

Re-thinking Professionalism In Further Education In Post-devolution Wales

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requirements of candidature for the degree of PhD
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Abstract

This thesis explores professionalism in FE teaching in Wales. It also considers government policies for professionalising teaching in the sector and, in particular, if the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) Professional Standards have been material in shaping teacher professionalism. The research was based on interviews and focus groups with teacher-trainers and trainee teachers in two universities and four FE colleges in South Wales, and the documentation of their training programmes. The research also includes an analysis of policy documents and interviews with officials responsible for policy in Wales.

The research draws on current sociological interest in professionalism and the way that can be defined by employers in the interests of the firm. The theoretical basis of the analysis is Bernstein's concept of pedagogic discourse; and it is argued that professionalism has been re-contextualised by government and LLUK as an official discourse, represented in the Professional Standards as a set of generic competences, underpinned by trainability and linked to the attainment of qualifications. This generic discourse defines professionalism in ways that privilege corporatism and flexibility; its generic nature promotes the idea of trainability for teachers, in much the same way as learners in FE are expected to 'learn how to learn' to adapt to the changes brought about by globalisation.

Welsh Assembly Government policy commits to achieving equivalent standards of professionalism in FE and schools but, unlike England, apart from its endorsement of the Standards, no progress has been made. The Standards' role in teacher training was explored. The influence of the official discourse in the Standards was mediated by teacher-trainers in ways that were oriented to practice and to the enactment of professionalism, rejecting any notion of competencies. The Standards accordingly had little influence on trainees' constructs of professionalism. Trainees were focussed instead on gaining basic survival skills, but they had a clear personal sense of professional standards, centred on their responsibilities and commitment to their students. There was a discourse of professionalism in formation, recognising the importance of tacit knowledge, acquired by experience.

The study concludes by identifying a possible distinctively Welsh approach to professionalising FE teaching, and the need for improved mentoring and support for trainee and newly qualified teachers.

A copy of the LLUK's Professional Standards: '*New Overarching Professional Standards for Teachers, Teachers and Trainers in Lifelong Learning in Wales*' can be accessed from the LLUK at:
http://www.lluk.org/documents/02_Bilingual_TTT_Standards.pdf.

Re-thinking Professionalism In Further Education In Post-devolution Wales

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Chapter One: Introduction And Background

1.1 What The Research Was About

This study set out to examine whether the new Professional Standards for teachers and trainers in lifelong learning adopted by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) were material to FE teacher professionalism in Wales. To do so, it has focussed on the discourses of teacher professionalism engaged in by teacher-trainers, trainee teachers and the officials responsible for policy. This research is relevant and timely since, over the last ten years, FE has come to play an increasingly important role in government plans for the development of a highly skilled and trained workforce (Avis 2007a). After years of ‘benign neglect’ (Lucas 2004), FE teachers now find themselves in a sector considered ‘pivotal’ to government objectives (DfES 2004) and teacher training has consequently experienced profound changes (Simmons and Thompson 2007a). Recent research supports the view that ‘teachers matter’ and are an important factor in learner outcomes (Day et al. 2007; OECD 2005) and government policies for the professionalisation of FE teachers reflect that view.

While that is the position in England, in Wales, things are different. The objective of improving skills is the same, and most recently documented in *Skills That Work for Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government 2008d). To deliver that objective the WAG has embarked upon a radical transformation of post-compulsory education and training (PCET) (Welsh Assembly Government 2008g). That is currently underway and is intended to increase efficiency and effectiveness through greater collaboration between schools, FE colleges and other training providers. If that transformation is to

work, it is reasonable to suppose that equivalent standards of professionalism ought to apply to teachers across the whole of PCET, since in future Welsh learners will follow individual 'Learning Pathways' that take advantage of provision in schools, colleges and elsewhere according to their personal needs, blurring the boundaries between schools and colleges. That supposition is endorsed in WAG policy (Welsh Assembly Government 2006c).

However, while the professional status of schoolteachers is generally understood, and there are established legislative and administrative arrangements in support of it, the same cannot be said of teachers in PCET, of which FE forms the largest part. That position is now changing; in both England and Wales new Professional Standards for teachers in FE, workplace training, and adult and community education have been adopted (LLUK 2006, 2007). In England, but not in Wales, there is a new statutory requirement for teachers in FE to be appropriately qualified; to have undergone a period of 'professional formation' leading to a licence to teach; and, to be registered with the Institute for Learning (IfL), which has become *de facto* the professional body for those teachers. There are then, in England, measures in place to professionalise teaching in FE whereas, in Wales, the main imperative has been delivering *Skills That Work for Wales*.

This research was confined to FE, rather than including other elements of PCET. I chose to study teacher-trainers and trainees, rather than serving teachers, because they are involved in the training and early career development to which the new Professional Standards were directed. If the Standards are to have an impact, it would be on training programmes and ultimately on trainees' constructs of professionalism. The overall aim of this study was therefore to identify the version of professionalism that was embedded in initial teacher training (ITT) programmes, how the Professional Standards had influenced that, and what trainees' constructs of professionalism were and how they related to the Standards. In order to understand the policy background and the discourse of teacher professionalism engaged in by those developing and

implementing the Standards in Wales, I included officials from the WAG and from Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) in the study.

This research makes a contribution to the understanding of the formation of FE teachers' identities and the part that teacher-training programmes may play in that. It also provides an analysis of the policy to professionalise teaching and its relationship to wider government objectives. At one level it examined how teacher-trainers and trainee teachers perceived professionalism. At another level, it was concerned with the professionalisation of FE teachers as an occupational group, where the interest lay in the anticipated tensions between the version of professionalism driven by government policy from outside the profession and that constructed by teachers within it. The research was therefore equally located within the sociologies of profession and of professionalisation. Teacher-trainers and trainees in Wales have not been the subject of published research. As the study also examined the background to the adoption of the Professional Standards in Wales and the views of the officials involved in their development, this was a unique opportunity to document and analyse a policy process as it happened and the influence it was having on its recipients.

This was a qualitative study, using two principal methods: the analysis of policy documents and training materials, and, semi-structured interviews and focus groups with officials, teacher-trainers and trainees. These were supplemented by informal meetings with WAG officials and the non-participant observation of LLUK's consultations with the sector, together with its work with a steering group, while the Welsh Standards were being developed. The accounts given by officials in the WAG and in LLUK, alongside published policy documents, were taken together to establish the existence of an 'official discourse' of professionalism, external to the teaching profession. Those of teacher-trainers and trainee teachers, together with training programme documentation, were expected to provide evidence of a separate 'pedagogic discourse' of professionalism.

1.2 The Research Questions

The research therefore focussed on what professionalism meant for officials and, for teacher-trainers and trainees. The official discourse of professionalism was expected to be different from the discourses of those responsible for training teachers. Trainees would be presented with discourses of professionalism by their trainers, while also being exposed to the discourses in the colleges where they were working or in their placements. Trainees' accounts would therefore illustrate the way teachers' professional identities were being shaped and the relevance of the Standards to that process. In that light, Hamilton (2007) has raised relevant questions about how teachers in the sector are prepared for their role and how they acquire professional identities and values:

‘Where does that sense of values come from, and what sustains it, especially in the face of challenge from policy initiatives? How can we characterise as a single workforce one that contains many people who are primarily trained as vocational subject specialists rather than as teachers ...?’ (Hamilton 2007: 255-6).

Her questions were prompted by the diversity of the FE workforce and the varied entry routes into FE teaching, which are described later in this Chapter.

This is not an extensively researched area, although interest in it is growing. Edward *et al.* (2007) remarked that, only some ten years ago Randle and Brady (1997) and Shain and Gleeson (1999) were commenting on the relative neglect of the FE workforce as a subject of study compared to the school and higher education sectors. They observed that now, although there is still more written about the professional identity, values and careers of teachers in the school sector, ‘... professionals in the learning and skills sector have received much more research attention ...’ (Edward *et al.* 2007: 157). However, despite a growing interest in the professional identities, values and careers of teachers in FE, and the attention now being paid by governments to the training of teachers and their professional standards, until recently we were in a position where we knew little about who the practitioners in FE are, ‘... their dispositions or how they define professionalism in the contested contexts of their work.’ (Gleeson and James 2007: 451). That is changing, as recent work in Wales has

shown (Jephcote and Salisbury 2009; Jephcote et al. 2008; Salisbury et al. 2006a; Salisbury et al. 2005).

While over the past ten years governments in England, and to a lesser extent in Wales, have introduced measures to professionalise FE teaching, marketisation and increased accountability have been viewed as contributing to FE teachers' de-professionalisation and to the loss of their autonomy (Bathmaker 2000), and the public service ethos of colleges has been replaced by market values (Gleeson 1996). This has also been seen as stimulating new, or different, forms of professionalism (Shain and Gleeson 1999). Current interest in FE teacher professionalism remains concerned with these as well as recent changes, including the introduction of professional standards (Avis and Bathmaker 2004; Gleeson et al. 2005; Lucas 2002, 2004; Lucas 2007; Robson 2006; Spenceley 2006; Thompson and Robinson 2008). Regulation of the sector has, it has been argued, put government in the driving seat, diminishing the role of the teacher as an autonomous professional (Finlay et al. 2007) and confining their role to that of mere servants of the state (Avis 2003) as teaching practise is standardised (Lucas 2004).

This research is located within that broad field and set out to answer the following:

- How, and to what extent, the LLUK Professional Standards are interpreted and applied by FE teacher training institutions and trainee teachers in Wales?
- The degree to which the Standards influence the professional values and practices of trainees.
- The processes by which trainees' identities are shaped, and the key influences underpinning them.
- The development of the WAG's policies for FE, including its adoption of the Professional Standards, and what the consequences might be for FE teacher professionalisation and professionalism in Wales?

1.3 Theoretical And Conceptual Framework

Theoretical positioning

The underlying premise adopted in this research was that ideas and beliefs about ‘professionalism’ are products of social interaction in which reality, or the way reality is perceived, is a socially constructed phenomenon (Berger and Luckman 1966; Gergen 1999; Hammersley 2001). However, while that approach might serve as a basis for understanding how professionalism could be constructed through day-to-day interaction, it would not provide a basis for an analysis of the discourses of officials, teacher-trainers and trainees that would provide more generally applicable conclusions. Some researchers in this field have employed a Foucauldian concept of discourse in their analysis of how ideas of professional values are shared (Avis et al. 2002a; Moore 2004; Robson et al. 2004), while others have derived their theoretical position from Bourdieu, in particular his ideas of *habitus* and field, (Colley and James 2005; Colley et al. 2002; Grenfell and James 2004; James and Bloomer 2001). In this research I have adopted Bernstein’s concept of ‘pedagogic discourse’ and its role as a symbolic regulator of consciousness and thereby as ‘... a condition for the production, reproduction and transformation of culture...’ (Bernstein 1996: 52).

Bernstein offers an analytic framework, developed in the context of the British education system, and predicated on the concept that power and control ‘... distribute, reproduce and legitimise dominating and dominated principles of communication ...’ (Bernstein 1996: 18). Those principles can be applied to the communication and transmission of knowledge and that knowledge can be re-contextualised through the selection, re-focussing and positioning, and creation, of the elements of knowledge. Those exerting power and control can be said, through their re-defining and prioritising of the values of knowledge and the ends to which it is put, to determine what is, and what is not, ‘knowledge’. In so doing they form ‘regulative’ discourses, which serve to ‘... distribute forms of consciousness through distributing different forms of knowledge...’ (Bernstein 2000: 28). It follows that consciousness, and

consequently identity, as a product of the way knowledge has been so defined, is ultimately a product of power relations.

Bernstein's analysis of British education identified two fields where power and control were exercised and within which knowledge was re-contextualised, so forming potentially competing pedagogic discourses. These were the officially determined and sanctioned knowledge originating from government and its agencies, the 'official re-contextualising field', which stipulated what was taught and how; and, a 'pedagogic re-contextualising field' located in schools and colleges and in academia (Bernstein 1996: 48). Where the latter had an independent existence from the former there could be debate over the content and methods of teaching and consequently differences in practice; where it did not, methods and practice would become effectively matters of state regulation. Bernstein's model therefore provided a framework for analysing professionalisation and teacher training in terms of power relations and, from that, making a link to teachers' identities. The distinction between the official and the pedagogic re-contextualisation fields offered a theoretical basis for the analysis of the way the official discourse of professionalism might be constructed and influence the discourses of trainers and trainees.

While the concepts of re-contextualisation and discourses of professionalism are helpful, the process of teacher training involves the transmission and acquisition of knowledge in the, more conventionally understood, curricula and practical sense. ITT curricula emphasise theories of education and learner management as well as extensive practical experience of teaching. I needed therefore to consider the role of educational theory and practical knowledge in ITT as constituents of professionalism (Eraut 1994) as well as the informal learning that takes place during training (Eraut 2000a). Educational theories play a significant part in FE ITT, but in professionals' working lives 'tacit' knowledge, born of experience and a reliance on communally shared concepts are used, rather than an 'off the shelf' application of theory (Eraut 1994: 43). In this study I therefore examined what trainees considered was the place of theory in their professional training and its relevance to their practice. As much of

trainees' early professional development would take place in their placements, and not forgetting that many trainees were already teaching before beginning their training, I expected to see evidence of such tacit knowledge in what trainees said.

1.4 The Background And Scope Of The Research

FE colleges are only one part of the landscape of PCET, and government policy, as contained in the WAG's Learning and Skills Measure 2009 and in *Skills That Work for Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government 2008g, 2009a) has taken an increasingly all-encompassing view of the different providers across PCET. Education and training for 14-19 year-olds in Wales is now moving towards a co-ordinated mix of provision in school sixth forms, FE colleges and other training providers, and the new LLUK Standards in both England and in Wales apply to teachers, tutors and trainers across the sector as a whole.

It might be argued therefore that this study should not be confined simply to teachers in FE colleges. However, FE institutions form by far the largest single element of PCET outside schools accounting for 65 % of all enrolments in FE, community learning and work-based learning combined (Welsh Assembly Government 2008b). FE colleges have a clearly defined institutional and physical presence compared to the more fluid arrangements found in community and work-based learning. Teachers working in FE do so in institutional settings, colleges, characterised by physical and management arrangements akin to those in other educational establishments like schools and Higher Education institutions (HEIs). Colleges, like schools, are subject to greater regulation by government than the other elements of PCET, which include private training establishments and many voluntary and community learning providers.

The current environment within which FE teachers work is largely shaped by the 'long shadow' cast by incorporation, when FE colleges became independent of local

authority control (Jephcote and Salisbury 2007). That change in FE colleges' status was intended to introduce a market for learners in the interests of increased efficiency and improved performance. This marketization of FE generated new pressures for FE teachers in the process of accommodating to changing circumstances, and was not helped by the introduction of more 'flexible' contracts and the rise of a new managerial ethos (Gleeson 2001), which, in some respects, conflicted with the more traditional values held at the time by many teachers in FE colleges (Gleeson 2005; Gleeson and Shain 1999). These factors combined to create circumstances that could be expected to influence how concepts of professionalism were developed and shared among teachers in those institutional settings in a way that was distinct from other parts of post-16 education and training, making it appropriate to confine this research to teachers in FE.

Despite its size, FE has been a relatively neglected part of the education system in comparison to schools (Huddleston and Unwin 2008). Until comparatively recently, the intention of government policy was that FE colleges should meet learners' needs in their areas, in collaboration with local employers who would identify the skills they required. That this actually happened in most cases is a matter of some doubt and there was little pressure on colleges to collaborate with employers or other parts of the education system. In comparison with schools and HEIs, academic interest in the sector was slight. It is not surprising then that those working in colleges described themselves as the 'Cinderella' of the education system.

As Kennedy (1997) remarked, there is no standard definition of FE, but for the purposes of this study I have taken it to be that provided in FE institutions or colleges, of which there are 21 in Wales¹. By comparison with their colleagues in schools, the training and professional standing of teachers in FE was, until recently, of less concern to government and, consequently, less regulated. In the school sector there is a statutory requirement, with certain exceptions, that teachers must have achieved Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and be registered with the relevant General Teaching

¹ Excluding the Sixth Form College, WEA and YMCA institutions

Council – the professional body for schoolteachers. While, since 2002 in Wales, regulations have stipulated that teachers in FE should be appropriately qualified, depending on their teaching workload, there were no government endorsed professional standards until 2008, and, although the position is different in England, there is no requirement to reach a standard equivalent to QTS or be registered with a professional body.

Since the 1970s school teaching has become, in effect, an all-graduate profession and teacher training programmes delivered, in the main by HEIs, have replaced teacher-training colleges. Virtually entirely in the case of secondary schools, the entry route into school teaching is via a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE).

Typically, trainee schoolteachers undertake the PGCE after recently completing their first degree, and, for them, teaching is a career choice. The recruitment of trainee schoolteachers in both England and Wales is managed by a Government agency, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA). The TDA is also responsible for defining what is required to gain QTS and for approving teacher-training programmes.

The General Teaching Councils (in Wales, the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW)) are statutory professional bodies, funded by teachers' subscriptions, which maintain registers of schoolteachers, since, in order to teach in schools, a teacher must continue to be registered. Teachers can be removed from the register on grounds of serious misconduct or incompetence. As well as upholding professional standards of behaviour in this way, the GTCW promotes teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) and the professional standing of schoolteachers. The position of FE teachers is almost completely different. The term 'teacher' is itself not commonly employed, and staff are described variously as lecturers, instructors and tutors, depending on their role. The key to understanding FE is to recognise its diversity. FE covers a range of subjects, from the purely vocational to the academic and at levels from the most basic and remedial to courses delivered under franchise from an HEI that lead to a degree awarded by that institution. FE teachers may be delivering

courses for GCSEs or A Levels, for professional qualification, NVQs, City and Guilds and a range of other certified courses in various occupational fields, as well as staff training programmes for major local employers. Although in the post-compulsory sector, FE provides for learners below school leaving age, in partnership with local schools; however, the age range of learners is wide and only about a quarter fall into the 16-19 age range. Although that age group accounts for the majority of full-time learners, the greater number of learners are enrolled part-time and, of those, most are aged 25 and over (Welsh Assembly Government 2008b). FE is therefore, in terms of student numbers, mainly a provider of adult education and training, although that is not reflected in government policy.

Courses are delivered part-time and full-time, often outside normal working hours and, unlike schoolteachers, a significant proportion of FE teachers are only employed on an hourly-paid or fractional basis. Simmons (2008), drawing on Burchill (2001), identifies the increase in part-time and temporary teachers and the casualisation of labour in colleges as a consequence of incorporation, and as a factor in the 'feminisation' of the FE teaching workforce as male teachers 'fled' FE (Simmons and Thompson 2007b). In the practical subjects, e.g. Construction, Catering, Health and Beauty and so on, teachers need to have relevant, and often lengthy, experience of working in those occupations and bring with them the ethos of their previous occupations (Robson 1998b). For them and many others, entry into FE teaching, unlike schoolteachers, is as a second career.

FE is often seen as a second chance for learners who have failed in, or been failed by, the school system. A common perception among FE teachers is that schools are anxious to offload their less able and more troublesome pupils and that consequently they have to pick up the pieces. Particularly in the more socially deprived areas of Wales, teachers in FE have a significant role in supporting learners who have serious financial, family and social issues to contend with (Jephcote et al. 2008). These elements – the diversity of subjects taught; the variety of entry routes; the fragmented and uncertain nature of hourly-paid working or fractional contracts; their attachment

to previous occupational identities; and, their pastoral role were, at the outset of this research, considered likely to be influences on the way FE teaching was constituted as a profession.

The way teachers in FE are trained is also markedly different to that of schoolteachers. Almost all schoolteachers train pre-service; in FE this is relatively uncommon. Most teachers train in-service, part-time over a two-year period, reflecting the pattern of recruitment described previously. There are a variety of awarding bodies offering qualifications for teaching in FE and, while, in Wales, typically the awarding body is an HEI, most training is provided, under franchise by FE colleges. Other bodies, City and Guilds and OCR for example, also offer teaching qualifications, but these are mainly provided in England. The training of FE teachers in Wales is provided by six HEIs: Cardiff University, Glyndŵr University, Swansea Metropolitan University, the University of Wales, Newport, the University of Glamorgan and the University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC). Glamorgan, Glyndŵr and Newport franchise training to, between them, 16 FE colleges in Wales. Before 2002 (2001 in England) there was no statutory requirement to be qualified to teach; arrangements for ITT varied from college to college and there was little monitoring and validation of ITT programmes (Guile and Lucas 1999; Lucas 2004)

If professionalism in school teaching is well developed and supported by programmes of Induction, Early and Continuing Professional Development, the same cannot be said of teaching in FE. But, this situation is changing and this study was set in the context of increasing government interest in the role that FE, together with the other elements of post-16 education and training outside schools can play in raising the level of skills generally and in addressing particular skills shortages. A series of reports and a White Paper in England, evidence this interest (DfES 2006a; Foster 2005; Leitch 2006) as does, more recently, the Webb Review in Wales (Webb 2007). The WAG response to Leitch and Webb was set out in its strategy for transforming education and training provision in Wales, *Skills That Work for Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government 2008g). If FE was, not so long ago, described in a much cited

article as ‘the Cinderella Service’ (Randle and Brady 1997), it is now attracting increased attention as a key component of the post-14 education and training system, considered strategically together with school sixth forms and other private and public training providers.

The origin of both the English and Welsh Governments’ interest in FE lies in the perceived ‘skills deficit’ as reported in both the Leitch and Webb Reviews, and the need to maintain Britain’s competitive position in an increasingly global market for goods and services, as well as contributing to social justice:

‘It is plain that the balance of global activity is changing. An increasing proportion of world output is being produced by the emerging economies of China and India. Goods and services are increasingly tradable, and global competition is intensifying. Our economic future must be based on high value-added businesses and high quality jobs. Success here relies on achieving significant increases in our work related skills across the board and particularly where there are skills shortages and gaps.’ (Welsh Assembly Government 2006b: 43);

‘For Wales to be a successful, bilingual society, it must have an educated and well-trained population ... Wales’ education system must meet this challenge if it is to enable the country to compete effectively in the global economy, ensure quality in public service delivery and produce a citizenry capable of contributing to social and cultural advancement.’ (Webb 2007: 4).

If FE is to take on such diverse and challenging roles, then standards of teaching and learning might be considered to need improving from the position where, ‘... the overall quality of further education provision is variable.’ (Welsh Assembly Government 2006c: 20). To achieve that, in England the DfES White Paper announced its intention to create ‘... a well qualified workforce and a sustainable culture of professionalism, and to enable staff to improve and update their skills continuously.’ (DfES 2006a: 50); these intentions were elaborated in the following consultation document which made proposals for new regulations to reform initial teacher training and to introduce a requirement for professional development (DfES 2006b). Similarly, in Wales, the Assembly Government recognised the need for paralleling, beyond the school setting, the existing arrangements for Induction and Early Professional Development for new schoolteachers; and, it went on further to announce its intention to ‘explore the scope’ for the establishment of a professional

body to set and safeguard professional standards in FE (Welsh Assembly Government 2006c).

Although not always expressed explicitly as such, the professionalisation of the FE teaching workforce had therefore clearly moved on to governments' agenda in both England and Wales. But, the manner and timing of subsequent developments has varied between the two countries. Responsibility for education and for economic development was devolved to the Welsh Assembly in 1999. Since then policies and priorities in these areas, including those for the FE workforce, and, more generally, for the education and training of 14-19 year-olds, have diverged. Government in England has embarked on a series of reforms designed to improve leadership and management in FE and to raise the standards of teaching and learning, including the new Professional Standards. Following those developments in England, in 2007 the WAG endorsed the Professional Standards, developed for Wales by the LLUK, and, as in England, these will underpin the qualifications that are required to teach in the sector. The story of how these Welsh Standards were developed and came to be adopted provides the backcloth for this study and is described in Annex C.

1.5 Administrative And Policy Contexts

Administrative arrangements

Since devolution in 1999, FE in Wales has been the responsibility of the WAG. Until 2005 the day-to-day administration of FE was the responsibility of Education and Learning Wales (ELWa), established in 2001. ELWa was the 'brand name' for the National Council for Education and Training, which took over the role of the former Further Education Funding Council Wales (FEFCW), and the Higher Education Funding Council Wales. The National Council element of ELWa also inherited the work of the Training and Enterprise Councils, and the funding of school sixth forms;

the intention being to thereby break down the distinctions between academic and vocational routes and to enable a common planning and funding framework for post-16 learners.

In 2005 ELWa was merged with the WAG education department, newly entitled the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS), together with Dysg, which was previously the Welsh arm of the UK wide Learning and Skills Networks that provided a training and support service to the Lifelong Learning sector in England. Following the Assembly Elections in May 2007, the education department was re-structured and re-named the Department for Children, Education, Learning and Skills (DCELLS). ELWa's demise may have partly reflected general concern with the relative independence of Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies and consequent accountability issues, since the Welsh Development Agency and a number of other bodies including the Curriculum Council (ACCAC), were taken into the WAG at the same time. However, the merger of both ELWa and ACCAC with DELLS was argued to provide 'critical mass' to the new education department and put its expertise at the heart of Government (Sullivan and Fowler 2006).

This was not simply an administrative change; it involved re-thinking the relationship in terms of planning and funding, between the WAG and education and training providers. It caused a major restructuring of the education department as the work of ELWa officials were integrated with that of WAG civil servants and overlaps and duplication ironed out. Strategic planning arrangements had to be re-considered in the light of what was appropriate, and legally possible, for the WAG to do. While all of this occurred during a time of increasing policy interest in the sector in both England and Wales, there was inevitably a hiatus in terms of policy development until the end of 2007, while these administrative changes bedded in.

Policy developments

Since the Labour Government's coming into power in 1997, FE, as well as post-16 education and training generally, has assumed a new importance in its agenda with, in

England, a series of consultation papers and White Papers (DfEE 1998a, b, c, 1999, 2000a; DfES 2001, 2002a, 2003a, 2005), associated with proposals for the reform of teacher training and for the professionalisation of teaching in FE (DfEE 2000b, 2001; DfES 2003b, 2004). More recently the Government commissioned a review of FE in England (Foster 2005) which was followed by the White Paper *Further Education: Raising skills, Improving Life Chances* (DfES 2006a). A separate, Treasury commissioned review of the need for improved skills and better training across the whole of the UK reported in the same year (Leitch 2006) which, in its turn, was followed by a further consultation exercise on proposed reforms (DfES and Learning and Skills Council 2007).

In Wales, the work of a group representing employers and training providers had laid the foundations for the establishment of ELWa and a re-structuring of the organisation of training provision in Wales (Education and Training Action Group for Wales (ETAG) 1999). This was followed by the development of policies for 14-19 education and training which centred on the idea of 'learning pathways' tailored to the individual learner's needs and spanning both academic and vocational subjects (Welsh Assembly Government 2002b). While ELWa had been exploring ways that post-14 provision could be better organised between schools and colleges to meet learners' needs in a number of 'Pathfinder' areas, it was not until late in 2006 that the Assembly Government commissioned its own review of post-16 education and training. Its terms of reference required it take account of the broader context of post-16 developments, 14-19 learning pathways, higher education, workplace learning and the Leitch review. The review, chaired by Sir Adrian Webb, reported in the following year (Webb 2007).

The common theme running through these official documents, and particularly in the Leitch and Webb Reports, was the need to develop a highly skilled, flexible and adaptable labour force. They shared a common concern with the low level of basic skills both in comparison with other countries and, in the case of Wales, with English regions. The key for Leitch was to make post-16 education and training more responsive to employers' needs and, at the same time, re-focus it on 'economically

valuable skills', with funding directed specifically at such training, while strengthening the influence of the employer-led sector skills councils by requiring vocational courses to be approved by them before being funded.

Whereas Leitch was concerned with post-16 training, the Webb Report took into account the whole of post-14 education and training (but not HE), including adult provision, although the emphasis was on 16-18, since '... learning to 16 or 18 is the platform on which all else must rest.' (Webb 2007: 11). It broadly endorsed the Leitch recommendations on Basic Skills, and the Assembly Government's 14-19 learning pathways policy. More controversially, Webb proposed new arrangements for implementing learning pathways through 'commissioning consortia' at regional and local levels, to liaise with local employers and to identify needs and commission training. Coupled with that was the recommendation that FE colleges should be merged so that no college should have a turnover of less than £15 million, below which Webb considered colleges could neither provide the breadth of curriculum nor operate cost-effectively. Webb was largely silent on matters relating to the teaching workforce, although the Review recommended that there should be a minimum entitlement to CPD, equivalent to 10 days a year, for teachers in both schools and in FE.

At the heart of the Webb Report was the wish to integrate vocational training with the academic; supporting the Welsh Baccalaureate in that regard and the expansion of practical and experiential learning through new, work-based learning pathways as well as improving the support for apprenticeship schemes. The Report noted with concern the predominant influence of academic values and the requirements of university entrance on what is taught in schools:

'A strong sense of hierarchy lurks not far below the surface amongst post-14 education: the closer providers are to universities, the higher their prestige both in their own eyes and those of parents. Work-based learning providers often find themselves at the base of this pyramid – trainers of last resort, summoned only to help with the most difficult, least engaged students.' (Webb 2007: 86).

That last comment, to a degree, can also be applied to FE.

Shortly after Webb had reported the Assembly Government published two consultation documents (Welsh Assembly Government 2008a, e) outlining its proposed strategy for skills and employment and for engaging young people in education or training, the latter to be underpinned by a statutory entitlement to support and guidance (Welsh Assembly Government 2008c). The strategy document made no mention of the kind of re-organisation envisaged by Webb, although acknowledging his Report and the need for a 'strong network' of providers, including centres of excellence, scaled up to generate efficiencies and provide a breadth of curriculum. Instead, it preferred to focus on the role of the new Wales Employment and Skills Board and its links with Sector Skills Councils, so strengthening the employer's voice, and a closer alignment between funding skills training and WAG's economic development priorities.

Later that year the WAG published the final version of *Skills That Work for Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government 2008d) which represented its formal response to both Leitch and Webb and the basis of future policy. This strategy marked a shift away from simply setting targets based on learner outcomes to the view that developing skills and supporting businesses should be considered as elements of an integrated package. As far as providers were concerned, the emphasis was to be on more collaborative working between institutions and across sectors. A new Learning and Skills Measure (Welsh Assembly Government 2008c), enacted in 2009, would provide the statutory basis for ensuring collaboration. This strategy represented a significant shift away from the policies of the past fifteen years and the principle of providers competing for learners appears to have been given a lower priority, in favour of a more planned system comprising of a network of providers:

'The learning network is part of a complex skills system involving many different agencies. Most of the network has evolved over time, rather than being consciously planned; different types of school and college serve overlapping travel-to-study areas. Historically, competition between providers often hindered partnership working, and restricted the choice of courses available to learners.' (Welsh Assembly Government 2008d: 75).

While the Webb Report's proposal for commissioning consortia did not appear in the strategy document, it accepted that fewer, larger institutions would be better for learners and be more cost-effective. Accordingly, in 2008, the WAG published an injunction requiring the whole of the Welsh education system to consider and come up with proposals to 'transform' provision along such lines by early 2009 (Welsh Assembly Government 2008g). While the document was careful not to be prescriptive and insisted that there should be local solutions to local needs, the clear message was that there were inefficiencies and duplication in the existing system that needed to be rationalised. The Learning and Skills Measure (Welsh Assembly Government 2009a) later placed a duty on education authorities and colleges to collaborate in planning provision and, if appropriate, establish joint working arrangements to that end.

FE teachers in Wales can therefore be said to live in 'interesting times', with the prospect of new ways of working and the merger of institutions before them. However, the Skills and Employment Strategy is wholly concerned with structural matters and not with teachers. In terms of quality of provision, it refers to the newly developed Quality and Effectiveness Framework (Welsh Assembly Government 2009c), but teachers in PCET, their training, professional standing and development are not mentioned. At this point, in Wales, the professionalisation agenda appears to have stalled, or even to have been abandoned, while the policy interest has focused on the re-modelling of provision.

Learning or skills?

The emphasis on skills in the latest WAG strategy document, and in its precursors, Leitch and Webb, is not new. The success of similar initiatives in the past, including the idea of the 'learning society', has been questioned, the more so as the pace of Government reform has quickened (Coffield 1997, 1999; Edward et al. 2007; Felstead et al. 2004; Finegold and Soskice 1988; Finlay et al. 2007; Gorard and Rees 2002; Hughes and Tight 1995; Keep and Mayhew 1999; Rees et al. 1997). The idea of learning as a collaborative activity involving both teacher and learner and involving

understanding, growth and personal development, as well as the acquisition of knowledge, has been seen as being replaced by a discourse of 'skills' and the needs of the labour market, centred on training, so that:

'... we are fitting learners to the needs of the economy and providing them not with a high-quality education in accordance with their needs but with a distinctly inferior form of 'trainability' in accordance with their class.' (Coffield 2008: 54).

There is an inherent tension between what some commentators see as an educational tradition, in which FE enabled people to 'better' themselves and one that is narrowly focussed on acquiring 'generic' vocational skills that meet the immediate needs of the market, but which limit the ability to master high level skills (Avis et al. 1996; Walford et al. 1988; Williams 2005). Governments' linking of funding to performance and targets, has meant that learning has increasingly been seen in terms of those outputs that can be quantified – retention rates and qualifications gained – and colleges have been accused of emphasising certification at the expense of some more inclusive concept of learning. Meanwhile, it is those 'economically valuable' skills (Leitch 2006) that are to be supported by funding and accordingly prioritised. How this will develop under the new skills strategy in Wales remains to be seen, but it is likely that there will be a much closer relationship between what training is provided and funded and the needs of the employers in colleges' localities.

1.6 Outline Of The Structure Of The Thesis

The next Chapter traces the evolution of sociological interest in profession from a concern with its definition, the categorisation of occupations and the function of the professions, to a position where such matters are now considered relatively unimportant. Interest now is in professionalism, what that means and how a sense of professionalism is acquired. Early studies were interested in the rise of elite professions, but, more recently, the emergence of new professions, partly as a result of technological change, and covering a greater range of occupations, has necessitated a

fresh analysis of the way they have taken professional standing and what that means for its members. Many of these new professions, including teaching, are in the public sector and government requirements of accountability and regulation impact on the nature of their professionalism. This is then further explored in the literature on FE professionalism, which looks at the question of where a teacher's identity might be drawn from, and how teachers reconcile or manage those identities in their daily lives. What is clear is that there is no single, dominant model of teacher professionalism and that identities are not fixed and immutable but changing and fluid; also, that we still know little about how teachers construct meaning in their work. But it does seem that there are tensions to be managed between compliance with the requirements of management and adherence to more 'professional' principles, underlying the contested nature of FE professionalism.

Chapter Three discusses the methodology used in this research, linking it to the theoretical framework previously outlined in this Chapter. It provides an account of the selection of the institutions for inclusion in the study and strengths and weaknesses of the methods used. Chapters Four to Six contain the substance of the research, an analysis of the Professional Standards and policy documents to evidence the existence of an official discourse of professionalism, in the Standards and in the accounts of officials on the one hand, and a pedagogic discourse of trainers and in training programmes on the other. Annex C supports those Chapters with an account of the policy development and the evolution of the Standards in Wales. Chapter Six considers trainees' constructs of professionalism and the relevance of the Standards to that, identifying trainees' views of themselves as professionals in embryo, with a professional identity rooted in their subject knowledge and sense of responsibility where the Professional Standards have little relevance. The final Chapter provides a summary of the arguments and recommendations for policy.

Chapter Two: Identities In Transition: Profession, Professionalism And Professionalisation

2.1 Introduction And Definitions

'While they have been fascinated by 'the professions' for many years, sociologists have, while claiming to demystify them, been mystified in their turn ... ' (Atkinson 1981: 8)

'Yet still the very substance of professionalism – what precisely professionalism is and how it is constituted – remains under-examined in the broad sociological field, and particularly in the context of education.' (Evans 2008: 35)

In this Chapter I begin with a review of the literature on profession, professionalism and professionalisation as background to the following discussion of the literature on FE teachers, their professionalism and professionalisation, or, as some have argued, their de-professionalisation. It includes case studies of professional training and how it can influence professionalism that provide the context for the analysis in Chapter Six of trainee FE teachers' constructs of professionalism, and how they reflected their training experiences. As the quotations at the beginning of this Chapter demonstrate, the sociology of profession has been beset by conceptual difficulties. Nevertheless, some definitions are necessary. By professionalisation I mean the way an occupation acquires professional status – although the definitions and criteria by which particular occupations may be classified as a profession and attempts at classification are now largely discredited as failing to '... assist our understanding of the power of particular occupations ... or of the appeal of 'being a professional' in all occupational groups.'

(Evetts 2006: 519). Instead, for the present purpose, a profession is taken to be what is generally acknowledged to be such, or, if that is what its members believe it to be.

Discourses of professionalism are taken to include those engaged in by people outside a profession – about what is required or expected of it – and those engaged in by its members – about how they perceive, and should enact, their role as professionals; in other words, what meanings they attach to ‘professionalism’. Discourses of professionalism are distinct from the objective facts of professionalism – the training and qualifications required, membership of professional bodies, codes of professional behaviour and so on. They are about understandings and meanings, expressed by members of the profession and by those with expectations of it within particular contexts; that is, in answer to Hacking’s question: ‘the social construction of what?’ (Hacking 2000), they are what I have taken to be socially constructed.

Professionalism is perhaps the more nuanced of these concepts, and one that was, in the past, largely ignored. In his study of professionalisation, Millerson (1964) barely referred to the term in an exhaustive review of the way profession had been defined. Professionalism has been seen as the way professions were legitimised in terms of the value of their work and the knowledge, skill and training required to do it (Freidson 2001), as well as their monopolistic control over those skills (Larson 1977) and the exercise of their consequential power. Professionalism, defined as the way professionals actually behave, constituted a separate tradition, rooted in early ethnographic studies, such as Becker *et al.* (1961). More recently, the analysis of discourses of professionalism has focussed on how they can be used as a means of control and to promote and facilitate organisational change (Evetts 2003; Fournier 1999). In that last sense, ‘professionalism’ can now be considered to be a more fruitful field of study than that of ‘profession’ (Evetts 2003: 398).

This study considers professionalism against the background of government policies for the professionalisation of PCET. There are parallels with the role of the state in schoolteacher professionalism where marketisation, performativity and increasing

government interventions have conjointly influenced teachers' professionalism (Ball 2008). Treating professionalism as a discourse carries with it two important meanings: first, that professionalism is socially constructed through discourse; and secondly, as such, it is situated – meaning that it is a product of particular, and changing, times and circumstances. In other words, it is fluid and dynamic, evolving and responding to change. The consequence of that is that neither professionalism, nor profession, can be defined by external, objective 'fixed' criteria. Professionalism is what people understand it to be and what matters is what those understandings are. It is arguable, in postmodern times, that we can all define ourselves as 'professional' if we want to be, and if we conduct ourselves appropriately (Crook 2008).

Discourses of professionalism may come from within the profession itself and may be codified and policed by it. Alternatively, they may come from outside the profession, from employers or agencies and government, as well as the profession's clients. These external influences have been characterised as 'organisational professionalism', acting as a controlling influence on employees (Evetts 2003, 2006). Professionalism originating from within or 'occupational professionalism', was typically seen to be the way an occupational group advanced itself, and achieved its professional status (Evetts 2005). I will argue that, with FE teachers (and schoolteachers), governments have engaged in a form of organisational professionalism with the objective of professionalisation, but here to serve the public's purpose.

The official discourse of FE teacher professionalism is documented in the Professional Standards; but the discourse of organisational professionalism can operate in subtle ways. Recent research has been directed at the way managements and governments have used the idea of professionalism as a discourse of motivation and identity that serves as a means of control, akin to Foucault's (1979) 'normalization' process (Aldridge and Evetts 2003: 556). This works when these values and expectations are internalised so that, for example, with performativity:

'... it works most powerfully when it is inside our heads and our souls. That is when we do it to ourselves, when we take responsibility for working hard, faster and better as part of our sense of personal worth and the worth of others.' (Ball 2008: 52).

But it is not a matter of a simple dualism, between ‘demanded’ professionalism and ‘enacted’ professionalism (Evans 2008), where organisational or official versions of professionalism and those that come from FE teachers themselves exist and compete with each other on some all-encompassing national scale. We should not ignore the contexts in which professionals work and that the interface between official and unofficial discourses happens on a local scale, where teachers strive to balance the competing demands of their ethical and professional considerations and the pressures of performativity in their workplaces, mediating these demands in their own ways (Gleeson and Knights 2006; Hoyle and Wallace 2007; Stronach et al. 2002) and so ‘getting by’ (Elliott 2001). In these situated, contextualised circumstances, professionalism, as it is enacted, is continually made and re-made.

2.2 The Sociology Of Profession

2.2.1 Evolving ideas of profession

The sociological view of professions, professionalism and professionalisation has undergone significant shifts of perspective. Initially, professions were regarded as contributing to the civility and stability of social systems, (Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933), Tawney (1921) and Marshall (1950). That view was similarly expressed by Parsons (1951), identifying their part in supporting the normative order. Professions were described as a social value as altruistic bodies exerting discipline over their individual members in the public interest, as ‘honoured servants of the public need’ (Freidson 1983); and were distinguished as individuals by their competence and discretion (Freidson 2001: 150). As a consequence they were trusted and allowed to practice autonomously. Merton (1957), while still taking such a functionalist view, identified the dysfunctional aspects of the professions, and, by the 1970s an alternative, less positive view had become the norm. Larson (1977: xvii) describes how professions had translated their specialist knowledge and skills into social and

economic rewards. Professions were now commonly regarded as acting as self-serving cartels, controlling the supply of services and thus protecting the interests of their members from interlopers (Abbott 1988: 8-9).

While the functionalist view can account for the role professions play in society, it does not provide an account of their emergence in the first place, that is, the processes of professionalisation, nor, for professions' exercise of power and influence. The rise of the professions has been explained in historicist terms: either as an outcome of the division of labour (Durkheim 1957) or, in Marxist terms, of emerging relations of production. More recently the concept of the 'professional project' (Larson 1977; MacDonald 1995), linked historical developments with theories of social stratification, and described how occupations ally themselves with dominant political forces in the pursuit of social status and economic reward.

Functional explanations of the role of professions, and historicist accounts of their rise, operate at the level of societies as a whole. They do not take into account what it means for the individual to be a professional, and how individuals construct their own professional identities. Both of these last considerations are key to understanding how a concept of professionalism, as interpreted by individual practitioners, influences their attitudes, values and behaviours. It was such questions that interested the Chicago School and their approach became the main alternative to functionalist theories of profession. Taking the individual professional as subject has its dangers however. Stronach *et al.* (2002), argued that in recent studies the individual professional is treated as *emblematic*, simultaneously both reduced to a singular meaning and inflated to 'improbable' symbolic importance. These individuals are then portrayed as prey to the forces acting upon them, emerging, variously, as heroes, or, as demoralised and de-professionalized members of a proletarianised workforce.

This chapter echoes the above themes, but we need to be wary of those pitfalls. Some (Avis 2006a; Avis and Bathmaker 2004; Bathmaker 2006) have seen the potential for a 'new professionalism' in FE, arising from the changes that have affected the sector

since incorporation, and linked to a new, critical, form of pedagogy. An alternative view saw the growth of managerialism and performativity, targets and inspection regimes, with consequent reductions in teachers' autonomy, as being associated with proletarianisation and de-professionalisation (Randle and Brady 1997). While professions emerge and evolve over time and in response to changing economic and social developments, there is considerable evidence in education research (Colley and James 2005; Day et al. 2006; Quicke 2000) to support the idea that, individuals' personal professional identities are also, independently of those wider influences, subject to re-alignment or re-construction over time and are contingent upon their career trajectories, work situations and life events. This is discussed further on, but for now, looking at how new entrants acquire a concept of what it is to be a professional, we should bear in mind that is only the start of a process that will continue through their careers.

2.2.2 The professional project

Much of the early sociology of the professions was concerned with identifying the 'traits' of professionalism, and the classification of particular occupations on an hierarchical continuum by reference to an ideal-type of professionalism (Greenwood 1957). The identifying characteristics of a profession were varied. Millerson (1964) listed fourteen distinct elements variously found in such definitions, concluding that they were subject to semantic confusion and authors' bias (although that did not deter him from producing his own list). Attempts to classify occupations also gave rise to distinctions between 'professions' and 'semi-professions', where the latter included teachers (Etzioni 1969). The interactionist school provided an alternative to that view, seeing professionalism as emerging from the interactions of individuals within groups, rather than as an idealised, abstract standard (Becker et al. 1961; Freidson 1970b). Even if the ideal-typical school of thought did not ignore the dysfunctional aspects of professionalism, the interactionists went further in revealing the imperfections in constructions of ethics and public service (Becker et al. 1961). This became associated later with increasing interest in the exercise of power by the professions, as

exemplified by Freidson (1970a) where doctors appear as wielders of power rather than as altruistic public servants.

Larson (1977) continued the critique of the ideal-type conception, arguing that analyses based on ideal-types ignored what professionals actually do and the functions of the state. Larson observed, quoting Freidson (1970b), that professional autonomy, 'the right to control its own work', and a profession's right to be exempt from external evaluation, is not absolute and depends ultimately on the state. Importantly, those rights are not stable and fixed characteristics, but represent an accumulation over time. Professions gain autonomy, but privileges can also be lost, in processes that are characterised by struggle and persuasion. The ideal-typical model on the other hand seldom accounted for the complex historic circumstances in which groups of specialists attempt to achieve a monopoly over specific areas of the division of labour, but, instead, tended to see the process as a natural consequence of the division of labour unconnected with other social forces.

In Larson's analysis, different occupations each formed relationships with the ruling class; professionalisation was therefore a process by which occupations organised themselves to attain market power '... an attempt to translate one order of scarce resources – specialist knowledge and skills – into another – social and economic rewards.' (Larson 1977: xvii). Larson, termed this the 'professional project', implying a coherence and consistency in the actions of occupations in their journey to becoming professional, even if the goals and aspirations implicit in that project could not be explicitly articulated by its members (1977: 6). This model required the pre-existence of a specialist body of knowledge; a market for it, and the ability of the owners of that knowledge to organise themselves and to control its dissemination and the supply of related, knowledge-based services.

FE teachers and the professional project

We might then ask how FE teachers might fit in to such a model. It is not easy to categorise them in terms of the 'professional project' as outlined above. They do not

seem to measure up to the idea of an organised, aspirational or upwardly mobile occupational group; nor as a group possessing a defined body of specialist knowledge; nor as having any defined market for their services other than within the state educational system. Their relationship with a 'ruling class', as represented in their case by government, is almost wholly subservient and dependent rather than negotiated. It is tempting therefore to dismiss FE teachers as a profession in terms of the professional project model, as their professional status is dependent on the state.

However, to deny FE teachers professional status for that reason would be to accept that the only model is the process of occupational professionalisation exemplified by the classic professions: medicine and law. Doing so would disregard the increasing range and diversity of models of professionalisation followed by a wide range of occupational groups, many of them new to the economy and including those that would not meet any ideal-type definition of a profession. Importantly, from the point of view of this study, it would underplay the growing role of the state, in regulating professions in the public interest and in encouraging and fostering professionalisation in the public sector in the interests of its policy objectives. Indeed, today few professions have been able to sustain their independence from the state, or employer organisations, in the face of globalisation and the expansion of government intervention (Gleeson and Knights 2006: 280).

2.2.3 Defining profession and professionalism

Returning to the ideas of profession and professionalism, attempting to define what constitutes them has been a contested issue; 'There can be few areas of social enquiry that have become so involved, distracted and perplexed by matters of definition than the study of the professions.' (Burrage et al. 1990: 204). Yet, as Freidson had argued some years previously, without a sense of what it is we are talking about, how can we develop a theory of the professions? Attempts to focus on the process of gaining or claiming professional status merely avoid the issue of definition and, '... the issue of definition ... cannot be dealt with profitably either by denial or avoidance.' (Freidson

1983: 22). Freidson (1983) dismissed attempts at definitions that justified professions' dominant positions as well as those that sought to provide a definition that would be generic and universal in its application. Instead the idea of profession should be considered as an 'intrinsically ambiguous, multifaceted folk concept', specific to particular historic and social contexts, where no single definition can ever be persuasive. If considered phenomenologically in that way, a profession is taken to be what people in a given society at a given time determine it to be, and it is for sociologists to simply record how others employ the concept. But, we should be wary of assuming such attributions are uniformly understood and agreed. The role of official agencies should not be ignored either; since to obtain negotiating and other benefits, professions must meet officially sanctioned educational and institutional criteria.

It follows that the ideas of profession, professionalism and the process of professionalisation are a product of the understandings and interactions within and between different groups. Burrage *et al.*'s approach was to abandon the search for particular characteristics of profession, instead they identified the four actors, whose actions determine the form, and the success or failure, of professionalisation: these being the practising professionals themselves, the state, the users of professional services and the universities. Focussing on the roles of the key actors has the advantage of shifting the perspective towards their interactions.

This study is, in accordance with that, about what professionalism means to the actors in government, teacher training institutions and trainee teachers and the interactions between those meanings. It does not attempt to provide a definition of profession or professionalism, but, it will nonetheless be helpful to have a framework for examining the meanings attributed to them. Popular understandings of profession cluster around the attributes commonly contained in the functionalist typologies of profession; primacy is given to the existence of a *knowledge* base, acquired by a process of training (Eraut 1994). Flowing from that, 'professional' behaviour can be expected to provide a standard of service and commitment to the client, a sense of *responsibility*,

which is associated with the trust the client has, based on the professional being qualified and subject to professional codes of practice. That trust enables the professional to practice in an *autonomous* way, in accordance with his or her judgement. When we come to examine the content of the official and other discourses of professionalism in FE teaching I will do so using those three criteria.

2.2.4 Professional training

While there is a considerable body of evidence about the occupational or professional socialisation of trainee professionals, few studies deal with the professional training process itself, its content and the manner of its delivery, and the institutional arrangements through which it is delivered. Atkinson (1981) examined the way the curriculum, and the methods of teaching it, embody a particular view of what is appropriate and acceptable knowledge. Atkinson tells us about the social construction of medical work and medical knowledge in the context of medical students' fourth year clinical training. Clinical training is supposed to provide real experience, but, in practice, this reality is socially organised, achieved and managed, and is far from natural. Students are shown a dramatic enactment of a particular form of medical work. In this process there is, as established by the classic interactionist studies such as Becker *et al.*, an element of learning the ropes – the manner of interacting with patients, acquiring the proper demeanour and use of language, where elements of these behaviours have a more symbolic than a practical value. But, the main outcome is to privilege a particular form of methodical investigation and the 'facts' that such an investigation elicits. The process is akin to Bernstein's notion of invisible pedagogy where in a context that ostensibly provides an opportunity for the student to learn by discovery, that context is managed by the teacher: '... bedside teaching practices therefore provide a mechanism for the affirmation of the preconstituted nature of illness as an ontological entity, while the social production of disease categories remains invisible.' (Atkinson 1981: 121).

Bucher and Stelling (1977) conducted a longitudinal study of trainee psychiatrists in different institutional settings; while they did not focus on the way trainees were taught, they were interested in the trainees' response to the training programme and their trainers' relationships with the wider professional community. Trainees actively managed their work and constructed their own identities '... forging the generalized roles provided to fit their own evolving professional selves.' (1977: 271). If Atkinson's students appeared to have been moulded by their clinical training into a kind of occupational *habitus*, Bucher and Stelling's trainees brought a more reflexive attitude to their training; one aspect of that being the conscious adoption of role-models, and the way trainees were deliberately selective about which persons, or specific attributes of a person, they selected as models. The relationships between trainees and trainers were also significant and involved the evaluation of their trainers' methods and teaching styles.

Critically, the different institution's training programmes and styles of working set the stage, but the process of socialisation was equally a product of situational factors, of which role-playing activities were of '... outstanding importance in the development of professional identity and commitment.' (Bucher and Stelling 1977: 266). These activities allowed trainees, by working in the field, to develop a sense of 'mastery', a growing confidence in their own judgment and the ability to validate their own decisions without reference to external sources. Key to that was the opportunity to have (or be in a position where they felt they had) autonomy and be responsible for their actions. From such self-validation comes:

'... an autonomous professional being, who has constructed his own professional identity but whose professional identity, level of commitment, and projected career strongly reflect the structural and situational variables within the training programme.' (Bucher and Stelling 1977: 279).

