What does professionalism mean to teachers within FE?

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We all got there in the end.

Abstract

This piece of research seeks to understand the concept of professionalism in relation to trainee teachers currently undertaking Initial Teacher Training (ITT) within Further Education (FE). In particular, it focuses on their reasons for undertaking a teaching qualification at a time when the sector is undergoing yet another period of political intervention with the deregulation of the FE workforce. The onus has been firmly put at the feet of employers to determine appropriate teaching qualifications for their employees. At the start of my study College A was requiring its staff to have a teaching qualification, but, by the time this study was coming to an end, this was no longer the case.

I adopted a case study approach to interview both trainee teachers and senior managers within my own organisation to ascertain whether having a full teaching qualification is seen as both necessary and more importantly fundamental to making an FE teacher 'professional'.

The findings reveal that the concept of professionalism is complex, and that there is a wide range of both definition and meaning. Using life histories, I was able to identify the impact of experience and other factors which contribute to the life trajectory of trainee FE teachers, and which determine their own view of what it means to be professional.

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List of Abbreviations

ALS	Additional Learning Support
AfL	Assessment for Learning
AoL	Assessment of Learning
ATLS	Associate Teacher Learning and Skills
BERA	British Educational Research Association
Cert Ed	Certificate in Education
CTLLS	Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DTLLS	Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector
ETF	Education and Training Foundation
FE	Further Education
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation
HoD	Head of Department
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
HPA	High Performance Advisor
IfL	Institute for Learning
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LLUK	Lifelong Learning UK
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
LSIS	Learning and Skills Improvement Service
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
PCET	Post Compulsory Education and Training
PGCE	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education
PLA	Pre-school Learning Alliance
PTLLS	Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector
QTLS	Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SET	Society for Education and Training
SMT	Senior Management Team

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter explores the reasons underlying this piece of research. It begins by outlining the context of the study against the changing political backdrop which has significantly influenced the position of the Further Education tutor over the last decade. In doing so, I will detail my particular interest in the concept of professionalism, and what this means for trainee teachers currently undertaking Initial Teacher Training. I will discuss the aims and objectives of the research, and the research questions I designed to help meet these.

1.2 Context

My own interest and career as a Teacher Educator began some time ago. I started my working life as a Registered Nurse, and had neither the passion or confidence to consider a career in teaching. However, changes in terms of the delivery of nurse training meant that I often found myself mentoring student nurses, and was increasingly asked to deliver informal training sessions to small groups. There was a move towards less time in the classroom and more time in a clinical environment, which meant that a significant proportion of nurse training happened outside the classroom and whilst on placement. As my confidence grew, so did the amount of teaching I did, and I began to seriously consider a move towards full time teaching. One area which I knew needed improvement was my actual teaching ability. Whilst I had the nursing subject knowledge to do so effectively, I did not have the underpinning teaching theory and therefore embarked upon a Further and Adult Education Teachers' Certificate teaching qualification which I successfully achieved in 1993.

This was not mandatory. I was not required to have a teaching qualification. I chose to undertake one in order to aid my transition from nurse to nurse educator. I was not supported in any way to do this qualification, I funded it myself and studied at a local college on an evening. I was unable to receive any remission from my clinical work, and this did not constitute any part of my Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This was because the CPD requirement which formed part of my conditions for ensuring my continued

registration for the Nursing and Midwifery register were based on clinical practice and not any element of my teaching role. For example, I had to undertake annual First Aid training. This strikes me as particularly pertinent to my research. Less than 25 years later teaching regulations have come full circle, and I find myself working as a teacher educator with trainees who themselves have chosen to undertake Initial Teacher Training, but have no mandatory requirement to do so.

I continued to work as both a nurse practitioner and nurse educator until 2001 when, as a parent of two young children, I became involved with the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA). This was initially as a volunteer, before I then secured a position as a Regional Training Officer. My role was to line manage sessional tutors and to deliver training courses to both staff and parents/volunteers working within a childcare setting. I think it is important to note that again, a teaching qualification was a desirable, not essential requirement for this role. However, during my time working for PLA, the changes in government policy dictated that there would be a compulsion for teaching staff to gain a full teaching qualification. I believe in leading by example, I did not feel it appropriate to ask sessional tutors to undertake a full teaching qualification when I did not have one myself. I therefore chose to embark upon my In-service Post Graduate Certificate in Education in 2004, and was given remission of hours in order to undertake the course. This was a two-year part time course which was delivered 3 hours every week at a local FE college. It was validated through a local University. It is also important to note that when I started the course there were a significant number of unqualified teachers working in FE, and therefore Local Authorities were able to draw down funding from central government to subsidise tuition fees. As a result of this, I did not have to pay any contribution towards the course, my fees were paid in full. The issue of course fees is significant as the rise coincided with the deregulation of the sector. This theme will be explored in more detail later.

I continued to work for PLA until December 2007 when, shortly after the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations came into

force, I became a Lecturer in Teacher Education at a Further Education college in the North of England (this will be referred to throughout as College A). I subsequently became the Centre Manager for Teacher Education, a post I have held since 2009. My role involves delivering the Certificate in Education, the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and the BA (Hons) in Education and Professional Development through a validation agreement with a local University. College A is one of a number of partner colleges who operate such validation arrangements, and form an Education and Training Consortium of approximately 25 FE and HE institutions. I also deliver the Level 3 Award in Education and Training and the Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training which are validated by City and Guilds. Until recently these were known as Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) and the Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS). The different courses will be explained in more detail in subsequent sections.

I have therefore worked as a Teacher Educator for the majority of the time that the 2007 regulations were in force, and in that time have seen firsthand the impact these have had. My lecturer role in 2007 came about directly as a result of the increased numbers of trainees required to gain a teaching qualification, and the subsequent impact this had on courses. As the demand for courses increased so did the number of staff required to teach them. Within my first year at College A the number of staff with the teacher education team doubled. Numbers peaked in 2009/10, the department was thriving and there were 7 fulltime staff within the team. The mandatory requirement to gain a teaching qualification meant that employers released their staff to attend daytime classes, something which does not happen now. The majority of employers also paid the tuition fees for trainees too. For the first time there were also evening courses being offered to try to cope with demand. The class sizes were run on a maximum capacity of 24 trainees per class, and there was always a waiting list. Fast forward to 2013/14 and nobody could have envisaged that within five years of the regulations coming into being they would subsequently be revoked. This has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of trainees starting ITT, and inevitably

there has been a sharp decline in the number of staff required within my department. In 2015 the reduction in the number of trainees meant that the teacher education department was overstaffed, and we were told that there would have to be compulsory redundancies if redeployment elsewhere within the college was not possible. Whilst I kept my post as the Centre Manager, this is on a reduced contract of 20.35 hours per week, and I now have only one other member of staff employed as a teacher education lecturer, also on a fractional contract of 20.35 hours. We are now grateful that the minimum class size of 8 is part of our validation agreement. Our average class size now is approximately 12 trainees and we only offer one class for each year of the course. The classes are delivered on an evening to meet the needs of the trainees.

Reflecting back, I am struck by the accidental way I 'fell' into a teaching career, something I had previously expressed no interest in. This is an important element of my research, and one which I shall refer back to throughout this thesis, that of being a dual professional. The interviews I carried out with my trainees also reflect the same pattern as many of them had never envisaged becoming teachers. A motivation behind my research is captured well by Robson (2006, p.14) who states "the assumption has been…. that if I know my subject, I can, by definition, teach it to others". This was certainly not my experience and neither, as my research has discovered, was it for many of my trainees.

1.3 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

The previous section outlined my career to date, and noted the pivotal points at which my journey was affected by changing legislation in relation to Initial Teacher Training. I have discussed the reasons why I now find myself working as a teacher educator, and how my role has changed significantly during the last decade. The deregulations have had a significant impact on the number of trainees who are currently undertaking ITT, and coincided with a significant rise in tuition fees. There are, however, those who still choose to undertake ITT. The overall aim of my research is to understand what professionalism means to teachers working within the FE sector, and whether undertaking ITT

contributes to this. I am interested to see if trainees consider themselves to be professional teachers, or whether they identify themselves first and foremost as a professional within their subject specialism. I adopted a case study approach located within the interpretivist paradigm to conduct the research.

This thesis seeks to address the following research questions:

- What does professionalism mean to trainee teachers working in Further Education?
- Why are trainees still undertaking ITT in the light of the revocation of the 2007 regulations?

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The present chapter has placed my research in context and has outlined my career path to date, from nurse to nurse educator, training officer to teacher educator. This path has ultimately led to me working as a teacher educator within a sector that has undergone a radical transformation, particularly during the last decade. The chapter has outlined the rationale, aims and research questions that the study aims to address.

Chapter Two offers a review of the relevant literature. It begins by considering the many and varied concepts of profession and professionalism, and how these relate to FE teachers. In particular I consider the concepts of dual and triple professionalism which are closely associated with those teaching in the sector. These concepts are examined in relation to the notion of professionalism and whether that is synonymous with a teaching qualification. I offer a historical consideration of the milestones and significant turning points within Further Education in relation to teaching qualifications for those working as teachers or trainers in the sector.

Chapter Three outlines the methodological approach taken, and explains why I have chosen an interpretivist paradigm for this study. It discusses my choice of a case study approach, and the use of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as data collection methods. This chapter discusses the sampling strategy I employed, as well as the ethical considerations related to the study.

Finally it discusses the rationale and procedures used for analysing the data through thematic analysis.

Chapter Four is concerned with data analysis. I analysed both the trainees' responses from questionnaire and interview data, as well as that of members of the senior management team within College A. I present the life histories of six trainee teachers. My research clearly identified four major themes. These were standards, subject knowledge, behaviour and autonomy. One of the key themes which emerged from my data was the disparity between the notion of autonomy in relation to the features of professionalism, and the reality of constant governmental interference in the FE sector. There is a mismatch between voluntary professionalism and imposed professionalism. For many trainees, this has also manifested itself in the managerialist way their autonomy is restricted within a classroom environment. The interviews which were carried out details the challenges some trainees face, and the imposition of prescribed ways of working.

Chapter Five concludes this study, and summarises the findings from Chapter Four. It makes recommendations based on these findings. This research suggests that those trainees undertaking ITT find it beneficial in developing their teaching skills. As such, there needs to be greater personal and financial support for potential trainees. FE teachers are working with limited autonomy, and fewer and fewer employers are requiring staff to hold a full teaching qualification. The majority of trainees identify themselves as professional in relation to their specialist area first and foremost rather than teachers. However the status associated with being recognised as a teacher is a desirable trait and an intrinsic motivation for many. Some trainees do not consider themselves as dual professionals, they are either subject specialists **or** teachers. This chapter then considers the limitations of my research. Finally it offers a reflective account of my experience in carrying out this piece of research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses much of the current literature which relates to the broad aims of my research, by considering the developments within the FE sector which initially brought about the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations. My reasons for embarking on this study came about as a direct result of the Professionalism in Further Education Interim Report of the independent review panel (BIS 2012) which has reported that

> a system of regulatory compulsion has not proved to be a successful means of achieving a professional workforce, and that colleges and providers, as employers, should be given the freedom and the responsibility to decide what arrangements are most appropriate for their organisations and their staff. (BIS, 2012, p.9)

It was at this point I began to formulate my thesis aims and questions. As my research journey progressed the Final Report was published and the Regulations were revoked altogether. Currently there is no mandatory requirement for FE teachers to hold a teaching qualification. This will be explored in more detail later. It is important to trace the historical developments as this will set my research in context.

However the historical timeline is not the only consideration. Any piece of research relating to professionalism needs to explore the many varied definitions of what the terms professional and professionalism mean. I consider the definitions of both dual and triple professionalism, and how these relate to the trainees' perceptions of themselves. I explore the different approaches such as trait and functionalist which may be viewed as more traditional. I then consider more recent developments and approaches to professionalism which include New Professionalism, and democratic.

2.2 Professional and professionalism

> What it means to be a 'professional' in further education in England has been the subject of ongoing debate over the last two decades. In an attempt to codify professionalism, New Labour developed a package of reform, crystallised by the introduction of new professional standards and qualifications and a new inspection framework under Ofsted.

(O'Leary, 2013, p.348)

The overall aim of my research is to consider how teachers within Further Education consider their own professionalism, and whether they think that the mandatory requirement to gain a teaching qualification has contributed to this professionalism. In this section I will be investigating the different definitions of professional, and the concept of professionalism.

2.2.1 Approaches to professionalism

There is little agreement and certainly no single definition of the term profession. The earliest occupations which warranted the title were, according to Law and Kim (2005), the "learned professions" and were in medicine, law and theology. According to Friedson, (1994. p.169) "much of the debate about professionalism is clouded by unstated assumptions and inconsistent and incomplete usages". This was certainly borne out by my research, the very concept of professionalism means different things to different people. Friedson (1983, p.33) further asserts that a profession is "an empirical entity about which there is little ground for generalising".

In this section, I will consider the different theoretical perspectives and approaches to the concept of professionalism, and whether these are applicable to the role of an FE teacher. My research indicated a number of different viewpoints, many of which were replicated in the literature on the subject. There has been a shift in the different approaches, from the more 'traditional' espoused from the 1950's, to the more recent contemporary approaches which use more recent terminology such as communities of practice. Each of these approaches will be examined in turn.

2.2.2 The trait and functionalist approaches

Both the trait and functionalist approaches define professions as a set of occupations which have a number of common characteristics, and that these differentiate them from non-professional occupations. Greenwood (1957) presents the characteristics as:

- There is a basis of systematic theory that is also used to delineate the profession

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- The authority is recognised by clients and the professional determines the needs of the client
- Society approves this authority and sanctions it
- There is an ethical code to prevent misuse of the authority position
- There is a professional culture, supported by professional associations

Millerson (1964) is one such advocate of the trait approach, and defines professionalism as including the following:

(i)   skill based on theoretical knowledge

(ii)   the provision of training and education

(iii)   testing the competence of members

(iv)   organisation

(v)   adherence to a professional code of conduct altruistic service

By comparison, Sims, Fineman and Gabriel (1993) developed this trait approach further and defined their own traits of professionalism comparable with those outlined by Millerson (1964). These include:

(i)   a systematic body of knowledge and monopoly powers over its application

(ii)   a self-regulating code of ethics, emphasising values such as respect for the confidentiality of the client

(iii)   the sanction of the community at large

(iv)   control over the profession's own qualification and entry procedures

(v)   an altruistic orientation, stressing the value of the profession's service to the community over strictly monetary rewards for the professionals

"The trait approach has the advantage that it is potentially empirically viable and that it is consistent with a 'common sense' approach to the understanding of professionalism" (Frost, 2001, p.7). The trait approach is, I would argue, a more generic view of professionalism. However many of the traits are applicable to the FE sector, and many of the traits identified were, and still are applicable to the role of an FE teacher. For example, the skills and knowledge acquired during initial teacher education and the entry requirements ensure

that there is control and regulation over who can and cannot enter the profession. Whilst the approaches identified above are not recent, I do think that the trait approach is still useful in relation to the FE sector and much of my research supported this. Trainees expressed their professionalism in terms of gaining a qualification after undertaking a period of training and gaining a qualification which is underpinned by a set of professional standards.

For Johnson, the important thing to note about the functionalist approach to professionalism is the emphasis on the way that the professions are used within society. There is a "high degree of generalised and systematic knowledge which stems from the fact that knowledge provides a powerful control over nature and society, [and as such] it is important to society that such knowledge be used primarily in the community interest" (Johnson, 1972, p.33). As such, the functionalist approach pays more attention to the interaction between professions and society. Johnson (1972) argues that the functionalist approach is focused predominantly on the premise that professions are central to the well-being of society. The functionalist approach does, therefore, make several assumptions, and as such is not without its criticisms. Firstly, it assumes that society has a functional unity with a shared common interest regardless of class, gender, ethnicity or other social divisions. Secondly the emphasis on values and altruism masks the nature of the differential power relation between professional groups and those they serve. This therefore means that the professions "mobilise their power and control to ensure their social status and related material rewards" (Frost, 2001, p.8). Within the FE sector, there is generally an increase in salary once trainee teachers successfully complete initial teacher training. However my research shows that FE teachers perceive themselves to be lacking in power, particularly in the current climate of managerialism. The lack of autonomy and power was a key theme which emerged from my data analysis.

2.2.3 Further definitions of professionalism

As previously discussed, the trait theory of professionalism states that an occupation becomes a profession by attaining certain characteristics,

including adherence to a code of ethics, a body of theoretical knowledge including actual and practical skills, licensure or registration, and commitment to public good. Those who advocate the trait theory have, in effect, produced a checklist of features that can be ticked off to determine how far a given occupation has progressed towards the goal of professionalisation (Mikkelson 2013). This has been termed Old Professionalism, which stems from the assumption that there is trust in an individual, and they offer a dedication and expertise within their field of work. By contrast, New Professionalism is the idea that every individual who is seen as a professional is accountable for their work, it is no longer focused around dedication and trust, but performance is monitored, this ensures that individuals are meeting the standards set by their regulatory body and targets are being met. As such, Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) and Sachs (1999) contend that teacher professionalism should incorporate a focus on the teachers themselves taking greater responsibility for defining both the nature and content of their work. This would appear to be at odds with the current managerialist climate within the FE sector, and the audit and accountancy culture which pervades.

The entry route to mainstream teaching is on a graduate only basis, most enter having undertaken a long period of higher education focusing on a specific, generally academically recognised and defined subject area. In addition to this, there is an element of specialist instruction in the theory of teaching, which instills an ethos of professionalism, "in Weberian terms this prolonged period of induction and assimiliation into the interest group (ie teaching professionals) succeeds in achieving a form of social closure which excludes outsiders" (Spenceley, 2006, p.290). Browning (1997, p.171) suggested that "linking the words 'professional' and 'teacher' … could be interpreted as a subversive act when applied to educators in further education."

Trying to apply any of the above definitions to the field of FE teaching is problematic, the sector is reliant on teachers who have gained skills and experience acquired in the pursuit of a previous occupation, rather than being derived from the "codified knowledge" of pedagogy transmitted through the

HE system of initial teacher training (Anning 2001). This therefore limits the claims of FE teachers who class themselves as educational "professionals" because they have not got the "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1988) normally afforded to professional groups because they have not obtained specific, socially and economically recognised, pedagogically based qualifications. Randle and Brady (1997, p.127) note that "there is no […] ability to ensure market closure and the group has relatively little opportunity to limit entry."

In October 2014, the then shadow education secretary Tristan Hunt argued that teachers should take an oath to show commitment to the teaching profession in the same way that doctors do to the Hippocratic oath. He believed that "such a symbolic statement when teachers qualified would help to 'elevate' the status of the profession". This would serve to emphasise the "moral calling and the noble profession of teaching" (Hunt, 2014).

This has caused vast differences in opinion, those who are in favour cite the higher social status it would bring, referring to the place of education within society as a whole. However suggestions are that rather than an oath, there should be some kind of nationally acknowledged, signed social contract.

Those against refer to the 2013 freedom on information request to the General Medical Council which revealed that not only is there no single, agreed Hippocratic oath used in the UK, but that not all doctors take it anyway. Opponents argue that rather than an oath

> what is required is a tangible demonstration of the esteem in which teaching is held. Instead they argue that what is needed is a proper professional body, a public acceptance by government that education and training are at the heart of the social and economic development of the country, a move away from constant reform, a willingness to allow professionals more autonomy and, of course, proper funding of the sector. (Law, 2015)

There are many differing approaches and opinions in relation to whether teaching should actually be considered a profession at all. For example Leiter (1978) and Samuels (1970) argue that because teachers have limited autonomy and are working within a performance management culture at best teachers can only be considered to be semi-professional. Ozga (1981)

expands this to a view of professionalism as an ideological construct used as a form of occupational control. Perhaps the most positive view is offered by Phelps (2006) that the performance management and managerialist approaches merely serve to promote the best and highest standards for teachers. According to Robson (1998) a key principle of managerialism was the view that workers could no longer be trusted to do their jobs efficiently and effectively. This led to the introduction of systems for measuring accountability and performativity (Ball 2003).

> The teaching profession suffers from a vicious circle of low status, lack of competitive resources, inability to control their own selection, training and qualification, divided and consequently ineffective organisation and a degree of state interference and control suffered by almost no other profession all leading to low bargaining power, low remuneration and low status (Perkin 1985).

Colley and James (2005) propose an epistemology of professionalism and an ontology of professionalism. The first "takes the form of a list of defining characteristics, functions or ways of working that set professions apart from other occupations" (Colley and James, 2005, p.3). This can be likened to the notion of a job description. They contrast this with the ontology of professionalism which is likened to a person specification. In its simplest form this can be related to the outside in and inside out view espoused by Stronach (2002). The first sees practice as externally driven and controlled whereas the latter draws on the personal attributes of the professional.

"Professionalism is socially constructed as a dynamic and innovating concept" (Peel, 2005, p.125). For example, Becher (1996) advocates the use of the term learning professionals, those who develop both practical and intellectual skills throughout their lives. By contrast Grant (1999) likens the term professional to accomplished or qualified whilst Friedson (1994) believes in a commonsense notion of professionalism which effectively labels some occupations superior to others. Eraut (1994) takes this a stage further by differentiating between 'powerful' professions such as law and medicine to the less powerful public sector ones such as teaching, a 'semi-profession'.

Whatever definition is cited, there appears to be some commonality based on

a set of five principal characteristics of professionalism. The first is that professionalism requires extensive training which comprises a significant intellectual component and involves both theoretical and practical expertise. Secondly the provision of an important public service which results in the organisation of members and leads to a third process which licenses and regulates practice. The final two characteristics encompass the existence of a code of practice and a high degree of professional autonomy. This requires individuals to assume responsibility and be accountable for their professional actions (Laffin,1998a).

Hoyle and John (1995) argues that there is an intangible element to a profession "a distinctiveness…centered on knowledge, judgement, ethics and self-government" that is acknowledged by those who consider themselves as professionals, and which acts to govern their ethics and practices in relation not only to the subject, but also in terms of their relationship with their work-related significant others or reference group. Carr (2000) develops the concept further to include the effect that "professionalism", in terms of teaching, can have on the individual, arguing that the deontic element of teaching (ie something done for others, using autonomous and responsible judgement) develops a superogatory dimension for the individual professional as their work intrudes into the private life of the educator, moving them eventually into an axiological situation where they act as a role model.

Scott (2008) argues that professions are institutional agents, rather than a homogenous group. As such he defined three different categories which he termed creative, carrier and clinical. He defined creative professionals as those employed in institutions such as universities or research centres who carry out various aspects of work which underlie the profession. Teachers are encompassed within this category, and carry professional messages to clients and the public. This supports the characteristics encompassed within the trait approach. The final category is comprised of professionals such as engineers and accountants, and defined as clinical professionals. They "apply professional principles to the solution of problems presented by individual clients or by specific problematic situations" (Scott, 2008, p.228).

These elements have been incorporated into the ten characteristics of a post compulsory teaching professional suggested by Crawley (2015). The following acknowledge and build on the more traditional notions discussed early.

1. Engagement in activity which has particular and special characteristics.
2. A high personal and public status as a result of their profession which merits payment as a result of their efforts.
3. Recognition as practicing according to agreed and acknowledged codes of conduct, standards of training, competence, responsibility and understanding.
4. Conducting their profession with honesty, integrity and transparency within the public domain to maintain its status within its ranks and with the public at large.
5. Accepting responsibility for a social purpose within their specialism and a broader purpose in the wider community beyond that.
6. A responsibility to work with other professionals and the wider community.
7. Demonstrating autonomy within their professional practice.
8. Participating in decisions affecting their professional lives and environments, with peers and with the engagement of the wider community.
9. Subjecting their work to public accountability.
10. Selfless commitment to updating their expertise and continuous development of their field. (Crawley, 2015, p.494)

These characteristics seem to me to offer a set of characteristics in line with the trait approach, but that emphasise the social role of the FE professional in keeping with that of the functionalist approach. Furthermore, these characteristics recognise the complexity of the contemporary context which feature in the notion of both triple professionalism and New Professionalism which will be discussed later.

The Lingfield Review (BIS, 2012) consulted a number of organisations and FE teachers. It concluded that "the original usage of 'professionalism' relates to religious observance: *to profess a religion* , implying that it has as much to do

with belief as with practice and that it essentially relates to people within a recognisably similar group" (p.22). As such the Review proposed a working list of the criteria which are said to underpin professionalism:

- Mastery of a complex discipline
- Continuous enhancement of expertise
- Acceptance that the field of expertise is a vocation to be pursued selflessly for the benefit of others
- Public accountability for high standards of capability and conduct
- Membership of a group earning and deserving the respect of the community
- Membership of a defined group with similar skills, transcending local loyalties to achieve national and international recognition
- Acceptance of responsibility for the competence and good conduct of other members of the professional group
- Membership of a group which accepts responsibility for planning succession by future generations
- Membership of a group which seeks continuously to extend and improve its field of knowledge
- Membership of a group deserving an above - average standard of living (BIS, 2012, p. 22)

These seem to mirror and support the characteristics espoused by Crawley (2015) above.

