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# **Black and Minority Ethnic Trainees' Experiences of Physical Education Initial Teacher Training**

**Report to the Training and  
Development Agency**

**Conducted for Training and Development Agency  
by the Carnegie Research Institute  
Leeds Metropolitan University**



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Research Institute  
Leeds Metropolitan University**

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2008

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# Contents

I.	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	1
II.	LIST OF TABLES.....	1
III.	LIST OF FIGURES.....	2
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	4
	INTRODUCTION.....	4
	METHODOLOGY.....	5
	FINDINGS .....	7
	<i>THE PARTICIPANTS</i> .....	7
	<i>EXPERIENCES</i> .....	8
	CONCLUSIONS.....	10
	RECOMMENDATIONS .....	11
1.	BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH .....	14
2.	LITERATURE REVIEW .....	17
	INTRODUCTION.....	17
	<i>CARRINGTON ET AL (2001)</i> .....	17
	<i>TEEMAN ET AL (2005)</i> .....	18
	<i>BASIT ET AL (2006); BASIT ET AL (2007)</i> .....	19
	<i>BASIT AND McNAMARA (2004); SMART AND ROSS (2006)</i> .....	19
	<i>SMART AND ROSS (2006)</i> .....	20
	<i>JONES ET AL (1997)</i> .....	21
	<i>BASIT, KENWARD AND ROBERTS (2005)</i> .....	21
	<i>BENN, (1996, 2000); BENN AND DAGKAS (2006)</i> .....	22
3.	METHODOLOGY .....	24
	INTRODUCTION.....	24
3.1	<i>RATIONALE FOR METHODOLOGY</i> .....	24
3.2	<i>RECRUITING THE PARTICIPANTS</i> .....	26
3.3	<i>THE PARTICIPANTS</i> .....	27
3.4	<i>THE INTERVIEWS</i> .....	29
3.5	<i>QUESTIONNAIRES</i> .....	29
3.6	<i>DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS</i> .....	30
3.7	<i>LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY</i> .....	30
4.	BLACK AND ETHNIC MINORITY TRAINEES AND ETHNIC MINORITY TRAINEES AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING: MOTIVES, INFLUENCES AND CHOICES .....	31
	INTRODUCTION.....	31
4.1	<i>ETHNIC ORIGINS: OFFICIAL AND SELF DEFINITIONS</i> .....	31
4.2	<i>MOTIVES FOR ENTERING TEACHING</i> .....	33
4.2.1	<i>POSITIVE AND SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES OF SPORT/EARLY DECISION TO TEACH</i> .....	33
4.2.2	<i>ENJOYING THE EXPERIENCE OF WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE</i> .....	34
4.2.3	<i>BEING A ROLE MODEL TO BME STUDENTS</i> .....	35
4.2.4	<i>POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE INFLUENCES</i> .....	36
4.3	<i>FACTORS AFFECTING CHOICE OF INSTITUTION</i> .....	39
4.3.1	<i>REPUTATION FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION</i> .....	39
4.3.2	<i>PROXIMITY TO HOME</i> .....	40
4.3.3	<i>EXPERIENCES ON THE INTERVIEW DAY</i> .....	41
5.	TRAINEES' EXPERIENCES OF TRAINING .....	45

INTRODUCTION.....	45
5.1. <i>EARLY EXPERIENCES IN PE INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION.....</i>	45
5.2. <i>'YOU ARE ONLY HERE BECAUSE OF THE 'RACE' CARD!' .....</i>	46
5.3. <i>WIDER INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT.....</i>	49
5.4. <i>PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR COURSE.....</i>	50
5.5. <i>ETHNICITY, 'RACE', RELIGION AND EMBODIMENT .....</i>	52
5.6. <i>ALCOHOL, SOCIALISING AND INFORMAL PE CULTURE.....</i>	55
5.7. <i>ETHNICITY, 'RACE' AND RELIGION AS PROFESSIONAL ISSUES.....</i>	57
5.8. <i>TEACHING PLACEMENT .....</i>	61
5.9. <i>RACIST HARASSMENT AND SOCIAL ISOLATION.....</i>	64
5.10. <i>APPLYING FOR TEACHING POSTS IN SCHOOLS .....</i>	67
6. TRAINEES' VIEWS ON INCREASING THE DIVERSITY OF PEITT COHORTS .....	71
7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	75
RECOMMENDATIONS .....	76
REFERENCES .....	79
APPENDIX 1 EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE.....	83
APPENDIX 2 COVERING LETTER .....	85
APPENDIX 3 PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET .....	86
APPENDIX 4 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	89
APPENDIX 5 QUESTIONNAIRE .....	92

## **I. List of Abbreviations**

AfPE	Association for Physical Education
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BSc	Bachelor of Science
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
EAL	English as an additional language
EBITT	Employment Based Initial Teacher Training route
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EMF	Ethnic Minority Foundation
GTTR	Graduate Teacher Training Registry
HEA	Higher Education Academy
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
PE	Physical Education
PEITT	Physical Education Initial Teacher Training
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (with Qualified Teacher Status)
SCITT	School Centred Initial Teacher Training route
TDA	Training and Development Agency
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

## **II. List of Tables**

Table 1	National BME trainee recruitment in PE over the last five years
Table 2	The Participants - official ethnic category profiles of interviewees and questionnaire respondents

### III. List of Figures

- Figure 1 Motives for entering teaching
- Figure 2 Extrinsic motives for entering teaching
- Figure 3 Factors affecting choice of university: location, reputation and recommendation
- Figure 4 Factors affecting choice of university: pluralist ethos
- Figure 5 Institutional support
- Figure 6 Balancing personal and professional demands
- Figure 7 Perceptions of the course
- Figure 8 Experiences of PE culture
- Figure 9 Types of school placement
- Figure 10 Ethos and support on school placement
- Figure 11 Experiences of racial harassment and social isolation
- Figure 12 Applying for teaching posts
- Figure 13 Increasing the diversity of PEITT cohorts



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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

This report draws together the findings of research that aimed to explore black and minority ethnic (BME) trainees' experiences of Physical Education (PE) initial teacher training (ITT). Although the numbers of BME trainees opting to enter teaching have improved considerably over the last few years, PE remains one of three specific subject areas where they remain significantly under-represented. Current figures suggest that PE attracts approximately 3% of trainees from BME backgrounds, compared with 11% for new entrants into teaching overall.

The relative lack of success in attracting BME trainees into PE teaching compared to other subject areas suggests that the subculture of the subject may be a compounding factor. Over the last decade or so, a number of studies have explored the impact of ethnicity on teachers' professional socialisation and their experiences as teachers in school, but none have focused on experiences within specific subject cultures. The centrality of the body in PE, and the link between this and the perceived low status of the subject, are influencing factors highlighted in the broader literature, including sports studies. For example, research exploring racism and the under-representation of BME participants in sport has highlighted the prevalence of stereotypical attitudes about their physicality and abilities held by coaches, administrators and spectators. Other research has suggested that some minority ethnic groups favour higher status, better paid, careers in areas such as law or medicine rather than teaching. As yet, there has been little attention to 'race' and ethnicity within PEITT, although studies have shown the impact of gender on trainees' developing professional identities, and how teachers' gendered bodies are important 'tools' of their work. In addition, there has been little research that has acknowledged trainees' multiple identities, or the complex ways in which 'race', ethnicity, class and gender and other identity markers intersect to impact on the professional socialisation process. The research on which this report is based sought to fill some of these gaps in our understandings of BME trainees' experiences of PEITT, and to identify strategies that might help in their recruitment and retention in the longer term.

The research was funded through a small Recruitment and Retention Challenge Grant from the Teacher Development Agency (TDA). These grants form part of the TDA's wider policy agenda to widen the diversity of new intakes opting into teaching. Higher education institutions have been encouraged, through targets and financial support and incentives, to develop specific strategies aimed at widening the diversity of their cohorts. Examples of such strategies include the provision of specialist admission help for BME prospective trainees; opportunities to gain experience in schools; open days and 'taster' events; advertising in the ethnic minority media, and the development of good practice guides and staff training to help ITT providers address issues of 'race' and ethnicity.

The impetus for this research resulted, in part, from presentations and discussions at a one day PEITT Network<sup>1</sup> staff seminar on diversity held in October, 2007. The quantitative research conducted by the Association for Physical Education (AfPE) and the Ethnic Minority Foundation (EMF) presented here, showed the extent of the national under-representation of BME students in PEITT. Although the day focused on addressing reasons for BME under representation and strategies that might be used for improving recruitment, we felt it was also important to learn about the *qualitative* experiences of trainees that have been attracted into PEITT. Understanding the experiences of our current BME trainees might offer useful insights into how we might recruit and retain future such trainees. Our choice of qualitative research was supported by a national study published shortly after the network day, investigating the links between gender, ethnicity and degree attainment (Higher Education Academy, HEA, 2008), which specifically calls for further qualitative studies of students' experiences of different subject areas.

## Methodology

Given the low numbers of BME trainees in PEITT nationally, in order to recruit sufficient participants for the study, trainees from five universities delivering secondary PEITT programmes were invited to take part: Leeds Metropolitan University (the lead university); the University of Bedford; Liverpool John Moores; Brunel, and Loughborough Universities. These universities are all major PEITT providers, running either three or four year undergraduate Bachelor of Arts/Science (BA/BSc) (Honours) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and/or one year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses, and had staff interested in and committed to the research. Invitation to participate in the research went to all current trainees, as well as to the last three years of recent graduates. As a result, our participants included trainees in different years of their undergraduate BA/BSc QTS training, one year PGCE trainees, and recent graduates in their first or second year in teaching.

The study used semi structured interviews to explore trainees' qualitative experiences of training. The interviews were semi structured and explored trainees' motives for entering teaching, the image of the profession, factors impacting upon choice of institution, their experiences of training (including those specific to teaching PE) and attitudes towards gaining a teaching position. Trainees were also asked for their thoughts on strategies aimed at increasing the diversity of intake into PE teaching. During the research preparation phases, we also decided to provide the opportunity for trainees to report their experiences anonymously, through the use of a questionnaire. This drew on previous work by Carrington et al, (2001), but included some specific questions on the subject of PE.

An important methodological issue presented itself in the development stages of the research around the classification of ethnicity. Which trainees would/should be

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<sup>1</sup> The PEITT Network brings together all providers of PEITT to discuss and agree action on related issues, as well as working to promote, protect and respond to their developmental needs and interests (see <http://www.technowledgeable.com/peitte2/peittenetwork.html>)

included in the study and how would they be recruited? Whilst we used the classification of ethnicity used by the TDA for monitoring trainee intakes, we were aware that this is highly contested, and that many trainees choose not to complete this section of their application forms. In addition, although all public institutions have a duty to collect and monitor information on ethnicity using such categories, the Data Protection Act prevented us from being able to use this information to identify BME trainees within our cohorts. Instead, we sent information about the study to *all* trainees, and invited participation from those who identified themselves as having a BME background. In the invitation, we were explicit about our concerns about using the 'official' classifications of ethnicity, and as an important part of the research process, engaged participants in discussion about their views of these, and their own preferred, self definitions. Any trainee interested in the research, but who did not identify themselves as having a BME background was also invited to contact us. One such trainee took up this offer, with a preferred description of 'White British of Eastern European background'. We have used the terms BME, trainee, and ITT here as they are used by the TDA; they are not necessarily our preferred ones. Of the 63 BME trainees attending the five case-study institutions over these four years (2004/5- 2007/8), 25 chose to participate in the study, making an acceptable 40% participation rate. 8 participants were recent graduates teaching in school, with the remaining 17, current trainees.

Given the small numbers of participants, ensuring their anonymity was a key methodological issue for the study. As a result, we have had to avoid linking trainees' individual viewpoints to their self or 'official' definitions of ethnicity. Instead, we present some detail about the overall sample, using the broader, Census 'output' categories – e.g. 'Black', 'Asian' or 'Mixed' heritage, rather than the more specific ethnic categories such as Black Caribbean or Pakistani. 13 of our trainees were Mixed heritage; 8 Asian, and 3 Black, using these broader categories. Where the data highlights its significance, we talk about trainees' differential experiences using these broader categories. For example, all of our Black trainees experienced stereotypical comments about their physicality that were not a feature of other trainees' accounts. We recognise that in using these broader categories we are in danger of reproducing essentialist conceptions of ethnicity as homogenous, static categories and try to avoid this by presenting sufficient data to illustrate the similarities and differences of trainees' experiences, and explicitly address the intersections of ethnicity with other categories of difference, such as religion and gender through our accompanying commentaries.

This study was based on a small number of interviews and questionnaires from those trainees that chose to take part, and therefore any recommendations and conclusions that we have drawn must be viewed with this in mind. Nevertheless, we argue that the insights gained are important ones, and the interviews have yielded rich, in depth qualitative knowledge of BME trainees' experiences within PEITT. Whilst some of these are similar to those of other BME trainees in other subject areas, our research has also shown the significance of subject culture of PE. The scale of this study has limited the extent to which we can say much about the universities' different training routes, and nothing at all about school-based routes. These limitations points to a need for further research, building on this initial study.

## Findings

### *The Participants*

Most of our trainees had similar concerns about the 'official' categories of ethnicity to those expressed in Carrington et al's (2001) earlier study of ethnicity and professional socialisation. All of our questionnaire respondents provided preferred descriptions of their ethnicity that were different to the 'official' classifications. Although the categories have changed from those used in Carrington's et al (2001) study to recognise more heterogeneity between individuals from Mixed heritage backgrounds, it was these trainees that found the categories most problematic. In addition, many of the trainees, particularly the Asian and Black trainees, preferred to describe themselves as having dual or 'hyphenated' identities, such as British Indian, or simply as 'British'.

Whilst using these official classifications of ethnicity as the starting point of the research, the importance of moving beyond these and acknowledging the participants' very different experiences was confirmed as we listened to their stories through the interviews. These showed the significance of gender, class, religion and age, as well as 'race' and ethnicity, on their experiences. By focusing on 'BME' trainees, there is a danger of constructing their experiences as homogenous and different to those of 'white' trainees. In fact, in many ways, our participants shared more characteristics with their fellow white PEITT trainees, than with BME trainees in teaching generally. For example, the majority were young, able bodied, successful sports performers, with no family obligations. In this sense, the majority of our participants did not fit with the older age profile of BME trainees found in other studies of ethnicity and ITT. All but four of our twenty five participants had moved into PEITT through the 'traditional' route directly from school to higher education, and were between 19-24 years of age. Most had made an early decision to teach, whilst they were at secondary school, where they had had positive and successful experiences of PE.

Most of our participants identified the intrinsic satisfactions of teaching, such as the opportunity to work with young people and 'to make a difference', as important in their decisions to teach. On the negative side, poor discipline, work load and too much paperwork were identified as concerns about teaching as a career. The low status of PE within schools was never cited as a concern by the trainees themselves, although this was significant to some of their parents. The majority of trainees completing the questionnaire agreed that being a role model for BME students in school was important to them; however the interviews revealed more ambivalence from some trainees to this positioning. Some trainees simply wanted to be seen as 'good' teachers, and were reluctant to see their ethnicity as playing a part in that identity.

A number of people had influenced our trainees' decisions to teach, and they had received both positive and negative recommendations about teaching as a career. Teachers had been particularly important in positively influencing them to consider teaching. Although the questionnaire data suggested that the majority of trainees had the support of their family for their career choices, the interviews revealed that for many, particularly the Asian trainees, this had not been straightforward, and had often had to be argued for. Some families had exerted pressure on trainees to

choose a higher status and better paid occupation such as medicine or law. In addition, some parents regarded PE as low status and 'non-intellectual' and argued that their children were too well qualified to choose this subject.

Factors influencing trainees' choice of university for their training were varied. Whilst proximity to home was an important factor for some, not least because of cost, others specifically enjoyed moving away from home to have some independence. The real and perceived constraints of family obligations meant that, for some of the Muslim women trainees in particular, moving out of the family home was not an option. The university's reputation for PEITT was important, but trainees' experiences on the day of their selection interview were most significant to choosing *between* institutions. Positive interactions with staff and feeling comfortable with the ethos of the institution were cited as very important, while predominantly white student cohorts were off-putting for some trainees. Familiarity with an institution, either through previous study prior to a PGCE course, or through a family member attending the university, played a part in some trainees' choice of institution.

### *Experiences*

Early experiences of their course were important, and for some Black and Asian trainees, the transition to university represented something of a 'culture shock' when they realized they were the only BME trainee, or one of a small number, in an otherwise all white cohort. The anxieties faced by all trainees entering a new course were thus heightened by their ethnicity. However, some of the Mixed heritage trainees reported little dissonance in their transition from their largely white secondary schooling to their similarly, largely white ITT course.

All but two of the participants were positively engaged in and enjoying their training or teaching in school. Only one trainee and one NQT, both Black men, were considering whether teaching was the right career for them. Most of the other trainees felt that their course was good preparation for teaching, and would recommend it to others. The positive support from their personal tutor was specifically highlighted in questionnaire responses. The challenge of balancing professional and personal commitments was a concern for many of our respondents, although, as noted earlier, they were less likely than other BME trainees in ITT to have children and a family to support. Nevertheless, over half were undertaking paid work alongside their studies in order to be financially solvent.

School placement had been the most important and rewarding aspect of their training for all but a small minority of trainees. Although some trainees had felt apprehensive at the prospect of a placement in a predominantly white school, in practice, their fears had not been borne out in practice. All trainees recognised the importance of having experiences of different kinds of schools; however, a few were disappointed with the lack of variety in their placements, and would have liked the opportunity to be involved in the decisions over school allocations. Difficulties on school placement expressed by some trainees were more to do with their relationships with staff rather than with students. Although reluctant to suggest negative experiences were linked to their ethnicity, some trainees talked about 'overly critical' tutors, and distinctly 'chilly' atmospheres on some teaching placements. Only one trainee had experienced a verbally racist comment from a student serious enough to make a formal report which had been effectively and

efficiently dealt with. Most of the schools appeared to have good 'zero tolerance' policies towards racism, something that did not appear to be so evident in university settings.

A significant finding from the study was the stereotypical or ill-informed views of the white trainees towards 'race' and ethnicity as professional issues and towards some of our participants. For example, six Black or Asian trainees had their place on the course questioned by white trainees suggesting their success had resulted from the institution's attempts to meet "race' quotas'. Three Black trainees experienced stereotypical comments in practical PE classes about their physicality and physical abilities. 'Jokes' and 'banter' about their ethnicity was something that some trainees accepted as a taken-for-granted part of their experiences. Muslim trainees reported having to make significant compromises to 'fit into' the non-Islamic culture of higher education and PEITT, although individuals negotiated these in different ways. Swimming, for example, was a particularly problematic practical context for two Muslim women; not so for another describing herself as '*very westernised*'. Finding places and space for prayer and fasting were also mentioned as difficult. The centrality of alcohol in extra curricular contexts and in informal socializing, prevented some men and women trainees from feeling that they could be - or indeed, in some cases, wanted to be - fully included in the PE group.

Equity issues had been addressed as part of their training, but these had more usually focused on special educational needs or English as an additional language, than on issues of 'race' and ethnicity. Undergraduate courses had addressed issues of 'race' and ethnicity more substantially than PGCE courses. No trainee talked explicitly about being engaged in these issues as part of their school placement experience, a significant finding, given that this is the part of the course that trainees view as most valuable. Trainees had different views about the usefulness of university based sessions addressing 'race' and ethnicity. Some viewed them as largely unnecessary given '*that racist attitudes had all but disappeared*'; however, some of these trainees, themselves, expressed stereotypical views about particular ethnic, religious or gender groups. A minority of trainees criticized the lack of attention to issues of 'race' and ethnicity in their training, arguing that, for white peers in particular, it was essential that 'facts of racism' were understood if they were to become credible teachers in multi-ethnic Britain. Practical help in how to deal with racist incidents amongst students was requested by some, although more proactive trainees drew their own ethnicity and/or religious identities as pedagogical 'resources' to address students' stereotyping.