There is a clear parallel with what Atkinson had identified as the 'primacy of personal knowledge', based on experience and the clinician's trust in what his or her own senses reveal and with the acquisition of 'tacit knowledge' (Eraut 2000c), and this, it will be seen, was paralleled by trainee teachers' accounts in this study, discussed in Chapter Six.

The processes of training illustrated by these two studies is not therefore simply about the content of programmes or the institutional arrangements for their delivery. There is a preceding process by which curricula are defined and arrangements established, emerging from the prevailing pedagogic discourse. It is also a process involving on-going social interactions between trainers and trainees, and one where trainees are not simply passive recipients, but may actively evaluate their training and construct their own identities using selected models. In that last respect the opportunity for trainees to 'spread their wings' and practice autonomously, without overt supervision, simultaneously allows them to test these identities and gain confidence in their mastery of the skills they have acquired.

2.2.5 Case studies

The professional project was intended to provide a model of the way occupational groups positioned themselves for economic and social reward and the sociology of profession has, to a large extent, been bound up with the study of social stratification and social mobility. Current interest has turned again to the normative aspects of professions and their role in exercising social control over their members, particularly in the case of those occupations providing complex services to the public (Freidson 1994, 2001). That interest now is not, as in the past, in the moral nature of the professions as a force for public good, but in how professionalism is being re-defined and extended to a range of occupations as a means of securing compliance with management requirements. While for Wilensky (1964) the 'professionalisation of everyone' was evidence of the application of loose criteria and sloppy thinking, and that an optimal, technical base of true professionalism could be identified, current research rejects such a notion and is now engaged with the idea of how the concept of professionalism, as it is understood in a given context, can be used by management and others for their own purposes, embracing a range of occupations not hitherto considered as professions (Evetts 2003, 2006; Fournier 1999).

In this field a number now take their lead from Foucault (Goldstein 1984), where the concept of discourse, and its relationship with the exercise of power and control, has in particular been adopted in one form or another by those researching the way individuals are socialised into their occupations. The concept of discourse has been seen as particularly appropriate for the rise of 'new professions' and providing an answer to the question originally posed by Larson (1977):

'... why and in what ways have a set of working practices and relations that historically characterized medicine and law in Anglo-American societies ... resonated first with engineers, accountants and teachers and then (to add to Larson's list) with pharmacists, social workers, care assistants, computer experts and law enforcement agencies in different social systems around the world?' (Aldridge and Evetts 2003: 548-9).

Fournier (1999) identified the extension of what she described as 'professional discourses' into occupations that are not normally identified as professional, and where these discourses act as a disciplinary logic, or a means of control 'at a distance'. This operates as the individual internalises, more or less consciously, the values and behaviours expected of him or her (Ball 2008). There are parallels with Bourdieu's description of *habitus* and with Bernstein's codes. Fournier followed Foucault (1973) suggesting that being a professional is not just about knowledge '... but is also about conducting and constituting oneself in an appropriate manner...', drawing parallels in that respect with the interactionist studies of socialisation.

A professional discourse of this nature can be a subtle and sophisticated means of management control over its workforce. It operates by instilling in workers the 'cult of the customer' and an image of quality, linked with the notion of the 'self-actualising employee', that is, being responsible for their personal development and progression in accordance with organisationally defined competencies. Thus, it has the effect of internalising discipline and enabling control at a distance 'in the name of the client and the self' (Anderson-Gough et al. 2000). Fournier was careful to point out that the appeal to professionalism does not always work and may need to be backed up by coercion; nor are the competencies necessarily internalised in a wholly straightforward way. In the company she studied, some staff members rejected the model of professionalism articulated by the competencies expected of them, but

developed their own, sometimes subversive, notions of professionalism, and as will be seen late in this Chapter, there are clear parallels there with what has been observed in the case of FE teachers.

Fournier identified the existence of organisationally sanctioned professional discourses existing side by side with informal discourses. Similarly, Sachs (2001), writing about teachers in Australia, identified two distinct discourses, which he described as democratic and managerial professionalism respectively, that shaped the professional identity of teachers. Other studies have shown the importance of discourses of professionalism as achieving organisationally defined ends. Grey (1998) in a study of trainees in an accountancy firm, sought to capture how 'being professional' formed a specific discursive practice, the '... ways notions of professionalism are written and spoken about, by whom and with what effects.' The way professionalism was evaluated encompassed a range of characteristics such as fairness, gender, sexuality and hierarchy, which suggests how diffuse the notion of being a professional was within the firm. Grey concluded that the meaning of being a professional was primarily bound up with ways of self-conduct, rather than technical competence and so echoes the observation of Becker *et al.* that '... science and skill do not make a physician ... one must have learned to play the part of the physician in the drama of medicine.' (1961: 4). Moreover, the discourse of 'being a professional' in the firm underpinned a series of complex and inter-related ways in which behaviour and social relations were reproduced and regulated. This 'enactment' of professionalism is a theme that emerged from the accounts of teacher-trainers and trainees in this study and is considered again in Chapters Five and Six.

As with Fournier's company workers, and Sachs' teachers, the professional discourse of Grey's accountancy firm was strongly client oriented, and a similar view of another accountancy firm has been provided by Anderson-Gough *et al.* (2000) who related the organisational discourse of 'the client' to the construction of professional identity within the firm. This served to make invisible internal management controls and marginalise family, friends and non-work activities; although it did provide rewards in

terms of identity and material and symbolic rewards. In studies of two occupations that have relatively recently come to be seen, or see themselves as professions, those of journalism and occupational therapy, Aldridge and Evetts (2003) and Clouder (2003) have deployed the notion of discourses of professionalism that are highly specific to their individual circumstances. These two also studies illustrate the dynamics of occupational socialisation in new professions from different perspectives. In Clouder's study of occupational therapists the interest is in understanding '... how individuals construct their profession, which in turn, constructs individual professionals.' (2003: 220) and, in the case of journalism, Aldridge and Evetts show how, as in Fournier (1999), the discourse of professionalism is mobilised by employers as a means of introducing self-management and self-motivation.

These studies, while expressed in terms of discourses reflect, more or less, a debt to the social interactionists. They are mainly micro-level ethnographic studies and interested in the way individuals created their professional role in contexts determined primarily by managements. None of the studies is about a profession with an established, and strong, professional organisation and tradition and linked training programmes such as medicine. They therefore do not take into account structural influences, including the roles played by professional bodies and by training institutions. It is also apparent that contexts – in the studies above, the role of management and trainees' ambitions – are likely to be highly relevant too. An interesting comparison can be made here with FE teachers where, post-incorporation, new 'professional' contracts were introduced, significantly worsening teachers' conditions of service. Clow has commented that this was an interesting choice of terminology '... used by managers as a way of convincing staff to accept the new regime.' (2001: 408) by offering a desired status.

2.2.6 Drawing the threads together

These case studies provide a perspective on how discourses of professionalism can be used to drive occupational change, and as a means of control. I have previously identified the role of the different actors in the model of Burrage *et al.* in defining professionalism and in the professionalisation of occupations, that model did not include employers and the case studies have illustrated their importance in particular. However, Bucher and Stelling's model has attractions for the analysis of FE teacher professionalism and professionalisation because of the attention it draws to the political context and the role of the state and of the universities as training providers.

In this thesis the interest is in how trainee teachers have constructed their idea of professionalism. This takes place within specific contexts, their training programmes and their workplaces, and within the broader setting of government policy. For an account of how such factors can interact we can turn again to Bucher and Stelling (1977) who proposed a model of professional socialisation. This placed such situational and interactional variables within a framework of external and internal structural variables. The external variables consist of the professional communities and formal organisations, such as training institutions. There is a dynamic relationship between the two; in particular, defining the content of training programmes and the ways they are taught. The internal structural components – professional organisation and the training programme – include the number and type of professionals involved in the training programme and their ties to the wider professional community. Their evidence supported the idea that trainers were a self-selecting section of that wider community and shared common beliefs about the ideology and practice of their profession. This in turn was reflected in the content and style of training programmes. The characteristics of the trainees and the interaction between them and their trainers, as previously described, were also factors. These are included in the situational and interactional variables, and were played out in part in trainees' participation in formal training but, equally, in the way trainees actively evaluated the potential models available to them.

Bucher and Stelling studied trainee psychiatrists, and the professional medical community was well established and organised, with strong links to the training institutions. That is less the case with FE, where employers, represented by the LLUK, and government have an influence that is considerably stronger than that of teachers as a profession. Nonetheless the model points up the parts played by trainers and their discourse of professionalism in determining the content of training programmes, and, by trainees' mediation of that content in determining their constructs of professionalism, which will be explored in later chapters.

So far we have looked at the mechanics of the processes and how they might be taken to operate. What of the content? Have we gained any clues from the above as to what might, generally speaking, constitute the 'essence' of professionalism, even if we have ruled out a search for a precise definition? I will take this further in the next part of this Chapter where I look at FE teaching in more detail. However, a common theme emerges from Atkinson and from Bucher and Stelling's work; that is, the emergence in clinicians of a reliance on the authority of their own senses and personal experience, their knowledge, both formally and informally acquired, provided the basis for the autonomous practitioner. In other professions, often working in a more structured, managed context, the case studies above identify as a common theme the sense of responsibility or commitment to the client. Even those of Fournier's workers who explicitly rejected managerial values, as set out in the company's competency framework, had a concept of professionalism that was 'moral' – in the sense of doing a good job and satisfying the customer. These values had their own disciplinary logic and, in sharing a commitment to the customer, in part at least aligned with those of their employer – even if other dimensions of the official discourse were consciously rejected. It is arguable then that, in these cases, as well as being vehicles for control, the discourses of professionalism retain that moral dimension that was considered so important by Durkheim – and much of the early modern literature on the professions (Johnson 1972).

Evetts (2005) distinguished the discourse of 'occupational professionalism', coming from within the occupation and rooted in specialist expertise and codes of practice – to which we could add a sense of vocation and ethics (Cribb 2005) – from that of 'organisational professionalism'. This last is the kind of professionalism promoted as a form of managerial control, linked to increased accountability and capable of promoting change as, for example, described by Fournier and by Aldridge and Evetts above. Organisational professionalism is driven 'from above', as distinct from 'from within' (McClelland 1990), and while conferring improved status, and possibly reward, it

'... incorporates rational-legal forms of authority and hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision making. It involves the increased standardized [sic] of work procedures and practices and managerialist controls. It relies on externalised forms of regulation and accountability measures such as target-setting and performance review.' (Evetts 2005: 9).

This model appeals to the traditional professional values of autonomy and control over one's work, but in reality substitutes organizational values for 'professional' ones. This resonates with current reforms in the public sector, including education: 'Organizational professionalism is clearly of relevance to the forms of public management currently being developed in educational institutions ...' (Evetts 2005: 11).

The distinction between an idea of professionalism 'imposed' from outside and that developed and shared by those inside an occupation is also reflected in Evans (2002) who defines 'inner' (community of practice, shared) and 'outer' (policy and legislation, codified) social frameworks that define knowledge. The key question however is how the two interconnect and relate. While these two types of professionalism are presented as ideal types, and so exclude one another, the case studies above suggest that elements of both may co-exist *within* the same occupation (or, perhaps more properly, work contexts). Working within an occupation characterised by the sort of controls Evetts has described, individuals and groups may still subscribe to an idea of professionalism that is more attuned to ethical values rather than to those of the organisation – although they are increasingly required to

work in and meet (or at least give the impression of meeting) the requirements of their employer.

The resulting tensions, in the case of schoolteachers, have been vividly described as a struggle for the ‘teacher’s soul’ (Ball 2003) and their resolution as ‘principled infidelity’ (Hoyle and Wallace 2007). In a similar way Stronach *et al.* (2002) dismiss the idea of a professional ‘type’ as reductionist and goes on to identify the professional (in their case nurses and teachers) as having split, plural and conflictual selves, located in a complicated relationship between policy, ideology and practice where they juggle between externally set performance requirements and their personal and professional orientations. These strategies for managing conflicting ethical, professional and performative demands in the FE context are discussed in what follows.

2.3 FE Teacher Professionalism – A Work In Progress?

2.3.1 Introduction

The following reviews what has been written about teaching in FE; the professional status of FE teachers and the influences that have shaped that status. Much of the more recent research has been done under the umbrella of the ESRC’s Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP): specifically, two major projects: *The Impact of Policy on Learning and Inclusion in the Lifelong Learning Sector* and *Transforming Learning Cultures in FE*. The outcomes of the first of these projects were reported in a special edition of the *Journal of Vocational Education and Training* (Edward and Coffield 2007; Edward et al. 2007; Hodkinson 2007; Hodkinson et al. 2007), and those of the second by Gleeson (2005) and, more recently and in more detail, by James and Biesta (2007). However, both these projects’ aims were, primarily, to assess the impact of policy on the sector, focussing particularly on

the learning process and the cultures surrounding it.

The findings on FE teachers' professional identities and values therefore constituted just one element, albeit a highly significant one, of these wider investigations and some questions remain unanswered. Yet there are more issues to be explored. Hamilton (2007) was quoted in Chapter One as asking important questions about where teachers' sense of values come from and how they are sustained in the face of challenge from policy initiatives; and how such a diverse workforce as FE teachers can be characterised as a single profession. Those questions are central to this study. The two research projects above are almost exclusively based on the English experience. Wales, by comparison, has been little studied as a case in its own right, although the position has been remedied by the TLRP extension project, *Learning and Working in Further Education in Wales* (Jephcote and Salisbury 2007, 2009; Jephcote et al. 2008; Jephcote et al. 2007; Salisbury and Jephcote 2008; Salisbury et al. 2006b; Salisbury et al. 2005).

Those who contributed to the literature were themselves, in a number of instances, engaged in teaching in FE or in the training of FE teachers. As a consequence a significant proportion of the research in this field was concerned with the experiences of trainee and newly qualified FE teachers (Robson (1998b), Avis *et al.* (2002a), Bathmaker and Avis (2005; 2007), Parsons *et al.* (2001)). While this theme continues to be of interest (Spenceley 2007; Tummons 2008), more recent research, both within the TLRP projects referred to above, (Hodkinson et al. 2007; James and Gleeson 2007; Jephcote and Salisbury 2009), and outside of it (Robson and Bailey 2009; Robson et al. 2004), has moved on to examine the lived experiences and personal histories of established teachers and the cultures they inhabit. In contrast, comparatively little attention has been given to the process and content of teacher training and to the attitudes and experiences of teacher educators in training institutions. There were early commentaries on what the nature of ITT for FE should be (Lucas 1995; Young et al. 1995); the relationships between HEIs and FE in providing training (Robson et al. 1995); and, the concern that FE teacher training was

being given lower priority than that for schoolteachers (Lucas 1996). More recent studies have criticised the standards-based approach to training implicit in the application of the FENTO and LLUK Standards in training programmes (Lucas 2007) as well as the implementation of the reformed qualifications introduced in England (Holloway 2009; Simmons and Thompson 2007a; Thompson and Robinson 2008). However, teacher-trainers remain a virtually unstudied group – although Murray (2007) provides an account of the transition from schoolteacher to teacher-educator in Higher Education.

There are relevant parallels with the ways schoolteachers' professionalism has evolved as governments imposed new requirements of accountability and of responsiveness to consumer demand on schools, and we can draw inferences for FE from the much larger literature on schoolteachers' professional lives, for example Goodson (2003) and Ball (2008), as similar demands have been made of FE, particularly after incorporation. This has been described by Hoyle and Wallace (2007) as the 'accountability movement', with its beginnings in James Callaghan's Ruskin College speech in 1976 in response to the belief that public service professions – in this case those in education and particularly schools – had secured a level of autonomy that took little account of the wishes of clients, including the state.

Since then in FE, under successive governments, peer accountability has been replaced by the need to be responsive to the market, coupled with increasingly managerialist college administrations and greater accountability to governments in England and Wales through their respective agencies. These developments have been described as a shift from 'old' public management, or 'municipal bureau professionalism', to 'new' public management driven by markets and public choice, which creates a public service that is managed, brokered and mediated by professionals in highly competitive and contested market situations (Gleeson and James 2007), typified by casualisation, work intensification and de-professionalisation and the requirement for greater flexibility.

While FE teaching was not subject to the same kinds of changes as in schools, incorporation brought with it a funding regime which, in Wales as elsewhere, was linked to the recruitment and retention of students and to their eventual achievements. That led to teachers' work intensification, as colleges strove to be more cost-effective; increasing reliance on performance measures and an increase in teachers' pastoral and administrative duties (Jephcote and Salisbury 2007). While governments in both England and Wales have sought to enhance the professional status of schoolteachers (Morris 2001), by statutorily re-defining their work in the Schoolteachers' Workload Agreement and subsequent regulations (Welsh Assembly Government 2004) with the intention of focussing schoolteachers' time and energies on their professional activities, no similar measures to define and contain teachers' work have been introduced in FE.

The pressures of increasing workload and managerial control have been considered to be a threat to professionalism, even as 'de-professionalizing' FE teachers (Randle and Brady 1997); and that the introduction of tightly defined, competence-based curricula has turned teachers into artisans without professional autonomy (Hodkinson 1997). In these respects FE teachers' experience was held to have mirrored that of schoolteachers where '... government priorities in the UK have meshed with a professional culture of teaching to produce a damaging coherence ...' (Bottery and Wright 2000: 1). Others (Avis 1999; Robson et al. 2004) have instead seen evidence for the emergence of a new form of professionalism or a professional re-construction, represented by the belief in the ability of FE to transform the lives of students and to fulfil a broader educational role than simply the achievement of qualifications and acquisition of skills. Teachers can be said to work around the rules to fulfil 'an ethic of care', that is, a personal commitment to their students (Jephcote et al. 2008; Salisbury et al. 2006b). Similarly, professionalism has been relegated to a means of surviving or 'getting by' through different strategies of compliance with, or mediating, the demands of management in terms of their prioritisation of students' needs (Gleeson and James 2007; Gleeson and Shain 1999).

Running through these accounts are questions of agency and structure (Gleeson et al. 2005): are teachers the agents of their own destiny or enmeshed in structures over which they have no control? The processes by which teachers, as individuals, construct their identities as professionals in these circumstances are variously described in terms of communities of practice, or by reference to Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus* and field, although here it is important to reflect on the variety of different discourses and social interactions in the workplace that impact on the individual as well as, importantly, the life histories that people bring with them into teaching, described as the 'individualistic elemental nature of professionalism' (Evans 2008). In FE, teachers' have typically had prior working lives; it has been observed that many of those engaged in teaching skills regard themselves as specialists engaged in teaching, where their identity as a teacher is secondary to their previous 'specialist' identity (Lucas 2004; Salisbury 1994; Spenceley 2006). Alternatively, they may 'wander' or 'shuttle' between the two identities (Colley 2002; Colley and James 2005).

Teachers' professionalism is also taken to be a product of the contexts, the social environments that teachers work in, which can vary between and within colleges, and the shared values that develop in that way, both in training and in practice. Goodson has stressed the importance of such contexts in understanding the importance of wider influences on teachers' lives and work and how those inter-relate (Ball and Goodson 1985; Goodson 1992, 2000) so that '... the forms of knowledge which teachers have are substantially implicated in the kinds of people teachers are and believe themselves to be ...' (Goodson 2003). As a social construct, professionalism is not independent of those contexts. It follows that teachers' identity, their ideas of being a professional and what constitutes professional behaviour and standards, are not static. It will become clear from this Chapter that individual practitioner's professional identity is multiple and changing, continuously made and remade – but not in a set trajectory (Colley et al. 2007). It is a product of circumstances, being more or less stable, more or less fragmented at different times depending on their situation, career position and life events (Day et al. 2006), or 'situated in a recurring set of unstable conditions'

(Gleeson and James 2007). In this way then, teachers may position themselves differently on a number of different dimensions – which we might usefully consider as discourses – but there is an inevitable tension between those different discourses, requiring teachers to resolve the emerging conflicts. At the individual level that is a product of the way teachers ‘story’ themselves, their personal backgrounds, career histories and values; and, related to that, find an accommodation between the discourses of performativity and of professional and ethical behaviours. Is this latter merely a means of ‘getting by’, surviving with their self-esteem intact or a more positive role, creating a new professionalism? This Chapter goes on to examine the extent to which there may be sufficient common strands to identify what constitutes ‘professionalism’ in FE teaching to test against the voices of teacher educators and trainee teachers in this study.

2.3.2 De-professionalisation or re-professionalisation?

While this is something of a false dichotomy, it still is a useful peg on which to hang commentaries on the way the nature of teaching in FE has changed as a result of the pressures outlined above. We can approach this debate in the light of its usefulness for exploring the way ideas about FE teaching have developed, recognising, too, that as a debate it has largely run its course as the heat generated by incorporation and associated changes has died down. James and Gleeson (2007) have observed that what constitutes professionalism in FE is an elusive concept, and what it means to be a professional has become more complex and contradictory. Were FE teachers ever professionals? If we take the possession of formal qualifications as a test, a benchmarking study of FE in England and Wales by the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) exposed the lack of reliable data on the numbers employed in FE teaching and the qualifications held (FEDA 1995). A range of possible qualifications existed – from PGCE/Cert Ed. and City and Guilds Further and Adult Education Teachers’ Certificate through to NVQs in training and development and specialist awards offered by BTEC, City and Guilds and the RSA. Most staff undertook initial teacher training in-service and, at that time the City and Guilds

Further and Adult Education Teachers' Certificate was probably the most common award undertaken. Some staff continued to Cert Ed. or to degrees. No data for Wales were provided, but in England it was estimated that, for those staff 'with a primary role in teaching and promoting learning', the proportion who were professionally qualified (in the Report's terms) was just under 50 per cent.

Official data on staff employed in FE institutions in Wales do not distinguish teaching from other staff in terms of qualifications held. However, out of 14,025 staff, teaching and non-teaching, directly employed in 2006-07, 39 per cent held a 'professional' qualification, first or further degree (Welsh Assembly Government 2008f). As nearly half of all staff in FE are engaged in teaching or supporting teachers it must be concluded that a significant minority were therefore not professionally qualified. Nor does this provide any indication of whether teachers possessed a specific teaching qualification. However, it was recently estimated that nearly three quarters (74 per cent) of full-time FE teachers in Wales held a full teaching qualification (PGCE/Cert. Ed.), although among hourly paid or those on small fractional contracts the proportion was much less (31 per cent) (Lester 2007). While that is an improvement on the 1995 FEDA estimates, if possession of qualifications is taken as the prime criteria of professional status, FE teaching does not compare with school teaching, which is virtually an all-graduate profession with every teacher (except in defined circumstances) holding a teaching qualification.

Towards the end of the 1990s there was growing interest in whether FE teaching constituted a profession and how that status was affected by the then principal concern with the effects of incorporation. It was typically concluded that, according to the conventional criteria, the case for professional status at that time, and before the introduction of the FENTO standards and statutory qualifications, was weak. Robson (1998a) identified the diversity of entry routes into FE teaching as being responsible for indeterminate boundaries, with no clear 'graduate gate' as was the case with schoolteachers. Nor was there any consensus on a shared body of professional knowledge, developed, controlled and certificated by a professional body, 'The

profession is not clearly demarcated and has not achieved a specialised or protected title.’ (Robson 1998a: 594). For Robson, the key to the culture that FE teachers operate within lay instead in their previous occupational identities before becoming teachers. In that sense, they hold a dual identity, as teachers and as members of their original trade or vocation. More recently, Clow (2001) found a number of different constructions of professionalism among FE teachers and that this made it difficult for FE teachers to form themselves into a coherent professional body. There was no guarantee of any theoretical knowledge of teaching practice, or an accepted code of conduct; and the diversity of subject specialisms and the levels at which they are taught; teachers’ low status and the predominance of part-time working all militated against professionalism. She too concluded that FE teaching was not, then, a profession in the strict sense.

That said, neither Robson nor Clow dismissed the idea of some conception of professionalism existing within FE teaching. The common theme here, as ever, was the diversity of FE and the different roles that teachers necessarily play in it, which made it difficult to identify a typical teacher, sharing a similar career history with other, fellow teachers. This fractured nature of the FE workforce was in part the product of the varied prior identities of FE teachers, carried into FE and re-worked there (Avis and Bathmaker 2006). Clow has suggested, like Robson, that one variety of FE professionalism is validated by individual teachers’ previous occupational status and a commitment to passing on those professional standards to their students; another variant of professionalism is rooted in the pastoral role of teachers and, associated with that, a belief in an emancipatory role of FE in transforming students’ lives.

For others the interest was not in whether or not FE teaching was a profession, but in how teachers were responding to change. The incorporation of colleges generated considerable interest in how teachers adapted to the new regimes introduced by management now anxious to meet the requirements of a marketised funding system. This was represented as a clash between professionalism and managerialism (Randle and Brady 1997); where lecturers resorted to covert and overt resistance to

management demands, regarding them as diluting the quality of teaching. Teachers became re-positioned as assessors and facilitators as their personal influence over course content and modes of delivery were reduced; the effect, it was argued, being the de-skilling of teachers as work intensification and greater dependence on educational technology reduced the traditional lecturer's skills. If professionalism had previously resided in expertise, autonomy and a public service ethic, these developments were then to 'de-professionalise' FE teaching. Such developments were not unique to FE, but were part of a more general imposition of a social market on public sector occupations, which failed to acknowledge the content and the ethical and moral dimensions of professionalism (Hyland 1996), substituting re-regulation for de-regulating and subordinating the autonomous self to the greater good (Ball 2003).

From a more recent perspective, Spenceley (2006) has taken a similar view, seeing subject specialisms being replaced or subordinated to the ability to manage and facilitate learning, and excellence measured in terms of outputs rather than the quality of teaching. However, she also drew attention to the breadth of the teacher's role including counselling and administration, a factor that, perhaps, meant the acquisition of new skills, rather than de-skilling. Ainley and Bailey (1997) have similarly described how the demands for new types, and larger numbers, of students and changes to the curriculum and assessment regimes meant new ways of working in teams, with management requiring 'endless meetings'. Feelings of insecurity followed from teachers' doubts about their ability to measure up to the new performance standards. Mixed loyalties emerged as they were required to identify more with the college's objectives rather than their personal or professional ones. Ainley and Bailey found that teachers were also concerned to meet what they saw as being what their students required – out of loyalty to their original trade; and it was important to their self-esteem that these standards were met.

It might therefore be expected that such conflicts as outlined above would have translated into industrial action. While it is true that there was a significant level of action taken by FE teachers in the period after incorporation, this was less the result of

the kinds of tensions that Randle and Brady or Ainley and Bailey describe, but more as a result of the way that incorporation was implemented locally, as colleges, subject to financial pressures, pushed the boundaries of their new found autonomy (Williams 2003). Nor was corporate management quite the hegemony that it is portrayed as, there were significant local variations and shifting discourses of leadership (Gleeson 2001).

The view emerged that teachers were becoming proletarianized; driven by the need to meet attainment and retention targets, they were now the 'production workers of the educational establishment' (Thorley 2004). The FENTO standards were seen as having the potential to have a similar effect, creating a workforce of technicians (Bathmaker 2000). However such a view of teachers as artisans restricted by new competence- based curricula (Hodkinson 1997) was challenged by Robson *et al.* (2004) who found that, in practice, teachers went well beyond what the curricula required (see also Jephcote *et al.* (2007) for a similar conclusion), partly for reasons of loyalty to their original professions but equally out of their enthusiasm for their subject, here again echoing Ainley and Bailey (1997). Others saw this rather as a time of re-professionalisation or professional reconstruction (Shain and Gleeson 1999), or, disputed the use of the term de-professionalisation observing that de-, up- and re-skilling happens in all professions over time (Avis 1999) and Whitty, writing about schoolteachers, argued for a more balanced view, regarding the arguments about de-professionalisation and re-professionalisation as instead being about 'competing versions' of professionalism Whitty (2000).

If what emerges from the foregoing is a somewhat confusing picture, there does appear to be a discernible shift over time as the view of the basis of teachers' professionalism moves from their subject knowledge to one which goes further to include their expertise in managing the process of learning and getting results, associated at the same time with an increased pastoral role. We can link this to the emphasis on the need for learners to 'learn how to learn', the shift to 'mode 2 knowledge' (Gibbons et al. 2000), reflecting governments' concern with globalisation

and the need for an adaptable and flexible labour force. However, as might be expected, this shift had not been without its tensions and discontinuities. All of this should not disguise the fact that little is known about what FE teachers actually do (Clow 2005; Gleeson and James 2007) and much of the work referred to above is based on very small case studies; so, the individual perspectives of those studied and the situations in which they found themselves inevitably shape the conclusions drawn (Parsons et al. 2001). What does emerge however, is a view that there is no simple model of professionalism; we can reject the idea of a professional 'type' (Stronarch et al. 2002), and instead different strands of professionalism exist in parallel. Two such strands are those of 'corporate' and of 'critical' professionalism (Bathmaker 2006) echoing the descriptions of occupational and organisational professionalism (Evetts 2003; Fournier 1999) and 'economies of performance' and 'ecologies of practice' (Stronarch et al. 2002), that is, the need to meet external, performance requirements on the one hand and, on the other, the wish to satisfy personal, ethical and professional values. However, these categorisations do not tell us much about the content of professionalism.

2.3.3 The content of professionalism

In her more recent analysis of teacher professionalism, Robson (2006), borrowing from Furlong *et al.* (2000), identified three constituent elements of teacher professionalism in further and higher education, that is, knowledge, autonomy and responsibility, where the last can be said to be associated with a code of professional values. Hoyle and John previously made the same distinction adding that '... knowledge, autonomy and responsibility remain crucial matters for education...' (1995: 15). These themes have emerged in the first part of this Chapter; where, while accepting that attempts to define the characteristics of professionalism are less useful than understanding what members understand or believe to be the content of their professionalism, the core elements of professionalism were described there as the personal knowledge acquired, both formally and informally, and the reliance on that

knowledge so enabling the professional to practice autonomously, together with a sense or responsibility, or commitment, to their clients

The knowledge base of teachers is disputed territory. School teaching has been described by Richard Elmore as a profession without a practice, lacking a specific, defining content, other than the expertise in the particular subjects taught. If that were the case in schools, it is even more so in FE. Robson (2006) pointed to the unique position of teachers in the post-compulsory sector; unlike professions such as engineers, lawyers or nurses, who acquire specialist knowledge directly related to their practice, most teachers in post-compulsory education acquire specialist knowledge and, after that, the knowledge to teach it. Subject knowledge in FE is diverse, including academic subjects, and trade skills, and, in many cases, linked to teachers' previous occupational identities (Robson 1998a). To take 'subject knowledge' as defining professionalism would therefore be to understate the variations in the breadth and intellectual content of that knowledge and its relationship with teachers' identities.

Teaching as simply passing on a skill, in the manner of Clow's 'vocational teachers' (Clow 2001), within a narrowly bounded understanding of the knowledge to be taught, would not generally be considered to be 'knowledge' that would define professionalism. Spenceley observed how in some vocational subjects teachers see themselves, and are seen as, trainers, '... equipped only to pass the specific knowledge and skills associated with their previous occupation to learners, rather than primarily being educators or teachers' (2006: 292-3). Clow found that this was the case in those she categorised as the 'ex officio' and the 'vocational' teachers, where the former were '... untouched by the professional knowledge base of learning and teaching.', and the latter's professionalism was rooted in their desire to pass on their standards to their students (2001: 413). A similar conclusion was arrived at by Ainley and Bailey (1997) and is reflected in Bathmaker's idea of teachers' 'personal professionalism' as being defined by a commitment to their students and to their specialism (Bathmaker 2006).

The knowledge passed on by such an approach to learning and teaching has been categorised (Avis and Fisher 2006) as 'mode 1 knowledge' (Gibbons et al. 2000), that is, as discipline-based and transmitted in an hierarchical, master-apprentice tradition. In a post-modern world this type of knowledge is, it is argued, being replaced by 'mode 2 knowledge', non-hierarchical, pluralistic, trans-disciplinary, fast changing and socially responsive to a diversity of needs (Smith and Webster 1997). If that is so, teachers would become facilitators of learning and as Avis *et al.* have argued, the role of the teacher is becoming narrower with an emphasis on flexibility and adaptability rather than subject knowledge, so that 'The lecturer becomes in effect a unit of resource to be applied where the need lies and whose labour is to be directed by management fiat.' (Avis et al. 2003: 184). Broader and more transferable skills would be required, with a consequent shift in the content of the professional knowledge base from specialist to more generic teaching skills.

While previously the assumption was made that subject expertise in itself provided sufficient credentials for teaching (Lucas 1996; Robson 2006), recent developments in the direction of professionalising the FE workforce – the development of professional standards, and the regulations requiring new entrants to be qualified – now necessitate an additional need for professional training and expertise in the areas of pedagogy, driven by government's view that traditional subject-specific knowledge is transient and that learners should 'learn to learn', summarised in Jones and Moore's conclusions on Youth Training (Jones and Moore 1995). In this way, it was argued, subject knowledge loses its authority and pedagogy becomes paramount. More recently, echoing that theme, Fisher and Webb have described FE teachers' self perception as often that of being a 'generalist' or 'a Jack/Jill of all trades' (2006: 342). Similarly, those teaching trade skills were drawn into becoming 'educators', a role in which they were not necessarily comfortable (Spenceley 2006).

Although the Ofsted review of FE ITT had criticised the lack of subject-specific pedagogic training (Ofsted 2003) and DfES considered that an FE teacher should be trained in both their subject skills and in the skills of teaching (DfES 2004), delivering

ITT in the context of specific subject areas would prove to be a challenging task, since the range of subjects covered in FE meant that teacher-trainers could not hope to have personal knowledge of the content of more than a few of those subjects, or of how they should be taught. It follows that the content of teacher training is inevitably almost exclusively about generic pedagogic skills – theories of learning and learning styles, classroom management, lesson planning – providing, as a teacher-trainer in this study put it, a ‘tool kit’ of methods and approaches from which trainees could dip into as they saw fit in the course of their practice. The orthodoxy of learning styles has been endorsed as good practice by the Association of Colleges, together with the idea of the ‘reflective practitioner’ (Schön 1983) and so the centrality of reflection to personal and professional development.

It is perhaps surprising then, given all of this, that learning as a process does not appear to be something that practicing FE teachers in Wales have given much thought to, and teachers there seemed to find it difficult to express what they understood by ‘learning’ (Jephcote et al. 2008; Jephcote et al. 2007). There may be a connection here with the evidence, borne out by the trainees in this study, that trainee FE teachers take a jaundiced view of the theoretical underpinnings of teacher training programmes (Harkin 2005; Salisbury 1994) or, at least, that they consider there is more to becoming a capable teacher in FE than a command of theory and knowledge or the ability to demonstrate competence in the classroom (Bates 2003).

If subject knowledge is arguably being subordinated to generic pedagogic skills, and these dominate the content of teaching programmes, while research into the content and the manner of teacher training and into teachers’ practice is scarce, the impression is that ‘... we appear to be a long way from any coherent pedagogy of teaching and learning in post-compulsory education.’ (Robson 2006: 16). This is despite the widespread use in the training institutions included in this study of standard texts, as well as the influence of the FENTO and, subsequently, the LLUK standards, which emphasises pedagogic values. It remains to be seen how factors such as the diversity of FE, in terms of both subjects taught and of learners and their needs; the demands on

teachers' time and energies of students' pastoral needs and management requirements; the ever-changing sense of identity; and, the fractional, part-time nature of working, have worked against the development of an accepted or commonly understood body of core professional, pedagogic knowledge. However, in the end, a search for a coherent pedagogy of teaching and learning may be chasing a mirage and Eraut (1994) has pointed out that doubt and uncertainty are inherent in all professional knowledge, even the most scientifically based.

It will now be helpful to consider the elements of professionalism identified in the first part of this Chapter, as they apply to FE teaching.

Autonomy

If a systematic and specific body of professional knowledge is arguably lacking, the discussion above has demonstrated that there are mixed opinions about the relative freedom FE teachers enjoy in exercising their individual judgement rather than being confined by prescribed curricula and managerial frameworks. As previously noted, such discussion is limited by the lack of knowledge about what teachers actually do in their practice in classrooms and workshops. Evidence exists in Wales from the *Learning and Working in Further Education in Wales* project; here it was found that teachers, while required to comply with ever-increasing bureaucratic demands, still had a wide degree of freedom over the way they structured and managed their lessons. Salisbury *et al.* (2006b) describe the routine assessment by teachers of how different teaching strategies will impact on various sets of learners, in this case having regard to the need to protect those with particular difficulties, educational or social. The same paper also identifies the significant pastoral role of teachers, advising and 'looking out' for their students in ways that do not appear on their job descriptions or are taken account of by management.

A traditional view of the teacher as an autonomous expert responsible for delivering teaching in a way that was 'implicitly anti-commercial' (Randle and Brady 1997) has been eroded by the need to respond to market demands. Yet, it has been observed that

teachers see it as part of their professional practice to ‘work around the rules’, in other words to mediate the conflicts of policy and managerial diktat with their own conception of good practice and educational values (Gleeson 2005; Gleeson et al. 2005; Shain and Gleeson 1999). The discussion of the way in which practitioners mediate the requirements of management and of policy later in this Chapter evidences the way that teachers apply their own ‘professional’ standards and values – of quality of teaching, of care for their students – and the importance they attach to those values, or, alternatively simply act in self-preservation in the face of the mounting pressures of work intensification and bureaucracy.

Responsibility

If by ‘responsibility’ we mean the regulation of behaviour by codes of professional conduct, maintained and policed by a professional body, then that is absent in FE in Wales, whereas in England and Wales schoolteachers are required to register with the relevant General Teaching Council. In Wales, the GTCW has a statutory responsibility for maintaining a register of teachers who are qualified to teach and teachers may be suspended from the register, so making them ineligible to hold a teaching post, on grounds of both incompetence and unsuitable behaviour. In England, teachers in the Lifelong Learning sector are required to register with the IfL, which has developed a professional code (Institute for Learning 2008b), based on core principles including professional integrity and behaviour. The Ifl’s remit does not run in Wales and so Welsh FE teachers are not subject to any ‘professional’ code of conduct in the way their colleagues in England and those teaching in schools in Wales are.

The absence of written down codes of behaviour does not mean that standards do not exist. There is a substantial body of evidence, pre-dating the IfL and its codification of professional behaviour, pointing to teachers’ commitment to their students, and the trainee teachers in this study have confirmed that. Shain and Gleeson’s (1999) ‘strategic compliers’ fell into that category because they wanted to ensure that students received a quality education, Bathmaker’s (2006) identification of a

'personal' professional identity among trainee teachers included a commitment to students, corresponding to Clow's earlier (2001) description of 'holistic' professionalism among teachers. In Wales there is similar evidence from the *Learning and Working in Further Education in Wales* project of teachers' personal involvement with their students and their desire to do the best by them. FE teachers' role encompasses more than teaching, and a significant amount of their time is spent on what might be called pastoral work. Here too they are working both within and against 'the system'. Salisbury *et al.* (2006b) and Jephcote *et al.* (2008) have described FE teachers as having an 'ethic of care', where they strive to meet the best interests of their students, reluctant to provide attendance information that might affect their financial benefits such as EMA.

2.3.4 Getting by

But talk of the content of professionalism ignores the processes that shape teachers' ideas of professionalism. It is at this point that we need to consider the question of structure and agency: how far are professional behaviours and, in that sense, professionalism, determined by individuals' own responses, or, in a more deterministic way by forces beyond their control? Gleeson *et al.* (2005) noted how research has tended to concentrate on either a view of the FE professional as merely a recipient of policy changes, as in the discussion of de-professionalisation, or, alternatively, as 'an empowered agent of educational change' where the focus is on how professionals construct their identities and meaning. These approaches appeared to them to represent a false dualism and disregard the interrelationships that exist between the two. In their view, too much emphasis has been paid to the idea of professionals as agents of change – in Stronach *et al.*'s terms, 'restorying' themselves, constructing narratives of professionalism – at the expense of ignoring the structural factors and '... the way professionals operate in and mediate the interplay between agency and structure.' (Gleeson *et al.* 2005: 457). Mediation provides, at the individual level, for professionals' creative compliance or rule breaking, and, at a collective level, offers the possibility for contesting and re-negotiating performative

regimes. However, in the segmented and isolated context of teaching in FE, the capacity for the latter is questionable. James and Gleeson (2007), pursuing this last point, considered that the achievement of a stronger sense of professionalism would require structural change, perhaps through greater trust and being more accountable, in other words, a different deal with the state. In that last respect, Whitty (2000) had earlier observed that professional status is, in a sense, a bargain struck with the state.

In a critique of the more individualised explanations of learning cultures, including those represented in the *Transforming Learning Cultures* project, Avis has argued for a more politicised, determinist analysis (Avis 2006b); he comments on the use of Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus* and field by Hodgkinson and James (2003) in an early paper on the project (and see also, for example, James and Bloomer (2001), James and Gleeson (2004) and, most recently, Gleeson and James (2007)); where the emphasis on *habitus* plays up the social and cultural and downplays material relations; whereas complexity and indeterminacy are front stage, structural and material relations (social structures and patterns of inequality, class, gender and race) are relegated to the background.

It is perhaps somewhat inevitable that research based upon individual practitioners' accounts should tend to a more individualised account of values and behaviours, but Avis's critique is not wholly justified given James and Gleeson's acknowledgement of the need for wider, structural change to secure a stronger sense of professionalism referred to above. Nevertheless, it is true that only passing reference is made in the literature to the comparatively low status of FE teaching, which may be explained by the presence of skill-related, 'blue collar' subjects, the subordinate role of FE in delivering HE programmes and the varied occupational and academic backgrounds of teachers. The social origins and the lack of economic clout of students in FE, compared to those in HE, must play a part too.

If we then accept that the issue is not a simple, dualistic one of individual agency and external influences, it is still useful to consider the ways teachers' have responded, but

not necessarily in a collective way, to the changes that have been described as de- or re-professionalising. Hoyle and Wallace (2007) have described how schoolteachers mediate the pressures of policy in their daily lives by adapting them to serve the needs of their pupils. The disjunction between policy and practice is recognised and teachers neither rebel against, nor opt out of the reforms imposed on them, but work around policies and structures, continuing to hold to their professional values. Hoyle and Wallace described this as 'principled infidelity'. Mediation can take different forms: *protective*, where teachers seek to protect pupils from the pressures of, for example, testing regimes; *innovative*, where teachers internalise the requirements of policy but develop them in creative ways. These responses are considered *ironic* since they recognise the fundamental dilemmas inherent in implementing policy and meeting managerial targets. So, in meeting their perception of the needs of their pupils they have to adapt or subvert policies and targets while, equally, giving the appearance of implementing them. It is not clear how far this principled infidelity is a private act done by individual teachers without reference to others, or whether it is a shared activity done in collusion with others, and, possibly, even connived at by their managers.

Principled infidelity is one response; alternatives, Hoyle and Wallace suggest are compliance and non-compliance, where compliance represents acceptance of reforms without enthusiasm or commitment, a kind of 'going by the book'. Shain and Gleeson similarly identified FE lecturers' responses to the changes following FE incorporation as resistance, compliance and 'strategic compliance', this last, in some sense at least, pre-figuring principled infidelity. Strategic compliance represented the mediation of a managerialist discourse that emphasised flexibility, reliability and competence. There was evidence that some lecturers 'bought in' to the new managerial discourse, it was not contested and:

'... residual elements of 'public sector' or 'old' professionalism are drawn on and reworked through lecturer practice in order to make sense of the changing conditions of work in managerial and competitive contexts.' (Shain and Gleeson 1999: 459).

In these cases the main commitment of lecturers was to ensuring students received a quality education, as distinct from simply conforming to output measures. This

strategic compliance was thought at the time to offer the possibility of developing critical and reflexive thinking and bring teachers to think about priorities and professional possibilities in new ways. However, more recently, Gleeson and James (2007) have moved away from the idea of strategic compliance and towards the view that this is more a process of mediation, noting that tutors exhibit more subtle skills associated with 'tacit knowledge' and 'invisible trade' (Eraut 2000b) and 'adding value' (Robson et al. 2004). Similar evidence comes from Edward *et al.* (2007); staff in FE colleges felt subject to 'endless change' but were they reduced to simply responding, or did they find ways of coping that reconciled their professional motivation with the demands of others? Those that survived these pressures best were those '... whose professionalism included compliance with bureaucratic demands, but what they were truly enthusiastic about was the impact they could have on the lives of their learners. (Edward et al. 2007: 166). There are clear parallels here with Evans' categorisation of 'enacted professionalism' (Evans 2008). Nor is the process of mediation of national policy the product of teachers' responses alone. Colleges developing their internal plans, systems and practices translate policy in their own terms, reflecting the environments within which they work (Spours et al. 2007) and the needs of the communities they serve.

What the foregoing clearly suggests is that teachers are doing a variety of things, some of them simultaneously. They are both complying with changes – there seems little evidence of outright rejection – and, to a greater or lesser extent, they are filtering these new policies and procedures through their own professional values, including the wish to 'do well' by their students. The source of these professional values is not identified but the desire to meet their students' needs is arguably an inherent component of professionalism. The key point is that, insofar as teachers adapt to change and to the needs of their students, this is a creative and potentially 'professional' process. How far this is a collective action, and so 'professional' in the sense of being shared and understood by teachers generally as a common discourse, is not clear. If that were the case, then there could be grounds for arguing for a 'new professionalism'. The issue then is, how far is simple compliance, and with it,

perhaps, the adoption of managerial values overlaid by new more ethically and democratically driven ones?

2.3.5 A new professionalism?

Whitty (2000) argued that performance measures, a focus on output measures and bureaucratic forms of administration accomplished the erosion of schoolteachers' traditional forms of autonomy and their accountability to intrinsic professional standards. He observed that these developments, initiated by the state and including a professional body for schoolteachers (the GTC) could be ameliorated if a new, and different form of teacher professionalism emerged as a 'third way' positioned between state control and professional self-governance (and self-interest), a form of 'democratic professionalism' rooted in altruism and public service. The 'creative mediation' of targets and procedures would intervene in the tensions and contradictions between agency and structure experienced in their working relations with students. In FE, this possibility has been described as professionalism being re-worked in preferred ways (Gleeson and Knights 2006).

The idea of the development of a 'new professionalism' rooted in the concept of 'critical pedagogy', is linked with the work of Avis and Bathmaker (Avis 2005, 2006a; Avis and Bathmaker 2004; Bathmaker 2006) and represents the idea of a pedagogy that is critical of inequalities in society and works for social justice, possessing a transformative power to change society. Gleeson (1996) argued similarly that real and lasting educational reform cannot be subordinated to the causal determinants of economy, or traditions of hierarchy and exclusion. An alternative must embrace citizenship and empowerment beyond market, qualifications and employer-led considerations, in terms of how education and training help shape, rather than passively respond to, the changing nature of industrial society; seeing the student as a learner, rather than as a customer or 'skills carrier'. On similar lines, Coffield (1999) rejected the idea of education as investment in 'human capital' and advocates a new 'social' theory of learning that shape 'learner identities' and tackles inequalities

and structural barriers, emphasizing social relationships and networks. These ideas follow Lawton's (1989) classification of curriculum theory into distinct ideologies: 'classical humanism', 'progressivism' and 'reconstructionism', where the reconstructionists see education as a way of improving society as well as developing individuals, rejecting the idea of transmitting cultural heritage on the one hand and child-centered individualism on the other.

The reconstructionist position is inevitably linked to a particular set of values and ideas about citizenship. These writers hoped that this was to be the future of professionalism in FE and that view was a product of their concerns over the changes brought about by marketization and by government policies. Those concerns were echoed by what Field describes as the decline of the 'powerful moralism of British adult education' (Field 1991) and the pervasive threats of crisis and change (Elliott 1996). Both Avis and Bathmaker agreed that there is a need to escape a corporate culture in favour of a profession that is activist, transformative and advocates social justice and equity, resonating with Whitty's 'democratic professionalism', where bridges are built between schoolteachers and previously excluded constituencies of students, parents and communities (Whitty 2000). If there may be a certain amount of wish fulfilment in this, and most recently Bathmaker (2006) suggested that the content of professionalism is rather more multi-dimensional and subject to a range of influences that would complicate such idealism, there remains considerable evidence to suggest a strong ethical dimension to the way FE teachers carry out their work, underpinning the idea of 'principled infidelity' discussed earlier.

If 'critical pedagogy' fails to cover fully the complexity of the evolving nature of FE professionalism, we might instead look at a number of different strands. Separate discourses of professionalism appear to exist, ranging from those that are oriented to managerial values and the goals of the organisation, to those based in a notion of pedagogy, whether that be based on subject knowledge, specific teaching skills or the ethical-democratic dimension referred to above, or a combination of all of these. Sachs (2001) found that among Australian schoolteachers, new forms of professional

identity were being produced by the public sector reforms, similar to those in the United Kingdom, introduced by the Australian Government. Conduct becomes a form of enterprise developing 'designer teachers' who conform to bureaucratic norms, rather in the way that Ball later described British school teachers as being engaged in 'an enterprise of the self', investing and adding value in themselves through training and professional development (Ball 2003). But this was not the whole story; there were 'activists', teachers with emancipatory aims rooted in values of equity and social justice, (these were clearly the favoured model) to be fostered by supportive communities of practice. Trainee FE teachers however, entered the profession drawing on a variety of discourses to make sense of their practice, including that of good pedagogic practice and their specific subject skills (Avis et al. 2002a). Robson *et al.* (2004) found FE teachers adopted discourses of professionalism that rested on teacher autonomy; were protective of the standards in their industries (a loyalty to previous occupations); were supportive of new entrants; and, related theory to practice, not teaching simply to outcomes.

If there is then, a discourse of professionalism that reflects the corporate nature of FE, which could be taken as corporate professionalism, there is an alternative discourse (or discourses) that challenge it; these are the 'authentic teachers' in Ball's terms, who resist the performative values of management and the corporate ethic. But, Bathmaker took the view that teacher trainees do not readily fit into either of these categories, being neither wholly compliant nor wholly critical (Bathmaker 2006). Embedded within these discourses are the notions of what constitute the elements of a professional teacher's identity and the sources of professionalism – in Lawton's terms, their educational ideologies. The importance for vocational subject teachers of their previous occupational identities has been identified as one factor (Avis and Bathmaker (2006) and Robson (1998b)). Allied to that is the wish to protect the interest of their trade and produce students who are capable of 'fitting in'. But, more critically, is the question, discussed earlier, of what is the content or nature of pedagogy. One view of the effect of a marketized sector is that learning has become commodified (Gleeson and James 2007; Jephcote and Salisbury 2000); this meant a shift from imparting

traditional discipline-based knowledge to generic teaching skills focussing on 'trainability' or 'learning to learn'. The role of the lecturer was reduced (or transformed) to that of a 'facilitator of learning' rather than an expert, a unit of resource to deliver teaching (Avis et al. 2003; Parsons et al. 2001). For Spenceley this was not necessarily an unwelcome development; in her view the new professionalism is not based on subject expertise or professional knowledge, but on 'continuously updated transferable skills', and that facilitating learning is a legitimate professional activity (Spenceley 2006).

2.3.6 Communities of practice

Discourses operate within given social contexts, formed by the physical opportunities for interaction and the social relations between participants. Lave and Wenger (1991) and, as further developed by Wenger (1998), locate the learning process in communities of practice, a notion that borrows from the traditional ideas of the master-apprentice relationship. Learning is an integral part of our everyday lives, part of our participation in communities and organisations, and so 'communities of practice are everywhere'. As we engage in different activities we interact with each other and the world, and tune our relationships accordingly, i.e. we learn. Collectively, learning results in the practices that form the 'property' of communities created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise; 'It makes sense, therefore, to call these kinds of communities *communities of practice*.' (Wenger 1998: 45). The idea that teachers' practice and professionalism can evolve through the kinds of interaction described in this way has been an attractive one (Avis et al. 2002b; Avis and Fisher 2006; Bathmaker and Avis 2005; Viskovic and Robson 2001).

As elaborated by Wenger, the concept of communities of practice has a ready appeal, especially for explaining the way newcomers adopt the values and practices of their more established colleagues, as such it has taken on an iconic status (Gleeson and James 2007). The central idea is that of participation; without that communities cannot exist and it is through participation that meaning is negotiated giving form to

concepts and understandings that become reified, taking on the status of an objective reality. The essence of a community is the sharing of a common enterprise, there are no set boundaries or formal membership rules and individuals may belong to more than one community simultaneously. An individual's identity is, then, 'learnt' through their participation in the communities they are part of, and is a 'way of being in the world'. However, individuals may only be marginally or peripherally involved in communities of practice, particularly if they are new entrants, and there are tensions that arise as a consequence.