2.2.4 Dual Professionalism

Dual professionalism, according to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) (2012), comprised two elements, both of equal importance; the first being an up-to-date subject specialist expertise, and the second being a sound grasp of pedagogical skills. This was supported by my own research. Some of the trainees asserted that although they had confidence in their own subject specialist areas, but what they did not have was the knowledge in relation to how best to teach it to others. As such they had chosen to undertake ITT to gain the pedagogical teaching skills. That was also true of

my own experience as a nurse educator. I lacked the knowledge and skills in how best to share my own nursing experience with others. I did, until I had completed my first teaching qualification, always consider myself to be a nurse first and foremost. I now consider myself a teacher educator. Not only am I no longer on the Nursing and Midwifery register, but I am no longer competent in my clinical practice.

The term professional has different connotations. According to Whitty (2000, p.232) "a profession is whatever people think it is at any particular time and can vary. So the fact that we normally talk about the teaching profession means that teaching is a profession". In FE this came to the fore with the introduction of the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) standards, and whether standards that are imposed on a sector make for a more professional workforce. Certainly much has been debated about the term professional and its application to the role of an FE teacher. This is fundamentally because of the 'dual professional' label given to teachers within the sector, and denotes the fact that those teaching within the sector are already qualified and have allegiance to another profession prior to entering teaching. For example they may be accountants, bricklayers or hairdressers. This is an elementary foundation, and one of the LLUK standards was that teachers within FE must "understand and keep up to date with current knowledge in respect of own specialist area" (LLUK, 2007). This was superseded by the Education and Training foundation (ETF) standards which states that teachers and trainers within the lifelong learning sector must maintain and update knowledge of their subject and/or vocational area.

However, this means that those entering FE do so as subject professionals, equipped to pass the specific knowledge and skills associated with their previous occupation. Lucas (1996, p.69) notes that, historically educators in further education "have seen their qualification or expertise in a vocational area as sufficient for teaching noting that this has had the effect of placing specialist knowledge of subject or trade above pedagogy". My research shows that this historical tradition is still in operation today. College A requires all new teachers to be qualified in their subject specialist areas. This is an

essential criterion for gaining employment, whereas a teaching qualification is a desirable trait. There is an assumption that teaching skills can be taught or learnt, therefore these are not part of the entry criteria in gaining employment.

This emphasis on subject delivery is described by Chappell (1999) as a credible "industry expert". The teacher is one who has gained subject mastery through workplace experience and the acquisition of (generally) skills-related qualifications predominantly based on practical demonstrations of skill and technical expertise rather than theoretical cognisance (Spenceley, 2006). As such, they see their industrial knowledge and experience as conferring legitimacy on their identity as teachers. This view is supported by Randle and Brady (1997) who argue that the academic standards which are often associated with the term professional have been reinterpreted by FE practitioners to encompass the practical skills that they impart. Chappell adds that "practical knowledge is judged not it terms of its claim to generalisable truth as in the case of discipline-based subjects but rather its performativity in the workplace" (Chappell, 1999, p.22). Some of this can be linked to the developments in education in general, particularly in relation to the competency based qualifications such as NVQ's.

> This drive towards 'competence' has had the effect of confirming the primacy of subject knowledge in the minds of the practitioners and those who recruited them, and has turned the emphasis in turn to the McNair report on the primacy of skills into a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Spenceley, 2006, p.295)

This was certainly something that many of my trainees alluded to. Whilst all of them considered themselves to be professional, it was, for some, inherent because they were qualified in their subject specialist areas, rather than because they were undertaking ITT. Subject specialism was the defining factor.

As such, the educator in FE frequently adopted the mantle of "industry expert" with a specialist knowledge which had in previous workplaces been accorded high status (Anning, 2001). This allowed them to maintain their credibility with their peers while simultaneously promoting their image of professional competence and of being a fund of expertise for their learners (Randle and

Brady,1997, p.128). In this way the predominant requirement was the need to prepare learners to be competent and effective 'professional' workers. As Clow puts it, "those teaching in vocational areas model the behaviour expected in the workplace" (Clow, 2001, p.142). As such, predominantly skills-based educators retained their autonomy by controlling what was taught and were accountable to a community of practice they both recognised and valued i.e their skilled peers, with whom they shared an underlying and tacit knowledge of the 'real' subject of education. This was something that was alluded to by Harriet, a hairdresser undertaking ITT. She felt that the hairdressing curriculum was not reflective of her experience when working in a salon, and therefore part of her desire to become a hairdressing tutor was to keep her own skills and knowledge current.

It has been widely noted (Elliott, 1996; Robson, 1998 and Chappell, 1999) that there is little common identity among educators in the FE sector, and this is further weakened by the collegiality usually associated with professionalism being of an unconventional and tenuous nature. Rather than an allegiance to the profession of an FE educator, the allegiance remains primarily with their initial profession, and thus reinforces the division of FE into disciplines associated with different skills and trades. As such, the vocation of an FE educator is a fragmented concept, "being based primarily on skills and trade knowledge rather than on the canons of academic and pedagogic knowledge" (Spenceley, 2006, p.297). The underlying ethos of the FE teacher, whilst broadly relating to that which underpins education as a whole, means that the general emphasis on student learning is much more likely to be guided and aligned to that of the preceding occupation and experience of the teacher. The relationships with the significant others are more likely to be those such as employers and skilled workers rather than fellow educators. This was certainly true for some of my participants, but in particular those who had only recently embarked on a teaching career. Those who had only just left their industry, or were only teaching on a part-time basis were much more entrenched in their specialist areas rather than as educators. They were, therefore, less likely to identify themselves as teachers.

Gleeson and James (2007) offer an alternative to the traditional notion of professionalism, suggesting that specifically in FE, people are becoming "learning professionals", that is someone who works in both an academic and vocational world where the environment is more complex but where the period of extended study is substituted for more practical "on the job" experience. This would enable FE teachers to experience dual identity as a professional with a specialism, whilst at the same time being a professional teacher.

The different entry routes into FE teacher training are, according to Robson (1998), creating a weak professional boundary, certainly in comparison to the degree requirement for school teachers. Those undertaking FE teacher training do not need a degree for the Certificate in Education, a full level 3 qualification in the specialist area is sufficient. The majority of vocational tutors such as hairdressers, beauty therapists and construction workers do, in my experience, enter with a level 3 qualification. By contrast, those with a degree in their specialist area undertake the PGCE, these tend to be the more academic subjects such as those wishing to teach history, sociology, law or psychology. Both routes lead to a full teaching qualification, and therefore are acceptable as a means of gaining QTLS. When I selected the participants for my research, I intentionally selected an equal number of Certificate in Education and PGCE trainees to see if there were any differences in how they defined their own professionalism. One in particular never considered himself to be a professional because he left school with no formal qualifications and found work in a garage. For him, undertaking ITT and becoming a teacher will make him a "proper" professional.

> In moving from one occupational area (in industry or commerce) to another (education and training), most further education teachers retain strong allegiances to their first occupational identity. In their talk about the work of teaching, therefore, one might expect to find reference to these prior identities, to the values and understandings of a professionalism associated with the first workplace and its culture, as well as to wider discourses of professionalism and teacher professionalism. (Robson, *et al.* 2004, p.187)

2.2.5 Triple Professionalism

Recently Spours and Hodgson (2013) have argued the case for "triple

professionalism", as "dual professionalism is insufficient because teachers and managers can be forced to play games in order to comply with policy or to look inwards at the performance of the department" (Spours and Hodgson, 2013, p.) They believe that the current political and economic context requires a different model of professionalism, and that the "top-down" professionalism which was imposed under the previous Labour Government "produced restrictive college environments that stifled the type of ongoing collaborative dialogue between teachers that helps them to develop a strong sense of professional identity and agency" (Spours and Hodgson, 2013, p.) They argue that colleges need to be looking outward, rather than looking inwards at their own performance.

Hodgson (2015) has argued that dual professionalism is insufficient, and needs to be developed to incorporate triple professionalism. She believes a third strand is needed, one which requires an FE teacher to work not only with colleagues in their own institution. They also need to work with FE colleagues in different institutions and those from industry across a range of different sectors. This is because

> professionals no longer work in isolation but are expected to work in networks. They have to communicate and cooperate with a range of colleagues but also professionals in other sectors who have different languages, who work in different patterns and have different values and that means we need to think more expansively about what it means to be a professional. (Hodgson, 2015, p.7)

As such FE professionals would have a better understanding of the role of the college within its community and the different ways national policy was being translated and implemented in different colleges (Hodgson, 2015). One way this approach can be seen is in the recent Post 16 Education and Training Institutions Review which aimed to help create more financially stable and efficient providers and improved collaboration across different types of institution. One of the recommendations from the area review which College A was a part was consideration of opportunities for increased collaboration, to pool and build on individual colleges' expertise in higher level subjects.

Triple professionalism suggests the development of a strong ethical concern

going beyond the focus on student attainment and college performance, and instead has a focus on its locality and communities (Spours *et al*., 2007). Recognition should be given to the interconnection and interdependence that exists between a college and its surroundings. It should have a highly developed regional and local knowledge. Again this was a feature of the Post 16 Education and Training Institutions Review. This democratic/ecological model of professionalism would have to maximise professional participation within the college or training organisation in order to produce an expansive working culture, rather than a restrictive one.

This approach is typified by communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.115) which they define as "a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice". Gleeson *et al.* (2005) question the idea that there is a "community of professional practice" in FE and argue that one needs to be built. They believe that FE professionals are usually seen as either subject to external reform, or as active agents who can and do construct identity and meaning within their work. However, they argue professional knowledge is generated through tensions that are experienced at the interface between external criteria of performance and those "ecologies of practice" (Stronach *et al.* 2002, p.45). Gleeson *et al.* (2005) see FE practitioners who are located within a fragmented FE sector, and one which needs a significant shift in order for them to gain a stronger sense of professionality. This sense of professionality should come from instituting (to some extent, a restoration) of wider forms of democratic governance and accountability which transcend market narratives and consumerist interests (Gleeson and Knight, 2006) In this sense, professionalism does not simply occur in a social context, it is a social practice, and constitutes a highly contested process.

This idea of a "community of practice" fits in with the situated learning theory advocated by Lave and Wenger (1991). This social learning theory is less dependent on cognitive or mental processes that are inherent in learning, but rather focuses on the social arrangements and mechanisms. Put simply, novices enter a community of practice and begin with legitimate peripheral

participation before moving towards a state of expertise and full membership and participation. The theory is about both the social relationships of learning and the conditions for the existence of any form of professional knowledge, and hence the existence of knowledgeable practitioners themselves (Fuller *et al.*, 2005).

Whitty and Wisby (2006) consider the "collaborative" and "democratic" approaches to professionalism as an alternative to the traditional and managerialist ones. The democratic view is one that requires teachers to perceive themselves not as victims of change, but rather as agents of change (Johnson and Hallgarten, 2002). This concurs with the views of Sachs (2003) that teachers need to adopt an "activist identity", one in which, as professionals, teachers work within communities of practice and as such form networks and alliances between themselves and others, these are fluid according to the issues and concerns at the time. In this way activist professionals take responsibility for their own on-going professional learning. (Sachs 2001). According to Whitty (2001, p.160)

> It is probably best to see all these various positions as competing versions of teacher professionalism for the twenty-first century, rather than seeing one as fitting an essentialist definition of professionalism and others as detracting from it.

Simkins and Lumby (2002) argue that there is a pervading managerialist culture within FE, driven by widespread changes in public services. As such they identify a number of different interlinked threads.

> The first concerns a discourse, which, it is claimed, is replacing traditional professional and public service values with those of management and the private sector. The second emphasises the embodiment of these values in a range of managerial approaches, such as strategic planning, human resource management and a focus on measured outcomes as primary indicators of success. Third, and underpinning these, is a set of ideas about distribution of power in the FE system, which claims that the authority and autonomy of professionals is being diluted or replaced by the power of managers to establish agendas and to determine modes of work. (Simkins and Lumby, 2002, p.13)

Adan (2013) discusses a new global context which he terms New Times. He coins the phrase "progressive tendency" which comprises four main elements;

technological, economic, social and political. Professor Ken Spours argues that New Times is a challenge, encompassing as it does the features of horizontal networking, digital technologies, global connectivity and with a clear focus on sustainability, well being and human empathy. This vision was highlighted in the The Bloomsbury Paper, The Interim Report of the Inquiry into a 21st Century Education System (Compass, 2014) which Professor Spours contributed to. This argues that, amongst other things, there should be a focus on professionalism, collaboration and teacher development

> A key ingredient of a more equitable, inclusive, high performing and efficient education system is the central role of education professionals who will have the capacities to lead, innovate, collaborate, care and bring the best out of their students. It is the relationship between leadership, the teacher, wider stakeholders and the learner that will be at the heart of a new model.

> Educators should develop a 'triple professionalism' - expertise in an area of knowledge and skill (professional persona No 1); expertise in understanding learners; pedagogy and the organisation of learning (professional persona No 2) and capacities to collaborate beyond the institution with social partners such as students, parents, employers and other types of professionals, in multi-disciplinary way (professional persona No 3).

This collective notion, according to Evans (2008) centres around teachers themselves as key players, so that rather than the concept of professionalism being imposed by external agencies, it is one that is influenced and adopted by the professionals themselves. As a consequence of this, she proposes three types of professionalism, the first being that which is *demanded* or requested, that which reflects the professional service level or requirements which are made of an occupational group. The second type is *prescribe*d, and and reflects the envisaged or recommended service level perceived by analysts. The final category is *enacted* and refers to professional practice which is observed, perceived and interpreted by any observer either from outside or within the relevant professional group. She asserts that professionalism is

> Professionality-influenced practice that is consistent with commonly-held consensual delineations of a specific profession and that both contributes to and reflects perceptions of the profession's purpose and

> status and the specific nature, range and levels of service provided by, and expertise prevalent within, the profession, as well as the general ethical code underpinning this practice. (Evans 2008, p.29)

We have already considered the concepts of both dual and triple professionalism, the latter primarily in relation to the democratic discourse advocated by Whitty and Wisby (2006) and the activist viewpoint espoused by Sachs (2003). A third ecological view is offered by Barnett (2012) which is ethically driven and which is, he argues, demanding and in need of high levels of support. Barnett coined the term super-complexity, which has, he states, resulted from the fact that

> The hard-pressed professional is faced with an identity crisis. Is professionalism a matter of being a knowledgeable expert or of meeting clients' wants or of managing resources efficiently or of entrepreneurial nous? Is it a private, a public, a bureaucratic or a performative mode of being that is called for? (Barnett, 2008, p.195)

In order to support democratic professionalism, Spours (2012) argues that there needs to be engagement with several fundamental concepts, those of trust, empowerment, mutual accountability, multiple expertise, collaboration and professional capacity building.

According to Taubman (2015) there are three main typologies of professionalism. These are traditional, managerialist and democratic. The traditional form is, he argues no longer applicable because it "does not take account of the current social and political marketisation and privatisation of public services". These are evident in the managerialist approach and define professionalism by the "top-down regulation and compliance" and is therefore controlled by managers. It is characterised by a relationship which relies on supervision, assessment and audit between managers and teachers. This is certainly evident from my own experience, and many of the trainees working at College A. The final category of democratic professionalism "seeks to demystify professional work and build alliances between educational professionals and other members of the institution's workforce and external stakeholders, including students, parents and members of the wider community" (Daley *et al.*, 2015, p.98). This supports the triple professionalism definition discussed earlier.

The trait and functionalist approaches discussed previously share a common bond. They both define a profession in relation to the services it offers to the community. Similarly there is agreement that there needs to be some kind of control over entry, as well as adherence to a professional code. What is absent from these historical views is that which requires the professional to update their own expertise and to collaborate and work closely with other professionals, as well as the community at large.

Having considered the many and varied definitions and types of professionalism, the following section considers these in relation to the developments within Initial Teacher Training for the FE sector.

2.3 The historical context – FE reform and policy initiatives from FENTO to the present day

"Whatever else you could say about Labour's educational policies there is certainly no shortage of them" (Ball, 2008, p.86).

In order to place my research in context, it is important to understand the almost continuous government reform which FE teachers have been subjected to over the last two decades or so. Therefore, the literature I have considered is primarily from the late 1990's onwards. Prior to this date, there was very little regulation at all, and those who undertook initial teacher training usually did so voluntarily. This neglect was reinforced by the attitudes of many teachers and managers in FE themselves who believed that vocational or subject expertise was in itself an adequate basis for teaching (Green and Lucas, 1999). As such, this produced a culture in FE where teacher identity was primarily tied to subject or occupational expertise, resulting in fragmented practices and professional cultures (Robson, 1998). This situation came about primarily because of the predominantly vocationally based nature of further education. This was reminiscent of the mechanics institutes and technical colleges which developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Within these institutions, the main focus was on learning from a skilled artisan or practitioner (Harkin, 2005), thereby reinforcing the notion that subject expertise rather than knowledge and skills in education would ultimately determine the quality of teaching and learning. As such further

education continued as the "Cinderella Sector", (Randle and Brady 1997) of the English education system, and suffered from a lack of funding and a lack of strategic direction which continued until the 1990's.

This is an important theme which I shall refer to in Chapter Four when I present an analysis of my data. One of the major themes which emerged from my data is that of subject knowledge as this was seen by my research participants as a major element in defining themselves as professional. The fact that they were qualified and experienced in their own specialist areas did, in their opinion, legitimise the description of themselves as professionals. Whether that allegiance is tied to that of an FE teacher or a subject specialist will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

To set this subject specialist element in context however, it is worthwhile to note that both the Certificate in Education and the PGCE consist of 120 credits. Of this, only 10 credits relate directly to the subject specialism element of the trainees teaching. This is assessed by an online tutor rather than a teacher educator, and each trainee is allocated to an online subject specialist group. This approach has been identified by Ofsted as an element of good practice. My own trainees have generally valued this element of the course as it affords them the opportunity to focus specifically on the subject specialist pedagogy of their own curriculum areas, yet in reality it is a very small part of the ITT curriculum.

This focus on subject knowledge was a key element in the re-organisation of the FE sector following the end of the Second World War. The McNair Report (1944) was published three months before the 1944 Education Act. One of its proposals was that there should be a basic salary scale for all qualified teachers. This is an interesting point to remember over 70 years later. For many, fiscal remuneration is a driving force as there is usually a monetary difference when moving from an unqualified salary scale to a qualified teacher payscale. Within College A this difference has always been highlighted on job advertisements. As soon as trainees successfully complete ITT and have their marks conferred at the Course Assessment Board, I notify Human Resources in order for the new salary to take effect.

The Report also emphasised the need for staff within the FE sector to maintain up to date subject competence and skills based knowledge, rather than in developing teaching ability (Spencely, 2006). It clearly prioritised subject specialist knowledge over that of teaching. As such, the need to undertake formal teacher training remained as a recommendation rather than a mandatory requirement. This could perhaps be the reason why, for many, the FE sector is still synonymous with vocational and skills training. There have actually been Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses for the FE sector in existence for over 60 years. Following the McNair Report the first technical teacher-training institutions were established and offered, initially, one year full time Certificate in Education courses. As this full time entry route usually meant that trainees were not able to work at the same time, a two year part time in-service route was developed enabling trainees to train on a part time basis whilst still holding down a job. This route is still the most popular choice today, although the full time year route (known as the pre-service course) is also still in existence. Despite this, FE teacher training was generally unregulated (Orr and Simmons, 2010). There was little in the way of compulsion which was a key difference between FE and the maintained school sector.

The main developments followed the 1997 election when the New Labour Government came into power, and announced its intention to introduce a requirement for all new FE teachers to have a teaching qualification. This qualification would be based upon national standards. The subsequent publication of The Learning Age in 1998 (DfEE) highlighted that education was a key focus and priority. The result was a mission to stay competitive within the global economy, and specifically within the FE sector. There was an expectation that students had the right to receive high standards of teaching in order to achieve their goals and reach their full potential. Both The Fryer Report (1997) and Kennedy Report (1997) had identified the need for a coherent, nationally recognised teacher training course for FE teachers. The resulting standards were published in 1999 by the employer-led body FENTO (Further Education National Training Organisation).

FENTO endorsed training providers and awarding bodies whose ITT programmes conformed to the new standards, so that only those teachers with a FENTO endorsed qualification were seen as meeting the national requirements of the teaching profession. These reforms had a particular focus: "the DfES clearly has a particular vision of how it wants the workforce to look: a standardisation of professional qualifications; a licence to practice; adherence to a particular body of professional competencies" (Tummons, 2010, p.65). This was seen as a vehicle by which two related policies could be carried forward: creating social justice through widening participation in education, and boosting the economy through enhancing the skills of the nation (Learning and Skills Council 2005).

The focus on widening participation emphasised the need for well-educated, well equipped and adaptable labour, and the importance of a high quality teaching force (DfEE, 1998). As such, state intervention and a series of policy initiatives were introduced. Keep (2006) argues that PCET (Post Compulsory Education and Training) in England is now the most highly-regulated and centrally-directed education system in Europe at the start of the new millennium. It was an attempt to move away from what Lucas (2004a) termed 'benign neglect' to a system where "the government has invented a professionalism for them" (Orr 2008, p.98).

However, these reforms were quickly condemned when in 2003 Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) carried out a major national survey inspection of FE teacher education and concluded that the existing system based on the FENTO standards provided "an unsatisfactory foundation for the professional development of FE teachers at the start of their careers" (Lucas *et al.*, 2011, p.2). The survey identified huge variations in the quality of initial teacher training, and was particularly scathing about the lack of specialist subject support available to trainees. There was a lack of subject mentoring available to many trainees in the workplace and a lack of observations and feedback on trainees' teaching practice. Many trainees had very few opportunities to teach and assess across different areas and levels. HMI concluded that whilst the taught elements of ITT courses was good overall, there was little connection

between the taught elements of the course and the supervision and assessment of a trainee's teaching in the workplace.

I would argue that this situation still exists. One of the major differences between those teaching in schools, and those teaching in FE is the support given to those who are newly qualified (NQT's). Traditionally the maintained sector has given mentor support and some remission from teaching hours during the first year post qualification. In FE this is not the case, and the lack of recognition for either unqualified or newly qualified staff means they are subjected to a full teaching timetable and little, if any, mentor support. One of my trainees summarised the mentor support available as either "a chance meeting at the photocopier or a quick cuppa in the staffroom. It certainly isn't something that is ever planned, I have to grab my mentor when I can!" (Trainee 12, questionnaire).

This situation has shifted slightly at College A, the introduction of a non accredited Programme of Excellence has been introduced as a mandatory requirement for all new teaching staff. This is regardless of whether they hold a recognised teaching qualification or not. Any member of staff on this programme is given 1.5 hours remission of hours from teaching. However, this is not for mentor support, or recognition of being a new teacher, but is rather to ensure they are "college ready", and therefore the staff on the Programme have to attend the taught sessions regardless of whether this is beneficial to them or not.

The government reaction to the criticisms of FENTO was the publication of Equipping our Teachers for the Future (DfES, 2004) which proposed new standards and regulations. This resulted in the abolishment of FENTO in 2005. It was replaced by a new employer-led body, the sector skills council Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK). The aim was to produce new national standards, role specifications and learning outcomes, therefore fulfilling the government policy which was to create a national system for FE initial teacher training qualifications comparable to those in schools. As such this would raise the professional status of teachers in post-compulsory education. This resulted in a call for a recognised status for teachers working in the Further

Education sector, that of Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS). The sector is, however, unique in requiring post qualification tasks before conferral of "qualified" status. The concept of a recognised status is something that was raised by some of the trainees in my research, and will be discussed further in the analysis of my data.

LLUK produced new national standards (LLUK, 2006) with core units of assessment based on an agreed credit framework which was intended to enable trainees to transfer between different institutions during their training. One area of particular interest to the government was the specialist approach to ITT, and here LLUK stressed the importance for ITT courses to provide subject mentors in the workplace (LLUK, 2007). Both my research and my own personal experience have shown that the requirements to provide subject mentors, and the reality of actually doing so are often two completely different things. This is usually attributed to the lack of formalised mentor arrangements discussed previously.