Trainees felt they had been well prepared to apply for teaching posts, and many were enthusiastic about working with schools with ethnically diverse student bodies. Most were keen to be role models for BME students, but equally recognised the challenge of working in predominantly white schools. Some trainees felt that their ethnicity or religion would be additional 'strength' in their application for jobs; others were more circumspect and concerned that they may be discriminated against because of their ethnicity. The overall ethos of the school and the strength of PE department appeared to be more important factors than the ethnic makeup of the staff; trainees recognised that many posts would have predominantly white staffrooms.

Trainees' views on how to widen the diversity of future intakes into PEITT varied. Not surprisingly, given that some trainees had been accused by peers of being accepted onto the courses because of their ethnicity and 'institutional quotas', any suggestion that institutions give 'special treatment' or 'lower' admissions criteria for BME candidates was strongly rejected. Nevertheless, the high academic grade points requested by some institutions were suggested as a factor that may operate to prevent applications from interested BME candidates. In addition, the low status of PE held by some family and community members was identified as a key challenge for widening participation strategies. Certainly some of the trainees' own stories had highlighted their own personal battles to convince family members of the worthiness of PE teaching. Working with youngsters in schools to stress the educational worth of PE, the intrinsic satisfaction of teaching, and the possible opportunities for career advancement in schools, were all identified as being important in future marketing efforts. Finally, the importance of universities using case studies of successful BME candidates in PE teaching in their advertising and taster days, including themselves, was also suggested.

## Conclusions

Our study shows that BME recruits to PEITT share many similarities with their white counterparts, and are somewhat different from BME trainees in other subject areas. BME trainees in PEITT are more likely to be younger than BME trainees in teaching generally, and to have followed the 'traditional' route to university directly from school, rather than be 'career changers'. The low status of PE and teaching did not seem to be a factor in their decisions to teach, although this had clearly been a concern for some of their parents. These findings suggest that attempts to increase the diversity of new recruits should include strategies aimed at raising the profile of PE teaching in career guidance sessions with appropriately aged students. These should highlight the specific contribution of the subject to the development of young people, and the overall wider goals of schooling as well as the intrinsic satisfactions of teaching. We find it disappointing that the status of PE continues to be a challenge, despite the recent attention and significant levels of financial backing it has received from government, via the national PE and School Sport for Young People Strategy (DCSF, 2008) and associated Public Service Agreements (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 2007; 2008). The majority of our trainees were passionate about teaching PE and the contribution it could make to young people's lives, including challenging stereotyping and discrimination.

For some trainees, being a role model for BME students and being able to 'make a difference' was an important aspect of their decision to teach. Whilst most were keen to seek out multi-ethnic schools, others were happy to accept the challenge of working in predominantly white schools, as long as they felt that they would receive support for the subject area, and from other staff. Other trainees were reluctant to see their ethnicity as significant to their becoming a teacher: they simply wanted to be regarded as 'good' teachers, regardless of where they taught. As with other research, our study has shown that the inevitable uneven power relations that exist between mentor and trainee may be heightened by 'race' and ethnicity.

Our findings show the importance of developing a more sustained attention to issues of 'race' and ethnicity in PEITT, and specifically within the different elements of the



training. None of our trainees explicitly talked about being engaged in issues of 'race' and ethnicity on school placements and this suggests that PEITT institutions need to build in appropriate learning experiences into this important element of the training. These sessions should help trainees to understand the educational importance of ethnicity and 'race' to students' achievements in and experiences of schooling, and their role as teachers in promoting good 'race' relations. In addition, the experiences of our trainees in practical activity sessions highlighted in this study suggest a need for an explicit focus in training, that addresses how the practices and culture of PE can operate to reproduce - or challenge - racialised thinking, stereotyping and inequalities. In building up the learning materials and resources for ITT tutors (for example, through Multiverse<sup>2</sup>) the specific learning environments within PE should be addressed.

Finally, our study has highlighted the importance of ensuring widening participation strategies cannot be viewed as conferring any advantage on BME trainees. Several of our trainees had felt their position undermined by such assumptions, and they strongly rejected any strategies that could be questioned in this way. The huge, national, over-demand for PEITT places suggests there is room for the profession to undertake a critical examination of the admissions and selection criteria and processes, and their impact on widening participation strategies.

## Recommendations

1. Our research shows that, in many ways, BME trainees in PEITT are similar to their white counterparts; they are likely to be young, able bodied, having enjoyed success in their own PE and schooling, and followed a traditional route from school to university. They are intrinsically motivated to teach, and their love of the subject area is important to them. Whilst they are aware that the subject suffers from low status, and because of its practical nature sometimes seen as 'anti-intellectual', they have been able to convince their own parents that PE teaching is a worthy career. These findings point to the need to raise the awareness of the specific contribution of PE to young people's education and schooling in any marketing and widening participation strategies, working with families and communities, as well as with schools. The development of learning materials for teachers to use in school, for example, in careers education sessions, and with Key Stage 3 youngsters considering their GCSE and A level options, should be considered.
2. Our research also shows the importance of trainees' initial impressions of the ITT institution and of their experiences on interview, particularly their interactions with staff. It is therefore crucial that institutions carefully consider the messages they promote during these days. Signalling commitment to diversity can take a number of forms, including through the kinds of visual imagery used to advertise and promote the course, the use of current or former BME trainees on the interview day, and by specifically highlighting 'race' and ethnicity as equity issues that are considered through the course.

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<sup>2</sup> Multiverse is a website, supported by the TDA, and designed to help teacher educators and student teachers in addressing the educational achievements of students from diverse backgrounds. See [www.multiverse.ac.uk](http://www.multiverse.ac.uk).

3. Presentations and written materials about teaching placements, in particular, should be carefully considered. BME trainees' anxieties about working in predominantly white schools should be explicitly addressed, as well as the more general concerns impacting on all trainees. The strategies in place to support trainees experiencing difficulties in school should be clear, including the procedures for making a formal complaint if necessary. Overall, it was interesting to learn that our trainees appeared to feel well supported against racial harassment in school settings - many of which had explicit 'zero tolerance' policies –more so, it seemed than in their university settings. We propose, therefore, that ITT tutors review their course materials, including trainee handbooks, to ensure that their commitment to the promotion of good race relations is explicitly and clearly stated.
4. Although trainees agreed it was appropriate for them to have experience of different kinds of schools, few had been involved in the decision making about the allocation of schools. Whilst recognising the complexities involved - not least that ethnicity is only one factor alongside many that could be equally important – we propose that ITT tutors consider how they might involve all trainees in this process.
5. Our findings show that addressing 'race' and ethnicity issues as part of the professional development of PE teachers is sporadic at best. PEITT tutors need to carefully audit how and where these issues are addressed and how these might be better integrated into the courses. School-based learning tasks specifically addressing issues of 'race' and ethnicity in PE should be devised and implemented, working in partnership with school based tutors. It is recognised that tutors themselves may require support to develop their own knowledge and understanding of these issues.
6. In initiating this research, we were aware of the paucity of literature, research and resources addressing 'race' and ethnicity in PE, either at school or ITT level. For example, the Multiverse website, designed to help teacher educators and student teachers in addressing the educational achievements of students from diverse backgrounds, has few PE specific resources compared to those in other curriculum areas. This, of course, must reflect a lack of commitment on our part as PEITT tutors to centralise these issues in our work. We propose, therefore, that the PEITT network make this a priority, and support the development of such resources. We suggest possible two avenues for this below.
7. Finally, this study has identified a number of different avenues for further research.

Firstly, we recommend that this small study be viewed as a pilot and consideration given to extending it to a national study of BME trainees in PEITT, including school based routes. It may also be valuable to consider the possibilities of tracking some of the participants from this study, as they progress into work.

Secondly, although a focus on BME trainees' experiences is valuable, we also believe there is a need for research that addresses white trainees' experiences of 'race' and ethnicity issues as part of their PEITT. Although we live in an increasingly multi-ethnic society, this is not necessarily reflected in the populations of all schools, or, as this study has shown, within particular departments within schools, such as PE. Some of our trainees agreed that there is a need for BME PE teachers to teach in predominantly white schools, and play a positive role in challenging stereotyping

and discrimination. However, it is clearly equally important that white PE teachers are able to work to challenge these issues too.

Alongside this, there is a need to identify examples of good practice in teaching and learning about 'race' and ethnicity in PEITT, and to develop and share resources to support ITT tutors, for example, through the PEITT Network and Multiverse. The Multiverse website already provides some excellent materials, but our research has shown the importance of addressing the specific and embodied learning area of PE, and the need to add to this developing resource base. Some of our BME trainees' experiences shared in this report could be used to develop short 'narratives' for use by tutors in addressing issues of 'race' and ethnicity with future PEITT cohorts.

Finally, there should be a critical examination of the admissions and selection criteria and processes used in PEITT recruitment for their impact on widening participation strategies.

# 1. Background to the Research

Attempting to widen the diversity of those choosing to enter the teaching profession has been a key policy initiative of the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) for some time. Institutions involved in initial teacher training (ITT) have been supported by the TDA in their efforts to increase the diversity of their intakes, through, for example, by the setting of annual targets for the numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) trainees recruited, and specific funding to support their recruitment and retention. In addition, the TDA has commissioned a number of research studies aimed at addressing the complex ways in which ethnicity impact on trainees' and teachers' experiences of training and the profession (e.g. Carrington et al, 2001). ITT providers have developed a variety of strategies in order to increase their numbers of trainees from BME backgrounds, including the provision of specialist admission help for BME prospective trainees; opportunities to gain experience in schools; open days and 'taster' events; advertising in the ethnic minority media, and the development of good practice guides and staff training to help ITT providers address issues of 'race' and ethnicity. In 2007/8, institutions were able to apply for specific funding from the TDA in the form of Recruitment and Retention Challenge Grants to support particular, identified projects. The research reported in this report was funded by such a grant and focused on the specific subject area of secondary Physical Education (PE), one of three subjects doing less well in diversifying their ITT intakes.

The impetus for the research emerged, in part, from presentations and discussions at a one day Physical Education Initial Teacher Training (PEITT) Network<sup>3</sup> staff seminar on diversity held in October, 2007. Research conducted by the Association for Physical Education (AfPE) and the Ethnic Minority Foundation (EMF) was presented showing the extent of the national under-representation of BME students in PEITT (Turner, 2007). Although the TDA met their target of 10.5% of new entrants opting for teacher education in 2006/7 to be from BME backgrounds, this figure did not account for variations between different subject areas, or across different age phases.

PE remains one of three specific subject areas where trainees from these backgrounds remain significantly under-represented; current statistics suggest that PE attracts approximately 3% of trainees from BME backgrounds (TDA, 2008)<sup>4</sup>. The relative lack of success in attracting BME students into PE teaching compared to other subject areas suggests that specific subject culture may well be a compounding issue. Over the last decade or so, a number of studies have explored the impact of ethnicity on teachers' professional socialisation, (e.g. Carrington et al, 2001; Siraj Blatchford, 1991; Basit et al, 2006) and their teaching experiences in school (Basit et al, 2005), but none of these have focused on experiences within specific subject cultures. Arguably, it is the centrality of the body, and the link

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<sup>3</sup> The PEITT Network brings together all providers of PEITT to discuss and agree action on related issues, as well as working to promote, protect and respond to their developmental needs and interests (see <http://www.technowledgeable.com/peitte2/peittenetwork>)

<sup>4</sup> These figures may be an underestimation, since a considerable number of entrants choose not to complete the ethnic monitoring section of their university/course application form.

between this and its status within schooling more broadly, that points towards the need for a specific focus on PE.

Research exploring racism and the under-representation of BME participants in sport have highlighted the prevalence of stereotypical attitudes held by coaches, administrators and spectators about their physicality and abilities (e.g. Long, et al, 1997). As yet, there has been little attention to 'race' within PEITT, although there is work exploring trainees' gendered identities (e.g. Brown and Rich, 2002; Rich, 2001) and how teachers' gendered bodies are important 'tools' of their work (Webb and Macdonald, 2007a; 2007b). There is little research, however, that acknowledges trainees' multiple identity positions, and the ways in which different identity markers intersect (Flintoff, Fitzgerald and Scraton, 2008).

Benn's (1996; 2002) and Benn and Dakgas' (2006) work is one exception and is particularly important for exploring the inter-relationship between religion and ethnicity in Muslim women's experience of primary ITT, and the institutional challenges of offering an educative environment compatible with the requirements of Islam. The PE element of the training posed particular problems, with many of the traditional practices and policies linked to the body, such as traditional clothing, and working in mixed groups, having to be changed or adapted. Their research also shows the varied experiences of the Muslim women on teaching placement. Whilst some were on the receiving end of religious prejudice and discrimination, others were welcomed and seen as an important asset in schools characterised themselves by diverse populations.

Our research was set against this policy and research background, and aimed to contribute to an understanding of BME trainees' experiences of PEITT and to identify strategies that might help in their recruitment and retention in the longer term. Limited funding meant that it was only possible to invite participation from trainees from five universities involved in secondary PEITT programmes: Leeds Metropolitan University; the University of Bedford<sup>5</sup>; Liverpool John Moores; Brunel, and Loughborough Universities. However, these are major PEITT providers, running either three or four year undergraduate Bachelor of Arts (BA)/ Science (BSc) (Honours) with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) courses, and/or one year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses. Trainees on both PGCE and undergraduate courses in the academic year 2007/8 were invited to take part in the research. Data collection took place in May and June of 2008 which involved the completion of a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. In order to increase the numbers of possible participants in the research, information about the study was also sent to up to three past trainee cohorts for each institution.<sup>6</sup> The semi structured interview and the questionnaire explored trainees' motives for entering teaching, their image of the profession, factors impacting upon their choice of institution, their experiences of training (including those specific to teaching PE) and attitudes towards gaining a teaching position. The questionnaire was adapted from those used in a previous study by Carrington et al, (2001) and the interviews allowed for trainees to talk in detail about their qualitative experiences.

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<sup>5</sup> Formerly De Montfort University until 2006/7

<sup>6</sup> The research aimed to include 8-10 participants from each institution, so decisions over whether to send invitations to alumni depended upon the numbers of current trainees opting to take part in the study (see Methodology Section for full details).

Before moving to the main body of the report, it is important to highlight why we have used particular terminology. We have used 'Initial Teacher Training', 'Trainee', and 'Black and Minority Ethnic' because these are the terms commonly used by the TDA. However, we recognise that the use of such terms is much contested, and these are not necessarily our preferred terms. We also use the terms 'race' and ethnicity together and interchangeably, drawing from others (e.g. Gunaratnam, 2003; Hall, 2000) who have stressed their complex interrelationships. As Gunaratnam (2003, p.4) notes,

The much used, general conception distinction between 'race' and ethnicity is that 'race' invokes a biological and genetic referent, and ethnicity refers to cultural and religious difference and kinship.

She goes on to note, drawing on Hall (2000), that the processes of biological and cultural differentiation through the categories of 'race' and ethnicity are not two separate systems of meanings ('discourses') but are 'racism's two registers'.

The next Section provides a review of some of the key literature that has explored the impact of ethnicity on the professional socialisation of teachers, including specifically PE.

## 2. Literature Review

### Introduction

This section overviews some of the more recent studies focusing on ethnicity and the professional socialisation of teachers. None of this work specifically addresses the experiences of trainees or teachers within the subject area of secondary PE. We do, however, report on the significant work of Tansin Benn that has focused on PE in primary ITT (e.g. Benn's 1996; 2000). Earlier, we highlighted the contested nature of terminology around 'race' and ethnicity - here we have used the same terminology as that in the original research.

### *Carrington et al (2001)*

This was an extensive, national, study of ethnicity and professional socialisation, conducted in the late 90s, using both survey and interview methods. The research aimed to explore the perceptions and experiences of ethnic minority trainees of their PGCE course and NQT year; university tutors views on the challenges of widening participation, and the identification of examples of good practice. The research consisted of five strands (1) a national postal survey with ethnic minorities on PGCE courses in 1998/99, and (2) follow up interviews with a selection of these; (3) interviews with PGCE university staff, and (4) a postal survey and (5) telephone interviews in 2000, with some of the original trainees in their NQT year. Strands 1 and 2 aimed to explore trainees' motives for entering teaching, their images of the profession, factors influencing their choice of institution and their views on current initiatives designed to increase ethnic minority recruitment. Strand 3 sought to explore the response of PGCE university staff to the current policy initiatives to widen ethnic minority participation in teaching, but also to identify examples of good practice. Strands 4 and 5 provided the opportunity to return to some of the PGCE trainees initially involved in the study, to explore their earlier experiences of teaching. The study's findings are significant, not least because of the scale and scope of this national study, involving approximately 37% of PGCEs of that academic year in the questionnaire responses, and interviews with 49 students. Nevertheless the authors do suggest that the findings needed to be read with the methodological limitations of the study in mind.

The findings show ethnic minority recruits have significant misgivings about the perceived low status and rewards of teaching, and yet have been motivated to enter the profession because of its intrinsic benefits and rewards. Higher than average numbers of these trainees were in science or other 'shortage' subjects. They see the importance of acting as role models for ethnic minority students and their own communities, as well as the significant contribution they can make in all-white schools. Being generally older than other trainees, and 'career changers', financial and family constraints added to the already demanding challenges of completing a PGCE year. Although anxious about the reception they would receive in all-white schools, this seems not to have been born out in practice. The difficulties actually experienced by those working in such schools seemed little different from those working in multi-ethnic schools. The study found few actual reported cases of overt racial harassment, although university staff were aware that this might happen, and many trainees expressed anxiety about this possibility. Although the majority of

NQTs were enjoying their teaching, with good levels of support, one in six reported experiencing racial harassment, mostly verbal abuse from pupils. Follow up telephone interviews revealed that almost ten percent were considering leaving the profession, citing the unrelenting pressures of work. Both trainees and university tutors expressed concerns over any widening participation campaigns that could be read as involving a 'relaxing' of standards for ethnic minority candidates. Yet, for university tutors balancing the desire to increase minority ethnic candidates with the impartial application of selection criteria was a significant and difficult issue. Tutors reported that the implementation of the TDA's Performance Profiles has tended to put pressure on institutions to recruit high achievers in terms of conventional qualifications, rather than adequately qualified candidates who they might deem to be able to become good teachers, and the authors suggest further research on this area would be fruitful.

### *Teeman et al (2005)*

This was a large research study commissioned by the TDA that explored the characteristics of unsuccessful applicants to PGCE courses. We have focused here on reviewing those elements of the project that highlighted the significance of ethnicity on the application and selection process for teaching. This study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods, including the analysis of raw data from 18,000 PGCE applications, just under half of which had been unsuccessful in gaining a training place; a survey of 800 successful and unsuccessful applicants, and interviews with 50 members of staff from 20 ITT providers. The findings show that although the TDA's (then) target of 9% of applicants from minority ethnic groups had been met nationally, success rates varied between institutions. Institutions with ethnically diverse undergraduate populations and local communities had little problem attracting applications from minority ethnic groups. ITT staff interviews highlighted that most of their minority ethnic candidates lived locally. More traditional institutions found the recruitment of minority ethnic candidates more problematic. In relation to applicants, a higher proportion of those applying for priority subject areas are more successful; ethnic minority candidates and men aged 30 and over are less likely to be successful compared with applicants who are female, aged under 30 or white. Those holding a degree at the time of interview, have a 2:1 and some school related experience are more successful than those who have no degree, a 2:2 or no experience. There is much variation in the nature of the admissions and selection criteria, and in the strategies used to encourage more diversity of applications. For example, ITT providers set their academic criteria to reflect the pressures of recruiting to a particular course – there are less competitive selection processes for less attractive courses. The research proposes several avenues for future research, including, identifying and publishing best practice examples of recruitment strategies aimed at widening the participation of minority ethnic candidates into teaching; a review of admissions and selection criteria in relation to phases and subject areas; a review of Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) inspections and TDA quality categories on selection criteria generally and how these might impact on how institutions' administer their selection criteria, and an assessment of the link between key criteria (e.g. class of degree) with retention and achievement on the PGCE courses and NQTs becoming effective teachers.