In practice, the existence of communities of practice in FE has been called into question. Avis *et al.* (2003) and Bathmaker and Avis (2005) comment that in reality trainee teachers were marginalised and alienated by demoralised staff, noting also that Lave and Wenger's model was a relatively stable one and did not allow for changes in the nature of work and introduction of new work. Gleeson *et al.* (2005) found no evidence of communities of practice actually existing (yet considered that the challenge was to build one around new, research-based pedagogy and working practices). More recently, Gleeson and James (2007) rejected the usefulness of the concept on the grounds of the inherent notion of progression from the periphery to the centre as newcomers are integrated into the communities they are part of; here they felt, the idea of mediation is more useful in explaining the way individuals adapt the values of the groups that they belong to. They also pointed to the fragmented and diverse nature of FE, where there is no common staff room culture as college staff work part-time or fractional hours and teach at different times of the day and night (Jephcote and Salisbury 2009).

2.4 Discussion

There has been a significant concern with the changes in the work and working environment of teachers in FE over the past two decades. We have polarised views: the 'old guard' bemoaning the changes brought by the market and competition and a

loss of traditional academic values (and the same has been said of HE too, see Beck and Young (2005)). Others have identified the changes as a process of re- or different skilling (Spenceley 2006), albeit that this has happened, partly at least, in response to the pressures on colleges to get results and match output targets set by the funding bodies. That last view has led to a belief in the need for 'professional' training in teaching methods as expressed in the kind of model advocated by Fisher and Webb (2006), drawing on Lucas (1995) and Young *et al.* (1995), which emphasises the interconnections between subjects, team working and pedagogic skills, rather than the need for specialisation.

The important question is not: 'Is FE teaching a profession?', that is, how it matches up to some criteria of what makes a profession, but 'What is the content of FE professionalism and where does it come from?'. As this Chapter has shown, it can be helpful to consider knowledge, autonomy and responsibility as elements of professionalism. There has been a distinct increase in the emphasis on the pedagogic content of teachers' professional knowledge and their role in managing or facilitating learning, but that is not to diminish the importance of subject knowledge (*pace* Fisher and Webb), and it is the balancing of these two elements of professional knowledge that give rise to tensions, a 'dual identity' (Robson 1998a), further complicated by the expansion of the roles that teachers have to perform, as bureaucrats administering ever more demanding systems and as counsellors to their students, as well as educators having to work with a range of different levels of student ability. Teachers' autonomy in the past may have been exaggerated, as part of a 'golden age', but there is no doubt that, like their colleagues in other areas of education, performance monitoring, targets and accountability have brought new pressures to bear. Ways were found to work within the system, either simply to 'get by' or to protect what they considered important. In that last respect, the key is teachers' sense of responsibility to their students, this 'ethic of care' and loyalty to their subject, and that is as much an element of teachers' professionalism as their 'knowledge', both subject and pedagogic. Thus we might describe teachers as evolving a sense of professionalism

that is creative and responsive to changing circumstances, but defensive of what they consider to be their core values.

It is reasonable therefore to expect that FE teachers and trainee teachers would have a confused picture of what constitutes their professionalism, not least because the way in which their professional identities form is in a continuing state of flux (Colley et al. 2007). Teachers' professionalism is not a fixed concept; it varies from individual to individual as an ongoing project (Goodson 1995). It is a product of the contexts in which teachers' work – their managers and their colleagues – their training, and, the way as individuals they mediate those influences through the filter of their previous working experiences (Day et al. 2006), and is deconstructed and reconstructed (Colley et al. 2002). But, it is also a mistake to consider professionalism as a wholly individual construct. There are sufficient common elements to teachers' ideas of professionalism to suggest that, in their situations, across colleges and beyond the immediate workplace, there are shared discourses of professionalism. Underpinning those discourses are factors including their social status (and that of the trades and skills they teach), their gender balance, and the fractional, part-time nature of their work. The role and status of FE itself, in comparison to schools and HE, cannot be left out of the reckoning; if no longer the 'Cinderella service', FE's standing in the education system is not high and has been seen as largely fulfilling the task of keeping young adults off the unemployed register (Ainley 2003; Coffield 1999).

What emerges, to be explored later in this thesis, in what is a relatively unstudied field where little is known about how FE teachers construct meaning in their work (Gleeson et al. 2005), is a picture of a highly dynamic, responsive set of behaviours and values that we might characterise as 'professional'. These may have at their core values that we can, for now, term pedagogic, but equally there are values that run counter to the prevailing managerial ethos and the objectives of government, recalling a more liberal tradition and teachers' autonomy to identify and meet the needs of their students according to their own assessment of those needs.

Chapter Three: How The Research Was Done

3.1 Overall Approach

The way the research was conducted and the methodological issues that arose from that are described here. The theoretical underpinnings of my approach have already been set out in Chapter One, and this Chapter makes the connections between that and the research design.

The Research Design

This study explored the discourses of teacher professionalism among the officials responsible for policy in relation to FE; among teacher-trainers; and, among trainee FE teachers. In order to address the questions set out in Chapter One, the design of the research therefore needed to focus on government policy, the processes of developing that policy, and in particular, the development of the Professional Standards. It needed to examine the meanings attached to teacher professionalism by officials and teacher-trainers, how those meanings might be reflected in the content of teacher training programmes, and in trainee teachers' ideas of professionalism.

The design involved the use of a number of different qualitative methods appropriate to each of the separate elements above. The methods used fell into four broad categories. This combined data, which included a study of policy documents, interviews, focus groups and non-participant observation, enabled me to track the story of the development of the Standards in Wales as it progressed, and to do so in the context of the WAG's emerging policies for PCET. Supporting information about the progress of policy development was provided through informal meetings with

WAG officials over the period of the research. Field notes were kept as a record of the meetings. Field notes were also used to record the initial meetings with senior FE college staff when I was seeking access to teacher-trainers and trainees in the teacher training institutions selected for this study. These discussions provided useful background and insights into their perspectives of the FE sector and teacher training. I conducted a documentary analysis of Welsh and English Government policy documents and of the documentation used in the teacher-training programmes included in the study. The development of the Standards in Wales involved an advisory steering group, established by LLUK. I attended the meetings of this group, as a non-participant observer. In addition, I also observed one of the two open consultation meetings on the draft standards that LLUK held with the sector in Wales. This provided additional supporting evidence.

Interviews and focus groups constituted the main elements of the research design. The objective was to establish what professionalism in FE teaching meant for WAG officials, teacher-trainers and trainee teachers. This was done through a series of semi-structured interviews and focus groups designed to elicit the constructs of professionalism held by officials involved in implementing policy, FE teacher-trainers, and trainee teachers. The objective in selecting these three different groups was to be able to analyse and contrast the different perspectives of officials with those responsible for training FE teachers and the trainee teachers themselves. In accordance with the research questions, the focus was to be on FE teacher-trainers and trainees, rather than on longer-serving teachers.

The use of more than one method is an established procedure in qualitative research and qualitative research methodology has been likened to the work of a *bricoleur*, assembling different materials from different sources and using different methods to provide a richer picture than would be gained from using one method alone (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). Although the different methods addressed different sources, I sought to do that in a complementary way, comparing the documentary sources with the verbal accounts given in the interviews and focus groups.

In summary, the research design was:

The documentary analysis of WAG policy documents and teacher training programme materials;

Meetings with WAG and LLUK officials and with management at FE and HE teacher-training institutions;

Non-participant observation of the meetings of the steering group involved in the development of the LLUK's professional standards for Wales and LLUK consultation events; and,

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups, including seven interviews with officials, thirteen interviews with teacher -trainers, and nine focus groups involving, in all, sixty-three trainee teachers.

In practice, and observing the need for flexibility in qualitative research (Rubin and Rubin 2005), the way the research was carried out was adapted, within that overall strategy, to take advantage of both the opportunities that presented themselves and those difficulties that arose during the course of the research. This meant that, as additional themes emerged in the interviews and focus groups, the structure I had initially developed was adapted accordingly.

Outline of the Chapter

The remainder of this Chapter describes in more detail how these different approaches were carried out, the methodological issues they raised and how the data were analysed. It goes on to provide some biographical information about the participants and the ethical considerations arising from the way the research was designed and conducted. The Chapter begins by making the connection between the theoretical underpinnings of the study and the research design; it then continues by reflecting on my role as the researcher and the possible effects that it might have had in accessing participants, on their responses to me and in my analysis. The Chapter concludes by

considering the questions of validity and the how far the findings could be capable of generalisation.

3.2 Linking Theory And Method

Chapter One described the theoretical basis of the research, where I took as my starting point Bernstein's concept of pedagogic discourse. Pedagogic discourse re-contextualises knowledge and thereby consciousness and identity, and I have argued that government interest in teacher professionalism can be considered to represent an 'official' pedagogic discourse. In this study, I began with the idea that, as in all such discourses, power and control relations, here exercised between governments, colleges and teachers, would determine its content and transmission. I expected that the official discourse of professionalism would be transmitted through FE ITT programmes. However, as alternative and oppositional discourses can exist, re-contextualising knowledge in different forms, I also expected that the discourse of teacher trainers would represent a further and distinct 'pedagogic' discourse of professionalism, mediating the official discourse in the content and delivery of training. Additionally, I expected that there would also be a further discourse among trainees, reflecting their attitudes to the content of their training programmes and their initial experiences of teaching, as well as their previous occupational histories and biographies.

The question then was how might I access these different discourses. In that sense, we were dealing here with a Durkheimian idea of social facts; that is something that exists and has meaning, but no objective reality. However, they can be accessed through the 'representations of society' (Becker 2007: 5), in other words, the accounts of participants in particular worlds, where those accounts are not just simple representations, but are part of the world they describe and shaped by the contexts in which they occur (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 126). This entailed taking a naturalist standpoint where the social world would be studied, as far as possible, as it

is, without creating ‘artificial’ settings or situations, and in a way that was sensitive to the nature of the real worlds inhabited by those studied (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). The methods of doing so can be described as ethnographic; in practice that term has been broadly drawn, variously defined as being simply the work of ‘describing a culture’ (Spradley 1979) or, as including a range of qualitative methodologies which mean that a single objective description is not possible (Hammersley 1992). Generally ethnographic studies are inductive, developing ideas from what is observed; here, as outlined above, I began with a framework suggested by the idea of pedagogic discourse and so, to a degree, the methodology was designed to test or elaborate that idea and, in that sense, was partially deductive. However this was not an hypothesis to be tested as such, and that starting point should instead be more properly considered as constituting the ‘foreshadowed problems’ (Malinowski 1922) with which an ethnographic study should begin.

The need to examine the data within that framework for the ideas that they generated next raised the question of whether this was to be an application of ‘grounded theory’ (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998). This has the risk of being a set of procedural orthodoxies (Atkinson et al. 2003: 150), the more so when, as in this study, data have been analysed using computer assisted methods, to which grounded theory particularly lends itself (Fisher 1997). Mindful then of those comments, my approach was to follow the principles of grounded theory, but avoiding using it in a formulaic way, instead, interrogating the data using the theoretical framework to generate ideas.

Within that overall ethnographic methodological approach, the epistemological position I took was a constructivist one (Berger and Luckman 1966; Gergen 1999; Hammersley 2001), that is, that reality, or rather people’s perception of reality, is socially constructed. Here it is important to recognise exactly what it is that is considered as having been socially constructed (Hacking 2000). In that respect I considered that professionalism has an objective reality, in the sense that there are documented codes of practice (including the Standards), qualifications and

professional organisations. This study was concerned, instead, with 'ideas' of professionalism and how they might be expressed by officials, teacher-trainers and trainees. The task of constructivist research is to elicit social actors' views of '... their worlds, their work and the events they have experienced or observed ...' (Rubin and Rubin 2005: 28). As individuals' views, these are of interest in themselves, but if it is understood that, by living and working together, people come to share the same meanings, the same ways of judging things (Gubrium and Holstein 1997) then there would be a basis for considering that the accounts obtained in this research, from people working in the same settings, represented a common construct, a discourse, or discourses, of professionalism. These discourses could be taken to be social facts, in other words having a reality, which would permit their description, and which would have meaning for those sharing them.

Following what has been famously termed 'the crisis of representation' in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln 2000), postmodernism and post-structuralism have challenged this view, in the former's more extreme forms, casting doubt on empirical description and on any possibility of explanation (Gubrium and Holstein 2003). Subsequently Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argued that further developments have led to a 'methodologically contested moment', and, while this need not detain us, it illustrates the current, contested nature of qualitative research. The challenge posed, in particular by postmodernism and post-structuralism, is about the nature of reality and the possibility of our knowing what it is, or what people perceive it to be. At its heart is the argument that the meanings attributed by the researcher to what social actors say and do, the act of understanding, *Verstehen*, is itself a social construct, dependent on the cultural and personal biography of the researcher, the personal lenses through which he or she perceives the data. From the post-structuralist perspective similarly, the view taken is that research cannot be divorced from its socio-cultural origins, and is a product of the particular interests, political and otherwise, pertaining at the time.

If it is not possible to come to an entirely objective, unproblematic account of reality, there is nevertheless a strong argument for relying on common sense knowledge (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 17). In our day-to-day business of living and interacting with others we have to make assumptions and judgements that 'work' in those contexts, just as the officials, teacher-trainers and trainee teachers studied in this research had to do to operate in their respective social worlds. As researchers we are also actors in our own social worlds, and we can therefore use our common sense knowledge and experience to help us understand the social worlds of others. The objective, however, is still to try to provide, as far as is reasonably possible, a true description, independent of the bias introduced by our particular socio-cultural lenses or preconceptions of how things should be (Hammersley 1992).

This can be the more problematic when, as in this study, as I shall explain later, aspects of the research are conducted within the researcher's own culture and in a context and in settings with which he or she is familiar. It follows that, given my personal circumstances, I needed to be particularly aware of my own biography and its associated values and the possible implications of that for the research, as well as being conscious of the requirement to render an account that reconstructed and interpreted the data obtained and avoided the taken-for-granted, noting especially that 'nothing never happens', that the most mundane or obvious events or beliefs are a product of that social world (Atkinson et al. 2003: 27).

3.3 Myself As The Researcher

Before going further I need to provide some personal background, since my antecedents could have had a bearing on my ability to gain access to policymakers and FE teacher training institutions, as well as on the relationships I established with interviewees and trainee-teachers, and the perspectives I brought to the research and my conclusions. Before beginning this study, I was a senior civil servant working for the WAG in its Education Department. Although I was not directly involved with FE,

I was responsible for policy in respect of schoolteachers; their recruitment, training and, their professional development and standing. In that position I regularly met head teachers, schoolteachers and their union representatives, as well as officials of the GTCW, the (then) Teacher Training Agency, and Welsh providers of ITT for schoolteachers. In one sense then, this was, for me, not a case, of 'making the strange familiar' but, on the contrary, 'making the familiar strange' (Atkinson et al. 2003), and I had to guard against my own pre-conceptions of teacher professionalism that had been developed during my official existence. But, in another sense, this was very unfamiliar territory. I began the research with virtually no previous knowledge of FE, and I had only been once to an FE college. While I was grounded in education policy generally, in my official life I typified the attitudes to FE that lead to its being considered as the 'forgotten' part of the education system.

That constituted my personal journey as a researcher, transforming myself from an official, with policy-oriented pre-conceptions and somewhat fixed ideas about professionalism in education and the nature of teaching, to someone sensitive and open to what I was seeing and hearing. I had thus to set aside some of the baggage I had brought with me, although it would be a mistake to overstate the inflexibility of the official mind, as a good civil servant is experienced in assessing and evaluating evidence. Most importantly then, I had to learn to be reflective and accept that whereas I might have considered myself as a dispassionate and neutral, I did bring to the research values and pre-dispositions that could, if not recognised affect the outcome.

Some of the policymakers whom I interviewed, mainly those in the WAG, were known to me as former colleagues. This may well have made gaining access easier than it might otherwise have been, but, apart from that, I had no grounds for believing that this affected their responses to any significant extent. The only likely effect was that the interviews were conducted in a more relaxed way, as interviewees felt that I 'understood' the milieu that they were working in, the language used and the constraints on them. The other officials I interviewed, one working in the WAG and

two in the LLUK, were not known to me before I began the research. However, I had met them during the earlier part of this research, when I was making initial contacts, and subsequently when I attended the consultation meetings on the draft professional standards for Wales and when I sat in as an observer on the steering group working with LLUK on the development of the standards. Two of the WAG officials I met to review progress on the introduction of the standards in Wales (but who were not interviewed as they assumed responsibilities in this area at a late stage) had been managed by me when I was working in the WAG. Our relationship was good, but during our meetings, the distinction between ‘outsider’ and ‘insider’ became blurred.

It was reasonable to suppose that my background helped in gaining access to the FE colleges and the HEI’s involved in teacher training. Despite the fact that these were busy people, my approaches to FE college senior managers as gatekeepers were responded to positively and they were helpful. I was able to gain access to all those I wished to interview – with only one exception, discussed later in this Chapter. It also helped that interviewees in teacher training institutions seemed to have rather welcomed the nature of this research as evidence of an interest in what, to them, still remained an overlooked, but important, sector. It was also possible that my previous position, dealing with similar issues in respect of schoolteachers, gave me a degree of credibility in the eyes of these interviewees. But, it was not possible to say whether or not the interviews themselves elicited more or less information as a consequence of those considerations than they might have otherwise.

The interviewees were, in the main, people who shared similar social and demographic characteristics to myself, that is, we were white, educated to degree level and middle-aged. They were people I could relate to easily, the kind of people I had worked with previously when I was a civil servant. The same was not true of the trainee teachers with whom I carried out the focus groups. They were mostly considerably younger than me and, while about half were recent graduates, others were not and had previously worked in a variety of trades and occupations for many

years before entering FE. Some were experienced FE teachers or support staff, now required to obtain a teaching qualification.

The relationship I established with the trainees in the focus groups was critical to the amount and value of the data that could be obtained. As is discussed later, the objective was to run the groups in such a way that participants stimulated one another and engaged with the topic, but within a structure that focussed on the themes I wanted to explore. This meant that I had to establish my credibility as a researcher, the relevance of the project to them, and gain their trust in my treating what was said in confidence. I also needed to be able to manage the discussion to keep it going and to keep it relevant to the research. I cannot say what effects my age, manner and personal background had on that and on the outcome of the focus groups, however I experienced no particular problems that I could attribute to such factors. While no firm conclusion can be drawn from the above, it is necessary to record the possibility of influences on the responses of interviewees and focus group participants that could result from the manner of our interaction on those occasions.

3.4 The Methodology: An Overview

Ethnography involves observation, making cultural inferences from what is seen and heard; seeking accounts and explanations from social actors and examining the artefacts they use and the way they are used (Spradley 1979). All of these entail different methods, appropriate to the research questions and the particular circumstances of the research. The different methodologies used in this study reflected that mixed approach.

This research took as its basis that what those engaged in policy making, teacher training, or the trainees themselves said about their particular ideas of professionalism, represented meanings that were both held in common with their colleagues and contemporaries, and which had emerged from their social interaction with them in the

contexts within which they worked. It would, at the same time, have constituted a set of shared values that underpinned their personal beliefs and actions. In the case of officials, therefore, this would mean how they expected, or wished, professional teachers to behave. In the case of teacher-trainers, it would reveal their ideas of what an FE teacher should be able to do, based on their experiences and perceptions of the realities of FE teaching. What trainees said would provide an insight into how policy and the professional standards, mediated by their trainers, and their own experiences of teaching practice, were reflected in their constructs of professionalism.

These are matters that cannot simply be expressed in terms of statements that can be agreed with or disagreed with, or ranked in some way in a questionnaire. They are about feelings and values; they are matters of degree, of how individuals might respond to ever-changing and particular circumstances. More importantly, and as in the event became clear from the responses of participants, they were things that they had not always considered before, at least in any structured way. They belonged in the realm of the 'taken-for-granted' or the tacitly understood. It was therefore necessary to find ways of bringing them out.

One means of doing so could have been by direct observation, for example by participation, in one way or another, in the process of teacher training. But this was not an exercise in understanding the 'lived experiences' of trainees and the settings within which training took place; that approach could only infer what trainers and trainees believed from what I might see of their actions or from what was overheard. While that alone might have yielded valuable data, it would have needed to be accompanied by direct questioning. For practical reasons, that kind of ethnographic study would have necessarily been restricted to one training programme and to one set of trainers and trainees, and it would have been difficult, mainly because of access issues, to track the development of policy and officials thinking by similar methods and at the same time. Instead, the chosen method was to use semi-structured interviews and focus groups to develop a dialogue around the issues that were

suggested by my review of literature, but at the same time allowed for new issues to emerge as participants raised them.

Observation is an integral part of ethnography; although I was a non-participant observer at the steering group and consultation meetings already referred to, there were opportunities to observe the workplaces of officials and teacher trainers, the atmosphere of colleges, and the appearance, behaviour and responsiveness of FE managers, interviewees and participants in the focus groups. These were recorded in field notes. The documentation of policy and training programmes were an important resource. They represented the formal, 'official' statements, prepared in particular contexts for specific audiences, with specific purposes in mind and using a particular rhetoric. They provided a mirror to hold up to the accounts provided by interviewees and in the focus groups. The considerations involved in the analysis of documentary data, as well as in qualitative interviewing and focus groups are discussed next.

3.5 The Methods: Critical Considerations

Interviews

Interviews might be regarded as a poor substitute for observation, and that seeing what people do is 'better' than the accounts they give of what they do. However, this is generally an unhelpful distinction; rather, they are different methods that generate different descriptions (Atkinson and Coffey 2003). It follows that interview data are neither the truth, nor a distortion of it (Silverman 1993). What qualitative interviews produce is a form of narrative (Atkinson and Coffey 2003; Mishler 1986); it is not a question here of discovering the 'truth', but attention should instead be given to '... the coherence and plausibility of accounts, to their performative qualities, the repertoires of accounts and the moral types they contain ...' (Atkinson and Coffey 2003: 116). In this way common themes and patterns may be identified (Warren 2001), as well as what is what is different.

As narratives, interview data are capable of being analysed in different ways according to the epistemological position of the researcher but in every case attention should be given to the relationship between what is said in the particular context of the interviewee and its meaning (Mishler 1986). They are examples of social action; interviewees' narratives are used to construct their lives and those of others, to justify their actions, and to locate their actions within socially shared frames of reference. They must therefore be analysed in terms of how they are constructed and the functions they fulfil (Atkinson et al. 2003).

If observation and qualitative interviews are different, but equally valid ways of accessing shared values and beliefs, observation alone, as previously noted, cannot readily provide an insight into feelings and beliefs in the way that interviews can. However, just as the researcher's socio-cultural lenses and preconceptions can colour their observations, the outcome of qualitative interviewing is dependent on the rapport that is struck between interviewer and respondent and the way the interview was conducted. Qualitative interviewing is based in conversation (Kvale 1996), it is a 'guided conversation' where the interviewer listens actively and is responsive to what they are being told (Rubin and Rubin 2005). Such 'responsive interviews' constitute a dialogue that is jointly constructed and re-formulated by the interviewer and the interviewee (Mishler 1986: 53), the aim being to provide 'thick descriptions' (Geertz 1973). The interviewer consequently needs to be attentive to the variety of meanings as they emerge from the interview and aware of meanings developing that might have made previously determined lines of questioning irrelevant (Warren 2001). The skill with which this is done and the ability of the interviewer to establish a relationship of trust that encourages the interviewee to be open and frank, determines the richness and value of the data obtained.

Compared to observation, interviews take place in less natural circumstances: a meeting has been arranged by prior agreement; work and other distractions have been temporarily set aside; arrangements are made for recording what is said and so on; and this may be the first time the interviewer and interviewee have met. While these may

be mitigated to some extent, for example by carrying out interviews in familiar surroundings and as far as possible reproducing the natural feeling of a conversation, interviews nevertheless remain artificial events. But no method comes without its disadvantages and the task of the researcher is to make a judgement about the suitability and practicality of using different methods, while being aware of their limitations and how they might influence the outcome of the research.

Focus Groups

Focus groups might be considered simply as group interviews, although unlike interviews, the interaction between group members plays a crucial part (Morgan 1997). Apart from being a more economical and efficient way of reaching a number of participants, focus groups have in that way, a particular advantage:

‘The situation of the focus group, in principle and with a fair wind, can provide the occasion and the stimulus for collectivity members to articulate those normally unarticulated normative assumptions. The group is a socially legitimated occasion for participants to engage in ‘retrospective introspection’, to attempt collectively to tease out previously taken for granted assumptions.’ (Bloor et al. 2001: 5-6).

If the use of focus groups involves some reduction in the researchers’ control over proceedings compared to interviews, their collective nature ‘... empowers the participants and validates their experiences.’ (Madriz 2000: 838), and, as a group activity, they reflect the fact that attitudes and perceptions are products of social interaction (Krueger 1994). More so than with interviews, focus groups are unnatural staged settings and, the relationships within the group itself, as well as with the researcher, raise issues that need to be recognised as well as the advantage described by Bloor *et al.*.

Individual members of the group will have particular characteristics, they may be more or less opinionated, more or less willing to participate; some will be want to remain in the background for fear of exposing their feelings or views that are not generally accepted or might make them appear foolish. Individuals with strong opinions may dominate the group, but otherwise individual’s attitudes may tend to move towards the ‘group view’ during discussion. In discussion members need to

listen to others, and while thinking about what they want to say, they can become distracted or the discussion moves on and the opportunity is lost, and this has been termed 'product blocking' Fern (2001).

These considerations require that the researcher be attentive to the dynamics of the group and the way attitudes and opinions are evolving. The process of articulating previously unarticulated assumptions will inevitably involve participants in thinking and re-thinking what they feel and, in doing so, responding to what other say. The researcher will need to involve those who are not participating, to reflect back emerging beliefs to the group for confirmation and, as with interviews, and, crucially, be aware of developing meanings that should be explored and the need to divert from the pre-conceived structure of the session (Morgan 1997). The control exercised by the researcher is therefore a key determinant of the success of a focus group. That includes creating a permissive, non-threatening environment (Krueger and Casey 2000) which may be helped by a (limited) disclosure of the researcher's biography so inviting reciprocity (Fern 2001).

Documentary analysis

Documents are not simply containers of content, they are a product of the 'socially organised circumstances' in which they were produced (Prior 2003: 4). The general principles involved in using documents as a resource are no different from those in any other area of social research (Scott 1990: 1). Documents are designed to fulfil certain purposes with certain audiences in mind. They are intended to inform and, explicitly or not, persuade their readers. The circumstances in which they were produced, their authorship and the processes they went through before being produced are therefore critical to their understanding. In ethnographic terms, they are artefacts, which reveal something of the social worlds in which they were made. They are part of material culture '... to be interpreted in relation to a situated context of production, use, discard and re-use.' (Hodder 2000: 706). The way documents are written, their structure, the language they employ, the discourses of which they are a part, what is

included and what is left out, reflect the social contexts in which they were produced and the intentions, covert and overt, of the authors (McCulloch 2004).

Documents are also actively consumed, not simply read by passive actors. At one level they may interact with the document, skipping passages or reading them in a different order; at another level readers bring with them their own preconceptions and beliefs that affect their interpretation of the author's meaning, producing meanings of their own. However, attempting to infer the meanings others may attribute to a text can be a difficult business and it is more useful instead to concentrate on the social activities through which texts are appropriated (Prior 2003: 24)

For the researcher, approaching documents as social phenomenon requires engagement, not detachment, 'This emphasis on *hermeneutics* ... submits the analyst to consider the differences between their own frames of meanings and those found in the text.' (May 2001:183). While a poststructuralist, semiotic analysis of documents is possible, that would tend to focus on the text itself as the object of research, rather than on the intentions of the author and the contexts within which they were produced, insofar as they help the researcher to understand the social world which they reflect (May 2001: 184). McCulloch (2004) has provided a basic typology of documentary analysis; it can involve objective, quantitative methods enumerating words and phrases in accordance with some pre-determined analytical framework; the interpretation of documents as social constructs; or, the critical examination of discourses emphasising the exercise of power and authority. The latter can be useful in respect to official documents and those used within large organisations, as was the case in this study; Burton and Carlen (1979) provide an example of a critical (and polemic) analysis of the discourses employed in two official reports.

Non-participant observation

There is a considerable literature on participant observation (Bruyn 1966; DeWalt and DeWalt 2002; McCall and Simmons 1969), but little has been written about non-participant observation. However, where the former is to a large extent concerned

with issues of access to, and acceptance as, a member of a group – where that can be highly problematic in some settings – these issues are equally relevant to non-participant methods. The skills of observing and the need for careful field notes are common to both approaches.

Where a participant observer may be able to pass as a member of the group or organisation studied, and in some cases the success of the research will depend on that so that social action is observed in its natural state, the non-participant observer will usually be identified in that role by those he or she is observing unless covert methods of observation are employed. Knowing that they are being observed may then have some effect on the behaviours of the observed. Often it can be helpful to assume some cover that enables the researcher to merge into the background without raising too many questions. As with participant observation, non-participant observation, especially where it is covert or done in the guise of another role, raises particular ethical issues.

Observation, particularly in relatively familiar settings, requires the observer to attend methodically to what seems merely obvious (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 103). Yet, although this is a relatively naturalistic setting (compared to interviewing and focus groups), data are not ‘naturally occurring’ and the selection of events recalled and recorded remain mediated by the theoretical concerns and biography of the researcher (May 2001: 152)

3.6 Doing The Fieldwork

While the documentary analysis consisted of a review of various sources, published and unpublished, printed and electronic, the major part of the research was done in the field. By this I mean the informal meetings with officials and with managers in teacher training institutions; the non-participant observation of the steering group and consultation meetings; and, the interviews and focus groups. This section describes

the methods used during this fieldwork, while the following two sections deal with the way participants were selected and how I gained access to them. The ethical issues raised by the way the fieldwork was conducted are considered in the section on ethics further on in this Chapter.

Meetings

Meetings with officials took place at intervals over the course of the research. The aim was to keep track of developments and gain an insider's view of the way those developments were going. These meetings were informal, often over a cup of coffee in the staff restaurant, and not recorded, although notes were taken and later written up as field notes. I made it clear that these discussions were in confidence that they would not be quoted directly and that my notes would respect their anonymity. Three of these officials were also interviewed formally during the course of the research. Part of the process of gaining access to teacher training institutions involved meetings with their management including the staff managing the training programmes. These meetings were intended to explain the purpose of the research and it was not appropriate to record them, although again I took notes.

I attended the meetings of the LLUK run steering group; I gained access to the group as a result of earlier contacts with LLUK officials, who suggested that it would be useful for me to sit in. The group was aware of who I was and of my role as a non-participant observer. There were no objections to my presence. The LLUK took the minutes of the meetings (my presence was recorded as 'observer') and I received copies, as well as the papers for each meeting, and I made my own notes. I was also given access to the consultation meeting organised by the LLUK. This was open to representatives of providers and others from the Lifelong Learning sector. I simply observed proceedings to get a general feel for the responses to the LLUK's proposals and the issues raised, and recorded my observations in field notes.

Interviews

The second element of the fieldwork consisted of qualitative, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Both interviews and focus groups were recorded for later transcription and analysis, and each lasted about an hour. Interviews were conducted in the interviewee's offices; the focus groups took place in lecture or seminar rooms in their training institutions. The interviews and the focus groups both involved a series of questions on broad topics so as to provide a structure that would ensure the research questions were covered and that there would be a degree of comparability between the responses.

In the interviews, different question structures were used for officials, for teacher trainers and for the focus groups; copies of each are at Annex D. The questions that formed the structure for the interviews and for the focus groups were derived from the main issues that had emerged from my review of the literature and were therefore intended to test whether the participants in this research would respond in ways that were comparable with those in other studies. They therefore focussed on how officials and teacher-trainers viewed the FE sector and whether teaching in FE was a profession and, if so, why. Officials were asked to give an account of policy development, the evolution of the Standards and what the Standards were intended to achieve. Trainers were asked about how professionalism was incorporated into their programmes, whether it resided in subject knowledge or pedagogy, and how the Standards were taken into account. In the focus groups trainees were invited to discuss their ideas of professionalism and how they had been developed in training and whether they were aware of the Standards. The questions were framed in broad, rather than specific terms, although I include notes to myself on possible prompts if interviewees needed it. Prompting had to be done with care to avoid leading interviewees into particular responses to the questions.

Ideally, it would have been helpful to pilot the interviews to test the appropriateness of the content and sequencing of the questions. In practice the pool of potential

interviewees was so limited that to do so would have used up many individuals who I would have needed for the study itself. The interviews and focus groups did not follow the structure strictly as they developed in their own unique ways as themes were developed. As the programme of interviewing and conducting focus groups progressed additional issues emerged that were incorporated into the structure of later interviews and focus groups.

So as to obtain as much information as possible and to preserve the feeling of a conversation, rather than a formal interview, within the overall structure provided by the questions the aim was to be attuned to the participants' responses and provide them with the freedom and the opportunity to express their beliefs and feelings as far as possible. In the interviews I conducted with teacher-trainers, where we were talking about matters that could be taken as reflecting on their competence as trainers, I needed to be careful to use non-judgemental terms: 'There are no right answers ...', 'This is not a job interview ...', to create a non-threatening and permissive atmosphere and to encourage them to say what they felt, rather than what they thought they should say. In such settings the social interaction between interviewer and interviewee is an important factor in determining how far meanings are revealed and information gained. Also, my own biography might have pre-disposed me towards certain meanings and made it more difficult for me to be attuned to others. This is an inherent issue with qualitative interviewing and such considerations have already been noted above.

Ideally, it might be argued, it would have been better to combine interviews (and focus groups) with other methods, such as observation, since: 'Although asking, listening, talking and hearing are important, so are seeing and feeling as a means of apprehending the social world' (Warren 2001). Yet, in this study it would have been unrealistic to expect to observe policymakers in the actual process of making policy, as that happened in a variety of places, at different times and in different ways, as well as access being likely to have been restricted on grounds of confidentiality. The best available proxy for this was observing the way the steering group worked with LLUK

officials, where drafts of the standards were discussed. For similar reasons, it would have been a very time consuming exercise to observe sufficient teacher training sessions to be able to distil anything about trainers' attitudes to professionalism. Interviewing was in this case the most efficient way of exposing their attitudes and beliefs. Such considerations applied also to the trainee teachers and the focus groups were designed to do that also.

Focus Groups

The objective of the focus groups was to elicit trainee teachers' understanding of professionalism, how far this was something that they had been taught or had developed themselves and what part the professional standards played in that. The aim was to form groups of between six to eight trainees; in practice using tutorial groups, and allowing for eventual 'no shows', this meant that, in the event, two groups were as large as eleven and, because some trainees did not turn up, the smallest consisted of just two people. Overall, the average size of the groups was seven. The gender balance varied from group to group; in five out of the nine groups female trainees outnumbered males, and in the two least balanced groups, there were in one case, four females to one male, and in the other, the ratio was six males to one female.

The groups were run as open discussions on a set of questions, with a few words of introduction to set the scene and focus attention on the topic (See Annex D). Where appropriate, trainees were asked to rank what they had said: 'How important do you feel that is compared to ...?'. In the last group trainees were asked to work in pairs to rank five possible characteristics of a professional FE teacher. These were: Responsibility, CPD, Knowledge of their subject, Knowledge of teaching methods, and, Autonomy. These attributes had emerged from the literature and from the previous focus group discussions with the other trainees. It worked well in focussing the following discussion, although I was careful not to introduce the exercise until that group's initial thought had been aired, as that might have prejudiced their opinions. I had not tried this with the earlier focus groups for that reason, but, since those

characteristics had emerged in most of the earlier discussions, I felt safe in introducing them in that way in the final group.

Before beginning the focus groups I had piloted the use of vignettes – quotations taken from previous studies reported in the literature as examples of what other trainee teachers in similar situations were saying – but rejected that approach as their use tended to ‘steer’ the participants and discourage their thinking through the issues for themselves. For similar reasons I chose not to use visual material, partly because choosing such material that was relevant was difficult, but also because it might have appeared a little naïve, particularly in front of some who were experienced in the classroom, and consequently might have undermined my credibility. As with the interviews it was important not to restrict the discussion too closely to the pre-determined questions and to allow trainees to develop their ideas. At the same time the discussions had to remain focussed, and managed, so that the more reticent members were given a chance to contribute.

In both individual interviews and in the focus groups, the unsaid was potentially as important as what was said. I did ask participants at the end of the discussion if there was anything they felt they wanted to add that hadn’t been covered, but that did not produce any further significant comment. In the focus groups there was a risk that the more silent members represented a distinct sub-group, different, in their beliefs and attitudes, from their more vocal colleagues. There is no strong evidence that this was or wasn’t the case. On a number of occasions I went around the table inviting comments to make sure no one was excluded, and this did not suggest that the quieter members had distinctly different opinions from the others.

3.7 Accessing Officials

The selection of which officials to interview was made purposively on the basis of their responsibilities. As there were only a limited number of individuals with

responsibilities for policy in relation to the professional standing of FE staff in Wales, all of those with the relevant responsibilities at that time were approached. I had known three of them when I was in the WAG, and they provided the details of the others I needed to see. I sought interviews with eight officials in the WAG and LLUK; a sample access letter is at Annex E. One of those I approached in the WAG said that he was content to be represented by another official, who I had already approached in any case. Of the eight who were approached, six agreed to be interviewed. These key Welsh officials were located in the Education Department of the WAG, including Dysg, which at that time had only very recently been merged with the Department, and the LLUK. One was a senior official in the Education Department who had oversight of policy that included PCET as a whole. Three interviews were carried out with the officials in Dysg with policy responsibilities for FE teachers and their professional development. Work on developing the professional standards for Wales was undertaken by LLUK and a further two interviews were with the LLUK staff charged with the development of the Welsh standards.

In England, the IfL has a statutory role in relation to FE teachers, being responsible for their registration and for recording their CPD as a condition of continued registration. At the time the interviews were being carried out it was being suggested that the IfL might carry out a similar role in Wales (an alternative being the GTCW), and therefore I considered it was appropriate to interview a senior officer of the IfL. While decisions on teacher registration in post-compulsory education and training in Wales have yet to be made and the current likelihood of the IfL's role extending to include Welsh FE teachers is uncertain to say the least, the IfL's views on the role of CPD in teacher professionalism continue to be relevant. This is particularly so because the employment market for FE teachers covers both Wales and England and trainee teachers in Wales consider employment opportunities across the border. This was also reflected in the attitudes of teacher-trainers in HEIs, as evidenced by my interviews with them, who had an eye to the marketability of their programmes for trainees from England or who might intend to work in England.

The initial approach by letter was followed up by e-mail and telephone contacts to arrange dates for the interviews. There was no particular issue about the timing of these interviews as policies, and the structure of the WAG Education Department, were in the process of evolving over the period of the research. There was therefore no one time when an interview would have been more important in those respects than another, and indeed, the state of policy development at the time was less important for the research than the usefulness of the interviews in understanding the meanings officials attached to professionalism. That said, one official was interviewed at a time just after the Assembly elections in May 2007, when discussions about forming a coalition government were still in train. Consequently, there were uncertainties about the future direction of policy.

3.8 Accessing Teacher-training Institutions

Selection

For reasons of travel time and costs the choice of training institutions from which the teacher trainer interviewees and focus groups of trainees were to be selected needed to be kept within a limited geographical area, and limited to a reasonable number, consistent with producing results that would be representative of Wales as a whole. For those reasons the selection was confined to South, South East and South West Wales. That area contained the majority of the population of Wales and over half the Welsh FE colleges. Within it, it was possible to identify FE colleges with a range of different characteristics, including those with a considerable rural catchment area; those in significant Welsh speaking areas; those in more urban settings and those located in communities with high levels of social and economic deprivation. The area contained eleven FE colleges running FE teacher-training programmes under franchise arrangements with an HEI. Those colleges ranged in size (the numbers of enrolled full-time and part-time trainees) from over 30,000 (Wales' largest college with six campuses) to less than 4,000. There were also three HE institutions offering

FE teacher-training programmes in the area. Two of the HEIs were included in the study (identified here as HEI X and HEI Y); at the time HEI Y was responsible for franchising its training programme to all but one of the eleven FE teacher-training institutions, and it was the awarding body for the PGCE/Cert. Ed. programmes they ran. Five FE colleges from the eleven colleges running teacher-training programmes were chosen for inclusion in the study. The selection was made so that there was a reasonable spread in terms of colleges' size and their geographic location. Estyn inspections were taken into account to rule out the least well performing colleges, although none at the time had recent inspections of their PGCE/Cert Ed courses. The breakdown in terms of college size and numbers of PGCE/Cert Ed trainees is shown below:

FE Colleges Selected for Inclusion in the Study by Location and Size (figures are rounded)

Name and Size Group (S/M/L)	Location (S/SE/SW)	College Size: Total Enrolled Learners (All programmes) 2005/06*	College Size: Staff (Full-time equivalents) 2005/06**	Average Number of PGCE/Cert. Ed. Students***
College A (M)	S	12,700	600	70
College B (M)	SW	11,300	550	35
College C (S)	S	5,700	300	50
College D (L)	SE	33,000	900	75-80
College E (M)	S	12,100	600	170

Source: * DCELLS, 2008. *Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales Statistics 2005/06*. Cardiff, Welsh Assembly Government.

** Welsh Assembly Government, 2008. *Staff at Further Education Institutions in Wales 2005/2006: SDR 138/2007*. Cardiff, Welsh Assembly Government.

*** Information provided by colleges.

This provided a sample of one large, three medium and one small college; they were located in a mix of rural, valley and urban communities and so avoided possible bias arising from size and catchment area characteristics. None of the colleges in the area, and so those sampled, made any significant use of the Welsh language but that was typical of colleges in Wales generally, as only one college, in North Wales, does so.

Access

The initial approach was made by letters addressed to the Heads of Department in the two HEIs and to the five FE college principals, a sample letter is at Annex E. The college principals passed this request on to a senior manager and preliminary meetings were arranged with them and the staff responsible for managing the PGCE/Cert Ed programmes. At those meetings the purpose of the research and the way it was to be carried out was explained. As a result of the meetings, the appropriate members of staff who were teaching on the PGCE/Cert Ed programme were identified, and I obtained their agreement to be interviewed and to carry out focus group sessions with their trainees.

In the case of College E, despite a welcoming response from senior management, and two positive preliminary discussions with the college, managing to arrange an interview with a teacher-trainer proved difficult as the person approached was reluctant to be interviewed and I therefore did not pursue this further. The reason for this was possibly due to the fact that the member of staff responsible for managing the PGCE/Cert Ed programme, and who was at the second meeting, was going to be unavailable for interview and the request was passed on to a member of staff who had not been present and therefore did not know anything about the project. Despite that, the meetings that took place provided useful background and the senior managers were able to make some helpful observations on the role of the programme in that college.

Apart from paving the way for the interviews and focus groups, these early meetings provided me with an initial impression of what FE colleges were like as I had only previous, and very limited, experience of one. The campuses were variable in size and in the quality of their buildings; one was located on a large industrial estate in a modern building, another in a rural location some miles distant from the nearest town in a series of low-rise buildings that might, I guessed, have had a previous purpose. In another there was major construction work in progress to develop the site, which was

otherwise somewhat 'down at heel'. Most were slightly disorienting for the newcomer as their buildings sprawled over large sites and finding particular rooms was not easy if I had not been met at reception. Accommodation for staff was not generous, sharing offices was common and typically they were crowded with filing cabinets and papers.

When I visited during the day in term time they were crowded with students, mostly young, and noisy; there was a strange combination of youthful exuberance and a pervading sense that some were just filling in time, rather as they might in a coffee bar or a bus stop. This sense of alienation was highlighted on one occasion when I arrived at the college to find the offices of those I was to meet had been evacuated because of flooding resulting from vandalism. I would not suggest that this was a common event or typical of colleges generally, but the reaction of staff implied that this was not unusual.

The college staff members I met were very willing to talk and to cooperate with the project. These early discussions helped a great deal in arranging the interviews, getting teachers' commitment, and gaining access to trainees. I was able to explain the research and deal with questions in a way that would not have been possible in writing. One issue that I was able to deal with in the meetings was teacher-trainers' concerns that their trainees would take the opportunity of the focus groups to complain about the way the courses were run. The meetings allowed me to explain that my aim was not to compare colleges, but to get an understanding of what trainees in general thought, and this provided some re-assurance together with my promise that individual courses would not be identified. It was also helpful to have had the support of senior managers in the colleges at the meetings as that ensured that I got to meet the staff managing the training programmes and that the research had their backing.

Managers and teacher-trainers had a sense of being forgotten, complaining about the lack of WAG interest (this pre-dated the publication of the more recent policy documents following the Webb review). It seems the 'Cinderella service' syndrome

had not yet dissipated, at least in these Welsh colleges. Yet there was an overwhelming sense that they valued what they did and were committed to the sector.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Interviews were conducted with two members of staff at each of the two HEIs and the FE colleges A, B, C and D. There were therefore four interviews with trainers in the two HEIs; in each case one was responsible for managing the programme for training full-time trainees and one managed that for part-time trainees. I also interviewed at least two staff members at each FE college, a total of a further nine interviews.

In all, I carried out nine focus group sessions, involving sixty-three trainees. Five focus groups were in the two HEIs; there were separate groups for part-time and full-time trainees (only the two HEIs offered full-time training courses). With the part-time HEI trainees training over two years, one group was formed from those in their first and one from those in their second year. With the full-time trainees, one group was taken from trainees at the beginning of their training and two groups at the end of training. It was important not to mix part-time and full-time trainees as they had different characteristics and experiences and potentially something different to say. By taking groups of trainees at both the beginning of their training and at the end I wanted to be able to see if there were any significant differences in attitudes that might be a result of their training experiences.

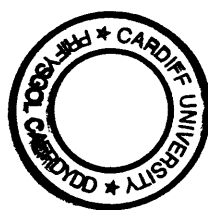
In the FE colleges, where all trainee teachers were training part-time over a two-year period, four focus groups were run in two FE training institutions, colleges B and D. As with the part-time HE trainees, in each of the two colleges, one focus group was formed from trainees in their first year and one from those in their second year. In the FE colleges, where trainees doing the PGCE/Cert Ed programme included those training to teach in a variety of environments, including the health, prison and police services as well as the adult and community sector, only those trainees currently teaching, or intending to teach, in FE were included.

The membership of one focus group was selected randomly from a list of trainees. However, in practice it proved more effective to use single tutorial groups and so I subsequently was able to take advantage of their timetabled meetings. That was a particularly important consideration for part-time trainees, who had other commitments in the day and who would otherwise have been difficult to access. This method of selection meant that sufficient numbers of trainees came and that they already knew, and were used to talking to, each other, although there might have been a possible element of bias as their group dynamic was already formed.

Presentation of myself

I gave some thought to the image I presented to interviewees and trainees, since I was aware that clothing and other bodily signs would convey a message that could, in different ways, influence the manner of their responses to me (Delamont 2002:152; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 83). For the interviews with officials I adopted my old official persona – neat haircut, suit and tie – as being appropriate to the contexts within which these interviews took place and which would represent me a ‘serious’ person. For the interviews with teacher-trainers I took a more relaxed approach – jacket and open necked shirt. In both cases the idea was to create an appearance that was similar (allowing for gender differences) to those of the interviewees themselves and their colleagues and so minimise any negative reactions on the grounds that people tend to most readily accept those who mirror themselves.

In the focus group situations, I could not expect to pass myself off as a student in a similar way, even though the trainee teachers in the focus groups were diverse in terms of their ages, education and previous occupations. Attempting to appear similar to the group members in dress and body language would not have been true to my personality; I would have looked and felt distinctly odd, and I considered that would have undermined my credibility. There was a fine balance to be struck between conveying the seriousness of my purpose and avoiding too formal an appearance, both in manner and dress, which could have discouraged some from participating in the



discussion. In the end I opted for a casual style that I felt matched those of their teacher-trainers, one that they would therefore be used to in the classroom context.

3.9 The Participants

The three groups, officials, trainers and trainees, involved in interviews and focus groups did not form homogenous entities; officials came from different organisations with different corporate aims and objectives; teacher-trainers were located within HE and FE and some of the latter were also engaged in FE teaching as well as teacher-training. Trainee teachers came from a variety of different backgrounds and at different stages of their life histories. Many had already been teaching for some time and had a developed sense of their teacher professionalism.

Officials

Providing detailed biographical details of officials and, to a lesser extent, teacher trainers would, given the size of the field in Wales, allow them to be identified. However, with that limitation, WAG officials included both career civil servants and some with a variety of experiences of working in education including teaching, although not in FE. The latter were those who had come into the Assembly Government as part of Dysg. The career civil servants had varied careers and had held a number of different posts inside and outside of the Education Department; one had only recently moved into the Education Department with no previous experience of that area of policy. All these officials had high-level policy responsibilities.

A feature of the WAG was the rapidity with which officials turned over and changed post. This had been the more so in the period studied, when its Education Department went through a period of re-organisation which lasted nearly two years from April 2005, following the absorption of ELWa, ACCAC and Dysg. Nearly all of those interviewed have since moved from the posts they then occupied, or their

responsibilities have changed. In contrast, the officials from the LLUK and the IfL also had varied backgrounds, but, with one exception, they had considerable experience of working and teaching in the lifelong learning sector.

Teacher-trainers

Four of the teacher-trainers were from the two HE teacher-training institutions. Two of them led on the development of the training programmes in their institutions and, the HEI Y programme was franchised to four of the five FE colleges in this study. These HEI trainers were well established, and were teaching on programmes that had been in existence for many years. However, only one had recent experience of working in an FE college. The other nine teacher trainers interviewed were located in FE colleges running franchised training programmes. They had a current knowledge of working in the FE sector, and many of them had become teacher-trainers after some years teaching in their colleges. Unlike the HE trainers interviewed, where only one was female, only two of the nine trainers interviewed in FE colleges were male.

Trainee teachers

The trainee teachers taking part in the focus groups were very diverse in terms of their ages, qualifications, life histories and career stages. In terms of gender they were evenly split, with thirty males and thirty-three females. I did not ask their ages, but eighteen were comparatively young and had graduated in the last two to three years, the remainder had made, or were in the process of making, a move into teaching for a variety of reasons and at different stages in their lives, and consequently were older than the recent graduates.

The following table shows a breakdown of the reasons given by trainees according to where they trained and whether they were training full-time or part-time.

Membership of Focus Groups by Mode of Training and Reasons for Undertaking Training

	HE Institution			FE College	TOTAL
	Part-time	Full-time	Total		
Career change /required by employer	6	6	12	25	37
Recent graduates	1	11	12	6	18
Age/Injury	1	-	1	2	3
Family	1	-	1	3	4
Other	-	-	-	1	1
TOTAL	9	17	26	37	63

Twenty-six of the trainees were in HE training programmes, nine on part-time courses, running over two years, and seventeen training full-time over one year. The majority of the recent graduate entrants were to be found on the full-time HE programme. Thirty-seven trainees were training in FE colleges; all of them were training part-time (FE colleges did not offer full-time programmes) and most were teaching in the same college as they were being trained in, either on teaching practice as part of their training programme or, in the case of those who had worked there for a number of years, to gain a required qualification. Trainees in FE colleges accounted for most of the career-changers. For the recent graduates motives for training to teach in FE were mixed; some had been trainees at the college they were training in, and others had already gained considerable experience of FE teaching.

The most common reason, given by thirty-seven of the remaining trainees, was wanting a change of career. This was usually as a result of their dissatisfaction with their former occupations, and often coupled with a stated desire to go into teaching, although it was difficult to assess how far the latter represented a genuinely vocational motivation. For a few of these career changers this was a career progression within their college, for example from technician to lecturer.

3.10 Ethical Issues

The research complied with the BERA ethical guidelines (BERA 2004) and Cardiff University's ethical approval procedures, receiving the approval of the relevant ethical committee. All participants in the interviews and focus groups gave their informed consent and signed a consent form after the purposes of the research and confidentiality of their responses were explained to them. They were told that the interviews and the focus groups would be recorded and that the recordings would be transcribed, in an anonymised form, for subsequent analysis. Copies of the consent form and the accompanying information sheet that were provided to participants are at Annex F. It was made clear that they could withdraw from the research at any time if they wished, in which case their contributions would be destroyed. None has since chosen to do so.