The new qualifications consisted of a three tier system. The first tier comprised Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS), and was the basic minimum requirement for anyone teaching within the FE sector. This was also the first unit of the second tier, Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) which was designed for those teachers who carried out a lesser teaching role in terms of their contribution to designing the curriculum, teaching materials and assessment, and therefore anyone gaining this qualification could achieve Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS). The final tier, the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) was designed for those in a full teaching role and was for anyone with wider responsibilities for teaching, managing courses and supporting students and would enable them to gain QTLS (Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills). These courses were all designed for Awarding Bodies, not Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), and were further complicated by the fact that there were different levels within both PTLLS and CTLLS as these could be achieved at either level 3 or level 4, and the overall qualification for DTLLS was awarded at level 5. HEI's were acknowledged as offering programmes of

study higher than level 5, and therefore their ITT programmes had to be endorsed by Standards Verification UK (SVUK) which was a subsidiary of LLUK.

To achieve parity with school teachers who are awarded QTS (Qualified Teacher Status), a new professional status of QTLS was introduced. This required FE trainees to complete their initial teacher training and then complete a post qualification process known as professional formation. This had to be completed within five years of completing training and was subject to approval by the Institute for Learning (IfL). A further requirement was for teachers to be registered as a member of the IfL, maintain that registration continuously, and provide an annual record of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) each year. The number of hours for this was dependent on the number of hours worked. Therefore, a full time FE teacher was expected to undertake at least 30 hours CPD.

In March 2012, less than five years after the introduction of the new qualifications, Lord Lingfield was commissioned by the Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning to review how successfully they had achieved professionalism within the sector. The interim report was based on the premise that

> over the last decade, government has attempted to impose by statute a form of professionalism on the further education sector through the development of national occupational standards for teaching staff. As successive reports by Ofsted and academic research have shown, this endeavour has failed to achieve consistency in the diverse provision for acquiring vocational knowledge and skills. In comparison with arrangements in both schools and higher education, the initial training of lecturers and their continuous professional updating in further education are too often reported by those involved to be both haphazard and onerous. (BIS, 2012, p.2)

The review was commissioned as a response to a dispute which arose regarding the withdrawal of funding to the IfL, which, after three years of state funding had been phased out was required to become self-financing. The review argued that the costs had simply been passed down to FE staff who were still compelled to be a member in line with the 2007 regulations, and many refused to pay their own membership, ultimately putting them in breach

of the regulations. There were, according to the UCU (2012), tens of thousands of FE lecturers who had ceased to pay their subscription, and were potentially facing dismissal. The General Secretary of the UCU, Sally Hunt said in 2011 "College staff are highly professional people who make a vital contribution to our society and economy. It seems extraordinary that at a time when we need to be prioritising education, the government is making it more expensive for teaching staff to belong to this compulsory body" (Hunt, 2011).

This continued the trend of government policy towards de-regulation as demonstrated by the abolition of the General Teaching Council (GTC), the parallel body to the IfL in the school sector, and the level of uncertainty around regulatory compulsion as an effective instrument in matters of professionalism. This tension is something that on a personal level I struggled with. As a nurse I was required to pay a fee every three years to enable me to stay on the Nursing and Midwifery register. Without this, I would have been unable to practice. I had to keep my professional portfolio up to date, and demonstrate that I had undertaken Continuing Professional Development in order to maintain my license to practice. I continued to pay my IfL subscription fees, many of my colleagues did not.

The review concluded that "the professionalism of further education lecturers, instructors, workplace supervisors and assessors might naturally flourish without interference" (BIS, 2012).

A key theme of the review was on the inappropriateness of the teaching qualifications within the FE sector. Lucas *et al.* (2011, p.690) found that "CTLLS was not an appropriate qualification" and that it "caused confusion among teachers and managers". I can concur from my own experience as a teacher educator that there was a lack of understanding amongst a large number of both trainees and employers. Some saw the CTLLS route as a cheaper option, indeed it was significantly cheaper than undertaking either a Certificate in Education or PGCE. Typically the course was delivered over one year rather than two. However it did not enable successful candidates to gain QTLS status, and as such was deemed inferior. Much of the criticism referred

to the complicated system of 'nested' qualifications, with all trainees beginning with PTLLS, and then diverging towards either the CTLLS or DTLLS route, dependent on the end goal, and either route not leading to either ATL or QTLS, but requiring a further period of reflective practice recorded in a portfolio and supervised by the IfL. In order for lecturers to maintain this status, they had to both undertake CPD and report and log this with the IfL. This was in addition to the payment of a registration fee, unlike those with QTS status, who are not required to maintain their "qualified" status through payment of annual fees, and report regular study. This compulsion aimed

> to support professional values in further education by legislating for the registration of practitioners by the Institute for Learning (IfL), on the model of the General Medical Council or the General Council of the Bar, both Victorian creations. (BIS, 2012, p.i)

Counterparts with QTS remain qualified unless disqualified for a specific misdemeanor. A criticism leveled at the 2007 regulations by the Lingfield Review was that the additional hurdles to qualification might be interpreted as meaning that FE lecturers are inherently less professional than their peers in other sectors, and need particular measures to attain professionalism (BIS, 2012).

Another criticism related to the complicated and inconsistent qualifications. Lucas *et al.* (2012, p.686) found

> wide variations in the credit structures amongst the (university FE teacher training) programmes reviewed, which included differing numbers of modules and therefore different assessment requirements, as well as a complete variation in the titles of the qualifications awarded, all of which claimed to cover the new framework and finally different levels for what appeared to be identical awards on the national Qualification and Credit Framework.

Much of this was as a result of the process,

> validation and endorsement of the new framework was so rushed that things were cobbled together by teacher trainers working in isolation from one another – all having to take their own university criteria, structures and credit ratings into account. (Lucas, *et al.*, 2012, p.693)

This was further compounded by the fact that the qualifications were also

accredited by nine awarding bodies.

The qualifications were indeed simplified, and now consist of the Level 3 Award in Education and Training, the Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training and the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training. From my perspective, the Level 3 Award is still seen as a desirable option by many employers. This is supported by the number of trainees who undertake the course, and are, in my experience, funded by their employer. The fees are significantly lower than undertaking the Certificate in Education/PGCE. The cost is in the region of £450. College A still delivers the course, although numbers have dropped to approximately 40 per year. The biggest decrease has been in the demand for the Level 4 Certificate (formerly CTLLS). A steady decline in applications has resulted in this course no longer recruiting sufficient numbers at College A and therefore the course has been withdrawn from the prospectus.

At the time of the Lingfield interim review, it was reported that only a small number of lecturers have become fully qualified, with 85% of lecturers within the FE sector still to embark upon the professional formation stage leading to the conferment of QTLS. The five years allowed for this final stage was described to the review panel as "a let-out clause allowing significant numbers of lecturers to be working towards qualification for a number of years. The implication was that 'working towards' would, for many, be a permanent state" (BIS, 2012).

At the same time, March 2012 also saw the publication of the Evaluation of FE Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007 by BIS (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills). This report was commissioned to assess whether the Regulations were achieving their aims and objectives, if there were any added benefits or barriers, and to identify good practice. In comparison to the Interim Report, it identified encouraging progress as a result of them. There was considerable anger and frustration in the FE sector as this report, published almost simultaneously with the Lingfield Review showed significant differences and findings. There did not appear to be any compatibility or common ground, indeed the findings are contradictory in

many areas.

This report found that the introduction of the 2007 Regulations had been positive for the FE sector, with an increased number of teaching staff embarking on ITT qualifications, even those who had been employed prior to 2007. One of the biggest benefits reported was the introduction of the PTLLS qualification, as it introduced a minimum level of competence. As such, it enabled new staff to quickly gain the basics in key teaching skills such as lesson planning, writing schemes of work and how to meet different learning preferences. One of the benefits highlighted by the report is simply that the qualification is perceived by staff themselves to be useful, and that

> having A/QTLS is widely considered to be important in terms of achieving parity with schools. Having an equivalent to the QTS status is considered by providers to give a clear message that the professionalism of FE providers is on a par with that of schools (DfBIS, 2012, p.9).

In my experience this equivalency is significant. Many of my trainees work in schools or sixth form colleges, and even though they have gained a full teaching qualification, there is still misunderstanding in relation to a Certificate in Education or PGCE gained in the lifelong learning sector. I often have to explain to Heads within the maintained sector that QTLS and QTS are equivalent. Those who achieve a teaching qualification and work in an FE college generally do not apply for QTLS. Those who work in schools do. This would seem to support the notion that professionalism is related to status, the conference of Qualified Teaching in the Learning and Skills Sector is held in higher regard than simply having a teaching qualification, albeit a widely recognised one.

The Final Report of the Independent Review Panel on Professionalism in Further Education was published in October 2012, after a period of consultation with many FE training providers and government agencies including Ofsted and representative bodies, as well as individual members of the public (BIS 2012). The recommendations were that the 2007 Regulations should be revoked with largely discretionary advice to employers on appropriate qualifications for staff and continuing professional development

replacing compulsion. The 2007 qualifications should be replaced by a simplified system consisting of an Award, a Certificate and a Diploma, the latter being at level 7 "to help form the capabilities of those who aspire to the highest professional levels" (BIS, 2012). This focus on aspiration from an individual point of view is seen by many as a downfall of the new regulations. The dichotomy between "traditional" definitions of professionalism and the revocation of the 2007 regulations poses something of a dilemma. This is further exacerbated by the increased governmental control which has been a key feature of the last two decades, and a further challenge is that of the cost of undertaking ITT. Tuition fees are increasing, and although student finance is available, and is not means tested, for many the thought of taking out a student loan is not an option.

Whilst some may wish to gain a higher level teaching qualification, if employers do not require it of their staff, are trainees likely to wonder whether it is worth the time and expense to gain a teaching qualification? The issue of cost is likely to be significant if HE fees continue at the current level. Based on my own experience, this is certainly true. The following table details the number of trainees embarking on ITT and the cost per year.

Year	Number of new trainees starting ITT at College A	Tuition fees per year
2012/13	32	£2,900
2013/14	17	£3,000
2014/15	14	£3,150
2015/16	15	£3,280
2016/17	22	£3,380
2017/18	15	£3,475

Those undertaking ITT within the FE sector are usually older than those undertaking primary or secondary teacher training. Therefore they are more likely to have greater financial commitments such as a mortgage or a family. Those undertaking the PGCE have, in most cases, already taken out a student loan in order to pay for their first degree, and some are, therefore unwilling to add more debt to this. As such many trainees, whether undertaking the Certificate in Education or the PGCE are less likely to want to take out a student loan, and the revocation of the regulations means that employers can choose whether a teaching qualification is a mandatory requirement for its staff. Since the regulations were revoked, there has been a significant decline in the number of trainees being supported financially by their own organisations. Eight of those who enrolled onto the ITT course in 2016/17 are all employed by College A, and all were employed on contracts which required them to gain a full teaching qualification within 3 years of starting employment. As a result all of these are fully funded. By contrast, there is only one member of College A staff in the 2017/18 cohort, and she is paying the fees herself. She has chosen to pay in instalments, and have these taken directly from her wage rather than take out a student loan. She is a PGCE trainee, and already paying back her student loan accrued whilst undertaking her degree.

LLUK ceased to operate as a Sector Skills Council on 31 March 2011. Many of its responsibilities transferred to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), but there is no longer a formal Sector Skills Council for the FE sector. One of the key recommendations inherent in the Lingfield Review was that there should be an FE Guild to become

> the co-ordinating awarding organisation for students' qualifications in the sector, specifically considering the reduction of their sometimes bewildering profusion: establishing 'benchmark' awards comparable in their simplicity and breadth of recognition with university degrees; and driving cost-efficiencies – working with the national awarding bodies to achieve these ends. (BIS, 2012)

John Hayes, the Minister described his intention as follows:

> I am inviting sector employers, with employees, to take ownership and put in place – over the coming year – an alternative approach (to

supporting and promoting professionalism in the sector) based on consensus and a shared aspiration to promote the highest standards. (BIS, 2012)

The original proposal to form a Guild was made by Ministers in 2011. The Independent Review Panel on Professionalism in Further Education, led by Lord Lingfield, endorsed the concept and described how it would enhance the status of the Learning and Skills sector by providing a single body to set professional standards and codes of behaviour, as well as developing teaching qualifications (BIS, 2012).

The proposed FE Guild quickly changed its name and become the Education and Training Foundation, a response to a consultation which saw over 60% of those consulted believing the name to be too restrictive. The inclusion of FE in the name was not seen as representative of the sector as a whole, and the term guild deemed as too traditional. The new Foundation came into being on 1st August 2013. It is charged with being an employer-led partnership and providing a focal point for all FE and Skills sector interests in taking forward the professionalism flowing from the Lingfield Review.

The key functions of the Foundation include acting as an overarching body with end to end responsibility for professionalism and vocational education across the sector. These include developing its own professional standards and codes of behaviour for members, developing appropriate qualifications for people working in the sector through which people can progress, supporting individual, subject specific and corporate CPD, and working at a strategic level to help bring in expertise across the sector and finally to support employer recognition of professionalism. Membership is on a voluntary basis. The role of the ETF is

> to support the continuing transformation of our technical and vocational education system by ensuring the sector has world-class leaders, teachers and trainers. In turn, this leads to ever-improving learner outcomes, provides a better skilled workforce for employers and creates a stronger economy, country and society. (ETF, 2013)

The ETF has four main aims which are:

- To raise the quality and professionalism of teachers and trainers

across the FE and training sector.

- To deliver consistently excellent outcomes for learners and employers.
- To support Colleges and training providers of all types in achieving their own improvement objectives.
- To promote this vibrant sector to employers and national influencers, and raise awareness of its vital role in rebalancing the economy.

One of the main challenges for the ETF was to produce a new set of professional standards, which it did in May 2014. These came about as a result of direct consultation, interviews and online surveys with approximately 1,000 professionals working across the FE sector. I was involved in one of the consultation events, as were many of my fellow teacher educators across the Consortium. I felt it was important, as a professional to have a voice in the development of these. The resulting standards have been described by Helen Pettifor, Foundation Director of Professional Standards and Workforce Development as

> a major milestone for our sector. By working with the whole sector to establish a consistent benchmark as to what constitutes effective practice, we have produced an aspirational set of standards that both unite the sector in the drive for professionalism and excellence, but succeed in being flexible enough to be fully relevant and applicable to whatever part of the sector you're teaching in. (Pettifor, 2014)

The professional standards have been separated into three areas, values and attributes, knowledge and understanding, and skills. There was a deliberate intention to make the standards as clear and concise as possible, in direct contrast to those of 2007. Dr Jean Kelly, chief executive of the Institute for Learning said

> Presented simply on a single sheet of A4 paper under three headings, the standards summarise the expectations that teachers and trainers set for themselves. Rather than being prescriptive, they offer a framework for teachers and trainers to evaluate and develop their practice, collaborating and sharing with peers. The standards provide an excellent foundation for professional conversations about learning and development, and recognise the value of teachers and trainers being able to use their judgment and exercise professional autonomy, to ensure the best outcomes for learners. (Kelly, 2014)

The following timeline summarises the main reforms which have taken place within further education teacher training over the past two decades:

1997-99   DfES consultation on introduction of standards and qualifications for FE teachers

1999   FENTO is formed and national standards are published for teaching

2001   Statutory Instrument requires all new teachers to gain a teaching qualification based upon the approved FENTO standards
            Ofsted given the responsibility for inspection

2003   National survey on the Initial Training of Further Education Teachers was published by HMI, DfES consulted on future reforms

2004   DfES published Equipping our teachers for the future

2005   FENTO is replaced by Lifelong Learning UK and Standards and Verification UK

2006   Publication of LLUK standards for teacher, trainers and tutors in the Learning and Skills Sector
            DfES publish Professionalisation of the learning and skills sector which announced plans for all FE teachers to undertake compulsory CPD

2007   LLUK mandatory units of assessment for initial teaching qualifications are published
            Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) introduces the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations. QTLS is also introduced along with a compulsory CPD requirement

2008   Reforms are implemented, ITT providers go through SVUK endorsement and teach ITT qualifications based on the new standards and assessment units

2011   Publication of the Review of Vocational Education – The Wolf Review. This recommended parity between QTS and QTLS so that FE teachers could teach in schools

2011   LLUK ceased to operate as a sector skills council, many of the responsibilities transferred to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

2012   Professionalism in further education review: interim report was published in March

2012	Evaluation of FE Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007 was published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
2012	IfL confirms that it will return to its roots and again operate as a voluntary, professional membership organisation
2012	IfL members with QTLS status are recognised in law as qualified to teach in schools on equal pay and conditions
2012	Final Report of the Independent Review Panel on Professionalism in Further Education was published in October
2013	Government regulations requiring all teachers in FE and skills to obtain a teaching qualification are revoked
2013	The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) was established in October 2013
2014	The Education and Training Foundation publishes new professional standards for teachers and trainers in further education and skills
2014	IfL remained open and continued to operate as a professional body until the transfer of its legacy was complete on 31 October 2014

As the historical timeline has already shown, there have been numerous recent attempts to professionalise teachers by the imposition of national standards and regulations. Friedson (2001) suggests that professionalism is being re-defined and extended as a means of securing compliance with management requirements. This was certainly borne out in my research at College A. The requirement for all teaching staff to have a teaching qualification changed during the lifespan of this study. In doing so, this called into question whether undertaking ITT makes a professional workforce. The senior management team have enforced compliance with undertaking a non accredited internally devised Programme of Excellence. This is mandatory for all new members of teaching staff, regardless of whether they have completed ITT or not. The Senior Management Team feel that this will ensure professionalism in line with the College Code of Conduct and organisational policies and procedures. In doing so, they have redefined professionalism and sought alternative means of seeking compliance. New members of staff will

not be signed off their probationary period until the first and second phases of the Programme of Excellence have been successfully completed.

This focus on standards is something which my research identified as a key theme, and which will be explored in more detail in the data analysis chapter.

The meaning of professionalism is complex and hard to define. The debate about its meaning is based on assumptions and inconsistencies (Friedson, 1994). The trait and functionalist approaches offer a set of characteristics which can be applied to the FE sector, for example the skill based on systematic theory which tests and limits entry to the profession (Greenwood, 1957; Millerson, 1964; Sims, Fineman and Gabriel, 1993). In contrast, the functionalist approach emphasises the interactions between professions and society (Johnson, 1972) therefore assuming that the professions can use their power and control in order to ensure their position within society. This was certainly not borne out by my research. The trainees highlighted both a lack of power and autonomy within the FE sector. This can be closely linked to both Old and New Professionalism. The former stems from the assumption that those working within a profession are trusted by society and committed to their field (Mikkelson, 2013). By contrast New Professionalism contends that individual performance should be monitored to ensure both regulatory standards and targets are met. Hoyle and John (1995) and Carr (2000) argue that this professional judgement and knowledge is aligned, not only to the individual practice of the FE teacher, but instrumental in terms of their relationship with others, both peers and students. This forms one of ten characteristics offered by Crawley (2015) who suggests that an FE professional has a responsibility to work with other professionals and the wider community. This ties in with the notion of triple professionalism advocated by Spours and Hodgson (2013) and the democratic professionalism which Taubman (2015) says needs to support alliances between the educational professional, members of the organsiation in which they work as well as other stakeholders. This is very different to the managerialist approach which is characterised by "top-down regulation and compliance" (Taubman, 2015).

One of the defining features of both professionalism and ITT courses in FE is the necessity for the trainees to be qualified in their own subject specialism. Entering FE as a subject professional has traditionally been seen as sufficient for entering into a career in teaching, therefore subject knowledge was placed above pedagogy (Lucas, 1996; Chappell 1999). Dual professionalism (LSIS, 2012) comprises two equally important elements, up-to-date subject knowledge and sound teaching skills. My research supports this, my trainees were confident in their own specialist subject knowledge, what they did not have confidence in was the ability to teach it to others. They did not, therefore identify themselves as dual professionals.

The FE sector was, until the late 1990's subject to relatively little regulation due to it being predominately vocationally based. Vocational subject knowledge was more important than knowledge of how to teach (Green and Lucas, 1999; Harkin, 2005). The Cinderella Sector (Randle and Brady, 1997) was largely ignored until the New Labour Government came into power in 1997 and prioritised the need for all new FE teachers to gain a teaching qualification. Both the Fryer and Kennedy Reports in 1997 identified the need for a coherent and nationally recognised ITT course for FE teachers based on a set of standards. The resulting FENTO Standards were published in 1997. This standardisation of professional qualifications (Tummons, 2010) was supposed to ensure a high quality FE teaching workforce (DfEE, 1998). However a HMI inspection in 2003 proved otherwise and led to the abolishment of FENTO in 2005 following the publication of Equipping our Teachers for the Future (DfES, 2004). FENTO was replaced by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) who produced a new set of ITT qualifications, a new set of standards, and the introduction of a new recognised status for FE teachers, Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS). Teachers had to be a member of the Institute for Learning (IfL), maintain their registration and complete and record an annual record of CPD. Initially IfL was funded by the state, but after three years this funding was withdrawn and had to become self financing. Many teachers refused to pay their membership and were in breach of contract. This was a contributing factor towards the Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning commissioning a review into

professionalism within the sector. The review concluded that the attempts to impose professionalism on the sector had failed (BIS, 2012) and that a small number of lecturers within the sector had achieved QTLS. However the review was published at the same time as the Evaluation of FE Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007 by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, which showed this to be untrue.

Despite the contradictory findings, the Final Report of the Independent Review Panel on Professionalism in Further Education was published in October 2012 and subsequently the 2007 Regulations were revoked. Employers now have the freedom to determine appropriate teaching qualifications for their own staff. LLUK ceased to operate, there is no longer a Sector Skills Council for the FE sector. There is, however, an Education and Training Foundation which has produced its own professional standards and has responsibility for professionalism across the FE sector. Membership is on a voluntary basis. My research explores the notion of professionalism, and clearly indicates that adherence to a set of standards is a pivotal element of helping trainee teachers define themselves as professionals. What is less clear cut is to what particular set of standards they align themselves to.

2.4 Conclusion

This literature review has clearly demonstrated that there has been an intense period of political intervention in the FE sector, and that the Labour Government imposition of national standards aimed at professionalising the teachers working within the sector was rejected under the Coalition Government. They maintained that professionalism should be the responsibility of the management and teachers within institutions. This position remains unchanged under the Conservative Party. The aim of my research is to consider how these changes have impacted, both on the senior management team within my own institution, and fundamentally those teachers currently undertaking Initial Teacher Training, and how, or indeed if, they consider themselves to be professional. It is evident from reviewing the literature that there are numerous and conflicting definitions of the term professional, and that the FE sector is unique in both its entry route and its

concept of dual professionalism. As such, I would agree that "professionalism is a shifting rather than a concrete phenomenon" (Hanlon,1998, p.45), and I will explore these fundamental issues in more detail in Chapter Four. I will analyse how my research supports or challenges the ideas discussed in this literature review by examining the perceptions of trainee teachers, and their journeys into a career as an FE teacher.

The difficulties in defining professionalism, and the different approaches from the 1950's onwards are, I would argue, particularly pertinent to my research as they are bound within the political arena, and the changing landscape of FE. They are still relevant today, and it is evident from reviewing much of the available literature, that there is still no one encompassing definition. By interviewing current initial teacher training trainees, I hope to be able to ascertain how they would define themselves and their own views of professionalism.

> The shift, in anthropological ethics, from professionalism to audit is yet another instance of the swing of the liberal pendulum from a romantic primacy of the ethical to a utilitarian primacy of the economic. (Pels, 2000, p.148)

In recent times professional has come to be synonymous with paid activity rather than voluntary work, the increased rise in the term can be reflected in such occupations as professional footballer. This supports the view of Baggini (2005) that to be a professor or a professional is to be an expert in some skill or field of knowledge and comes from the Latin roots of profess.

Both Robson (1998) and (Orr and Simmons, 2010) carried out research which confirmed that trainee teachers who have been working for a number of years in a vocational profession identity with that first and foremost, they cannot locate themselves as either being or becoming a teacher in FE. Clow (2001) develops this argument further citing that trainees' knowledge extends to what they know as a profession, but that the knowledge of teaching and learning may be negligible.

As this chapter has shown, there are all manner of understandings of professionalism. My research will navigate its way through these, reflecting on

the ways in which they are helpful in understanding the perspectives of my participants.