### *Basit et al (2006); Basit et al (2007)*

This research explored reasons why minority ethnic trainees withdraw from ITT courses. Not only are there less minority ethnic trainees in ITT, but they are more likely to withdraw than ethnic majority trainees. Data was collected from 34 ITT institutions, using telephone interviews with programme leaders and withdrawal questionnaires for trainees who had chosen to leave during their course (both minority ethnic and majority ethnic trainees). The findings suggest that withdrawal is best seen as a process rather than a one-off event. The reasons behind withdrawal are much the same for minority ethnic as well as majority ethnic trainees, although minority ethnic trainees are more likely to regret withdrawing than their majority counterparts. The study found that course tutors' explanations for withdrawal were largely similar to those given by the trainees themselves. These included, for example, realising that teaching is 'not for them', with too high workloads, problematic pupil behaviour and the pressures of an over-assessed curriculum as key factors. Financial, personal and health reasons were also cited as reasons impacting upon decisions to withdraw. However, there was a key discrepancy between trainees and course leaders about the level of support available for those who experienced difficulties. Many trainees cited this as a key contributor to their decision to withdraw, particularly a lack of support from school based tutors. Course leaders did not mention a lack of support at all as a reason that might have contributed to withdrawal. For a number of minority ethnic individuals, unwitting, deliberate and institutional racism also played a part in their experiences although the authors suggest that racism was not their sole reason for withdrawing. For example, trainees reported stereotypical attitudes regarding their heritage language and culture from some university and school tutors and fellow trainees, as well as racial harassment from students and some staff in school. The nature of school placements had been central to some trainees' decisions to leave – they had felt isolated in predominantly white schools, or felt they had been put into unrealistically challenging schools with little support. The report identifies a number of implications for policy, including; the importance of matching recruitment strategies with appropriate early intervention strategies at university and school levels; the importance of raising university and school staff's knowledge and sensitivity to issues of 'race' and ethnicity; the careful consideration of school placements in relation to ethnic mix and geographical distance; ensuring that reporting mechanisms for problems in schools are clearly highlighted to all trainees, and finally ensuring that schools fully understand and deliver on their commitments in relation to supporting trainees during placement.

### *Basit and McNamara (2004); Smart and Ross (2006)*

These two studies explore minority ethnic teachers' experiences of schooling, particularly their early years of teaching – Basit and McNamara focus specifically on experiences of the NQT year, using qualitative interviews, whereas Smart and Ross's (2006) study draws on a large-scale survey of a representative sample of 10,000 teachers within their first five years of teaching, from which 409 teachers from visible minority ethnic backgrounds were selected.

Basit and McNamara's study interviewed 20, mainly women, NQTs working in primary schools from three local education authorities in the Northwest of England, from diverse African Caribbean and Asian groups. Although not representative, this in-depth qualitative study provides a valuable insight into the experiences of some

NQTs primary women. The study sought to explore both the advantages and disadvantages of being an ethnic minority teacher. Overall, a key finding was the heterogeneity of experiences of the NQTs. For example, the research highlighted the importance of the selection process when applying for teaching posts, where trainees had had very different experiences; some felt their ethnic background to have been advantageous to them being given a job; others felt racial discrimination played a part in them not getting a post. The research highlighted the significant role of the mentor, observation and of the review process in the NQT year, and the ways in which this could be significantly different, depending upon the school context and the individual fulfilling the mentor role. The NQTs felt they were important role models for children, could challenge some of the limiting stereotypes, and could relate better to some of the parents as a result of shared backgrounds. In contrast the research also highlighted the negative attitudes of some of their colleagues, and difficulties of dealing with some white parents without strong support of more senior staff.

### *Smart and Ross (2006)*

The authors of this report stress that they have not been able to use a representative sample of visible minority ethnic teachers because complete data on this population of teachers does not exist. (The authors define visible minority ethnic teachers as 'non-white'). Nevertheless, the study does draw on a large number of teachers (409) and explores their experiences of their first five years in schools. The findings identify some differences between visible minority ethnic and majority ethnic (white) teachers, although the report stresses the importance of heterogeneity of their experiences. Visible minority ethnic teachers also *share* many similarities in terms of their views and experiences with white teachers. Visible minority ethnic teachers are more likely to work in schools with lower than average educational attainment and above average levels of free school meals and EAL than white teachers. There is some evidence that visible minority ethnic teachers are slightly more ambitious than white teachers for career advancement, although some identify racial prejudice as being a factor that may limit their careers. A greater percentage of these teachers compared to white teachers are involved in career development learning, although this tends to be on an individual basis rather than via those activities provided through the schools and local education authorities. This suggests that schools may not be enabling or encouraging teachers to take up these opportunities. Visible minority ethnic teachers were more likely than white teachers to stress the importance of 'race'/ethnicity equity issues, although all teachers put this aspect before social class or gender. There was a clear link between those teachers (white and visible minority ethnic) who understood how 'race'/ethnicity and religion/belief impacted on their classroom practice and those who had received training on this area. Visible minority ethnic teachers were more likely to say they understood this link regardless of whether they had had training or not, although some teachers in both groups indicated not understanding the implications for their practice of these equity issues. Visible minority ethnic teachers were more likely than white teachers to suggest achievement plans should target particular minority ethnic groups of children, and work with parents to raise aspiration. They were also more likely than white teachers to argue for the importance of having minority ethnic teachers to reflect diverse communities. Finally, visible minority ethnic teachers are more likely than white teachers to believe that teachers are not able to innovate in the classroom, and to bring about change – the authors highlight this as a concern, and

suggest that this might be because of recent experiences of discouragement and prejudice.

### *Jones et al (1997)*

This study focuses on the school experience of some minority ethnic students in London schools during their PGCE course. The study involved 19 students in all, 13 were black, 6 were white, and focused specifically on 'the in-school relationships with mentors, degrees of in-school comfort and as well as the coping strategies deployed by the trainee teacher' half way through their PGCE course (p.131). Three key themes emerged: the mentor/student relationship, comfort, discomfort and 'fitting in', and coping tactics. The study showed the significance of the mentor/student relationship to students' progress on the course. Some minority ethnic students suggested that their mentor had been unsupportive, or had been overly critical of their work, but in such a way that this 'subtle' racism was difficult to substantiate or challenge. Nevertheless, many black students felt it was important to recognise that racism impacts on the training process.

'Fitting in' on school placement is of key importance for all students. The authors suggest that this can be helped if there is a shared or similar background between the student and the pupils, if the school is in their locality or they get on well with the staff. The interviews showed that this 'triple' experience of fitting in and feeling comfortable was rare amongst minority ethnic students. Some minority ethnic students are seen as being able to make special contributions (for example, a Sylheti speaker found this advantageous with working in a school with 90% of students were of Bengali origin). However, more often students reported feeling uncomfortable, as a result of their ethnicity, class, or gender, and not being able to 'fit' in their school placements. Where their identity did have a better 'fit' with the school, better rapport and understanding seemed easier to develop. Some students were particularly critical of the policy of placing black students in predominantly white schools, where they were more likely to fail or have difficulties. The study reported that students' more usual coping strategy with difficulties was simply to try and 'survive' – not to question their mentor or their situation too much, and to try and do what they were told, and simply get through the practice. The authors recognise that issues of fitting in and building relationships with mentors are faced by all students, but argue that they may well be compounded by issues of race.

### *Basit, Kenward and Roberts (2005)*

This study was funded by Multiverse and aimed to identify and report on trainees' experiences of racism during teacher training'; to identify school responses to racist incidences and to identify examples of effective practices that tackle racism on school placements. The study used qualitative interviews with twelve minority ethnic trainees in three universities, including some who were on the Graduate Teacher Programme, together with six tutors and nine school placement mentors. The findings suggest that racism is still a reality in the lives of some ethnic minority trainees on teaching placements, and the authors make a number of suggestions about what needs to be done. Although the universities and schools involved in this project had equal opportunity policies, they did not have a separate anti racist policy. Student handbooks outline what to do if a trainee is having difficulties, but the authors suggest that more explicit guidelines about how racist incidents will be dealt with are needed. Whilst most trainees felt supported by their mentors and university

tutors, some clearly do not report incidents of discrimination. Students should be encouraged to report a racist incident anonymously if they do not wish to make a formal complaint. There is a strong need for training and development in the universities to raise the awareness of the possible incidences of racism during school placements. More sensitivity should be shown when selecting schools and mentors for minority ethnic trainees. Counselling services should be widely advertised, and a named member of university staff should be designated as a first port of call for any trainee having difficulties.

*Benn, (1996, 2000); Benn and Dagkas (2006)*

Tansin Benn's work is significant for this study because it is, we believe, the only UK research that has addressed the PE experiences of minority ethnic groups as part of their ITT, albeit in primary education. Benn's early work, completed as a PhD, is located in her own practice as a tutor on a primary ITT course. Through action research, it explores the complex intersections of 'race', ethnicity, culture, gender and religion in the everyday experiences of Muslim women trainees in the PE subject studies element of their ITT. In addition to collecting interview, observation and diary data with seventeen Muslim women through their final two years of training and first two years of teaching, a questionnaire was sent to seventy higher education institutions involved in ITT to explore their experiences of working with Muslim trainees. Whilst stressing the heterogeneity of their experiences, nevertheless, the study showed that the women were on the receiving end of significant levels of religious and racial prejudice from other trainees, as well as from school tutors and pupils, and experienced 'institutional racism' in the ways in which their needs in ITT were 'invisible' or ignored. The prejudice was stronger towards those who chose to wear the hijab, the headscarf, as a visible sign of their faith. Her survey data also showed that few were able to offer an educative learning environment conducive to the needs of Muslim trainees.

Although Muslim women's participation in PE at school level has been accommodated through single sex classes, the now, all coeducational, ITT courses present significant challenges. For the first cohort of Muslim women in Benn's study, the initial reaction when faced with totally coeducational PE sessions was one of shock. University tutors were under prepared and had not thought through the implications of meeting their religious needs within the traditional, institutional practices of PE. Initially, the strategy of the first intake of Muslim women was to 'suffer in silence' and not to object to the institution's lack of commitment to meeting their religious needs. Issues arising in PE were resolved largely on an individual basis, in a reactive rather than proactive way. For example, Muslim women were accommodated into practical swimming classes by being allowed to learn to teach from the side of the pool, rather than being forced to have to swim in a mixed group. Eventually, the institution began to provide facilities, such as a prayer room and appropriate catering, to address the needs of the increasing numbers of Muslim trainees, men and women. However these changes were met with much hostility from non-Muslim trainees, particularly when these changes affected other groups, such as the introduction of single sex teaching groups. Muslim women trainees also experienced significant levels of religious and racial hostility whilst on school placement – from pupils, but also from staff. Their response was largely one of retreat and of 'stasis', choosing to retreat from their religious identity and to talk about anything to do with Islam or being Muslim. There were a few examples where

particular trainees had been welcomed and made to feel 'comfortable' in school settings, but these were rare. Interestingly, school based PE sessions were often better than anticipated for the trainees; however Benn argues that this had more to do with the low status of the subject, rather than teachers support for the development of their teaching in this area. Benn's later work with Dagkas, (Benn and Dagkas, 2006) explores staff and trainees' attitudes to the now institutional-backed policy of offering Muslim women the choice of working in a single sex group for all of their studies, not just in PE. Non Muslim trainees' attitudes appeared to be much more supportive of the policy than had been evidenced some years earlier, suggesting it needed a sustained commitment on behalf of the institution to shift attitudes. Muslim women opting for the single sex classes, reported feeling 'comfortable' and report the significant impact this had on their confidence and enjoyment levels in the subject.

## 3. Methodology

### Introduction

Like Carrington et al, (2001) we had a number of misgivings as we embarked on the research. Concerns revolved around, firstly, the particular focus on BME trainees' experiences of ethnicity and training and secondly, the use of ethnic categories as the starting point for the research. As highlighted earlier, since we know little about the experiences of BME trainees in PEITT, there was a strong rationale for this research to be undertaken. However, we consider it equally important to address the ways in which white trainees' ethnicity and their experiences of 'race' and ethnicity impact on training. Indeed, in focusing only on BME trainees' experiences, we are aware of the dangers of contributing to a construction of this particular group of trainees as both homogeneous and 'different' from their white counterparts. In addition, in using 'official' categorizations of ethnicity as the starting point of the research, there is a danger of contributing to essentialised concepts of ethnicity, rather than exploring the heterogeneity of experiences and the intersections of ethnicity with other categories of difference, such as religion and gender (Flintoff, et al, 2008)<sup>7</sup>. However, as Bonnett and Carrington (2000) point out, ethnic categories can and have been used to highlight the need for, and support social change. Finally, throughout the project, we have been aware of, and reflected upon, the methodological issues raised by our dual role as researchers and lecturers involved in delivering aspects of the trainees' ITT programme. We agree with Carrington et al, (2001: 34) in their conclusion that policy related work such as this is as much 'a test the researcher's micro-political and interpersonal skills as it is of his or her methodological skills'.

### 3.1 Rationale for methodology

As the AfPE/EMF study of BME trainees in PEITT drew on the available quantitative data from institutional monitoring of ethnicity (see Turner, 2007), our own research was originally conceived to contribute to build on that picture by focusing on trainees' *qualitative* experiences of training. Although a small percentage of the overall total of PE trainees, nevertheless, percentages amount to real people with real experiences, that currently remain 'hidden' from knowledge within PE. We felt that these experiences needed to be heard, and made central to the research, and that semi- structured interviews were an appropriate method for this. We were also cognizant of the difficulty of conducting meaningful survey research with potentially small numbers of trainees.

The focus on qualitative research was supported by other research exploring students' experiences of higher education more generally (for e.g. Higher Education Academy (HEA), 2008). Confirming the findings from an earlier government report,

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<sup>7</sup> Whilst some trainees talked about their class background, their age or abilities, none mentioned their sexuality. Although not explicit in our participants' stories, other studies (e.g. Clarke, 2002; Flintoff, 1993a, b,) suggest that (hetero) sexuality forms an important aspect of life in PE and intersects with other relations of difference including ethnicity.

this study showed that being from a minority ethnic group has a statistically significant and negative effect on degree attainment, and that women are more likely to obtain a higher degree classification than men (except for the attainment of a first). The study also found that, although institutions had 'race' and Gender Equality policies and ethnic monitoring processes in place, there was less evidence of these impacting on their learning, teaching and assessment strategies in order to address differential attainment. In addition, interviews with lecturers found they were more likely to see the student rather than institutional practices as the core problem. The report concludes by arguing for more qualitative research on students' differential experiences of higher education, supporting our decision to employ semi-structured interviews. As a result, we have tried to provide detailed quotes from our trainees through the report, in order to let their voices be heard.

However, as the research planning progressed, we also decided to include an anonymous questionnaire. Reflecting upon the data collection process, we were particularly aware of our powerful positions, both as lecturers involved in delivering aspects of the trainees' PEITT courses, and as white researchers. Gunaratnam (2003), for example, warns of the dangers of ignoring the ways in which research on 'race' can produce, as well as challenge, social relations. Further, a number of researchers have explored the politics of confronting whiteness when involved in cross-ethnicity interviewing and researching issues of 'race' (e.g. Watson and Scraton, 2001). To what extent would trainees feel able to talk about their experiences openly with us, particularly if these were critical of the course, or particular lecturers (including ourselves), or about experiences of racism? Beckett and Clegg (2007) have argued cogently for the use of questionnaires to overcome the impact that the presence of the researcher may have on data collection, particularly when exploring sensitive issues. Like all data collection methods, questionnaires, too, have their limitations, but we chose to include these so that trainees would have an opportunity to provide us with information about their experiences on an anonymous basis. We also secured permission to use questionnaires from a previous, much larger study (Carrington's, et al, 2001) as the basis for ours, thereby giving us some scope to compare our findings with those of a larger cohort (albeit now somewhat dated).

Five institutions involved in university-based, teacher training were involved in the study: Leeds Metropolitan University; University of Bedford; Liverpool John Moores, Brunel, and Loughborough Universities. Funding limited the numbers of institutions we were able to include. The institutions were selected because they were each major PEITT providers; had been successful in recruiting some BME trainees, and had lecturing staff interested and committed to being involved in the research. Trainees on both PGCE and undergraduate BA/BSc with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) courses, in the academic year 2007/8, were invited to take part in the research. In addition, in order to increase the numbers of possible participants, information about the study and an invitation to participate, was also sent to up to three past cohorts for each institution. The study aimed to involve between 8-10 participants in each institution, so the involvement of alumni varied depending upon the take up of current trainees.

As Table 1 below shows, that there have been some increases in the numbers of BME trainees in PE over the last five years, although these have been small. Taking

the whole five years into account, of the total of 8218 PE trainees in England, just 242 (2.94%) were from an ethnic minority. This figure includes the Employment Based Initial Teacher Training courses (EBITTs) (which account for approximately 11% of all trainee places) and School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITTs) (which account for 0.77%), as well as the more standard, university based, courses. However, this figure does not include a further 408 trainees (4.96%) that did not declare their ethnicity on their application form, or where their ethnicity is unknown.

**Table 1: National BME trainee recruitment in PE over the last five years**

Year	Ethnicity				Actual Registration No	Percentage BME
	Majority	Minority	Unknown	Undeclared		
2003/04	1,389	40	0	116	1,545	2.59%
2004/05	1,418	31	52	18	1,519	2.04%
2005/06	1,636	35	36	40	1,747	2.00%
2006/07	1,605	71	27	48	1,751	4.05%
2007/08	1,524	65	3	67	1,656	4.04%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,572</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>8,218</b>	<b>2.94%</b>

The total number of BME candidates attending the five institutions involved in this research, across these last five years was 63 (as calculated using the same TDA statistics on declared ethnicity). A total of 25 trainees/alumni took part in the interviews, with a minimum of three from each institution, making our sample a respectable 40% participation rate. This is a slightly higher percentage than the participants in Carrington, et al's, (2001) national study on ethnicity and the professional socialisation of teachers.

### **3.2 Recruiting the participants**

An email letter outlining the research and inviting participation was sent to all trainees at each institution from their respective Course Leader (see Appendix 1). We decided that the initial information about the research should come from the Course Leaders rather than from us directly, for two reasons<sup>8</sup>. Firstly, we felt it was important for the research to be seen as part of the everyday strategies for improving institutional practice, and hence supported by the Course Leaders, and secondly, this went some way to prevent the trainees from feeling coerced by us to participate in the study. To ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act (1998) the invitation was sent to all trainees, rather than just those who had identified themselves on course application forms as coming from an ethnic minority background<sup>9</sup>. The letter explicitly acknowledged the complex issues involved in the 'categorisation' of ethnicity for monitoring, good practice and research purposes, but explained that the study would draw on the categories used on the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTTR) /Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) form. These were

<sup>8</sup> Where one of us had the role of Course Leader, the email was sent from another Course/Programme leader in PEITT.

<sup>9</sup> The Data Protection Act (1998) specifically prevents data collected for one purpose (i.e. University ethnicity monitoring) to be used for another, such as research.



provided at the end of the letter. We also included an opportunity for trainees who did not identify themselves as BME, but who, nevertheless, might be interested in the project, to contact us. As highlighted earlier, one of our initial thoughts was that the study should also involve white trainees and their experiences of 'race' and ethnicity. All too often white people are not seen as 'raced' (Twine and Warren, 2000; Bulmer and Solomos, 2004). Although there are now studies considering white trainees' experiences of 'race' and ethnicity (e.g. Gaine, 2001; Solomon, et al, 2005), few of these have taken a subject specific lens. We had envisaged adapting the interview and questionnaire to include any white trainees interested in participating. In the end, only one 'white' trainee, whose preferred self description was 'White British of Eastern European background', participated in the project. We return to these complex issues of categorising ethnicity below.

Trainees interested in participating in the study were asked to email the locally based researcher, who then sent out a full Information Pack, which included a covering letter describing the research, a Participant Information Sheet, Consent form, and a copy of the questionnaire with a stamped addressed envelop for its return (see Appendix 2 and 3). The final question on the questionnaire asked trainees to contact the locally based researcher if they would be willing to be interviewed. Interview dates and venues were then confirmed via email or telephone to take place at a time and place convenient to the participants (see Interview Schedule, Appendix 4).