Interviewing officials and teacher trainers did not involve any unusual or significant ethical issues. These were people who were capable of understanding the purpose of the research, and were talking about their work, rather than any sensitive or personal matters. In some cases they told me that they were expressing views that were not wholly consistent with the official line of their institution, but they did not ask for such statements to be treated differently, and so appeared to be content with the confidentiality arrangements that applied.

In the focus groups, while, as with the interviews, this was about the trainees' work and not their personal lives, there was a possibility that difficult or sensitive matters might be raised in discussion and this could be potentially embarrassing because of the group context in which that would have taken place. At the beginning of each group I therefore asked participants to undertake to observe the confidentiality of the proceedings, and I gave trainees my contact details so that, if they had any concerns, they could get in touch. None did. Nor were any issues raised that appeared, judging from the trainees' comments or demeanour, to have caused difficulties for them.

In addition to the interviews and focus groups I met Assembly Government and LLUK officials on a number of occasions. They were fully aware of who I was and of the purpose of the research. These were informal meetings and they were not recorded, although I made notes in their presence. I made it clear that the purpose of these meetings was to provide a background to policy development, on a non-attributable basis. The people I met were senior officials, well used to talking to outsiders on such a basis and, while they were candid, they were careful not to prejudice their, and their Minister's, position. I judged that there were therefore no ethical issues raised by these meetings.

The members knew the purpose of my attendance at the steering group meetings and there were no objections to my presence, and I had known two of them when in my post in the Assembly Government. The consultation meeting organised by the LLUK were open to representatives of providers and others from the Lifelong Learning sector. It was a large meeting and I simply observed and listened. I do not consider that any ethical issues were raised by my attendance at either of these meetings.

It has been suggested (Crow et al. 2006) that obtaining informed consent can affect the outcome of research in two possible ways; in a negative way by dissuading those asked to participate in the research from doing so, or, by introducing a quasi-legal element into the relationship between interviewer and respondent, or, by sensitizing the participants to the research questions, affect their responses. More positively, Crow *et al.* point out that the process of obtaining informed consent can create a more positive relationship between the researcher and participants and might make people more willing to participate.

In this study, the participants expressed no concerns about being asked to sign the consent forms and both the interviewees and the focus group members took the need for informed consent and my assurances about confidentiality as a matter of course. I did not consider that my relationship with them was affected by having to obtain their consent, although in most cases they would have been concerned if confidentiality and

anonymity was not assured. Neither did I consider that the information provided about the purpose of the research affected participants' responses given its general nature and the open and wide ranging discussions that took place.

3.11 Analysing The Data

In analysing data we go beyond a process of simple description and transform it into something it was not (Dey 1993). Wolcott (1994) categorised three ways of presenting data: description, analysis and interpretation. Simple description allows the data to speak for itself, in the hope that the reader draws appropriate conclusions; analysis provides the identification of the key factors in the data and the relationships between them. Interpretation aims to '... make sense of what goes on, to reach out for understanding ...' (Wolcott 1994: 10). These are not necessarily exclusive categories, nor do they proceed in a particular order, but represent instead the different emphases that qualitative researchers employ to organise and present their data. Since this was not an essentially descriptive study I did not seek to provide an account of the work of officials and teacher-trainers or of the experiences of trainees. Instead this was an analysis and interpretation of the data represented by the documentation of policy and of teacher training programmes, and that from the interviews and focus groups. In conducting that analysis and interpretation I needed to be aware of the contexts in which the data had been generated, the intentions of its authors or of the participants with the aim of producing a coherent 'story'.

The analysis of the transcripts of the interviews and focus groups was undertaken using a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) package, MaxQDA. Fisher (1997) reviews the use of such tools, stressing the need for the reflective use of computer assisted methods to underpin, rather than as a substitute for, analysis. I found that this method was most useful in refining the coding structure and, once the data had been coded, retrieving and managing the data in a way that facilitated interpretation. The initial activity in data analysis is coding, and the subsequent steps

in analysis stand and fall on the way data have been coded. Indeed, it is better to consider coding as a fundamental part of analysis and not a separate procedure. It is in the coding that the data can be allowed to 'speak', and this is essentially a reflective, analytical activity. However, inherent in coding is the risk of losing sight of what has not been coded; coding is a way of seeing but also of not seeing (Silverman 2000), and it was important to re-iterate the coding process to minimise that risk.

Using CAQDAS is, in essence, no different to using any other method of identifying and categorising segments of text, but is a far more convenient way of doing so and makes handling a number of codes and sub-codes more manageable. It allowed the use of both multiple and overlapping codes, the assignment of segments of text to more than one code, and codes could be further sub-divided into hierarchical structures of sub-codes, all of which would have been difficult to manage with manual methods such as the marking or flagging of transcripts. Most importantly, it also enabled the initial coding structure, which had begun with the 'foreshadowed problems' as reflected in the design of the semi-structured interviews and focus groups, to be easily refined and developed, rearranging codes into different thematic structures, during the process of coding in a manner that mirrored the application of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998). This involved 'thinking with the data', as transcripts were read and re-read to interrogate them and generate ideas (Atkinson et al. 2003: 148-152), seeking to identify what lay behind the responses and statements made by interviewees – what they were 'really' saying – and test that against the theoretical framework adopted in the study. This was very much an iterative process, since, as I formulated ideas in coding transcripts as I went on, it was necessary to then re-visit previously coded transcripts in the light of those newly emerging ideas and concepts which were now represented in additional codes. I also learnt in doing that, that subsequent readings of the transcripts always prompted fresh insights.

The software was therefore used to 'code and retrieve', but, although that suggests a merely mechanical activity, as explained above, that was not the case. Nor was retrieval simply a matter of counting instances of the occurrence of a particular code. Although the frequency of codes was of interest, that had to be interpreted in the light of the way interviews and focus groups had been conducted and the backgrounds and circumstances of participants. Common themes did emerge, but this was not a simple statistical exercise. The principle advantage of CAQDAS is that, once the data has been coded, every instance of a code can be retrieved easily and compared and reviewed. It is also easy to conduct analyses in a manner akin to cross-tabulation, so that codes can be related to one another, after the initial coding, this was one of the key ways the data could be interrogated. At one, simple, level this involved a crude examination of the way instances of codes appeared to be related to others. The software made this possible in a way that could not have been achieved with manual methods. But, as with counting the frequency of individual codes, the instances of apparent relationships have to be interpreted, although numerical distributions can provide a starting point for further investigation (Fisher 1997: 98).

3.12 Discussion

Validity

The selection of the interviewees was, as explained earlier in this Chapter, done on a purposive basis, and the selection of trainees for the focus groups was opportunistic and in neither case were randomised, controlled sampling procedures used. The research was not therefore representative in any strictly statistical, positivist sense, and, accordingly, no attempt has been made to provide an analysis that could be 'scaled up' to make quantifiable and statistically valid statements about FE in Wales.

Hammersley (1992) has defined the criteria for assessing ethnographic research as *validity* and *relevance*. Validity is taken as being synonymous with 'truth', although

this should not be regarded naively as ‘realism’, instead it should be taken in its common sense meaning as being plausible and credible – does the evidence stand up? It is clear from the discussion at the beginning of this Chapter that there may be objections to such a point of view, but when coupled with relevance, particularly in the context of other, related research, the argument becomes more persuasive. If the research had taken place in isolation those questions would have been difficult to resolve. However, this study can be seen in the context of the other research, which has been reviewed in Chapter Four. The extent to which those findings and the outcome of this research are comparable to the results of those other studies may provide a measure of externally derived validity, and that will be considered in following chapters.

A further test of validity can be the presence of ‘saturation’, that is if, after conducting a number of interviews and focus groups, no further significant themes emerge in the subsequent interviews and focus groups. That was the case in this study. On that basis it is reasonable to assume, subject to acceptance of the claims for the representativeness of the sample of teacher training institutions, that the data gathered and the conclusion drawn from it have a degree of internally generated validity.

Generalisability and limitations

Moving on from the validity of the research, a further question is how far the findings and conclusions from this study can be generalised to the wider FE sector in Wales and beyond. As has already been explained, the sample of FE colleges was restricted to South Wales, but colleges within that area broadly reflected the range of characteristics found in colleges across Wales as a whole, and that variety was matched in the colleges chosen for inclusion in the sample. While this was not intended as a statistically representative sample, I sought to avoid as far as possible any bias that could have arisen from including colleges that did not reflect that diversity. On that basis, and given the comments above, the results may with caution be generalisable, with the following limitations.

It was only possible to interview those who were in the relevant posts at the time. Since those interviews were carried out, all of those I interviewed in the WAG have since moved, or their responsibilities for FE teachers have been transferred elsewhere as a result of re-organisation. It follows then, that the data from those interviews can only represent a 'snapshot' of the attitudes held by those senior officials at that particular time. As is so often the case, policy has moved on, new staff, and more importantly, new Ministers have impacted on the corporate view held within the WAG. While those policy developments have been identified in the analysis of WAG documents, supplemented by the informal meetings with officials over the period of the research, the richness of the data gained from the interviews could not be replicated.

Chapter Four: The Official Discourse

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter analyses the content of the Standards and the policy documentation that lay behind them; it also analyses the data from interviews with officials. In doing so it addresses the last of the research questions set out in Chapter One: how the WAG policies for the sector have evolved and the consequences for teacher professionalisation and professionalism. The Chapter concludes that the LLUK Standards emerged from an official discourse in England that has defined professionalism as a set of competencies, in a way that prioritises trainability and generic pedagogic skills for new teachers. Considering the Standards in that way provides support for the argument that a shift to mode 2 knowledge is taking place in FE, as identified in Chapter Two. The argument that follows on from that is, as teachers' subject knowledge is being subsumed by generic teaching skills as part of a pedagogic model based on competencies and intended to develop trainability in their students, so the Standards embody a similar model of competencies and trainability for the training of teachers themselves. However, although policy documents contain a coherent message on those lines, the discourse of officials revealed a much more diverse set of views, depending on their backgrounds and experiences.

It also became clear from the interviews with officials and Welsh policy documents that there was a different view in Wales of the future role of FE teachers and of the need for Standards and associated qualifications. In Wales, FE was considered to have a role working collaboratively with schools, and not just confined to lifelong

learning, but professionalisation of FE teachers was not being actively pursued and the Standards were adopted in Wales by default.

Theoretical basis of the analysis

In section 3.5 of Chapter Three I have discussed the nature of documentary analysis, and in section 3.2 made the connections between my theoretical position and the methods used. I now go on to apply that theoretical approach to the analysis of the policy documents. The theoretical basis of the analysis is that 'knowledge', in this case what constitutes professionalism, is taken to have been re-contextualised within, in Bernstein's terms, an official re-contextualising field, to produce an official discourse. In the case of FE professionalism there are potentially two sub-sets of the official discourse, that of governments, in both England and in Wales, and that of teachers' employers, the LLUK, covering England and Wales. However, the LLUK, as a Sector Skills Council (SSC), was a creation of government and the Standards were prepared at the request of, and subsequently endorsed by, Ministers. Any distinction between these official discourses is therefore blurred by the relationship between them, and it is unlikely that Ministers would have endorsed the Standards if they were not in accordance with their views. For the purposes of analysing the Standards I have therefore assumed they constitute a single re-contextualising field. This Chapter traces the DfES's official discourse of change and professionalisation in its policy documents, which led in turn to the LLUK being established and given the task of preparing the Professional Standards which became the embodiment of the official discourse of professionalism. The WAG discourse emerged from a similar starting point but promised a different perspective on professionalisation, although the LLUK Standards in Wales, being derived from the English Standards, provided essentially the same re-contextualisation of professionalism.

Bernstein (1996: 66-67) drew on Jones and Moore (1995) in developing the concept of the 'generic performance mode'. Jones and Moore had discussed the role of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications in the development of qualifications based on a model of competencies derived from a functional analysis of occupations.

This, they held, was narrowly behaviouristic, and reflected the, then current, neo-liberal discourse of the market. A competency-based model served to both re-contextualise practice and suppress alternative forms of understanding, and embraced the concept of 'trainability' as a substitute for liberal education or craft tradition in FE. In Bernstein's subsequent re-working of that analysis, he described three 'competency modes': liberal/progressive, populist and radical, which were broadly about the purposes of education, and three 'performance modes': singulars, regions and generic, which were broadly about how teaching was carried out and the organisation of subject matter. Generic performance modes were '... directly linked to the market, to the construction of what are considered to be flexible performances.' (Bernstein 1996: 69). Bernstein went on to argue that there had been a trend, from the 1970s on, for the increasing dominance of the official re-contextualising field (the state) over the pedagogic re-contextualising field (those working in education); and consequently performance modes, particularly the generic performance mode, became more important than the competency modes.

In that analysis, the generic mode entailed a concept of skills that was short-termist, that prioritised 'trainability' (learning to learn) over other, more lasting, types of knowledge and values, producing a 'flexible, transferable potential' in the learner with the capacity and willingness to rapidly acquire new skills, rather than more specialist and deeper rooted abilities. Trainability demanded a set of cognitive and social processes that in turn shaped the individual's identity in ways that Bernstein considered lacking by comparison with more traditional learning: 'There seems to be an emptiness in the concept of trainability, an emptiness which makes the concept self-referential and thus excluding.' (Bernstein 1996: 73).

If Bernstein was thinking of Youth Training and NVQs, the concept of the dominance of the state as the official re-contextualising field and, with that, the importance attached to generic performance modes in education also has relevance for teacher training. Beck (2009), also drawing on Jones and Moore (1995), and on Moore's later analysis (Moore 2007), used Bernstein's conceptual framework for the analysis of the

TDA's professional standards for schoolteachers. A key point, Beck observed, was that the adoption of a genericised model of learning and of trainability was not an inevitable consequence of given economic or technological changes; rather, it was how '... particular sets of developments are narrated...' and how the responses to them were presented as inescapable and beyond question (Beck 2009: 6). Beck added that the idea of trainability is an ultimate, but undeclared, principle that '... underpins generic modes as a type' (Beck 2009: 6). A similar approach will be taken to the analysis of the LLUK Standards, where, in this case, the official re-contextualising agency is the LLUK, working within a policy framework determined by governments in England and Wales as part of their narrative of the threat of globalisation.

4.2 Background: The English Aspirations

Annex C traces the policy background to the development of the LLUK Standards in England and Wales. It provides a description of the antecedents of the present Standards and of the shifting terrain on which policy had evolved. This Chapter now looks at the content of those policy statements and of the Standards. The first steps in the process of reform in England was the publication of *Success for All: Our Vision for the Future* (DfES 2002b), followed by the 2003 Ofsted report (Ofsted 2003). *Our Vision for the Future* was couched in the language of progressive policies and current 'management-speak'; in the Secretary of State's Foreword, the sector is described as being 'pivotal' to the objective of strengthening Britain (here forgetting devolution) on the dual foundations of social justice and economic success, as well as being at 'the cutting edge' of enshrining lifelong learning in the 'daily lives of our citizens and the culture of our country'.

The context was set by increasing fears for the competitiveness of the British economy in the face of globalization, the threat to social cohesion that might follow such a decline and the consequent need for a skills-based economy (DfES 2002b:

Foreword). The social value of lifelong learning was not further elaborated on, nor how 'citizens' daily lives should incorporate it, instead it was simply treated as a self-evident good. But, it has been argued that the policy of up-skilling is merely a simplified version of human capital theory, with the danger that skills are seen as the 'only' issue, diverting attention from structural issues including the lack of investment; its attraction for politicians being that it provides a simple answer to complex problems and a means of social control (Ainley 2003; Coffield 1999). The rhetoric in the Foreword appears to have been intended to win over the workforce in colleges and beyond and so assist in securing the reforms. Yet, while ostensibly addressed to the sector '... we want to give you the tools to make it happen.' (DfES 2002b), *Our Vision for the Future* would seem to have been intended to reassure businesses and employers by its many references to the sector becoming more responsive to their needs.

For the workforce there were promises to '... address under-investment in professionalism and to reward and recognise the importance of the further education and training workforce.' (DfES 2002b: 5), to bring an end to destructive competition and to lift the 'burdens of bureaucracy'. The relative neglect of the sector in the past was acknowledged; and this was to be the 'once-in-a-generation opportunity' for reform – although reform would not be achieved quickly; instead it would be a 'journey of reform' (borne out, in the event, by the timescale over which the changes were implemented). To improve the quality of teaching and learning, 'good practice' would be identified and spread, the proportion of qualified teachers increased and rewards linked to performance introduced. In this way teaching, training and learning was to be 'at the heart of what we do'.

Teachers were thus presented with a deal, but not one that was negotiable. Better training and support; investment and real terms increases in funding; improved leadership and management could hardly have been cavilled at. But many might have wondered what 'striving for excellence' would mean for them, how the reforms associated with the provision for 14-19 year olds, and '... the development of new

provision to fill gaps and the rapid replacement or discontinuation of funding for inadequate provision that has poor prospects of improvement.’ (DfES 2002b: 19) might affect their colleges and them personally. In terms of what would be expected of teachers, *Our Vision for the Future* was clear that there had been insufficient attention to the skills and qualification held. Implicitly, behind the ‘onwards and upwards’ rhetoric of investment and improving quality, was a recognition that standards of teaching and learning in the sector were patchy, and that many teachers were not appropriately qualified.

Despite the references to ‘meeting needs and improving choices’ – as if this was a learner-led initiative – the improvements in teaching and learning were fundamentally driven by the Government’s Skills Strategy: ‘In each sector of the economy we must encourage employer demand for skills and ensure that the quality and spread of vocational provision meets the requirements of the businesses and industries it serves.’ (DfES 2002b: 22). Accordingly, teachers should have ‘strong and up to date’ industry and technical knowledge to secure ‘credibility with employers’. The outcomes identified as measures of the success of the reforms included increasing the attainment of qualifications and skills by young people; improving employer confidence in the provision available; and, learner satisfaction (lifelong learning and social justice having apparently been forgotten along the way). It comes as no surprise therefore that the prime motivator for the reforms was the national economic interest (Williams 2005).

The Ofsted report on the initial teacher training of FE teachers followed. Ofsted began with the FENTO Standards and tested their suitability for training purposes, since at that time training programmes were validated by FENTO. Ofsted also examined the way training was delivered in training institutions and in trainees’ workplaces and training placements. Understandably, given their experience, Ofsted took the schoolteacher training model to benchmark FE ITT (Fisher and Webb 2006; Thompson and Robinson 2008). Acknowledging the diversity of FE and with it ‘the rich mix’ of student teachers’ backgrounds, it proved difficult to determine just who

needed to be qualified to the level of the FENTO standards. Ofsted went on to conclude that such a heterogeneous mix ‘... raises the question of what categories of staff should be eligible for FENTO-endorsed qualifications and what teaching contexts should be regarded as acceptable for demonstrating that the standards are being met.’ (Ofsted 2003: 16). The overall picture that emerges from Ofsted’s review is of a workforce whose training was lacking in key respects by comparison with that of schoolteachers. In particular, Ofsted identified a lack of subject-specific pedagogic training. A further significant concern was the lack of mentoring trainees received. The comparison was made with secondary school ITT, ‘... where the role of the mentor is central to placement work.’ (Ofsted 2003: 24).

The criticism of the absence of formal mentoring arrangements might have been justifiable, and the evidence provided by trainee teachers in this study suggests not much has changed since in Wales. However, Ofsted failed to fully take account of the differences between schools and FE that militated against effective mentoring, particularly the systemic issues, identified by Simmons and Thompson (2007a), of trainees’ workload, their casualised employment and lower levels of academic achievement. More to the point was Ofsted’s criticism of the FENTO Standards as being inappropriate for designing courses or for judging the attainment of trainee teachers. It was concluded that the number of standards and sub-standards made it difficult to focus on what was important in initial training, and that the Standards took insufficient account of the range of different contexts within which teaching took place, notably because many trainee teachers were going to teach outside FE.

Ofsted were not alone in their criticism of the FENTO Standards in these respects. The Standards had been considered to invite a mechanistic approach to teacher training, or, that they had simply been ‘mapped’ onto existing programmes (Lucas 2002, 2004). They did not reflect what teachers actually did (Clow 2005) and represented a managerialist discourse implying that deficiencies could be overcome by instrumental, competence-based training – out of touch with the reality of learners’ attitudes and dispositions (Wallace 2002). If the Standards had a place, it

was thought, it was in defining basic ‘survival’ skills, or as a basis for considering professional development needs, but on their own they could lead to a narrow, technicist view of what a teacher should look like (Bathmaker 2000).

Equipping Our Teachers for the Future (DfES 2004) followed, after a period of consultation on proposals ‘to tackle the weaknesses identified by Ofsted’. It again referred to the ‘pivotal role’ of the sector in bringing social justice and economic prosperity. As before, teachers may have been surprised to find that, having suffered years of ‘benign neglect’ (Lucas 2004), they were now considered to have such a key part to play in the nation’s future. Unlike *Our Vision for the Future*, this document was more focused on teachers; its tone was set by its ‘vision’ that all learners would be taught by qualified and skilled teachers – which everyone could agree with – and it took care to refer to there being ‘much to praise’ in the sector, so that this was simply a case of ‘further improvement’. Interestingly, the document did not address itself to the awarding institutions, notably the HEIs responsible for training programmes and awarding qualifications. The only reference to the HE sector was to increased funding for ITT and developing better collaborative arrangements between HEIs and the FE colleges delivering their programmes.

The quality of ITT a teacher receives was now considered to be vital as it ‘... affects their teaching through their career.’ (DfES 2004: 4) but no evidence was provided to back that assertion. The main themes of the document, apart from reforms to ITT, were the need to extend the requirement to have a recognized teaching qualification to teachers, trainers and tutors outside FE; the further requirement that they hold a license to practice; and, the need for CPD. While the model remained that of schoolteacher ITT and QTS status, the new passport to teaching qualification, would allow teachers to teach while training. That qualification would be sufficient in itself where teachers only had a limited teaching role. Unlike schoolteachers, teachers in FE and beyond would be required to complete and record a prescribed amount of CPD; but why this was not considered to be a matter for individual teachers’ professionalism, or for their managers, and instead would necessitate bureaucratic

arrangements for monitoring and recording it, remains unclear. While respondents to the preceding consultation had stressed the wish to have parity of esteem and of professionalism with schoolteachers (DfES 2004: 6), such arrangements would not seem to serve that end.

The proposals were described as ‘the offer to trainee teachers’; but this was not an offer that could be refused. However, as the reforms would mainly affect trainees not yet in service, that would probably not have been an issue. The difficult negotiations would be on the development of new Standards to replace the FENTO Standards, now formally acknowledged ‘...to be a description of the role of an experienced teacher, and ... not appropriate as a definition of the outcomes of initial training.’ (DfES 2004: 12), and then, to engage with the awarding institutions on the scope and content of future qualifications.

Equipping Our Teachers also highlighted the need for the identification and spread of good practice and partnerships between colleges, HEIs and others, with proposals for the establishment of Centres of Excellence in Teacher Training. The search for good (or best) practice had been previously identified in *Success for All* (DfES 2002b) and was a common theme in successive policy documents, but as Coffield and Edward (2009) have established, ‘good practice’ is hard to define and consequently to identify and to transfer. Deconstructing the terms suggests that ‘best practice’ is superior to ‘good practice’ and by implication is the only practice that should be adopted. In real life situations, Coffield and Edward found that teachers tended to use what was officially promoted as best practice selectively, based on their own assessments of the needs of their learners. The pursuit of ‘best practice’ and ‘excellence’, remain at best a rhetorical exhortation to improve and to shame those individuals and institutions lagging behind.

4.3 Wales: *The Silent Partner*?

From the beginning, Welsh policy reflected the same concerns about globalisation as were felt the other side of the border, although arguably Wales had in the past experienced greater exposure to the risks of employers finding cheaper labour elsewhere. Also, by comparison with England, the Welsh skills base was substantially lower and social disadvantage more marked. The WAG's aspiration set out in the Minister's Foreword to *The Learning Country* was to '... to build a truly enterprising and creative culture, making the very most of our distinctively rich and diverse inheritance.' (National Assembly for Wales 2001). What was distinctive in this document, which consulted on the pattern for the future of Welsh Education, was a recognition of the need to consider teachers, regardless of the institutional settings in which they worked, as 'practitioners', implying, but not specifying, a measure of commonality between school and FE teachers. However, on closer examination, much of what was set out in the document referred to what was being done, or proposed, for schoolteachers. Teachers in FE were simply to be entitled to 'increased professional development and other support', and 'consideration' would be given all FE teaching staff obtaining 'suitable qualifications'. Officials in WAG might reasonably be assumed to have had wind of developments in DfES and *Success for All* was to be published shortly after, but *The Learning Country* nevertheless lacked comparable proposals.

Five years later, *The Learning Country 2* (Welsh Assembly Government 2006b) reviewed progress and consulted on proposals for the future which were then to be set out in *The Learning Country – Vision into Action* (Welsh Assembly Government 2006c). While *The Learning Country 2* was in large measure a celebration of progress and had an underlying political message for a wider readership, it did offer some specific promises including: the production of a workforce development plan that would inform training for staff in all settings; and developing and improving the

flexibility of deployment of practitioners within and across sector boundaries.

Underlying this was the intention was to make more effective use of teachers; 'We need also to make better use of the time, skills and expertise of practitioners to enable them to be more productive during the time that they are engaged with learners and ensure they are better supported.' (Welsh Assembly Government 2006b: 38). While similar concerns as those expressed in England about the variability of standards in FE were voiced in *The Learning Country 2*, they received much less prominent treatment, possibly to keep the sector 'on side', but also, we might assume, to maintain the generally positive tone of the document.

When the final proposals were published, in the section of *Vision into Action* entitled 'Supporting Practitioners', the focus was on the need for improved ITT, induction and CPD for schoolteachers and teachers in PCET, together with improvements in 'learning and teaching pedagogy' and the sharing of good practice generally. The intention that staff could be deployed 'within and across sectors' was confirmed; and, recognizing the need for common standards of training and development, *Vision into Action* promised to 'explore' ways of paralleling the developments that had taken place with schoolteachers on induction and early professional development for other staff 'within and beyond the school setting'. There was a commitment to the development of a five-year strategic plan to 'create the expectation' that all practitioners would engage in effective teaching and learning, including 'leading edge' research. This development was to build on the pedagogy initiative that had been launched the previous year to share 'innovative practice' (Welsh Assembly Government 2009b).

Vision into Action remained short on specifics as far as FE teachers were concerned. There were the same rather general references to 'best practice' and to effectiveness as in the DfES's publications. In terms of the proposals, despite the potentially radical idea of a workforce of practitioners who could be deployed across sector boundaries,

there was no mention of the implications of that for ITT, subsequent professional development, the role of support staff in schools and colleges, and the need for changes to the legislation which currently prevents teachers without QTS teaching in schools (Welsh Assembly Government 2004). The promise to ‘develop and improve’ flexibility of deployment seems un-thought through without at least some indication of what this might mean in those respects. Equally un-thought through was the intention to ‘explore’ the development of comparable arrangements for induction and CPD as were available for schoolteachers without any commitment to resources, to a timescale, or detailing what this might mean and what it was intended to achieve. The authors of *Vision into Action* ought to have been aware of *Equipping Our Teachers for the Future*, published two years previously; there was no sign of any recognition of what was going on across the border and whether that was considered to be relevant or, for whatever reason, irrelevant to Welsh circumstances. Given the sweeping nature of those changes in England – in the qualifications framework, improvements to ITT, the requirement to undertake CPD and the role of the IfL – that is surprising.

In the intervening years, apart from the roll-out of the Pedagogy Initiative (there is a ‘Pedagogy Champion’ for FE) and its associated guidance (Welsh Assembly Government 2009b) there has been no apparent sign of any developments taking forward the commitments made in *Vision into Action*. It can be inferred therefore that the section on ‘Supporting Practitioners’ was, as far as teachers outside of schools were concerned, drafted in the absence of any concrete plans, and in the hope that something might be done, without wanting to commit to any specifics that would constitute a hostage to fortune.

4.4 Skills That Work For Wales: A Discourse Of Choice And Efficiency

Skills That Work for Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2008d) provided the skills and employment strategy for Wales. It followed the period of adjustment necessitated by the merger of ELWa and Dysg into WAG, the associated managerial changes and re-shaping and consolidation of policy. WAG's concerns were primarily focused on the comparatively low level of skills in the Welsh labour force, the high levels of economic inactivity and low attainment in basic literacy and numeracy. What the last might have said about both schools and PCET was not mentioned, but in the tradition of previous publications, *Skills That Work for Wales* paid tribute to the achievements of the past, before saying that 'much remains to be done'. That included measures aimed at improving the 'quality and relevance' of education and training. While the document was predominantly concerned with economically valuable skills, representing as it did WAG's response to Leitch and Webb, the Ministerial Foreword referred, if briefly, to the broader role of learning in terms of transmitting culture and values, so acknowledging the Welsh language and cultural heritage generally in a way that was not paralleled in English policy documents.

Skills That Work for Wales was a significant document, not least because it was the product of the newly re-structured Education Department (DCELLS). Its audience was drawn widely, reflecting the inclusive style of the WAG's policy making, to include the education institutions (but not HE), training providers, businesses, trades unions, the Employment and Careers Services, Prison and Probation Services and Youth Offending Teams. But there was little mention of teachers, either in schools, FE or elsewhere. In the Executive Summary, in the section on Basic Skills, reference was made to raising the capacity to respond to demand by investing in 'teachers, lecturers and trainers', echoing a similar intention contained two years earlier in *Vision into Action*. This was not expanded on elsewhere in the document and the section on Basic Skills talked instead about the, then forthcoming, *Quality and Effectiveness*

Framework (Welsh Assembly Government 2009c) which would require providers to evidence learners' improvement in their basic skills. The focus therefore was on outcomes rather than process and content.

More relevant to teachers would have been the foreshadowed transformation of the provider network. While making suitable noises about the progress made by schools and colleges, *Skills That Work for Wales* was clear that the system had developed in an unplanned way and involved too much duplication of provision. Competition hindered partnership working and restricted learners' choices. To deliver sufficient choices to 14-19 year-olds in the most effective and efficient way, colleges and schools would need to work together to increase the availability of courses and eliminate duplication. There were too many small school sixth forms and, following Webb, too few FE colleges of a sufficient size to operate efficiently. This represented a radical departure from the previous market-led policy, and one where the WAG would have a leading role in acting as midwife to the re-shaping of the post-16 educational system. Reliance on competition was to be replaced by partnership and the sharing of resources following the model advocated in *Making the Connections* (Welsh Assembly Government 2006a).

The dominant discourse was of choice and skills, led by the 14-19 agenda and with the objective of securing a wider offer to learners, covering both academic and vocational subjects. Increasing choice was however set in the context of the acknowledged deficiencies in skills, and in basic skills in particular. Yet, *Skills That Work for Wales* made no mention of HE, which surely would contribute significantly to the skills base of Wales; and the document's preoccupation, confirmed by its target audience, appears to have been mainly with education outside of the A Level-HE nexus. The rhetoric of choice in education was therefore about the greater integration of vocational skills training with traditional school-based subjects and, in the light of the future raising of the school leaving age and an uncertain labour market, about ensuring that

courses were available that would be perceived as relevant by learners.

The other discourse was one of efficiency and effectiveness, allied to quality. *Skills That Work for Wales* referred frequently to ‘best’ practice and both the *Quality and Effectiveness Framework* and *Effective Practice in Learning and Teaching* (the Pedagogy Initiative guidance) focused strongly on the sharing of ‘good’ and ‘best’ practice by various methods; Coffield and Edward’s comments, previously cited, are relevant here. The *Quality and Effectiveness Framework* made a specific reference to the LLUK Standards, and is the only WAG document to have done so since their publication. It described the Standards as providing a ‘framework of good practice’ and playing a key role in supporting ‘provider effectiveness’ through their use in recruitment, staff development and performance management. There was no mention of the deployment of staff across boundaries as signaled in *Vision into Action* and, behind the rhetoric of efficiency and effectiveness, lay the message of achieving economies of scale, mergers and savings. Effectiveness was now seen more in terms of institutional arrangements and the re-alignment of provision and less in terms of the workforce and their skills and training, other than their day-to-day management.

4.5 Analysing The Standards

The evolution of the Welsh Standards

The way in which the Standards were developed in Wales is described in Annex C and was a process that I was able to observe. The LLUK worked with a group representing FE, adult and community and work-based training as well as ITT providers and held consultation events with those interests across Wales. The outcome of that consultation and the consensus within the Steering Group was the strong feeling that the Standards should be set in the context of bilingualism and that

uniquely Welsh policies, including education for sustainable development and global citizenship, should be taken into account.

The Group were also supportive of common standards across the UK, and for the kind of flexibility and deployment across sector boundaries envisaged in *Vision into Action*, but the latter was not carried into the Standards. An earlier meeting between LLUK and the devolved administrations had settled the issue of broadly common standards and, accordingly, the Group were provided with the English Standards as a model and LLUK's agenda did not provide for any radical departure from them. In effect, Welsh policy and bilingualism were 'bolted on' to the English Standards and the discussions in the Group therefore centred on drafting points rather than issues of principle.

Re-contextualising professionalism

If the Standards are to be taken as an example of the generic performance mode we need to see how far they serve to re-contextualise professionalism by defining it in particular ways while suppressing alternative interpretations of professionalism; and, how far they represent a competency approach, designed to develop trainability – the 'flexible, transferable potential' identified by Bernstein.

The Standards were explicitly intended to cover the wide range of teaching and training roles undertaken within Lifelong Learning, they were intended to be '... context free and level free, in order to represent all constituencies, experienced teachers and teacher educators.' (LLUK 2007: iii). While having a broad appeal, the Standards were nevertheless described as 'Professional', although they were intended to apply to those for whom only the most basic level of teaching qualification would be required and who might not therefore be generally considered as professional teachers of the same standing as schoolteachers. 'Professional' in these terms therefore can be taken as being widely drawn and defined more by teachers' adherence to the Standards rather than by any other criteria. It is clear then, that the

Standards do indeed define professionalism and by implication exclude other definitions.

If professionalism has been re-contextualised in the Standards, we can next consider what are the underlying structures and assumptions that have shaped that. There are eight principal themes in the Standards, which can be grouped under three headings:

Teaching and Learning	Team working	Policy
Learning and Learners	Collaboration and Team Working	Equality Diversity and Inclusion
Pedagogy	Systems	Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship
Reflection and Evaluation		Bilingualism

Two, bilingualism and sustainable development and global citizenship, are unique to the Welsh Standards. These Welsh elements are directly related to the themes in *Vision into Action* and *Iaith Pawb*, the strategy for the Welsh language (Welsh Assembly Government 2003). Bilingualism was considered especially important in the Welsh context and, understandably, the need to cover it was strongly emphasised in the initial consultation process. It is also unimaginable, given the Welsh Assembly's statutory responsibilities, that the Minister would have endorsed the Standards without any Welsh language provision.

Bilingualism was defined in the Standards as a generic term '... used to reflect a variety of settings for teaching and learning through the medium of Welsh or the teaching and learning of Welsh as a language.' (LLUK 2007: 1), yet in Domain A of the Standards (Professional Values and Practice), which 'support and inform' the other domains, Standards AK 3.2 requires that teachers know and understand 'ways to promote bilingualism' and AP3.2 requires them to 'use opportunities to promote bilingualism'. Bilingualism in that usage clearly refer to something other than simply the teaching of Welsh, or teaching through the medium of Welsh, or the 'settings' in

which they occur. Standard BP 1.4 goes on to expect that teachers will ‘promote and develop a bilingual learning environment appropriate to the learners’, and BK 1.4 contains the expectation that they will know and understand how to do so. Thus, not only does bilingualism have an unspecified meaning, but teachers are expected to know about it and, implicitly, have a duty to promote it, something that teachers without a command of the language might be expected to find particularly difficult although the Standards are silent about that.

The Welsh elements, together with equality, diversity and inclusion, found in the English Standards, were driven by clearly stated government policies framed outside of education and represent broad political commitments, to be overlaid on the Standards. More subtly, underpinning the Standards is a managerialist view of the need for collaborative working and the need to secure the commitment of teachers to implementing systems of reporting and data collection required for monitoring performance.

The vision of the teacher in the Standards is not of an isolated individual, but of one who works collaboratively, despite the evidence of a fragmented workforce in reality. In Standard AP 5.1 teachers are expected to ‘Communicate and collaborate with colleagues and/or others, within and outside the organisation, to enhance learners’ experience’; in Domain E (Assessment for learning) they are required to know and understand ‘How to work as part of a team to establish equitable assessment processes’ (EK 2.4). Collaboration is here seen as a narrowly instrumental activity designed to achieve improved learner outcomes, ‘... meeting the needs of learners ...’ (BK 4.1), or reaching equitable assessments. The idea of engaging, in a collegiate sense, with colleagues or in communities of practice is absent, although mentoring and support is mentioned in one context (BK 2.7, BP 2.7) and there is similarly mention of the sharing of good practice (AK 4.3, AP 4.3). Beck has commented on the TDA Standards that ‘collaboration’ can involve disguising authority relations (2009: 10). While that may or may not have been the intention in this case, EK 2.4 may mean, as well as the legitimate moderation of marking, the subordination of

teachers' assessments based on their professional judgement to other considerations – evidence provided by the discussions with trainee teachers in this study suggest that this can, and does, happen. As with 'bilingualism', one might wonder what teachers will understand by 'collaboration'.

Considerable emphasis is given to teachers' observance of procedures. In the key, underpinning domain of Professional Values and Practice, Standards AK 6.1 and AP 6.1 require the knowledge of, and conformity to, 'statutory requirements and codes of practice'. AK 7.1 requires a knowledge and understanding of 'Organisational systems and processes for recording learner information' and AP7.1 expects teachers to 'Keep accurate records ...'; elsewhere Standard BP 3.5 expects teachers to 'Identify and use appropriate organisational systems for communicating with learners and colleagues'; while EP5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 are concerned with teachers' accurate and up-to-date reporting and assessing learners' progress. A large part of a teachers' professionalism is therefore seen in terms of their compliance with college systems and, implicitly, conformity with managerially derived measures of learners' performance, whereas one might have otherwise imagined that these are less 'professional' matters, and more to do with teachers' contractual obligations. It is hard to conceive of standards for the established professions, such as medicine and law, containing similar requirements, thus the LLUK Standards contextualise teacher professionalism as being, in part at least, bureaucratic and compliant with management.

One would expect teaching and learning to figure largely in the Standards, since the Minister's Foreword sets the document in the context of '... our intention to drive up standards of teaching and attainment in all learning settings.' The discourse behind the Standards is a 'learner centred' one; the first thing that the Standards say is that teachers will value 'Learners, their progress and development, their learning goals and aspirations and the experiences they bring to learning' (AS 1). AS 2 requires teachers to value learning and its potential benefits, while Standards AK 2.1 and 2.2 are about how learning can 'change lives' and promote '... the emotional, intellectual, social and economic well being of individuals and the population as a whole.' This may be

designed to initially focus teachers' minds on learning outcomes rather than processes, although as discussed below, the bulk of the Standards are taken up with pedagogy. It may also have been a rhetorical device for engaging with teachers by emphasising the importance of their work, even though it verges on platitude. Nevertheless, we might ask what professional 'knowledge and understanding' means in these areas where, while seemingly self-evident, the actual evidence for such transformations and improvements in 'emotional, intellectual, social and economic well being' may be sketchy and at best related to individual cases, while there is evidence that individual learners' 'learning journeys' are actually products of a range of social interactions and affected by multiple influences outside of the FE experience (Salisbury et al. 2007). Also, teachers feel that their ability to engage in such transformative processes by digression and discussion reflecting learners' interests are hampered by fuller syllabuses and administrative pressures (Preston and Hammond 2003).

Understandably, pedagogy is a significant component of the Standards, spread across all the domains. Notwithstanding the Ofsted criticisms of ITT for FE and the FENTO Standards, the model of pedagogy here is a generic one and focuses, for example, on the principles and theories of learning and teaching (AK 4.1), behaviour management (BK 1.2), motivation (BK 1.3), flexible approaches to teaching and learning (BK 2.4), lesson planning (DK 1.1 and 1.2) and negotiating individual learning goals (DK 2.2). The Standards' treatment of subject knowledge is confined to an expectation that this will be 'current and appropriate' (CP 1.1), otherwise in Domain C (Specialist learning and teaching), the generic standards are simply re-applied to the specialist context, so for example, Standard CK 3.1 requires knowledge and understanding of 'Teaching and learning theories and strategies *relevant to own specialist area*' (my emphasis).

Reflection and evaluation are, together with the elements of the pedagogy model outlined above, important constituents of FE ITT and the Standards expect that teachers will 'value' the reflection and evaluation of their own practice as well as engaging in CPD (AS 4). Teachers are expected to be 'committed' to improving the quality of their practice (AS 7). Yet CPD otherwise does not feature in the Standards,

despite the statutory requirement to undertake CPD to maintain the license to teach which *de jure* defines FE teacher professionalism in England.

Given the aim of developing Standards that would be applicable across a wide range of settings and levels, it is hard to see how they could be anything other than generic, although, as referred to above, LLUK has developed specific guidance for specialist teachers (not considered here). However, even if not intentionally, the Standards provide a version of teacher professionalism that is biased towards a pedagogy that is independent of subject knowledge. It is hard to say if that was a deliberate move towards creating a teaching workforce that itself has the same generic skills and trainability – in the interests of transferability and flexibility – that are to be inculcated into their learners, but there is sufficient evidence in the Standards to claim that they exemplify Bernstein's 'generic performance mode'.

The Standards as a competency model

The Standards were written as basis for teacher training and for the development of a qualifications framework; the Minister's Foreword to the English Standards states:

'These new professional standards have been developed specifically to respond to calls from Ofsted for clearer standards that new entrants to teaching in the sector should be expected to demonstrate ... and an emphasis on competence in teaching in a particular area of specialism.' (LLUK 2006).

In fact, the emphasis on specialism is confined, in both the English and Welsh versions, to Domain C, which as previously considered essentially re-states other Standards in terms of subject teaching. The Standards are therefore about what new teachers should be expected to 'know and understand' and be able to practice. In that sense they are clearly competencies, although the range and complexity of the expertise apparently required are extensive and demanding. The Standards begin with an overarching statement that 'Teachers in the lifelong learning sector will value:' followed by the statements A.1 to A. 5 that apply to all the domains and are supplemented in each domain by a number of 'commitments' specific to that domain. Within each domain the individual standards include the dimensions of 'knowledge and understanding', and of 'practice'. In that way, the Standards are performative, implying that, to meet each standard, the teacher *must* be able to demonstrate both

knowledge and understanding of it, and practice it. The effect of the Standards is to compartmentalise professionalism into discrete areas that lend themselves to training and assessment. As Beck has commented on the TDA Standards, 'The cumulative effect of this form of discourse is profoundly reductive ... The model is a technicist one involving the acquisition of trainable expertise.' (Beck 2009: 8).

The competencies are not, however, narrowly drawn in a way that might lend them to a simple 'tick box' assessment; not only are there so many (although a significant reduction on the former FENTO Standards) but 'commitment' and 'values' do not lend themselves to objective assessment. It is also unlikely, given their range, that a new entrant will be able to have more than a sketchy knowledge and understanding in many of the individual standards, neither are they likely to have had the opportunity to demonstrate every aspect of the elements of practice required by the Standards. In the last analysis, the effectiveness of the Standards as a means of determining new teachers' performance lies in the extent to which they are incorporated into ITT programmes and how trainees' competence against the Standards is assessed.

How do the Standards relate to other definitions of professionalism?

In Chapter Two I reviewed different views of FE teacher professionalism, concluding that this was, at the individual level, not static but evolving as an ongoing project and, that previous experiences and background were determining influences on a teacher in shaping his or her idea of professionalism. At a more general level, while resisting the attempt to define 'profession', there is a basis for considering that the key defining elements of professionalism are knowledge, autonomy and responsibility. In those three respects, how do the Standards measure up?

The Standards emphasise knowledge and as we have seen, this is mainly in respect of pedagogic knowledge, although competence and being up-to-date in subject knowledge is also expected. The pedagogic knowledge in the Standards is, as discussed above, essentially the kind of knowledge that is amenable to training, and provides for transferability; it does not reflect the kind of 'tacit knowledge' that is

acquired through experience and the exercise of a professional's personal judgement, nor that acquired in social interaction with peers in the workplace. It does not include the counselling and supportive roles that teachers take on as emotional labour, although there is a warning note in Standards FK 2.1 and FP 2.1, requiring teachers to 'Provide effective learning support *within the boundaries of the teaching role.*' (my emphasis). Where those boundaries lie is not a matter the Standards chose to define.

Autonomy, the relative independence of the professional to exercise their judgment in the interests of their clients, does not figure in the Standards. Instead as we have seen, the Standards promote collaborative working and compliance with systems.

Although in BS 2 teachers are expected to be committed to 'Applying and developing (their) own professional skills to enable learners to achieve their goals', and it might be argued that much of the expectations of practice would require the exercise of judgement, for example, BP 2.1 'Provide learning activities ... which meet curriculum requirements and the skills needs of all learners', the implication is, when taken with the Standards as a whole, that this is discretion that operates at the margins and is of a narrow, technical nature and within limits defined corporately. Responsibility, in the sense of a commitment to learners is strongly advocated in the Standards, equally teachers, as noted above, are expected to 'value' their professional development and be committed to improving their practice (AS 4 and AS 7). However, there is no mention standards of professional behaviour, and in England these are separately covered by the IfL's code dealing with matters of integrity, respect, care, practice, disclosure and responsibility (Institute for Learning 2008a).

4.6 Officials' Discourse

4.6.1 The officials

Wales is a small country; compared to England, the field and the number of actors within it is small, thus it was possible to interview all of those officials with the key policy responsibilities in the WAG and, in the LLUK, for the development of the Welsh Standards. Seven officials were interviewed; four were in the WAG, Alex, Ed, Fiona and Dafydd; all but Alex were located in Dysg, which had at the time responsibility for FE teacher development. Dysg had then just been merged with DCELLS; Fiona and Dafydd had not until then been connected with it, or been civil servants, as Dysg had been, until the merger, the Welsh arm of the Learning and Skills Agency. The move into the WAG had required them to adjust to new ways of working and new relationships, including that with the Minister, as well as a re-thinking of their role. Ed had recently been transferred into Dysg from another part of the WAG and had no prior experience of education policy work. Fiona had some experience as an unqualified teacher in lifelong learning, and Dafydd had been schoolteacher. Alex, who was, by his own admission 'a bit of a career civil servant', was located at a senior management level in DCELLS. He had considerable experience of different fields and had, at an earlier stage in his career, been responsible for advice and implementing policy on schoolteachers.

Two interviewees were with LLUK officials, Georgina, who had taught in FE, and Carolyn, who had previously worked in the private sector and whose only experience of FE was as a part-time student. Georgina had worked on the LLUK Standards and qualifications framework in England. Bryn was an official of the IfL; he had taught for twenty years in FE and other parts of the Lifelong Learning sector in England and still taught part-time in an FE college. Georgina, Carolyn (in LLUK) and Bryn (in IfL) were working in organisations with a UK or England-only remit and so did not

have a particular Welsh perspective, although LLUK was at the time engaged in developing the Welsh Standards.

4.6.2 The role and effectiveness of FE

Defining FE

In Chapter One I have commented on the diversity of FE and how, unlike the rest of PCET, it is regulated by government. Officials made similar comments when I asked for their views on the purpose and role of FE. These would set the context for their understanding of what policy for the sector is and how that might, or ought to, develop. It also provided the context for their understanding of the need for professional standards. None came up with a straightforward definition of the sector. Alex and Bryn defined FE by contrast with schools and with the rest of the PCET sector. Alex focussed on the fact that, because it was post-compulsory, it had to strive to be attractive to students; Bryn noted that it was regulated and so had a distinct legal identity and was therefore more open to direct government intervention than other elements of PCET. In rather similar terms, Fiona described FE as being ‘the most organised and clearly defined’ part of PCET, however, she saw FE as itself being very diverse and so difficult to characterise. That diversity and the sector’s size and importance were reflected in Carolyn’s perception of FE as being ‘a multi-million pound business’.

In terms of what FE was there for, interviewees, apart for Ed, gave general answers such as, as Alex said, ‘to provide a range of learning opportunities’; Alex also mentioned FE’s role as a ‘second chance’ for those who had not succeeded at school. Ed identified three main areas: providing ‘quality learning’; providing a training ‘asset’ for employers and thirdly, a role in the community, fostering social inclusion – without saying how.

Who are FE's clients?

Officials had mixed views about the policy emphasis on training for 'economically valuable' skills and the broader 14-19 agenda; there were concerns that adults' needs would not be met as funding would be diverted to meet then needs of young people.

Fiona, in Dysg, took the view that this was what was required and that teachers needed to be trained to work with that age group:

'... and given that we've got a focus on the up to 25s whilst there, there is also adult learning in the work force agenda, there is a real push for the 14 to 19 and up to 25 and getting *that* generation focused and moving forward and improving the practitioner to work with that age group.' (Fiona).

Bryn, from IfL and talking about England, thought that the funding system operated to the detriment of adult provision:

'... because they always chase the buck, they always chase the kind of funding imperative ... and we are certainly seeing that the opportunities for adults to *properly* engage in anything that might be considered to be kind of sustainable adult learning opportunities in further education colleges, is diminishing.' (Bryn).

Dafydd thought that too, but here expressing the views of Welsh teachers looking over the border:

'They've seen what's happening in England they say with funding and they're worried the same – the monies actually at the moment concentrated on 14-19 and they are seeing their subjects being cut and their courses and what they are saying ... if this is cut, your community is going to suffer tremendously especially the adult community sector.' (Dafydd).

Alex in the WAG, revealed that there was a debate to be had about what sort of training should be provided, suggesting that this had not been clearly thought through (and at the time the WAG had not responded to Leitch), but his comments reflected the idea of trainability embedded in the policy documents:

'I think that there is an important debate underway around whether is about narrow, vocational skill development, or about equipping young people with a broader range of skills that they can use in an increasingly uncertain labour market. ... I don't think that anybody knows enough about what is going to happen in the next 10 years to say with confidence that we know what the right answer is for any given young person and it seems to me that the socially responsible path, therefore, is to give those young people a broad range of skills, which enable them to decide what makes sense for them rather than somebody deciding for them. But that's a pretty heavy, profound debate, which is not had very often' (Alex).

If Alex was preoccupied with young people, Bryn, thought FE should deliver what he saw as its longer-term purpose, the needs of adults:

‘I mean particularly the demographic challenge that this country faces, the Leitch agenda will be short-lived if that’s all we focus on for the next three to five years. So I think further education has a very difficult role to play in terms of making sure it can deliver around the challenges that are presented by the policy initiatives, such as Leitch, but also making sure it’s still there in five years time to respond to what will be a new set of challenges about how we respond to the needs of adults for whom we look to make up the bulk of our workforce as our young school leavers diminish’ (Bryn).

These contrasting views illustrate the challenges for policy – the needs of young people and for adult training and re-training; the uncertainties of the economy and demographic change. It was disturbing that there was not a coherent, shared view among officials and that those, like Bryn and Dafydd, who were closer to the grassroots, were concerned by policy short-termism. It was also interesting that, in this context, officials did not refer to local employers as colleges’ clients, or to the need to undertake remedial work because of schools’ failures, although these came up in their discussion of colleges’ effectiveness.

The effectiveness of FE

Looking at how effective FE was, interviewees gave a qualified response. Alex saw room for improvement but acknowledged that results were being achieved, in terms of outputs, but without reflecting on the quality of those outputs, his main interest being, it seemed, in the efficiency and effectiveness with which outputs were delivered and how that could be improved using the policy levers at government’s disposal:

‘I think, at one level ... it is delivering in the sense that there are people emerging from the sector with specific vocational skills that equip them to work in specific businesses, who go on to work in those businesses. I think you’ve got to take that as some indicator of success, but, as with all aspects of the public services at the moment, the concern of Government is to ensure that they are as effective as possible, which means that just because they are producing the goods today, doesn’t mean that we sit back and say ‘fine’, we say we want more goods tomorrow.’ (Alex).