Chapter Three: Methodology and conduct of the research

3.1 Introduction

Following on from the literature review, primary research was undertaken to fulfill the aims of the study. The research participants were 45 trainee teachers all undertaking ITT at College A. College A is situated in the north of England, and offers a range of courses from pre-entry level through to Higher Education and professional courses to over 7,000 students. The trainees were all in the second year of a two year part-time in-service course, and were a mixture of Certificate in Education and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education trainees. I also interviewed senior managers from College A at the start of my research. I then carried out a further interview once the College changed its position in relation to the requirement for unqualified staff to gain a teaching qualification which occurred towards the end of this study.

This chapter begins by discussing the research approach I adopted and the justification for this approach. I will then discuss the data collection methods, sampling considerations and engage in a discussion of the ethical issues. Finally, I will move on to the data analysis and explain how and why I chose a thematic approach.

The aim of the thesis, as discussed in Chapter 1, was to conduct a qualitative case study of trainee teachers undertaking Initial Teacher Training in order to:

- Develop an understanding of what professionalism means to trainee teachers, and whether they would choose to undertake a teaching qualification in the light of the revocation of the Regulations.
- Develop an insight into why my own organisation (College A) still required its own staff to gain a full teaching qualification after the revocation, but then in June 2017 changed so that a teaching requirement is now desirable rather than mandatory for unqualified teaching staff.

3.2 The research questions

My research question was "what does professionalism mean to trainee teachers within Further Education", although it took many revisions to arrive at this point. This was partly driven by my own desire to understand what drives trainees to undertake initial teacher training, particularly in the current political climate, and also the literature review revealed many and varied definitions of professionalism. I wanted to understand the concept of professionalism from both the perspective of individual trainees, and also from the senior managers within my own organisation. The revocation of the 2007 reforms places the responsibility for determining appropriate qualifications at the door of employers. They decide what teaching qualifications staff should have, the mandatory requirement for all FE teachers to be qualified no longer exists.

As such, I began to design my questions by revisiting the literature review, and identifying the main themes. The two main areas I wanted to address were what the term professional means to trainee teachers, and whether the requirement to undertake mandatory teacher training contributes to the notion of professionalism. These resulted from the many and varied definitions of profession, professional and professionalism, and also the conflicting opinions on whether the 2007 regulations had raised the status of FE teachers, and whether, therefore, their revocation would deprofessionalise the sector. As such the questions I asked were:

- How long have you been teaching for?
- What is your understanding of the term professional? Please could you explain what the term professional means to you?
- Why did you undertake your Initial Teacher Training qualification?
- Do you consider yourself to be professional? Please could you explain why/why not?
- Does the requirement to have a teaching qualification make someone professional? Why do you think this is/is not the case?
- Would you have undertaken this qualification if it wasn't mandatory? If so, why?

These were administered by means of a questionnaire. The questions were then developed and extended for the semi structured interview stage.

3.3 The research design – the interpretivist paradigm and a qualitative approach

In its simplest form, ontology is concerned with the nature of being, it is "an understanding of how the world exists" (Burton and Bartlett, 2009 p.16) According to (Wellington, 2000, p.199), ontology can be defined as "the study or theory of 'what is', i.e. the characteristics of reality". Bryman (2004, p.3) summarises the basic ontological issues as "whether the social world is regarded as something external to social actors or as something that people are in the process of fashioning". A person will adopt a particular ontological viewpoint, depending on whether they see social reality as eternal and objective, or socially constructed and subjective.

Epistemology is "the theory of knowledge" (Benton and Craib, 2001), and the view that researchers have about the way in which knowledge is created will influence and ultimately determine the way in which research is carried out. A researcher who adopts a positivist approach contends that the social world exists in the same way as the natural world (Yates, 2004, Evans and King 2006). As such, society can be investigated in the same objective way, human behaviour is predictable and can be easily observed and measured. According to Wellington (2000) positivists believe that knowledge is objective, value free, generalisable and independent of the knower. As such, the data collection methods associated with the positivist approach are those which produce data that can be quantified and tested. Examples of these include observations, surveys and structured interviews.

By contrast, the interpretivist paradigm stems from a belief that there is no single reality; rather than something that can be observed, it is something which is interpreted. This is because the social world is created by the interactions of the individuals within it. This means therefore that there are multiple realities, the role of the interpretivist researcher is to understand these interactions.

Interpretive studies assume that people create and associate their own subjective and intersubjective meanings as they interact with the world around them. Interpretive researchers thus attempt to understand phenomena through accessing the meanings participants assign to them (Orlikowski and Baroudi 1991).

This piece of research was born as a result of the government shift in the regulation of FE teachers, and I believe that the best way to reconcile this shift with trainee teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals was to align myself with an interpretivist stance. I was particularly interested in how the trainees constructed their own professional identity, and what life experiences had led them to undertake Initial Teacher Education. As such I was interpreting the trainees' perceptions of themselves as professionals, I was interpreting *their* data rather than my own values and beliefs about what I consider the term to mean.

Having acknowledged that there are a plethora of different definitions of professional and professionalism, it seemed impossible to engage with anything other than an interpretivist approach. I wanted to investigate the meanings assigned by the trainee teachers from their own viewpoint. I was interested in how the experiences of the trainees had impacted on their own perceptions of what it means to be a professional. For example some did not align their perceptions to the role of a teacher, but rather a way of behaving or adhering to a code of conduct. This view is echoed by Walsham cited in Guest, *et al*. (1993, p.5) that

interpretive methods of research start from the position that our knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors and that this applies equally to researchers. Thus there is no objective reality which can be discovered by researchers and replicated by others, in contrast to the assumptions of positivist science.

As such my research design is exploratory, which is, as defined by Bell and Waters (2014), research that enables a culture to be understood. In this particular study, the culture in question is that of a trainee teacher undertaking ITT within the lifelong learning sector.

I want to examine and interrogate the trainees' perceptions of the term professional and their reasons for embarking on a mandatory teacher training course. My research is qualitative in nature and "qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.8).

The quote from Denzin and Lincoln is particularly apt with its focus on the socially constructed reality. For the purpose of this study, that reality was a decision made by the trainees to undertake ITT, and whether this contributed to their views of themselves as professionals. They were making a decision to become a qualified teacher, and I wanted to develop my relationship with them to understand their reasons for this against a backdrop of political deregulation. I had already formed a relationship with the trainees, all were known to me for a period of at least 18 months, and I was privileged to have been a part of their academic and professional journey. Part of the ITT programme consists of regular tutorials, and therefore I was used to engaging in dialogue with them on a one to one basis, approximately one every half term. This meant, therefore, that there was already an ease and understanding on my part, and whilst still acknowledging that I was a researcher, I felt that there was already a level of intimacy between myself and my participants. We were already in a relationship.

A qualitative approach would therefore enable me to gain

> the insider's perspective, the 'actor's definition of the situation', the meanings people attach to things and events. This means they can be used to study the lived experiences of people, including people's meanings and purposes (Punch and Oancea, 2014, p.344).

I fundamentally wanted to engage with the trainees and to seek their reasons for undertaking Initial Teacher Training, and as such the research approach I have adopted is qualitative, and was chosen since the methods associated with a qualitative study reflect an interpretivist tradition. An interpretive approach is appropriate for my area of study as a methodology that "…seeks to understand human behaviour and the social processes that we engage in

and allows interpretation in natural settings" (Gerrish and Lacey, 2006, p.158). The goal of interpretivist research is to understand and interpret human behaviour rather than to generalise and predict causes and effects. For an interpretivist researcher it is important to understand motives, meanings, reasons and other subjective experiences which are time and context bound (Hudson and Ozanne 1988). I have not sought to explain the ways in which professionalism works, but rather to understand the perceptions of trainee teachers. This is a fundamental difference between the interpretivist paradigm and that of positivism, interpretivism is concerned with understanding rather than seeking an explanation.

> Teacher learning ... involves the complex interrelationship between individual careers and dispositions to learning, the cultures of school and department, and the broader social, economic, political and above all, policy contexts in which teachers are currently working and have worked in the past. (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2001, p8)

This quote resonated with me for a number of reasons. Firstly, as detailed in the introductory chapter, there have been a number of significant life events which have influenced my career to date, and my own particular journey to becoming a teacher educator has been affected by both personal and political interventions. I never envisaged myself becoming a teacher, let alone a teacher educator. Were it not for the introduction of the 2007 Regulations, I doubt very much I would have become one.

My research shows that the reasons for my trainees undertaking ITT are numerous and complex. For some, it was simply a natural progression to become a teacher, but a choice that was not available earlier in their lives. This was, for some, down to confidence or academic ability. For others it was, as in the case of Tim, a desire to prove himself and to compete with others in order to secure promotion. Teacher learning is contextualised by everything from the individual dispositions of trainees to governmental policy. My research aims to understand these reasons.

3.4 Case study

Johnson and Christensen (2008) describe case study research simply as "research that provides a detailed account and analysis of one or more cases" (p.406). I had always intended to undertake semi structured interviews with six trainees. Transcribing these and analysing the data provided me with detailed and personal life histories. Rowley (2002) argued that case studies support detailed study of areas of investigation needing to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions. One of the main aims of my research is to understand the perceptions trainee teachers have of themselves as professionals, and whether they consider a teaching qualification is necessary and contributes towards this professionalism. I therefore needed to engage with a methodology that would enable me to understand the unique experiences and perceptions of trainee teachers. In my research, I identified the 'how' as how have the trainees identified themselves as professional; what does this mean to them? Is it related to their role as a teacher, or in relation to their subject specialism? How do they locate themselves, as a teacher or, in the case of Harriet, a hairdresser first and foremost? The 'why' relates to their decisions to undertake ITT, why did my trainees come to be undertaking ITT in the first place? Was this a long held career goal, or simply a response to circumstantial events as evidenced by Daniel?

Tummons and Duckworth (2012, p.9) describe the case study as "an investigation of a particular case, single issue". Yin (2003) believes that this method of research has merit, although some have criticised it as being insufficiently precise or rigorous. I did not seek to test a hypothesis, I was not aiming to seek a solution to a problem, but rather to understand a phenomenon as experienced by my trainees and College A. As this is a small scale study which is being undertaken in a relatively short period of time, it is a case of "best fit" (Tummons and Duckworth, 2012, p.39), as a case study "retains the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin, 2003, p.2) and catches the "dynamics of unfolding situations" (Cohen *et al*., 2009, p.262). Yin (2009) stated that a case study approach was appropriate when a researcher wanted to "understand a real life phenomenon in depth" (p.18). Yandell and Turvey (2007, p.81) cite a case study as an appropriate

research methodology to adopt as it "shows a strong sense of time and place; they represent a commitment to the overwhelming significance of localised experience". This emphasis on localised experience was particularly apt when College A changed its stance during 2017 and now no longer requires or supports its staff to gain a teaching qualification. I therefore concur with Stake (1995) who suggests that it is the need to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of a situation, of the embedding and interaction with contexts that creates circumstances appropriate to case study research. Yin (1994) echoes this view:

> You would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study. (p13)

Case studies can be categorised into three different types according to Stake (1994), these being intrinsic, instrumental and collective. The first is generally undertaken by a researcher wishing to gain a better understanding of a particular case, the second examines a particular case thereby hoping to give an insight or refine a theory. The latter allows the initial case to be extended to cover several more cases. This piece of research is an intrinsic case study as I want to gain a better understanding from both a trainee teacher and the perspective of College A.

3.5 Sampling

The research was initially planned for a five month period between January and May 2014. This period was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, the trainees had already completed one module and therefore in terms of deadlines and workload, participating in my research would not be too onerous. Secondly, there was more opportunity within the taught sessions at College A to allow for completion of the questionnaires. I wanted to secure as high a response rate as possible, and felt allowing time in class would maximise the number of responses. I was very aware that the trainees were not only studying, but working too, some were volunteer teachers and therefore had a number of

different roles making demands on their time. I did not want my research to add further stress.

The case study sample consisted of a group of 45 trainee teachers, all of whom were known to me. As I currently hold the position of Centre Manager for Teacher Education, I teach the In-service Certificate and Professional Graduate Certificate in Education courses, and therefore I have access to the trainee teachers on these courses. I sent out questionnaires to all the final year trainees, this was a deliberate decision as these trainees had all embarked on the course prior to the deregulation of the 2007 regulations, and I wanted to canvas opinion as to whether the trainees would still have undertaken the qualification if the regulations had been revoked at the start of their course. I did consider sending out questionnaires by email, but I was less likely to get as many responses, the trainees receive a large number of emails both from College A and the Consortium. I therefore felt that a face to face explanation of the purpose, combined with allowing class time for completion would be more beneficial in terms of gaining responses.

This sampling strategy cannot be generalisable to a wider population because as Bryman (2008) suggests this sample would be considered as a group who are conveniently available to me. Convenience sampling is "a process of selecting subjects or units for examination and analysis that is based on accessibility, ease, speed, and low cost. Units are not purposefully or strategically selected." As previously mentioned, these trainees were attending college A, and therefore I did not have to worry about either accessibility or cost. By administering the questionnaire in class, I was able to guarantee a high return and could then start to analyse the data more quickly, as well as selecting the most suitable participants for the follow-up interviews.

For my research, I conducted semi structured interviews with 6 volunteers, although I did employ purposive sampling, but that was to gain a broad spectrum of experiences and opinions. These are purposive samples as the participants were "selected with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose reflects the particular qualities of the people or events chosen and their relevance to the topic of the investigation" (Denscombe, 2007, p.17), for

example, I did not want to have all 6 interviewees who worked for my own organisation. I also wanted to select a mixture of ages, and differences in the number of years teaching experience the participants had. I was overwhelmed by the number of trainees who volunteered to take part in the interviews, and found it quite challenging to select those to take forward to the interview stage. I limited myself to six as I wanted to obtain detailed qualitative data.

My rationale for the final six was an even number of male and female trainees to try and avoid gender bias, and as mentioned above, I did not want all six to work in FE colleges. I also wanted to see if there were any differences between those studying for the Certificate in Education compared to those studying for the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education, as well as the range of teaching experiences. I wanted as broad a sample as possible, whilst still being mindful that this was a small scale study. The final selection is detailed below:

Trainee	Number of years teaching experience	Job role	Studying for	Type of organisation
John	One	Full time Lecturer teaching Functional English at College A	Certificate in Education	FE College
Kate	Three	Has worked for the Fire and Rescue Service since leaving University, however has recently gained promotion and now employed as a full time Trainer	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	Fire and Rescue Service
Tim	Three	Has recently gained a secondment to the Education Department within an NHS Trust. Has substantial experience having worked as a clinician for the last 14 years.	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	NHS Trust
Susan	One	First year as a paid teacher in an FE college (prior to this had worked as a learning support assistant for 8 years within the same organisation). Now teaches Care and Early Years.	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	FE College
Daniel	Two	Second year working for a private training provider as an NVQ assessor, employed predominantly as a Bodyshop Repair Specialist, but now mentors young people undertaking an apprenticeship.	Certificate in Education	Private training provider
Harriet	Two	Second year teaching level 2 and level 3 hairdressing at a national hairdressing academy.	Certificate in Education	Private training provider

The selection of the participants from the Senior Management Team (SMT) at College A was less successful, and in reality I was only able to interview a small number of staff. I sent out emails to the Principal, Vice Principal, Assistant Principal with responsibility for Quality as well as the Director of Human Resources and the Staff Development Manager, I only received acknowledgements from the Assistant Principal and the Staff Development Manager. Despite a follow up email and telephone call, I did not receive any acknowledgement from any of the others. Having two participants was not ideal, but I had no other option. As with the trainees, I interviewed them separately and transcribed the interviews afterwards.

When I needed to repeat the interviews after the situation at College A changed, I approached the same members of staff. By this stage, the Staff Development post had been made redundant, and was replaced by a new post of Head of Quality. This time she was the only person who responded to my request, but, as the founder of the Programme of Excellence she was an ideal person to interview. She has ultimate responsibility for devising, delivering and supervising the High Performance Advisors who have been employed primarily to take this initiative forward.

I felt a shift in my own feelings when carrying out the second round of interviews after College A changed its stance. They were I felt, likely to be contentious. I am obviously known to the Senior Managers having been an employee at the College since 2007. In my role as Centre Manager, I have a vested interest in wanting staff to be supported to gain a teaching qualification. There have been a number of trainees from College A since I was first employed, and although not a huge proportion, they do, on average form around 20% of the overall number of trainees. I was very conscious that I could potentially be viewed as a disgruntled employee rather than a researcher. From a personal perspective I felt the interview was more structured than semi-structured, and that the answers I was being given were very much a corporate view rather than a personal view.

3.6 Data collection

For this research, I intended to use two main data collection methods, questionnaires and semi structured interviews. My rationale for using questionnaires was that "the questions are standardised, anonymity can be assured, and questions can be written for specific purposes" (Opie, 2010, p.95). This may explain why questionnaires are used so often as a means of gaining information. A questionnaire of this kind can also represent quantitative data which is not always conversant with an interpretative approach, but "by including both quantitative and qualitative data, case study helps explain both the process and outcome of a phenomenon through complete observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under investigation" (Tellis, 1997). The only quantitative data I was interested in was the length of time my trainees had been in a teaching role. I wanted to see if there was any correlation between the amount of time they had been teaching and the perception of themselves as professionals. The analysis of this data will be explored in Chapter Four. A copy of my questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

I did find it quite difficult to devise my questions, I did not want the questionnaires to be too long, but I also did not want there to be any ambiguity. As discussed above, my first question was purely factual, and devised so that I could see if there was any correlation between length of time teaching and perceptions of professionalism. This was as a direct result of my own experiences as a teacher educator, many of those who undertook the qualifications when they were mandatory challenge the assumption that a teacher qualification contributes to their own professionalism. They equate length of time teaching to be more important than a teaching qualification. The remaining questions were a mixture of closed and open, and I hoped that by asking a closed question but then inviting clarification, I would invite participants to respond in their own language. However, I acknowledge that this can lead to both advantages and disadvantages, Opie (2004) believes that allowing participants to answer questions openly enables them to contribute their own personal experiences, but at the same time can cause issues for the researcher in terms of the additional time required to analyse

such data. This was certainly not a disadvantage to me, as an interpretivist, rich data was what I hoped to get and I was prepared to invest the necessary time and effort in analysing it. Geertz (1973) uses the term "thick descriptions" to describe the depth and richness in language or data.

Another disadvantage to using questionnaires (Opie 2004) is that the response rate can be less than other methods, and may require the researcher to issue reminders to boost the return rate. In my experience, the fact that these were self-adminstered questionnaires meant that they were easy to distribute, and because I gave them out in class, it was easy for me to explain the purpose and clarify understanding. This also guaranteed that I achieved a high response rate. I actually received 37 out of a possible 45.

The questions were intentionally generic and were never intended to be the sole data collection method, as I concur with Bell (1999) in the limitations of questionnaires being that they

> Can provide answers to the questions What? Where? When and How?, but it is not so easy to find out Why? Causal relationships can rarely if ever be proved by a questionnaire. The main emphasis is on fact-finding. (Bell, 1999, p.14)

As an interpretivist researcher I acknowledge that the use of questionnaires as a research method is more associated with the positivist paradigm. However, I felt that my use of questionnaires was justified. It afforded me "considerable advantages in administration – it presents an even stimulus, potentially to large numbers of people simultaneously, and provides the investigator with an easy (relatively easy) accumulation of data" (Walker 1985).

Having acknowledged that the questionnaires were useful, but had limitations, I then embarked upon the next stage of data collection which were follow up interviews. In its simplest sense, an interview is "a conversation with a purpose" (Webb and Webb, 1932) By contrast, Wellington (2008, p.72) believes that "the purpose of a research interview is to probe a respondent's views, perspectives or life history, ie the exchange should be far more in one direction than another. It is rather more than a conversation with a purpose".

The interviews took place at a time and location which was convenient for the participants, for the majority this was in my organisation prior to the start of the class, with the exception of one who asked if the interview could be conducted in her own work place immediately after I had carried out a teaching observation. I was mindful that this could potentially cause tension, my responsibility first and foremost was to provide immediate verbal feedback on the observation. Depending on the outcome of the observation, the trainee could be still processing this information at the time of interview, and therefore it could impact on the answers given.

For all the interviews, I was mindful of the need to find a quiet and private place which had wifi access, as I had chosen to record them using a digital voice recorder. I felt that this would allow me to fully engage with the interviewees without having to take written notes, and I assured them all at the start of the interview that I would delete the recordings at the end of the study, and that no identifying details would be kept. They were all given a Participant Information Sheet and a Participant Consent Form, copies of which are included in the appendices. I had downloaded the Dragon Dictation software on to my ipad, I believed this would eliminate the need for transcription. In reality, the use of this software proved somewhat challenging. For the first interview, it would not work at all and for a further two, the quality of the recording was not very good, for some reason it kept making reference to Star Wars! Rather than saving time, this actually made transcribing the interviews more time consuming than those which only relied on the digital voice recorder, and I would be cautious about using the software again. I was particular relieved that I had not relied on this as the only data collection instrument. I did not receive ethical approval from the University of Sheffield until July 2013 and the interviews took place between November and December 2013. This was initially later than planned, however I was conscious that the interviewees had several deadlines for their coursework, and did not want to impact on these. I was also mindful of the forthcoming Christmas holidays, as I knew that having two weeks annual leave would afford me the time to transcribe the interviews, and I wanted to transcribe them whilst they were still fresh in my mind.

Each interview lasted between thirty minutes and an hour, and in practice many of the questions were not asked directly. This was not always intentional, I found that the majority of the interviewees, once the initial questions had been asked, were likely to address the remainder with gentle prompting. As such, the answers tended to arise naturally from the conversation. Tuckman cited in Cohen *et al.* (2000, p.268) describes the research interview as:

> providing access to what is 'inside a person's head, [the interview] makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

My intention was not to measure in a positivist sense, but rather to yield qualitative data responses to a series of questions. The interview schedule has been included in the appendix.

The interview style adopted was semi-structured as defined by Hitchcock and Hughes (1995). They consider that this style of interview enables the interviewer to probe and expand on meaning once the respondent has answered initial basic questions. The participants in my study were asked the same major questions but opportunity was available to explore responses so that each interviewee had a unique experience. The aim was to enable participants to tell their own stories even though I had in mind a list of issues that I wished to raise, a technique proposed by Stake (1995).

The interviews were semi-structured, and although I had an interview schedule prepared in advance, I was conscious that I was actually carrying out biographical research which "enquires into the way that people make sense of their lives through the collection, analysis and representation of data about individual experiences of life " (Tedder, 2012, p.322, cited in Arthur *et al.*). For me this was an essential element of my research as I was more interested in meaning and how the interviewees could describe themselves, their actions and their interactions with others. This enabled me to address the research question which was what professionalism means to trainee teachers within the FE sector. In its simplest sense, I was drawing on what is

described by Goodson and Sikes (2001) as a life story, which might be conceived as a simple narrative, a personal reconstruction of what an individual considers significant about his or her own life. A life history or biographical methodology can be defined as

> a self willed, 'autopoietic' accomplishment on the part of active subjects, in which they reflexively 'organise' their experience in such a way that they also generate personal coherence, identity, a meaning to their life history and a communicable, socially viable life world perspective for guiding their actions (Alheit, 2005, p.209).

As such, "the interviewing process becomes less a conduit of information from informant to researchers that represent how things are, and more a sea swell of meaning making" (Ellis and Berger, 2002, p.853).

Atkinson (1998) contends that the life story interview provides a practical and holistic methodological approach for the sensitive collection of personal narratives that reveal how a specific human life is constructed. This is supported by Clandinin (2007, p.224) that life histories "can be examined through the lens of any theory or research question applied to it". This was particularly suitable for my research as I was enquiring into the ways that the trainees described and understood themselves in relation to professionalism. I was engaging in biographical research which can, according to Denzin (1989) be either an 'oral history', 'life history' or 'personal history'. The former can, he says, be obtained through an interview or conversation, the latter builds on the former to construct a written account of a person's life. Goodson and Sikes (2001) further propose a distinction between a 'life story' and a 'life history'. The first is when a person reconstructs what they feel is significant about their own life. A life history develops this further by interpreting these events, and can be co-constructed by the participant and the researcher, or the researcher can do this alone. In such a way the narrative becomes contextualised and theorised, and becomes a history rather than a story. Whichever is used the account cannot be treated as an objective account, but rather the experiences are interpreted and contextualised to represent what Goodson and Sikes (2001) define as "a partial selective commentary on lived experience". This was entirely appropriate for my research as I was inviting

the trainees to offer their own account of the reasons for undertaking ITT, and how or whether this affected their perceptions of themselves as professionals.