### *3.3 The participants*

The questionnaire and the interview asked participants how they would define their ethnicity using the GTTR/UCAS categories (which reflect the categories used in the National Census, 2001). However, we also asked trainees to tell us their preferred self definitions and explored their views on the adequacy of the 'official' ethnic categories in the interviews. These are discussed in detail in Section 4.

The small numbers of trainees in our study means that to ensure their anonymity, we have not linked trainees' individual viewpoints to their self or 'official' definitions of ethnicity when quoting from their interviews. The TDA's national figures show the very small numbers of particular ethnicities, such as Black African or Chinese trainees in PEITT, for example. We have also chosen not to use pseudonyms, again for reasons of anonymity, since names are often indicative of particular cultures and/or religions. Like Ratna (2008), we also wanted to avoid any unintentional, inappropriate use of names. Instead we have used numbers, recognising this is rather impersonal and somewhat unusual in qualitative research. For the same reason, we did not set out to analyse the results by the trainees' institution.

We recognise that by presenting the data in this way, we may be doing little to challenge the view of ethnicity as being homogeneous, static categories. However, this had to be set against our responsibility for ensuring the trainees' anonymity, which we regarded as paramount. We do give some detail of the breakdown of the overall sample below (see Table 2), using the broader, Census 'output' categories—e.g. 'Black', 'Asian' or 'Mixed' heritage – rather than the more specific ethnic categories such as Black Caribbean or Pakistani, and where the data highlights its significance, talk about trainees' differential experiences using these broader

categories. For example, all of our Black trainees experienced stereotypical comments about their physicality that were not a feature of other trainees' accounts. In addition, where trainees' religion or gender has been significant to their experiences, we highlight this in our commentary.

Because the questionnaires were anonymous, it is not possible to link findings from these with individuals' interviews, and there are some differences in the two data sets. Not all trainees that completed the questionnaire were involved in an interview, and it was not possible to ascertain whether all interviewees completed the questionnaire. Twenty five interviews were completed, with more men than women involved in the interviews (14 men, 11 women). Thirty three questionnaires were given out, and twenty four returned, with less from men than women (10 men, compared to 13 women – one questionnaire did not declare their gender). The discrepancy between the numbers of questionnaires handed out and those returned can be explained in part by a delay at one institution in getting ethical clearance for the project. This meant that several trainees had left for their summer vacation before the commencement of the interviews, and although it was possible for them to return the questionnaire independently of the interview, the locally based researcher suggested that this was unlikely. In terms of the three broad categories of ethnicity, Table 2 shows there was little difference between the interview and questionnaire respondents.

Table 2: The Participants – 'Official' Ethnic Categories from Interviews and Questionnaires

<b>2001 Census 'Output' Data</b>	<b>Official Ethnic Categories used in 2001 Census and GTTR/UCAS forms</b>	<b>Numbers of Participants (interviews)</b>	<b>Number of Participants (questionnaires)</b>
White	Other White Background	1	1
Mixed	White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian Other Mixed Background	13	12
Asian	Asian or Asian British – Indian Asian or Asian British - Pakistani Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi Asian Chinese Other Asian Background	8	8
Black	Black or Black British – Caribbean Black or Black British – African Other Black Background	3	3
		Total = 25	Total = 24

In order to achieve a reasonable size sample, our invitation to participate in the project was sent to all current trainees on both undergraduate and PGCE courses,

as well as to those who had recently graduated. This meant that some of our trainees were in the early stages of their training, whereas others were almost at the completion of their course and thinking about applying for jobs. The variety in the length of time in training would clearly be a significant factor in trainees' reflections on their experiences.

### *3.4 The interviews*

The interviews were designed to allow trainees to talk in detail about their experiences of training. The schedule was semi structured and included questions on motives for entering teaching, image of the profession, factors impacting upon choice of institution, their experiences of training (including those specific to teaching PE) and attitudes towards gaining a teaching position. Trainees were also asked for their thoughts on strategies aimed at increasing the diversity of intake into PE teaching (see Appendix 4).

25 participants in total were interviewed from across the five institutions: 14 men and 11 women. Of these 25, 17 were current trainees, on either a PGCE or undergraduate BSc/BA PE (QTS) course, with a further 8 participants being recruited from recent alumni (those who had graduated in the previous two years).

Each interview lasted between an hour and an hour and a half, but some were much longer, with the longest lasting two and a half hours. Four interviews were conducted by telephone but the rest were conducted face-to-face at a time and space convenient to the trainees. Some of the interviews with alumni were completed at the school where they worked. With the participants' permission, all interviews were recorded, and transcribed. To avoid sending confidential digital files to the lead researcher by email, an outside company, OUTSEC, was used for the transcription of the interviews (see [www.outsec.co.uk](http://www.outsec.co.uk)). To ensure confidentiality, OUTSEC provided a password protected website to upload each interview, during which the interview was encrypted. The completed transcript was then downloaded in the same way.

### *3.5 Questionnaires*

The questionnaire was adapted from those used in a previous study by Carrington et al (2001), and aimed to explore similar questions to those in the interviews (see Appendix 4). 24 participants returned the questionnaire out of 33 in total that were sent out (73% return rate). Of these 24, 16 were current trainees, on either a PGCE or undergraduate BA/BSc PE (QTS) course, with a further 8 participants being recruited from recent alumni. 10 men and 13 women students returned the questionnaire with a further one that did not identify their sex.

### 3.6 *Data management and analysis*

The questionnaires were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) data analysis package. Two members of the research team, working independently, undertook the first analysis of the qualitative data from the interviews. Each transcript was analysed by the locally based researcher who had conducted the interview, as well as the lead researcher, Anne Flintoff, who was responsible for constructing the draft analysis. Coding was devised around the key themes of the interviews and questionnaires. This draft was then considered by all the researchers before the final version was agreed. The use of questionnaires and interviews enabled us to create a more comprehensive analysis.

### 3.7 *Limitations of the methodology*

This study set out to explore trainees' *qualitative* experiences of their initial teacher training in PE. In this sense, the findings provide in-depth insights into the experiences of a small number of BME trainees. These will not be representative of all BME trainees in PEITT. Given the small overall numbers of BME trainees in PEITT, however, we were pleased that 25 trainees/alumni agreed to take part in the study and argue that our study makes a useful contribution to this much under-researched area. Nevertheless, our study tells us little about the experiences of those who chose not to be involved. In addition, although we drew our participants from five key institutions involved in PEITT, our research cannot say anything about the nature of training across different institutions, or between modes of study (PGCE, undergraduate, school based teacher training routes). The numbers of questionnaires clearly limit the extent to which this quantitative data is useful. However, it did back up the key themes that emerged in the interviews, and as we have argued above, gave trainees a chance to tell us things about their experiences anonymously.

Finally, throughout the study, we have been conscious of our dual role as lecturers on the PEITT courses, and researchers on the project, as well as our own different ethnic identities, for the outcomes of the study. Albeit in different ways, we are all involved in working in different roles (as lecturers; school liaison tutors; dissertation supervisors) on the PEITT courses that the participants were asked to reflect upon. Four of us make contributions into university based sessions specifically addressing equity issues. We are all white, and with varying levels of research expertise in relation to issues of 'race' and ethnicity. Inevitably, our different positionings - in relation to the participants but also to each other - raise important questions of power and politics central to the outcomes of the study. Throughout, we have tried to be reflexive about these issues, and be explicit about our own value positions and the purposes of the research.

## 4. Black and Ethnic Minority trainees and Ethnic Minority trainees and Physical Education Initial teacher training: motives, influences and choices

### Introduction

This section draws on both questionnaire and interview data and is in two parts. The first part explores trainees' perceptions on the official categorisations of ethnicity used to monitor ethnicity in ITT and their preferred descriptions of themselves. We show how these classifications are viewed as highly problematic by most trainees, but particularly so by trainees from a Mixed heritage background. The second part explores trainees' motivations for teaching, and some of the factors influencing their decisions to choose this career.

#### 4.1 *Ethnic origins: official and self definitions*

Like Carrington et al, (2001), we were interested in the trainees' views of the 'official' categories as used by the GTTR/UCAS, and how these may differ from their preferred descriptions of themselves. Since Carrington's et al, (2001) study, the categorisation of ethnicity used in the GTTR/UCAS forms has changed to reflect those used in the 2001 Census. The main difference has been the inclusion of ethnic categories for people of 'Mixed' ethnic background (White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; Other Mixed Background), to replace the single, earlier category of 'Other'. As in Carrington's study, many of our trainees fell into the Mixed heritage ethnic categories, and they, too, had the greatest problem with the official categories, and particularly with any that included the word 'Other'. However, the *majority* of our trainees (all but three completing the questionnaire) stated their preferred description would be different to that of the official categories of ethnicity.

The responses from trainees from Mixed heritage backgrounds were diverse and included:

- 'Mixed – Black Caribbean and White, definitely not Other'
- 'Mixed 'race' – British'
- 'Mixed 'race''
- 'Mixed'
- 'Dual ethnicity'
- 'Mixed White and South American'
- 'White (European) - Asian'

As Carrington, et al (2001, p.38) notes, the existing ethnic categories do not convey 'an inclusive image of the United Kingdom as a multi-ethnic and pluralist society but also take no account of those who view themselves as having dual or 'hyphenated' British identities'. Although few of the Mixed heritage trainees used the description 'British' as part of their preferred descriptions, in contrast, the majority (ten) of the Black or Asian trainees included British, or simply wrote 'British' to describe themselves:

'Black British'  
'British'  
'British Indian'  
'British Asian'

The interviews confirmed these findings. Asian and Black trainees, rather than those from Mixed heritage backgrounds were the most accepting of the official ethnic categories. Twelve respondents suggested that although they would tick one of the mixed categories on the official forms (White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; Other Mixed Background), they were far from happy with having to do this. Some of their responses included:

*I don't like them. I feel that I just wonder why do you need to know that? Why should that make a difference? I often don't bother with them, I just don't write anything. Why do you need to know that, why...what should it make a difference....Myself, as I was younger I was always confused what to put which is an odd thing to say, but I was always confused but now I would put, if I had to put something, I think my sister would probably put something completely different but I'd put mixed, white and black African I'd put down.....I normally just say....if somebody asks me I just say mixed 'race', I don't refer to anything [Trainee 25].*

*Yeah, I don't like any of them. In fact I had a kid talk to me the other day and she said, 'are you half caste, miss?' and it is a term which is ... actually people have said that to me for quite a while, but I take it with a pinch of salt now and I also point out what they are trying to say as well. I said 'yes, I can see where you're coming from, but I'm not like half a pot, you know if you test half a pot and half of it's done and half of it's not, I'm not like that, I'm a full pot'. ..... [Trainee 21].*

This trainee went on to talk at length about her views on the categories, suggesting that although they had got better in moving away from a simple 'Other' category, they remain limited in capturing the real essence of a person's ethnicity:

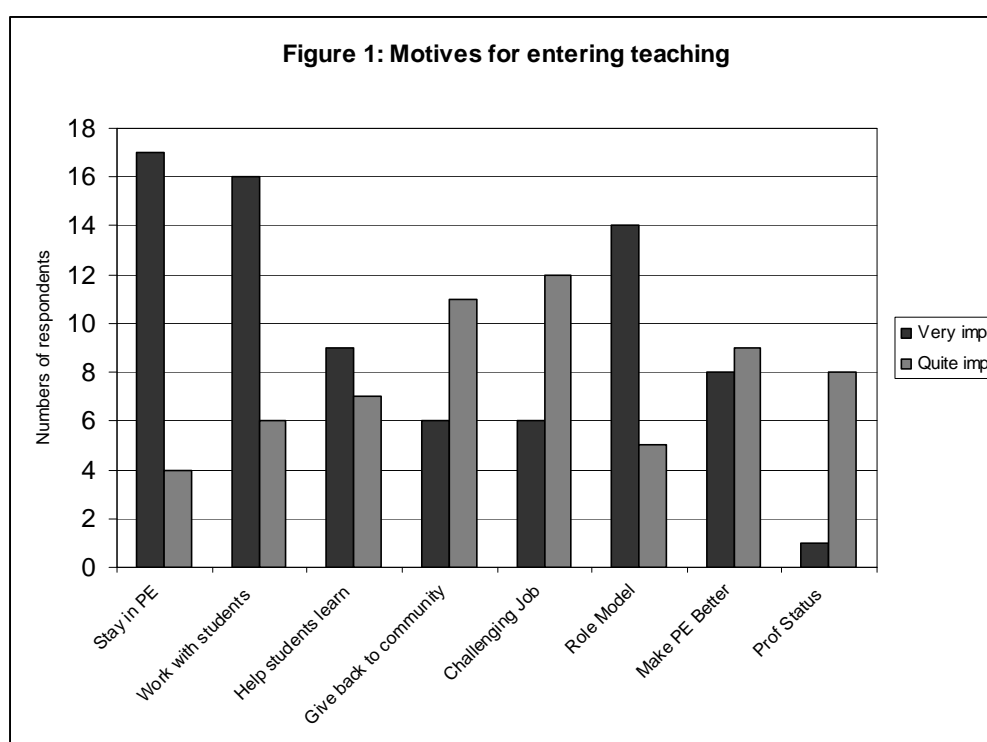
*It's a tricky one and it is getting better, depending on what study it is. I don't like ticking the box ..... I used to be Other, ages and ages ago, which is completely ... I'm not Other... it's like Other, Other what? You know, what is this Other, sort of thing? And as you know, as countries and Britain diversifies even more, that category of tick your ethnic group is going to get just bigger and bigger. And whatever box they do, say for example Tiger Woods, he's from like three or four different ethnic backgrounds.....It's very different, and also the ethnic background, it's not just your colour of skin, it's like your background in the sense of your experiences as well, so I can't necessarily pick ... .... [Trainee 21].*

Confirming this view that ethnicity is '*much more than your colour of your skin*', another trainee explained that she always described herself in terms of her nationality, religion and her family's birthplace:

*I am British Muslim Kashmiri. Yeah because that is saying I am born here, this is my religion but this is where my parents came from [Trainee, 9].*

## 4.2 Motives for entering teaching

In both the questionnaire and interviews, we asked trainees about the factors contributing to their decision to teach PE. Although there was some variation, and the reasons were sometimes complex, a number of themes emerged. The interview data confirmed patterns emerging from the questionnaire data, and showed the importance of intrinsic rather than extrinsic factors in their decision making. Like Carrington et al, (2001, p.65) we have used the term intrinsic here to 'denote a set of motivations that are seen to be inherently worthwhile or satisfying' such as 'the desire to work with young people' or 'staying in PE' whereas 'extrinsic' motivations are linked to more instrumental concerns, such as job security or holidays. Three factors were central in influencing most trainees' decision to teach PE; the opportunity to stay in the subject area of PE; enjoying the experience of working with young students, and the chance to make PE better and become a role model to other minority ethnic students (see Figure 1).



### 4.2.1 Positive and successful experiences of sport/Early decision to teach

The decision to teach had been made early on in the lives of most trainees. Fifteen of those completing the questionnaire had decided to go into teaching PE when they were at school or further education college, with a further three deciding during their final year on a sports science or similar undergraduate course. Unlike the trainees in Carrington's et al, (2001) study, who were older than the norm with a mean age of nearly 28, many having switched careers to become teachers, all but four of our

trainees had moved directly from school or college into their training course (or for one or two, after a year or so spent travelling) and therefore were much younger (between 19-25 years of age)<sup>10</sup>. The younger age of our participants may reflect not only the changing demographics of ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom, but also commonsense ideas that 'ability' in PE teaching is an occupation for the young (Webb et al, 2008).

The interviews revealed that most trainees had enjoyed, and were successful in, their own school PE and 'staying in the subject area of PE' was very important to most trainees (see Figure 1). Many had been involved in a variety of sports and physical activity, in and out of school, and had had a good relationship with their own PE teacher. These two aspects were mentioned first when trainees were asked about their decision to become a PE teacher:

*...it was the PE teacher firstly because I loved my PE experience. I lived in the PE department, I can't remember going anywhere else, I just loved it. Second of all I had a talent, I knew it was my favourite subject, ability wise I was autonomous, I'd do something without thinking and I'd be good at it whereas the other subjects I'd have to really work hard at it in order to be good at it [Trainee 10].*

*...all the way through my school life, I've loved doing sport. ...and just at school the PE teachers definitely, I went through the lower middle to upper schools and in middle school got on really well with my PE teacher there and was in all the teams, like, pretty much every sport and things like that. I really enjoyed my lessons, tried hard and then in upper school, same again really, got on really well with the staff at my upper school, still in contact with a lot of them [Trainee 25].*

*....I think because I was successful at PE as a child and I really enjoyed the subject myself as a child. I enjoy working outdoors and being active, definitely a kinesthetic learner and a kinesthetic person. It was just definitely the natural choice [Trainee 13].*

For two male trainees, PE teaching had been suggested to them as a 'fall back' after failing to become professional sportsmen. Another male trainee had chosen to retrain as a PE teacher after retiring from part time professional sport after injury.

#### *4.2.2 Enjoying the experience of working with young people*

As well as a love for and ability in sport, many trainees also mentioned their positive experiences of working with young people by either helping their PE teachers or coaching sport in their later years of schooling. Positive responses from the young people and seeing them learn were motivating factors reinforcing their decision to choose teaching as a career option. In addition, several trainees had parents or

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<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to compare the average ages of our trainees with those in Carrington's et al, (2001) study which only included PGCE trainees. Our study included trainees on all years of their undergraduate degrees, hence trainees aged 19 – 21 years of age). Interestingly, two of our mature trainees had chosen to retrain through an undergraduate rather than the shorter, one year, PGCE route.



close relatives who were teachers and had picked up some understanding of the day-to-day challenges of teaching through them:

*Well before I came to the course I helped out in my old school just teaching....when I was year 12 and 13 I was helping cover some year seven, not cover but be there with an assistant teacher and also they ran after school clubs like athletics clubs and set up cross country teams and working with the kids was really rewarding...Both my parents are teachers and also just the fact that I was following in their footsteps made it easier to just go into teaching as a field. [Trainee 23].*

*I always looked up to my teachers and I just wanted to be like them really and affect people's lives like they did really with me. Um....the subject, PE because I just absolutely love it, just getting on with children and teaching children, you know like helping them learn and achieve things. I think I always liked the thought of just being able to have that impact on them and just seeing that they're learning and stuff and me being able to do that creatively and stuff. [Trainee 2].*

#### *4.2.3 Being a role model to BME students*

Several interviewees specifically stressed they had chosen teaching to 'give back to the community' or to 'make a difference', particularly to other BME children, or those in deprived circumstances:

*....with getting a little bit older and starting to consider things I just realised that perhaps there was an avenue for me to actually make a difference and make a sports field a little bit more equal because I was doing things and was always the only one [ethnic minority], so I thought well maybe if I can get involved in the system I can then help to actually make it better for the next person [Trainee 15].*

*A mixture of things. Having teachers who weren't so good at the school I went to...quite a good school to be honest but I thought one or two teachers I had...I personally thought I could have done a better job .....and also the fact that I hadn't had a PE teacher other than from a white background, I felt that I could have been a different role model for kids in schools being from a different background [Trainee 12].*

Figure 1 also shows that fourteen of the questionnaire respondents felt being a role model to BME students was 'very important' in their reasons for choosing teaching, with a further five suggesting it was 'quite important'. However, several trainees were clear that they did not want to be regarded as a role model for BME students, stressing they simply wanted to be known as a 'good' teacher, regardless of their ethnicity. This is one example of the difference in trainees' views of the significance of their ethnic identity for their developing professional identity. Other examples are explored later in the report.