Georgina, in LLUK, thought that the sector was probably not performing ‘as well as it could’, this was because of external factors that affected colleges’ performance:

‘But, I mean, I think there are lots of issues that may not necessarily be FE issues, there may be all sorts of different kinds of issues, with, for example, schools using FE in certain ways as a kind of centre to put the people they can’t cope with. You know that does happen, and also it’s to do with the, lack of parity in pay between schools and colleges, so a lot of people will, there’s a high turnover of staff as well, so continuity is very difficult to maintain. Then there’s the reorganisation, reacting to the different policies.’ (Georgina).

These issues – schools ‘dumping’ the non-academic or difficult students, re-organisation and policy changes – also referred to by others. But, there was among Dysg officials a belief that Estyn inspections evidenced improving standards, or at least did not give ‘too much cause for concern.’ (Ed).

Turning to how FE could improve its effectiveness, the Welsh interviewees talked in terms of structural change, and were mindful of the Webb Review, then in progress, as well as the professionalisation agenda. Alex’s comments were, given his position, necessarily guarded, but it was clear that he expected some degree of consolidation as Webb was later to recommend:

‘As well as having to determine the Government’s response to Leitch, there is a very interesting exercise underway at the moment under Adrian Webb that will, that could have an important bearing on FE moving forward, including the structure of FE ... and the number of FE institutions. I think it would be simplistic to suggest that, to the extent there are problems in FE, they can be solved by consolidating the sector into fewer, larger institutions. But it may be that there are certain aspects of the challenges it faces, certainly in terms of economic challenges, financial challenges, that it will be better able to deal with, with the map to be re-drawn. Lots of ifs and buts there.’ (Alex).

Others voiced a common theme of improved collaboration, co-operation and the sharing of resources, later to be the core of the WAG policy in *Transforming Training and Education Provision in Wales*. There was an acceptance among interviewees that competition was likely to be inefficient and counter-productive and that greater collaboration would improve efficiency, but no claims were made for that providing a better quality of service.

4.6.3 Professionalisation of FE teachers

The need for professionalisation

Bryn expressed a vision of teacher professionalism that was independent of the particular context the teacher was working in and was ‘flexible and transportable’:

‘I think that what we need is staff, we need a workforce that doesn’t see itself as being an FE college lecturer, or a work-based learning trainer, an adult and community learning tutor, you know, our workforce needs to see itself as a professional teacher, or a role somewhere within that notion of teacher professionalism, that’s much more flexible and transportable than that ...’ (Bryn).

Alex identified a need to pay more attention to professionalism in FE as it came ‘out of the shadows’, but, critically, and in common with Bryn, saw that as being applicable across all PCET settings and leading to improved outputs:

‘But as FE comes out of the shadows, in a sense, so a concern around professional development comes higher up Government’s league table of concerns and if you are interested in the output of the sector then you need to be interested in the skills that practitioners within the sector have, to deliver whatever the product is. So I think it is no surprise that Government in Wales is now extending its professional development agenda so as to encompass practitioners in post-16 settings ... our aim is to construct a framework which enables them all to get better, more professional, more effective.’ (Alex).

Alex continued by acknowledging the imbalance between provision for schoolteachers and teachers in PCET:

‘... the range of products we deliver is currently more skewed towards the pre-16 sector than it is to the post-16 sector. So ... we need to redress that imbalance. It’s not surprising that professional standards are being worked on, on a UK level, given what’s happened already to the teaching profession.’ (Alex).

Although Alex was talking about a professionalisation agenda of which the Standards would form a part, colleagues in Dysg considered that an acceptable standard of professionalism already existed within FE:

‘... in the research that we’ve done, the vast majority of teachers and lecturers in FE colleges, in FE colleges are at least qualified to PGCE FE standard or higher. They, the Estyn report and so forth would bear out I think, that the quality of teaching as measured against the standards that Estyn are looking for within the FE colleges overall in Wales is good. (Ed).

So, Ed felt professionalisation was a ‘red herring’ as far as FE was concerned:

‘I really feel that ... ‘professionalizing’ the FE sector is something of a red herring, I really do. I think in terms of their qualifications, in terms of the way that they view themselves, I feel that the professionalism of the sector ... it’s not really an issue.’ (Ed).

Fiona, who, like Ed, was in Dysg and had seen the same research, also rejected the need to focus on qualifications: ‘We have a reasonably well-qualified work force in FE. It’s not nearly so much of an issue within the Welsh FE sector ...’. But Dafydd was more upbeat, making the comparison with the schools and pointing up the need for career progression :

‘Well as far as the FE is concerned I think the policy for the FE workforce at the moment ... is right and we do need to professionalise our workforce. Schools have obviously have got their professional workforce ... what they have got in schools of course at the moment is they’ve got a progression as well ... The FE sector hasn’t had that type of structure in place.’ (Dafydd).

Chapter Two has identified the issues that arise from the part-time nature of much of FE teachers’ employment, and Georgina similarly considered the lack of a career path to be a consequence of that:

‘I think the professionalisation of the sector is a good idea, the basic minimum standard for all entrants to the profession, making it a serious career choice, as opposed to something you kind of drop into ... having a proper pay structure; having a proper career structure ... many people were employed on fractional, sessional contracts ... lots of people go into further education as a second career because its flexible and you can choose your hours and then of course that which was flexible and useful, then it’s a noose around your neck because you can’t then get into a proper career path.’ (Georgina).

Ideas about professionalisation

Alex was clear that structural reform was not enough on its own to bring about desired changes and that it would be necessary to engage with FE teachers and so, looking to school teaching as the model:

‘You can’t consider the role of FE in the future without considering the role of practitioners within that. There is a developing agenda around which tends to be seen as school-based, focussed, that we are looking towards a profession which is more reflective, which is keen to use evidence about what works, what doesn’t work, which is comfortable about using data around performance. I think those are things that tend to be said about practitioners in school-based settings; I think we will increasingly be

using the same language with regard to practitioners in post-16 settings. The practitioners need to be *central* to what we can achieve in the sector.’ (Alex)

The idea of reflection, as defined by Alex, that is, being linked to performance measures and benchmarking, evidences a managerialist discourse of professionalism, harnessed to performative goals. Ed and Fiona made similar comments. But, while Alex believed a new form of professionalism was developing on those lines, he was concerned that Government might attempt to define acceptable teaching styles:

‘Oh, I think we are changing the definition of professionalism. We are expecting more of this particular profession, broadly defined, we are, we may be defining a new professionalism ... There are all kinds of moves afoot to define what that practice should look like. I think there are dangers in this. I don’t think there are dangers in the new professional agenda; I don’t think there are dangers in expecting more of practitioners; I think there are dangers in Government thinking there is one right answer: one way to teach in the classroom or in a lecture hall or anywhere else..’ (Alex).

Later Alex suggested that, rather than Government taking the lead in professionalisation, it might be better to leave that role to teachers, although it was evident which way he thought things should go:

‘There’s two, two big choices here. Do you construct a performance management framework which has certain sticks to drive people in the direction of achieving greater professionalism, I mean these aren’t necessarily either/or, do you simply create a culture where people *want* to do that, a pretty difficult one to establish; but I think it’s certainly the role, *a* role of Government, that, if we think this is the way people should go, we should find some means of communicating that ... National Government will not, cannot ‘manage’ practitioners in any sector of education. Leaders within schools, institutions, work-based learning settings offer that direct interaction which has to be central to what we are talking about.’ (Alex).

Yet, as Alex admitted, professionalisation and the emergence of the Standards was part of a wider government agenda, demonstrating the motivation behind the ‘organisational professionalism’ in public sector occupations identified in Chapter Two:

‘You have to see the emergence of professional standards as part of a bigger shift towards Government ... reflecting a kind of public interest, establishing accountability frameworks around various aspects of public services, and, in that context I think it’s quite striking that ... ten years ago there were no requirements around entry to the FE teaching profession ... I think it’s just interesting to reflect these bits of machinery, accountability mechanisms, have been put in place against a backdrop of greater and greater concern around what is being produced by various

bits of the public sector. I see the establishment of national Standards as part of that.’ (Alex).

Chapter Two has commented on the importance of teachers’ previous professional identities, Carolyn, in LLUK, similarly thought that teachers’ professionalism resided in their previous occupations, and so to professionalise FE teaching, new structures were needed that would create a distinct sense of profession and enable it to be recognised as such. In England such structures were in place to generate a sense of professionalism:

‘To confer a licence to practice on people makes them responsible and they have to maintain their licence through continuing professional development. So when somebody comes into the profession now, in England, from 2007, they are signing up to being a professional, not being a part-timer, ‘I’ll do it in my spare time’ kind of person ... far more aware of your responsibilities, as a professional teacher (or tutor or trainer) ... ’. (Georgina).

An important part of those structures in England was the IfL’s role as the professional body. Bryn explained that the concept of professional formation, which would lead to QTLS, the license to teach, took into account the different routes FE teachers took into the profession compared to schoolteachers:

‘Our view is very much that there is a process that teachers need that’s around proving that they can translate the skills and knowledge they acquire through teacher training into their professional practice, but that doesn’t need to be time limited. So that we aim to introduce this notion of professional formation rather than an NQT year, that’s around an objective assessment being made in the workplace of the teacher being ready to have QTLS conferred ... ’ (Bryn).

If for Alex in the WAG, professionalisation was about accountability and improved outputs, Georgina and Bryn, in LLUK and IfL, while still engaged in a discourse of professionalism that was ‘organisational’, put more emphasis on the quality of teaching that followed professionalisation. Theirs can be described as an insiders’ approach, and, while working within the framework of government policy, with the objectives articulated by Alex, their values and personal commitment to professionalisation came from those of the profession itself. It might have been possible that, where like Georgina, they were involved in the drafting of the Standards, they could have mediated the crudest demands of managerialism.

4.6.4 Discourses of professionalism and professional identity

Interviewees were asked to consider what defined teachers' professionalism. Alex mentioned the existence of a professional 'voice' – in a non-union sense – drawing on knowledge of teaching practice and 'what works best'; and Georgina felt that it was a 'mix' including reflection, collegiality and a commitment to students:

'It's to do with reflective practice, to seek opportunities to improve and to work as part of a team; to seek opportunities to test things out on others, on their colleagues. To do with collegiality, to do with, obviously to do with CPD and, I think at the heart of it, is really, really recognising who your learners are, and really caring about them and knowing your boundaries within that. But how do you put that down in a kind of ... I mean you can do and we are trying to define it at the moment!' (Georgina: 82).

The last sentence is revealing: it points to the difficulty of embodying these ideas in meaningful text – not that Georgina, who was developing the Standards, had despaired of doing so. Bryn, speaking for his organisation (IfL) spoke about teachers being committed to CPD; CPD was the IfL's interest as that was, in part, to be how professional formation was to be measured. In that light Bryn also argued for inclusion in wider communities of practice that would go beyond an individual college. For Dafydd, professionalism was about collegiality and was linked to self-assessment, and CPD. He associated that with colleges that had developed a professional collegiate ethos and so improved their performance, and he later advocated an entitlement to CPD as in England. Fiona identified other strands of professionalism, attitude and being motivated.

Interviewees' held different views about the respective weight given to subject knowledge and pedagogic skills. Fiona and Ed saw experience and competence in their field as key for those teaching 'vocational' subjects:

'There is an absolute requirement for the people, practicing in that sector to have the relevant occupational competency. And there is a view which I think I would hold to, that you get much, that most teachers ought to be, if they're teaching in a vocational area, ought to have practiced in that vocational area.' (Fiona).

Others (including Ed later on) saw it as a balance, or a combination, of skills:

'Actually both of those are really important, because if you haven't got specialist knowledge where's your credibility? You've got to have credibility. But there's no

point being a really good mathematician or somebody who's done an English degree if you can't impart knowledge and communicate. So it is both of those things equally really ... ' (Georgina).

For Fiona it also involved more than just occupational competence, so that the teacher had to have the ability to cover more than just the subject being taught, as well as enthusiasm for the subject:

'Particularly given our focus in Wales on key and transferable skills, part of the issue here is that we're looking in our teaching to moving to teaching skills, to teaching vocational knowledge and content and to teaching academic knowledge and content but, with a centre of skills and competencies of a transferable nature ... ' (Fiona).

But Bryn and Dafydd saw it as increasingly a matter of training in teaching skills *per se*:

'So our best our best vocational teachers are still going to be our best bricklayers, electricians, beauty therapists and so on and so forth. And we have to recognise that they carry that forward with them in terms of any new professionalism that they develop. So subject is a very, very strong part of the identity of the teacher ... But, I think more so than ever, developing in those skills around teaching and supporting learning, at the earliest possible stage in their employment as a teacher, is now absolutely critical.' (Bryn).

Georgina went further saying that a teacher's identity should primarily reside in their teaching, rather than their previous trade, although that remained relevant:

'Yes, well I think if you are teaching you should be regarding yourself as a teacher. It doesn't mean you can't regard yourself as a plumber, a hairdresser or whatever as well.' (Georgina).

But, referring to a survey done by IfL, Bryn said:

'... some 60% plus of all the professional development that was done by the thousand or so that responded related directly to their subject specialism; so it was to do with what they teach, not necessarily how they teach it. It was done because they perhaps have other professional body membership that they need to maintain, and the driver there, in terms of delivering CPD that relates to beauty therapy or hairdressing or whatever, is the strongest one – because that's still how they see themselves, their identity.' (Bryn).

Thus, in Bryn's view, teachers' identity, at least in vocational subjects, was still rooted in their original trades. However, this might also be simply because teachers had to keep up to date in these areas and that was their priority over developing their pedagogic skills.

It is apparent from the above that officials held different ideas about what constituted professionalism. To a significant degree these mirrored their positions and backgrounds, thus Alex, in the WAG, spoke about knowing ‘what works best’, while Bryn, from IfL, emphasised the role of CPD. But there was a measure of agreement on the centrality of generic pedagogic knowledge, and, in response to the issue of identity discussed in Chapter Two, for teachers to identify themselves as professional teachers.

4.6.5 The Welsh Standards: need and content

As we have seen, Alex had positioned the Standards as part of a broader Government agenda; but this was not clearly articulated by anyone else, although it was generally acknowledged that Wales was ‘different’ and that there should be distinct Welsh Standards. Even Carolyn, from LLUK, was vague:

‘Why are we introducing them? Er, well, I guess we’re not introducing them because they’re, what we’re doing now is developing the standards for Wales, as opposed to the predecessor standards which existed, which has been the England and Wales version of standards, so we need the Wales standards [*indistinct*], by diverging policy agendas. And those aspects of Wales that obviously are clearly unique, so working in a bilingual environment or Welsh medium environment, those specific skill sets need to be recognised ... ’ (Carolyn).

The overriding impression was that developments in England required the WAG to follow suit, and that they were:

‘... triggered by the development of the Standards in England, a recognition that here in Wales we couldn’t simply ignore the developments in England. So ... LLUK were contracted to look at the needs of the sector in Wales, taking the Standards that had been developed for England as their starting point. Again reflecting the desire of the practitioners within the sector that there was sufficient commonality retained between developments of England and developments in Wales to allow for cross-border movement in terms of careers and so forth. So, that’s, that’s where we started six months ago.’ (Ed).

It would eventually be necessary to have standards in Wales that teacher trainers could use to base their programmes on or else run the risk of them not being validated by SVUK:

‘... you know, obviously, if, if we hadn’t have developed the new Standards largely reflecting I suppose what’s happened in England, if we’d simply done nothing and

just continued with the old FENTO Standards, how long SVUK would have been prepared to support those ... that was never an option.' (Ed).

The timescale and the need to retain commonality with England meant that the English Standards were taken as the starting point. One might speculate that LLUK was in the driving seat anyway because resources had not been made available to work up Welsh standards independently and, even if there had been, LLUK's UK remit meant it would ultimately have to satisfy itself that such Welsh standards were acceptable. There was a tinge of regret, and a hint that Wales might have developed a different model, for as Fiona, in Dysg, said, 'It would have been very nice to be able to start with a clean sheet of paper.':

'So, basically we are, to a degree, stuck with what England has, the decisions England has made. What we discussed briefly with LLUK, in our concepts and talking around this before we, you know, had to make decisions and move ahead, was very much framing a set of overarching standards that might be more, you know, hierarchical, moving upwards. But that wasn't to be.' (Fiona).

In the end, she adopted a kind of resigned acceptance:

'And I, my, my attitude would be, as I said, you know, very much, we are where we are. There's this set of standards in England. You know, we could go back to the drawing board and start from a different premise and try and develop, you know, let's just get by, and move forward ... to the teaching and learning.' (Fiona).

Nor was the funding LLUK received from the WAG to do the job generous:

'We've been given a very little pot of money from the Assembly in comparison to that which the DFES invested ... The funding that's been available to the Assembly on this work only runs into tens of thousands ... So clearly the methodology has had to be constructed around the budget that was available.' (Carolyn).

However, whether this meant that the WAG had simply recognised the inevitability of importing the English Standards as it had insufficient resources to develop an independent approach, or, alternatively, it did not accord FE professionalisation the same priority as DfES cannot be determined from these comments. There had been a tradition of adopting and adapting English policy in Wales prior to devolution and it is surprising that this passive attitude to the Standards remained unquestioned post devolution, the possible explanation being the low profile of PCET, despite the rhetoric of the policy documentation discussed earlier in this Chapter.

Despite that, LLUK took a positive approach to the development of the Welsh Standards. Its officials were hardly likely to feel that their work on the English Standards were irrelevant, but there was a substantial commitment to consultation and the Welsh exercise was seen as an opportunity to build on what had gone before:

‘What, what was really important was that people didn’t see us as coming in and *dumping* stuff on Wales. And actually, with our development of the standards to make them seem more Welsh, we, the few of us, the people who have been working on it, feel the Welsh standards are going to be better than the English ones because they will have identified certain things, and there are three things there, one is the bilingualism aspect of stuff, one is to do with the global citizenship and the third thing is about peers, working with peers.’ (Georgina).

The emphasis on bilingualism that came out of LLUK’s consultation and the work of its steering group surprised Ed and Fiona in Dysg, who felt that there would have been more concern with basic skills, Fiona also mentioning collaboration and leadership. Maybe this reflected a difference of view about what the Standards were intended to cover and, in particular, what was meant by collaboration. Georgina, in LLUK, was clear that collaboration between sectors (rather than with peers) was not a matter for the Standards, nor was leadership. The Standards represented ‘... what a teacher does, whether they are new, doing PTLLS, or whether they are an experienced teacher or a teacher educator.’. In other words, they contained elements of teachers’ individual, professional practice. In that way they did not amount to a ‘set’ of attributes to be achieved in their entirety in order to be ‘qualified’, as this was not an NVQ:

‘One of the weaknesses, and I’m thinking about NVQs now, is when standards are also qualifications, there’s no distinction between them ... standards have to be a basis for professional practice and they have to reflect what people do, but they have to do that in such a way that ... people do that bit, they do some of it, then they do some of this – which might not be part of the standards ... Standards have got to be within flexible frameworks where you can pick and mix them really, depending on your role ... ’ (Georgina).

Qualifications and role descriptions would be separate developments and would start from the overarching Standards but the Standards were not intended to be as detailed as the specific requirements for a particular role within the sector.

4.6.7 The Standards and professionalism

For Bryn, the Standards were only a beginning, defining a teacher at the start of their careers, they did not take account of developments that might take place later in a teacher's career; nor did they relate to specific, job description, occupational standards being designed to underpin qualifications, that was their limitation:

'I don't think they make a particularly good job of articulating what career teaching is about; they don't necessarily tell us the kinds of things that we would want to see evidenced in teachers twenty years into their practice, they're really about this kind of initial momentum around training and development ... I think for us there are unmet needs around the occupational standards, particularly around things like reflective practice and wider communities of practice and so on and so forth that aren't there because they are occupational standards for the purposes of developing qualifications, as opposed to actually reflecting ... what teachers in the sector look like. (Bryn).

Georgina, from LLUK, had a different view:

'I think the good thing about that is that the standards are robust and you can use the standards as your benchmark as a teacher, but when you come to 'What do I do when I am in this particular setting?', what we have done is put clear water between standards and qualifications; and I think people will welcome that, because you can go to the standards and you can use those for appraisal for example, and you don't need to go to the qualifications to do that.' (Georgina).

Bryn, taking the IFL's position, went on to say that that professionalism went beyond the Standards and initial qualifications, involving ongoing development – which was a matter for the profession, and he rejected the idea that officials and policy makers knew what was required:

'Qualifications aren't the end of the journey a teacher qualification is very much that which equips me to start the journey to becoming the best teacher I can ... but there are unanswered questions in terms of what we would expect from the ongoing development of teachers – and that's our bag really, that's our remit ... I think it needs to come from the workforce, it needs to come from a real deep understanding about what teaching is about, and I don't think that anyone at policy level, particularly not LLUK, which is an employer-led organisation, not a teacher-led organisation, that necessarily has that kind of, like, purchase.' (Bryn).

If I had previously categorised Bryn and Georgina as 'insiders', the above shows that differences of opinion exist there too, with Bryn claiming the authentic voice of the profession and positioning the LLUK as management and, by implication, more aligned with government. It is interesting to relate that to Alex's earlier comments about the need for professionalism to come from within the profession.

As to the eventual impact of the Standards on teacher professionalism, there was a real doubt in Ed's mind that anything would happen in Wales beyond the development of Welsh Standards, because there was no political imperative, and therefore no funding:

‘ ... because there is no guarantee at this particular moment in time ... in Wales, we will take the standards anywhere beyond the standards. There's no, currently no funding stream to take, to complete the journey, if I can put it that way and follow the path that England has trodden in terms of standards, roles and responsibilities and then a full qualifications framework ... that direction of travel, we've started on that journey. But, whether we complete the journey here in Wales, to put it crudely, is purely and simply a question of funding and ministerial priorities.’ (Ed).

4.7 Discussion

There was a distinct difference between the English and Welsh perceptions of the positioning of FE. In the English policy documentation and for the LLUK and IfL interviewees, FE was firmly located in the wider Lifelong Learning sector and the Standards were intended for those teachers. No connections were made with schools and schoolteachers and with collaborative working between sectors, although, the schoolteacher model of professionalism had been influential in the approach to the professionalisation of teachers in Lifelong Learning in England. In Wales, the perception, as set out in *The Learning Country: Vision into Action*, was more of bringing teachers in PCET up to speed with the kind of professional framework provided for schoolteachers, recognising that collaboration and cooperation, involving the movement of teachers and learners across sector boundaries would require that. Alex's use of the term ‘practitioner’, rather than teacher, followed its usage in *The Learning Country*, conveying the sense of a common approach to standards of professionalism across all sectors and that it would be necessary to redress the imbalance in the professional development for FE teachers compared with that for schoolteachers.

The Standards and professionalisation

However, that was not reflected in the Welsh Standards. The development of the Standards in Wales was to be, for Alex, part of a wider change agenda that included a re-structuring of colleges, greater accountability, and a drive for 'better' outcomes. While Alex put this in the context of UK-wide developments, those in Dysg were unconvinced about the need for Standards or for the professionalisation of FE teaching, claiming that, in the main, FE teachers were appropriately qualified and performing adequately. But, it was understood that developments in England could not be ignored and there needed to be 'commonality' in the content of ITT in both countries. It appears that the WAG considered it was 'stuck' with the LLUK model, or was not sufficiently interested to do anything else, and LLUK was not provided with a sufficient budget to do much more than adapt the existing English Standards. The conclusion is that the WAG had, in effect, drawn a line under the decision to ask LLUK to develop the Welsh Standards, with no further developments after that planned. It has therefore to be concluded that the potential impact of the Standards on the professionalisation of FE teaching is likely to be limited and only to the extent that the Standards were incorporated into ITT.

The language Alex used was managerialist; he spoke about teacher effectiveness, their outputs and their accountability to government; teachers' reflection on their practice should be about benchmarking and improving their performance. While Alex saw professional standards and professionalisation in instrumental terms, as achieving more and better outcomes for learners, the function of government was to set parameters and targets at the strategic level, and to foster a culture of change by working with teachers and colleges.

Georgina in the LLUK had a more technicist approach and was more focussed on the need for minimum standards. Carolyn in LLUK also saw professionalisation as a process of putting structures in place – a professional body, CPD requirements – that would make it recognisable as a true profession. These views represent a discourse of

professionalisation that is more ‘structural’: rooted in improving training, ensuring all new entrants would be trained to at least a basic level before they began to teach, changing the nature of employment and providing CPD. In that way they closely mirrored the English policies and their implementation. Where WAG officials were talking about professionalisation, their discourse was not about qualifications and training, but, in ways unspecified, about providing teachers in PCET with the same kind of developmental support and recognition as schoolteachers enjoyed.

In the absence of a professionalisation agenda in Wales, the Standards were seen principally as being necessary to provide a basis for qualifications. In England it seemed the Standards had a multiplicity of roles; essentially they were the basis for a qualifications framework that would define what qualifications were needed in particular contexts and at particular levels. For Georgina they defined elements of a teacher’s professionalism but it was not necessary to meet them all, although they were a starting point. They could be used for benchmarking performance, assessment and for identifying developmental needs (much like the predecessor FENTO Standards) although, in that last respect, Bryn had doubts about their usefulness.

Although the analysis above has linked the Standards to competencies, Georgina rejected the idea of their being a set of competencies that had to be achieved in their entirety, in the manner of an NVQ, to lead to a qualification. That function would be fulfilled by other, role-specific qualifications that would select elements of the Standards, appropriate to their context. Yet, inevitably, if the Standards were to underpin generic ITT qualifications, to some degree at least, they would have to be treated as competencies, and, in the absence of a qualifications framework in Wales, that seems to be the position although, as will be seen in the next Chapter, the extent to which the Standards were embedded in ITT programmes was limited.

Discourses of professionalism and identity

The Standards embodied an official discourse of trainability, and there was also some evidence of that in officials’ comments. Bryn’s concept of professionalism embraced

the ideas of flexibility and transferability, and Alex talked about the need to move away from narrow, vocational skill training in FE. Fiona said the same as Alex about vocational training and added that there was an increasing emphasis on covering basic skills within particular subject contexts. If that might therefore have suggested the existence of an official pedagogic discourse that privileged generic, transferable pedagogic knowledge over specific subject knowledge, when it came to discussing the balance between the two, opinions were initially divided. However, those who had put subject knowledge first came to consider later, as our discussions progressed, that such knowledge was of little use without the ability to communicate it and to facilitate and support learning.

The emphasis placed by Bryn and Dafydd in particular on the 'new' professionalism that came with teacher training, over and above any skills or professional knowledge that were held by teachers previously, evidenced an idea of professionalism that was rooted in generic pedagogic knowledge acquired through training and, related to that, the sense of an identity as a professional teacher. Georgina was clear that teachers should regard themselves firstly as teachers, and that was their professional status, although they might also consider themselves to be plumbers or hairdressers at the same time. Such previous occupations can be a strong influence on shaping teachers' identities, and Bryn offered some support for that view in the case of teachers of vocational subjects. Nevertheless, some officials' accounts revealed a discourse that contextualised professional status in terms of generic pedagogic skills in a similar way as did the Standards, containing the assumption that professional teachers would be flexible and capable of teaching beyond a narrow definition of their subject to include teaching transferable skills and across sector boundaries, but not expressed as competencies in quite the same way. Although acknowledging other professional identities that might have been derived from previous occupations, it excluded them from its definition of teacher professionalism.

Chapter Five: The Discourse Of Teacher Training

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter analyses the teacher-training programme documentation and the data from the interviews with teacher-trainers in two HEIs and four FE colleges. It addresses the first and second of the research questions: how, and to what extent, the Professional Standards were interpreted and applied by teacher training institutions, and, how the Standards influenced the professional values and practices of trainees. In that last respect, I considered how the content of training programmes and teacher-trainers' discourses of professionalism, related to the Standards and how that could have had an influence on trainee's understanding of professionalism. The analysis follows the theoretical approach set out in Chapter Four.

In that Chapter, I described the Standards as a product of the official re-contextualising field; in this Chapter I will show that the content of training curricula and the criteria for assessment were the product of a pedagogic re-contextualising field. Teacher-trainers, in both HEIs and colleges had their own conceptions of professionalism and opinions about standards-based training, which were reflected in the content of the programmes and mediated the influence of the Standards. The content of training programmes, as evidenced in their documentation and in what teacher-trainers said, prioritised an enacted form of professionalism.

HEI teacher-trainers and their FE colleagues, did not see the Standards as being central to their programmes although they were mindful of the need to crosscheck with the Standards to ensure SVUK endorsement. Trainers spoke instead in terms of

developing programmes in a pragmatic way to meet their conception of trainees' needs and were fundamentally opposed to adopting a competency model of training, which was what they saw in the Standards. Among FE trainers there was a perception that the benefits of training were not simply the transmission of particular skills, but of the experience and development of the 'whole person', a kind of holistic, liberal view of education, so that one trainer said that people who had left or failed the programme had still gained from it.

Training providers

Before going further, it is necessary to understand the relationship between the Standards and the qualifications required to teach in FE. This is described in Annex C, but, in summary, Regulations in England (DIUS 2007) require that a teacher have completed a training programme endorsed by Standards Verification UK (SVUK), a wholly owned subsidiary of LLUK, and undergone a period of 'professional formation' to the satisfaction of the IfL before being awarded QTLS. SVUK endorsement is dependent on training programmes incorporating the Standards appropriately. In Wales the 2002 Regulations remain in force (Welsh Assembly Government 2002a), and teachers must have an approved qualification, but approval is now from the SVUK and Welsh training programmes therefore need to incorporate the Standards in the same way as their English counterparts. There is no Welsh equivalent to QTLS.

The teacher-trainers were located in six institutions, two HEIs and four FE colleges. Together they ran three training programmes, since all the FE colleges except one (College B) ran programmes under franchise arrangements from one of the two HEIs, HEI Y. College B had, at the time of the study, recently changed to running a programme that had been newly developed by another HEI in South Wales (not one of those in the study). College B had been involved with that HEI in developing this programme, together with a number of other colleges, which is of interest because, in the interviews with College B staff, I was told that explicit account had been taken of the LLUK Standards in that process.

Where colleges were running HEI Y's programme under franchise the documentation was essentially the same, although some colleges had chosen to present it slightly differently, making some minor additions. In one case, the Professional Development module included a 'mapping' of the curriculum onto the FENTO Standards (although this material was due to be up-dated). In another college, the Professional Development module material included, as an annex, and without further referencing, a copy of the LLUK Standards' underpinning values (AS 1 to AS 7), albeit the English ones. College B's programme, although developed by another HEI, drew extensively on the HEI Y model. Given the broad similarity of the programmes, with only HEI X's documentation being substantially different, I have analysed the material as a whole without distinguishing between institutions except where it is helpful to do so.

5.2 Programme Documentation

Before considering how the training programme documents examined re-contextualised professionalism in their own terms it was necessary to consider the purposes they were intended to serve. Their outward purpose was for trainee teachers' information. The documentation was directly addressed to the trainee and includes helpful study advice, guidance on preparing assignments, academic referencing, warnings about plagiarism, etc. which, given that many trainees would not be graduates or have had any recent experience of education, was necessary. They also detailed the requirements of the professional development plans and reflective journals that formed a significant part of the Professional Development modules. That said, the major part of the course documentation was concerned with describing the content of each module, their aims and their assessment and grading criteria. While trainees needed to know this, their inclusion served other purposes; they provided a basis for dealing with disputes which could not be resolved if the assessment and grading criteria had not been documented, and they helped to justify the academic credentials of the course of study and enabled them to demonstrate that they met the

SVUK's requirements in respect of the Standards. The programmes had been developed by staff with substantial experience of teacher-training and, in both the academic content of the programmes and in their practical content, I expected to find evidence of 'interactional expertise' (Collins and Evans 2007), translating trainers' experience and expertise into language.

Re-contextualising professionalism

What ideas of professionalism did the training programmes' documentation embrace? Like the Standards, the model was essentially a pedagogic one, where the taught elements of the curricula were contained in modules that covered, for example, theoretical approaches to learning, communication skills including ICT, lesson planning, classroom management, curriculum design, assessment, and, mentoring and tutoring. This was further developed in the assessment and grading criteria for each module, which, in two of the three programmes, described in detail the specific levels of competency that could be achieved. There was a strong element of reflection built in to all the programmes and the concept of the 'reflective practitioner' (Schön 1983) may be taken as forming a major constituent of the programmes' conception of professionalism, and was shown by its inclusion in the 'Professional Development' or 'Professional Practice' modules in two of the three programmes.

Subject knowledge was a taken-for-granted; and the programmes did not set out to train teachers in methods that were specific to their subject. Instead, in the programmes' Professional Development modules, this was to be covered by the trainees' documentation of their practice in reflective journals for discussion with their tutors, where the intention was, as described in the HEI Y model, 'To promote and develop informed reflection linked to subject specific knowledge and skills.'. The emphasis was on trainees' reflection on their own developing practice rather than any assessment of their subject knowledge and, particularly in the HEI Y model, there was helpful advice about what being reflective entailed, with a brief discussion of the literature. According to the documentation, the use of reflective journals was intended to chart the trainee's progress and demonstrate their growing abilities in self-

evaluation, assessing their practice and how they were relating theory to their practice. If therefore much of the taught element of programmes consisted of acquiring competencies, those parts of the programmes that were concerned with professional development largely defined professionalism in terms of personal development and reflection; thus professionalism was seen as synonymous with practice and ensuring the effectiveness of that practice. Put another way, it was the enactment of professionalism that defined it, rather than the fulfilment of a set of competencies – although acquiring competencies and subject knowledge was a necessary preparation for that subsequent enactment.

This contextualisation of professionalism was one which, like the Standards was based on pedagogic competence, and trainees were assessed on that basis, since it was capable of formal assessment through assignments, micro-teaching sessions and observation, but it went somewhat further in recognising that a trajectory of learning and development is inherent and necessary in professional life. If the role of the Standards was simply to define the minimum required of a new teacher, in England that subsequent development path has been incorporated in the statutory requirement that teachers undertake a specified amount of CPD annually; in Wales there is no equivalent mechanism for post qualification training and development that would achieve that end.

The HEI X model was somewhat different in not having a Professional Development or Professional Practice module in its programme, rather it had one entitled *Values, Policy and Practice*, which covered the broad sweep of educational policy relevant to PCET and aimed to locate trainees within the broader context of policy and the kinds of issues currently faced by teachers in the sector. The module contained a section on *Professional Knowledge, Intellectual Skills and Understanding* that incorporated selected elements of the LLUK Standards' values, and the module addressed the question of professionalism including the content of the LLUK Standards. Reflective practise journals and observation of teaching (including two observations by a subject specialist) formed part of the assessment as in the other programmes, but the

documentation of this programme also suggested a rather more academic approach, and the HEI prided itself on being one of the longest established providers of ITT for FE in England and Wales. It did not appear that the Standards were to be taken as the definition of professionalism, and, like the other programmes, the taught modules were about developing competencies in generic pedagogic skills; but there was a sense that professionalism here was considered to go beyond reflection and enactment to include an appreciation of the wider policy, social and economic contexts affecting FE.

While to a significant extent the programmes set out a range of competencies that had to be acquired, through the practical teaching experience trainees gained, their reflection on that experience and their responses to it, trainees were encouraged to go beyond what is simply stated in the Standards as ‘Reflect on and demonstrate commitment to improvement of own personal and teaching skills ...’ (Standard AP 4.2) so that became the defining component of their professionalism. That went some way to promoting the notion of the autonomous and responsible practitioner. Reflection and professional development for the purpose of improving one’s practice originate in a sense of responsibility for learner outcomes, the kind of commitment to the client identified as a component of professionalism in Chapter Two. Placing this responsibility squarely on the individual teacher, rather than as one who forms part of a collaborative team, as promulgated by the Standards, strengthens the teacher’s autonomy – they are responsible for delivery of the curriculum and are answerable to their own standards in the first instance.

This pedagogic re-contextualisation was therefore not wholly at odds with the official version contained in the Standards, but went beyond what is strictly a generic performance mode to what Bernstein has described as a ‘regional performance mode’, that is where these are ‘.... recontextualisations of singulars and face inwards towards singulars and outwards towards external fields of practice.’ (Bernstein 1996: 68). What Bernstein was describing was the way Universities have re-contextualised existing subjects (singulars) into new disciplines crossing subject boundaries. The

training programme discussed here have taken particular competencies (singulars) and re-contextualised them into an idea of practice which included them, but was more than just the sum of their parts.

5.3 Teacher-trainers' Discourse

5.3.1 The teacher-trainers

Four trainers were located in HEIs; Rhys as the Director of the full-time programme in HEI X and had over twenty years' experience of teacher training in the UK, and overseas, but out of the four, only Yvonne, who led the part-time course in HEI Y, had substantial experience of teaching in an FE college (for over twenty years). Rhys, like Tyrone, who was Programme Leader for the full-time programme at HEI Y, had definite and personal views about training and a cynicism borne of long experience of government initiatives. Sion, who led the part-time programme at HEI X and was a course tutor on the full-time programme there, was also an experienced teacher-trainer.

Nine trainers in FE colleges were interviewed. Lorna and Pat were in College A; Naomi, Huw and Irene in College B; Jim and Karen in College C; and Viv and Sian in College D. Their roles and experience varied, but all were involved in teaching on franchised PGCE/Cert Ed programmes and in determining the way the programmes were run. Three of the interviews were at College B, which had switched from running the HEI Y programme to a new franchise and Naomi, the Course Coordinator, and Huw had been involved in the design of that new programme. Only two trainers, Huw and Jim, combined teacher training with teaching mainstream courses in addition to the PGCE/Cert Ed. Huw felt:

'I think it's important that we as teacher trainers are able to walk the walk as well as talk the talk. So I'm teaching on the First Diploma Health and Social Care this year

... it keeps my hand in with what it's like to teach 16 year olds, rather than nice compliant adults who want to be there.' (Huw).

Pat was a Department Head in College A and her responsibilities covered two other areas as well as the PGCE/Cert Ed, although she did interview candidates for the programme and taught on it. Jim, Naomi, Karen, Lorna and Viv described themselves as Programme Directors or Course Co-ordinators and had management responsibilities for the training programmes. Huw, Sian and Irene had a mainly teaching role in those programmes, although Huw also participated in the WAG Pedagogy Initiative. Pat and Jim had at least twenty years experience of training teachers; Naomi, Huw, and Lorna each had between four and ten years experience of teacher training. All the FE teacher-trainers had previously taught in mainstream FE.

5.3.2 Trainers' ideas about professionalism

Chapter Two concluded that professionalism in FE was elusive and changing, reflected individuals' career histories, and there were competing pressures to meet the external demands of management and maintain the standards derived from within the profession. Professionalism as enacted took place in arenas where these competing pressures were contested and teachers adopt different strategies for managing conflicts and discontinuities. Looking at how teacher-trainers perceived FE teaching and what they considered constituted professionalism would locate them in those contexts and help to illuminate their approaches to training.

Apart from Rhys, who gave a qualified answer, all the trainers considered FE teaching to be a profession. Yvonne saw professionalism as a relatively recent development and associated it with professional training, the increasing attention to required outcomes and the need for keeping records and documenting courses:

'I think it's become far more professional over the years ... and I know when I was at the FE college before coming down here, over the years we saw far more full-time and part-time members of staff attend programmes when I was leaving than when I started on the programme and in terms of quality and standards, I think people are far

more aware of what has to be achieved, and because of the fact that they have always been inspected; so, in terms of course files for example, when I started there, in the 1980s, we didn't have course files and all of a sudden we were asked, it would be about five years after that, to provide course files, but nobody knew what these course files should look like [*Laughs*] – although we were keeping all the documentation, but you know. And then there was training. Training was introduced, and so everything became a lot more organised ...' (Yvonne).

Yvonne's characterisation of professionalism was how she saw it enacted – that is in an increasingly organised way and validated by formal training. Naomi agreed that the growing demands placed on teachers meant they had to be more professional, in Yvonne's sense, but she added that teachers were 'double professionals', bringing to mind Robson (2006), because of their subject knowledge and professional training as a teacher, referring to the knowledge base of professionalism. Most of the FE teacher-trainers considered that a teacher's autonomy, the freedom to judge what methods and approaches to adopt according to students' needs, was a defining element of professionalism. As Naomi put it:

'Is being a professional someone who has to think for themselves; somebody who can work in difficult situations; somebody who can take something forward beyond the boundaries they're expected to work in? ... I think if that's the criteria, I do think that that's what people are doing in further education. Because [*Laughs*], although targets are set for them, and it may appear externally that they're working in a, in a very mechanistic way, just meeting these targets, in fact they're not; because, as well as those targets, they're under a lot of pressure to meet learner's needs, and I think they have to be professionally well qualified and develop themselves to do that. ... To me, that's being professional; and also, upholding your profession, I suppose, ensuring that the profession of teaching does not get subsumed in target setting and, and recognising mechanical achievements etcetera. That can be, I think that can be very hard and I think people in further education are really trying to do that.' (Naomi).

Naomi's comment clearly demonstrates the competing pressures of management demands and professional standards already referred to, as well as the difficulty of steering a course between them. The existence of professional standards (but not those of FENTO or LLUK) came out strongly from trainers' comments, indicating that there was a sense of values that were generally understood, if not articulated. It was voiced as trainers' belief that FE teachers had a kind of moral responsibility for their students' learning over and above what a narrower interpretation of their role might imply, or the targets and assessment regimes that they worked with:

'You have a responsibility not just to teach those in front of you, but to guide them and to make sure that what they're learning from you and your programme is the right

chapter in their lives for their learning, because it's going to affect their future. It's not just about today. It's not just about this year's course.' (Pat).

In that way teaching in FE was seen by Jim as being 'far more than a job', providing support for students beyond the classroom, which was for some an essential element of professionalism.

'... one of the things we always try to get across, you are a lot more than just somebody who stands there spouting out some information to your students. I think the students do need to take a care and interest and I personally think you need to get to know your students, not prying or being nosey obviously, but showing interest in them and then, it does need to be a two-way thing especially in FE, it's not like dealing in schools is it?' (Karen).

Commitment was part of those standards. This meant taking a pride in their work and having a sense of its importance: 'It's believing in what you do, actually believing in what, in what you're doing has some worth.' (Lorna); working long hours '... to do it well you've got to show commitment to it. It's not a nine to five job. You can't do it nine to five.' (Jim); 'It's not about clocking in and clocking out' (Sian).

Viv expressed the idea of standards:

'And you have to have standards and you have to adhere to those standards because I think if you start to, those standards start to drop then professionalism starts to waver.' (Viv).

Naomi talked in a similar way about standards, and that they constituted professionalism, but did not consider that all teachers necessarily shared such standards:

'I think I know of areas in this College, and, and I'm thinking maybe construction and, and health social care and business studies, possibly, and particularly hairdressing, where people do feel that there is a standard they want to achieve not just as hairdressers, but as teachers as well, and that encourages me, that's what makes me feel that people in FE do see themselves as professionals but of course there's another area where ... people don't feel like that.' (Naomi).

Keeping subject knowledge up to date and CPD were seen as elements of professionalism by all the FE trainers. In FE teaching it seems that professional development is also a way of coping with changes in the curricula and the nature of subjects taught in order to meet learners' needs:

'...the reality is that as time goes on in your profession you will have to acquire and develop new knowledge. So whatever you started with, unless you're in one of the

few niche areas where it remains unchanged, everything changes hugely. So the most you're going to be able to do is to be in a, in a discipline, in an *area* that is similar to where you started when you completed your first qualification. So the knowledge is always being updated. But fundamentally it's got to be about knowing students, knowing their needs, knowing where they are, and then be able to design and deliver a curriculum that meets those needs. And if you're not the person to deliver it, then you find the other person who can. And you either have to retrain yourself or teach in a different area.' (Pat).

Behind Pat's comments about change was an assumption that as subject knowledge became less relevant when the teacher moved on to teach in different subjects, their generic teaching knowledge became more so; in other words, she was saying that whereas subject knowledge was transitory and replaceable, generic skills were more lasting.

FE teachers often bring considerable life experience with them into teaching and that was seen as an element of professionalism unique to the sector compared to schools where new teachers were thought of as only having their subject knowledge:

'... [*schoolteachers*] go into teach in schools when they're about twenty-one ... they often don't have anything to offer the students, only that knowledge. They don't have anything to share, and I think that that's something special about FE teachers as well.' (Lorna).

And this was reflected in recruitment for teacher training:

'... performance and sport, hair and beauty, it does attract a younger teacher. So those are the areas where people are quite likely to come in, in their early 20s. Everywhere else, in fact on recruitment we positively discourage people from coming straight out of a degree at an age of 21, 22, to train for FE because they don't have experience to pass on to the students, and many students will be much older than them anyway.' (Pat)

Other factors which led to them describing FE teaching as a profession were the requirement (in regulations) for training and qualifications; the possession of interpersonal skills; lesson preparation; reflectiveness; a sense of responsibility and knowledge of their subject. In that last respect, Naomi had mentioned teachers being 'dual professionals'; but opinions differed about the relative balance between subject knowledge and knowledge of teaching methods and practice, most opting for it being a balance of both:

‘It’s going to be both really isn’t it, it’s absolutely, and it’s got to be both because you could know everything there is to know about your subject matter but if you haven’t got the skills to put it across you’re in no man’s land really, and likewise you can have fantastic inter-personal teaching skills but you’ve still got to, you know, the key is obviously preparation isn’t it? You’ve got to have a balance of both’ (Karen).

But Huw believed that teachers should move out of, as he described it, their ‘subject bunkers’ and reflect more widely on teaching practice; Naomi saw the FE teachers’ role as expanding outside traditional subject teaching performing different and new roles and, in particular, fitting their students for a part in the economy:

‘They’re being asked to work in areas that are not traditional to them. They’re being asked to work with difficult students. They’re being asked to work with students with learning disabilities and with physical disabilities. They’re being asked to operate in a way that will help the country ... to operate as an effective economy. I think people have to be professional to be able to do that, and I do think that the people who are teachers and the lecturers who work in FE are very aware that they’re doing that job, that it is important, that the work that they do is not just about the individual students. It is about the country’s economy.’ (Naomi).

Later she added that:

‘I think if you ask most people who work in further education, are you an engineer or are you a teacher? They will say ‘I’m a teacher, I’m a teacher who teaches engineering’. They don’t see themselves as simply being fixed in that engineering profession. And I think that, well surely that’s partly what makes a professional? And they have, they really have a concern for teaching standards as well as for ensuring standards within, you know the academic or craft area of professional area they teach in.’ (Naomi);

and saying that, on the PGCE/Cert Ed programmes trainees began the process of focussing on teaching and:

‘I think that’s what underpins, underpins professionalism. They’re *not* just hairdressers who come in and, you know, show people things; they really consider themselves to be *teachers* of hairdressing.’ (Naomi).

Huw and Naomi’s comments, and those of Pat earlier, point to an increasing emphasis on generic teaching skills and, as a corollary, that those skills and wider, but undefined, professional standards constituted teacher professionalism.

Training programmes focussed on generic teaching skills for the practical reason that it was difficult to muster the various specialists to enable teachers to be trained in the context of their subjects. Trainers were clear about that:

‘Our focus is on pedagogy and teaching and the constructs of learning. How they use that at the end of the day, and where they fit into, is a question for themselves ...’ (Rhys);

‘The generic teaching skills, yes. We don’t teach subject-specific’. (Viv);

‘What it doesn’t focus on, this course, this FE PGCE course, is subject knowledge; it doesn’t focus on subject knowledge. So there’s an *a priori* assumption that people come in with a certain amount of subject knowledge and that they have it. And usually they do, although sometimes I think that their subject knowledge is not fantastically sound.’ (Huw).

But, the primacy given to pedagogic skills was justified in terms of the need for FE teachers to be flexible, in that sense distinguishing them from schoolteachers:

‘School - when you’re training for primary or secondary, they teach you how to teach your subject. It’s not about teaching how to teach. And I’ve been sort of recently involved with this to do with the fact that speaking to lots of teachers, it is the case that sometimes those particular things, like methods and diversity and being able to change and be flexible is much more difficult within the school sector as it is within FE.’ (Sian).

It was also a matter of working across and between subjects and integrating basic and key skills into teaching:

‘In FE it has to be inter-disciplinary, anyone working in FE, whether you are a plumber or an engineer or, you’re talking about all the key skills, communication, numeracy, literacy, job, vocation and so on; it cannot be confined to the constructs and concepts and the pedagogy of the subject disciplines that you get in schools. And this is where the HMI put their foot in the wrong pond. They’ve come along and said ‘It has to be subject specific delivery in ITT’. In FE you can’t, you cannot do that; you can put them in the context whilst they were teaching, but those same individuals need upgrading in their maths, in their literacy and ... in their knowledge of a range of subjects.’ (Rhys).

Tyrone was dismissive of the need for training in subject teaching, comparing FE ITT favourably with ITT for schoolteachers, which put insufficient emphasis on pedagogy:

‘And we see this in secondary education, where the big failing of secondary teacher training is an over-emphasis on teaching people what to teach at Key Stage 3 and 4, and these are graduates. I would personally be insulted if somebody told me what I had to know in terms of subject knowledge at Key Stage 3. ... Those sorts of things I think are patronising and a waste of time, which is what we see as one of the failings of secondary teaching is that people are not taught how to teach they’re taught what to teach. And I think I would resist actively any leaning in a direction of that in further education teacher training because I’ve seen how it’s gone in secondary teacher training and the results there are not good to look at.’ (Tyrone).

Chapter Two drew attention to the view of some that FE was not a profession because of the fragmented nature of employment. Similar comments have been made by some officials in Chapter Four. Rhys endorsed those judgements. In his opinion FE teaching was not fully professional because of its part-time nature, he preferred instead to think of it as a craft; he acknowledged that it had a skills and a knowledge base like other professions, but critically, where it was part-time, there were no career opportunities:

‘... put it this way, this could be it in a nutshell for you, there are no career opportunities there is no professionalism. So in FE, if it’s part-time there are no career opportunities.’ (Rhys).

He thought there was a lack of a consistent professional ethos, because of the diversity of the sector:

‘It’s very difficult to identify a collective ethos, because there isn’t one [*laughs*] ... because each institution is so different in terms of its curriculum, which if you go to school you know you are going to get a Physics teacher and a biologist and a PE teacher and so on, if you were in FE, you’ve got first, you’ve got to say ‘What’s this institution about and who’s it catering for?’ and therefore there’s a different collective there.’ (Rhys: 53).

Tyrone made essentially the same point about career opportunities as Rhys had, but expressed it in terms of qualifications: ‘... there isn’t an adequate qualifications ladder in place for further education teachers ...’.

Tyrone and Rhys both had views about the threats to professionalism coming from increasing managerialism after the incorporation of FE colleges.

‘... this is one of the problems that you have had since incorporation, in that you have linear_line managers where learning and professionalism is shared, and one of the outcomes, where you have managerialism and Fordism, everything is line-managed, you don’t have that sharing of practice, it’s very linear in it’s, it destroys - communities of practice, sharing ideas, for fear of what somebody else might think of it, because you are in a line management set..’ (Rhys).

A target driven regime in colleges meant that opportunities were constrained and autonomy reduced:

‘We become technicians, we don’t become professionals; the teacher is no longer a craftsperson who can creatively craft learning. They become technicians, to a learning environment. ... if someone is professional it means they are accountable for their actions ... so they have to address it in that way. So the more managerial you

get, the more limited the opportunities for practice, therefore the domain of professionalism recedes.' (Rhys).

Yet, as Rhys observed, paradoxically, many people had come into FE because they wished to escape the managerial culture in their previous occupations. He was not wholly pessimistic; despite what he had previously said, he thought opportunities were there, though not always taken up. Asked if de-professionalisation had taken place he said:

'No, don't think so. I think the opportunities for doing a lot more varied courses, for a lot more varied pedagogy, adopting technology has been, is there, but unfortunately is not taken up by the existing cohort of practitioners – because they don't see the value in it, because they are on such limited employment contracts in the first place. The notion of loyalty to the institution has diminished, but loyalty to the practice has not ... that's the difference, that's the sort of perceptual view; I would like them to see themselves as good teachers, but the gap between the institution and the role player is wider.' (Rhys).

The idea of the 'good teacher' emerges in trainees' views of professionalism and can be related, again, to the enactment of professionalism, rather than meeting set criteria. He also refers to the contested nature of teacher professionalism, the balancing of institutional demands against professional standards.