I found the interviews challenging for a number of reasons, and was particularly thankful that I had recorded them. Each one was very different to the next, two in particular were very emotional. I almost felt as if I was listening to a monologue. Daniel, for example, became tearful when recounting his academic journey and career prior to embarking on ITT. I actually only asked him how he came to be on the Certificate in Education course, and from that first question, the rest of the conversation flowed. Following on from the sea analogy used previously, I was then able to interpret his meaning. Tim was another who became emotional, but for him it felt as if he was bitter and resentful about the path he found himself on. He felt that he had let his parents down, and that he was having to prove himself in order to gain promotion.

3.7 Positionality

As mentioned previously, I am currently the Centre Manager for Initial Teacher Training within College A, and therefore am known to all of the trainees, although I am not the personal tutor to all of them. The college adopts a co-tutoring policy, so that each trainee has two course tutors, but only one of them has a personal tutor role. This policy has enabled trainees to have access to different teaching styles, but by having one personal tutor to carry out tutorials and mark written work, the trainees have the opportunity to develop a strong professional relationship with that particular teacher educator.

I felt this was important, even though some of the research participants were my personal tutees, they did have access to another teacher educator, and therefore I was not seen to be showing favouritism by only interviewing my own personal tutees. This brings into consideration the issue of social power, the trainees were in a position to say no, there was no pressure to take part, although I do acknowledge that trainees could have felt under jurisdiction to take part. It is impossible to ignore the fact that they were trainees, and

therefore I was carrying out research with trainees whom I teach. I was particular mindful of the ethical considerations involved in educational research as a whole and will discuss these in relation to my particular research in the next section.

My positionality was something I was particularly conscious of when I interviewed the Head of Quality. I found it very challenging not to deviate from the interview schedule. My personal feelings had to be put to one side. I strongly believe that a teaching qualification is valuable, and the decision by College A to no longer require this of its staff is something I have found very hard to understand. The interview was the first time I was told in person that the mandatory requirement has gone. I found this out by chance. A potential trainee who was employed by college A approached me about undertaking ITT, and I advised her to approach the Staff Development Officer for financial support. She then told me that she had already done this, and been told that there would not be an option. This was obviously going to impact on the number of trainees on my courses, and felt like a personal insult. This was something I tried very hard not to show in the interview.

3.8 Ethical considerations

My research was carried out with consideration of and adherence to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines 2011. These guidelines emphasise that researchers must operate with both honesty and integrity, and stipulate a number of principles which researchers should be mindful of. These include:

- Voluntary informed consent
- Openness and disclosure
- Right to withdraw
- Incentives
- Detriment arising from participation in research
- Privacy
- Disclosure (BERA, 2011)

To ensure that these guidelines were followed throughout the research, I firstly gained ethical clearance from the School of Education Ethics Review Panel at the University of Sheffield. Once this stage was successfully completed, I was able to approach my participants. I ensured that they were fully aware of the implications of taking part in this research, and that they knew their rights throughout the process. When the questionnaires were given out, each participant also received a Participant Information Sheet and a Participant Consent Form. Participants were assured that they could withdraw at any time, that all data collected would be kept confidential (in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998), and that no personal or identifying details would be kept. Both individual identities and workplace information would be anonymised and protected. I was also mindful of the need to reiterate that no trainee would be advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to their ITT as a result of electing to take part in my research. I was particularly mindful of this as the participants knew me, both in my role as a course tutor knew me, and for some I was also their Personal Tutor. I made it explicit from the start that this study was for research purposes only, and was nothing to do with their ITT course. I was undertaking the study as a doctoral student and not as a tutor. All participants were offered the opportunity to read the thesis if they wished to do so.

Once the consent forms were returned, trainees were contacted to arrange a suitable time, date and place for the semi-structured interviews to take place. I was aware of the need to work within the parameters of the college policies and procedures in relation to both lone working and safeguarding. Taking responsibility for both my own and my trainees' health and safety was of paramount importance.

All the interviews were digitally recorded, the interviewees gave their consent for this. I transcribed the recordings verbatim, and ensured that these were checked and approved by the participants as an accurate account of the interviews. A sample transcript is included in the appendices, along with the ethical review application and subsequent approval letter.

3.9 Thematic Analysis

Having adopted a qualitative methodological approach to my data collection, the next consideration was to consider the most appropriate method for analysing the data, and I chose a thematic analysis which is, according to Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79 "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally *organises* and *describes* your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and *interprets* various aspects of the research topic." They espouse it as a simple to use method of data analysis which is, unlike many other methods flexible and able to work with a number of different research theories. This then offers rich, detailed and complex descriptions of data.

They clarify this further as "a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.82). They contest that thematic analysis is a very poorly 'branded' method in comparison to others, for example grounded theory, discourse analysis or narrative analysis, and that in actual fact analysis often occurs without being identified as any particular method. Braun and Wilkinson, (2003, p.30) highlight an example of data being "subjected to qualitative analysis for commonly recurring themes". I felt thematic analysis was particularly useful for me as it does not rely on a high level of either theoretical or technological knowledge needed for other forms of analysis such as grounded theory or discourse analysis. As such I agree with Braun and Clarke (2006) that it is "a more accessible form of analysis, particularly for those early in a qualitative research career". Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas (2013) assert that thematic analysis enables researchers to explore attitudes and behaviours associated with happened events which correspond with typical narrative inquiry. This seemed appropriate for my research given the intention to understand the concept of professionalism from both individual trainees and senior managers. I wanted to explore their attitudes and behaviours in relation to both undertaking ITT, and the events which led to becoming a teacher in the first place.

There are six different phases of thematic analysis, and each will now be explored in greater detail. These are, according to Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. Familiarising yourself with the data.
2. Generating initial codes.
3. Searching for themes.
4. Reviewing the themes.
5. Defining and naming the themes.
6. Producing the report.

The first is becoming familiar with the data, and for me this approach happened organically, having initially intended to pay to have the interview transcripts transcribed, I embarked upon the process myself. This was purely down to having a period of time over the Christmas holidays. Prior to carrying out the interviews, I had already read and re-read the questionnaires in order to familiarise myself with the responses. In doing so I began to note down initial ideas, and realised that there were often repeated words or phrases which were used. These were further reinforced when transcribing the interviews.

Data corpus (Braun and Clarke 2006) is all the data collected for your research. In this study it was 37 questionnaires and six semi structured interviews/life histories from my trainees. From the Senior Management Team at College A I had three semi structured interviews. Two were carried out in 2014, the final one took place in 2017. I began by reading and re-reading all my data, and began to formulate initial ideas. As such I became aware of the emergence of repeated words and themes. I concur with Rubin and Rubin (1995, p.226) who claim that "analysis is exciting because you discover themes and concepts embedded throughout your interviews". I particularly enjoyed this stage of the research, I felt as if I was 'being' a researcher. It felt as if the study was coming together, so rather than a collection of separate questionnaires and interviews, I felt as if the research was coming together in a cohesive piece. What I did find daunting and, at times, a little overwhelming, was the sheer volume of data. Coupled with the amount of time taken to get to this stage, I did contemplate different options for carrying out the second

phase. I was aware that there are specific software programs which are designed to code data. I had attended a session on one of these, NVivo, but a lack of confidence in my IT skills, and a tried and tested confidence in paper based methods resulted in the use of flipchart paper, highlighter pens and post it notes.

Having identified initial ideas, I then began to code using what Carpenter and Suto, 2008, p116) describe as "shorthand labels **-** usually a word, short ph[r]ase, or metaphor - often derived from the participants' accounts, which are assigned to data fragments defined as having some common meaning or relationship." One example which was specified a number of times in relation to the term 'professional' was 'relationships'. For some trainees this was a generic term whilst for others it was explicitly related to the relationships formed with their own learners.

The following table shows an example of my initial coding from two of my questionnaires:

I suppose, strictly speaking, that someone becomes professional when they are paid to do an activity. However, for me, the term also includes an implicit acknowledgement that someone has to reach and act in terms of a set of standards and ethical conduct. If I'm honest, those standards aren't necessarily the ones I work to. I have my own ideas about what is and isn't acceptable behaviour for a teacher	Professional Paid work Quality Commitment Standards Ethical conduct Behaviour Relationships Respect and support
I understand 'professional' as a measure of standard in a particular field, whether that be vocationally, in relation to the quality and commitment to be the best within their role, or in terms of how an individual conducts themselves and the kind of role model they are to others. Personally it means I am committed to developing, producing and delivering courses within my workplace that are of a high standard – the quality of which reflects the commitment to the role I do. Pastorally, it indicates a standard of respect and support I expect to extend to my learners and that they should expect from me	Standards Quality Commitment Conduct Role model High standards Respect Support Relationship with learners

Having completed this stage for all my data, I then moved to the second phase which is generating initial codes, and relates to coding in a systematic fashion across the entire data set. This was completed by the production of a mind map which I drew on a piece of flip chart paper. This stage enabled me to sort the codes into potential themes. "A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.82). At this stage there were a number of emerging themes and sub themes. Initially I had five themes. These were relationships,

personal attributes, behaviour, knowledge and responsibility. Relationships was divided into relationships with peers/colleagues, and relationships with learners. Behaviour was initially subdivided into behaviour within the classroom, and behaviour within own organisation. Knowledge was then further divided into both knowledge of teaching and knowledge of specialist subject. Both the initial mind map and subsequent stages of data analysis are included in the appendices.

I then began to review my themes. I was confident that three main ones had emerged, and that my data could fit into each one in a coherent manner. For example respect linked to both standards and relationships with others. I reviewed my themes, and finalised them as standards, behaviour and subject knowledge. The only exception to this was the sub theme of autonomy, and I found it difficult to locate this as it seemed to be, in different ways, an inherent part of the others. I then revisited my research and my entire data set, and linked these back to the literature review. I was confident that autonomy necessitated being a theme on its own, particularly after the second interview with the Head of Quality.

These themes form the basis of my data analysis and are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Analysis of findings

"What constitutes professionalism in the further education (FE) sector, though high on the political and policy agenda, often remains opaque and contested amongst those on the ground" (Gleeson *et al.*, 2015, p.78).

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the main findings that emerged from this study, and present my analysis of the data which was collected using the questionnaires and interviews. Following the process of thematic analysis as discussed in the previous chapter, I identified four key themes. These were standards, subject knowledge, behaviour and autonomy. Once these initial themes were developed, I was able to align the existing literature to each one to aid discussion of my findings.

The questions I asked in the questionnaire were:

- How long have you been teaching for?
- What is your understanding of the term 'professional'? Please could you explain what the term professional means to you?
- Why did you undertake your Initial Teacher Training qualification?
- Do you consider yourself to be a professional? Please could you explain why/why not?
- Does the requirement to have a teaching qualification make someone professional? Why do you think this is/is not the case?
- Would you have undertaken this qualification if it wasn't mandatory? If so, why?
- What are your views on the revocation of the 2007 Regulations? Do you think this will impact on the professionalism of teachers within the Further Education sector? How?

One of the first questions I asked in both the interviews and the questionnaire was 'how long have you been teaching for'? My reasons for asking this question were to ascertain if there was any correlation between the length of time working as a teacher, and the perception of the respondents'

constructions of themselves as professionals, in relation to their subject specialism and/or teaching role. The responses ranged from three months to over thirteen years. I felt this was important as I wanted to explore if there was any correlation between length of service and the reasons for undertaking a teaching qualification. I reflected back to my own reasons for embarking on initial Teacher Training, I undertook my training prior to the introduction of the 2007 regulations, and it was a choice rather than a mandatory requirement. I was not in a full time teaching role, nor had I been teaching long when I undertook my first teaching qualification. I did, however, have a desire to develop my subject specialist pedagogy.

The responses to this question were interesting when the trainees then explained why they had undertaken ITT. Of the 45 trainees, 22 had been working as teachers for less than a year, and identified their reasons for undertaking ITT as wanting to become more proficient, and to develop their skills and knowledge. Generally the longer someone had been teaching, the more likely they were to have been told they had to undertake ITT. This was the case for 19 of my trainees. However of these 19, 17 had been told it was mandatory because of their own organisational requirements. It became clear that many of the trainees, 36 in total, were not fully aware of the reasons behind the regulations or why they were required to gain a full teaching qualification. 24 had simply assumed that it was a requirement from their own organisation rather than a national perspective, whilst 28 were completely unaware of the LLUK standards or the government policy regarding FE teacher training. There was an element of undertaking teacher training because 'you have to' without asking for the underlying principles behind this requirement. For many, it was simply something that they had to do. At the start of this research, College A outlined its expectations for newly appointed staff very clearly. There was a requirement to gain a full teaching qualification within three years of appointment. Successfully gaining one enabled teaching staff to move onto the qualified teacher pay scale, so for some, fiscal remuneration was a driving factor. Therefore of the 11 trainees from College A in my sample, 9 had chosen to undertake ITT as soon as possible after appointment in order to obtain a pay rise. By contrast, the other two had

avoided detection and slipped through the net. As such ITT was only undertaken when it became evident that staff were in breach of contract, and therefore it couldn't be avoided any longer. One trainee described it as a 'necessary evil if I want to keep my job' (Trainee 7, questionnaire).

Before New Labour was elected in 1997 ITT in FE was "voluntarist, haphazard and uneven" (Lucas, 2007, p.18) as there was no obligation for teachers to hold teaching qualifications. Lucas (2013) argues that the revocation of the 2007 standards will have profound implications for the professional status of FE teachers, and indeed a return to their voluntarist past.

I began the literature review by looking at the historical context of FE teaching, and the various governmental interventions which have resulted in the FENTO standards, and then more recently the 2007 regulations. Both equate professionalism with adhering to a centrally controlled list of practices, not to autonomy or judgement based on specialist knowledge which definitions of professionalism usually involve (Eraut, 1994).

4.2 Theme 1 – Standards

The first key theme discussed relates to standards, and I believe it is important to start with this theme as it was the revocation of the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations that brought into question the issue of whether mandatory adherence to a set of teaching standards was important in creating a 'professional' FE teachers workforce.

As highlighted in the literature review, there are conflicting views on the value of standards, the FENTO standards were seen as a response to the need for "a particular vision of how it wants the workforce to look: a standardisation of professional qualifications; a license to practice; adherence to a particular body of professional competencies" (Tummons, p.65). These were followed by the 2007 standards, a further move towards the professionalisation of the FE teacher.

By contrast, Nasta (2007) believes that both the FENTO and LLUK standards are limiting as they are an attempt to capture what teachers know and do, much of which cannot be measured.

> Both sets of standards make an implicit assumption that it is possible to capture in written statements-codified knowledge-the richness and complexities involved in the process of teaching. Whilst codification may have some significant advantages in making knowledge transparent and accessible, there is far from common agreement about whether it is possible to capture in this form, the fundamental knowledge and practices of professionals operating in complex teaching and learning environments. (Nasta, 2007, p.3)

The 2014 Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in Education and Training – England are built on four fundamental points:

- Set out clear expectations of effective practice in Education and Training.
- Enable teachers and trainers to identify areas for their own professional development.
- Support initial teacher education.
- Provide a national reference point that organisations can use to support the development of their staff.

The responses below resonate with this particular view that professionalism can be measured against a set of standards or criteria, and that there is an expectation about how this will impact, not only on the way a teacher behaves but how they are perceived by others. These standards are not necessarily the ones that are published by the Education and Training Foundation, nor those produced by an organisation. This trainee has their own perceptions, values and beliefs about what is acceptable for an FE teacher.

> I suppose, strictly speaking, that someone becomes professional when they are paid to do an activity. However, for me, the term also includes an implicit acknowledgement that someone has to reach and act in terms of a set of standards and ethical conduct. If I'm honest, those standards aren't necessarily the ones I work to. I have my own ideas about what is and isn't acceptable behaviour for a teacher. (Trainee , questionnaire)

This view supports the trait approaches to professionalism with reference to the ethical code advocated by both Greenwood (1957) and that of Sims, Fineman and Gabriel in 1993. It is also a feature of the characteristics espoused by Crawley (2015).

By contrast this trainee highlights the use of standards in relation to teaching ability and relationships with learners.

> I understand 'professional' as a measure of standard in a particular field, whether that be vocationally, in relation to the quality and commitment to be the best within their role, or in terms of how an individual conducts themselves and the kind of role model they are to others. Personally it means I am committed to developing, producing and delivering courses within my workplace that are of a high standard – the quality of which reflects the commitment to the role I do. Pastorally, it indicates a standard of respect and support I expect to extend to my learners and that they should expect from me. (Trainee 3, questionnaire)

For this trainee, being a professional is linked to undertaking some form of training or qualification that is recognised by receiving external recognition in the form of a certificate. This is a key feature in all the definitions of a professional, particularly those of the trait approach.

> To be a professional means to be an expert in the field you are working in. This is usually supported with some form of certification whether that be a degree or specific types of training. In this case it is working to the government teacher training standards and becoming qualified. (Trainee 4, questionnaire)

There were four references to the teacher training standards, yet conversely there were 24 trainees who stated that they were unaware of either the 2007 regulations or the revocation of them. This would perhaps go some way towards explaining why, according to the Lingfield interim review (2012), so few FE teachers had become fully qualified. The inability of the IfL to 'police' those who did not gain QTLS within the specified period of five years from gaining a teaching qualification was cited as another reason to deregulate the sector.

One trainee responded that there is a dichotomy between achieving accreditation or certification, and maintaining that. The particular reference related to the possible repercussions were someone to be 'struck off' the

teaching register, this trainee admitted to being unaware of the protocols within teaching, but knew them in relation to his subject specialism of counselling. This echoes one of the criticisms levelled at the 2007 regulations by the Lingfield Review, mainly that the mandatory requirement for FE teachers to be members of the IfL was not enforced and that a significant number of teachers were not qualified.

During one of the interviews, Daniel described how he came to be in a teaching position, and why he was currently undertaking the Certificate in Education. For him working towards a set of standards was a fundamental reason behind his decision to undertake a teaching qualification at nearly 60 years of age.

> I left school without a qualification to my name, I hated school and had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. After being in a series of dead end jobs, a friend of my dads offered me some work in his garage doing body shop paint repairs, it didn't set my world on fire but at least it kept my parents off my back and I earned a bit of money. I never saw myself doing it for the best part of thirty years, but looking back I know that nobody, including myself thought I would ever amount to anything. When I got the chance to mentor apprentices, many of them young lads with no qualifications, I realised that I could make a difference to them and to me. Undertaking the PTLLS course was the most nerve wracking thing I've ever done, but getting that certificate at the end of the course made me realise that education could be for me, and undertaking the Cert Ed means that for the first time in my life, I can get a nationally recognised qualification and can call myself something that people understand – a teacher. I will have been through a process and worked towards a set of standards that mean something. My old dad tells everyone that I am a teacher, you can hear the pride in his voice, I never heard that when I was just working on painting cars.

This view resonates with the public perception that working towards a set of standards and being recognised as having achieved these is sufficient to 'earn' a label. For example doctors are, I would argue, still highly revered within society as having undertaken a significant period of training, as are lawyers, both are held in high esteem and regard. For Daniel, it was the public recognition of having achieved a recognised qualification and being able to call himself a teacher that was his ultimate motivation. The standards enabled him to measure himself against something tangible, and know that he had achieved it. Daniel therefore supports the "high and public status"

characteristic of Crawley, 2015, along with "practicing according to agreed and acknowledged codes of conduct, standards of training, competence, responsibility and understanding" (Crawley, 2015 p.494).

32 of the trainees commented on the pride experienced, either by themselves or others at the ability to attend a graduation event after successfully completing ITT. This resonates with the high regard and esteem which is a feature of being professional, and is particularly visible at College A. Graduation is always held on a Saturday, and involves a procession from the College to the cathedral where members of the public line the street to watch. One trainee described this as a 'them and us' situation, and said

> Just for a few minutes I will feel as if I am a member of an elite group, almost a celebrity. I will be walking down the street in my cap and gown and will know that I am a somebody, a teacher. (Trainee 4, questionnaire)

4.3 Theme 2 – Subject Knowledge

A fundamental debate in relation to FE teachers has often focused on the dual professionalism label which results from teachers being qualified in a particular field prior to becoming a teacher. One of my trainees teaches counselling and sees himself first and foremost to be a counsellor, and a professional in terms of that specialist area, however in terms of his teaching role he said

> I always seem to be bumbling through and making lots of errors. However, the mistakes may be more due to a heavy workload, and my self perception probably has more to do with internal negative thought processes and then being particularly bad at what I do, I never expected teaching to be so hard. It's not about knowing my subject, I know it inside out, but teaching it is another matter entirely. (Trainee 2, questionnaire)

This view sits uncomfortably with the view of Robson (2006) "that if I know my subject, I can, by definition, teach it to others."

A key theme which emerged from the responses was the reference to being a specialist in a particular field. One trainee defined professional as

> Being competent, skilled and knowledgeable in a specialism, in my case that means I can deliver my subject to industry standards, and know that my learners are fit for work. If I don't have the up to date knowledge then my learners haven't got a prayer. (Trainee 5, questionnaire)

For this trainee, the emphasis in relation to professionalism was associated with being confident in their subject specialist knowledge, a key feature of the professional characteristics proposed by Crawley (2015). Another referred to it as having an acceptable level of knowledge, skills and expertise to be deemed proficient for the work to be undertaken. This was defined as

> the thing that makes me credible, the knowledge that enabled me to get the teaching job in the first place. I need to be able to demonstrate that I have the right knowledge at the right level. It's pointless trying to teach level 4 skills to level 2 learners, I need to be able to guide them through the qualification at the right pace and level. (Trainee 8, questionnaire)

One trainee replied that a professional is simply someone who is a specialist in their particular subject/field. Several other responses alluded to the fact that subject knowledge was of paramount importance in being considered a professional, and that this was more important than undertaking Initial Teacher Training. For many the general consensus was that becoming a qualified teacher would enhance them as professionals, rather than make them so.

This was, however, not the case for one trainee

> An industry qualification is no indication of how effective someone is as an educator. Without having to have a teaching qualification I would be concerned for the quality of the teaching being delivered and subsequent support in understanding individual learners' needs and methods of teaching/assessing. A curriculum could be covered and boxes ticked but whether or not students would fully embrace the subject and truly learn would remain to be seen. (Trainee 12, questionnaire)

Only one trainee specifically commented that they considered that they were a dual professional, and commented

> I feel I am a professional within my subject area as I have up to date industry knowledge of my sector, and the relevant industry qualifications to make me credible in front of the students. Now I have nearly finished my teaching qualification I definitely consider myself to be a dual professional, I don't think you can have one without the other. (Trainee 10, questionnaire)

This trainee had embarked on ITT because of a desire to pass on the subject expertise to others, and therefore found it impossible to divorce one from the other.

> You can only be an effective teacher in your subject if you keep your own knowledge up to date in that area. I could be the best teacher in the world, but only if I keep one foot in my industry. (Trainee 10, questionnaire)

This view clearly resonates with that of Crawley (2015) that a teacher in the lifelong learning sector should have a "selfless commitment to updating their expertise and continuous development of their field".

This naturally led me to ask, 'why did you undertake your Initial Teacher Training qualification'? The responses to this ranged from it being a mandatory requirement from an employer to a desire to gain a formal and recognised qualification which would improve the employment opportunities of the respondents. 15 of the questionnaires made reference to a desire to pass on the skills and knowledge associated with their individual subject specialism, and believed that undertaking a formal teaching qualification would enable a more formal and theoretical approach to imparting this knowledge. This view conflicts with the assumption that "vocational or subject expertise was in itself an adequate basis for teaching" (Green and Lucas, 1999).

> Professional to me means someone who is proficient in their area of expertise and who has an acceptable level of knowledge, skills and expertise to be deemed proficient for the work to be undertaken. Although I believe that someone can be proficient in their area of expertise, I firmly believe that they will be a more rounded and well informed teaching professional if they have undertaken an associated and recognised training programme in order to ensure quality and consistency of teaching and underpinning knowledge requirements have been gained. (Trainee 6, questionnaire)

Interestingly, those who worked for an organisation such as the Fire Service, college or private training provider saw themselves as professional because they had the subject knowledge to be successful in gaining a role in the first place, regardless of not being a qualified teacher. However one trainee felt that subject knowledge on its own was insufficient as

> I believe that someone can be proficient in their area of expertise, however I firmly believe that they will be a more rounded and well informed professional if they have undertaken an associated and recognised training programme related to their area of expertise, in order to ensure the quality and consistency of teaching and underpinning knowledge requirements have been gained. (Trainee 11, questionnaire)

There appeared to be a correlation between the length of time teaching, and the importance and value that trainees attached to their subject specialism. Those who had moved into a teaching role within the last two years were more likely to see themselves as 'industry experts', and therefore aligned to their first profession. For example one trainee was, first and foremost a counsellor, and had sought alternative work when his own counselling business was no longer in a strong enough financial position to support his family. He answered an advert advertising for a part time tutor, and got the job with the condition that he undertook the PGCE. For this trainee,

> I'm a counsellor, even when I become a qualified teacher I will always be a counsellor above anything else. It's what defines me, what I know and because I have qualifications, sound knowledge and experience in the field I will always see myself as that. (Trainee 2, questionnaire)

Having analysed the life histories of the six Initial Teacher Training trainees, there is no consensus of the meaning of professional or professionalism, the words are used in an almost throwaway manner, but there is no agreement on why and what this means for the individuals concerned. For example the use of training and gaining a qualification was a common theme, but there is no agreement as to the purpose and level of training. It was more important for me to understand the way in which the interviewees constructed their own views of professionalism, and the way in which both their academic and working life has impacted on this.