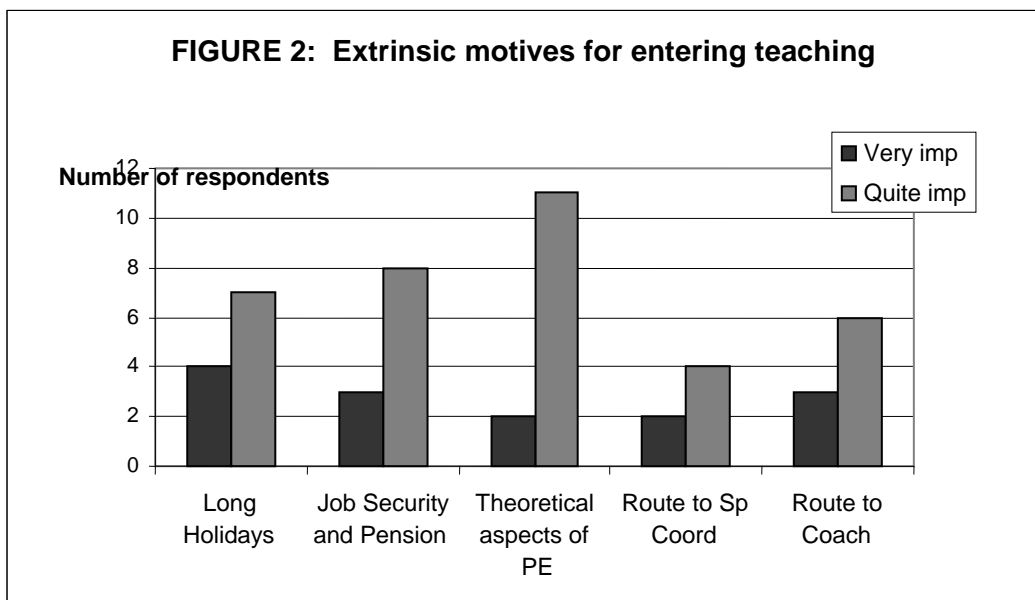
Two trainees, both mature students, had had poor experiences of schooling themselves and it has been this personal experience that was a motivating factor in

them choosing teaching as a career. One recalled his ‘massive journey’ to become a teacher, motivated by the possibility of making schooling a better place than the one he had experienced. Having been excluded from schools on occasions himself as a child, he worked as a sports coach with young offenders for several years, and it was this experience that helped him decide to become a teacher, some years later:

*Probably the best part about that was working with young offenders, because that is really where I got my kind of goal that yeah, this is where I want to be heading. A lot of the young offenders were excluded from school ...and they kind of looked at me as somebody that they could talk to and coming from the same background that they did, it was kind of like how can you do it. That was my motivation. Where it all goes wrong really is at the start of your education and it all starts to go wrong in school. If I could be that person in school to stop it from going wrong, then maybe they won't reach young offender stage. That is what I am hoping for [Trainee 24].*

Another remembered being told by a teacher that she would ‘never amount to anything’, and turned to PE teaching much later in life. Having worked successfully in a number of well paid administration jobs, she returned to education many years later in order to help with her son’s education; firstly deciding to learn Urdu, later for other GCSE qualifications, and then helping in her son’s junior school. These experiences helped her to make the big decision to change careers.

In contrast to these intrinsic factors, as Figure 2 below shows, extrinsic factors, such as job security and pension, or long holidays were seen as less significant, and rarely mentioned in the interviews as positive factors influencing the trainees’ decisions to teach.



#### 4.2.4 Positive and negative influences

We were interested in whether the trainees had been influenced in their decisions to teach by the recommendations of other people. Of the trainees returning the questionnaire, six suggested that they had not had teaching recommended to them by anybody. For the others, a career in teaching had been recommended to them by teachers (11), friends (8); parents (4); sports coach (4) and careers guidance officer (2), a head teacher (1), teacher friend of the family (1) and college tutor (1). They mentioned receiving comments such as:

*My PE teacher said I would make an excellent teacher. It made me think twice, and I then researched into the profession. It wasn't till I enjoyed the theory work in my A-levels that I realised PE teaching was for me*

*Decent pay and holidays. Professional status. Working with young people and changing lives and minds.*

*Great working with children, very rewarding every day's different*

*Working with young people to be extremely rewarding. An exciting career that is stimulating and challenging. The holidays.*

*My strengths & interests suit the career. They thought I'd enjoy it and be good at it.*

*They thought that I would be well suited to it.*

The questionnaire also asked trainees whether they had been discouraged from taking up a career in teaching. Overall, half (15) had experienced comments or advice from teachers (5), parents (4), friends (5) or sports coach (1) not to go into teaching. The reasons included:

*'Poorly behaved kids. Poor wages.'*

*'Working with young people is difficult'.*

*'My mother also experienced the difficulties which I may face as a teacher'.*

*'Too much stress, pressure'.*

*'Not very well paid and long hours. Politics. Increased paper work'.*

*'The potential for racism given my religious beliefs (Muslim)'.*

*'Low income'*

A number of questionnaire comments were specifically linked to the low status of PE as a particular subject specialism within teaching:

*'They tried to put me off the profession by stereotyping the subject as "just jumping around all day". They didn't understand the importance of being physically educated through, in or about the physical'.*

*'My head of year who was also a PE teacher said that I would be wasted on teaching and advised my parents to get me to do something else!'*

*'Too intelligent to teach PE, should be a doctor / lawyer etc'*

In the interviews, many trainees, especially some of the Asian trainees, talked about their struggles to overcome parents' negative attitudes about the status of teaching, and specifically PE teaching. Some had felt pressurized to opt for what their families regarded as higher status and better paid careers in medicine or law, rather than in teaching. One trainee told us of her exasperation at having to educate her parents about *'what PE was really about'*. Others suggested that their parents had been persuaded to support their career choice only after several discussions and seeing their offspring's unwavering commitment over time. Whilst the questionnaire data suggested that the majority of the trainees (sixteen) had support from their parents for their decision to teach (sixteen trainees either strongly agreed, or agreed with the statement, 'My family support my decision to teach'), the interviews revealed that this was not always a taken-for-granted support, and had often had to be argued for.

In addition to the perception of teaching generally as a low status occupation, the specific subject specialism of PE was also questioned because of its practical, and therefore perceived, 'non academic' nature. Trainees that had been successful academically at school recounted pressure from teachers who considered them to be 'wasting their time or talent' in opting for PE:

*I think it was because I was a straight A student ...so [the head of year at school] was like what are you going to do, and I remember he sent me on a visit day to Oxford [university] but they didn't do any PE there so I wasn't really interested in it. I think because I was quite an able student he was like, 'the world's your oyster you can do anything', he was PE teacher as well so I always found that quite frustrating. I was like but you're a PE teacher! I don't know if he didn't enjoy his teaching very much or if he just felt I was capable of something more worthy in his eyes..[Trainee 19].*

*No-one has really put me off it. My mum always had doubts about it....She had doubts. It is a typical Indian thing that your son or daughter goes into medicine, law, something fancy, something scientific, but when I said to her I wanted to be a PE teacher, she had doubts about it. She was all.. well what are you going to do with that? [Trainee 11].*

For two Muslim women trainees, the views of the extended family were particularly strong:

*In terms of putting me off, it would be my grandparents who were like, oh my god, she can't be running around doing that. It was horrendous. Their perceptions were ridiculous and I don't condone it one bit even though they're old and traditional..... they weren't happy with it and because Asian culture....are so deprived of so many things, it's such a massive thing to be educated, it's compulsory. If you don't get educated you'd be disowned, it's*

*that pressure on us. And then the next pressure is you've got to go into as much as money as possible so that you don't live in poverty and they saw PE as me running around, they saw me as not earning any money ....[Trainee 10].*

*Not teaching, but choosing PE, yes. Because of at first, not my immediate family in England, but family in the Middle East didn't really understand, well, what is PE? And my dad's the eldest son so you have to kind of set the example and so for his children, you know, the first daughter went off to go and do medicine, the first son was going off to do business; well, teaching's fine, but what's PE? Why leave home for four, five years or whatever, to then go and teach somebody to throw a ball. That was how limited their knowledge of it was and it was just getting over that barrier of going, well, actually there's a lot more to it [Trainee 15].*

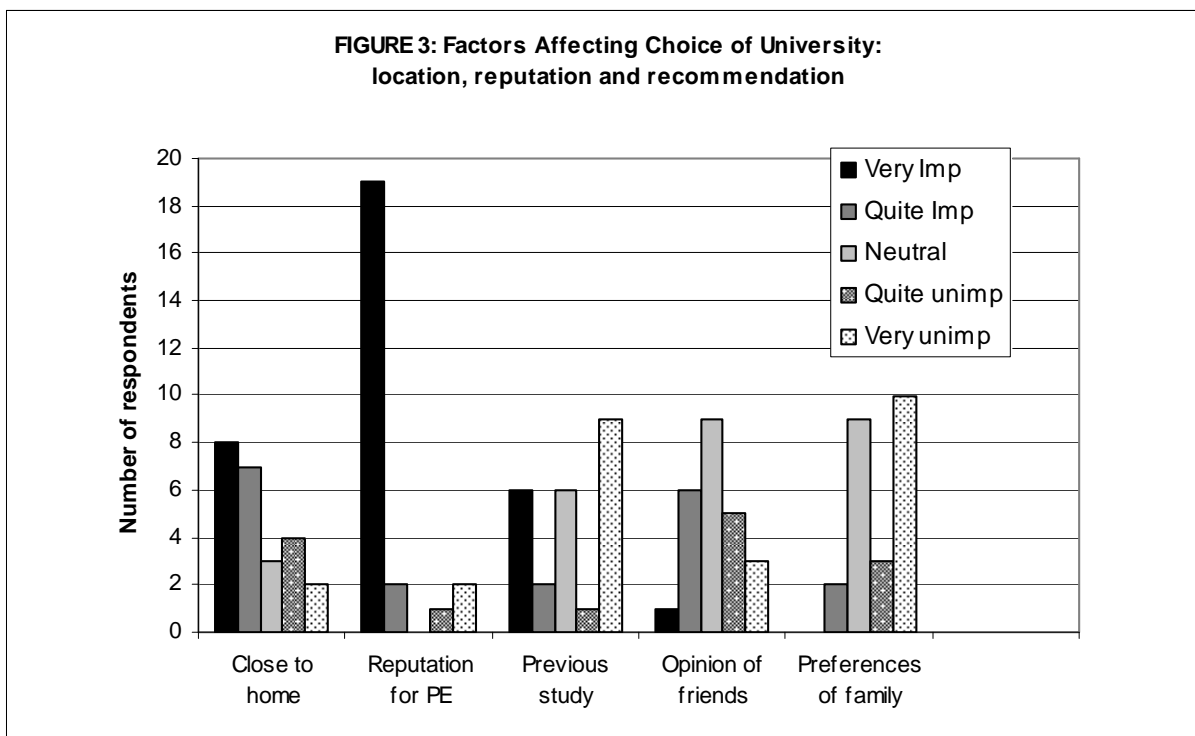
These experiences mirror those found elsewhere that show the significance of family support for young people's career decisions, particularly young women from Muslim communities (e.g. Kay and Lowrey, 2003; Kay, 2006).

Eleven trainees in the questionnaire data either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the statement that the low status of the subject may put off BME students from applying to become PE teachers. However, the trainees' own concerns about teaching PE, expressed in the interviews, were rarely about its status. Instead, they talked about whether they would have the ability to become a good teacher; be able to cope with the amount of paperwork, and the demanding nature of the job. In contrast to Carrington's et al, (2001) study, few trainees in our research mentioned concerns about students' poor behaviour or being in a minority in schools as issues that made them doubt their decision to teach.

### **4.3 Factors affecting choice of institution**

#### **4.3.1 Reputation for Physical Education**

Not surprisingly, given the importance of the subject itself for trainees, a key factor influencing their choice of institution was its reputation for PE (see Figure 3). Some trainees had chosen to stay in the same institution for their PGCE as the one where they had studied for their undergraduate course, explaining that familiarity with the staff and 'insider' knowledge was an important factor.



However, a number of other factors played a part in trainees' decision making, including proximity to home, and their initial experiences when visiting the institution. As Section 5 explores in more detail, for some trainees the move into PEITT entailed making a transition from a multi-ethnic to a predominantly white community, and having family and friends close by ensured support against feelings of isolation. The interview data highlighted the importance of the experiences whilst being interviewed for an ITT place<sup>11</sup>, particularly the initial interactions with staff, and the extent to which trainees were made to feel comfortable. Other factors, explored through the questionnaire, such as the university's reputation for equal opportunities or the numbers of BME students or staff, seemed to be less important for their choices (see Figure 4 below).

#### 4.3.2 Proximity to home

For several of the PGCE trainees, the proximity of the university to home was an important factor in their choice, with family playing a central role. For these two male trainees, it offered them the cheapest way to study:

*one of the reasons, the main reason I chose [name of institution] you know the location of it wasn't too far and I didn't really want to travel you know go to somewhere out of London to do a one year course didn't really make that much sense.... [Trainee 4].*

*Well [name of institution] would have been my first choice because it's close to home. So I thought, 'Well its close to home, I can stay at home and just travel up and down and look after Mum and Dad at the same time and I can*

<sup>11</sup> All candidates applying for an ITT place are required to have an interview in order that their suitability for teaching can be assessed.

*save money as well'; because if I went away from home, obviously I would have had to spend money on accommodation, and everything else with it [Trainee 18].*

For the three older trainees with children, proximity to home was essential, meaning their choice of institution was limited to their local university. However, as noted earlier, most of our trainees were aged between 19-25 years of age, and therefore significantly different from the older age profile found in Carrington et al's (2001) study, many of whom had children. PE is a subject area that attracts young trainees, and our research shows the importance of attending to the complexity of BME trainees' identities and the intersections of subject choice, age, gender and ethnicity and religion in exploring their choices of university.

For some trainees, decisions to move away from home in order to attend university were shaped by real and perceived obligations of family and community (see also Bagguley and Hussain, 2007; Kay, 2006). One Muslim woman trainee recounts her very difficult first year, and the impact of travelling for forty minutes from home each day.

*Basically my parents didn't allow me to move out so I was forced to stay at home, which was huge, and at the time I didn't have my [car driving] licence so I had to use the train and then the bus and it was horrendous really, it really affected my first year. ....Yes, because they didn't want me to....they see university as a way really you could just...lots of partying and lots of influences...lots of things that they're worried about and they don't want me to experience that. They want to keep me at home where I've got a good family there and then I can study..... There's a line that I can cross though, which is a combination because my grandparents were like, you're not living out, she's getting too modern for the day, so my parents were under pressure so they kept me at home [Trainee 10].*

However, for others, decisions about choice of university were about getting some space away from family and school friends, and being able to develop new friends. Whilst proximity to home was important for some trainees, it was their experiences on the interview day, discussed below, that was a key factor for many in choosing between institutions.

#### *4.3.3 Experiences on the interview day*

Although both reputation and location were cited as important in choosing where to apply for training, for many trainees, it was their first experiences of the institution, on the day of their interview, which were significant in deciding between institutions. Their interactions with staff, and the degree to which they felt comfortable with the institutions' ethos on that day, were cited many times in the interviews as being important factors in their decisions to choose to go to one university over another. In addition, having a link with the university, either through previous study, or having a friend or sibling also studying there, contributed to them positively to their developing sense that their ITT course would be 'ok'. The following comments were typical.

*Because I did undergrad there and I knew the surroundings and knew the environment. .. the main reason I chose [name of university] you know the location of it wasn't too far and I didn't really want to travel ...to do a one year course that didn't really make that much sense... [Trainee 4].*

*Just the reputation and obviously I enjoyed the undergraduate so I was – I do not know, I was pretty sure that I wanted to do it and obviously I knew [student's name] from undergrad so [student's name] was there so that was nice, there was just – and I just got on well at the interview with people, everyone I managed to get on, with, yes, I just thought – good [Trainee 20].*

*I knew that the course at [name of university]... having friends who had gone through the sports science course and PGCE obviously ... you know world and, if not, country renowned ..a very good course and obviously it was familiar and I would be able to stay at home and things like that, so ... and I knew some of the lecturers as well and it just felt right really in a sense [Trainee 21].*

Many of the trainees' comments about their choice of course were explicitly related to their experiences on interview as a BME candidate. More often than not, they had been the only BME candidate - or one of a small number - on this day. For some, this was not an unusual experience, or one that was viewed as particularly problematic. Often, it simply reflected their previous educational experiences in predominately white settings. For others, it had raised doubts.

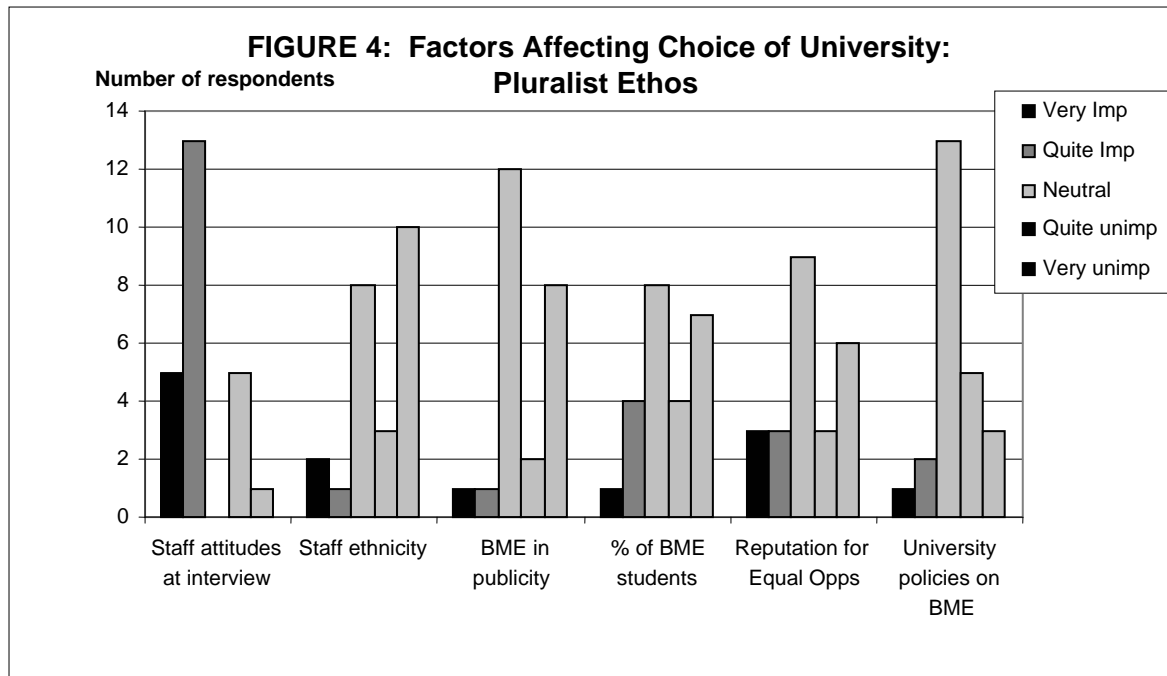
*on the interview day I remember that the only other ethnic minority person on the interview was [name]. He was the only one there everyone else was of the white British majority. And I did have a conscious thought at the back of my mind 'Would I be the only Asian on the course?' Because I didn't see anyone on my interview day, and ....the thought was there, and as the course went on it gradually faded away, it wasn't an issue for me towards the end. At the beginning it was, I felt scared, and I thought I might be left out on certain occasions. They might not talk to me. But it was okay as the course went on [Trainee 18].*

*I came for an open day and I got a lot from it. ....when I went to [another] university and I sat there with the other applicants, and I was there in my headscarf, and the receptionist thought I was there for a dance or a drama interview, as opposed to the PE because I didn't look right... And it put me off, whereas when I came here, you know, straightaway it was not a problem; it was just, you're just another applicant, which is what I've always just tried to be [Trainee 15].*

*The lecturers kind of knew where I was coming from, which I thought was really, really good and it was also close to where I am coming from as well. So I thought maybe I would find people that were of difference 'race' as well because I was quite worried about going out to [name of university] that it would all be white kids and I would be like the only person that was any different... [Trainee 24].*



The interactions with staff on the day of the interview were of key importance to the trainees in assessing whether they would be comfortable on the course. These social interactions featured as far more important than other factors such as the university's reputation for equal opportunities as highlighted in Figure 4 below.