If, for Rhys, there remained a loyalty to practice, but that the exigencies of part-time and limited contracts meant the course of least resistance lay in compliance, Tyrone saw compliance as the failure of teachers to actively challenge managerialism and act as truly autonomous professionals:

'Performativity and post-Fordist culture in FE is a recognised phenomena, but I would suggest people de-professionalise themselves by and large because it's easy. I think the problem is that there is a culture of compliance in colleges that people are happy to subscribe to. That, part of the problem, if we were to lay the problem at the door of any particular area, is a problem of teacher training in not encouraging people to be critical enough. I don't mean critical in an academic ... analytical sense, but critical of practice of their own, of their colleagues of the institutions. That critical resistance, that kind of pedagogic resistance ... is what has gone, and partly because of the kind of undergraduate education people have received, they aren't encouraged to be independent, autonomous, all the kind of things that professionals need to be. So it's not a failing of organisations in becoming too managerial; yes that exists, but managerialism often occurs because of a failure at lower down in the system to act independently...' (Tyrone:).

Tyrone's view of compliance needs to be seen in the context of 'strategic compliance' and 'principled infidelity' discussed in Chapter Two. It may be that Tyrone favoured

a more overt resistance than these ways of 'getting by'; but again, Tyrone was pointing up the contested nature of teacher professionalism.

Rhys, Sion and Tyrone were clear that the ability to practice autonomously, linked with accountability and experience, was the defining characteristic of a professional teacher:

'Because I think what we would say if we were defining what is a profession, is it is one where autonomous independent judgement based on experience is recognised and valued. And no matter how much Government removes, or attempts to remove that from teaching, or Further Education teaching, it still exists at any level.' (Tyrone).

The idea of professionalism as being synonymous with commitment (long hours worked etc.) was not as evident from HEI trainers' accounts, although Sion noted that:

'... we are seeing a very high degree of professionalism; they are dedicated to what they're doing, they have to put in far more in terms of hours than people would imagine outside. With a teaching load of 25 hours the preparation time in their first years in the profession is going to be crippling.' (Sion).

Trainers therefore did see professionalism as multi-faceted and contested, but there was a strong sense of the existence of professional standards in an informal sense, which were to do with teachers' commitment and responsibility for their learners, their autonomy and their knowledge. The nature of the FE workplace and conditions made professionalism difficult to sustain in a collective way, and no mention was made of communities of practice or of the kind of collaborative working that the Standards were promoting. On the contrary, the impression trainers gave was of teachers who were very much left to work in isolation, for whom professional standards were personal rather than collective matters.

Trainers did engage with pedagogy, and subject knowledge and skills were taken as given; while it would have been difficult for programmes to train in subject contexts, despite Ofsted's recommendations to that effect (noted in Chapter Two and Annex C), trainers did not in any case consider that was necessary. Some trainers did acknowledge that generic teaching skills were increasingly important but where the Standards have been described as being directed to generic skills as a basis for

developing 'trainability' in trainee teachers, teacher-trainers saw this as inherent in the nature of FE teaching where teachers had to have subject expertise but also be able to cover basic and social skills as well as cross-disciplinary working.

5.3.3 The place of the Standards in training

At the time of the interviews, in the summer and autumn of 2007, the new LLUK Standards for Wales were about to be, or had just been adopted, while the English Standards had been in place since the previous year. Those in the HEIs were therefore aware of developments and were mindful of the need to secure validation from SVUK in the light of the new Standards, but also to ensure that their programmes were marketable to those who might consider working in England where an approved qualification would be needed. Sion's use of language reflected the English agenda and terminology, anticipating that this would come to Wales, although at the end he expressed some doubt:

'Once again we've been looking at what's needed for the development in FE, but also with, with a mind to qualified teacher status in the Lifelong Learning sector. So we're looking at the sorts of things that a student would need in a portfolio presenting for QTLS and so we've increased the number of assessments that are going to go into portfolios and things, so that they will meet the QTLS requirement – if it ever arrives.' (Sion).

Tyrone was dismissive of the need for separate Welsh arrangements at all:

'I think this notion that somehow FE can be secular, or can be sectioned off in Wales, and somehow treated differently is a total myth.' (Tyrone).

Rhys felt that the Standards provided a basis for a curriculum, but it seemed that he had mainly satisfied himself that the programme he delivered was consistent with the emerging Standards, much in the way that HEIs had done with the former FENTO Standards (Lucas 2004):

'We've actually sat down and mapped the Standards to what we do, and we've fulfilled most of them.' (Rhys).

But, while not objecting to the Standards in principle, he went on to say that they missed out what he considered to be key elements:

‘The Standards are missing any form of evaluation, no evaluation of practice in the Standards at all ... so if there is no standard that brings out evaluation and reflection on practice, then it’s missing a big chunk of what professionalism is about. But, it’s not an issue for us, because it’s a fundamental precept of this course.’ (Rhys).

Sion, located in the same HEI as Rhys, confirmed that this was the approach they had taken:

‘I think we, we had a look at where the Standards were going, but we didn’t particularly take them into account in that sense. We were looking at a natural evolution of the programme, where it needed to be, because we’re working very closely ... with Fforwm ... so the needs of FE, have really driven the programme, rather than the standards.’ (Sion).

Like Rhys, Sion confirmed that the Standards were interpreted broadly, and that their programme covered areas that were not included explicitly in the Standards:

‘Yes, and we think that we’re covering areas that are sadly lacking from the Standards, but they are essential areas. For instance, the Standards... don’t actually mention evaluation of learning, they talk about evaluation of your assessment practise. So the whole literature that supports Investors In People and the importance of evaluation of learning has been ignored; the Standards don’t take account of them at all.’ (Sion).

Their approach to programme design could therefore be described as considering what trainees needed, and then to cross check that the Standards had been met; but from what they had said, in Rhys and Sion’s opinion, their programme went further than the Standards.

In HEI Y, Tyrone was responsible for the programme’s design. He took a similar position to that of Rhys on the place of the Standards in developing the training programme:

‘I develop what I consider to be an effective curriculum and then I make the Standards fit around it. Because the Standards are a complete distraction. The only people that do a standards based curriculum are people like City and Guilds, and it’s clearly written for City and Guilds ... and bodies like Edexcel and various other providers of commercial qualifications, because it doesn’t really train teachers, it just goes through the motions.’ (Tyrone).

This judgement, that the Standards were essentially a competency model and only to be used by awarding bodies which followed an NVQ-like training regime, was shared by Sion who noted that in England about half the training programmes were run by awarding bodies other than HEIs ‘... whose business is selling NVQs.’, so he went on

to reject what he, and colleagues in FE training institutions, described as a 'tick box' approach to curriculum development:

'We weren't trying to tick the boxes. We said: 'What makes sense in terms of a new teacher? [Then] Let's make sure that the Standards have been covered.' (Sion).

He was concerned that non-HEI awarding bodies might do just that, rather than developing a rounded individual:

'I can see that for a lot of the providers, achieving this, this particular standard, ticking the boxes, will become a goal in itself. Rather than a consistently coherent approach to learning, and providing the rounded professional, we'll have someone who's had boxes ticked.' (Sion).

Rhys, Tyrone and Sion had chosen to design their curricula to meet their perceptions of what was needed, informed in Rhys and Sion's case by their contacts with the sector. The Standards were not seen by them as central to that process, but needed to be taken into account, as a final check, to ensure that courses would be validated. But Yvonne described a somewhat different scenario from that offered by her colleague Tyrone. She said how the Standards were explicitly taken account of:

'Oh certainly, yes. What we are doing is we are re-writing the course with those Standards in mind, you know, so, we have all sorts of things that are informing us and we are, we are ensuring that the course actually ... satisfies those standards and the old FENTO, SVUK standards' (Yvonne).

Although it later became clear that the starting point was the existing programme and so the engagement with the Standards was, perhaps, more a question of fine-tuning and checking for consistency:

'We know what the programme is like at the moment and we know what the objectives are of individual modules. What has happened over the last couple of months is we have got together with our franchised centres and we've looked at the Standards and we have had discussions, there've been a number of meetings to develop the new programme. And so, I suppose there are two ways of working, you either work from the Standards or work from what you know of the course and see. So it was important for us to know what the Standards required of us, and I suppose when you're looking at something like that and you look at the Standards, you think 'Oh well, we're doing that already between us', or 'We will need, when we've re-designed the course, to make sure that we satisfy that or we emphasise this a little more', you know, include different tasks to make sure these sort of Standards are covered.' (Yvonne: 137).

Apart from Yvonne, the trainers in HEIs generally took a sceptical view of the whole idea of Standards, Tyrone rejecting what he saw was a set of competencies:

‘The idea of professional standards, there aren’t a set of standards for Doctors ... there isn’t the set of competencies. And I would suggest that most of the universities, if they’re honest with you, and other teacher trainers will say the same thing. It’s not about what we feel is effective in developing teachers, it’s a localised solution based on the staff we have and the expertise we have, not based on some common sort of NVQ staff framework we can roll out and produce evidence for, because the NVQ’s don’t develop criticality.’ (Tyrone).

If Tyrone had raised the pragmatic issue of what a given HEI was capable of delivering, Rhys took another view, stressing the need for the appraisal and testing of the Standards, something that should be done by HEIs and not just LLUK:

‘... someone has got to test the legitimacy of standards, and their application ... There is also an epistemological, academic, research view of what’s going on, and how it should go on, and how it’s performing, not only in relation to regions or institutions, but globally and in the cultural perception of what’s going on. So it’s a very complex process; I don’t think it can just be undertaken by agencies alone.’ (Rhys).

However, there was some qualified support for the Standards from Rhys:

‘The Standards are now, as far as we, I’m concerned, are good, because they’re, they’re not complete by any means, but they offer a base upon which you can design a curriculum, certainly get a course together on it.’ (Rhys).

Although it was clear that for him there was more to a training programme than meeting the Standards:

‘The Standards are baseline you could say, outcomes, that you would expect someone to, but, by the same token, one could be very careful in how they are employed, and how they are *placed* in training contexts, in teaching training contexts. They can’t, they can’t provide every teacher with everything, I mean it’s far too difficult to do that.’ (Rhys).

Sion was more impressed by standards being developed for schoolteachers by the GTCW, standards that came from within the profession itself:

‘I’ve got far more regard for those standards that have come from serving teachers than from these that are being dropped on us by, by some unknown body.’ (Sion).

Yvonne identified an aspect of the Standards that was not picked up by the others:

‘... they take into account the context, the more I think, person, that’s the sort of thing I’d like to see happening is one of the development of the person in terms of the context in which he or she is working and so they seem to require things over and

above the academic and the skills, more a raising awareness of other issues that affect us as people.' (Yvonne).

Although Sion came close to this when he spoke of the aim of training as being able to produce 'the autonomous practitioner', a person able to adapt appropriately to the context within which they were working.

Trainers in FE colleges more often spoke of the Standards as a basis for assessment. In most cases they meant the FENTO Standards as only two of the colleges in the study had incorporated the LLUK Standards into their programme documentation. The way the Standards were handled varied from college to college; Lorna used them explicitly as part of the Professional Development module:

'... on the back of all their PDs we ask them to write to the new LLUK standards, you know those ones that we were given? And so it's skills and attributes, so I actually, in their PD pack they've all got that, I've actually given it to them so ...' (Lorna).

Otherwise there was a vagueness about how the Standards fitted into the programmes they were franchised to teach. Irene referred to the FENTO Standards as being 'embedded' in the programme her college was delivering, but without much awareness of how exactly:

'I know the ... course was underpinned by them and somebody else had sort of linked to the assessments to them etc., you know I wasn't involved in that.' (Irene).

Jim said much the same:

'... they're embedded into the course and the teaching observation, assessment sheets follow their guidelines. But we don't hammer into them. We're aware of them and we've built it into the course. But that's as far as it goes.' (Jim).

Huw echoed that, saying that the role of Standards lay in providing a framework for assessment; Irene explained that a simple checklist was used to assess student's work against (some of) the Standards:

'At the end of the year when the students put their file together there is sort of a pro-forma provided by the university which has the Standard – not the whole Standards but has something for them.' (Irene).

There was a resistance to adopting a mechanistic approach to dealing with the Standards and they were considered as simply underpinning the programme:

'I believe that, really once the standards are in place and if they're embedded into a course like ours, then really to a large extent, people forget they're there, they don't know the ins and outs and the finer detail of it, they just, once they're embedded in the course then the course becomes what you're sort of focusing on, rather than the standards that are there, underneath the course. And whether that's right or wrong I don't know. I don't think we should be going down an NVQ and constantly ticking boxes to say yes I've done this, no I've done that, because I think that would be a shame because you lose a lot of the focus and development that students get from doing a course like the one we run now.' (Karen).

Viv made the same point:

'I don't think, not a tick box approach, absolutely not, because you've got to think of how you could incorporate it into the wider world. I think you've got to think about your requirements, your teaching requirements, the requirements of the students that are coming in, what are the problems that you're seeing ... You know, these sort of things, that you have to look at holistically. You have to take a gestaltist view on it, where you look at the whole before you break it up into parts, most definitely.' (Viv).

This view of how Standards should be treated in programmes seems to have meant that teacher-trainers felt they needed only to observe the spirit of the Standards, rather than following them to the letter. There was a common feeling that what mattered was delivering a programme tailored to the needs of trainees and not worrying too much about the detailed content of the Standards:

'I think, you know, there are a lot of useful areas there and I think there are a lot of relevant areas covered within the Standards. But, you have to look at what exists and I think they have to be, refined, if you like, to meet, you know, what you're delivering and what your body, your customer body, requires.' (Sian).

Huw and Naomi had been involved with another HEI in developing a new PGCE/Cert Ed programme; their approach could therefore have been expected to be more radical than the more routine, year-on-year adaptations that might otherwise have been made to a pre-existing programme. That development had also been undertaken in the light of the emerging English Standards and had recognised that they would need to be taken in to account. The approach was pragmatic, starting from the HEI Y programme they were using and considering how to meet trainees' practical requirements, rather than taking their lead from the Standards; as Naomi said:

'But no, we certainly ... did not start with the Standards. If anything, I suppose, in our heads at least, we maybe started with the existing course, so, we didn't re-write [HEI Y's] course and fiddle about with it. We decided what we wanted to do,

decided the structure that we wanted, but we kind of based that structure on, maybe, in terms of the modules, the number of modules and that kind of thing, we certainly based that on what we felt we hadn't been in agreement of ... And then, we looked at the key issues; we looked at the key things we felt were important ... I suppose we kept in mind the, the new Standards, this licence to practice, we kept that in mind, and we wanted to give them something that we get them up and running in the beginning. And we were, we were always mindful of what it is our, our learners, our student trainees, have to do to develop themselves.' (Naomi).

Naomi went on to describe how the structure of the new programme had been based on the HEI Y model and how it reflected what they considered important, in a way that did not overtly recognise the Standards:

'... the four of us who wrote the new course, we rather like the HEI Y model because generally at the centre of it, it was based on the principles of how people learn, and the other important element of that was applying those principles. Not, not delivering them to the teacher trainers as simply as theory, and not assessing them simply as theory; but really trying to get the learners to appreciate that theory and practice work together, and we like that, so we try to set up our courses the same way.' (Naomi).

Huw explained the way consideration had been given to the emerging Standards

'We had discussions at the very beginning about that and about the LLUK Standards and the status of the LLUK Standards and I know that [name] from [name of college] who was involved in the development process had discussions with those people and with SVUK ... so we were cognisant of that, but I think, at the end of the day, we said 'Look we've just got to go ahead and write this thing, and then if it doesn't fit the Standards we'll modify it to fit the Standards', but we wrote it reasonably confidently that it would meet the Standards; and, if it didn't, then we wouldn't need to throw the whole thing away we would just tweak it in order that it did.' (Huw).

There was a belief that they understood, in an intuitive way, what the Standards were about, without needing to be too rigid in incorporating them in the programme design. Naomi confirmed that:

'But we certainly didn't sit down and go through all of the Standards. But I think we felt that we did refer to them but I think we felt that really knew what those Standards meant in practice.' (Naomi).

This can be described as a 'holistic' view of the Standards – the term used by Viv – where a general understanding of the thrust of the Standards was sufficient, without detailed reference to their content, so, as Huw said:

'I know what it takes to be a good teacher, I now what's in the, our PGCE curriculum, and I'd always assumed that the curriculum met the FENTO Standards, so – I've never read the law, but I know I don't break it, you know what I mean? But I think that's how I approach it.' (Huw).

What emerges from these comments is the strong impression that trainers had their own ideas of professionalism. While they had no quarrel with the general tenor of the Standards, they rejected any competency-based model of training, even though the Standards did feature in their assessment criteria – but that may have been because some formal bases for assessment were needed for the validation of programmes. Huw's remark above is revealing; his judgement of what makes a good teacher was intuitive, a form of 'tacit knowledge' and as 'interactional expertise', implicitly incorporated into training and assessment as a kind of substrata below the formal and documented module descriptors and assessment criteria.

5.3.4 The relevance of the Standards

Given the way Standards were incorporated into training programmes, it was possible that trainees might only have had a limited awareness of them; Karen's account suggested that was indeed the case:

'... we tell them about them, but how much attention they pay to them while they're on the course ..' (Karen).

However, she later retracted somewhat, perhaps in defence of the programme:

'... they are aware of them and they do, they do make reference to them because it's part of the reflective practice that they show an understanding and a knowledge of what's happening around them in an educational setting, especially in year two of the programme, because we do curriculum in context and they've got to understand what's happening within the field of education and how that applies to them as lecturers as well.' (Karen).

Irene said much the same thing: 'Its not something that we, sort of refer the students to.' (Irene). One would expect teacher-trainers themselves to be fully aware of the content of the Standards, but some admitted to not having a detailed knowledge of them, and Huw admitted that he was unaware of the Standards until he had become a member of the group supporting the LLUK in developing the Standards for Wales :

'... actually until I was involved in the LLUK group, I had never looked at the FENTO Standards [*laughs*] and I'd been involved in teacher training all that time. I don't know if that's a terrible confession, or, you know, if there's lots of people like me out there ...' (Huw).

Naomi felt that the Standards did not have a significant impact on FE teachers' professional lives:

'I think many people are not too worried about the existence of the Standards and many people are unaware of the existence of the Standards.' (Naomi).

In part this was because of the size of the old FENTO Standards, which, if relevant, were bulky:

'I think the standards are relevant. I've always had an objection to the FENTO Standards because you know there's so many of them. It's really difficult for people to get to grips with them.' (Naomi).

Or it may be that they were just seen as a bureaucratic exercise to be interpreted according to circumstances:

'The LLUK Standards, or the FENTO Standards, are something which the bureaucrats and politicians can say ... you know, there's always a re-interpretation of those things, isn't there, on the ground?' (Huw).

Trainers' views on the relationship between the Standards and professionalism and the relevance of the Standards generally provided insights into their attitudes towards the Standards and what constituted professionalism, which arguably, would be reflected in the way the Standards were treated in their training programmes. Among the FE teacher-trainers there was no outright criticism of the Standards and they were accepted as a fair attempt at describing what a professional FE teacher should be capable of. Karen felt that the Standards did give trainees an idea of the complexity of the teacher's role:

'I can see the necessity of pointing out, especially to new and aspiring lecturers the complexity of the job of a lecturer and, you know, what's involved and who's, sort of the, oh, I can't think of a better word now, you know, the whole sort of, is attached to the job, it's not just the little narrow job ... ' (Karen).

However, Huw believed that new Standards alone would not contribute to re-professionalisation as this was a cultural change that required other initiatives, such as the WAG's Pedagogy Initiative that he was involved in. Pat and Naomi's view was that FE teachers were, in the main, already professional and, in Naomi's opinion, the function of the Standards was to affirm their professionalism:

‘... not saying to them, ‘Now here’s a whole new set of standards for you to meet’, but to help them to appreciate that many of these Standards they are already meeting, and that to be seen as professionals, although they may feel they already are, and I do, but to be seen as professionals, then they need to be a little bit more aware of the Standards and, and what they can continue to do, to uphold those Standards.’ (Naomi).

The teacher-trainers in the HEIs were more critical. The emerging Standards did not seem to have contained any surprises; they were ‘predictable’ according to Rhys and Yvonne said:

‘When our FE partners saw the Standards, I don’t think they were surprised or particularly fazed by anything, and I, I got the impression that they didn’t think that there was a whole lot of difference between what would be required now and what was required in the past and there didn’t seem to be, or there doesn’t seem to be, any, any additional requirements, or expectations; that they’re quite happy to work with the Standards as they are because we’ve been waiting some time for them to come to Wales.’ (Yvonne).

Rhys objected to the term ‘standards’, rather he felt the Standards formed a syllabus, or a set of competencies, while the notion of a standard ought to apply to the level at which those competencies were delivered. He argued that this meant that the Standards only represented a minimum level of competence, and that there could be a hierarchy of standards applicable to teachers as they gained experience. Sion made a similar point, saying that, by comparison with schoolteachers, where the GTCW was drawing up standards that teachers could be aiming to achieve at later stages in their careers, there was nothing in the LLUK Standards for existing teachers:

‘... we could draw the parallel with teaching again where, as soon as the opportunity to become a Chartered Teacher was made available, the response was tremendous from the profession; people genuinely wanted to engage with the standards and do it. We are not going to get that in FE when these LLUK Standards hit the boards because they just don’t have the credibility.’ (Sion).

Tyrone was forthright about the value of the Standards:

‘... standards are a waste of time. We didn’t have standards until a few years ago and teacher training existed for a lot longer than that. If we were in a system where there was complete chaos, anarchy, unregulated teacher training, lots of really bad teachers being turned out then there would clearly be an issue, but there isn’t – as far as I’m aware.’ (Tyrone).

Asked if he believed that the Standards contributed to professionalism in FE teaching, Tyrone said 'No'. That professional standards did little for standards of teaching and learning was a view that Rhys also shared:

'If you draw comparisons with the TDA and the teaching curriculum, the degree of prescription there didn't do anything for standards, you've still got more failing schools since the National Curriculum started, that is part of this whole difficulty of saying what teachers should do, not do, and so on.' (Rhys).

Asked why he thought that the Standards had been introduced Tyrone said:

'I think the value of standards in kind of making any difference is limited because we didn't have anarchy before we had standards, we had the Further Education Funding Council and we had various other quangos that supported teacher training, but the shift has been an ideological shift away from recognising professionalism in the university sector towards trying to regulate it and measure it. Because there's a Labour pre-occupation, actually it's not even a Labour pre-occupation let's face it, it's a Thatcherite pre-occupation with measurement and quantification, hence league tables, SATS all that sort of stuff, they're just another extension of that. And it doesn't work, we know it doesn't work and we only persist in maintaining this folly because there are no alternatives.' (Tyrone).

Yvonne, again unlike her colleagues, took a more positive view. She felt that standards of teaching were improving which she appeared to attribute to the Standards, but what also to what might be a broader conception of 'standards', as something understood and shared:

'I think, in general, when you look at the performance of tutors, in terms of their teaching, teaching abilities, I really think that generally there is an improvement and, because everyone seems to be working towards standards and are more aware of the standards there and what's required of them, and they're being inspected more often ...' (Yvonne).

5.3.5 What were trainers aiming to achieve?

If trainers discounted the Standards as a basis for professional formation, what was it that they did that made trainees professional? Karen expressed what a number of trainers in FE training institutions had said, by emphasising the whole developmental experience of the programme and the growth in confidence that trainees experienced:

'... they've actually had an experience that's not just developed them educationally, but as people as well because I like to think we offer a lot more than just the experience of getting a qualification.' (Karen).

But in HE, only Yvonne spoke in terms of the programme offering personal development as well as professional training:

‘... teaching and learning is not just in terms of formal teaching and learning, formal learning, it’s, it’s more than that, it’s seeing the person in, within his or her context and then developing people; you know we talk about personal and professional development on the programme, and ... I think that’s what it’s all about. And, you know, I think we’re fortunate in that the kind of people who come onto our courses appreciate all that, and see that as part of their jobs anyway. (Yvonne).

More particularly, trainers sought to provide trainees with experience of different methods of teaching, a ‘tool kit’ to take away, even if they didn’t use them all:

‘One of the things we talk about is the student, the teacher trainee if you like, having a set of tools in their box. Now what we often find is that the student teachers, they naturally adopt a teaching style which is either the way that they were taught, or which is much related to their learning style – in fact we all do that I guess – one of the tricks is to make them break out of that pattern and try new things, and that’s one of the things they find most challenging I think. And, of course, once they leave us, who knows what they go on to do, they may fall back into the old pattern. We need to assure ourselves that they’ve got all the tools in the box.’ (Huw).

That focus on generic teaching skills, rather than subjects could be seen as a strength of FE teacher training:

‘Well, that might be strength of FE teacher training programmes, that it is basically focussed on teaching and learning, there’s not a great deal of subject specific teacher training. I did my PGCE in Secondary in Biology and I know there was quite a lot of subject specific teaching; so, again, there’s strengths and weaknesses to that. I’m sure it helped I the way I taught Biology, but I’m not sure it helped necessarily in my general teaching skills.’ (Huw).

Karen’s programme included optional modules on teaching in specialist subject areas, but she was not convinced of their value:

‘Optional modules, we have optional modules and I think they get what they need in their specialist area from their experience in what they’re teaching and I don’t think it’s necessary, that’s my personal opinion, I don’t think it’s necessary to do optional modules.’ (Karen).

For Tyrone, the purpose of training was to develop an independent, critical frame of mind:

‘There are many forms of teacher and it’s again as much a skill to be able to get people to work autonomously and independently. ... But that’s got to be done by

teachers who are also critical not just unreflective deliverers of 'stuff' 'in a formulaic pattern.' (Tyrone).

Sion identified the need for an awareness of the contexts within which trainee teachers would be working and equipping them to play a wider role in their colleges:

'Well I think what we're doing in terms of personal development we're looking at, clearly drawing out reflective practitioners so they're conscious of policy and the context within which they're working. So the focus isn't simply on the classroom. ... And so it's, it's a much more rounded role, and taking on board where the whole profession is going rather than, what we used to see in terms of the isolated pockets and people weren't actually taking charge of anything outside their own classrooms; it was more inward looking.' (Sion).

Trainers had a much broader conception of what was needed, going beyond the basic requirements to enable teachers to survive in the classroom. They were aware that training was a developmental process in which reflection played a critical part.

5.4 Discussion

The analysis of the training programme documentation identifies the pedagogic re-contextualising field constituted by teacher training programmes as a 'regional performance mode', which has re-contextualised the elements of the Standards into a whole, predominantly oriented towards the field of practice. The content of the programmes, as evidenced by their documentation, focussed on the enactment of professionalism, the way professionalism was practised, or 'professionalism' – where the latter encompasses the existence of a knowledge base, the exercise of judgement, and, competence based on reflection and continued development (Hoyle and John 1995: 122-123). Reflection and development were key themes in the construction of professionalism contained in training programmes' documents.

Teacher-trainers' views were closely aligned with this model, as might be expected given their role in developing the programmes. Trainers talked about taking a 'holistic' view of the Standards; they were not much concerned with their detailed content, and the programme documentation was selective in which standards were

included. Trainers preferred to interpret the Standards in an intuitive way, in terms of their broad thrust rather than the detail of the individual standards, although that might have been a device for concealing the fact that they had not given them much attention, or even read them. Among the FE trainers, only two admitted to any detailed knowledge of the Standards. Where FE trainers were working with the programme franchised from HEI Y, they felt able to say that the Standards were 'embedded' in the programme, but without being able to say exactly how.

FE trainers referred to 'standards', but in a wider sense than the Professional Standards, and they cited a range of attributes that defined them, in their view, as professionals. For the most part, trainers did not consider that the Standards contributed significantly to teacher professionalism. More than anything, their idea of professionalism was rooted in the belief in a teacher's autonomy to decide what was best for their students, and the taking of responsibility for students' progress and development beyond, and possibly in contravention to, what was simply needed to meet the curriculum and college managements' requirements. This can be described as a tacit understanding of professionalism, together with their 'interactional expertise' (Collins and Evans 2007), expressing those values, leading to the conclusion that their professional values were embedded in the delivery of training and the consequent process of professional formation, rather than found in the documented assessment criteria drawn from the Standards, which were there to serve a more limited purpose. That 'tacit knowledge of professionalism' represented the companion to 'professionalism as enacted'; the 'knowing' and the 'doing', neither was capable of being codified and measured in the manner of the Standards or the assessment criteria, but they were understood and the former recognised the latter when it saw it – as Huw's comment above illustrated.

There was a clear rejection of a competency model of training, in favour of a developmental approach providing trainees with experience of applying the principles of pedagogy in their practice and reflecting on them. The purpose of training was to develop those attributes and provide trainees with practical pedagogic skills – a 'tool

kit'. Among the FE trainers there was a perception that generic teaching skills were becoming more important than subject-related knowledge, as teachers in FE were being required to develop away from their original subjects or to include basic skills and other matters in the curriculum and this was reflected in the content of the training programmes, moving to a more generic mode privileging trainability, although trainers did not articulate it in that way.

Yet this was not a discourse of 'trainability', that is, of acquiring generic skills that could easily be transferred. Subject knowledge was considered necessary, and the emphasis on training in pedagogic skills was because to do otherwise would have been largely impractical. But, more critically, teacher-trainers believed that there was a core of pedagogic skills that could, and needed to be taught, and that accordingly distinguished FE ITT from schoolteacher ITT to its advantage. These principles of pedagogy and the emphasis on reflection and development articulated by trainers reflected a practice-oriented discourse that supported the view of the pedagogic discourse, within teacher training programmes, as being 'regional', by comparison with the 'generic' official discourse.

Turning to the research questions, it is evident that trainers did not see a need to design their programmes around the Standards; instead they took into account what they considered trainees required and referred to the Standards as a final check, mapping the Standards on to the programmes. Trainers' accounts did not show that the Standards were referred to in training, referring instead to the way they believed them to be embedded in the course design. The Standards therefore had very little influence on programme design, and on the way programmes were delivered. Although it was accepted that there was a role for the Standards in assessment and the programme documentation confirms that they were used in that way, that could have been mainly to achieve SVUK validation.

There was little evidence from trainers that the Standards contributed significantly, if at all, to developing professionalism as they defined it. However, in trainers' accounts

there was an identifiable idea of professional standards, in the sense of their being shared and understood within the profession, recalling the idea of occupational professionalism discussed in Chapter Two. This embodied the notion of values that were resistant to management demands, and associated with a sense of personal responsibility to their learners. This seemed to have more meaning for trainers even though its content was not expressed overtly.

Chapter Six: Trainees' Discourse Of Professionalism

6.1 Introduction

The data from the focus groups of trainee teachers are analysed in this Chapter. The group discussions were designed to address the following three research questions: how, and to what extent, are the Professional Standards interpreted and applied by trainee teachers; how the Standards influence their professional values and practices; and, what were the processes by which trainees' identities are shaped and the key influences underpinning them.

The trainees' awareness of the Standards varied, depending on the programme they were on; where they were aware of their existence, it was only as something to refer to in their assignments. There was no evidence that the Standards were an influence on their conceptions of professionalism. They referred to 'standards' but these were conceived of in terms that were similar to those of their trainers, but also drew on their own interactions with colleagues and fellow trainees. These standards were about the way professionalism was enacted. Those trainees that had not been teaching before they began training were conscious of their lack of experience and located their professionalism in their subject knowledge, rather than in generic pedagogy, but valued the 'survival skills' they had learnt in training. They felt professionalism would come with experience, supporting the idea that their version of professionalism lay in the acquisition of 'tacit' knowledge. There was evidence of the importance of previous occupation as a component of professional identity as commented on in Chapter Two. The threat to their professionalism seemed to lie in colleges' need to

retain students and get satisfactory results that involved teachers in spoon feeding their students and compromising their integrity as teachers so that ‘everyone passes’.

Previous studies of trainee FE teachers have identified their sense of disillusionment with longer serving teachers, who they felt did not meet their own, higher standards, and with learners’ attitudes and with the academic content of their programmes; they reported that they were marginalised and excluded from communities of practice, and were dismayed by the bureaucracy they had to cope with (Avis and Bathmaker 2004; Avis et al. 2002a; Avis et al. 2002b; Bathmaker 2006; Bathmaker and Avis 2005; Harkin 2005; Harkin et al. 2003; Lucas 2007; Parsons et al. 2001; Robson 1998b, 2000; Tummons 2008; Wallace 2002). Spencely (2007) noted the difficulty trainees had with overcoming their traditional model of what a teacher was. Similar experiences were reported in this study and these are explored later in the Chapter.

The focus groups

The groups were drawn from the two HEIs and from two colleges, colleges B and D. Trainees in HEI X were on a full-time programme, they had little or, in most cases, no previous experience of teaching, either in FE or in other contexts; only a minority were employed by a college, and most had only secured a training placement for the duration of their training. Those in HEI Y were training part-time and all were teaching at an FE college in South East Wales; a number of them already had some years’ experience of teaching before being required to undertake the programme by their managers. The part-time trainees in the two colleges included some who were experienced teachers, some who had been newly appointed, or recently promoted, who had to undertake training, these trainees. These trainees attended the programmes in the colleges they were employed by. There were some part-time trainees in the colleges who, like the full-time trainees in HEI X, were training because they were hoping to find a teaching post. The part-time course allowed them to train while still in their current employment.

The methodological issues surrounding the use of focus groups have been considered in Chapter Three. They can fail because of a reluctance of one or more members to participate; they can be dominated by the opinions of a few members and, because they are a social group, opinions may tend to converge to the group norm. Because the trainees knew each other there were existing relationships, which might have affected the dynamics of the group. In all of the groups there were members who participated more and some who were relatively quiet, and there were those who, although invited, did not attend. In analysing the outcome of the groups it was therefore necessary to remember that what was not said might be as important as what was said.

6.2 The Trainees

Trainees' backgrounds and motivations for training

Trainees' accounts of their backgrounds and motives for training substantiated that 'Entering FE, is for many less a career choice or pathway than an opportunity at a particular moment in time.' (Gleeson et al. 2005: 449). These accounts illustrate the diversity of FE teaching and of entry routes into teaching noted in Chapter One. Trainees' motives for training were varied, for some of those new to teaching they represented the wish to escape from a job they didn't like, or because they wanted a better working environment, others expressed a desire to teach or wanted to stay in education after they graduated. Many talked about their love of their subject, and for those teaching a trade, there was a wish to pass on their skills. The discussion in Chapter Two has noted the influence of previous occupations on teachers' professional identity and trainees' career histories were therefore material to the analysis of the focus group data.

i) Full-time HEI trainees

There were seventeen full-time trainees in the focus groups from HEI X. HEI X was a large university and the programme was one of the longest established FE ITT programmes in England and Wales. The trainees were all relatively recent graduates, only one had previously taught in FE and three had other relevant experience, such as teaching English to speakers of other languages. None were training to teach vocational or professional subjects and about a third were intending to teach Film, Media Studies or Music. For several FE teaching represented a career move and a desire to return to education, or to get out of a dead end job:

‘Yeah, reason why I started the course really, was the old January blues I suppose it was. It got to a stage where I was in my job working in an office and I just went, ‘Oh I’m cheesed off with this. This isn’t not, nothing gained, I’m climbing so far up the ladder, was getting nowhere.’, so I just thought, and I’d been doing the training job so I thought well maybe I could translate that to FE and FE seemed like the best step for me ... ’ (Nigel: HEI X).

Others quite openly described FE teaching as a ‘fall back’ position:

‘I’ve done a Degree a couple of years ago now, in Swansea and I couldn’t really get a job, and I’d always thought about Teaching as a fallback and so that’s why I did this Course’ (Will: HEI X).

There was a general wish, for various reasons, not to teach in schools, often because they felt it would be a more ‘adult’ environment in FE where there would be less behavioural problems, or because they were not interested in teaching young children.

ii) Part-time HEI trainees

The two focus groups at HEI Y consisted of nine part-time trainees. The university ran a schoolteacher ITT programme as well as the PGCE PcET, and both programmes were run on the same campus. All the trainees were employed by the same FE College, as it was that college’s policy to ensure that all staff in a teaching post were qualified. Most of the trainees had served their time in industry. Five trainees were now teaching their trade; Gwyn for example was a carpenter who had recently started teaching as a career change through a personal contact with a member of college staff.

‘I teach carpentry and joinery at [name of college], prior to that full-time, well time served carpenter and joiner all my working life, never done anything else, that’s all I know [laughs].’ (Gwyn: HEI Y).

Tom was a plumber who had started as a technician and begun teaching as cover for absent lecturers and was now in a teaching post. Phil had also started as a technician in the college, as had Bill who had worked there for 26 years, and, like Phil, was now lecturing. Sion had previously had a varied career:

‘I’ve got a lot of years’ under my belt, I’ve done quite a lot of things, but mainly started off as a mechanic, went into management from there, studied with the Open University, went into business, finance, quite a few large organisations, done lots of in-house training; so I’ve been associated with training probably from mid-twenties, late-twenties ...’ (Sion: HEI Y).

They had come into FE teaching for a variety of reasons. Phil and Hazel had lost their jobs and applied through the Job Centre and an advertisement respectively. Rick wanted a better working environment:

‘I didn’t see myself when I was, sort of like fifty, still like rubbing down filler and being in that sort of unhealthy environment, so I still wanted to do something to do with vehicle body repair, because I enjoy it. So this was sort of, like, a good way into actually teaching people the stuff I know, rather than, like, being in the actual environment of a body shop.’ (Rick: HEI Y).

Tom had been forced out of plumbing by an injury, Kate needed to work as her husband had lost his job through ill health.

iii) Trainees in FE Colleges

The trainees were from two colleges; College B was small and predominantly rural, and the campus at which the training programme was run was outside a market town, although the other main campus was in a small industrial town a few miles away. College D was a large college with campuses in a number of towns spread over a wide area in industrial South Wales, the campus where the training programme was run was in a former steel-working town. Twenty-two trainees, in two groups, were from College B; all were teaching in the college, except for Angela who had taken a post in a HEI. There were sixteen trainees, also in two groups, from College D.

In College B, most were new teachers and were relatively new graduates; but six, Pat, Sheila, Prys, Jenny, Rosie and Terry, had been technicians or learning support assistants in the college, and were becoming full-time teachers and so required to obtain a PGCE. Matt was in a similar position as he had been teaching for some years but now had a permanent contract. Only Keith, Pat and Sheila were teaching trade skills – carpentry, plumbing and welding. In College D, most of the trainees were relatively new to teaching. Seven, Vicky, Amanda, Mary, Carl, Kirsty, Jean and Diane, were teaching part-time in the college while keeping their current jobs and their training was intended to provide them with a basis for a career move into teaching at a later stage. Gareth and Barry were established teachers with two or more years of experience and were training because their college required them to. Gareth and Barry were the only teachers of vocational subjects (electrics, building trades). Maria and Jennifer were learning support assistants moving into teaching.

Of the new teachers, some had chosen FE teaching as a career and they said that they wanted to teach and pass on their love of their subject. Olivia also wanted to stay in the college atmosphere, which offered more security than the uncertainty of working in the fashion industry:

‘... my background is fashion design and I also graduated [*a campus of the college*] in 2005. I, why did I go into teaching? I really loved that college, it’s really cool, the teachers are amazing and ... I just felt as though I’d like to do it, I’d like to be part of it. I also wanted to really stay in touch with the art world, so to speak. I wanted to stay on doing – it might be half a cop out or something – but I wanted to stay on doing my own artwork, so then in that way I thought being a teacher I’d have time to do artwork, be in the art world, enjoy teaching as well ... ’ (Olivia: College B).

Caddy, who had also recently graduated and was teaching dance had similar motives to Olivia. Keith loved carpentry and wanted to pass on his skills, but had come into teaching because of an accident:

‘I’ve been a carpenter for twenty years plus, and I enjoy it so much that I want to pass it on as a teacher, but I’ve got no teaching experience at all, well nothing yet! I’m starting to teach Monday coming now, first time. So I’m a bit nervous now about it. ... I enjoy the subject, you know, love the subject and want to pass it on, so I went into a teaching ... ’ (Keith: College B).

Ed expressed a rather more idealistic view of what he thought of FE teaching:

'The reason I wanted to become a teacher is I think it's a fantastic opportunity to pass on your knowledge and experience to students who actually, I would say, want to learn ... I think, after the three years I've been teaching them, they are going to walk into a job, hopefully, so I think that's quite a good challenge, to kind of get them up to that level. Whereas in school, perhaps, maybe, a percentage of the students in school are just there because they have to be there.' (Ed: College B).

Lem mentioned his love for his subject and the wish to pass it on:

'... but it's my, it's my passion where it's teaching is conveniently the same as it, so I do it. If it wasn't, very much like my subject matter then, I wouldn't put that much time into, you know, looking, preparing my lessons and, so because I love the subject and I want to get them to love it. ... I don't know if just the teaching part of the job, that's what I've learnt doing the PGCE, would attract me for the money at all really, it's only because it's the subject I like so I'm doing it, more or less doing it anyway.' (Lem: College B);

and a desire to teach was mentioned by Carl:

'Well, I currently work as a retail manager. I enjoy training staff and helping them out through NVQs and things in the workplace and thought 'Well, I quite enjoy that bit of it, I'll go and see if I can do a PGCE and carry on'.' (Carl: College D).

Sarah, who had been a programmer and gone into teaching for childcare reasons found that she actually enjoyed teaching and had found her niche:

'I think it's partly the enjoyment factor too. Because I feel more a teacher than a programmer because I love teaching, I wasn't particularly fussed on programming – I just wandered into it by accident. I feel more a teacher, although I've only been doing it this current year, than a programmer, which I did for five years ...' (Sarah: College D).

For others there was a wish to change career; the attraction of the flexible hours that FE teaching offered; or circumstances had played a part:

'I've been a plumber for thirty-seven years, far too long. I was approached two years ago, basically, to join the staff in [*a campus of the college*] as a plumbing lecturer. I had to make a decision; I thought I'm getting older, and it's getting colder, I'm easing off this year, so I thought I'd give it a go.' (Pat: College B).

Entry into FE seemed a matter of chance for some, for Mary there were family connections, her aunt had told her there was a vacancy because she was leaving.

Jennifer too had a contact:

'I got into FE from studying here myself, and someone from the college phoned me up and asked me if I was interested in the job, that's how I got into it. That's all really.' (Jennifer: College D).

Lem wanted the security of FE employment, that he also got through personal contact, which allowed him time to pursue his music business. Family reasons and the flexibility of FE hours were important for Lesley and Simone, Lesley said:

‘I qualified as an Accountant ten years ago, but then, after all that, I decided to have children and went into, and did the PGCE because it was an inward into teaching and teaching is a more flexible career when you have children.’ (Lesley: College B).

6.3 Ideas About Professionalism

Previous studies of trainee FE teachers have shown that they felt marginalised in their workplaces, were alienated by college practices for the recruitment and retention of students, and developed a negative attitude to existing lecturers who they felt did not match up to their own standards of professionalism (Bathmaker and Avis 2005; Parsons et al. 2001). Trainees were surprised by their students’ attitudes to learning (Wallace 2002) and that those attitudes ran counter to trainees’ ‘ethic of care’ (Avis and Bathmaker 2004). The process of professional formation has been identified as taking place during trainees’ teaching placements in colleges, as trainees navigated between their own anticipated professional identities and those that they felt pressured to assume as they worked with students and colleagues (Bathmaker and Avis 2007). This has been described as a ‘culture shock’, particularly for trainees coming late to teaching from a different professional orientation, necessitating complex adjustments in their conception of professionalism (Robson 1998b). In the light of these findings I was prepared for similar accounts from the trainees in this study.

The fluidity of professional identity (Colley et al. 2007), its contested nature (Stronach et al. 2002) and the different enactments of professionalism (Clow 2001), have been noted in Chapter Two. Here we will be hearing the voices of those at the beginning of their careers, where their ideas of professionalism and their identity as professionals were in a formative stage. These would not be views that would hold for the rest of their careers, but represented how they entered the profession. They

were diverse, as would be expected from the different entry routes that they had followed and their prior experience of FE teaching, or its absence.

All the trainees in this study considered that FE teaching was a profession. Mostly this was defined as ‘doing a good job’, and having ‘standards’ – working hard, working long hours, keeping up-to-date and being committed to their students:

‘... it’s a set of standards that you adhere, adhere to. ... That’s, I suppose that’s what the word professional means to me.’ (Hazel: HEI Y);

‘I think the attitudes of the people that I’ve worked with, I’ve come into contact with in FE, everybody really cares about their students and they really care about the quality of their work. And they work hard and they put in a lot more than they get paid for.’ (Lesley: College B);

Ideas of fairness and impartiality were also part of professionalism ‘... it’s about things like being fair and just and impartial, and all that sort of stuff.’ (Hazel: HEI Y). That relationship with students and the way teachers conducted themselves, keeping the right distance and being approachable without being too friendly was frequently identified. Others thought that being professional was about confidence and the ability to engage with a class and hold their attention.

The idea of ‘standards’ as being what was expected of the way professionalism was enacted, matches the discourse of professionalism voiced by their trainers, there was a strong element of idealism in it and it was a construct that had been developed in a social context, and not written down:

‘I think that’s where we actually get them from, is from everybody else around you as well ... I suppose I’ve picked up their views, and considered it a profession, because of the way you conduct yourself, ... so I still feel that that’s why it’s a profession, because of the way that you conduct yourself.’ (Phil: HEI Y).

Partly, they were thought to reflect the sort of people who became teachers and training did help to focus those personal qualities and to encourage reflection:

‘I feel I have the personal qualities that allow me to teach, but then for me to become a professional teacher, it’s just kind of recognising those qualities within yourself, I think that’s different. I mean that, from coming on this course now I started to recognise what is important and what isn’t,’ (Caddy: College B).

Trainees felt that having a qualification, as well as a post, would make them feel professional, so Suzy said ‘... if I go into a full-time job and I’ve got my qualification

that's when I'll start feeling, being professional' (Suzy: HEI X). Although for some the qualification marked the achievement of a status, for others it would be a proof, to them as well as to others, that they were competent. Many trainees thought experience would be necessary to be fully professional and there was a sense among all of them that their professional development was only beginning, although this was most clearly expressed by the full-time trainees who, as a group, had less teaching experience than the others. This uncertainty suggests that trainees also saw professionalism as a status confirmed by outward signs: a qualification, a job. But there was also a sense of a learning, or an experiential, journey, echoing their trainers' views about training, as well as the idea of professionalism being the accumulation of 'tacit' knowledge and understanding.

Knowledge

One of the questions I wanted to explore was how trainees described their core professional knowledge – was it their subject or pedagogic knowledge? Heather, who was then at the beginning of her training and newly exposed to the programme's content had been given pause for thought:

'Well, I mean, if you ask me to, well, of course, you have to know your subject. And I think at the beginning of this course I would have said this was the most important thing. But now, [laughs] I'm not sure whether it is! (Heather: HEI X).

Trainees generally felt that their professional knowledge was equally made up of subject knowledge and pedagogy: 'You can't teach unless you've got the background in it. But then you need the subject knowledge in order to teach.' (Phil: HEI Y).

There was a view that teaching involved translating theories of learning in an intuitive way, drawing on experience and the kind of innate qualities referred to above:

'I think it's more intuitive though. I mean if you go into a classroom and you've got 20 adults there, you don't stand there and look at them and think, right, now that person going to learn better if I give them something... visual and that, so it, it becomes, it's not so much a theory that you sit, sat down and read like you would learn a theorem in maths to do a maths problem, it's more that you absorb it and, and it becomes an intuitive thing.' (Hazel: HEI Y).

This was a skill that one already possessed but, as Caddy said above, training developed it. Here too is evidence of professionalism as ‘tacit knowledge’ or knowledge derived from experience of what works.

Trainees felt that their subject knowledge provided credibility, particularly so in the vocational subjects, and, in those subjects, they felt that they were still firstly an accountant, a carpenter or a plumber, and a teacher second:

‘I think I’m professional by the right of the training I’ve done for the last twenty odd years ... This is very new, this part of it. And, OK, I wouldn’t say I was professional at teaching at the moment. I won’t be for a long time, but, as far as my trade’s concerned, I am. ...’ (Gareth: College D).

Their previous professions had established their identity, but they did acknowledge the need for pedagogic skills ‘You’ve got to learn how to get the best out of your students, that’s where the teaching methods come in.’ (Gwyn: HEI Y). However, there was little to suggest that any of the trainees saw pedagogic skills as being the core of their professionalism, contrary to the emphasis on pedagogy in training programmes and on the generic discourse of the Standards.

A key element of the training programmes’ documentation of professional development was encouraging trainees to reflect on their practice, but this too was hardly mentioned by trainees. While Olivia did think reflection was ‘cool’:

‘When I was doing the reflexive journal at the end of the day and I was just ‘Well, this does make sense, yeah, brilliant’’ (Olivia: College B);

Barry, although accepting the need to reflect, rejected the emphasis given in training on linking that process to theories of learning and he considered it was a personal matter:

‘You can reflect, but it can be all your own reflection and there’s no theories in it. You know, that’s a right reflection I think. But when you’ve got to put the theories in it, you’re loosing the point then, cos you’re changing that, then, to make it fit with somebody else, and by the time you’ve done that it’s not you saying it is it?’ (Barry: College D).

Their practical concerns with what was effective, and not with how that fitted with theories of learning, evidences their overriding interest in ‘being a good teacher’, rather than meeting the academic criteria of the programmes.

Autonomy

Like the experiences of new teachers reported by Avis *et al.* (2003), there were complaints about paperwork, often considered unnecessary or duplicated, the requirements of assessment seemed to constrain the way subjects were taught because of the need to evidence students' progress:

'There's loads of paperwork for it, because it's all evidence based and then writing, that you're basically just dictating, and then writing this nonsense thing. It would be much better if you could actually physically just get the evidence they've got, staple it, and you write a comment on the back saying 'Passed all the criteria, or something, and they've done it.', you know, because you've seen it, rather than having to every single tiny little thing, tick off and write ...' (Sian: HEI X).

Although curricula and assessment regimes did appear to trainees to limit their freedom to teach what they thought was important, they had freedom in the style of teaching they adopted, '... you have leeway in your styles of teaching. I think that's where your, your autonomy comes in.' (Onagh: HEI X).

The size of course files that students had to put together needed marking and a considerable effort on the part of their teachers in re-ordering and checking that they were complete. Those teaching trade skills felt the demands of preparing these coursework folders meant that time, which could have been used to develop practical skills, was instead spent fulfilling the requirements of the assessment process in this mechanical way, or, it detracted from time that could otherwise have been spent doing a better job of teaching:

'And it cuts down on the time that the tutor can find resources. 'Cos I find I'm teaching middle of the road stuff and I would like more time to go out on the web and find more stuff, case studies and things, to be a bit more inspiring when instead I'm doing the admin. You know, it's one or the other really and I would like to have a lot more time freed up to find inspirational material for lectures.' (Sarah: College D).

Trainees were aware that there were pressures on them to deliver outcomes and ensure students passed, particularly if there were financial considerations:

'You're guided by bean counters, that's the problem. I've got one group from the United Arab Emirates, and they're paying our college £26,000 a year per student, that's just for one student, where our government pay, what five? ... So now we've

been told they have to pass, like they're not up to the standard, you know, they have to pass ... we don't get a say in it, because they're paying so much they have to pass.' (Alyn: HEI Y).

Lesley felt that '... sometimes that you're handing them the qualification. Because you've guided them through it, or redo this again; redo this again.' (Lesley: College B). Rick reported that no one was thrown off a course, whatever they had done, but sent back, undermining his position in front of the rest of the class:

'... and then it reflects on everyone else then, because they think 'Well if they can give a bit of gob, then I can do it'.' (Rick HEI Y).

Hazel found this was the case, even in a case where cheating was suspected, when the student was kept on. Asked how she felt about that, she said that this offended her sense of justice and fairness. Other trainees felt that teachers were under pressure to keep students in the system, particularly students receiving EMA, who were described as inattentive and being there 'just for the money'. This sense of disillusionment was found by Bathmaker and Avis (2005), but here there is additionally a sense of the weakening of their professional position when their judgment and professional standards were overridden by college interests.

Responsibility

Trainees were clear about their prime responsibility,

'... The number one thing is the students, at the end of the day that's what we are all here for, the students.' (Gwyn: HEI Y).

Their sense of responsibility was linked to both their personal standards and their loyalty to their trades, as Alyn said:

'Anyone that's been associated with an industry for a long while ... is going to have some affection for that industry aren't they? And want that industry conducted to high standards.' (Alyn: HEI Y).