I don't think having a qualification makes you professional. There are a lot of good tutors in college who haven't completed their teaching certificate as yet. These tutors often teach in much more creative ways than tutors who are fully qualified. Having a teaching certificate doesn't make a tutor behave in a professional way; being on time, being prepared for class, communicating effectively, team working and reinforcing the objectives of the department/college. Although I think having a teaching qualification is important as a base to build knowledge and experience in areas such as learning theories, learning styles, differentiation, classroom management etc, it doesn't make a person behave in a professional manner. (Trainee 4, questionnaire)

In my opinion a teaching qualification makes you a better educator not necessarily more professional. (Trainee 6, questionnaire)

A certificate does not make a professional in my opinion. However a commitment to gaining a teaching qualification in terms of time and finance shows potential. It's the time and effort put in after this in the continual development of practices and yourself that adds to make this a professional. (Trainee 8, questionnaire)

4.4 Theme 3 – Behaviour

I asked the trainees for their understanding of the term professional, and what it meant to them. Without exception all the trainees answered this question, but no one asked for clarification of my terminology. There appears to be an assumption that professional has a common meaning and understanding. On further analysis, two distinct discourses emerge – that of being professional and being a professional. This distinction is important because of the differing connotations. Being professional is associated with behaving in a particular manner whereas being a professional is ultimately about holding a particular recognisable role and status associated with it.

This resonates with the view of Clow (2001) that being considered a professional is behaving in a particular way, and this is particularly important in vocational areas.

I understand 'professional' as a measure of standard in a particular field whether that be vocationally, in relation to the quality and commitment to be the best within their role, in terms of how an individual conducts themselves and the kind of role model they are to others. Personally it means that I am committed to developing, producing and delivering courses within my workplace that are of a high standard – the quality of which reflects the commitment to the role

I do. Pastorally, it indicates a standard of respect and support I expect to extend to my learners and that they should expect from me. (Trainee 14, questionnaire)

This focus on behaviour appears to be closely tied to having the appropriate qualifications and conducting themselves in a manner which befits the status of a teaching professional.

Being professional to me is about being competent, skilled and knowledgeable in a specialism. It is also about behaving, communicating and portraying yourself in a manner that reinforces this level of aptitude. (Trainee 18, questionnaire)

For one trainee, there is a conflict between carrying out a role but not being viewed as professional by others.

I behave in a professional manner, following all college policies and procedures and ensure I maintain professional boundaries with learners. I arrive on time and complete tasks to a high standard, working hard to meet the demands of the department and the college. Although I behave professionally and am working towards my teaching qualification, my role as a support worker isn't viewed as a professional role. Advice and strategies offered to tutors about how best to support a student can often be undermined. (Trainee 20, questionnaire)

When I began to analyse the responses, a major theme which emerged was the number of trainees who sought voluntary teaching placements in order to secure a place on the Initial Teacher Training course. This was a relatively new development as volunteer teaching was only considered to be acceptable after 2010, prior to this only volunteer teaching which was undertaken through a Charity registered through the Charity Commission was eligible. I think this demonstrates that, for some trainees, the desire to gain a teaching qualification was so strong that they were willing to work as unpaid teachers in order to fulfil their goal. There were 11 volunteer trainee teachers in my sample.One trainee stated

I started teaching when I began my PGCE course in September 2011. I taught on a volunteer basis in order to meet the requirements of my course. I was determined to become a teacher, and the only way for me to do that was to look outside my own organisation, there was no scope for me to get any teaching hours here. It means I have to give up two evenings a week, one to do the teaching, and another to come to

college for the course, but no pain, no gain as the saying goes!
(Trainee 22, questionnaire)

The changes in the mandatory requirement to gain a teaching qualification also coincided with the increase in Higher Education tuition fees, so for some the financial implications were significant. The demographic of most in-service trainees is that they are at least mid twenties, often have children of their own and the fiscal trappings that these bring. It is therefore important not to under estimate the commitment that many of the trainees make both emotionally and financially. Whilst student loans are now available for part time HE students in the same way as they are for full time students, for some it is a difficult choice to make.

4.5 Autonomy and Responsibility

According to Hoyle and John (1995), the notion of what it means to be professional tends to emphasise three core issues: knowledge, autonomy and responsibility. The findings from my own research resonate with the first issue of knowledge as discussed previously, however that of autonomy has proved to be more contentious. The references to autonomy were scarce, only one trainee felt that they had some autonomy within the classroom, despite the expansion of government intervention in FE. This resonates with the view of Robson *et al.* (2004) that despite the restrictions and introduction of competence based curriculum, many vocational tutors pride themselves in providing expert specialist knowledge and maintaining the standards of their particular subject, going beyond the curriculum as specified rather than merely relating to a prescribed and potentially limiting competence-base of the course.

The notion of responsibility is one that was mentioned several times, both in relation to the trainees taking responsibility for their own learning and therefore undertaking initial teacher training, but significantly there were references to different organisations taking responsibility for the quality and professionalism of its teaching staff, and requiring those employed in a teaching position to become qualified.

Without exception, those who did not work for a College were not required to hold a full teaching qualification in order to meet their contractual obligations. They had undertaken the PTLLS course which was the minimum requirement for their role.

This notion was one which formed a key feature of my discussion with members of the Senior Management Team (SMT). As the onus and responsibility for having qualified teaching staff now rests firmly with employers, I felt it was important to gain the views of those who have responsibility for the recruitment and retention of teaching staff within my own organisation. I was also interested in their views on how the 2007 Regulations were implemented and enforced within the College, and what consideration had been given to these being revoked.

Currently newly appointed staff who do not hold a full teaching qualification are employed as unqualified lecturers. At the start of this study, they were contractually obliged to undertake one within three years of employment. Staff were supported to gain a teaching qualification in one of two ways, either to have the tuition fees paid in full, or to take remission of teaching hours whilst undertaking the course. I have not yet taught anyone who chose to take remission of hours since the rise in tuition fees.

4.6 Life Histories of six trainee teachers

"Entering FE is, for many, less a career choice or pathway than an opportunity at a particular moment in time" (Gleeson *et al.*, 2005, p.449).

The semi structured interviews were carried out with six trainees. My rationale for carrying out the interviews was to ascertain the career trajectories of some of the trainees. I wanted to ascertain why different people have different understandings of what professional means. These, as discussed earlier, were selected from the many who offered to take part in my research. I wanted a sample that were differentiated by gender, the organisation in which they worked, length of time in a teaching role and the course they were studying: Certificate in Education or Professional Graduate Certificate in Education.

What follows is a portrait of each of the trainees. In essence each trainee was providing me with an oral history. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and returned to each trainee in order to verify it was an accurate account. I offer the portrait as an account of each trainees reason for undertaking ITT, and their belief about their own professionalism. I was keen to explore the personal circumstances, social roles and networks which led the trainees to embark on the journey towards becoming a qualified teacher.

John is a full time lecturer who teaches Functional English at College A. He is in his first year of teaching, and knew that when he was appointed, he would have to undertake ITT, something he was more than happy to do. For John, he sees this as something that will enable him to do his job more effectively, he is new to the teaching role, and feels that he lacks the necessary presence and authority within the classroom to make him an effective teacher. John 'fell' into a teaching role, he never imagined he would become a teacher.

> So for me this job isn't really about the subject, it's about being in charge. Nobody really wants to take functional skills, they are doing it because they need a level 2 qualification and this is an easier way than taking a GCSE. My department are all about numbers, we are constantly being sent meaningless emails, is your scheme of work up to date, have you put all the predicted grades in, blah, blah. None of that is why I wanted to be a teacher, none of that stuff will help me to help my learners. I mean, I know you need to plan and check on what they are doing, but I never had the basics of how to plan. Until I came in your class, I didn't know what a learning outcome was, or the difference between AoL or AfL. This place has got the wrong priorities, it doesn't care about staff, and the pointless pile of paperwork, admin is the thing that drives this place, and it's the thing that causes me the most stress. How does that help anyone other than the suits? I have my own ways of knowing my learners, I measure the distance they travel, I know who is getting it and who isn't. Yet all my HoD does is send snotty emails telling me that MarkBook isn't up to date, all that does is add to my stress levels, and none of it makes my teaching any better. (John, interview)

John is, in his own words, a frustrated and failed footballer.

> So basically I left school after doing my A levels. All I ever cared about was football, it was what I wanted to do, earn mega bucks and live the high life. My mum and dad never saw that as anything more than pie in the sky, but the more they pushed me to get a 'proper' job, the more I dug my heels in. Truth is, I didn't really see myself making it big, but I

didn't know what else I could do or was any good at. Football was the only thing I ever really loved doing. Doing A levels was a compromise as I knew I never wanted to go to uni, but it bought me a bit more time. Once I left I got a job in a call centre, I hated it and lived for playing Sunday League football. At least I got a wage every month, but I never saw it as a long term option. It was only when I started helping out with the junior league that I got talking to one of the dads. He mentioned that I was good with the young 'uns, and that he was a sports teacher in a college. I suddenly saw that as something to work towards, but the chances are I'll not get anywhere without a degree in sport, and that's not an option money wise now I'm paying rent every month. At least teaching functional skills is a foot in the door, it's made me realise that I like working in a college environment and that I am good with the kids. (John, interview)

John feels that professionalism is closely linked to autonomy, and that the mark of a professional is being able to take responsibility for his own behaviour. He therefore thinks this is intrinsically linked to trust. This was something he did not experience in his previous role working in a call centre.

To go back to my call centre job, I was never trusted, I wasn't seen as a person with thoughts or opinions, I literally just sat in a booth along with a load of other people. We couldn't talk or have a laugh, literally you used to sit with your head phones on and wait for customers to ring in. You always had to be on your A game because supervisors could listen in at any time. I never did or said anything I shouldn't, but it was the fact that none of us were trusted, it was too Big Brother for me. (John, interview)

He further relates this to the lack of autonomy which he has experienced as a teacher when being observed by his head of department. In his view the current climate within College A completely refutes the link between autonomy and professionalism. He asserts that the managerialist approach proposed by Taubman (2015) is very much in evidence. There is, according to John, a culture of management control which manifests itself in the observation process whereby the observer has a predetermined idea of what is acceptable within a classroom environment. John described his feelings when he was observed by the Head of his department, and the feedback he received.

The way I behave, I think, says a lot about me. I think that I am a professional. I speak to the kids in an appropriate manner, I dress smartly and I don't do anything I shouldn't. Sometimes we have a laugh

in class, but to be honest you need that, functional skills is always better if you make it fun. They still know that rules are rules, I don't tolerate any messing about and the kids know how far they can push things. He {the Head} doesn't get it. He slated me for the kids behaviour and yet they were working! I couldn't believe it when I got my feedback, every one of them kids was engaged and my results are good. Just because they weren't sitting in silence and hanging on my every word doesn't make me unprofessional. I wouldn't care but he {the Head} hasn't been in a classroom for years. They would eat him for breakfast. Surely what matters is that learning is taking place, and retention and achievement are good, particularly as that's all we ever hear about. (John, interview)

For John, being able to call himself a teacher is an indication of the social status afforded to teachers, certainly in comparison with someone who works in a call centre. This he says, is evidenced by the way his parents refer to him as a teacher even though he is not yet qualified. One of the characteristics of a profession is, according to John, studying and learning. This is very much in keeping with the trait approach, entry to a professional is restricted and regulated.

I think it's being qualified, a profession is something that other people look up to, because they know you have worked hard to get there. I know my mum and dad are proud to tell people I am a teacher (even though I've not finished the Cert Ed yet), and I think that is because they think teachers are somebody. I think that's why they weren't happy about me wanting to be a footballer, for them it wasn't a 'proper' job, just something you did if you got lucky and were spotted. It's like doctors or lawyers, they are people who have studied and done exams and stuff. They are seen as being higher up in the pecking order and that's why they get more money. So I think that a profession is to do with studying and learning. (John, interview)

Katie is currently employed as a trainer within the Fire and Rescue Service. She went to university after completing her A levels, and achieved a 2:1 in geography. Unable to find work, she applied for a temporary post within the HR department and stayed there for almost three years. When a training position became available, she successfully applied for it. Katie now delivers in-house training to others within the service, but a major part of her role is to work with schools and organisations to deliver fire safety training to young people. A requirement of this role was for Katie to undertake the PTLLS course, and she was funded to do this. On successful completion Katie felt

that the course had whetted her appetite to undertake further study. This was the main factor which prompted her to undertake ITT, she did not need to progress further, and was not supported in any way to continue her studies. However Katie knew that a full teaching qualification would maximise her chances of one day leaving the service, possibly to move into a college lecturing position teaching public service courses. The fact that the PGCE was offered on an evening enabled Katie to complete her ITT in her own time, and meant that she did not have to tell her employer she was continuing with her studies.

Katie says she is torn, on the one hand she loves her job and if she had not had to do the PTLLS course in the first place, she would never have thought about undertaking the PGCE. She also feels frustrated that her position within the fire service is limited in terms of career advancement, as a trainer she cannot achieve promotion without moving into management, and that would take her away from training completely.

For Katie, she was acutely aware of the public perception of fulfilling a role, and being seen as a professional. That is, she says, most easily identified within the fire service by wearing a uniform. This is in keeping with one of the characteristics of the trait approach identified by Greenwood (1957), that the public recognise the authority of the fire service.

> It doesn't matter what role you do within the fire service, the fact that you wear a uniform means the public see you differently. As soon as I go and talk to a group of school kids, scouts, guides, whatever, they pay attention. They see the authority that the uniform implies. I am seen as a professional because of the way that I dress and the organisation that I work for. (Katie, interview)

Katie feels that she is a professional in her own organisation, and defines a professional as "someone who studies and works in an organisation or career for a significant period of time". She defines that period of time as "long enough to enable you to know the job inside out." For Katie, subject knowledge is synonymous with being able to call yourself a professional and gaining the credibility and recognition for doing a job well. This is something closely associated with the fire service, in her role Katie is acutely aware of

the responsibility to work within the wider community and to act with honesty, integrity and transparency (Crawley, 2015). Whilst acknowledging the generally high regard in which the fire service are held, Katie did refer to the public perception and consideration shown to someone working as a teacher or lecturer. This is, she says very different to that as a trainer. She says that this is because

> Trainer sounds less impressive that's teacher, I think it's because you know that you have to go to university to be a teacher, whereas trainer could be someone delivering first aid. I associate a trainer with delivering materials given to me by someone else, whereas a teacher means you are in charge, you plan and deliver everything yourself. (Katie, interview)

Although Katie behaves in a professional manner, she does not identify herself as a teaching professional, her job title is that of a trainer. This is something which she 'avoids' stating when asked for her occupation.

> If anyone asks me what I do, I say I work for the fire service. I don't say what I do specifically, as, to be honest, mentioning the fire service is usually enough. I think it's because they {the public}, can understand that. They have an idea of what that means, the fire service, and if I was to tell them that I aren't out fighting fires, I don't think I would be held in such high regard. I think they assume I am in some kind of admin role to be honest. And that's definitely not thought of so highly. I will be happy to call myself a teacher if I ever leave the service and become a lecturer once I've finished the PGCE, lets face it, lecturer sounds better than trainer. (Katie, interview)

Katie can relate to the public perception of fire fighters being held in high social esteem, not necessarily in relation to pay, but because they are in a profession which is deemed to be for the public good. In this sense she agrees with both Crawley (2015) and the Lingfield Review (BIS, 2012) that the fire service are a group who earn and deserve the respect of the community and are publicly accountable.

Tim is, in his own words, a failed doctor, although he never wanted to be one. Originally from China, he came to England after leaving school, and embarked upon general nurse training at a university in London. His parents told people he was going to be a doctor, yet he always wanted to be a nurse, and as such feels that he let them down in some way as they afford doctors a

much higher status than nurses. Despite being very successful, and achieving a senior nursing position, Tim feels that his parents perceive him as a failure.

Tim has always felt that he is a professional, he believes that the way in which the NHS operates, from the policies and procedures to the uniform is the thing that defines him as a professional. Tim associates the charcteristics of a profession in relation to the ethical codes and professional codes espoused by both Greenwood (1957) and Millerson (1964).

He undertook ITT as had unsuccessfully applied for a teaching position twice in the last three years. Each interview consisted of an assessment task, questions from a panel of 'experts' and a micro teach. Feedback showed he had the necessary subject knowledge but that the micro teach was not engaging to the audience, and lacked the 'wow' factor needed to make mandatory staff training appealing to nurses. Tim sees ITT as

> Something I need to do in order to gain a relevant qualification. I don't see being a teacher or undertaking teacher training as either stretching me or making me more professional, rather it is a means to an end. As a clinician I am used to being seen as knowledgeable, patients respect me as they know I have undergone training to help me to help them. The uniform and the senior nurse badge signal me out as someone who knows what they are talking about. That's why I was so annoyed when I didn't get the {teaching} job. I know my job inside out, so to be told that I wasn't good at getting it across to others made me determined to upskill myself and get a teaching qual. That said, I still think my nursing skills are the most important, I could teach nurses without having a teaching qualification, but not without my nursing ones. (Tim, interview)

For Tim, he is first and foremost a nurse, and hopes to be a nurse educator. Undertaking ITT is a means to an end, it is something necessary to advance his career. He will not consider himself to be a teacher, but rather a nurse educator, for Tim, being a nurse is and always will be his profession. Tim refutes the dual professional label.

Tim cited the requirement to undertake mandatory CPD as something that contributes to him being a professional. He reflected on the requirement to be a member of the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and believes that that is the thing that defines both nursing, and himself as a professional. The Nursing

and Midwifery Council is the professional regulatory body for nurses and midwives in the UK. They define their role as "protecting patients and the public through efficient and effective regulation" (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2015). This is, for Tim, an essential element in defining professionalism.

> I know that if I do something wrong, or if I don't keep my skills and knowledge up to date then I will no longer be on the nursing register. That gives me a sense of pride, knowing that I have completed a qualification that puts me in the public domain. And, more importantly, knowing that I need to do something to keep that good standing or I won't be allowed to stay on the register. Medicine is changing so fast, I wouldn't feel confident to continue nursing if I didn't keep updating my own skills and knowledge. I went into nursing out of a desire to help people, and I still believe that the best thing you can do is to help people who are suffering. I genuinely believe that nursing is a calling, and let's face it, nobody does the job for the money. That's why I want to be a nurse educator, so I can pass my own skills and knowledge onto others. I want to help the next generation of nurses to help others. (Tim, interview)

This is closely linked to the trait definitions of a profession, particularly that which was developed by Sims, Fineman and Gabriel (1993). It shows that, for Tim, he 'values the profession's service to the community over strictly monetary rewards.' Tim had, in anticipation of our interview, brought with him the Code of Conduct from the Nursing and Midwifery Council. This defines professionalism as

> Characterised by the autonomous evidence-based decision making by members of an occupation who share the same values and education. Professionalism in nursing and midwifery is realised through purposeful relationships and underpinned by environments that facilitate professional practice. Professional nurse and midwives demonstrate and embrace accountability for their actions. (Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2015)

When asked about the perception of teaching as a profession, Tim acknowledged he was aware of the Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers (2014), but only as result of undertaking ITT. He admitted that he was unaware of both the entry requirements to get on the course, and had assumed that teachers have to be on a register in the same way as nurses.

He was 'amazed' that FE teachers can choose to be a member of the Society for Education and Training, but that it is not mandatory.

Susan has worked within a college environment for the last 9 years, but only in a teaching role for one of these. Prior to starting ITT she worked as a Learning Support Assistant (LSA), and was assisting teaching staff in a variety of different classes from sport to functional skills. She has a degree in Early Years, but was unable to find a job after graduating; she knew that she did not want to work with young children, but was unable to decide on a career path. She started working as a LSA, and it was only when she began supporting in a Level 1 Childcare class that she began to consider becoming an FE teacher. Much of this was driven by a sense of frustration that the teacher she was supporting was not, in her opinion, teaching in either an appropriate or professional manner. When I asked Susan what she meant by this, her response was as follows:

> The thing about early years is that many of the kids who come on to the course have been pushed in that direction because it's seen as an easy option, all you do is learn how to play with babies and toddlers. Because it's at level 1, they are all low achievers who have left school with no qualifications, many have behavioural issues and don't really want to be in college in the first place. I get that, but the teacher didn't. She spent most of the lessons trying to get them off their phones and to stop talking, she was actually fire fighting rather than teaching. I kept thinking how differently I would do things if I was in charge of the class. That's when I had the idea of doing teacher training, and I approached the Head of Early Years, initially to ask if I could do some shadowing and voluntary teaching. It was fantastic when she said yes, but what was even better was that she told me there was a part time post about to be advertised. I applied and got it! The thing that really helped me was that part of the interview was doing a micro teach to a group of learners, and although I had never stood up and taught a group before, I knew what not to do. The early years teacher I had supported didn't, in my opinion, engage the group, she told them to put their phones away, but then did nothing when they didn't. She was a qualified teacher, but not professional in my opinion. Her standards weren't mine. (Susan, interview)

Susan relates professionalism to her own standards, she was not aware of the LLUK standards until she started on the ITT programme. She was, however, aware of the teaching standards within her own organisation. Susan

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felt that these standards were beneficial. For her the standards represent something which 'defines' the way in which a professional teacher works.

> I like the fact that we have standards to work towards. I want to know I am doing a good job, and that I am meeting, if not exceeding, the expectations college has of its teaching staff. I have high standards myself, I want to be able to raise the bar as far as teaching and learning go. I think that's really important, particularly when you deal with level 1 learners. They get a really bad reputation for being disengaged and disruptive, but I see that as a challenge. I want to prove that good teaching can turn that bad behaviour around. It bothers me that some of them might go to be early years professionals themselves, and I don't want them to be labelled as trouble makers, just as I wouldn't label young children. (Susan, interview)

Standards and behaviour are, for Susan, closely linked, and both are synonymous with the notion of professionalism.

> If you are a professional person you should behave in an appropriate way. For me, even as a lowly LSA, I was still in a position whereby I was in an educational role. As such I should be treated with respect by the learners, and equally I should treat them with respect too. That's why I found it so unacceptable that she {early years teacher} did not take more responsibility for the class. She didn't command any respect from the group, and that's why they didn't show her any respect. There was no learning taking place in that class. It was pointless having rules, when they weren't enforced properly. When the kids enrol they sign a college agreement that they will abide by the rules. If they don't there are consequences. That's the same in life, you can't go round doing what you want. (Susan, interview)

For Daniel, his career path has been almost discounted now he has 'arrived' at his end point. During his interview, he became animated and excited when he was able to call himself a teacher. Interestingly the term teacher is often substituted for something else in the lifelong learning sector; tutor, trainer or lecturer. As noted earlier, Daniel left school with no qualifications, and did not have a good experience of school. For him, one of the factors which highlights his professionalism is the relationship with his own learners.

> When I think back to how I behaved at school, I totally understand how I left school with nothing. I never went completely off the rails, but I was labelled as a wrong 'un. I just wasn't engaged, I didn't understand what I was learning, but fundamentally why I had to learn the things the teachers were telling me. I found it hard to concentrate and then became bored and messed about. I spent a lot of my time being sent

out of class and to the headmasters office. I would have hated to teach me! Since I started on the Cert Ed I've realised that you have to teach the kids in loads of different ways, it's not a one size fits all approach. That's the thing that I think defines me as a professional. I'm using my teaching skills to meet the needs of all my learners, and as a result I am engaging and motivating them. I don't have a class full of wrong 'uns, I've got them hooked on the subject, and because of the way I teach them, I've got them enjoying their education. I know that I was labelled when I was at school, I remember being told I would end up in a dead end job, and for a while I did. If my teachers, and particularly my old headmaster could see me now they wouldn't believe how far I have come.