Two trainees specifically recounted feeling pleased that tutors had stressed the two-way process of the interview and had encouraged them to use the opportunity to judge the institution, as well as the other way around. Other trainees specifically mentioned the importance of feeling valued as individuals and having a supportive experience during the interview day. Whilst appreciating the selective nature of the interview process, some experiences had been more supportive than others. For example, the use of group discussions and activities, in addition to interviews, was well received, so, as one trainee suggested, 'you weren't left there out on your own'. Some typical comments are provided below:

*I liked the fact that when I came to the interview everybody just seemed so much more, not involved, but actually wanted to talk to us. ....everybody got treated the same which ..was more apparent when I came here... that everybody was just equal [Trainee 6].*

*He [was] very professional...and I said to him, I'm just a bit worried because of my age. And he said, well you probably will be a lot older than everybody else, but don't let it stop you if you want to do it. [Trainee 7].*

*The experience itself. It was really laid back. When I first got there [tutor] was....I was an hour late because I got lost and [tutor] was just really, really nice about it, oh don't worry you haven't missed anything [Trainee 1].*

Only one trainee was critical of his interview, which, in his view, had put too much stress on his own performance in an activity, rather than his abilities to teach:

*Honestly I didn't think the interview process was that good. ...we had to do a gym lesson, but us performing gymnastics and it didn't have any relevance to getting on this course, I didn't think [Trainee 5].*

This section has considered some the factors that influenced the trainees' choice of institution. Whilst the reputation for PE was strongly highlighted in the questionnaire data, the interviews revealed the importance of social relationships and experiences of feeling welcomed and included on the day of the interview itself. Being in a minority was an inevitable part of that experience, but how this felt and was experienced varied between different institutions and was an important factor in some trainees' decisions about where to train. Whilst this section has focused on trainees' own experiences of the interview process, we return to the importance of admissions and selection criteria in Section 7 where we explore trainees' views on how to increase the diversity of PEITT cohorts.

## 5. Trainees' experiences of training

### Introduction

This section considers the trainees' experiences of training, including university-based sessions and teaching placements in schools. ITT courses, particularly the one year PGCE, are demanding and hard work. Trainees have to develop both subject knowledge and professional skills and attributes, and demonstrate competence against a comprehensive array of professional 'standards' (TDA, 2008). In this sense many of the experiences recounted in these interviews may reflect those also experienced by white majority trainees. However, in terms of ethnic identity our participants were different, and this section seeks to explore the extent to which this impacted on their experiences of training. We therefore report mainly on these issues here, rather than on the broader issues common to all trainees (for example, requests to spend more time on practical studies was common in a lot of interviews). However, whilst sharing an identity as an 'ethnic minority', it is important to stress the variety in the trainees' experiences. The interviews showed the complex ways in which their gender, religion and social class, and the extent to which their ethnicity was visibly 'marked', impacted on these experiences (see also Institute of Education, 2008). Trainees 'managed' their ethnic identities within PEITT in quite different ways from each other, and this identity work<sup>12</sup> was more or less significant in different contexts and times throughout their journey towards becoming a fully fledged PE teacher.

### 5.1. Early experiences in PE Initial Teacher Education

One of the important times in that journey was the first few weeks of the course. For any student, the first few weeks of a new university course can be daunting. The transition involves sorting out timetables and finding venues, understanding the initial demands of the course, making friends and building new relationships with other course members and staff, and for some, leaving the family home and learning to live independently. Although the interview day had given them some idea, many respondents nevertheless talked about their initial feelings when they arrived at the course and realised the majority, if not all of, the rest of their cohort were white. The responses were varied; as noted above, for some this was simply a continuation of a predominantly white schooling experience and therefore 'nothing new'; for others it was much more of a culture shock'. The following two quotes sum up these different positions:

*.. at first I was scared. My initial reaction was that I was scared and I didn't know how I was actually going to manage to get through the whole of the year, but as the weeks went on you've just got to put yourself out there, which is what I did. I got myself out there and just tried to talk to everyone on the course, and just be friendly and just be who I was, and I'd say after a couple of weeks it did get easier after people got to know me and after I got to know a few people. It did become less scary for me as time went on [Trainee 18].*

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<sup>12</sup> We use the term 'identity work' here to highlight that the active and ongoing processes involved in identity formation (see Gunaratnam, 2003).

*To be honest right at the beginning I didn't notice too much because the way I've been brought up, at my secondary school, was mainly white children anyway and at [name of university] I think quite a lot of the people on my science degree was white as well so I think, you know, it wasn't that much of an issue to me at first. I probably did like make a little note of it in my mind, that there was literally about three of us on my course, ethnic minority, but no, it wasn't like a major thing at the time at the beginning but I did notice it more and more during the course [Trainee 2].*

For a number of trainees, these early experiences involved moving into a very different, white, environment from those characterizing their school or home life. Several suggested that they had become much more aware of their ethnicity since coming to university.

*I think coming to uni [university] has highlighted my 'race' more to me as a person that I never had anywhere else [Trainee 6].*

*It is only when I have come to uni [university] that I have actually realized more so that I am an ethnic minority because where I come from, I am not an ethnic minority [Trainee 24].*

The ease of 'fitting in' varied between different contexts and was experienced differently by different trainees. As explored in more detail below, this was often easier on school placements (which were often multi-ethnic environments) than in the university-based sessions, especially the practical PE sessions, or in informal environments, outside of formal scheduled sessions. For example, one trainee described one of his early experiences as being the most challenging of his training. This was a compulsory field trip to the countryside, organized at the beginning of the course with the intention of helping trainees get to know each other. However, travelling to what was, for him, a very unfamiliar (and white) space, he described feeling like he was '*on Big Brother, forced to socialise' with other trainees, eat different food and drink in the evenings .... 'if you didn't drink like, it was what do you do kind of thing?'*. Whilst looking back on the experience, he was able to agree it had been '*good for bonding*', but he had struggled with the interpersonal demands made on him so early on the course, as well as the financial costs of the trip. Another trainee suggested she had felt as if her university was like a '*white, middle class, private school, where there were 'loads of people with similar backgrounds' and where 'it was what school they go to and what education [they have] that mattered*'. However, she recognised that she too was privileged in having had '*strong parental support and a good education*' that had got her the A level grades needed to get into this particular university, and that, in this sense, she shared aspects of a similar class identity, if not ethnicity, with many of her classmates.

## **5.2 'You are only here because of the 'race' card!'**

Although all trainees new to ITT have to cope with the challenges of 'fitting in' and establishing themselves in new groups and environments, ethnicity heightened many of our trainees' experiences of this process. (Indeed, a small number of trainees talked about their disappointment that they had not been able to fit in or establish

good relationships with their fellow trainees; we explore feelings of isolation in more detail below). We were perturbed to learn that six of our trainees had been made to feel vulnerable about their position on the course by comments from white trainees suggesting their success was only because of their ethnicity and the institution's need to meet their so-called 'race' targets':

*I know it was really hard to get on the PGCE and I know there were 2,000 applicants, that is what I was told. But I think if you work really hard, you get chosen don't you? I remember some people on the PGCE and I just ignored it but they said to me you only got on the course because you are Asian and they had to put you down, tick that box. [Trainee 9].*

*Well, I remember in the first year, I can't remember who it was with, we were just talking about what grades we had to get on with the course, then I just said, oh, well, I did a BTEC National Diploma, and someone said, but they don't count, they're low, you're getting in on the 'race' card. I was thinking, hey? [Trainee 5].*

The interview transcripts show how those of us conducting these interviews had to carefully explain the TDA's position on BME targets for teacher training candidates, and reassure these trainees that they had been accepted on their merit.

Trainees not visibly marked, either through skin colour, dress or appearance, had different stories to tell about the ways in which they interacted with white, majority trainees. Whilst in some ways, they felt it was 'easier' to fit in, for some, the white trainees' lack of awareness of the complexities of ethnic and religious identities was also frustrating:

*But I think, sometimes, because I've got quite pale skin and not necessarily, apart from my hair, I could sometimes look even European, Turkish in a sense and I think sometimes people don't realise that is my background and would talk about a certain issue, which I wouldn't be very happy with. In a sense, so their ignorance of identification of people is funny [Trainee 21].*

*People were amazed that I was even mixed 'race' and it was kind of like if you can't even see to look at somebody that they are not of the same ethnicity as you then how are you ever going to understand them and where they are coming from and where they want to be? I think because everybody is white, they just assume that that is just the way it is.... there is nobody that is of a different 'race' to them, so I guess they just go with that assumption....so when they do come across somebody of a different ethnicity, it's like oh ... it's a bit alien to them [Trainee 24].*

Throughout many of the interviews trainees talked with ambivalence about being defined as different because of their ethnicity - sometimes talking about wanting to be seen as 'the same' as other trainees, at other times stressing the importance of their different cultural and/or religious backgrounds. When asked in the interview 'To what extent has the university met your needs as a minority ethnic student?' trainees' responses were very mixed. Some pointed out that their needs were no different to other white trainees; others answered it as if we had asked whether they

had been discriminated against, as these examples from two Mixed heritage trainees illustrate.

*This to me... the way I've been brought up very sort of white middle class area all my schools very 90 odd per cent white, a few ethnicity, stuff like that so I'm not very well cultured so to me I've got more of a white culture than anything else, so to me it doesn't make a difference really. I don't think there's anything that needs to suit my needs like, with, like, religion or anything like that because like I say I'm pretty much like any other person really [Trainee 25].*

*Yeah, definitely. I don't feel like I've been treated any differently or any more special than any of the other people. I think we've all been treated the same, definitely [Trainee 14].*

One Muslim woman summed up this dilemma as follows:

*....I can understand where you're coming from because you just treated us like everyone else which is what we wanted but I don't know, maybe if it was highlighted a bit more then people could understand that it's huge to go into something [PE] that's frowned upon as such....others, but in a more – I mean I'm being quite frank with you - I wouldn't say this to someone else because they'd probably be quite horrified and I don't want to make my culture or my religion or ethnicity seem as a bad thing, so I don't say too much, but I want them to understand a bit more so they don't come out with those comments in the first year. I'm sure it happens every year for some poor person [Trainee 10].*

For some of the Muslim trainees, whilst their dietary and prayer needs had not always been met to their satisfaction, their reaction was, as the above trainee suggested, 'not to say too much', or as another remarked, 'not to make a fuss' not wanting to 'be a burden or feel like a charity case'. One particularly articulate Muslim woman talked at length about her commonsense approach of dealing with being 'the token other' (her words), and having to manage herself and her needs within a not-always supportive environment:

*In my first year I tried to find where the Prayer Room was on this campus and I was told it was at [name of building]. I went to [name of building] and it wasn't there. I'd been told it had moved back to near the [name of building] so I went to have a look to find it was a cupboard with a chair. The room was so small, it wasn't even large enough to put a prayer mat down.. So on this campus there isn't anything and, similarly, with the canteen. In the brochure it said Halal foods provided, so, oh brilliant, fantastic. I went to the staff ...[but] they dissuaded me from such an idea because they'd have to buy it [hot meals] in bulk, so I'd have to pay upfront even if I were never to eat them....So the promise that things were there in the prospectus, in reality, because of, again, I was probably the only person asking for it at the time, it wasn't financially viable or economical. But the Prayer Room was the biggest thing... So I just pray when I get in my house. [Trainee 15].*

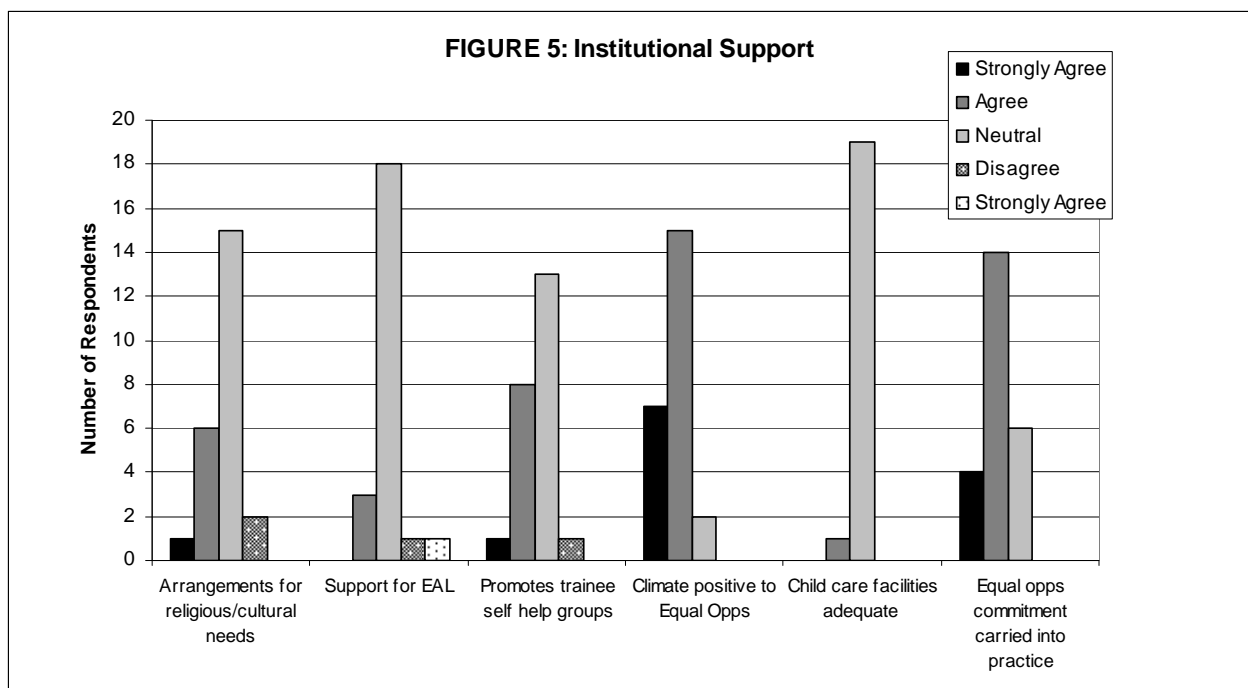
Another trainee at a different university, and travelling a long way into the university each day from home, suggested she, too, had to compromise in order to cope with all the other demands being made on her:

*Yeah ...right that's a good question [To what extent does the university meet your needs as an ethnic minority student?] because I didn't feel as if the university helped me but I know there were facilities there ...It's difficult because it's impossible to pray as well as go and do your work as well so I'd have to sacrifice that and that's not anybody else's fault ...it's impossible.. I was on placement, how could I go to lecture, pray, nip back....I didn't even bother thinking.. no way - I'm already like travelling loads, I'm already like complaining to [name of tutor] that I want to quit, the last thing I want to do is tell him that I want to pray as well.... So I didn't even go there. Yeah, there were just too many things for me to overcome, I had to sacrifice praying, but some might not [Trainee 10].*

Benn and Dagkas' (2006) work has highlighted the very real challenges for higher education institutions to provide a PEITT environment conducive to the needs of Muslim trainees. Our data shows the importance of the diversity of Muslim men and women's experiences, and the compromises they are willing to make to negotiate a position within PEITT.

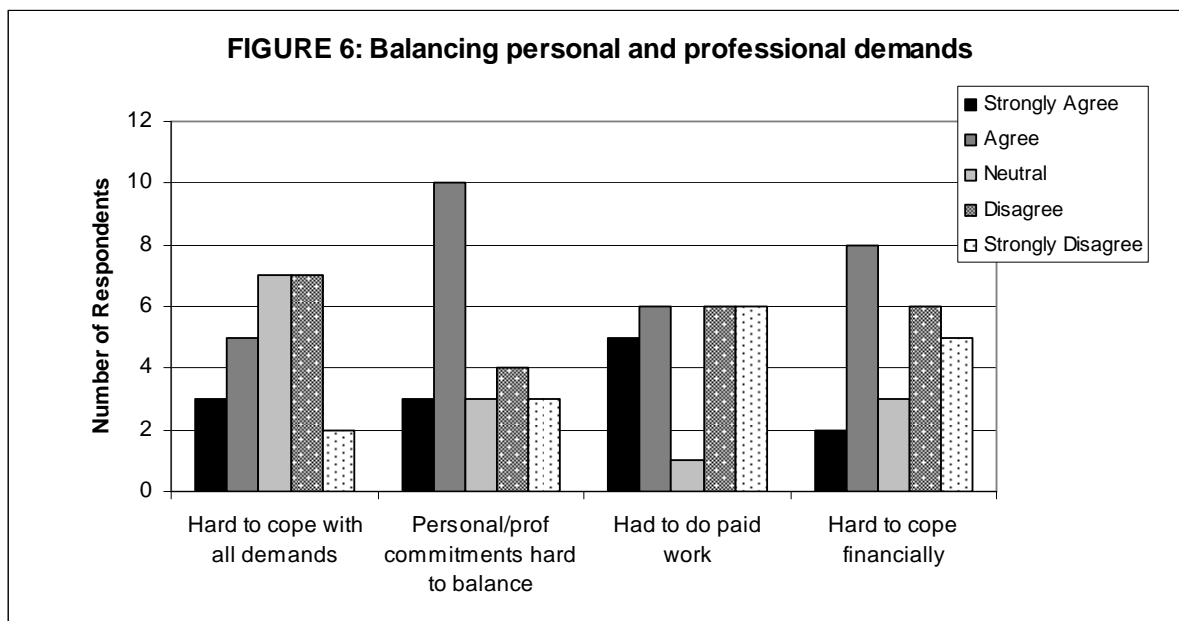
### 5.3 Wider institutional support

As shown in Figure 5 below, trainees were largely positive about the universities' commitment to equal opportunities with the majority agreeing that this commitment was carried into practice within their institutions.



This figure also shows that the majority of trainees did not need the use of some of the university's wider support services, such as childcare facilities, or support for

English as an additional language (EAL). In this sense, our participants were very similar to their white counterparts – relatively young, without family commitments, who have taken a ‘traditional’ route to university from school. Nevertheless, like other trainees generally, (and university students more generally), over half of our questionnaire respondents suggested that balancing their personal and professional commitments was difficult (see Figure 6 below). In addition, almost a half of them found it hard to cope financially, and had to do paid work in addition to their studying to be financially solvent. Research elsewhere has highlighted not just the affective and emotional ‘risks’ of choosing higher education in the first place, but also how ‘race’ and class issues interrelate in these decision making processes and impact on students’ every day experiences of higher education (e.g. Reay et al, 2001). Paid work is a reality for many working class students in higher education, much more than middle class students. Certainly for about half of our participants, having to undertake paid work during their studies was a necessity in order to be able to cope financially. The impact of paid work on their opportunities to study and succeed in their training is clear. Other studies have shown how, although the process of ‘drop out’ from teacher training courses is best seen as a complex process, economic circumstances often play a significant part (e.g. Basit et al, 2006).