This meant that they did more than was strictly needed to meet the requirements of the curriculum, which Phil said, 'didn't meet the requirements of the industry'. Pat and Sheila voiced the same concerns that training in college didn't equip students for the real world of work:

‘It doesn’t prepare them really for what they are actually going out to do. When they actually go out there it’s like ‘Oh my God’, you know, ‘I didn’t realise it was going to be this hard’.’ (Sheila: College B).

They did try to teach them ‘a bit more’, and Keith said he wanted students to be like him:

‘You add more on to it to motivate them more, if it’s not doing any good you get them to do it better, so motivation is behind it isn’t it? You want them to be like you then.’ (Keith: College B).

Others, as experienced tradesmen, commented that it was possible to judge if students were competent – meaning that this was their personal assessment, rather than one formally gained on the course. Pat said much the same, he knew what would make a tradesman and that the curriculum alone was not enough:

‘Well, what I think is *our* interpretation, good or bad; in our mind, we know what a good plumber is, what a good welder is, what a good carpenter is ... yet sometimes they can complete all the criteria of the course and yet, in our minds, think that ‘He’s not that good, but he has passed all the exams and all the theory exams’, but as far as actually doing the job, we think ‘Well, he’s never going to make a plumber.’ (Pat: College B).

Sheila recognised that she had to compromise her standards to keep students on the course:

‘I mean, with welding, there’s good ones and there’s bad ones, if it’s a bad one it’s actually no good at all isn’t it? But, I don’t know [*sighs*] I expect them all to be brilliant welders basically, but they’re not all going to be are they? I have to lower my standards for certain students, because, just to encourage them, to motivate them into completing the course basically and keeping their attention so we don’t lose them ...’ (Sheila: College B).

Such compromises might be difficult as trainees had to balance the need to achieve results, as measured by retention and pass rates, with their own standards and how student outcomes reflected on them. There was an inherent tension between their personal standards, ‘doing a good job’, turning out students who would be a credit to them and their trade, and the need to retain students on courses and enable them to pass at the end.

The full-time trainees in HEI X had a well-developed sense of responsibility and it was directly related to their sense of professionalism:

‘Before I started the course the word professional was always something, like, I couldn’t relate to, but now having done the course and seen how much responsibility you do have that’s not necessarily a bad thing, that’s quite a positive thing ...’ (Sian HEI X).

What they, more than the others, had picked up on was the counselling role of the teacher, the involvement of emotional labour. For Heather, beginning training, the realisation that there was a lot more to teaching than she thought was daunting:

‘And you know we’ve been told that teaching will shade into counseling as well. There will be, you know, we have to be equipped with counseling skills. This is part of what makes the training so overwhelming; there’s such a broad set of skills that you are expected to deliver, not just ... you know, educational ones within the obvious curriculum, but the counseling ...’ (Heather: HEI X).

Rhiannon and Onagh recognised that this was part of the job, echoing Clow’s findings on the proportion of time teachers spend on counselling (Clow 2005):

‘Something that’s probably not, it’s not acknowledged by the general public or whatever. But I think it’s totally an expectation, and because we know that students’ learning is more about the kind of academic ability or whatever, but it is about other issues in their lives and things like that that can have, you know, be barriers to learning. But there is an expectation, isn’t there, that you kind of got to address those, that side of things as well.’ (Onagh: HEI X).

Coming out of these comments is the idea that professionalism covered more than just their subject knowledge and pedagogic skills. Onagh and Odette reported students coming to them with their problems and the multiplicity of roles she had to fill:

‘I think that once they’ve accepted you they come to you with other things that have nothing to do with the school. That’s certainly one of the things I found most difficult with was the emotional and the kind of personal baggage that they brought with them and that they expected to be able to discuss with you if that’s what they wanted to do. And it’s all the things that come outside of the remit of the teaching, I think, that makes it much harder. You’ve got many roles, haven’t you?’ (Odette: HEI X).

Hazel said ‘... in between teaching IT, yes we do have a gossip, and I do end up being a bit of an advice giver ...’ (Hazel: HEI Y). But, in contrast, the male trainees’ perceptions of their role and their experiences in this respect were different, and they generally did not have the same issues with their students.

However, trainees agreed that it was primarily their duty to be aware of issues in their students’ lives that might impact on their learning, without necessarily feeling that

they could (or should) deal with those problems ‘... because without that support they wouldn’t complete the course.’ (Angela: College D). Although they, and trainees in HEI Y, had been warned against too great an involvement with student’s problems, they felt ill equipped, and they didn’t know when or who to contact for support. Some had experience of the issues raised by students and, without being trained to cope, had been left to manage as best they could, another instance of being ‘thrown in at the deep end’:

‘I teach adults basic skills, and a lot of them come from schools, they’ve been excluded, they’ve got behavioural problems and they’ve lived in different places all the time and they’ve not got any kind of parental supervision. It’s affected me in terms of their behaviour in the class. I’ve had to go to other people because I’ve had no experience of it at all and then I’m getting on the job experience, if you will, ‘How do I deal with somebody who bursts out crying or somebody who’s flinging chairs around?’.’ (Amanda: College D).

6.4 Trainees’ Awareness Of The Standards

The full-time trainees in HEI X were the most aware of the Standards, but they did not consider them relevant and the view was that they simply needed to be referred to, all they had to do was ‘Just stick them in our rationales’ and say ‘I am doing it, doing it this way, and saying it satisfies the LLUK standard’ (Martin: HEI X). They were peripheral, all that was needed was to ‘tick them off’, as Onagh said:

‘... you need to have your LLUK standards in your rationales, you need to be aware of what they are, but they’re not part, you know, they’re not like we’re not sat down and directly explained how they are part of what we’re being taught..’ (Onagh: HEI X).

Sian had observed during her teaching placement that: ‘Nobody in my college seemed to know what it, know much about it. It never got mentioned in my college, never.’ (Sian: HEI X). There was an awareness of a professionalisation agenda but Heather saw this as being distinct from actual practice:

‘... because the whole trend is towards constructing a professional, sort of architecture there, isn’t it, and this is what the whole thrust of LLUK and the Standards and everything is, a kind of professionalisation, erecting a sort of code of

conduct, which is quite separate, I think, to your day to day working as a teacher' (Heather: HEI X).

That is not to say that the Standards were completely rejected, Rhiannon thought they were on the whole valuable and offered useful guidance:

'I think for me personally my interest in the LLUK standards grew as I was on teaching placement because, as you say, you're kind of noticing 'Well actually I'm duplicating this one, but what about, you know, C? I'm not covering anything in that.' I think it did guide me, and it certainly made me think after I'd had a couple of assessments, written a few of these rationales and looked at them, it did kind of make me think 'Actually I maybe need to vary this a bit more or bring something else in that I wasn't before.'.' (Rhiannon: HEI X).

and others said they were also useful for reflecting on their practice.

The rest had less awareness of the Standards; Phil said he knew of them but hadn't gone into them in any detail; Helen was completely blank when asked about them, but later said 'Might have heard the phrase bandied about once or twice ...' (Helen: HEI Y). In one group trainees clearly had not heard of them, in another trainees said they had been explained to them 'but that was it', and in one case there were limited references to the need to link the Standards to their assignments:

'Well we, we have a sheet in the teaching file that we, yes, they said, there is a list of them, they said we would have to do standards, and they said which assignment covered each.' (Matt: College B).

6.5 The Training Programmes And Professionalism

The full-time trainees, who it will be recalled were new to teaching, found the practical elements of their programme useful; they identified lesson planning and behaviour management techniques in particular, but they recognised that actual experience was more valuable:

'We're talking about what we're learning though, whilst on the course. I've seen as very separate the things I'm learning while during my teaching experience ... And what I'm learning on this course. I feel that nearly all of my learning has come through my teaching experience, and not through attending classes at all.' (Sarah: College D).

Microteaching and giving presentations helped build confidence before they went into their teaching practice. Trainees' attitude to the theoretical content of the programme and the value attached by them to practical experience bore out what other research has found (Bates 2003; Harkin 2005; Salisbury 1994). They had difficulty making the connection between theory and practice:

‘... not all the theory is, or could be translated into practice. There is a lot in theory that you actually can't put into practice.’ (Sharon: HEI X).

For some theory was too abstract and ‘... some of that sort of went out the window a bit ...’, ‘Went straight over my head ...’. For Rowan it was classroom presence, not theory that counted:

‘It's having the confidence and learn how to speak and eye contact and that's all really important, but then Pavlov's dogs and extrinsic motivation – you don't think about that when you're teaching ...’ (Rowan: HEI X).

Suzy said ‘It's all very interesting, but most of it I would take with a pinch of salt.’ and Bruce felt that ‘... structuring of lessons was more important than, than Psychology was ...’.

Real experience and, importantly, actual observation of experienced teachers was considered more useful:

‘... once I was there and watching other teachers teach or having those same teachers giving me feedback on lessons I'd already done. Rather than sitting down in a lecture, it was all, I mean, I don't really get on with the Sociology side of it very well at all to be honest. That was my opportunity when I got into the College, it was my chance then to focus on what teaching was about or which I thought what teaching was about.’ (Alun: HEI X)

As a consequence, trainees paid what attention they thought they needed to theory and gave their trainers what they required, cutting and pasting theoretical references into their rationales. Martin was sceptical of the practicality of applying different learning styles in real life situations:

‘It is really stupid, I had an interviewer who said, ‘How do you place different learning styles in your lessons?’, and I mean, to do that properly, if you were being honest, you would have to do exactly the same activity, like sometimes using language, sometimes using visual aids, do you know what I mean? It's just so, you just make it up or you're doing and then they go, ‘Oh yeah. Well done.’ (Martin (HEI X);

but some felt that theory had its place:

‘ ... the different rules of learning and all that sort of thing, knowledge of all that I think makes it possible for you to become competent. I think you need a lot of that theory and knowledge before you could become a competent practitioner.’ (Odette: HEI X).

And for Malcolm, theory did have a practical application:

‘I felt there was a new situation, like how do I deal with it? So I went back after the lecture and I’d read and then I thought ‘When this situation happens again I’ll try it out.’, and because I felt confident enough with my students, I thought ‘Well I’ll try this strategy, see if it works, will they calm down.’, and I found it worked. If it didn’t, then I’d try another strategy and then, until, till I knew how to deal with the learners.” (Malcolm HEI X).

Trainees learnt a lot from observing experienced teachers, often those on their programme, but also those in their placement colleges:

‘ ... sometimes I learnt a *lot* about their behaviour in the lecture, more than the actual things that they are delivering on, and observing and just being, myself, there and how would I do that? And sometimes I feel I could have done it differently’ (Sharon HEI X).

However, the provision of formal opportunities to observe teachers as part of their training varied considerably, according to where trainees were placed. The mentoring and support that trainees received was also variable, with some getting substantial support, others hardly any. Support, in some cases, came from other quarters, from what might be described as communities of practice. Sometimes, as has been reported elsewhere (Bathmaker and Avis 2005), there was too much staff room politics or trainees felt that they didn’t belong and were excluded. While Suzy’s experience illustrated that :

‘If they know you’re a student teacher they treat you, slightly, you know, they don’t try to treat you differently, but they do treat you differently. You’re not one of the teachers at the college, you’re not one of the staff.’ (Suzy; HEI X),

that was not true of all the trainees, and Bruce said he got more mentoring from other members of staff than from his appointed mentor and Rowan enjoyed a friendly and supportive staff room atmosphere.

The part-time trainees had found the programme useful, but there was a resistance to the academic and theoretical content. The emphasis on reflection was considered unrelated to actual practice and over done:

‘... but, I mean we do, you do reflect and evaluate things automatically anyway. It’s, it’s part of human nature and it is definitely part of, it’s got a part in the job, but not to the degree that, that it’s done on this course, I mean I guess, it’s just done to death.’ (Phil: HEI Y).

These were the views of those who already had been teaching and who had come on the course because they were required to, and consequently just wanted to get through it, selecting what they thought would be useful:

‘... but it’s all, all down to what you have to do to get through the course though isn’t it? That’s why we’re taking this course. There’s a lot of bits of this course I’m using now. And there’s a tremendous amount of it I hope I’ll never use, and it’s just an absolute waste of time.’ (Gareth: College D).

Later, in the context of the application of theory, Gareth said, in effect, that he was just going through the motions:

‘... she says to me ‘Use this, this and this, how do you think by using that, did it work, did it not work? You agree with it, you not agree with it?’ But you’re thinking ‘I don’t really care’” (Gareth: College D).

Others said that they were referencing theories of learning to satisfy their trainers and valued the practical teaching experience most. For new teachers survival skills were more important:

‘I have a feeling that the theory we are learning in class will come in handy later, when we’ve got more practical experience, but at the moment my more immediate concerns are things like behaviour management and classroom management.’ (Sarah: College D).

This was not true of all the new-teacher trainees however. Mary said: ‘I’ve applied a lot of what I’ve learnt in this classroom actually into my teaching.’, and others said that they valued what they had been taught about learning styles; but, nonetheless, a common feeling was that this was simply putting a label on what they were doing anyway: ‘I just felt that it, we were, well I was, doing some of those things anyway without actually knowing that I was a humanist or I was ...’ (Jenny: College B), ‘It’s putting a label to what you’re doing.’ (Terry: College B). Keith had found it difficult to connect theory and practice, but he now realised that teaching was not simply a

matter of explaining, but of seeing that learning had taken place and that he needed to reflect on his practice:

‘Well, since I started, it’s a very complicated course, for some reason, because I haven’t got a, I don’t know nothing about teaching, but it seems to be everything theory, more theory than learning, you know trying to get them to learn. It’s more, a lot of background things on it, you know, to get you to teach them, learn something, you know; instead of you explaining something, you’ve got to *teach* it. When you go on this course, you’ve got to learn this that – just to show something like. But I, like carpentry, now, you just *explain*, but it’s more complicated than that like; you’ve got to see if they understand it, reflect back on it and things like that you know. (Keith: College B).

Like the full-time trainees, part-time trainees learnt from observing other teachers and were often critical of their trainers; ‘There’s a huge gap between how we’re being taught as students and the way we’re encouraged to teach.’ (Diane: College D). Some of the trainees had opportunities to observe teachers in the colleges where they were themselves teaching, but this was not formally arranged. Where they had this was considered valuable experience: ‘I’ve learnt far more from other people ... the tools what they’ve used and devised and I’ve taken a lot from that.’ (Vicky: College D).

Part-time trainees seemed to have had substantially less mentoring and support than the full-time trainees, often, when they started, being left to get on with it:

‘... one teacher has been in on my lesson since I started and then they said ‘Do you want someone in with you?’ and I said ‘Oh, I’m all right, but you can if you want’ so I was let loose with this A level group for two months – I could have been teaching them anything! (Bob: College B).

Sarah and Michelle had the same experience:

‘I was given the title of a module and the Edexcel specification for it, and they said ‘Teach it next week’; and I had to make up the whole scheme of work, lesson plans and everything on my own. And I asked around for other people’s help with resources, and nobody came ...’ (Sarah: College D);

‘I was told I would be supporting students not actually delivering to them. And then I was just told ‘Get your lesson plans, get a scheme of work, get everything ready, off you go’, I didn’t have a clue what I was doing. No support at all.’ (Michelle: College B)

Others said the same had happened to them, talking about ‘being thrown in at the deep end’.

Mentoring was variable, and often something that trainees had to push for or organize for themselves, or it was a matter of chance:

‘Well, it depended on who you, who you found yourself working with I think because I was, I was lucky to land, to be working with somebody who provided lots of support, and still does but I – that was just because I was lucky.’ (Lesley: College B).

Others found their mentors were busy and difficult to contact. Informal support from colleagues existed in some cases but was not typical; this was more likely for those trainees who were teaching full-time, and the existence of a staff room seemed to be an important factor:

‘... the staff room. I mean, that’s where I get, I get most of the, the answers I need, and I’m lucky to work with a group of colleagues that are all like minded and they’ll all, we’ll all help each other ...’ (Phil: HEI Y).

6.6 Training Outcomes

What trainees said about what they had gained from training provided an insight into the skills they valued and what might contribute to their sense of professionalism.

Despite some complaints about the way programmes were run, most trainees did feel they had benefited from training, even though the part-time trainees felt it could have been done over a shorter time-scale:

‘Well for me it, it hasn’t been that. It hasn’t been a case of getting that bit of paper. I really believe – this is between us now – I really genuinely believe, that I have gained an awful lot from this course.’ (Phil: HEI Y).

Not all thought the same, although Alyn said he had learnt something:

There’s one subject I’ve learnt, I apply all the time, I never used to, and it’s motivation. I used to think it was ok ... because they’re showing up, but ever since the government introduced this EMA rubbish and they bought motivation so to speak, it’s so important. Since we had that motivation lesson about a month and a half ago, it’s changed the way I teach, definitely. Just one, one small matter. Apart from that nothing.’ (Alyn: HEI Y)

All the new-teacher trainees said that their main gain was in self-confidence, and micro-teaching early in training had played a significant part in that. Others mentioned learning how to do lesson plans, feeling more organised and competent and

as a result of teaching experience, the feeling that they could teach, and were able to take classroom management in their stride; in other words, that they had acquired survival skills. Another important lesson was the need to vary their teaching methods and having different methods available:

‘Giving me more ideas to look at, as well, it’s when you get into teaching and your teaching, your methods, you might have a set method that you teach to, and so giving them more ideas and allows you to teach more ways and methods.’ (Terry: College B).

6.7 De-motivation

In their brief experience of teaching, trainees had come across colleagues who had lost their idealism, and seen the effects in the classroom of colleges’ need to retain students and get results, although trainees did not talk about their colleagues as ‘dinosaurs’ (Avis et al. 2002a). There was no strong evidence of de-moralisation at this early stage of their careers or of any specific critique of colleagues and college management as found elsewhere (Avis and Bathmaker 2006; Bathmaker and Avis 2005), but they had a cynical attitude to college management. Some trainees distanced themselves from the ‘business’ orientation of college management:

‘I mean the College made half a million pound profit last year. They were all so chuffed about it, they didn’t seem to be worried about what they’d teach ... It shows then how much it’s become like industry and other firms doesn’t it? Just a big firm basically.’ (Gareth: College D).

For trainees it was clear ‘everyone had to pass’, and their comments replicate those of the trainees studied by Wallace (2002). These comments, from full-time trainees, are typical, and there was general agreement in the group:

‘... because the College had accepted them on to the course, anyone who made it through to the final to the end of the course passed, everyone passed basically.’ (Will HEI X);

‘If you get the work back so many times until they pass so you sit with them and then you write and they write it, and you tell them what to write and they write it until they’ve got that pass, I have to get them all to pass.’ (Rowan: HEI X);

‘Even the lazy Students get through it. Because you have to get them through to pass, you have to get them through.’ (Sian: HEI X).

Other groups had made the same comments: ‘They don’t allow anybody to fail that’s the trouble’ (Amanda: College D) and there was a sense of disillusionment and of purposelessness, particularly where EMA students were in the class:

‘It’s no good for us, and they don’t learn no lesson when they ‘re thinking they’re going to pass anyway ... ‘ (Gareth: College D);

and some accordingly felt that they were being used to keep students occupied and retained in the system.

Getting students to pass meant that they had to dictate notes that students simply copied down:

‘I was teaching to the assignments so I’d walk in, I’d teach them how to answer the question on their assignment and then we’d spend the lesson doing the assignment then and they couldn’t, couldn’t move on then until everyone had finished it then. I wasn’t fussed, but they didn’t learn anything from it, they learned how to copy what I was doing, basically. But that was the only way to do it, there was no other way.’ (Alun: HEI X).

The full-time trainees had learnt that, in order to get students to pass, they had to ‘play the system’ and write what was expected in their assessments of students’ work:

‘You virtually write the same thing for each one as well. You write, if it says ‘Describe this’: ‘The Student described this.’, and well, if they’ve said they’ve had to describe four things, ‘They’ve described four things.’, as, you know, is that all you write, and you write up every single Student because they have to do it; it’s just a waste of time.’ (Sian: HEI X).

Trainees also experienced having to teach, often at short notice, a subject they were not really equipped to teach. Rhiannon made a link from that to her sense of professionalism:

‘I think it does detract from your professionalism in a sense. I love my subject so maybe it’s coming out of that, that passion for my own subject. ... It was appalling, but I felt that I wasn’t utilising the skills that I’ve got, in that lesson, and the students certainly lost out by having me in there, attempting to teach them. (Rhiannon: HEI X).

Sian felt too that by teaching out of subject she was not doing a good job and that she came across as someone who couldn’t do anything interesting.

Asked how they felt about being put in a position where they had to teach people who didn't want to learn and who would pass, whatever their ability and the efforts they put in, and how that reflected on their professionalism, Odette said that 'it de-professionalises you' and Rhiannon agreed. There was no dissent from within the Group. Odette's mentor had advised her that the reality of teaching was different from the 'academic' view given by the PGCE:

'I was, I was really taken aback by the levels of, you know, the essays, they've actually asked 'Is this an essay?' and I said 'There's no beginning, no end, grammar', you know, across the basic things. They weren't there, and I said if we're preparing to pass these students on, well, how do we justify this as an essay? ... That's the bit where I think this person had given up and he just overlooked that, 'Oh well let's forget the academic, this is reality'.' (Odette: HEI X).

Odette later said she did not want to become 'that person'.

Despite that, trainees as a whole did not seem demoralized, they had positive things to say; Alyn got a 'rush' out of teaching:

'... actually, it's quite a rush. I always find when I've come back from the summer holiday, when I go away it's not having to think about it, when I come back, there's always that stomach turning sort of moment before you go in front of the class for the first time, you sort of think 'Hang on, what am I doing'. ... That's a great feeling, yeah. Well yeah, I must love the sound of my own voice ...' (Alyn: HEI Y).

Barry saw progress:

'Yeah, the NVQ Level 1's I get, the ones I teach, I got to be honest, when, I think it was November, when we first had their portfolios in, I thought 'Oh my God, these lot, they'll never ...'. And I was in today and they just went on their own and they were filling, doing their evidence, doing this, and they were just like, gone it seemed from zero to hero in just a short amount of time.' (Barry: College D).

Tom took pride in one student's achievements:

'I think one of the biggest achievements is seeing a full-time student coming to college without a job, finding that lad a job, now that lad's back into college as a second year MBA. So as well as me altering his life, I've helped to change his life, and the buzz from that's unbelievable, you know, seeing that lad progress from someone that come from school without a job ...' (Tom: HEI Y).

6.8 Discussion

Two of the questions this research addressed were about how the LLUK Standards were interpreted by trainee teachers and how the Standards influenced their professional values and practices. The focus groups have shown that awareness of the Standards varied; this reflected, it must be assumed, the emphasis given to them in the respective programmes. Trainees' overall attitude to the Standards was that they were something they needed to reference, in order to show that they were meeting them, and that related more to the use of the Standards in ITT programmes' assessment criteria than to any value trainees put on the Standards. There was no evidence that the Standards had any other significance for them, and consequently any influence on their professionalism, other than that a few saw them as a useful check list.

However, trainees did have a developed sense of professionalism and of 'standards', but they were not the official ones. In that respect their construction of professionalism was similar to that of their trainers in that it focussed on professionalism, 'doing a good job'; commitment and integrity; and, in the maintenance of a professional relationship with their students, which amounted to keeping an appropriate distance and being fair. These standards did not come from the training programmes directly, but from their interaction with colleagues and fellow trainees. This finding resonates in key respects with what experienced FE teachers in Wales have said (Jephcote et al. 2008). In that case, teachers were reported as privileging the needs and interests of learners, putting 'pedagogical expertise' before subject knowledge – where that expertise was understood as establishing supportive relationships with learners. The trainees in this study placed less value on the relationships with their learners, and had not formed the same kind of bonds with them, but still evidenced a sense of commitment to their learners' needs and in many cases said they went beyond what was strictly required to satisfy those needs.

Trainees therefore valued the practical elements of their training programmes and, in the case of the new teachers, the confidence that gave them before they began teaching. The more academic elements of programmes were not correspondingly valued. Trainees went through the motions in their assignments in order to pass the course, but were generally dismissive of educational theory. However, there was evidence that they had learnt certain key lessons, as they all talked about the need to vary their teaching methods to, in effect, accommodate different learning styles, although this was rationalised by those who had already been teaching for some time as ‘putting a label on what we already did’. Their approach to pedagogy accordingly mirrored that of their trainers insofar as it included the practical skills, such as lesson planning and classroom management, but in respect of reflecting on their practice, they resisted making the connections with the academic theories of teaching and learning in favour of making more personal and pragmatic assessments of their teaching.

Trainees were naturally immersed in the process of becoming teachers, or, if they were already teaching, of developing their practice. It is understandable that they might therefore focus more sharply on their immediate needs and on ‘what works’. In the same way their identities were, in the case of those teaching trade skills, more closely related to their previous occupations than as teachers. For the others, subject knowledge was also more important than their pedagogic knowledge, and pedagogic knowledge did not seem to have been a significant constituent of their professionalism. That may have been because at this stage of their careers their subject knowledge outweighed their pedagogic knowledge, which would come with experience in due course. In that light, there was a strong feeling that initial training was only the beginning of their professional development and it was therefore all the more surprising that CPD was not mentioned as a component of professionalism, especially since personal development was a key theme in the training programmes.

Trainees had a well-developed sense of responsibility towards their students and would ‘go the extra mile’; their sense of standards included the outcomes they

expected of students and the trade skills teachers went beyond the curriculum to ensure students were well equipped for work. While trainees complained about paperwork and bureaucracy, it seemed that the greatest threat to their sense of professionalism came from the pressure they experienced to retain and eventually pass students in contravention to their own, professional, judgement of learners' abilities. Trainees felt strongly about this. In that way, although they did not express it in so many words, trainees might be considered less as autonomous and responsible practitioners, and more as simply serving the system. Nor did trainees suggest that the closely defined assessment criteria, which required them to spoon-feed learners in order that they pass, could also operate as a process whereby they themselves would be held to account and their performance monitored (Avis et al. 2003).

Bathmaker (2006) has distinguished 'corporate' professionalism, emerging from new forms of public management, and 'critical' professionalism, rooted in concerns for social justice and equity. She considered that student teachers did not fall into either of these categories; they may not wholly adopt corporate identities, despite the dominance of the corporate discourse, nor, despite that resistance, did their identities amount to critical professionalism. Bathmaker instead saw two strands in the way trainees construct their professional identity: personal and collaborative. The former was described as a personal response to their own experiences; a commitment to their students and a commitment to their specialism. The latter reflected the ideas of Hargreaves (1994) and of Lave and Wenger (1999). This may be compliance (Shain and Gleeson 1999) but can take different forms e.g. as a requirement of managerial cultures (Avis 2003). While collaboration may not necessarily offer a challenge to corporatism, Bathmaker argued that it provided a basis for dealing with the isolation felt by some trainees. The trainees in this study did not evidence corporate or critical professionalism as categorised above, but there were clear indications of a personal professionalism, expressed in their commitment to their students and their subjects. The existence of collaborative professionalism was less apparent in this case and trainees' ideas of 'standards' were essentially personal, and opportunities to develop

their sense of professionalism in communities of practice varied and were dependent on the circumstances of their working situations.

The third research question was about the processes that shaped trainees' ideas of professionalism. Trainees' discourse of 'standards' did not seem to have come directly from the taught elements of training programmes but from their interaction with colleagues, and they reported that they had learnt a lot from other trainees on their courses. They also critically observed the example of their trainers, but not many had organised or been provided with opportunities to observe other teachers in their own subjects. Mentoring in their teaching placements varied and in many cases was effectively non-existent, the part-time trainees who had begun teaching before coming on the training programme often spoke of being left to 'sink or swim', apparently a common experience, one training textbook is entitled 'In at the Deep End' (Crawley 2005). Some trainees had considerable support from colleagues in their departments, others none, and those teaching part-time might come into college to teach and go home without meeting any of their colleagues. These findings are consistent with those of Avis *et al.* (2003). In general, the fragmented, part-time nature of FE teaching does not help to develop effective communities of practice (Avis *et al.* 2002b; Gleeson *et al.* 2005), although for some of the trainees in this study they seem to have existed nevertheless. Weaknesses in mentoring and the links between HEI ITT providers and the colleges where trainees are placed for their teaching practiced have been identified (Cullimore 2006). Where trainees' mentoring had worked well, when they had been able to observe other teachers, and, where there was effective support from colleagues, these were considered very helpful, and it must be concluded that these FE trainees were significantly disadvantaged in comparison to trainee schoolteachers, where arrangements for the mentoring and support of trainees and new teachers are better established.

There was evidence to support Avis *et al.*'s (2002a) finding that trainees seemed to draw on different discourses to make sense of their practice, one emphasising good pedagogic practice, the other disciplinary knowledge or skill. Trainees' discourse of

professionalism, evidenced by their references to 'standards', which emphasised practice and subject knowledge as well as commitment and responsibility, had much in common with that of the teacher trainers. It was a discourse that was also strongly practice-oriented, but not in the sense of a given set of competences, or of a definition of professionalism that excluded others. While one trainee felt that generic teaching skills qualified a teacher to teach anything, this was not the view of the majority and many still regarded their identity as being defined by their trade; those who did describe themselves as a teacher still considered their subject knowledge to be the main element of their professionalism, and there was little mention of teachers being generalist 'facilitators of learning'. The discourse of trainees was distinguished from that of their trainers by their understandable concerns with coping and managing the pressures of their job and the related sense of needed to gain experience and develop. There was a discourse of professionalism in formation.

Chapter Seven: Discussion And Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

This research has been about the different constructs of professionalism in FE teaching; the influence that the new LLUK Professional Standards have had on teacher training and, on how trainee FE teachers in Wales have accordingly constructed their professionalism. For Government in England, the Professional Standards are part of the professionalisation of teaching in the sector and thereby improving the quality of teaching and learning. That aim has been validated by evidence of the influence FE teachers can have on the quality of learning (TLRP 2005). Although the relationship between trainees' accounts of professionalism and the way they practiced, and the effect of that on learning, was outside the scope of this research, the working assumption I made was that there would be a connection between their constructs of professionalism and their practice. That was, after all, the underlying premise of the Standards, that the version of professionalism embodied in them, and transmitted through training, would influence teachers' practice; otherwise, what would have been their point?

The Standards define professionalism in a particular way; they were intended to form the basis for qualifications to teach and they could therefore be expected to have been fully integrated into ITT programmes and reflected in trainee teachers' ideas of professionalism. That was not the case in the training programmes in this study. The Standards were extensively mediated through the discourses of professionalism in teacher training and, exposed to those discourses, and on the basis of their experiences

of teaching, trainees developed a construction of professionalism that was uniquely their own.

The second theme of this study was professionalisation, as the introduction of the Standards represented a significant part of the Government's strategy for the professionalisation of teaching in Lifelong Learning in England. This research has therefore also been about how far the Standards represented a move to professionalise FE teaching in Wales and how effective they had been in doing so. Although the LLUK Standards have been adopted, and earlier WAG policy documents had made a commitment to teacher professionalisation, no further steps have been taken by the WAG in that direction. Its attention has been on the re-structuring and rationalisation of provision rather than on the qualifications and professionalism of teachers outside of schools, and the Standards were adopted in Wales more by default, than as a conscious decision that they met Welsh needs.

In England, the Standards and other measures demonstrate the way professionalisation and professionalism can be driven externally, rather than internally (McClelland 1990); or otherwise be considered as 'organisational', rather than 'occupational' (Evetts 2003, 2005). Stronach *et al.* (2002) made a similar distinction in contrasting 'economies of performance' with 'ecologies of practice', as did Bathmaker (2006) who identified 'corporate and 'critical' professionalism. What these have in common is the idea that professionalisation and professionalism can be promoted by employers and serve the interests of the organisation, or alternatively, be rooted in practice and have a more ethical and idealistic content. In the case of the regulated, public sector professions, like teaching, the state has achieved this through performance and accountability measures that have required teachers to place conformity above their personal beliefs and commitments (Ball 2003).

I have described how the Standards contain a version of professionalism that represented a discourse that was predicated on the acquisition of generic pedagogic skills, corporatism, and flexibility and was a product of the state's re-contextualisation

of professionalism, requiring the conformity described by Ball. The role of the state in education has been identified by Bernstein as an ‘official re-contextualising field’ (Bernstein 1996), re-contextualising knowledge by selecting and defining its content. The official discourse of professionalism formed by that process has a potential to shape individuals’ consciousness and so their professional identity. Others have in much the same way pointed to how organisational professionalism can work in a Foucauldian sense to make its values professionals’ own (Ball 2008; Evetts 2005; Fournier 1999). However, Bernstein also observed that the official re-contextualising field could be opposed by what he categorised as the pedagogic re-contextualising field, representing the way knowledge was contextualised in schools and HE. The relative influence of the one over the other would depend on the extent to which they exercised power and control over teachers – the ‘struggle for the teacher’s soul’ as Ball put it.

While there are parallels with the ideas of organisational and occupational professionalism and the corresponding tensions between them, these are fundamentally issues of agency and structure (Gleeson and James 2007). How far are teachers subject to external structures and rules or can they determine their own professional identities? While there is an attraction in neat dichotomies like those above, real life is more complicated and teachers’ identities are made and remade and incorporate identities formed in their previous occupations (Clow 2001; Colley et al. 2007; Robson 1998a). They are shaped by the varied and multi-dimensional discourses teachers participate in (Bathmaker 2006), but also how individual teachers position themselves (Halford and Leonard 1999). They are a product of circumstances (Day et al. 2006), their life situations (Goodson 2003), and balancing the tensions between the demands of management and ‘ecologies of practice’ (Gleeson et al. 2005; Stronach et al. 2002). Identity is consequently a narrative, an ongoing project (Goodson 1995).

It would have been beyond the scope of this study to capture such shifts in identity and professionalism, and I therefore chose to focus on the way the Standards, as an

instrument of government policy, might work as a form of external, organisational professionalism and explore its influence on trainees who, in the training process should be most exposed to the new Standards. If that provided the background for this research, I needed to construct a framework for it. The first was the theoretical basis, and here I began from the position that professionalism was a social construct, the product of social interaction. There may be an objective 'reality' in the sense that professions have written rules, governing bodies etc., but here I was interested in a social reality, i.e. what teachers and others would say about their professionalism. These discourses of professionalism can be interpreted using Bernstein's conceptualisation of pedagogic discourse as outlined above. I also needed to develop an idea of what professionalism might be composed of in order to interrogate the data. For that, I have followed Robson (2006) and Hoyle and John (1995) in using Knowledge, Autonomy and Responsibility as key attributes of professionalism.

The research set out to answer four questions:

- How, and to what extent, the LLUK Professional Standards are interpreted and applied by FE teacher training institutions and trainee teachers in Wales;
- The degree to which the Standards influence the professional values and practices of trainees;
- The processes by which trainees' identities are shaped, and the key influences underpinning them; and,
- The development of the WAG's policies for FE, including its adoption of the Professional Standards, and what the consequences might be for FE teacher professionalisation and professionalism in Wales.

These are considered in the rest of this Chapter.

7.2 Welsh Assembly Government Policy

This research has analysed the way the WAG policy has developed (see Annex C for the story); Welsh educational goals and policies do not necessarily match those of the English Government:

‘We share key strategic goals with our colleagues in England – but we often need to take a different route to achieve them. We shall take our own policy direction where necessary to get the best for Wales.’ (National Assembly for Wales 2001: 2).

That Ministerial statement demonstrates the intention of developing ‘made in Wales’ policies to meet Welsh needs. But in the case of the Standards, English policy has simply been adopted partially, without real commitment and without serious consideration of whether the Standards were appropriate for Wales or if an alternative would be more suitable. This was not a ‘made in Wales’ policy, but a throwback to the days of the Welsh Office, when English policies were imported, and tinkered with as necessary to meet Welsh circumstances, without major changes. Although an official told me that she would have preferred a different approach, in the event, expediency and a lack of commitment dictated otherwise.

That was despite the many critiques of a standards based approach, both in respect of the previous FENTO standards (Bailey and Robson 2002; Bathmaker 2000; Clow 2005; Lucas 2004; Wallace 2002), and the current English LLUK Standards (Lucas 2007; Thompson and Robinson 2008); the official discourse underlying them having been described as having little understanding of what teachers’ practice (Gleeson and James 2007). Nor was there any evidence in WAG policy documents that professional standards and associated qualifications were ever previously on the Welsh agenda. Nevertheless, the WAG invited LLUK to develop Standards for Wales, but that was not because doing so was considered ‘necessary to get the best for Wales’, instead the accounts of Welsh officials suggest that this was wished on the WAG, partly in recognition of the LLUK’s function across the whole of the UK, and partly because of the perceived need for commonality between Wales and England in the content of ITT.

In Wales there has been no move to establish a professional body for FE teachers corresponding to role of the IfL in England, and the need for teachers to undertake CPD has not been addressed. In Wales, unlike England where the Standards underpin a qualifications framework, the only function of the Standards is to inform ITT programmes. Although the aspiration in the Minister's Foreword to the Welsh Standards was that the sector would 'work together to make full use' of the new Standards, they have not been officially promulgated in any way, for example, as a basis for CPD or performance management. Their role in ITT is mediated by the way they are referred to in training programmes. This research has not produced any reason for believing that the Standards have had, or are likely to have, a significant influence on FE teachers' professionalism in Wales. Meanwhile, despite the intention to 'explore' paralleling the provision of early professional development available to new schoolteachers (LLUK 2007: Foreword), a commitment that goes back to *The Learning Country: Vision into Action* (Welsh Assembly Government 2006c), the WAG has taken no further steps to professionalise FE teaching. There was a clear sense from my discussions with officials that the WAG's attention was focussed on other priorities and, despite the many assertions of the importance of PCET for Wales' economic future, for the time being at least, it must be assumed that FE teacher professionalisation remains on hold.

7.3 Teacher Professionalism In FE

There has been some debate as to whether FE teaching is or is not a profession. Those arguing that it was not pointed to low status the differences in skills, the diversity of entry routes and loyalties to previous occupations (Clow 2001; Robson 1998a), others to the de-professionalisation of FE teaching (Randle and Brady 1997) and teachers' loss of control over their work in the neo-Fordist environment of colleges (Hodkinson 1997), becoming flexible units of resource (Spenceley 2006). Others have seen signs of, or wish for, a new professionalism, capable of transforming learners' lives and advocating social justice (Avis 2006a; Avis and Bathmaker 2004; Bathmaker 2006), a

form of 'democratic professionalism' (Whitty 2000) attuned to the needs of communities rather than attempting to define them.

In reality, amid the varied pressures teachers face, it is the daily business of getting by, of compromise and the blurring of managerial and teaching roles (Gleeson and James 2007) that define teachers' professionalism as it is enacted. Here teachers work around the rules, mediating the conflicting demands of policy with their notion of good practice (Colley et al. 2007; Gleeson 2005; Gleeson et al. 2005; Gleeson and James 2007). This has variously been described as 'strategic compliance' (Gleeson and Shain 1999), 'creative mediation' (Gleeson and Knights 2006), and 'principled infidelity' (Hoyle and Wallace 2007), all were ways of managing the disjuncture between policy and practice. While Bathmaker and Avis (2005) considered this was unwilling rather than strategic compliance, Robson *et al.* (2004) suggested that teacher's discourses of professionalism may be a resistance to the narrowness of the curriculum and represented by their desire to go beyond the curriculum, to deliver what they felt was needed, so challenging Hodgkinson's view of teachers as mere artisans.

In this light it is more useful to adopt the perspective of professionalism (Hoyle 1975) and, more particularly, enacted professionalism (Evans 2008). If teachers were not simply passive deliverers of learning, but enacted their professionalism through a critical engagement with managerial requirements and the limits of the curriculum on the basis of their professional values and practice, there are grounds for arguing that while their autonomy appears to have been reduced by managerialism, the manner in which they have mediated those demands represents a form of autonomy, albeit not in the usual understanding of professional autonomy as earned, or due by virtue of professional status, but in a more subversive sense.

However, the knowledge base of their professionalism continues to be debatable. Subject knowledge, particularly where it lies in an occupational skill, has been an important component of professional identity (Avis and Bathmaker 2006; Clow 2001;

Robson et al. 2004) and a sense of loyalty to those trades was reflected in teachers' desire to pass their standards on to students (Ainley and Bailey 1997). A shift to a more generic teaching role has been identified, and not always seen as a welcome development. Spenceley (2006) described the FE teacher as becoming merely an educational resource, with subject specialism replaced by the ability to manage and facilitate learning, and training supplanting education. This departure from a traditional master-apprentice mode of learning to one that is multi-disciplinary and fast changing (Avis and Fisher 2006) and the diminishing role of knowledge compared to that of pedagogy (Avis et al. 2002a), suggests that where previously subject knowledge was sufficient (Lucas 1996; Robson 2006), now FE teachers are instead coming to regard themselves as generalists (Fisher and Webb 2006) reflecting governments' concern that learners should 'learn to learn' rather than acquire soon to be outdated, specialist knowledge. FE teachers are not alone in these respects and similar development have been reported in respect of schoolteachers, also as a result of policy (Gewirtz et al. 2006).

The evidence from this research has shown that an official discourse of FE teacher professionalism existed, articulated in the policy documents and in the Standards themselves, and was, in Bernstein's terms, a generic discourse, that is, based on competencies and underpinned by the idea of trainability. Generic teaching skills are privileged over specific subject knowledge in the interest of future transferability and are associated with the WAG and the English Government's concerns that a flexible workforce was needed to compete successfully in world markets (Fisher and Webb 2006; Leitch 2006; Webb 2007), even though this has been considered as fundamentally misconceived (Avis 2007b; Finlay et al. 2007). That pervasive notion of trainability has been extended from learners in FE to apply equally to their teachers in order to better meet the changing demands of the economy and local businesses. The Standards assume that knowledge can be acquired individually through training, and certified through a linked hierarchy of qualifications. This standards-based approach ignores the part that work-based learning plays in a teacher's education and

the importance of learning as a social process, in communities of practice (Lucas 2007).

The discourse of the Standards was not clearly expressed by WAG officials, theirs was more varied and individual. WAG officials repeated the policy line of moving to a provision of professional development that would be comparable with schoolteachers, and, unlike England, saw this against the background of collaboration between schools and colleges in the future. There was little enthusiasm for the Standards or for developing a qualifications framework based on them. At a senior level, the discourse was managerialist; professionalisation was about greater accountability and, following from that, improved outputs and delivery of the skills agenda. The sense of prioritising generic skills and trainability did not emerge as clearly as it did in the Standards, but there was an identifiable recognition of the need for FE teachers to be flexible and not narrowly confined to their subjects. However, for those in LLUK and IfL who were more closely identified with the Standards and English policy, the discourse was more one of putting the right structures in place. The appeal of professionalisation for them was the ethical goal of higher standards in learners' interests. There was no awareness in what any officials said of the kinds of compromises made by teachers in their daily lives, as described above, and their resulting enactments of professionalism.

7.4 Becoming Professional

The training programmes included in this research engaged in a separate pedagogic discourse of professionalism from the official discourse. That was not unexpected given other accounts of how policies have been similarly mediated by colleges (Spours et al. 2007), Coffield *et al.* (2007), and Nasta (2007) has discussed the translation of the Standards into the content of ITT programmes. Teacher-trainers firmly rejected any idea of training to specific competencies and preferred to take a holistic view of the Standards, that is, what was interpreted as being their broad thrust.

There was little evidence of the Standards being incorporated in training programmes' design, except for the purposes of SVUK validation; instead those responsible for developing programmes were chiefly interested in what they considered trainees needed. Teacher-trainers did not believe that the Standards contributed to, or defined, teacher professionalism. In Bernstein's terminology their discourse represented a 'regional performance mode' where training programmes re-contextualised the Standards and the ideas of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility, supported by reflection, in ways that were strongly oriented to practice.

The research has identified trainees' perceptions of teaching and of their students, replicating the findings in previous studies of FE teacher trainees (Avis and Bathmaker 2004; Avis et al. 2002a; Avis et al. 2002b; Bathmaker 2006; Bathmaker and Avis 2005, 2007; Harkin 2005; Harkin et al. 2003; Lucas 2007; Parsons et al. 2001; Robson 1998b, 2000; Spenceley 2007; Tummons 2008; Wallace 2002). As in this case, trainees' disillusionment with their colleagues and with their students' attitudes to learning, their exclusion and marginalisation from communities of practice and their surprise at the bureaucratic burdens placed on them were brought out (Avis et al. 2002a; Bathmaker and Avis 2005; Wallace 2002). The trainees in this study were sceptical of the value of the educational theories presented to them as found by Harkin (2005) and their attitudes to referencing theories and the Standards in their assignments echoes Tummons (2008) on how trainees formed a community of practice in order to make sense of and satisfy the assessment practices in their programme.

Trainees' discourse of professionalism had much in common with their trainers'; they referred to standards but these were personal and based on notions of 'doing a good job', echoing the construct of 'a good lecturer' (Avis et al. 2002a) and founded on a commitment to their students and so responsibility for them and their learning. As well as responsibility, they valued their subject knowledge and skills. They had generally little awareness of the Standards and where they were aware of them, their

concern was mainly confined to using them as required for the purposes of their programmes, as they also did with the theoretical elements of programmes.

There was little to suggest that the Standards had any direct impact on their idea of professionalism, and, taken with the way the Standards have been incorporated into training programmes, it cannot be said that they were influential. Professionalism was a personal construct and rooted very often in trainees' sense of responsibility towards their students and in their subject knowledge and skills. In that way this corresponds with Bathmaker's conclusion that student teachers drew on personal and collaborative discourses of professionalism (Bathmaker 2006) but, while this study provided substantial evidence of the former, there was little to support the existence of collaborative discourses, although trainees did comment that they learnt from observing each other as well as their trainers.

The existence of communities of practice (and even the meaning of the term) has been debated (Avis and Fisher 2006; Colley et al. 2007; Eraut 2002; Gleeson et al. 2005). If the existence of effective communities of practice could be patchy at best, Gleeson *et al* considered that the challenge was to build one around new, research-based pedagogy and working practices; and Lucas (2007) has called for work-based teacher education, a 'pedagogy of the workplace' to replace standards-based ITT for FE teacher trainees. The experience of trainees in this research confirmed that effective communities of practice were uncommon, and that limited accommodation and the part-time employment of staff meant that the opportunities for such communities were restricted. Often trainees had felt excluded or marginalised because of their status, but where trainees had benefited from mentoring and support, it was valued highly.

7.5 Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from the research questions are that the Standards have had, at most, a limited influence on teacher professionalism in Wales. That is because

of the way they have been mediated by the discourse of professionalism in ITT programmes and by trainees' own perceptions, which were heavily influenced by their need to cope with the day-to-day demands of teaching and by their own personal ideas of standards. It was also because the WAG had not adopted a qualifications framework for the different roles teachers in PCET have (although one has been developed by LLUK) where the Standards might otherwise have played a more important role.

That is not to say that the WAG should have followed England, far from it. The focus of the Standards and the qualifications framework in England is on the Lifelong Learning sector, excluding schools and HE. In Chapter One I have pointed to the reasonable expectation that standards of professionalism and professional development should be the same in schools and colleges if there was to be successful collaboration between the two to secure the policy of 'Learning Pathways'. WAG has still to think through what it intends to do, if anything, about FE professionalisation and associated qualifications, although it has the basis in published policy statements for developments that would be markedly different to those in England in the intention, expressed in *Vision into Action*, to provide for cross sector working between schools and colleges. That has the potential for the development of a teacher professionalism that is independent of sector and which could provide a basis for the integration of the academic and the vocational, as well as raising standards of teaching and learning, in support of the policy for 14-19 education. The fact that it has failed to do so, giving priority to structural change and rationalisation, must to say the least, be a matter for regret.

The existence of the Standards and the official discourse of professionalism reflect a managerialist approach, where 'professionalisation' covers a shift to generic skills, reflecting an idea of trainability for FE teachers that parallels that of trainability for learners. Standards, used in performance management, and the emphasis on outputs and targets, potentially represent a move to even greater accountability. In doing so there is evidence of an unwillingness to trust teachers' professionalism (their

knowledge and their sense of responsibility) and allow them to act autonomously (Avis 2003). Standards and professionalisation can therefore be taken as a bureaucratic response to the need to address the problems of low skill levels, but that is not the right response (Bathmaker 2000; Wallace 2002). A different deal with the state is needed, based on greater trust, allied to accountability, which would convey a real and meaningful sense of professionalism (James and Gleeson 2007).

A clear threat to teachers' professionalism arose from colleges' anxiety, for financial reasons, to retain students, and the fact that many students had no interest in learning, but were there as a result of government initiatives and the lack of employment opportunities. Trainees reported that 'everyone must pass' and there was no place for their professional assessment of students' abilities. There seems therefore to be an inherent tension between policies designed to keep young people in education, and the professional standing of FE teachers. The idea of a 'new professionalism', discussed in Chapter Two, contains a similar theme: that teaching is more than just putting learners through the system. If FE is to live up to the rhetoric of individual and community empowerment and transformation, teachers have to be able, and trusted, to deliver in those respects according to their professional judgement.

Trainees' accounts provide a depressing picture of the lack of mentoring and support that they enjoyed. Some trainees were simply 'left to get on with it'; and, while others did have good experiences, the kind of formal mentoring that trainee schoolteachers receive, or of their support in the early years of practice was lacking. 'Learning by doing' and the kind of tacit knowledge acquired by experience and observation of experienced practitioners are likely to have more benefit for trainees than their formal class-room training (Furlong and Maynard 1995; Lucas 2007), although this research has produced no evidence to support that contention, other than trainees' assessments of the value of their different experiences.

7.6 Recommendations

- The WAG should clarify its policy for professionalising teaching outside the school sector and the requirements for qualifications for teachers performing different roles, including management, across the whole of 14-19 education, to enable movement between sectors and career progression on an equal basis;
- Teachers outside schools should be provided with similar opportunities for induction and early professional development as schoolteachers, and in particular that their ITT should include appropriate work-place mentoring and support so that training involves guided learning on the job in their subject area;
- The idea of CPD should be embedded in teacher professionalism across all sectors in the way that it is in school teaching, but not as a matter for regulation and bureaucratic monitoring;
- A qualified workforce should be trusted to exercise its professional judgement in assessing learners and maintaining standards of learning and learners' development, and this judgement should not be subordinated to obtaining outcomes that satisfy funding requirements.

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Annex A: Clarification of the Terms Used

Post compulsory teaching and education is provided in, and regulated by, a wide range of institutions and bodies, both governmental and non-governmental. It is a diverse sector and that is reflected in the different ways it is described. The abbreviations used are listed in Annex B, the following provides clarification of the main terms used in this thesis.

Post-compulsory Education and Training (PCET): This term is used in teacher training institutions to distinguish the Cert. Ed and Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) courses offered to those training to teach in the post-16 education from those for schoolteachers. The term has no official status and is broadly defined to cover everything outside the school sector. In this thesis I have used PCET in that sense, but excluding Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Learning and Skills Sector (LSS): Generally this is taken to mean post 16 education and training outside HE institutions as reflected in the remit of the former Learning and Skills Council in England and in Wales, the former ELWa. The term is used in England, but not in Wales

Lifelong Learning: Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), as the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for Lifelong Learning, is responsible for staff training and development in community learning, FE, HE, Work Based Learning, and, Libraries, Archives and Information Services. However, where PCET simply reflects a distinction between education before and after the school-leaving age, the term 'Lifelong Learning' (and with it, that of the 'learning society') carries a wider and more aspirational meaning, and is connected with the idea of investment in human capital and its link with the requirements of the economy and the role of the individual in taking responsibility for their own learning to further their job prospects i.e. the idea of human capital.

Further Education: FE has been defined in different ways, for example as '...everything that does not happen in schools and universities...' (Kennedy 1997); yet the boundaries between what is taught in schools and colleges are becoming

increasingly blurred as educational policy seeks to break down the academic-vocational divide. In this thesis FE is taken to mean the 21 colleges and institutions in Wales (but excluding the sixth form college and WEA and YMCA institutions)

FE teacher: There are a variety of descriptions of the teaching workforce in use in FE, including ‘lecturer’, ‘teacher’, and ‘tutor’. This term is used here to mean those staff fulfilling a full teaching role for which, in England, Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills Status (QTLS) is now required. It does not include those who, in support of QTLS teachers, fulfil what LLUK describes as an ‘associate teacher’ role.