This leads on to mutual respect, it is the ability to recognise learners as individuals which is, for Daniel, a key feature of professionalism. He is passionate about the need for everyone in his class to be recognised and celebrated for their uniqueness, he fundamentally believes that every learner should be given a chance, and not compared to their peers. His view is directly influenced because of his own school experience.

> For me, the thing about professionalism is that you learn and draw on your own experiences. It isn't enough to get your teaching qualification and then stop learning. My school teachers were qualified, but they weren't willing or able to adapt their teaching, or see me an an individual kid. I wasn't academic, I struggled and because of that I became the class clown. I realise now that's because of my own fears and insecurities. A good teacher would have recognised that and found ways to engage me rather than writing me off. I see my Cert Ed as the start of my journey to being a teaching professional, sure I'll get the piece of paper telling everyone I'm a teacher, but its what I do with it that's important. I need to keep developing and learning. (Daniel, interview)

This is, for Daniel, very closely associated with continuing his own professional development, although not necessarily in a formalised or subject specific capacity.

Harriet, on her own admission hated school, writing and books, she always knew she wanted to be a hairdresser, and did the bare minimum to enable her to get into college. Having passed her level NVQ Level 2 and 3 in hairdressing, Harriet secured a job once she was qualified, but it was

> a village salon specialising in shampoo and sets, none of the techniques I had learnt in college. It wasn't exciting at all and made me

realise that I didn't actually want to do this for the rest of my life, standing on my feet all day and asking old ladies about their health, holidays and grandkids. (Harriet, interview)

Harriet never thought about being anything other than a hairdresser, and never believed that she was clever enough to be a teacher.

> I never thought about what else I could do until my salon took on an apprentice. The girl was doing her apprenticeship through a new training academy, and she loved it, came into my salon talking about how much she was enjoying studying and being taught by young trendy teachers, not like the ones who'd taught me. It got me thinking about whether I could do that, so I rang the academy and they told me that they didn't have any teaching jobs, and that I would need a teaching qualification anyway. I thought that was it, there was no way I was clever enough to go to a uni and get on a teaching course. I rang {College A} to talk through the different teaching courses, and was told about all the different options including the Cert Ed. It seemed less scary thinking about studying at college rather than uni, but I was told a place would only be offered if I had some teaching hours, but these could be voluntary. I rang the training academy back, and asked if I could do some voluntary teaching. Initially they said I could do a couple of hours shadowing, but I persisted and was eventually allowed to volunteer one day a week. That meant I could start on the Cert Ed, and 5 months into the course a part time paid post became available. (Harriet, interview)

For Harriet being professional is synonymous with the status and power associated with being a qualified teacher. She believes that the public perception of being a teacher is afforded a higher status than being a hairdresser, despite the length of time it took for her to gain her hairdressing qualifications. She feels respected in a teaching role.

> For me hairdressing is a profession in that you have to be qualified and it took me four years to be fully qualified. That said, I never felt a sense of pride that I get from telling people I am going to be a teacher. I think a lot of it is to do with being on a university course, my mum keeps telling people she will get to see me graduate, she never did that even when I passed all my hairdressing exams. It feels more grown up. I think I am respected more as a teacher, I like that feeling of being in front of a class and passing on my skills and knowledge. It's also a power thing, the students know I am in charge, I get to assess them, they behave and do as they are told.

Harriet will, she says, define herself as a hairdressing lecturer once she has finished the ITT course. She feels that recognising her hairdressing

background is important, without that she would have been unable to secure a place on the ITT course in the first place. She is continuing to update her own vocational skills, and acknowledges that up to date subject specialist knowledge is an important element of professionalism. Harriet recalls how she felt when she first started working at the training academy.

> Seeing the students develop, and the enthusiasm they showed made me realise that I had lost my own passion for the job. I can't blame where I worked, the fact is it was a small local salon with a regular client base, and so we didn't get asked to do any new or exciting treatments. Thinking about it, I know now that I had become complacent, I could do a cut and trim with my eyes shut, well obviously not literally! I just felt like I was going through the motions. Doing the Cert Ed has really made me see hairdressing in a whole new way, I see the trade through the eyes of my own students. They are fresh and keen, just like I used to be. It has really made me up my game, I'm doing research on new techniques and styles. I'm constantly updating my own skills and knowledge. (Harriet, interview)

Harriet is now thinking about her own professionalism in relation to her hairdressing knowledge. She is committed to updating her own expertise and development. This is not something which is a feature of either the trait or functionalist approaches to professionalism, but more in keeping with one of the ten characteristics proposed by Crawley (2015). The Lingfield Review (BIS, 2012) also cites one of the characteristics which underpins professionalism as seeking to extend and improves its field of knowledge. For Harriet, she feels that undertaking ITT has reignited the enthusiasm which made her choose a career in hairdressing in the first place.

4.7 The changing face of professionalism within College A

"The fractured professionalism characteristic of FE lecturers renders it a weak bulwark against the inroads of managerialism and performativity" (Avis and Bathmaker, 2006, p.176).

As of June 2017, the requirement to gain a teaching qualification is no longer part of a contractual obligation for newly appointed unqualified teachers at College A. When I spoke to the Head of Quality, she categorically stated that this was not financially driven. She did, however, acknowledge that the money which would have been paid for tuition fees or remission of hours is instead

being used to pay for a new internal, non accredited Programme of Excellence. This is a mandatory requirement for all new teaching staff. Even if they already have a teaching qualification, this Programme has to be undertaken as soon as they commence a teaching post. This is being supported by the new post of High Performance Advisors who, together with the Head of Quality, now have responsibility for delivering this programme. The rationale given for this is because

> Given the poor Ofsted inspection, one of the things which was highlighted was the inconsistencies in terms of classroom expectations, both from staff and students. As you know, there has only been me leading the quality team, although without an actual team! The college observation has been made up of Heads of Department and the SMT, but in this is in addition to their other roles. There hasn't, until the appointment of the HPA's, been anyone with sole responsibility for ensuring consistency in the standards of teaching and learning. Similarly there hasn't been anyone to ensure a clear and consistent approach to what the college expects of new members of teaching staff, and that is something Ofsted picked us up on (Head of Quality, interview)

It has been devised specifically to ensure all teaching staff are 'college ready', as the Senior Management Team feel there are specific skills which teaching staff need and which cannot be achieved purely by undertaking ITT. Examples of these include the planning, recording and monitoring tools which are used at College A, for example, ProMonitor, MarkBook and Pro Solution. As such a year long programme has been developed and implemented comprising four different phases. The first two must be undertaken and signed off before a new member of staff is deemed to have successfully completed their induction period.

> The Programme of Excellence hasn't been designed to replace the Cert Ed/PGCE, it isn't intended to be a cheap way of getting qualified staff because obviously it is only an internal thing, and if I am honest I think that staff will still choose to undertake ITT because if they decide to go and work elsewhere as teachers, they will need to have a recognised teaching qualification. If anyone asked me whether they should do the course with you, I would still advise them to do it, the P of E can't possibly replace your 2 year course, nor is it trying to. However given the current financial climate and our grade 3, this was seen as a viable option to ensure all staff who are new to college, regardless of whether they have a teaching qualification or not, are up

to speed with what the college expectations are. It also means that everyone involved in the process knows what to expect from teaching staff, there will be a more consistent approach to lesson observations. The reality is that with the number of teachers we have, there needs to be a clearer benchmark about what is and isn't an acceptable standard of teaching. We clearly hadn't got a handle on this which is part of the reason why it went so badly with Ofsted. (Head of Quality, interview)

I was particularly interested in the format of the Programme of Excellence, and how the language is used.

The first stage is called development as it contains all the elements which we consider a newly appointed member of teaching staff needs when they start at the college, but don't necessarily know. For example, the college teaching standards and our behaviour management policy. Professionalism seemed {to us} to be an all encompassing term which summarises everything we would expect to see from a teacher at College A, from dress to classroom expectations. Guidance relates to the way teachers guide their learners through their learning journey at college, and it is how we guide the teachers through the best way to do this. For example by using Moodle, assessment for and of learning. The independence stage is just that, the teachers should have been signed of their probation period, and as such are asked to complete a project within their own curriculum area before moving on to the last phase of autonomy. (Head of Quality, interview)

The final phase of autonomy requires the teacher to complete a reflective account of their time on the Programme of Excellence, and culminates in a formalised graded lesson observation in line with all teaching staff.

Autonomy was used as essentially the teacher is given the freedom to take responsibility for their own classroom and learners, but obviously we would still expect to see all college polices, procedures and expectations are adhered to, particularly in relation to the college teaching standards. (Head of Quality, interview)

The four phases of the programme are detailed below:

Phase 1	Development	Comprises an introduction to college systems, teaching standards and how to write SMART targets and learning outcomes. There is also a session on behaviour management, equality and diversity, Fundamental British Values and professionalism.
Phase 2	Guidance	The focus on this phase relates to assessment for and of learning, questioning techniques, embedding maths and English and measuring progression within the classroom. Another focus is the use of Moodle which is the Virtual Learning Environment used by College A.
Phase 3	Independence	At this point all teaching staff on the programme should have been signed off from their probation period, and are therefore asked to use this phase to complete a project within their own curriculum areas. This will be agreed in conjunction with the Head of Department, and presented to the curriculum team after completion.
Phase 4	Autonomy	This final phase culminates in a formal lesson observation in line with college policy, and the completion of a reflective account of both the Programme of Excellence and first year at the College. If everything has been completed successfully, there will be a sign off by the nominated HPA and the Head of Department.

Teaching staff on the programme receive 1.5 hours remission from teaching to enable them to undertake the course, and it is a roll on/roll off programme. This is seen as particularly important and very different to the previous corporate induction which all new staff undertook and was only run once a year, shortly before the start of the new academic year. This therefore meant that induction took place around the end of August or beginning of September. This therefore meant that if someone joined the college from

October onwards, they potentially had to wait nearly a year before undertaking formal induction.

Another key driver for the introduction of this programme is that it exempts new teaching staff from the formal lesson observations which all teaching staff are subjected to, regardless of whether they are qualified or unqualified.

In this context the term professional is deemed to be the way a member of staff behaves, and therefore works within the expectations College A has of all its staff. There is acknowledgement that a recognised teaching qualification is an ideal, but that it does not equip someone to 'hit the ground running' because it is a generic teaching course, and not organisation specific. As such a formal qualification is deemed desirable but no longer essential for a teaching role within college A. As ITT is still run at the college, the senior team think that staff will still choose to undertake ITT as it is recognised, accredited by a HEI and therefore transferable should the member of staff wish to seek a teaching position elsewhere. Any member of staff undertaking the course is currently eligible for a 5% reduction on the course fees. The removal of mandatory teaching qualifications at College A is, in some respects, still causing a slight air of concern by some of the senior managers. The Head of Quality stated that potential new applicants could be put off from joining an FE college that neither requires or supports its staff to gain a teaching qualification. This appears to be supported by the change in salary. Previously there was an unqualified and qualified teacher pay scale, this is no longer the case. There is no longer a financial reward for becoming qualified after starting employment as an unqualified teacher.

This closely relates to standards, and does, I would argue take away from the autonomy of the teachers within the classroom environment. The almost prescriptive programme is intent on shaping the role of a tutor within College A. There is an expectation that teachers will perform in a set way, for example in the way they dress, speak, and teach. The session on professionalism in the first phase of the Programme consists of a discussion around what is and is not acceptable professional behaviour at college A. It has a focus on the College code of conduct, and the College values. These include such things

as working within the College ethos and mission statement, and being aware of professional boundaries. This is emphasised in relation to the potential boundaries in relation to such things a social media, for example if staff are friends with students on Facebook.

This is little recognition of the fact that teachers teach their own subjects in a variety of different ways, but rather that they will fit a profile of graded teaching observations. These have recently been reintroduced as a result of an Ofsted inspection in 2017 which resulted in College A receiving a grade 3 which is requires improvement. Prior to this the College had a system of unannounced and ungraded lesson observations. This was introduced in 2013 as the senior management team felt that the previous system of graded observations was neither supportive, nor appropriate. The feeling was that the system should be one based on development rather than a summative grade, and feedback from staff was that the grade was the only thing that mattered.

I would argue that those who have recently undertaken ITT are not being treated as professional because they are still having to undertake the Programme of Excellence, there is no recognition of the fact that they have undertaken ITT, the SMT are therefore arguing that that is less desirable than a brand new member of staff who can be 'moulded' to the requirements of College A. This is supported by the view of one new member of staff who graduated from his ITT programme in July, and has successfully achieved an appointment teaching Public Services at the College. In his view

> this Programme of Excellence is a complete waste of time. I mean, I get that we need to be inducted, that's part and parcel of every new job, but having to spend an hour and a half being shown how to write learning outcomes is just a joke! I graduated with an outstanding teacher grade, learning outcomes aren't rocket science, the session was an insult to my intelligence. I wasn't the only one who thought that either. I get that Ofsted is top of everyone's agenda, but work with people who need help rather than this top down sheep dip approach. It cost me nearly 8 grand to get my PGCE, I worked hard to get that outstanding grade, and I wasted an hour and a half of my life on something I already know, and know how to do well. (Ben, interview)

I assert that the compulsion enforced by College A by the introduction of the Programme of Excellence is an attempt to enforce a view of professionalism

as "defined by management and expressed in its expectations of workers and the stipulation of tasks they will perform" (Troman, 1996, p.476).

As such, "increased surveillance of both institutions and individuals combined with rigorous target setting are producing mechanistic teaching and learning where the scope for professional activities and judgements is drastically reduced. This is reinforced by funding, quality assurance and inspection systems" (Daley *et al.*, 2015, p.102).

Standards is a term used by the majority of both trainees and staff when I carried out my research. This term seems to be synonymous with the notion of teacher professionality, and the recognition that there is a tangible list of traits which can be used to measure performance. Both the 2014 Professional Standards produced by the Education and Training Foundation, and the Teaching Standards in operation in College A share some similarities. However, those at the college are specifically related to teaching, and are, according to John,

> yet another tick box exercise, we have more of these to ensure that we get a good grade, it's another judgement and sometimes not even from someone with a teaching qualification. It really narks me that someone from the top can just walk into my classroom, stay and hour and then rate me. Teaching is far more than what goes off in the classroom, it's firefighting and crowd control sometimes. What makes it worse is that half of them haven't taught for decades if at all. (John, interview)

For John this demonstrates that within College A "teachers are encouraged to tailor what they do in the classroom during their graded observations to ensure that they comply with prescribed notions of 'good' or 'outstanding' practice. (Gleeson *et al.*, 2015, p.83). It would also go some way towards explaining why a number of teachers are exiting the profession altogether. At College A nearly 30% of teachers have left since September 2017. This includes four of the twenty two from my 2016/17 cohort. They were the last members of staff to receive funding for the ITT course, and despite this, they have chosen to exit the teaching profession altogether. "An unprecedented number of teachers are exiting the profession unable to withstand the bureaucratic overload and constant insults to their professionalism from

meddling ministers" (John Hugh, Liberal Democrat education spokesman reported in BBC news 23.3.17).

This completely resonates with the Programme of Excellence, for Ben, the reality of work as a newly qualified teacher is, in his words, 'the polar opposite' of the last two years undertaking ITT.

> I loved doing the PGCE, we were encouraged to think outside the box. It was great doing the course with so many people from different organisations, colleges, training providers and industry. I got as much from listening to them in class as I did from my tutors. Call me naive, but I thought the things I had excelled at, using creative approaches to teaching, engaging learners etc would be the things that I would be able to do. They were the things that got me the job here in the first place! Now I'm in post, I am starting to realise that actually what I do I the classroom is a very small part of what college are looking for. I don't have time to plan or prepare an outstanding lesson, I am inundated with paperwork, and the only remission I get for being a newly qualified teacher is taken up by doing this course. It's of no value, I would rather be able to use my judgement and choose which sessions to go to, having one of ProSolution would be useful, but a lot of what is on the programme isn't going to help me at all. It's even more annoying as these constant learning walks and observations are sending staff over the edge, nearly every day one or other of our team phone in sick. Then you are losing even more of your planning time by covering for them. (Ben, interview)

Ben is already reconsidering his career choice, and completely frustrated with trying to balance the demands of the organisation and his own professional values. He feels that the ITT course did not prepare him for the reality of what he terms micro managing. He feels that his professional judgements are constantly being undermined, and that College A shows scant regard for his teaching qualification.

> I'm really starting to wonder why I bothered doing my PGCE. It's a universally recognised teaching qualification, and yet this place takes no account of the fact that I've got it. I'm constantly behind with everything, I used to think teachers had it relatively easy, and at least got decent holidays and working hours. I can't believe how naïve I was! I take marking home every weekend, I'm behind with my planning and my HoD sends emails on almost an hourly basis telling me that I've forgotten to update Markbook. I know the progress my learners are making, I'm professional enough to know which are at risk, which need extra help. But it's as if I aren't trusted. (Ben, interview)

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This is very much in keeping with the managerialist typology of professionalism which Taubman (2015) refers to. It is typified by requiring all newly appointed teaching staff to undertake the Programme of Excellence, and takes no account of prior teaching qualifications or experience. It is further supported by the managerialist culture which Simkins and Lumby (2002) argue is removing the autonomy of professionals such as Ben and placing power in the hands of managers.

This study has clearly highlighted the views of the trainees undertaking ITT prior to the revocation of the 2007 Regulations. The themes of standards, subject knowledge and behaviour were identified and views of professionalism related to these in a variety of different ways.

The life histories of six trainees detailed the reasons for embarking on ITT, and how this helped to define their own professionalism. The recently enforced Programme of Excellence enabled me to ascertain the views of a newly qualified PGCE graduate as he embarked on his first teaching post at College A.

Standards, subject knowledge and behaviour are key themes in trainee teachers perceptions of themselves as professionals. The ETF standards (2014) can contribute to this, but the standards and expectations from both an individual and organisation also have an impact. There was agreement that public recognition of successfully completing ITT and being recognised as a teacher supports the "high and public status" characteristic proposed by Crawley (2015) and "membership of a group earning and deserving the respect of the community" (BIS, 2012).

Subject knowledge is intrinsically linked to professionalism. This is a key feature of the trait approach (Greenwood, 1957; Millerson, 1964;, Sims, Fineman and Gabriel, 1993). There was, on the whole, a consensus amongst my trainees that subject knowledge is of paramount importance and that it can be enhanced, but not replaced by ITT.

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Being professional is closely affiliated towards behaving in a certain way (Clow, 2001) and that was something all my trainees referred to. There were, however, differences in how this was identified. For some it was specifically related to modelling professional behaviour in the classroom, for others it was linked to all behaviour and conduct befitting a member of the teaching profession.

The final theme I identified was that of autonomy. This is one of three core issues related to being a professional (Hoyle and John, 1995). The others are knowledge and responsibility. Knowledge has already been identified as one of my key themes. The lack of autonomy was highlighted in relation to the managerialist and performativity culture of New Professionalism. Trainees do, however, feel there is an opportunity to exhibit some autonomy within the classroom, although that may not be well received by the management within their organisations. All trainees take responsibility for both themselves and their learners.

All of these themes can be linked to respect. Trainees respect both themselves and their learners, but fundamentally they respect what is, in their opinion, the definition of professionalism and act accordingly.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by summarising the key findings from this study in relation to the main research questions. It then discusses the contribution which this piece of work has made to understanding what professionalism means to teachers within FE, and why trainees still chose to undertake ITT despite the revocation of the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations. The limitations of this study are explored, and specific recommendations are proposed. The chapter concludes with a reflective account from my perspective as a teacher educator during this period.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

"Theoretical and political perspectives on the nature of professionalism in teaching are abundant, but little is known about the views of teachers themselves" (Swann *et al.*, 2010, p.549).

This study has adopted an interpretivist approach to investigate the concept of professionalism from the perspective of FE teachers undertaking ITT at College A. Some, not all, of the trainees were employed by the College. In addition it sought to understand the views of the Senior Management Team at College A during the lifespan of the project. I asked the trainees the following questions:

- How long have you been teaching for?
- What is your understanding of the term 'professional'? Please could you explain what the term professional means to you?
- Why did you undertake your Initial Teacher Training qualification?
- Do you consider yourself to be a professional? Please could you explain why/why not?
- Does the requirement to have a teaching qualification make someone professional? Why do you think this is/is not the case?
- Would you have undertaken this qualification if it wasn't mandatory? If so, why?

- What are your views on the revocation of the 2007 Regulations? Do you think this will impact on the professionalism of teachers within the Further Education sector? How?

I asked these in order to discover:

- What does professionalism mean to trainee teachers working in Further Education?
- Why are trainees still undertaking ITT in the light of the revocation of the 2007 regulations?

Professionalism means different things to different people, but is closely linked to adherence to a set of standards. These are not necessarily either the Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers which have been produced by the Education and Training Foundation (2014), or those within the different organisations trainees work in. Without exception all the trainees see adhering to some standards as synonymous with being professional. What differs is which standards. These might be imposed externally, or they might be intrinsic. They might be more closely aligned to subject specialism rather than teaching.

Those undertaking ITT had a variety of different reasons for undertaking the course, and seeking to become qualified FE teachers. These varied from intrinsic motivation, possibly due to undertaking vocational work and wanting to achieve a perceived higher status as a teacher. For others, it was related to extrinsic motivation and receiving monetary reward as a result of gaining a teaching post. There was, certainly amongst those who teach vocational subjects such as hairdressing and motor vehicle courses, a link to status. They perceived being a teacher would afford them a higher status than that held prior to undertaking ITT. As such vocational tutors are more likely to define themselves as teachers first and foremost.

Only two of the trainees would consider themselves as dual professionals. Those who were relatively new to a teaching role showed more allegiance to their subject specialism. This was also true of those who worked either as

volunteer teachers or on fractional contracts as they still worked within industry. Those in a fulltime teaching role defined themselves as lecturers or teachers. This was because of the lack of opportunity to keep their subject specialist knowledge updated, and the managerialist way in which FE has eroded the autonomy of teachers. This is something which prevents the development of triple professionalism. From a personal perspective I feel I am able to work with other professionals, but that is only because of the uniqueness of my role as Centre Manager. I am able to meet with other professionals across the Consortium on a regular basis, and attend training events. A key feature of the Consortium is the engagement with peers. It also contributes some financial assistance to those updating their skills, as demonstrated by the financial support I have been given to part fund this study.

The same cannot be said of my participants. None of the trainees aligned themselves with the triple professionalism approach advocated by Spours and Hodgson. This was fundamentally because of the restrictive climate in FE, either in colleges or private training providers, and the increasing number of teaching contact hours which staff are required to fulfil. Certainly within College A there is limited opportunity to undertake any non mandatory CPD which usually takes the form of whole college development days, and is, according to Scales, P. (2012, p.6) 'sheep dip' CPD

> You have probably experienced 'sheep dip' CPD. At the end of an academic year or during some downtime, you are 'asked' to attend, en masse, a CPD event probably hosted by an outside provider who doesn't know you or anything about your work. Easily auditable: probably a waste of time and money.

5.3 Contribution of this Research

This has been a small scale study, and as such it does not seek to make generalisations in relation to the findings. However there are a number of conclusions which can be drawn:

- Conceptions of professional and professionalism are complex and difficult to fully capture. There is no one definition which encompasses

all the different definitions, but the common factor appears to be that of studying and certification.

- There are those who are still committed to undertake Initial Teacher Training despite the pervading trend towards deregulation.

- Public recognition for becoming a teacher is a desirable and extrinsic motivation for many trainees. This is particularly true for vocational tutors such as hairdressers.

- Acting as a professional can be, for many, intrinsically linked to subject knowledge, standards and behaviour, and therefore a mandatory teaching qualification can only enhance this.

- The public perception of being a teacher is afforded a higher social status than some vocational jobs, and therefore a desirable position to achieve.

This research has been instrumental in facilitating a policy change within College A. By no longer requiring staff to have a teaching qualification, the Senior Management Team had prioritised subject knowledge over teaching pedagogy. As discussed previously, the introduction of the Programme of Excellence coincided with the removal of the requirement for newly appointed lecturers to gain a teaching qualification. This was not communicated clearly to either myself as Centre Manager for Teacher Education, nor to current members of staff. This led to very ambiguous messages being relayed to teaching staff. There were those on old contracts which still required them to gain a full teaching qualification within three years of employment. As such they were trainee teachers, but despite this were subject to the full lesson observation process. Conversely those who were newly employed at College A and had a full teaching qualification were exempt from formal lesson observations and had to undertake the Programme of Excellence. Those new to the college without a full teaching qualification were treated in the same way. This has caused both anxiety and frustration.