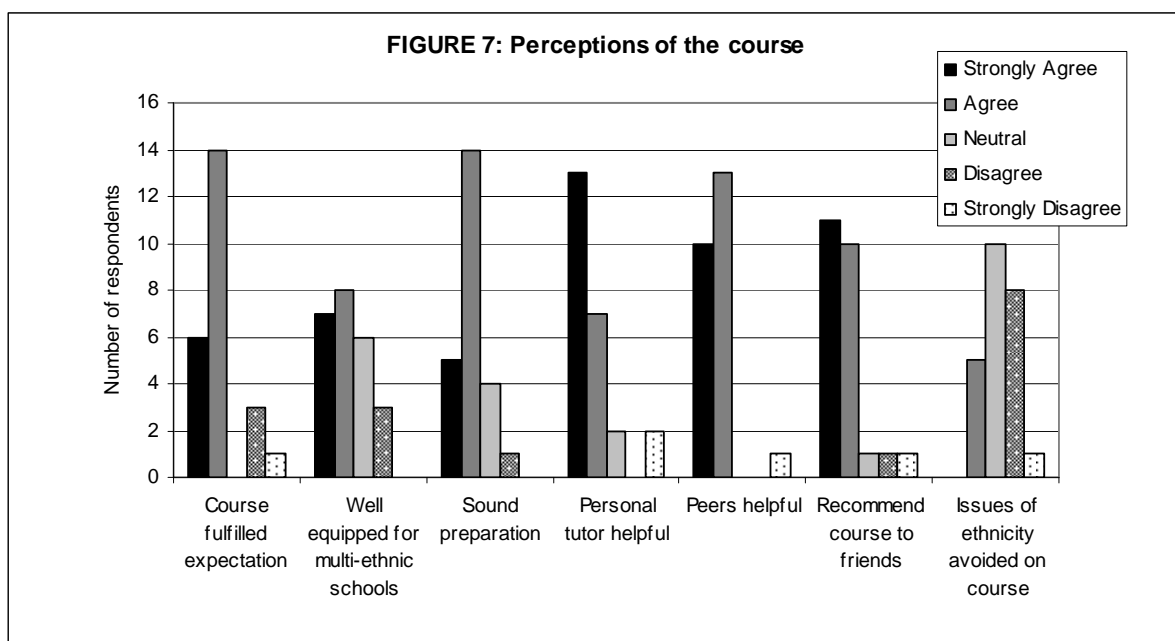
#### 5.4 Perceptions of their course

Questionnaire data showed that the trainees’ overall perceptions of their courses were positive. For most, the course had fulfilled their expectations and they considered it a sound preparation for teaching<sup>13</sup>. All but three would recommend their course to friends. Twenty of the trainees were particularly positive about the level of support received from their personal tutors, and peers (see Figure 7), and only two interviewees were considering whether teaching was really an appropriate career for them.

<sup>13</sup> Clearly the extent to which trainees in the early years of an undergraduate degree could comment on this in an informed way would be limited.



As described in the methodology section, whilst we drew on Carrington's et al, (2001) study for the basis of our questionnaire and interview schedule, we specifically wanted to include a focus on trainees' experiences of PE, a subject with its own traditions and sub-culture (Goodson, 1993; Paechter, 2000; Sparkes et al, 2007). We know of no other study that has explored explicitly BME trainees' experiences of secondary PEITT<sup>14</sup>. However, we drew on Benn's work on primary ITT, and studies in school PE, and sport more broadly to inform the kinds of questions we asked. In the interviews, many trainees talked about the teaching placements as being the most worthwhile aspects of the course, and we discuss their experiences of this in more detail below.



Given their love of sport, it was not surprising to find that the practical PE classes were also generally well received, although at the same time, these were also the contexts for some trainees where their ethnicity became more significant to their experiences. We explore these aspects below, as well as considering the experiences of the extra-curricular culture of PE. We are using the term extra curricular like Skelton (1993) to refer to those aspects of PEITT that fall outside the formal curriculum, but nevertheless are important and powerful spaces in which PE trainees interact and learn the 'expected' behaviours and values of PE culture during their training. We recognise the danger in talking about 'the subject' and the 'subject culture' of PE - as Evans and Penney (2002, p.5) note this 'incorrectly suggests that PE is a unified and homogeneous phenomenon, when it patently is not..' However, qualitative studies of PEITT and sporting cultures at university show the strong gendered nature of everyday practices, values and behaviours within the subject (e.g. Flintoff, 1993a, b; Skelton, 1993; Brown and Rich, 2002). These studies highlight the ways in which women and men negotiate a position within an often

<sup>14</sup> There are still very few studies that have focused on BME students' experiences of PE in schools, particularly girls. An earlier study by Carrington, 1993 has been followed more recently by Fleming, 2001; Knez, 2007; Bramham, 2003 for example. See also the recent guidance to schools published by Birmingham City Council, 2008, aimed at encouraging Muslim girls' participation in PE and school sport.

'macho', competitive, masculine and homophobic environment (see also Dewar, 1990). There has been little attention to date on the ways in which this environment may also be racialised, and the impact of this on BME and white trainees. Our data provides some insights into these processes. As we describe below, there were times when our trainees had been on the receiving end of stereotypical comments about their abilities, and where they had felt uncomfortable in the extra curricular contexts of PE

### 5.5 Ethnicity, 'race', religion and embodiment

Given the specifically embodied nature of PE, it was not surprising to learn that one of the contexts where trainees felt a heightened sense of their ethnicity occurred in their practical activity sessions. As Webb and Macdonald (2007a, 2007b) have shown, the body is an important 'tool' of PE teachers' work, and PE practical sessions were environments where trainees' bodies were very much on show, and where their physical capabilities were appraised and assessed. All three of our Black male trainees had been on the receiving end of stereotypical comments or assumptions about their physical abilities (in addition, five respondents noted this in the questionnaire survey).

*Obviously you just get normal things that happen in everyday life, but nothing... Well, if we're playing, in our practical activities, like before anyone's seen me play, I'm getting picked first, so like.....When we was doing athletics. No one had ever seen me run at this ..uni [university] because I did boxing and you don't see anyone running and no one off my class even went to boxing. But we were doing athletics and I was just assumed to be the fastest for 100, so I had to get videoed [Trainee 5].*

This was the same trainee we described above that had experienced white trainees accuse him of gaining a place on the course through 'using the 'race' card' because of his BTEC National Diploma qualifications. Later in the interview, he told us that when he had been completing his Criminal Records Bureau (CBR) documentation<sup>15</sup> someone had joked about what criminal offences he was writing down:

*what have you put [trainee's name]?! Just said as a joke, in passing. And it doesn't bother me a lot. Maybe that's because I'm black or maybe it's because I'm from the area that I live near, maybe it's both. It probably is both. You're just bear it, it's just there [Trainee 5].*

Whilst this trainee was happy to 'laugh off' this 'joking' as something that everyone in one way or the other has to put up with, such every day interactions can be seen as one of the ways in which racial stereotyping get perpetuated, and as Long, et al (1997) argue, should be taken seriously as tacit racism. Even the view that Trainee 5 had physical superiority – what Long et al, 1997 call an example of 'positive' stereotyping - is equally problematic as it implies the corollary, a presumed deficiency in academic capability. The questionnaire data showed that five trainees

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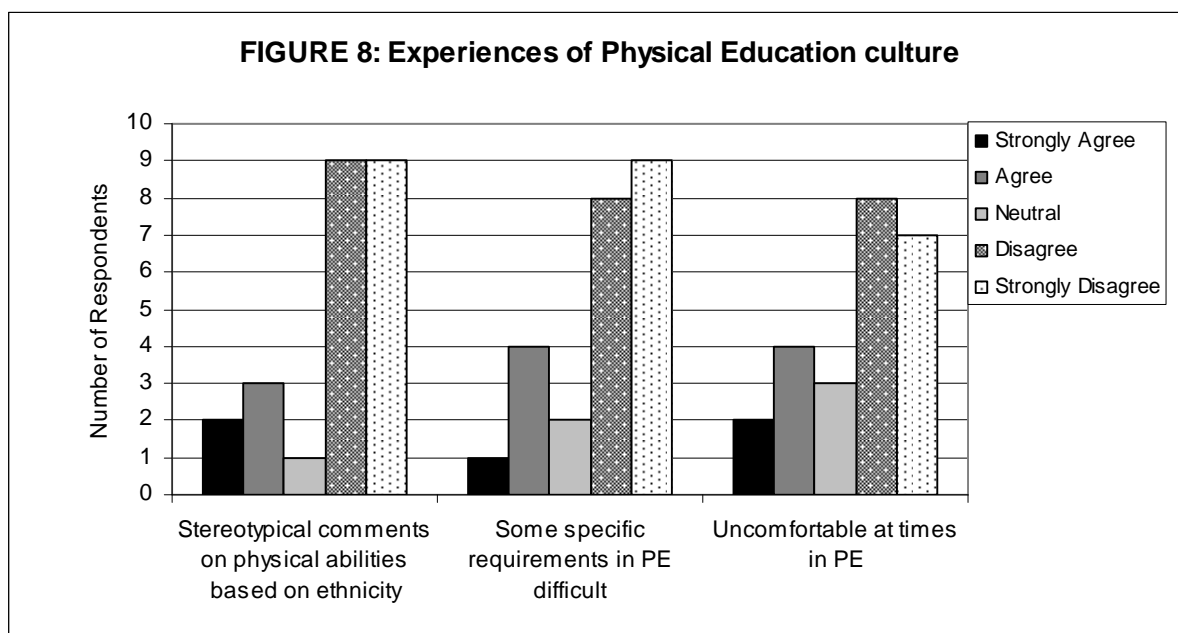
<sup>15</sup> All teacher trainees have to gain a Criminal Records Bureau certificate confirming that they are safe to work with young people or vulnerable adults, before starting their teaching placements.

had experienced stereotypical comments on their physical abilities based on ethnicity, and six had felt uncomfortable at times within PE (see Figure 8)

Two other Black trainees experienced swimming as an uncomfortable environment, at least initially, due to fears that their own weak (in their eyes) performance levels would serve only to perpetuate *'the stereotype that black people can't swim'*:

*... yeah I felt kind of funny doing the swimming module just because like you know there's a stereotype of black people who can't really swim and I was a terrible swimmer you know, I was perpetuating that stereotype, it was quite funny in a way. I was trying my best to swim but actually I can't swim that well and there's like some really good swimmers in the group... Yeah I was trying my best to swim but I'm just not good at it. What can I do? [Trainee 4].*

*Something like swimming I've kind of struggled a bit on and that's just purely because people have got this assumption that because you're black you can't swim or don't know how to swim. It's not necessarily the case because I've passed the first two years of swimming without a problem but that's just sort of one area that you sort of walk into and people are like..... you sort of feel as though everybody is looking at you. I kind of felt that the first few times I was at university but once I'd established I could swim it was absolutely fine [Trainee 23].*



Swimming was also the activity that caused the most difficulty for two of the Muslim women trainees. Whilst many young women feel ill-at-ease in mixed swimming sessions (see Flintoff, 1993b; Flintoff and Scraton, 2001), the religious requirement to ensure modesty in mixed settings poses particular issues for Muslim women. Indeed, Benn and Dagkas (2006) have argued that the practice of mixed sex PEITT in England is incompatible with the needs of Islamic students. Benn's work describes the struggles in her own institution to translate a policy commitment to

increase the numbers of Muslim trainees in primary ITT, into everyday practice, and balance the needs of a small group of Muslim trainees with those of the cohort as a whole. After several years of ad hoc solutions, it has only been through sustained commitment and concomitant increased numbers, that they argue it has been possible to offer Muslim trainees a choice of working in single sex groups.

For our Muslim women, the religious requirement to cover their bodies in mixed settings was accommodated in different ways by different trainees across institutions. For example, one trainee was too nervous to explain why she was unable to join in the mixed swimming class, and it was only when her tutor insisted that the practical involvement was compulsory, did she feel pressed to reveal her reluctance was for religious adherence reasons. The 'solution' here was for the trainee to attend the sessions, but work from the poolside. Later in the interview, this trainee told us about being made to feel uncomfortable by insensitive comments from her school placement tutors (*'who knew I was Muslim'*) about why she didn't wear shorts in hot weather. In contrast, another trainee opted to join in practical swimming lessons, but recounted the extra stress placed upon her by having to swim with several layers of clothing covering her body:

*with swimming because of the mixed nature of it and the fact that there's no way of making, at the moment, that swimming pool Muslim friendly...it [was] extremely difficult for me to just be wearing normal swimming attire. So that's always been hard ...wearing my multiple layers and they're not figure hugging, they're not thin....swimming costume, cap, long aerobic pants with elastic bands round the ankles to make sure they don't come up and then a cotton, high-necked long-sleeved top, again, with elastic bands. I looked ridiculous, extremely heavy, and my own pride made me work harder to keep up with everybody to swim. Luckily I'm a decent swimmer [Trainee 15].*

A third trainee, describing herself as 'very Westernised', wore a swimsuit like the majority trainees, but still admitted to feeling somewhat uneasy about how others might judge her, particularly male students, in choosing to teach swimming in shorts and a tee-shirt on school placement. These examples show the diversity of Muslim women trainees' levels of religiosity, and their implications for mixed PE settings in particular (see Kay, 2006).

Only one of our trainees [Trainee 15] chose to cover her head, for example, during her training<sup>16</sup> and after describing her dress for swimming (above), she explained other 'compromises' she made in order to be able to participate fully in the mixed environment of the course, in dance and gymnastics. We quote her at length:

*But I am a modern Western Muslim and I actually quite like the company of men; I don't see everything as a potential threat, so being in a lecture, being in a group, or shaking somebody's hand isn't a problem for me. I understand there's times when this needs to be done, so my interview with my new schools, three men on the panel, I wasn't going to not go in there because I'd be the only woman and the door was shut. I understand that, but some other*

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<sup>16</sup> This trainee wore a 'beanie' hat (tight fitting hat) that covered her short hair rather than a hijab throughout her course.

*Muslims perhaps won't. But when it comes to contact, if it's unnecessary contact then it needs to be refrained from. So lifts, in dance, and support balances, while it's in an educational setting, technically while it's in a lecture, I will allow it because I appreciate and understand that it needs to be done, but if given the choice I wouldn't do it. But I understand you can't completely...I don't think segregating teacher training is a good idea, I think there's a lot that you get from the guys and I think it works both ways.... I suppose it's my own more Western beliefs coming through; I do very much live in two completely different cultures and some of my closest friends happen to be male, but it's a very different kind of relationship and they are aware and respectful of it, but my dad doesn't know about it. It's the only way really [Trainee 15].*

These examples show the different ways in which Muslim women negotiated a position within PEITT, largely through compromise and adjustment on their part, rather than institutional support.

## **5.6 Alcohol, socialising and informal PE culture**

Other trainees recounted their experiences and sometimes discomfort over other pressures to 'fit into' PE culture. Although we have recognised above that it is dangerous to suggest that there is one, unified subject culture, nevertheless, recent studies, such as Sparkes et al, (2007) have suggested that there are 'rules' of conformity that impact on all PE trainees at university. Their ethnographic study showed the significance of alcohol and partying as two out of what they call the 'twelve commandments' of being 'accepted' into PE culture. Four of our male trainees talked specifically about the alcohol and 'partying culture' of PEITT and the pressures they felt as a result:

*.....it was fasting season as well and I remember the other Asian guy he was trying to explain stuff and some of the comments some of the guys were coming out with. So you can have a fast and then get pissed on the night time can you? And he was being really patient and I thought I am not even going to go there [Trainee 9].*

*Yeah I mean I drink but sometimes, like, I hate alcohol...it's not like I hate alcohol but it's like I don't drink like that, I don't drink like you get drinking games and stuff like that. I don't drink like that...I just feel under pressure to conform to what everybody else is doing ... it wasn't nice and like that was me and I'm quite strong and not conforming.... But you have someone like [name of male trainee] and he is like younger than me and he's like Muslim as well as like he's having, like I know, you know, weighing up in his mind should I, shouldn't I and there's...but just you know there are a lot more people that were not comfortable doing or drinking or ... it's not just like, yeah just that kind of atmosphere and everything but I think they were just resigned to conform ... I may as well get it over with kind of thing [Trainee 4].*

In addition to the male Trainee 9, above, who was Muslim, two of Muslim women talked about how it was difficult for them to feel included in the informal socializing after formal classes because of the centrality of alcohol.

*But I suppose my ethnicity has most affected the social side of the course because we try and plan things to do as a group, most recently a graduation meal. And they do try really hard to plan for me, but a few times it's been like, well, let's go to the 'race's. That is not an area or an environment where a Muslim can go, so straightaway that takes me out of the equation. Similarly, with the graduation dinner, I was there for the meal, but as soon as it then moved from the meal to the bar or wherever it was that they moved on, it became non-Muslim friendly, so again, my night was cut short...But that's been the hardest because then those that don't necessarily understand the reasons why I'm leaving early then start to resent it and think that it's because I believe I'm better than them. It's like, no, actually, it's because I can't physically put myself in that environment. And that's hard because then you get labelled as somebody that's not a team player and that doesn't care. ...And I have made sacrifices, but they're seen as little things for normal people, for want of a better word. But they're not, they're huge things and that's the hardest thing, the social side [Trainee 15].*

*Do you know what? I really, really tried to get on with the staff. They asked me loads of times to come out and they knew I had a young child, they knew I didn't go clubbing, and yet ...But even if they wanted meetings and stuff and they were doing stuff, it had to be in a pub or something like that....It is not what I want. ....I've done business where I've taken clients out for dinner. Why can't we do ten pin-bowling or go-carting?.....You don't have to do everything in a pub, do you? [Trainee 9].*

A lack of awareness of religious and cultural difference by white trainees was highlighted many times in the interviews. Our BME trainees were sometimes shocked at the lack of contact white trainees had had with people from different ethnic backgrounds and the implications of this for their teaching careers. As one woman suggested, white trainees need to

*open your eyes a bit more. They are going to go on placement and [name of white male student] going on placement and coming back saying I have never seen an Asian person before in real life. [Trainee 6].*

Another recounted being surprised about white trainees' experiences:

*I remember there's a module on the under grad course which tried to look into equity and equality and 'race' and gender and in the seminars people were just genuinely naïve they haven't been in that situation. There was like 20 of us in a seminar and I know that the seminar leader will say you know how many of you have been in a multicultural school or society and lived in that and there was only two of us... half the people there had never even spoken to somebody of another 'race' and its just... I was like, oh my gosh, and the misconceptions that people have, they don't have anything to base them on other than.. and that was coming out in the seminar the only conceptions they have is what they see in the media because they don't have a point of reference for their own opinion... I've never come across that at all but just that there is a lack of experience and a naivety almost [Trainee 19].*

However it is also important to stress that our respondents were themselves very differentiated in how they understood issues of 'race', ethnicity, and religion as we describe below. Certainly being from a BME background did not guarantee a critical perspective on ethnicity and 'race'. Equally, understandings of gender and its impact on students' experiences and involvement in PE in schools were often superficial, and stereotypical, particularly the perceptions of some of the men trainees towards female students.

### *5.7 Ethnicity, 'race' and religion as professional issues*

As part their professional training, all trainees need to demonstrate that they meet the requirements of the Professional Standards for Teaching: Qualified Teacher Status (TDA, 2008). In relation to issues of 'race' and ethnicity, there are two specific standards that consider these: Q18 and Q19:

'Q 18: Understand how children and young people develop and how the progress and wellbeing of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences.

Q 20: Know how to make effective personal provision for those they teach, including those for whom English is an additional language, or who have special educational needs or disabilities and other individual learning needs'.

TDA (2008, p.10)

The 1980s and 1990s have seen big changes to ITT, with a shift in emphasis towards practical based competences and skills, and away from reflection and theoretical concerns (Mahony and Hexhall, 1997). Mahony and Hexall (1997) amongst others, conclude that this has resulted in limited space, particularly within the PGCE, to address equity issues in any substantial way. Certainly within PE and PEITT, equity issues have never been a central concern (Dewar, 1990; Flintoff, 1993a; Flintoff, Fitzgerald and Scraton, 2008). Flintoff's (1993 a, b) research in the early 1990s showed gender equity as a marginal discourse with ITT, with these issues more often than not addressed within aspects of their courses that trainees viewed as least relevant, such as professional studies, or as part of optional electives.