Higher Education (HE): Education leading to higher-level qualifications, HNCs, HNDs, foundation degrees, degrees and postgraduate qualifications. Higher education takes place in FE colleges as well as in universities, but degrees and some other qualifications, including the PGCE (PcET) are delivered by FE colleges under franchise arrangements with universities, who remain the awarding bodies for those qualifications.

Professional standards: Professional standards for FE have a relatively recent history, beginning with those initially drafted by the Further Education Staff Development Forum (FESDF) in 1999, then further developed into the 1999 Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) Standards. The current Standards were developed by the employer-led sector skills council, LLUK whose remit covers both England and Wales. The Welsh Standards were endorsed by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2007

Annex B: Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACCAC	Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (responsible for the curriculum in Wales).
CPD	Continuing Professional Development.
DELLS	Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Welsh Assembly Government Education Department from 2006).
DCELLS	Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Welsh Assembly Government Education Department from 2007).
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment.
DfES	Department for Education and Skills.
DfTE	Department for Training and Education (Welsh Assembly Government Education Department prior to 2006).
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills.
Dysg	Provided training, research and support for the FE sector in Wales, now merged with DCELLS.
ELWa	Education and Learning Wales (the brand name for the National Council (CETW) and HEFCW, which together were responsible for post-16 education 2001 – 2006) now merged with DCELLS).
Estyn	Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales.
FE	Further Education.
FEDA	Further Education Development Agency (FENTO's predecessor).
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council (England).
FEFCW	Further Education Funding Council for Wales (its functions were taken on by the National Council (CETW) in 2001).
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation (replaced by LLUK).
Fforwm	Representative body for FE colleges and institutions in Wales.
GTC	General Teaching Council (the schoolteachers' professional body).

GTCW	General Teaching Council Wales (the schoolteachers' professional body in Wales).
HEI	Higher Education Institution.
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.
IL	Institute for Learning.
ITT	Initial Teacher Training.
LEAs	Local Education Authorities.
LLUK	Lifelong Learning UK (the SSC for staff in FE, HE, community and work-based learning).
LSC	Learning and Skills Council (responsible for FE funding in England, replaced the LSDA in 2005).
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency (the body responsible for post-16 education and training, except HE, in England until 2005).
LSS	Learning and Skills Sector.
PCET	Post-compulsory education and training.
QTLS	Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills.
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status.
SSCs	Sector Skills Councils (responsible for setting standards for training in their sectors).
SVUK	Standards Verification UK (wholly owned subsidiary of LLUK responsible for validating teacher training qualification for the Lifelong Learning sector).
TDA	Teacher Development Agency (responsible for the recruitment and training of schoolteachers).
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government (the executive arm of the National Assembly for Wales).

Annex C: The Development of the Professional Standards

Introduction

The professional standing of FE teachers needs to be seen in the context of the policy developments in England and Wales. This Annex traces the evolution of the Standards and is also an account of the shifting terrain on which policy has evolved and the competing claims on the content of teacher professionalism. Devolution meant that policies for education, including those for PCET, became the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly and this Annex traces the early developments made on an England and Wales basis, and the subsequent divergence of policies and priorities post-devolution. Chapter Four analyses the rhetoric of policy, but policies also have their expression at a more material level, in regulations and arrangements for managing and auditing performance. The following is concerned with the latter, describing the development of the Standards and the regulatory changes that have taken place.

Enforcing the Standards

The legislative instruments by which governments in England and Wales have influenced the development of professionalism in FE have been the introduction of mandatory qualifications for teachers in FE, requiring them to have been through a programme of ITT, varying according to their teaching responsibilities (DfEE 2001; DIUS 2007d; Welsh Assembly Government 2002) and, in England for CPD as a condition of maintaining the licence to teach (DIUS 2007c). ITT programmes were, and continue to be informed by the professional standards; unlike the FENTO Standards, which were designed both to inform programmes of initial teacher training for FE, and, to be used in staff appraisal and for CPD, the intended function of the LLUK Standards is principally to underpin the qualifications needed to teach in Lifelong Learning (not just in FE) and consequently to be included in the curricula of initial teacher training programmes.

An important agency in this context is Standards Verification UK (SVUK). As a wholly owned subsidiary of the LLUK, SVUK is responsible for endorsing initial teacher training qualifications for the Lifelong Learning sector, that is post-16 education and training excluding schools and HE. Without the SVUK's endorsement a teaching qualification will not be accepted by the Institute for Learning (IfL) as an appropriate basis for the award of Qualified (or Associated) Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS or ATLS) and so enable a teacher to meet the requirements of the 2007 regulations in England. The position in Wales is less clear as the 2002 regulations continue to apply although the *Quality and Effectiveness Framework for post-16 Learning in Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government 2009) has since retrospectively linked the Standards with the regulations. ITT providers in Wales have ensured that their programmes are endorsed by the SVUK.

Professional Standards: The Beginnings and FENTO

The LLUK Standards were preceded by standards published by the Further Education National Training Organisation. The history of the development of the FENTO standards and associated qualifications have been set out in a number of places (Bathmaker 2000; Brand 2007; Clow 2005; Lucas 2004; Nasta 2007). Before the late 1990's many teachers in FE still tended to regard themselves as specialist practitioners who happened to be teaching, rather than as professional teachers (Robson 1998). This was, perhaps, a lingering inheritance from the practical ethos of the old Technical Colleges; combined with the high proportion of part-time and short-term contract staff, and, prior to incorporation, the varied approaches to training and development of Local Education Authorities, which were then teachers' employers. These factors militated against any sense of professionalism, the need for professional teaching qualifications and for continued professional development. It was not until the end of the decade that national standards were adopted (FENTO 1999), and only by 2001 (2002 in Wales) that FE teachers were required by law to hold a teaching qualification based on those standards (DfEE 2001; Welsh Assembly Government 2002).

In the 1980s and early 1990s, when there was neither a statutory requirement for FE teachers to hold a teaching qualification nor any body overseeing training and qualifications, arrangements for initial teacher training varied between colleges and between different subject areas, and there was little comparability between those qualifications that were on offer (Lucas 2004). That is not to say that formal training did not exist and PGCE training was, for example, on offer in Cardiff, Huddersfield and Wolverhampton from the mid 1970s, and a FE teachers' certificate was offered by the City and Guilds. Incorporation in the late 1990s only served to make matters worse and the overall proportion of teachers with recognised qualifications decreased, while spending on staff development declined as a proportion of college budgets (Lucas 2000).

Government had begun to take an interest in FE teacher training by the mid 1990s, ending '... some 25 years of official neglect ...' (Bailey and Robson 2002), with the decision to introduce a higher level NVQ for FE teachers in 1994 and, in the following year with the establishment of the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA), taking on the functions of the former FE Staff College which had by then already laid the foundations for FE teacher training. One of FEDA's tasks was to map the skills and competences required of teachers and the outcomes expected of teaching across the FE sector with the intention of developing a framework of NVQ qualifications relevant to the particular key roles identified. Grappling with the diversity of FE teaching proved a hard task and the result was complex in the extreme:

'Starting from one key purpose, four domains were identified; from the domains, 19 key areas emerged which were then broken down into 67 key roles ... Each key role was then mapped against the standards set by 40 lead bodies, occupational standards councils, or industry training organisations, which were relevant to further education and the approximately 40 full NVQs that these bodies offered.' (Lucas 2004: 38).

This work was taken forward by the newly established Further Education Staff Development Forum (FESDF) which was set up by DfEE in 1996 charged with developing national standards for England and Wales (Scotland and Northern Ireland already had their own standards) in consultation with the relevant bodies and institutions, together with a framework for initial teacher training for the sector. The

process, led by consultants, involved a series of drafts and re-drafts and began from an examination of current standards in existence, including, in particular, those published by the Scottish Office (Scottish Office Education and Industry Department 1997) and for the following bodies – comprising a seemingly rather eclectic choice:

- The Training and Development Lead Body,
- The Association of Science Education,
- The Advice, Guidance, Counselling and Psychotherapy Lead Body,
- The IT Lead Body.

There followed a series of workshops and wider consultations with employers, managers, union representatives, staff development officers and teachers (Lucas 2004, Clow 2005) – although, as Clow points out, those at the ‘chalk face’ were underrepresented, nor was there any detailed occupational analysis of the tasks performed by FE teachers.

However, the outcome of this process (Peeke 1999), after numerous re-drafts and pressure from colleges, was a clear move away from the initial competency/NVQ model to one that, to a greater extent, provided broad, ‘holistic’ statements that were intended to allow for the diversity of subjects and the levels at which they were taught, and which would allow for subsequent professional interpretation and reflective practice (Lucas 2004). This has also been regarded as the product of internal tension between different camps within the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). One, based in the Moorfoot, Sheffield office, contained the civil servants involved in industrial training whose perspective was formed by needs for definable competencies and outcomes; the other, based in London, and more influenced by the school teaching environment, and looked for a more broadly based set of standards (Nasta 2007). Whatever the dominant influences on the process, the eventual gap between the approach to defining standards for professional teachers in schools and in FE is illustrated by the scale and complexity of the emerging standards for FE teachers compared to the then current standards for schoolteachers in England (DfEE 1998a).

The Government established the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) in 1998. FENTO was one of a number of National Training Organisations (NTOs), forming part of the Government's strategy for improving training across all sectors of the economy by encouraging employers to take responsibility for the training and development of staff (DfEE 1998b). FENTO took over and, in 1999 duly published, the standards previously developed by the FESDF. Like other NTOs, FENTO was an employer-led organisation; in that respect FE teachers continued to be treated differently from schoolteachers in England and Wales who, in addition to having long-standing professional qualifications, now had new 'professional' bodies – the General Teaching Councils – to promote standards and their professional development, albeit that the councils were instituted by government and not by the profession itself. Thus an important distinction between professional concerns and employer concerns was blurred (Lucas 2004).

The intention to establish FENTO had been announced in the Government consultation document *The Learning Age* (DfEE 1998b), which also announced the Government's decision that all new teachers in further education '... should hold, or within two years of appointment have begun, a recognised initial teacher training qualification.'. This applied to both full-time teachers and those with a 'substantial' part-time commitment. This became a commitment in the following White Paper (DfEE 1999) and, after a process of consultation, focussing on how the FENTO standards could be matched to qualifications and at what level those qualifications should be set and how they might be assessed, compulsory qualifications came into effect in September 2001, in the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations (DfEE 2001), similar regulations followed in Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2002).

These new requirements meant that all new entrants to FE teaching in England and Wales had to acquire a teaching qualification at a level and within a specified timescale, dependent on the nature of their contracts. The levels consisted of three stages – Introductory, Intermediate, and Full Professional, where the latter was at

NVQ Level 4. The first level was considered appropriate for those whose teaching role was relatively narrow, and for only a few hours a week; the Intermediate level covered part-time teachers with a wider range of roles; and, the Professional level was intended for full-time teachers with a full range of teaching responsibilities.

The statutory timescale within which this had to be achieved varied according to the teacher's responsibilities. Thus, for example, a new, unqualified teacher working full-time would be expected to reach Stage Three within two years, and a part-time teacher undertaking ad hoc teaching for a few hours a week would need to obtain a Stage One qualification within one year of entering the profession. Matched funding was to be provided to enable existing, unqualified teachers to obtain teaching qualifications. HE institutions and awarding bodies such as the City and Guilds offered qualifications to these levels. The content of courses leading to qualifications had to be in line with FENTO standards and FENTO had the role of endorsing course content.

The FENTO standards were not described as 'professional' standards and, were intended to fulfil three purposes:

- 'to provide an agreed set of standards that can be used to inform the design of accredited awards for FE teachers, validated within the national qualifications framework by HEIs or other awarding bodies;
- to provide standards that can be used to inform professional development activity within FE; and,
- to assist in institution-based activities such as recruitment, appraisal and the identification of training needs.' (FENTO 1999).

Implicit in these statements is the notion that the standards were, taken as a whole, a complete and adequate description of what should be expected of an FE teacher. They were not simply a definition of what was required to certify a new teacher as competent – that was a matter for the validation of training programmes. Nor did they seek to provide a qualifications framework; that responsibility was explicitly said to be a matter for the various awarding bodies.

The standards were based on four ‘values’:

- Reflective practice and scholarship;
- Collegiality and collaboration;
- The centrality of learning and learner autonomy;
- Entitlement, equality and inclusiveness.

Under ‘reflective practice and scholarship’ teachers were expected to consider their own practice, which should underpin their wider professional role in managing the learning process, developing the curriculum and guiding and supporting the learner. This reference to a professional role was accompanied by the subdivision of the standards into three main elements:

- Professional knowledge and understanding;
- Skills and attributes;
- Key areas of teaching.

‘Professional knowledge and understanding’ was further divided into three sub-categories that broadly described the requirement to be knowledgeable about the contexts (local and policy) of FE teaching; developments in their particular specialism and those in the wider fields of learning and teaching and included detailed descriptions of the ‘essential knowledge’ required in each of the eight ‘key areas of teaching’ identified in the standards.

The key areas of teaching represented the bulk of the standards. The last of these was identified as ‘meeting professional requirements’. This was described as an ‘... underpinning competence that supports and informs all the other processes.’, but essentially it amplified and repeated what had already previously been set out in the description of professional knowledge and understanding, and only introducing, as a new idea, that of ‘the ethics and values of the teaching profession’, without specifying what those were. The key areas of teaching were each divided into sub-standards and each of these was further sub-divided into a number of statements describing what teachers ought to understand and do, so that, in total, there were nearly 300 individual descriptors. Altogether, in seeking to be all embracing, the standards formed a voluminous collection of concepts and definitions; and, because of

their sheer number and coverage, it is difficult to imagine how anyone made complete sense of them:

‘Given the inherent ambiguity of words in conveying meaning, such an elaborated code is likely to pose inherent difficulty for teacher-educators and teacher-trainees having to interpret the standards and convert them into qualifications and training programmes.’ (Nasta 2007: 5).

Proposals for reform and professionalisation

Government in England now had aspirations for a better-qualified, professional workforce. The FENTO standards identified the key purposes of FE teachers as follows:

‘The key purpose of the FE teacher and those directly involved in supporting learning is to provide high-quality teaching, to create effective opportunities for learning and to enable all learners to achieve to the best of their ability.’ (FENTO 1999).

The structure and contents of the standards were intended to meet that key purpose. But already governments in both England and Wales had begun to express their concern with developing closer links between post-16 education and training and the investment in skills needed to maintain competitiveness in world markets. In 2001, in England, the DfES published its strategy for the following five years (2001), where it acknowledged that ‘... additional investment is essential if we are to achieve a world-class education system and ensure that our workforce has the skills to compete with the best in the world.’ (2001: 2).

That document promised, but did not detail, reforms of FE and training including ‘investment in professional development of teachers, trainers and managers’. The following year DfES outlined its plans for reform in England in slightly more detail in the discussion document *Success for All: Reforming Further Education and Training* (DfES 2002a), which identified the problems in the Lifelong Learning sector, including ‘a workforce whose skills and career development has often been neglected.’, and ‘an insufficient focus on the qualifications and skills of teachers and trainers in colleges and work-based learning providers’. It observed that, where information was

available, only 60 per cent of full-time and 48 per cent of part-time FE teachers (in England) had full or partial teaching qualifications. Plans for the future still remained embryonic however. While reference was made to the 2001 FE Teachers' Qualifications Regulations and the intention, when legislation permitted, of extending similar requirements to the rest of the Lifelong Learning sector, only the broad aims of raising the number of appropriately qualified teachers and providing them with opportunities to update their skills were mentioned.

A Vision for the future

Later that year more substantial proposals emerged from DfES in *Success for All: Our Vision for the Future* (DfES 2002b). This sought to address '... under-investment in the professionalism, reward and recognition of the further education and training workforce.' (2002b: 10). The proposals in *Our Vision for the Future*, applying to further education and training (but not work-based, adult and community learning), included:

The target of a workforce fully qualified to teach and train by 2010, where only new entrants would not be qualified, and they would be expected to achieve an appropriate qualification within two years of entry (or within four years for part-time staff);

Using powers in the Education Act 2002 to raise the quality of initial teacher training by requiring bodies running such courses to be approved by the Secretary of State;

The establishment of a broad Sector Skills Council for the post-16 learning sector; and,

Measures to improve recruitment and retention through performance pay, and recruitment incentives (but no plans to impose a national pay structure).

By that time, NTOs had been replaced by employer led Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), responsible for identifying and defining training needs in their sectors and which were

to cover wider areas of the economy than the NTOs. Like the predecessor NTOs, SSCs were to have a UK-wide remit. However, this change was not to affect the FE sector for some time as FENTO continued in being, endorsing initial teacher training courses, until, as announced four years earlier in *Our Vision for the Future*, its eventual replacement in April 2006 by a new SSC for the whole of the Lifelong Learning sector – LLUK. Other changes affecting the sector in England included the replacement of the Further Education Funding Council by the Learning and Skills Council in 2001 and the establishment of the Learning and Skills Development Agency in 2000, which was itself later subsumed within LLUK.

During this period, in Wales, the WAG's policy was confined to promoting the '... increased professional development and other support.' in FE (National Assembly for Wales 2001: 47). However, there was no equivalent Welsh commitment to the proposed reforms in England, and the only steps taken in that regard were the making of parallel regulations to the English Teachers' Qualifications Regulations in 2002, and the announcement that year of measures to bring about pay comparability between teachers in FE and those in schools. In Wales, a new body, Education and Learning Wales (ELWa), was formed in 2001 consisting of the National Council for Education and Training Wales, and incorporating the Higher and Further Education Funding Councils (HEFCW and FEFCW) as well as inheriting much of the work of the former Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). ELWa was to become the main influence in shaping the future of FE in Wales until its eventual absorption into the WAG in 2006.

An Agenda for reform

Meanwhile, in England, DfES was proceeding with fleshing out what *Our Vision for the Future* meant in terms of teacher education. The remit was now expanded to include the whole of the lifelong learning sector, paralleling the employers' proposals for an SSC for the whole sector, and although initially the proposed reforms were drafted so as to apply only to FE teaching qualifications, the general principles would, it was expected, be carried over to the rest of the learning and skills sector. The

Department was also heavily influenced by an Ofsted report (2003) which made a number of recommendations for the training of FE teachers.

In 2003, DfES published a consultation document, *The Future of Initial Teacher Education for the Learning and Skills Sector: An Agenda for Reform* (DfES 2003). In there it was boldly (and optimistically) asserted that teaching in the lifelong learning and skills sector would be a ‘career of choice’ and have equal status to teaching in schools and HE. These teachers would be well-grounded in generic pedagogy and in their subject-specific knowledge; be able to address the needs of all ages of learners from 14 years up; be competent in supporting their learners’ literacy, numeracy and ESOL needs through their subject teaching; be competent in meeting the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disability. They would be aware of different learning styles and settings and have appropriate academic, vocational, commercial or industrial expertise – which is updated regularly and would be able to fulfil a pastoral role. This represented a largely new, and indeed challenging, vision of what the teacher of the future might look like, as well as being effectively the official definition of FE teacher professionalism.

Also new, was the idea that there should be a period of professional formation which would include initial teacher training, but also further in-service workplace development, as well as mentoring and support that would reflect teachers’ individual training and development needs, and be recorded, and which would lead to a new status, that of Qualified Teacher of Further Education or Qualified Teacher of Learning and Skills. That status would then be a license to teach in the learning and skills sector.

The model on which this was based was that of schoolteachers, who have, typically, a full-time pre-service period of training leading to a PGCE and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Newly qualified schoolteachers then benefit from an induction year, providing an element of probation but also the support of a mentor and provision for structured further professional development as a basis for subsequent CPD. However,

in FE the majority of teachers train part-time while in-service (and in the rest of the learning and skills sector virtually all trainee teachers do so) and such a model was not entirely transferable. Instead, the document suggested that in-service trainees might undergo workplace development in parallel with their training over two years; for others with a limited teaching role only a basic introduction to teaching would be needed, while training to Level One (of the 20001 Regulations) would follow with workplace development that suited their hours.

Two further ideas indicated the future direction of travel; one was the recognition of the need for differentiation in teacher training. This followed the Ofsted finding that more account should be taken of the diverse needs of trainee teachers, in terms of their abilities and experiences, in the design of training programmes since, unlike trainee schoolteachers, intending teachers in FE come from a variety of backgrounds, many with considerable experience in industry, commerce or the trades, with widely differing levels of academic attainment. It marked a recognition that training programmes for teachers in FE, and in other parts of the learning and skills sector, would need, at least to some degree, to be matched to the needs of trainees.

The second idea was the need for a professional body to broadly fulfil the same functions as that which the General Teaching Councils in England and in other parts of the UK did for schoolteachers, and so provide ‘... a sense of professional identity.’ (DfES 2003: 33). The Institute for Learning (IfL) was considered, in its then embryonic form, to be capable of meeting that requirement and maintaining a register of qualified teachers. It would be mandatory for teachers to register with the IfL who would police professional standards and behaviour.

Agenda for Reform also indicated that an early priority for the (then still to be established) Lifelong Learning SSC would be to conduct a fundamental review of the FENTO standards. It went on to observe that Ofsted had identified a lack of common practice across HEIs in defining the levels of teacher training courses and the entry

requirement to those courses and that work was being done by the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) to establish a common position.

Proposals into practice

DfES had now established a clear agenda of change in the training and professionalisation of teachers in post-16 education and training outside schools and HE, forming part of its *Success for All* strategy. Following consultation on the proposals in *Agenda for Reform*, which received broad support, DfES published its outline plans for their implementation in *Equipping our Teachers for the Future* (DfES 2004) which was to provide the detailed roadmap for future developments. The vision of the teacher of the future therein was somewhat scaled down from that set out in the preceding consultation document, *Agenda for Reform*. It was now simply stated that teachers would be trained and qualified in the skills and subjects they teach at the levels appropriate to their teaching, which may be at Level One or degree level, and in the skills of teaching their subject in the workshop, laboratory or classroom. In that statement is an understanding that there could be no one size fits all training and qualification requirement, given the range of subjects, and the levels at which they are taught, in the sector; and in any case, re-iterated the principles that were already contained in the 2001 Qualifications Regulations. However, what was new was the intention to extend the requirement to have ‘appropriate’ teaching qualifications to teachers outside FE, who were not currently covered by those regulations.

The responses to the consultation had emphasised the wish that teachers in the learning and skills sector should have parity of esteem and of professionalism with schoolteachers; but there was no appetite for the suggestion that the bodies in England with responsibility for schoolteachers’ training, and for their professional standards and development– the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and the GTC respectively – should take on responsibility for those matters in post-16 education and training. DfES acquiesced to that, partly because there was a real risk of overloading those

bodies, but also in response to the range and diversity of provision in the sector, which it was felt would require their own, bespoke arrangements.

It followed from the above that the strategy would consist of training that would lead to a new award – Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS). This could be achieved after a period of formal training (anticipated to be at Level 4) over a period of up to five years, as well as mentoring and assessment in the workplace; the Qualification itself would be at Level 5. However, all new teachers would have to do a short introductory ‘passport to teaching’ course to Level 3 and above (referred to in regulations as the Preparing to Teach Award) before being able to teach. In recognition of the range of teaching roles in the sector, those teachers with only a limited role need do no more than acquire the initial ‘passport’. Others, whether full-time, fractional or part-time should go on to QTLS, but the timescale for doing so allowed for the training to take place in service, and for the different levels of academic ability among trainees, some of whom would need more time to develop their personal skills in numeracy, literacy and communications.

The strategy also introduced the associated requirements for professional registration and for CPD. Trainee teachers enrolled on passport courses would have to register with the IfL, which was to become the professional body for teachers in the sector, who would issue a ‘threshold licence to teach’. On completion of training the IfL would award QTLS and register teachers as holding a ‘full license to teach’. Trainee teachers would have to maintain a professional development log, which would be continued throughout their careers, and the renewal of their licence to teach would be conditional on the completion of a specified number of hours CPD each year.

Since the FENTO standards applied only to staff in FE colleges, and were felt to be ‘a description of the role of an experienced teacher’ rather than ‘a definition of the outcomes of initial training.’ (DfES 2004: 12), an ‘essential first step’ was to be the development of standards and skills across the whole of the learning and skills sector. This was to be a task for LLUK, to be completed by the end of 2006, so that training

providers could prepare courses for September 2007. Standards for the teachers in FE would therefore be no longer specific to them, as had been the case with the FENTO standards, but developed generically and so require to be interpreted in the context of FE colleges, more specifically, doubts had been expressed about the suitability of the FENTO standards for developing training curricula (and some of these have been referred to earlier in this Chapter); now there was an express intent to link standards to training and qualifications as an integrated package, with the capacity to reflect the diversity and range of levels at which subjects were taught in the sector and the varied backgrounds and skills of trainee teachers.

If the new standards, and training courses and the qualifications based on them, were to up and running in England by 2007, the IfL similarly had to gear itself up to register new teachers and to award QTLS in time for the first trainees under these arrangements to register on the passport courses in 2007. Further, to bring all of this into effect the necessary legislation had to be made by mid-2007. And, most importantly perhaps for those in the sector, additional funding was promised to underpin initial teacher training, mentoring in the workplace, and training incentive schemes.

After this long gestation period, the final shape of the proposals for the professionalisation of FE teachers appeared in the White Paper *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* (DfES 2006a), which announced a new Agency, the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) to support providers in driving up quality. (As it turned out the new agency was to be short lived, and replaced within two years by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, typifying the ‘endless change’ in organisation and administration affecting the sector (Edward et al. 2007)). The White Paper also announced the intention to introduce a requirement for undertaking a minimum amount of CPD annually, and so create ‘a sustainable culture of professionalism’, as well as referring back to the plans for the reform of ITT announced two years earlier in *Equipping Our Teachers for the Future*. Details of these plans were set out in a consultation document (DfES 2006b). The overall

response to that consultation was generally positive, although, in particular, a small majority were concerned about the tightness of the proposed timescale for ITT reform (September 2007) feared that the need for qualifications might deter some from entering the sector (DfES 2006c)

The reforms in place

The LLUK Standards for England were published in 2006 (LLUK 2006). They were intended to be ‘a vital first step in the construction of a new framework of qualifications for teachers in the further education system’ (LLUK 2006: ii). They were considerably less voluminous than the predecessor FENTO Standards, consisting of six ‘domains’:

- Professional values and practice;
- Learning and teaching;
- Specialist learning and teaching;
- Planning for learning;
- Assessment for learning; and
- Access and progression.

Each domain begins with five professional values that are common to all the domains (that might therefore be considered as core values) and, in that particular domain, what a teacher is expected to be committed to. All teachers will therefore value:

- All learners, their progress and development; their learning goals and aspirations and the experience they bring to their learning;
- Learning, its potential to benefit people emotionally, intellectually, socially and economically, and its contribution to community sustainability;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to learners, the workforce and the community;

Reflection and evaluation of their own practice and their continuing professional development as teachers;

Collaboration with other individuals, groups and/or organisations with a legitimate interest in the progress and development of learners.

There were two sub-domains in each domain: Professional Knowledge and Understanding, and Professional Practice; these amplified what a teacher would be expected to know and to practice. Altogether there were 138 standards in the sub-domains; which, taken together with the five common professional values and the 23 commitments, produced, in effect, 166 standards. This entirely logical structure did nevertheless give rise to a degree of obvious repetition since the same professional values applied in each domain and knowledge and understanding inevitably overlapped with practice.

Now that the Standards provided the basis for future qualifications, in the following year regulations were made in England (DIUS 2007d), applying to all new teachers in FE from September that year. The Regulations provided for: two new professional statuses – Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS); the introduction of new qualifications based on the Standards, including an initial award (PTTLS), a Certificate qualification for those in the Associate role and a Diploma for those with a full teaching role; and, the requirement to complete a period of professional formation. Unlike the 2001 Regulations, the need for a qualification was now dependent on a teacher's role and responsibilities, not the number of hours they taught. Importantly, the 2007 regulations gave the IfL a statutory function in the award of professional status (i.e. QTLS or ATLS) confirming it as the professional body for FE teachers.

To have professional status and licensed to teach, a teacher would have to be appropriately qualified (i.e. a qualification endorsed by the SVUK and in accordance with a new qualifications framework developed by LLUK and given statutory recognition in the 2007 Regulations), be registered with the IfL and have completed a

process of professional formation to the IfL's satisfaction, where they were required to demonstrate that they were '... in good professional standing and can apply the skills and knowledge gained through ITT in their own teaching practice according to the LLUK's occupational standards for FE teachers.' (DIUS 2007b). Teachers would also have to have '... the necessary literacy, numeracy and ITC skills to teach' as evidenced to the IfL (DIUS et al. 2008). In that last respect, where previously these skills were intended to be included in ITT, by making it an entry requirement this now put FE teachers on a similar footing to NQTs in English schools whose QTS depended on similar skills tests.

The distinction between QTLS and ATLS had emerged during the LLUK's development of the Standards and was consulted on together with the draft Standards. It was a controversial proposal and became the subject of considerable debate, many consultees fearing that this was an attempt to downgrade the pay and conditions of some teachers or enable them to be replaced by less qualified staff. Parallels were drawn with the recently introduced Higher Level Teaching Assistants in schools and similar concerns over that. The LLUK argument was based on an examination of the roles performed across lifelong learning as part of the process of developing the Standards. LLUK concluded that there was a difference between those teachers who were responsible for course design and content and those who taught within a framework of lesson plans and using materials provided by others, or who taught solely on a one-to-one basis, or, did not teach the full range of the curriculum. However, this view has been challenged as not reflecting the work of teachers and acting as a barrier to the professionalisation of those locked into the associate role (Thompson and Robinson 2008).

'Professional' status for FE teachers (the 2007 Regulations only apply to teachers in FE) was now more firmly established in legislation and, in DIUS's guidance to the Regulations, if not in the Regulations themselves, defined by the Standards (despite these being primarily designed to underpin qualifications) and maintained by a new professional body with powers to remove the licence to teach for professional

misconduct. The status of FE teachers in England had now become equivalent to that of schoolteachers in many respects; but in one key area the new legislation went further. Regulations (DIUS 2007c) now also required all (not just new) FE teachers to register with the IfL and made undertaking a minimum amount of CPD (30 hours a year for a full-time teacher), and keeping a record of their CPD, conditions of continued registration. This went further than what was required of schoolteachers in England or Wales, where there is neither an entitlement to time for CPD nor a requirement to undertake it (except in the Induction year and, in Wales, during Early Professional Development). That emphasis on CPD followed the findings of the Foster review (2005), which identified significant variability in the amount and type of CPD undertaken in colleges, and in particular, those of the Leitch review of skills (2006), which stressed the need for trainers to keep up-to-date with developments in industry and business practice (DIUS 2007a). The CPD requirement in the 2007 Regulations was therefore, as far as DIUS was concerned, less of a professional issue and more connected with the over-riding imperative of up-skilling the nation. However, the IfL, for its part, placed CPD in the context of maintaining high professional status, by ensuring excellence in teaching and learning (IfL 2008).

Wales – another country, other priorities

If all of these developments in England represented a significant and wide-ranging drive to raise standards and professionalise the teaching workforce in PCET outside schools and HE, the position in Wales was different. Here, with the exception of pay, the position of teachers in FE and in the rest of post-16 education and training remains largely as it had been. Welsh Ministers had emphasised their commitment to raising skills in the Welsh economy in a number of publications, including the paving document setting out proposals for a ten year strategy for education in Wales (National Assembly for Wales 2001), which announced the intention that Wales should become ‘a Learning Country’. However, that document said little about the role played by FE teachers. While the record of achievements in schoolteachers’ training, pay and support for their professional development, including the role of the

General Teaching Council Wales (GTCW), was set out at length, as far as FE teachers were concerned, there were only references to continued support for ELWa, the introduction of training bursaries for postgraduate FE teacher trainees and, more generally, the intention that ‘... increased professional development and other support to be promoted in further education.’ (2001: 47).

One theme that would be developed in later documents was the need to overcome, if necessary by legislative means, the barriers to the flexible deployment and exchange of practitioners ‘... in different settings’ so as to achieve the effective operation of partnerships, envisaging, one imagines, closer working and sharing of resources, including staff, between schools, colleges, work-based learning and other training providers. This cooperative approach to making the best use of resources in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness and the avoidance of duplication was later to be highlighted in *Making Connections*, the response to the Beecham Review of local government in Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2006).

By 2004, the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, reviewing progress since *The Learning Country* was published and her agenda for the future, focussed on the establishment of all-age skills programmes, the Skills and Employment Action Plan, the 14-19 Learning Pathways and the Welsh Baccalaureate (Welsh Assembly Government 2004). Many of these developments addressed the same issues as in the DfES *Success for All* agenda, but no mention was made of the need for similar workforce measures to those then being advanced in England.

That is not to say that there were no voices for reform in Wales. FENTO (Wales) produced a report, based on survey and interview data from across the sector in Wales, with proposals for the development of the FE workforce set in the context of *The Learning Country* and the establishment of ELWa (Drennan and Thomas 2004). This report laid a claim for the centrality of FE to the achievement of the WAG’s economic, social, education and training policies, particularly as set out in ELWa’s corporate strategy. It acknowledged that the WAG had, in 2002, announced its

intention to eliminate the pay gap between FE teachers and schoolteachers by 2005 and, that year, had brought in the Qualifications Regulations; these two measures would help deal with recruitment and retention issues and go some way to raising the status of the profession, matters which were of considerable concern to those surveyed.

The Report identified a number of areas where action needed to be taken, these included those where experience and expertise were generally lacking, one being management in FE, as well as some generic teaching areas, such as teaching the disaffected and updating teacher's experience of business practice. However, at the heart of its recommendations lay the need for improved opportunities for CPD:

‘Continuous professional development is the key tool for raising standards in the classroom, workshop, laboratory and studio. It should be available to all teachers, full-time and part-time, employed in FE colleges. No teacher should be precluded from taking up appropriate professional development opportunities should they wish to do so.’ (Drennan and Thomas 2004: 43).

Associated with that was the concomitant need for effective performance management and mentoring.

The following year Dysg, the arm of the LSDA in Wales, published a paper *Developing the Learning Workforce in Wales* (Dysg 2005). It noted the lack of an all-embracing statutory framework, covering workforce issues, such as existed for schoolteachers. Provision for CPD in FE teachers in colleges existed in a variety of formal and informal forms, but pressure on staff time and limited budgets (now put under pressure by pay reform) tended to limit the take up of these as well as other, more informal opportunities to share good practice.

Looking across the border, Dysg drew attention to the planned establishment of the QIA and saw in that an example of co-ordinated provision across the whole of the post-16 sector. Co-ordination, and securing a level playing field between the different elements – schools, colleges, work-based and adult and community learning – was to be the key, and it was hoped that this could be helped by the, then recently announced, merger of ELWa with the WAG education department. The outcome could be an

exchange of CPD opportunities and the development of a ‘single CPD framework’ – although how that would operate was not specified. What was suggested however, was that co-ordination should take place at a local level, to match CCETs and the emerging 14-19 partnerships which would look at provision and secure collaboration on workforce development needs within their areas, including work shadowing, job swaps and secondments between providers in different parts of the sector.

There is no evidence that these calls, for an entitlement to, and funding for CPD, had any immediate impact on the WAG education department. The 2002 Qualifications Regulations were a straightforward follow-on from their English counterparts. There is nothing to suggest that they represented any policy decision other than to maintain parity with England. The only distinctly Welsh measure to address the concerns of FE teachers was the decision to move to comparability in pay between teachers in FE and in schools over a three year period up to 2005. The decision to proceed with a Welsh version of the LLUK Standards (LLUK 2007), was presented as a Welsh initiative, but the impression gained from my discussions with officials was that the WAG considered it had no choice but to parallel developments in England, particularly given LLUK’s UK-wide remit. The evolution of the Welsh Standards is described in the next section.

The evolution of the Standards in Wales

The Deputy Minister for Skills endorsed the LLUK Professional Standards for Wales in October 2007, following the publication of the English Standards in the preceeding year. The Standards are now supported by a number of application guides, developed by LLUK, which aim to provide a context for the new Standards for specialist teachers, including those teaching Welsh for adults; those teaching bilingually or through the medium of Welsh; and those teaching numeracy and number; ESOL; and, literacy and communication.

Although the English Standards provided the basis for the Welsh Standards there was an extensive consultation process to determine how the former might be adapted and expanded to meet Welsh circumstances. That process involved open meetings, web-based consultation and a Steering Group representative of post-16 education and training providers in Wales. The results of consultation and the deliberations of the Steering Group were a set of Standards that were essentially the same as the English Standards, that is they were intended to be broadly applicable in all contexts and at all levels of teaching, but with additions to take account of bilingualism, cultural diversity, and sustainable development and global citizenship, the latter in line with the strategic aims of *Vision into Action*.

The Steering Group

Before the Group was established, LLUK had discussions with the sector, through Fforwm's teacher training group which included representatives of HEIs and FE colleges running ITT programmes, as well as Dysg, but, because the group was about training for FE, other elements of PCET were unrepresented. The group endorsed the need for Welsh standards and also for transferability of qualifications across borders, but there was a strong feeling that standards for Wales should take account of Welsh circumstances and WAG policies. By the end of 2006 WAG had agreed to ask LLUK to proceed with developing professional standards for Wales. This was followed by a 'summit' meeting between LLUK and the devolved administrations when the timescales for proceeding were agreed, the English Standards, being the most advanced, were fast-tracked. Consultations in Wales took place in the summer of 2007 and the Steering Group to work with LLUK in developing the Welsh Standards was formed.

I attended the Group as an observer. The Steering Group consisted of representatives of HE, FE, work-based learning, community learning and development, Estyn and WAG. The following account is based on my observation of the work of the group and of the consultation process LLUK followed in Wales. During its short life the Group met four times before taking on a new role, at the end of 2007, to work with

LLUK on developing a Teacher Qualification Framework for Wales. Individual representation varied from meeting to meeting and the only consistent attendees were from Fforwm, the union (UCU) and from an HEI training provider, consequently those individuals made an important contribution to the drafting, Fforwm's voice being particularly influential.

Once the Standards had been agreed the Group then went on to look at the qualifications framework developed by LLUK after consultation with the sector. Previous discussions with Fforwm and with the Group as well as the consultations had shown little enthusiasm for the split between associate and full teacher status that had been made in England. This was taken into account in LLUK's final recommendations to the WAG, which essentially proposed a minimum qualification to teach, equivalent to PTLLS, and a full qualification consisting of a minimum core (including skills in English and/or Welsh, Mathematics and ICT) together with additional, optional elements to take account of the particular context in which a teacher worked.

As the Group concluded its work in January 2008, a number of concerns were voiced about the direction things seemed to be taking in Wales. Their fears appear to have been well founded, since over a year later, while the Welsh Standards have been adopted and the SVUK's validation of Welsh FE ITT programmes depends on it being satisfied that those programmes take account of the Standards, there is no sign of the implementation of a qualifications framework. Importantly, the 2002 FE teachers' qualifications regulations (Welsh Assembly Government 2002) continue in force, and while not amended, the professional qualifications required should now reflect the LLUK Standards (Welsh Assembly Government 2009: 14).

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Annex D: Interview and Focus Group Protocols

1. Questions for Officials

Locate the respondent

1. Can you describe your present position and responsibilities?

What are their views of FE generally/how much do they know?

2. Looking at the FE sector as a whole, how would you describe it and what is its main purpose?

Obtain their view of its performance

3. Do you think it is fulfilling that purpose at present?
4. Why/why not? And, if not, what needs to be done? (or, if yes, are there significant areas for improvement?)

Obtain views about policy

5. How do you feel present policy for FE reflects what the sector needs?
6. Where does professionalizing the FE workforce fit in to that?

The FE teacher of the future

7. What do you think the FE teacher of the future will look like – the same as now or different?
8. What will be expected of them?

Professionalism

10. What can be done to encourage FE teachers to adapt to that ideal?
11. What role would professionalism and professional standards play in that?
12. Is being a professional teacher mainly about having specialist knowledge or, instead, being a facilitator of learning?
13. What is an FE professional, is it the same as being a 'good teacher' or is there more (e.g. CPD, pastoral care, mentoring, contributing to professional knowledge, upholding behavioural standards etc.)?

Obtain an account of the way the standards have been/are being developed: e.g.

14. Can you tell me about the approach to developing the standards in Wales and where we are now?
15. What, in your view, are the key factors that may lead to the Welsh standards being developed in a distinctive way by comparison with England?
16. Can you highlight the differences between the new standards (as they might evolve) and the existing (in Wales) FENTO standards?
17. How might they be an improvement on the FENTO standards?
18. Would you say the standards would go beyond simply providing the basis for a qualifications framework – how would you see them being used more widely?
19. Do the standards lend themselves easily to such purposes (and especially to developing a qualifications framework and developing training programme curricula)?
20. What would you say were the strengths and weaknesses of a standards based approach?
21. Is there more to ‘professionalism’ than is covered in the standards?

Test respondent’s knowledge of the FE sector

22. Do you think (you and other) policy makers have sufficient knowledge/experience of FE to determine its needs properly?
23. Is there anything more you would like to add?

2. Questions for Teacher-trainers

Locate the respondent

1. Can you briefly describe your present position and responsibilities? How far are you responsible for programme design/delivery/mentoring etc.?

What are their views of FE generally/how much do they know?

2. Looking at the FE sector as a whole, how would you describe it and what its main purpose is? [*Prompts: Leitch type values v. second chance, social inclusion, community role etc.?*]

A. Turning to the part FE teachers play in that; what is their construct of ‘professionalism’ in FE teaching? [Explain what I mean by ‘teacher’]

3. Is FE teaching a 'profession' and if so/not, why do you think that? *[Prompts: de-professionalisation/managerialism targets, autonomy, knowledge content, existence of a professional ethos, diversity of sector?]*

4. What are the key elements of a teachers' professionalism? *[Prompts: specialist v. subject knowledge, loyalty to industry, pedagogic skills, facilitator of learning, reflexivity, CPD, critical pedagogy/'politics of care', taking charge of the curriculum?]* Has this changed in recent years? *[e.g since incorporation?]*

5. What should a 'professional' FE teacher be seeking to achieve? *[Prompts: second chance, social justice, fit for work, civilised?]*

B. Trainers perception of trainees and their environment

6. How would you describe the trainees on the programme; how do you think they approach the course? *[Prompts: 'good' and 'bad' students, previous occupations' influence, dual identity issues, adopting 'teacher' stereotype or learner centred, Jane S's points – the academic v. the practical?]*

7. How do you think the environment in their workplace/teaching practice affects their attitude to the programme? *[Prompts: induction, communities of practice or marginalised, pervasiveness of managerial cultures?]*

C. The structure and content of the training programme

8. How is this *[the above]* reflected in the kind of skills the training programme aims to develop (and do you think that is appropriate)? *[Prompt: relative role of theory & practice, pedagogic skills and vocational expertise?]*

9. Can you *[if not fully covered above]* outline the content and structure of the programme and explain why it is shaped that way?

10. How far and in what way were the FENTO standards incorporated in the course design? How far have you taken account of emerging (LLUK) standards in England and the position in Wales? *[Prompt: was/is it just a 'mapping exercise?]*

11. What do you think are the most valuable elements in the programme?

12. How would you like to do things differently (if at all)?

D. The role of FENTO/LLUK standards and how far trainers are aware of the standards

14. How relevant do you consider the standards to be for teacher training, i.e. is there more to teaching than the standards? *[Prompt: do they reflect the sector's diversity, do they reflect the image of the professional the interviewee holds, are they too narrow, contrast FENTO with LLUK standards?]*

15. On balance do you think the standards contribute positively to FE teaching professionalism or (as some have said of the FENTO standards) contribute to de-professionalisation by controlling and regulating behaviour? *[Prompt: Why do you think Govt. is doing this?]*

16. Is there anything more you would like to add?

3. Focus Group Themes

1. **(Full time students)** Why did you want to teach in FE?

Prompts: Life change event, sense of 'vocation' (if so what?), escape from routine?

1. **(Part time students)** How did you get into FE, how long have you been in it, what is your involvement? *(subject, hours etc.)* Why did you want to do this course?

Prompts: see above also (on last point) professional development, need a qualification?

2. What makes a professional teacher? Or What makes a teacher unprofessional?

Prompts: Specialist v. subject knowledge, loyalty to industry, pedagogic skills, 'facilitator of learning', reflexivity, CPD, critical pedagogy/'politics of care'/emotional labour, autonomy/taking charge of the curriculum?

Try ranking what comes out of discussion. Use key words on paper slips rank in groups: what do you get?

3. Is that the same as being 'a good teacher'?

Prompts: Is it having teaching skills/pedagogy or about supporting students? Is it inspiration or perspiration? Practical skills v. academic theories – does the academic content of the course make sense?

Try ranking what comes out of discussion.

4. What do you want to achieve as a teacher, does 'the system' get in the way?

Prompts: Are they aware of pressures of targets/managerialism etc.? Are they doing what students need, bending the rules, principled infidelity? Or strategic (or unwilling) compliance?

5. How aware are you of FENTO/LLUK professional standards? Is there one/two standards that have particularly been relevant to you? (take the Standards as a visual aid)

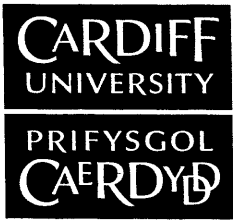
Prompts: Do they think there is a place for external standards or is this something for the individual to determine? Do the standards match up to what you think makes a professional? Is there an 'unwritten code' of behaviour and where does that come from?

6. Cast your mind back to when you began: how have you changed? What have you gained from the programme? What has helped you become more professional?

7. Anything else you want to add?

Annex E: Sample Access Letter

Cardiff School of Social Sciences
Director Professor Huw Beynon
Ysgol Gwyddorau Cymdeithasol Caerdydd
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XXXXXX
Principal
XXXXX College

18th June 2007

Dear XXXXXX

RE-THINKING PROFESSIONALISM IN FURTHER EDUCATION IN POST-DEVOLUTION WALES

I am engaged in the above research project, which is sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government. Its aim is to establish how, and to what extent, national professional standards, as developed by FENTO and, more recently in England, by the LLUK (who have also now been commissioned to develop standards for the lifelong learning sector in Wales) influence the way in which FE teacher trainees develop their ideas of what it is to be a professional teacher. An outline of the research is enclosed with this letter.

To do this I would very much like to interview a number of those responsible for planning and running FE teacher training programmes in Wales. That would include both Universities and, as is the case in XXXX, FE Colleges franchised to run their training programmes, as well as link tutors and mentors in the colleges where trainees undertake their teaching practice. I also would like to obtain the views of trainee teachers' through a combination of interviews and focus groups. I will ask interviewees about how they see the role of FE teachers; the importance of professionalism and what that means to them. I will ask trainers to explain how they have structured their training programmes and I will ask students about what motivated them to train to teach and what they have learnt from their training experience.

I am writing now to ask for your agreement and support for my interviewing your colleagues and their students on the full-time and part-time PGCE/Cert Ed. (PCET) programmes in XXXX, subject to appropriate safeguards. It would be very helpful if you could let me know whom I should contact in addition to yourself in that regard.

If you agree, I would also be grateful if I could have access to course materials and specifications, which will provide a documentary basis to supplement the information gained from interviews and focus groups.

Interviews and focus groups will last about an hour. I plan to conduct interviews with those responsible for running the programmes this summer, and focus groups (a maximum of ten students selected randomly and divided between pre- and in-service trainees), one with students at the beginning of their training in October this year, the other at the end of training in June next year. In addition I would ideally like to conduct a number of in-depth interviews with a small number of students at suitable points in their programme.

The participation of students will necessarily be voluntary and the Cardiff University School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has approved the arrangements for the study. Accordingly, all interviews with staff and students will be anonymised and individual institutions will not be identified. I should also make it clear that this is not intended to be a comparative study of training institutions in Wales and, while conclusions may be drawn about the different approaches taken across training programmes generally, I will not be making any comparisons or evaluations of particular programmes or elements of programmes in the study. All the information given will be treated in the strictest confidence and will not be shared with anyone else or published, except in a form that prevents individuals or institutions from being identified.

If you wish to discuss any of this I would be happy to meet you or speak on the telephone. In any case, I hope you don't mind if I follow up this letter with a phone call in the next day or so. I can be contacted most easily at home, and I would be grateful, should you wish to reply to this letter in writing, if you could do so to my home address:

XXXXXX
Cardiff
XXXXXX

Otherwise, my home telephone number is: xxxxxxx; mobile: xxxxxxx; and e-mail: xxxxxx.

Yours sincerely

Mike Harper

Annex F: Information for Participants and Consent Forms

Re-thinking professionalism in Further Education in post-devolution Wales

Information sheet for participants

What is this about?

I am a PhD research student in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Cardiff. The aim of this research project is to assess the impact of the national professional standards for the further education (FE) workforce on the training of FE teachers in Wales. It will also investigate their influence on the development of trainee teachers' professional values, compared to other influences, such as their previous careers and early teaching experiences.

The research will be the subject of my Doctoral thesis and the findings may be used in papers published in academic journals.

The Economic and Social Research Council and the Welsh Assembly Government are funding this project.

What do you want to find out?

The research seeks to establish:

- how, and to what extent, national professional standards for FE teachers are interpreted and applied by teacher training institutions and trainee FE teachers;
- the degree to which these externally set, national standards influence the professional values and practices of trainees; and,
- what are the processes by which trainees shape their identities as professional teachers, and the key influences underpinning those processes.

The outcome will provide a basis for assessing the potential of national professional standards for raising the standards of teaching and learning in FE. So it is important to reflect on the developments in Welsh education policy as they shape the future educational system in which trainees will be working. The research will therefore also consider:

- the development of the Welsh Assembly Government's policies for the FE sector, (including professional standards for FE teachers) and what the implications of these policies are for FE teacher professionalisation and teachers' professionalism in Wales.

Where do I fit in?

The research will take place between the spring of 2007 and the autumn of the following year. A number of university providers of FE teacher training and FE colleges carrying out training under franchised arrangements with a university provider have been selected. Subject to obtaining their agreement, I intend to interview FE teacher trainers in the selected training institutions. I also hope to conduct focus groups and interviews with trainee teachers from those institutions. A short questionnaire will be used for those teacher trainers who are not interviewed. Finally, I would like to interview government officials with an interest in FE, or involved in developing professional standards in Wales.

I will ask interviewees about how they see the role of FE teachers today, the importance of professionalism in FE teaching and what that means to them. I will also ask trainees about what made them want to teach in FE and what they have learnt from their training and in their teaching practice. I intend to ask teacher trainers to explain how they have structured their training programmes and how the standards have been taken into account in doing that. Interviews and focus groups will normally last about an hour and will be recorded.

I am therefore seeking your agreement to be interviewed, or to take part in a focus group, on the conditions set in the following section.

Fair processing

Your participation will be voluntary and I therefore need your written agreement to taking part in this study. A consent form is attached for your signature; in particular, it explains that, if you wish, you may withdraw from the study at any time.

You need to be aware that the data you provide will be held by the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University for the research purposes described above. My address is given at the end of this information sheet. I will only collect your name and the minimum of information necessary to enable me to record your position (trainer, trainee or official) and your location (university, FE college etc.). In the case of trainee teachers, I will ask about your previous career history and teaching experience, if any. Otherwise, the interviews and focus groups will cover the topics described in the section above.

The information I collect will be treated in confidence and will not be shared with anyone else other than my supervisor, except in a form that prevents individuals from being identified. The recordings and transcripts of the interviews will be held securely to prevent unauthorised access or loss. The information will be used in my thesis and in publications but will be anonymised so that no individual or institution can be identified. When my research is completed the data will be sent to the Economic and Social Research Council for retention.

How to obtain further information

If you need to know more about what is involved please contact me:

Mike Harper
Cardiff University
School of Social Sciences
Glamorgan Building
King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff CF10 3WT

e-mail: XXXXXXX

If you have any concerns about the way the research is conducted that I cannot satisfactorily answer you can contact:

Professor Søren Holm
Cardiff Law School
Tel: 029 208 75447
Fax: 029 208 7409
e-mail: XXXXXXX

***Re-thinking professionalism in Further Education in post-devolution
Wales***

Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet and I understand the purpose of the research and how the information I provide will be used. I also understand that the information I provide will be treated in confidence, will not be shared with others, included in a thesis, or otherwise published in a way that allows me to be identified, and, it will be kept securely. I will therefore not have the right to a copy of the information collected.

I agree to participate in the study and for the data I provide to be used for the purposes described in the Information Sheet. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time if I wish. Should I decide to withdraw, all the information I have provided will be destroyed, if that is my wish.

Signature

Name

Date