The lesson observation process has changed significantly at College A as a result of the last Ofsted inspection and the resulting grade 3. Prior to this lesson observations were unannounced and ungraded as it was felt these

were more supportive and appropriate. However the decision was reversed for the academic year 2017/18, and graded lesson observations have been introduced. Staff who are now observed and graded by the college observation team at grade 3 or below are subject to re-observation and put on performance management. This was the case for two of my current trainees who have argued that they are trainees and are used to my developmental and supportive lesson observations as part of the ITT course. One of them was so upset at being put on performance management that he decided to resign from the college. He was not alone, within the first term of 2017/18, 43 members of teaching staff resigned. Morale was low, and as a result the Principal held a series of informal meetings with staff to air any concerns they had, or to seek clarification on the steps being put in place ready for the next Ofsted inspection. At one of these meetings I raised my concerns about the ambiguities in the observation process. I explained that the Programme of Excellence appears to be replacing ITT, and that the two approaches are not being delivered either consistently or fairly.

I was assured that the Programme of Excellence was never intended to replace the Certificate in Education or PGCE, and that if staff complete the full year on the Programme, they are far more likely to remain at College A. As such, they will then be offered some financial contribution towards ITT, although this will not be the full tuition fees as happened previously. This does however show a commitment to, and recognition of the importance of gaining a full teaching qualification. I had never been told this, and had I not raised the issue in this meeting, I do not know when I would have been told. This potentially has an impact on the number of trainees enrolling on ITT, there are three applicants already for the academic year 2018/19 who have successfully completed the Programme of Excellence and do not hold a full teaching qualification.

The Principal suggested I meet with the whole college observation team to discuss the matter further, and to seek a solution which is fair to everyone. At this it was agreed that trainee teachers should not be subject to the full lesson observation process, but just the developmental one that is carried out by the

teacher education team as part of the ITT course. As the Senior Management Team were unaware of the teaching standards which trainee teachers are judged on during the ITT course, I delivered a presentation to all those who are part of the cross college observation team. A small working party has been set up to revise the college teaching standards and I have been invited to be part of that. There is actually very little difference between the standards, what is profoundly different is the way the standards are used. This feels a significant turning point, I now feel that the college are trying to align ITT and the Programme of Excellence, rather than the two being perceived to be vastly different and separate entities.

5.4 Limitations of this Research

One of the disadvantages of a case study can be applied to this research; the fact that the small number of subjects involved means there is little basis for generalisation. This is, according to Tellis (1997) limiting and therefore microscopic. I was acutely aware that I was dealing with a very small number of participants, I was only dealing with those studying at College A. This was intentional, I could have widened the research and sent questionnaires to those at other partner colleges within the Consortium. However, after discussing with other Centre Managers, I feel that the results I gained are representative of those studying ITT in other institutions. What is specific to my research is that College A no longer requires its own staff to gain a teaching qualification, nor does it involve the Teacher Education team in any of its internal staff training of teaching staff. However, as discussed in the previous section, there may now be a move towards a more cohesive approach to teacher education across the college as a whole.

I could have carried out a comparative study, and ascertained the views of trainees embarking on ITT after the Regulations were revoked. This was something that I did consider, however the reality was that I was carrying out doctoral research whilst holding down a full time job. The nature of my work means that I work evenings and some weekends, either teaching or carrying out lesson observations. That is in addition to the planning and marking which is a large part of my role, and which I do not have any remission of hours for. I

felt that there would be insufficient time to do this properly, and that I had never intended it to be a comparative study.

This has been a small scale piece of research, one which has been carried out in my one organisation, and one therefore in which I was immersed. I have been open and honest from the start, the participants were aware from the beginning that I was wearing three different hats throughout the process - teacher educator, researcher and doctoral student. As such it could be argued that my own positionality had an impact on the objectivity of my research. Those who took part did so willingly and were free to withdraw at any time. However the fact still remains that they were being taught and assessed by me whilst undertaking their ITT. Therefore it could be argued that I was too close to my participants.

It could also be argued that I was too close to the subject, particularly during the period when I faced redundancy and had to reapply for my own role. I found that incredibly challenging, particularly during the interviews. It was not easy to appear impartial. I passionately believe that ITT has a positive impact on trainees, and ultimately impacts on their professionalism. This was, however, nothing in comparison to the challenges I faced when interviewing the Head of Quality when College A revoked its requirement for newly appointed staff to gain a teaching qualification.

This study forced me to challenge my own values and beliefs, particularly when the situation in College A changed in June 2017, and newly appointed staff were no longer required to gain a teaching qualification. As such, they were not supported to gain one either financially, or by the remission of teaching hours. This study demonstrates that despite the revocation of the 2007 teaching standards, there are still those who are willing to invest both time and money to gain a full teaching qualification regardless.

5.5 Recommendations

Those undertaking ITT do so for a variety of reasons. These are:

- Personal career advancement

- Mandatory requirement
- Improve own knowledge on teaching

There needs to be a closer correlation between the skills needed in the classroom, and the perceived benefits of undertaking ITT. Employers are currently neither supporting, nor requiring teaching staff to gain a full teaching qualification. The lack of financial support from organisations, and the unwillingness of many potential ITT trainees to take on a student loan is reducing the number of trainees. As such there are those who would benefit from taking the course who do not apply.

There needs to be recognition from staff at College A that ITT is an appropriate course, and equips trainees with the requisite skills and knowledge to teach effectively. What is needed is the mentor support and recognition that staff are newly qualified, and some form of remission of hours to support newly qualified staff. The Programme of Excellence does not allow for autonomy within the classroom, and does not differentiate between those who have a teaching qualification and those who do not.

Teacher educators could contribute to the Programme of Excellence, and provide support and a bridge between those who are newly qualified, and those who are new to College A. The remission of hours for newly appointed staff could be used to enable staff to work in a more collaborative way, and therefore enable the sharing of good practice. This would facilitate the continuous enhancement of expertise identified by the Lingfield Review (BIS, 2012).

In addition, there needs to be an acknowledgment that the managerialist approach to professionalism is limiting and in some cases preventing FE professionals from demonstrating autonomy. As such the capacity for engaging with peers and other educational professionals is marginalised as teachers struggle to cope with the demands of the job and sector as a whole. As such there is scope for a new form of professionalism which encompasses the different elements of the existing approaches. My participants acknowledged the value of undertaking ITT, and the acquisition of

pedagogical teaching knowledge as identified within the trait approach. Similarly many valued the status afforded by becoming a teacher, and both the public and personal recognition associated with this (Crawley, 2015). What is missing currently from the different definitions is the recognition of the complexity of FE teachers struggling to maintain their professionalism whilst working within a culture run on performativity and accountability. As such autonomy for FE teachers does not exist.

5.6 A reflective account – A view from the front line

Undertaking this study has been invigorating, challenging and exhausting in equal measure. When I began, somewhat naively, by undertaking the literature review, I soon came to realise that change has been the only constant during my career as a teacher educator. Whilst I was aware of the changes at the time, it was only as I started the literature review that I began to reflect on the major collective impact these have had.

I have been subjected to the constant government interference in ITT for the last 10 years, and have experienced the highs, and more frequent lows that have accompanied the changing nature of the FE teacher. When I began, there was a feet dragging reluctance amongst some who were told they had to gain a recognised teaching qualification, often accompanied by a petulant, 'why do I have to do this, I've been teaching for years' face. With virtually no exceptions, those who had to be dragged kicking and screaming onto the ITT programme reluctantly agreed that they had learnt something about how to become a better teacher.

The sudden removal of the teaching regulations felt like a bereavement, myself and fellow teacher educators were incensed and saddened at the reckless way the sector was being treated. It felt personal, as if we were not doing a good enough job at creating a professional FE teaching workforce. This was accompanied by a sickening realisation that if the requirement for mandatory teaching qualifications was removed, indubitably jobs would be on the line. This was soothed somewhat by the recognition that by putting the onus on employers, surely they would still see the need for teaching staff to

be qualified? It was only as the applications dropped from a steady stream to a trickle that the reality set in, and slowly the teacher education team at College A began to be redeployed or made redundant. The final nail in the coffin was the increase in fees. There was an understandable reluctance amongst many of those who wanted to become qualified teachers to take on a student loan. The unique demographic of FE teachers means that the majority are mature learners who have financial commitments, and as such a further debt or loan is not an attractive proposition.

I firmly believe that a teaching qualification has made me a more professional teacher, and it grates that my own organisation has prioritised its own organisational requirements over ITT. There can be no doubt that money has played a huge part in the decision to no longer fund ITT for unqualified teaching staff at College A. In a period where the FE sector is under increasing financial pressure, the appointment of five High Performance Advisors and the newly created post of Head of Quality demonstrates that College A is willing to invest in unaccredited in-house training rather than nationally recognised ITT. It is also unwilling to use the expertise of the teacher education team, despite the reduction in hours of the staff within the department. This would seem to me to be a logical solution. I have lost count of the number of staff who have asked why neither myself or my teacher education colleague are involved in either the delivery of the Programme of Excellence or any college wide staff training. This is, I would argue, a huge oversight on the part of the senior management team. The recent Budget (November 2017) announced £40m teacher training fund for underperforming schools in England which does, in my opinion, show that the Conservative Government now recognise the crucial role that qualified teachers play.

This forced me to challenge my own professionalism, and rather than berating the situation, I have realised that my commitment to my own professionalism is the thing that drives me on. As a teacher educator, I have not been invited to contribute to either the planning or delivery of the Programme of Excellence. The decision about what to include has been decided at senior leadership level, and does not, in my opinion, enable staff who are new to

teaching within College A to develop their own professionalism. Rather it reinforces the prescriptive managerialist dictat that is at odds with many of the traits of being considered a professional. This links to the audit culture that is a feature of the FE sector, and one which is, particularly within College A linked to the requirements of Ofsted.

I have been fortunate to teach many of the staff at college A during my career as teacher educator. I have been nominated for a Principal's award, but am most proud of the fact that some of the staff I have taught have been recognised for outstanding teaching and received awards. I feel a great sense of pride and achievement that I have, in some way, contributed to those.

I see my own professionalism as closely tied to the responsibility to work with other professionals and the wider community, one of the characteristics proposed by Crawley (2015). The Consortium holds regular Network meetings which I attend in my role as Centre Manager. I am fully committed to updating my knowledge and expertise, as demonstrated by undertaking this thesis. It has been undertaken from a desire to further my knowledge within the field of teacher education. I am not required to hold a Doctorate, but have chosen to do so. I have also chosen to be a member of the Society for Education and Training. I practice "according to agreed and acknowledged codes of conduct, standards of training, competence, responsibility and understanding" (Crawley, 2015). Many of my colleagues at College A did not pay their fees to IfL once they were required to do so themselves, nor do they now choose to belong to the Society for Education and Training.

As I am coming towards the end of my teaching career, I can look back at the reasons why I became a teacher in the first place. Fundamentally it was to arm myself with the skills and knowledge to be an effective nurse educator in the first instance. At the time I did not foresee that I would ever leave the nursing profession, let alone become a teacher educator.

In 2015 I did contemplate terminating this doctoral research, and took a year long leave of absence. This coincided with the restructure of the Teacher Education team at College A. Facing the prospect of redundancy forced me to

consider my career, and I contemplated moving away from teacher education altogether. I was, however, unable to do so. The passion I have for teaching teachers is what continues to drive me on. The completion of this thesis does not mark the end of what has proved to be a long and fraught journey. Rather, it affords me the opportunity to reflect back on what has been a particularly tumultuous time in the career of a teacher educator from both a national, local and personal perspective.

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Appendix A – Ethical Approval

**The
School
Of
Education.**

Sally Brown
Educational Studies (EDUR15)

Head of School
Professor Cathy Nutbrown

School of Education
388 Glossop Road
Sheffield
S10 2JA

16 September 2013

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Dear Sally

ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER
What does professionalism mean to teachers within the Further Education Sector?

Thank you for submitting your ethics application. I am writing to confirm that your application has now been approved.

We recommend you refer to the reviewers' additional comments (please see attached). You should discuss how you are going to respond to these comments with your supervisor BEFORE you proceed with your research.

This letter is evidence that your application has been approved and should be included as an Appendix in your final submission.

Good luck with your research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Dan Goodley
Chair of the School of Education Ethics Review Panel

cc   Dr Darren Webb

Enc   Ethical Review Feedback Sheet(s)

Appendix B – Participant information sheet for Initial Teacher Trainees

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time, you do not have to give a reason.

The aim of this project is to consider how teachers within Further Education consider their own professionalism, and whether they think that the mandatory requirement to gain a teaching qualification as a result of the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations has contributed to this professionalism. My reasons for embarking on this project are as a direct result of the Professionalism in Further Education Interim Report of the Independent Review Panel (BIS 2012) which has reported that "a system of regulatory compulsion has not proved to be a successful means of achieving a professional workforce, and that colleges and providers, as employers, should be given the freedom and the responsibility to decide what arrangements are most appropriate for their organisations and their staff".

As you are currently on an Initial Teacher Training course, I would like to gain your views on whether you think that teachers within the Further Education Sector should be considered 'professional', and whether mandatory teaching qualifications contribute to this professionalism in any way. I aim to gather this information by administering a questionnaire, and then carrying out semi structured follow up interviews with six participants.

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications. The audio recordings of the interviews made during this research will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. The results of the research will be published in my doctoral thesis which will be lodged within the library at the University of Sheffield.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information.

Should you require further information, please contact myself or my supervisor

Sally Brown   edp10sb@sheffield.ac.uk

Supervisor's details: Darren Webb   d.webb@sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix C – Participant information sheet for Senior Management Team

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time, you do not have to give a reason.

The aim of this project is to consider how teachers within Further Education consider their own professionalism, and whether they think that the mandatory requirement to gain a teaching qualification as a result of the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations has contributed to this professionalism. My reasons for embarking on this project are as a direct result of the Professionalism in Further Education Interim Report of the Independent Review Panel (BIS 2012) which has reported that "a system of regulatory compulsion has not proved to be a successful means of achieving a professional workforce, and that colleges and providers, as employers, should be given the freedom and the responsibility to decide what arrangements are most appropriate for their organisations and their staff".

As you are currently one of the Senior Management Team with responsibility for the recruitment and retention of teaching staff, performance management and the quality of teaching standards, I would like to gain your views on how the 2007 Regulations were implemented and enforced within the College, and what will happen once these are revoked. I intend to do this by carrying out semi structured interviews.

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications. The audio recordings of the interviews made during this research will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. The results of the research will be published in my doctoral thesis which will be lodged within the library at the University of Sheffield.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information.

Should you require further information, please contact myself or my supervisor

Sally Brown   edp10sb@sheffield.ac.uk

Supervisor's details: Darren Webb   d.webb@sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix D – Participant Consent Form

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet and this consent form.

The aim of this project is to consider how teachers within Further Education consider their own professionalism, and whether they think that the mandatory requirement to gain a teaching qualification as a result of the 2007 Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations has contributed to this professionalism. My reasons for embarking on this project are as a direct result of the Professionalism in Further Education Interim Report of the Independent Review Panel (BIS 2012) which has reported that "a system of regulatory compulsion has not proved to be a successful means of achieving a professional workforce, and that colleges and providers, as employers, should be given the freedom and the responsibility to decide what arrangements are most appropriate for their organisations and their staff".

If you are wiling to participate in this research, and agree with the statements below, please complete this form and return to me.

Thank you

Sally Brown

Centre Manager for Teacher Education

I am willing to participate in this research, and understand that:

- I have read the information on this study and understand the information is only for research purposes
- My participation is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time without giving a reason
- I am under no obligation to take part
- My identify and that of my employer will be made anonymous
- I can check the interview transcripts to ensure they are an accurate account

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix E – Interview schedule for Senior Management Team

Introduction – Thank participant for taking part, reiterate the information on the participant information Sheet.

Questions -

How long has this college required its teaching staff to have a full teaching qualification?

Was this prior to he introduction of the 2007 Further Education Teachers Qualifications (England) Regulations?

Could you explain why this is, does the college see a teaching qualification and professionalism linked in some way? If so, how?

The recommendations by the Lingfield review are that mandatory teaching qualifications for teachers within the Further Education sector are no longer necessary, yet this college is still expecting unqualified teachers to gain a teaching qualification within 3 years of coming into post.

- Could you tell me why this is?
- What are your thoughts on the recommendations to remove the mandatory requirements?

What support will college offer to staff undertaking initial teacher training?

Thank you for taking part.

Appendix F – Interview schedule for Trainees

Introduction – Thank participant for taking part, reiterate the information on the participant information Sheet.

Questions -

Please tell me a little bit about yourself, and how you came to be undertaking ITT.

What do you understand the term professional to mean?

What do you think are the characteristics of a profession? Are you aware of any?

Do you think undertaking ITT will make you more professional?

- How?
- Why?

How do you define yourself?

- Subject specialist?
- Teacher?
- Both?
- Why?

What do you perceive to be the benefits to undertaking ITT?

- To you?
- To your organisation?
- To your learners?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you for taking part.

Appendix G – Sample transcript

Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research, please can you confirm that you have been given a participant information sheet, and that you are happy to take part.

John: Yes, that's fine. I understand.

So John, please can you tell me a little bit about yourself, and how you came to be doing the Cert Ed?

John: So basically I left school after doing my A levels. All I ever cared about was football, it was what I wanted to do, earn mega bucks and live the high life. My mum and dad never saw that as anything more than pie in the sky, but the more they pushed me to get a 'proper' job, the more I dug my heels in. Truth is, I didn't really see myself making it big, but I didn't know what else I could do or was any good at. Football was the only thing I ever really loved doing. Doing A levels was a compromise as I knew I never wanted to go to uni, but it bought me a bit more time. Once I left I got a job in a call centre, I hated it and lived for playing Sunday League football. At least I got a wage every month, but I never saw it as a long term option. It was only when I started helping out with the junior league that I got talking to one of the dads. He mentioned that I was good with the young 'uns, and that he was a sports teacher in a college. I suddenly saw that as something to work towards, but the chances are I'll not get anywhere without a degree in sport, and that's not an option money wise now I'm paying rent every month. At least teaching functional skills is a foot in the door, it's made me realise that I like working in a college environment and that I am good with the kids.

I don't particularly enjoy teaching the subject, but I do enjoy being a teacher. That's why I am doing the Cert Ed, I like being in front of a class. I knew when I took the job on that I would have to get a teaching qual, they told me that at the interview. But they also said that college would pay for it, and that it would be taught here. That was a big plus for me, somebody paying my fees and not having to go to a uni, it was a no brainer really. I like the fact that I'm dealing

with people, working in a call centre does your head in after a while. You are given a script to work from, you don't need to use your brain, and even asking to go to the toilet was a big deal, everything you did was monitored, supervisors listening in to your calls. I felt like a nobody.

I'm enjoying the Cert Ed, I'm not just saying that cos you are teaching it, but I think it makes sense. Teaching isn't rocket science, and some of the stuff is what I would do anyway, but it's nice to know why I am doing it.

Thank you John. You've told me why you are doing the Cert Ed, please could you tell me what you understand the term professional to mean.

John: I suppose it's to do with the way you behave, and the way other people see you. To go back to footy, they are just professional footballers because it's what they do for a living and they earn a fortune from it. That's clearly not going to happen to teachers, I don't earn in a year what most of them earn in a week!

To go back to my call centre job, I was never trusted, I wasn't seen as a person with thoughts or opinions, I literally just sat in a booth along with a load of other people. We couldn't talk or have a laugh, literally you used to sit with your head phones on and wait for customers to ring in. You always had to be on your A game because supervisors could listen in at any time. I never did or said anything I shouldn't, but it was the fact that none of us were trusted, it was too Big Brother for me. I never left a shift knowing I had done something worthwhile, there was zero job satisfaction. Doing this job I am doing something with loads of job satisfaction, particularly as the kids don't want to be there in the first place. Most of them think that when they come to college they don't have to do maths and English even if they failed it at school. They aren't happy when they find out they have to do it again, they think that they will just be doing mechanics, or plumbing or whatever it is they picked. That's the bit I find most challenging, but also the best bit. If I've got a kid in my class who really hates English and doesn't see the point in coming to class, if I can get them to keep coming and engage then just a little bit, then it's worth all the moaning. That's why I want my classes to be fun, I want them to want to

come, I feel as if I've done a good job then. Sure, sometimes it's like pulling teeth, but I go home with a good feeling at the end of the day.

I think it's to do with being seen to be in control, and trusted to do the right thing. The way I behave, I think, says a lot about me. I think that I am a professional. I speak to the kids in an appropriate manner, I dress smartly and I don't do anything I shouldn't. Sometimes we have a laugh in class, but to be honest you need that, functional skills is always better if you make it fun. They still know that rules are rules, I don't tolerate any messing about and the kids know how far they can push things. He {the Head} doesn't get it. He slated me for the kids behaviour and yet they were working! I couldn't believe it when I got my feedback, every one of them kids was engaged and my results are good. Just because they weren't sitting in silence and hanging on my every word doesn't make me unprofessional. I wouldn't care but he {the Head} hasn't been in a classroom for years. They would eat him for breakfast. Surely what matters is that learning is taking place, and retention and achievement are good, particularly as that's all we ever hear about.

Thank you. You've told me what you understand professional to mean, what do you think are the characteristics of a profession? Are you aware of any?

John: I think it's being qualified, a profession is something that other people look up to, because they know you have worked hard to get there. I know my mum and dad are proud to tell people I am a teacher (even though I've not finished the Cert Ed yet), and I think that is because they think teachers are somebody. I think that's why they weren't happy about me wanting to be a footballer, for them it wasn't a 'proper' job, just something you did if you got lucky and were spotted. It's like doctors or lawyers, they are people who have studied and done exams and stuff. They are seen as being higher up in the pecking order and that's why they get more money. So I think that a profession is to do with studying and learning.

Thank you. Do you think that undertaking the Cert Ed will make you more professional?

John: I guess so, for a start it will show me the right way to do things, and the reasons why I should do things that way. Like I said before, I kind of knew the way to get the kids to listen to me, and the logical way to plan a lesson, but when we've done all the learning theory stuff with you in class, it just confirms that what I am doing is right. I suppose it means I can link the theory to the practical. I am also thinking back to how I was taught, it's only a couple of years since I left school, and I can remember what did and didn't work for me. The subjects I did best in were the ones where the teachers engaged me, even if I didn't really like the subject. That's the reason I did English A level, not because I really loved the subject, but I had the best English teacher for GCSE, and she made it fun.

Thank you. How do you define yourself? Are you a subject specialist, a teacher or both?

John: A teacher without a doubt, even if I'm not a qualified one yet. I don't think of myself as a subject specialist but I think that's because I teach functional skills, and it isn't seen as a 'proper subject'. If I taught sports, then I would probably call myself a sports teacher, but lets face it, some people (including my mum and dad) don't really understand what functional skills is!

Thank you. What do you think are the benefits of doing ITT to you?

John: Like I said before, it helps me to teach the right way, and it gives me a qualification that people understand and recognise.

What about the benefits for the college?

John: They get a trained workforce, that's what Ofsted are looking for. They want to know that the kids aren't being taught by people who haven't got a clue what they are doing.

And what about the benefits to your learners?

John: To be honest, I don't think it will make that much difference to the kids, they think I am qualified anyway. I don't tell them I'm not, and when you come and observe me they just think it's part of the college observation process.

That's interesting, why don't you want your learners to know you aren't qualified?

John: I don't think they would respect me in the same way. They do as I tell them although we have a laugh. They don't like functional skills, nobody does. If they thought they weren't being taught by a qualified teacher I think they would play up.

Thank you, is there anything else you would like to add?

John: So for me this job isn't really about the subject, it's about being in charge. Nobody really wants to take functional skills, they are doing it because they need a level 2 qualification and this is an easier way than taking a GCSE. My department are all about numbers, we are constantly being sent meaningless emails, is your scheme of work up to date, have you put all the predicted grades in, blah, blah. None of that is why I wanted to be a teacher, none of that stuff will help me to help my learners. I mean, I know you need to plan and check on what they are doing, but I never had the basics of how to plan. Until I came in your class, I didn't know what a learning outcome was, or the difference between AoL or AfL. This place has got the wrong priorities, it doesn't care about staff, and the pointless pile of paperwork, admin is the thing that drives this place, and it's the thing that causes me the most stress. How does that help anyone other than the suits? I have my own ways of knowing my learners, I measure the distance they travel, I know who is getting it and who isn't. Yet all my HoD does is send snotty emails telling me that MarkBook isn't up to date, all that does is add to my stress levels, and none of it makes my teaching any better.

Thank you John. I will type up this interview and send you the transcript to make sure you are happy with it.

Appendix I – Final Stage of Thematic Analysis