All trainees in our study commented about being involved in university based sessions focusing on issues of inclusion, including attention to 'race' and ethnicity. However, none of the trainees' had directly been involved in addressing these issues as part of their professional development during their school placement (see below). Trainees' responses to the university-based sessions were varied, some arguing for their usefulness, but others suggesting that they were insufficient, and not linked enough to practice. For example, some trainees asked for more specific help with how to deal with students in school being verbally offensive to each other. In contrast, many trainees mentioned the sessions that focused on working with children with English as an additional language. These were seen as the most useful and practical, as were the ones that focused on working with students with special educational needs. Given the time constraints of a one year course, we were

not surprised to learn that PGCE trainees felt that issues of 'race' and ethnicity had only been 'touched upon'. In contrast, undergraduates appeared to have had a more sustained input. However, since the study did not set out to compare experiences across the different courses, we are not able to make more specific comments on this aspect but it is one that we return to in the recommendations from the study. Typical comments from PGCE trainees included:

*I can't really think ....I think we had one lecture around that area about ethnicity, how you should work around...what you should be doing. So the course looked at it but maybe not in the big detail I thought they might need to [Trainee 3].*

*... but in terms of, yeah I mean the university did speak about, to be honest I can't recollect but I do remember at some point like having a lecture on 'race' and ethnicity, not a lecture on it but touching on it. [Trainee 4].*

*I don't even remember having anything on that....On the actual practical knowledge bit,.. that is the only thing that came out of, yeah. I learned lots of stuff about disabilities [Trainee 9].*

Undergraduate trainees were more likely to talk about more sustained inputs or modules that addressed issues of equity, including 'race' and ethnicity, often with a formal assessment linked to the input. However, the majority of trainees talked about the rather 'add on' nature of these sessions, positioned either very early on, or in their view, too late in the course, rather than integrated throughout their studies. In addition, assessments linked to these elements were often optional. These three comments illustrate this aspect clearly:

*In fact, I do remember in Year One, it might have been Year Two, we did do a module on sociology but you could choose what to do it on, and some people did choose 'race' actually, but that was a choice, it could be 'race', ethnicity, social class, gender. You could pick anything then, but it was an option, so I think we definitely probably did about two weeks on it actually [Trainee 5].*

*Well I think it was addressed quite well this year but again, that is a bit of a shame that we had to wait until year three to actually start addressing anything to do with culture and ethnicity, which is a bit crazy really, considering that we have been out in schools for two years and we hadn't actually learned anything about culture....[Trainee 24].*

*I don't really think it's considered it. ...I think we have one lecture on English as an additional language, but it was so early in our development that many people didn't really take on board because it's your first year and you're just like, we'll listen, but it doesn't really stick...I don't think for a second anybody's intentionally racist, I just think that they don't, they're often, they've come through without ever having to consider it and so their opinions and views are not necessarily based on knowledge and fact, they're based on the environment around them and what's been reinforced. And, yes, maybe in the first year something has to be developed so that they can identify whether*



*there are any issues with ignorance, but then there's got to be some kind of follow-up.....[Trainee 15].*

Trainees' evaluations of the importance of having sessions addressing 'race' and ethnicity also differed significantly. Almost half of the trainees tended to view the sessions on 'race' and ethnicity as somewhat unnecessary to their professional development, arguing that good teaching was good teaching, regardless of students' ethnicity. As one suggested,

*I wouldn't say the course has done anything to help me, but then I don't see the course should need to be specific about teaching to black kids or mixed 'race' kids or Asian kids or Chinese kids because why would they be because they're just kids? You can't have a module on ethnic minorities, how to teach them, because why would it be different? [Trainee 5].*

When we went on to suggest to this trainee that perhaps all trainees should be involved in learning about racism and its effects on schooling, his response was that this should not happen anymore and that everyone should be professional enough in their work:

*Well, we've been, because of the statutory requirements then we have obviously gone through them, but I think just being a teacher, no, it's just a high expectation that you're not going to be racist against anyone, whether you're a teacher or not, so that's just obviously expected on the course, expected by the teachers and because you're a teacher it's expected [Trainee 5].*

Other trainees also either questioned the need for 'race' and ethnicity to be specifically addressed in the ITT curriculum, given the current times when '*no one is really racist*', or had doubts about how this might be done in order to really change someone's views:

*I don't know, I think people seem pretty clued up, whether that is part of the interview process, picking the right people to do the course. I don't think so, I don't think there are any issues ethnically [Trainee 20].*

*I don't know actually, but then how do you prepare people to be ... I think everybody at uni [university] and of the generation that we are in, no-one is going to be racist or prejudiced because we are not in that society any more. Well...I do say that very lightly, but I just think that who decides what should be done? What should be taught or how could you prepare somebody? Do you show them pictures? What do you do? We covered it in some of the sociology sessions, but I don't know.... I think people just thought it was part of their assignment. I know that sounds bad...[Trainee 6]*

In contrast, a small number of trainees argued strongly for the importance of sessions on 'race' and ethnicity and had been positively engaged in developing their own understanding and knowledge:

*I learnt a lot [in sociology], I read a lot of the readings so I became quite focused on that, especially the whole thing about black Afro-Caribbean boys, I just couldn't believe it; how they start so well when they first go to school, and you just think, Gordon Bennett, what's happened during that time for them to ... is it because of that whole focus of sport, that's what you start thinking, is it the whole PE things that's made a mess for them?... I think ...it's a form of racism really, saying that they're good at sport [Trainee 7].*

*So we had loads of modules on discrimination, stereotypes and yeah, throughout the time I was there they were...you guys were always like making sure that equal opportunities and inclusion were so important within that, ethnic minority, so from then on yeah there was always, every step of the module, it was always imbedded in our inclusion, equal opportunities....[Trainee 10].*

In some classes, the BME trainees themselves had been used as a 'resource' in discussions to give their perspectives on issues of 'race', ethnicity and religion. Some welcomed this as something positive that they could bring to PE. For example, one of the Muslim women trainees had been invited to give seminar presentations on Islam and PE to her fellow trainees as part of her university work, and since completing her PGCE, was now about to be paid to deliver these sessions to the new trainees. However, others felt under pressure and uncomfortable by the assumption in these classes that they would be the 'experts' and be able to speak on behalf of a particular group.

There was also the suggestion that some trainees, particularly white trainees, found talking about 'race' and ethnicity difficult, and in their efforts not to be seen as racist, tended to avoid talking about it at all. One trainee recounted his exasperation with his fellow white trainees repeatedly qualifying their discussions about ethnicity or 'race' by using the phrase 'no offence' to him. Another was very clear that all trainees should be involved in reflecting on difference and link this to their own educational biographies:

*It is to step out of your own shoes, in a sense, and step back. It is all about moments; every moment in their lives has a moment where they are either bullied because they are different, maybe because they have ginger hair, maybe they have got a long nose, maybe big ears, big hair....highlighting a difference of some kind. Everyone has a difference about them....[Trainee 21].*

She then went onto explain that all trainees needed to be presented with the facts of racism, through what she called 'shock tactics'. Another one had been involved in a session that had addressed whiteness and talked about the difficulty of white trainees in reflecting upon their own ethnicity. These sessions seemed to be exceptions rather than the norm, and as Trainee 24 described, had not been easy for the white trainees:

*....I think it was interesting to see how people reacted to questions such as what makes you privileged because you are white and the statement that you are white and privileged. It was interesting to see how people reacted to*

*that...[They didn't react very] well. You can really see then that people were extremely close minded and couldn't actually see that they are actually privileged..... it was clear why there needs to be more people like me, because it was like me v 30 other people with the same opinion. It was a bit of a shame really that they all shared that same opinion. It just shows that when they go out into school how well they react to black kids, will they just see black kids the same as white kids? ...They are a black child, they are not a white child, they will have different issues.... Will they ever be able to look at a black child and actually relate to them in that way? [Trainee 24].*

Questionnaire responses supported these positions, with half of the respondents agreeing that their course content and assessment should better reflect the diverse multicultural nature of society, and that university and school staff needed more training on the needs of BME trainees (see Figure 13).

In contrast to their experiences of the ITT curriculum, 'race' and ethnicity were much more prominent in trainees' everyday experiences of school placement.

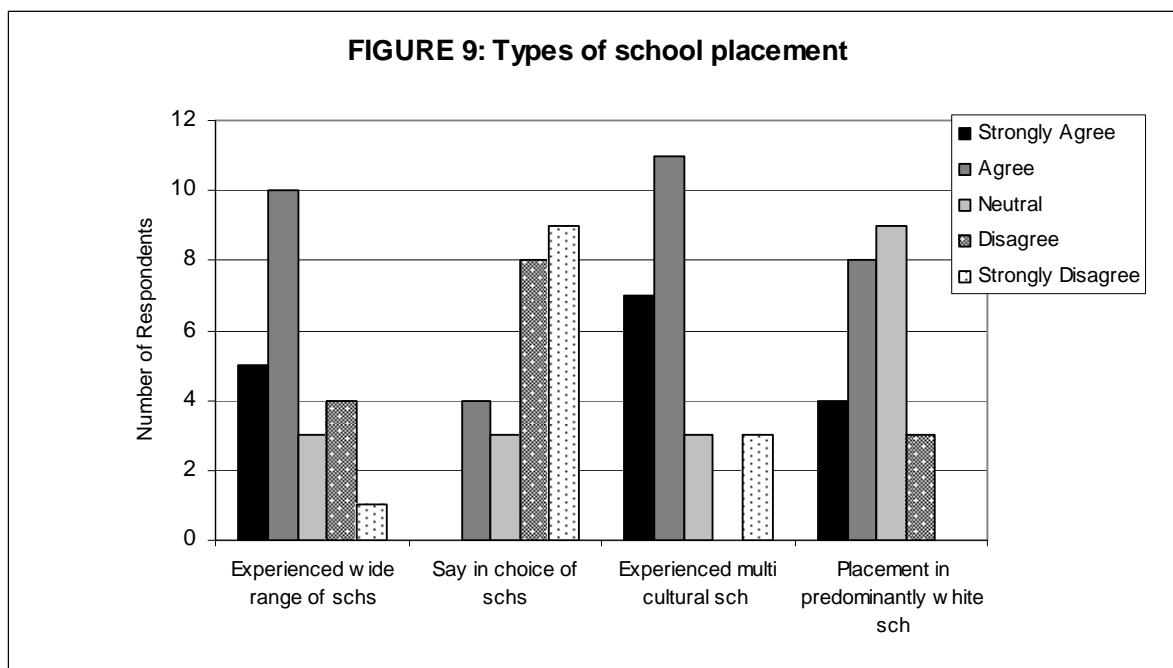
## **5.8 Teaching placement**

Our interviewees considered teaching placement to be the most worthwhile aspect of the course. However many had been anxious about the reception they would receive when starting a placement in predominantly white schools. The majority of trainees talked about what one called 'low level' racism in their own schooling, where other students would be verbally and occasionally physically abusive, and these memories were at the back of some trainees' minds as they went back into schools as trainee teachers:

*Yeah, I was a little bit apprehensive, you know, maybe there might have been....You could have had a few racist comments or something because the kids come out with all sorts of things sometimes to try and put you off. I experienced quite a bit of racism when I was a child playing football, sometimes....Just racial names that they used to call me and as a kid in school. It was mainly that [Trainee 13].*

*I didn't know if I'd get there and if there'd be low level racism or low level expectations or just the odd look thinking, what's he doing here or just, I don't know....I was a bit because it's in [town]. And I don't think [town] is a racist area, but I know it's predominantly white, upper class, so I didn't... But there was nothing there at all, that I found [Trainee 5].*

Fortunately, their fears were not borne out in practice, and the majority had had largely positive experiences in such schools. For example, Figure 9, drawing on the questionnaire data, showed most trainees had experienced supportive school staff, and tutors easily available to help with problems.



However, some interviewees talked about being objects of curiosity for white students on occasions, particularly in the early days at a new placement school. For example, students asked questions about where they were from, about how to pronounce their name, or for the Muslim trainees, about their religion. One Muslim trainee wearing her headscarf recounted how she was asked by one student whether she was a terrorist and believed in killing people! Her response was to proactively work with the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship teachers to develop three lessons on stereotyping and cultural difference. As she commented,

*I know the difference between a child being racist and a child that just simply doesn't know any different because I've been taught well by my parents and I'm not an idiot, really. You can tell, you just learn, when you've had both, you know when somebody's actually trying to hurt you and when somebody's actually trying to find out the truth [Trainee, 15].*

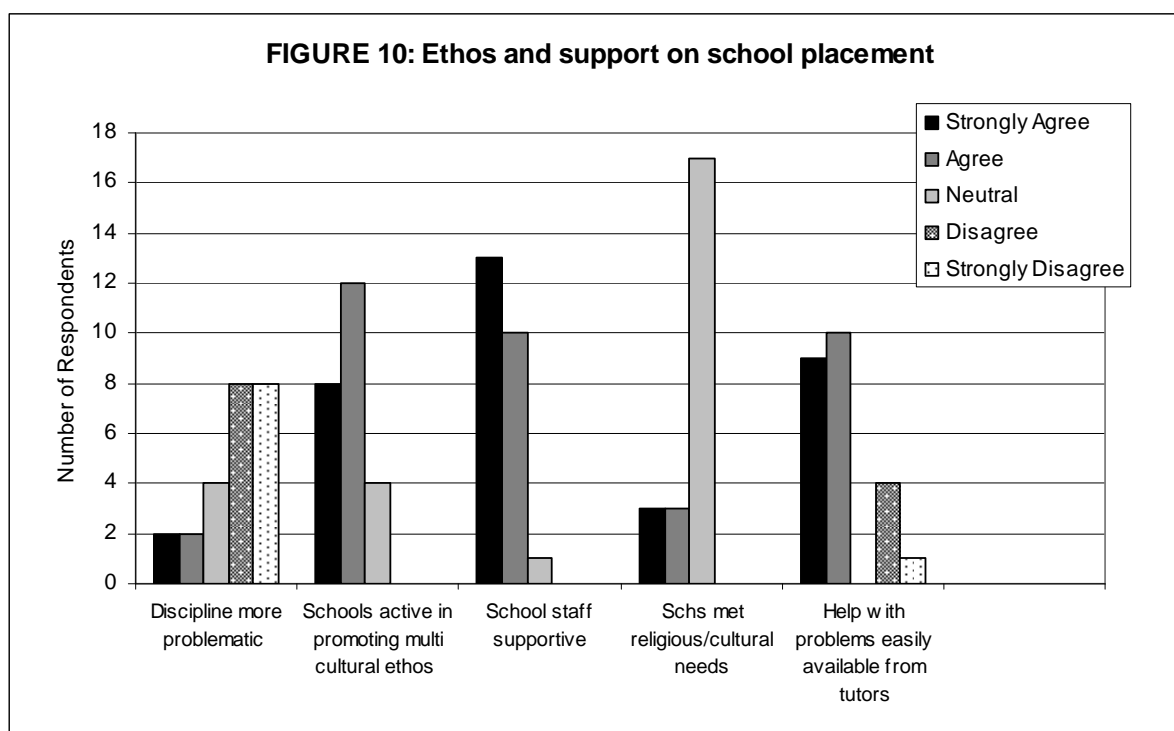
This trainee recognised that she could be, in her words, 'a real life human resource' and used this to good educational effect with students on her school placements. Several other trainees talked positively about the impact of their ethnicity and religion on the relationships they were able to form with BME students. Another Muslim woman suggested,

*Yes, 75 per cent Asian kids and I had such a connection with them, such a difference in placements. I loved both placements for different reasons. [First teaching placement School] made me an excellent teacher, [second teaching placement school] made me love what I do, I made a difference to these kids, who if I still walk past will still know my name.....Yeah I still go back there because, I mean [PE teacher] he knows I'm a ..role model ...and if I go in there they'll connect to me straight away... Because I'm a Muslim and because I'm Asian, they know that their parents can trust them with me at a certain time because they know I'm Muslim Asian [Trainee 10].*

*I would say the kids, especially the ones from ethnic backgrounds, reacted a lot better to me. That might be to do with my personality but ...but I feel the other person, the white person, had to work quite hard with the ethnic minority kids to sort of develop that relationship whereas I got there and straight away they see me and they're fine with me sort of thing [Trainee 25].*

Just as Brown and Rich's (2002) research shows the significance of gender as part of teachers' pedagogical resources, so too, some of our trainees suggested they were able to draw positively on their ethnic identities in their relationships with teachers and students. Few trainees had had difficulty with discipline, which is a key concern for all trainees before school placements<sup>17</sup>. Only four of our questionnaire respondents suggested that discipline was more problematic than they had anticipated (see Figure 10 below).

The majority of interviewees were happy to have had a range of teaching placements, including in predominantly white schools, and the opportunities to work with children from different backgrounds. Indeed, they felt it was important that all trainees had such experiences, even though, as discussed below, many were actively seeking to work in a school with a multi-ethnic intake. The questionnaire data suggested that all but five respondents had had experiences of different schools, with the majority (18) experiencing multi cultural school environments; however for half of them (12), their experiences had been in predominantly white schools.



Both interview and questionnaire data showed that few trainees had had any say in their school placements. Whilst there was recognition of the constraints on

<sup>17</sup> Like Carrington et al, (2001) we recognise that problems might have been under-reported by trainees, for fear of having their class management skills being judged as inadequate.

universities in placing trainees, nevertheless a minority of trainees suggested they would be happier had they been able to have some input into where they were going for their school experiences. For example, one trainee described his dismay when he found out that his first year school placement was at a predominantly white, private boys' school:

*I described it as Harry Potter, the school was like Harry Potter to me; it was out of my world! It was nothing like what I was used to at all....It was ethnically wrong to put somebody coming from [large metropolitan area] into a school [like that], and they know where I have come from, they know the kind of background that I have and to put me in a school like that! [Trainee 24].*

Without the strong support of his university mentor, this trainee suggested he was ready to give up teaching altogether. Another, a Muslim woman trainee, recounted how she had had to negotiate a change of placement once she found out that the school was a Catholic school. Whilst she was not against teaching in a Catholic school, she argued that it may well have been difficult and confusing for the students to be taught by someone who was so obviously not Catholic. The university had agreed to change schools, but only after the trainee had been proactive herself in raising the issue.

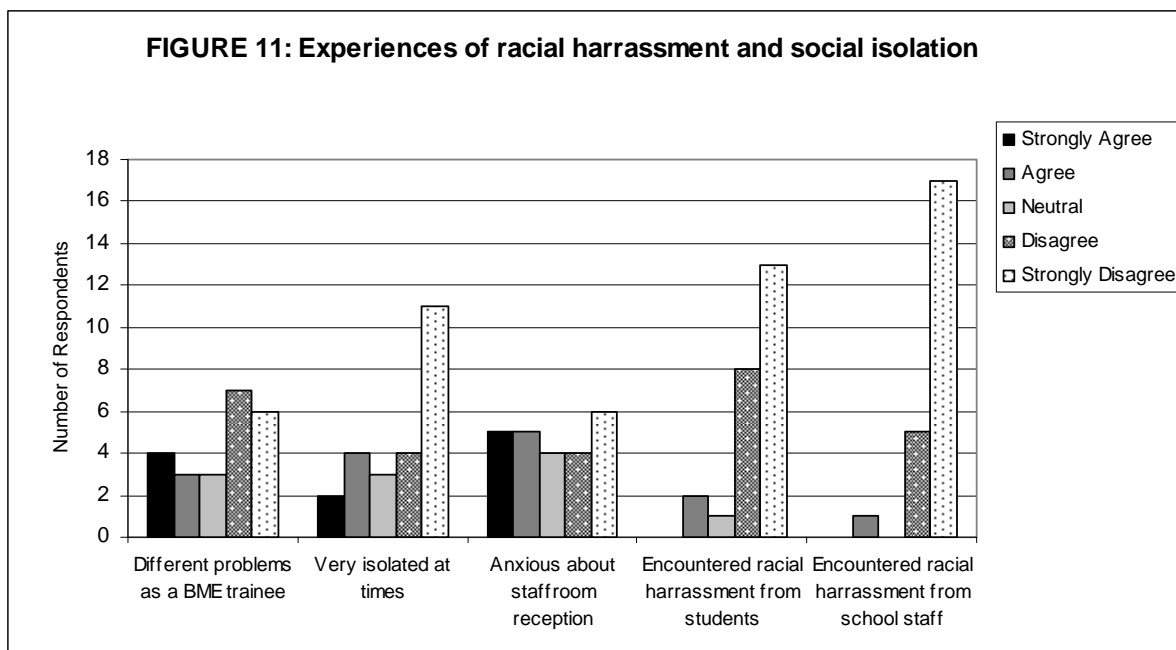
These two examples illustrate the dilemmas raised by school placements – a crucial element that may determine the trainees' overall success on their course. Carrington et al's (2001) study found that tutors were aware that 'matching' trainees with schools on the basis of ethnicity was problematic – not least because other factors such as gender, age, school ethos, subject availability, child care and so on can be of at least equal relevance. However, they also recognised that whilst they were responsible for ensuring all trainees got varied teaching experiences, this had to be balanced with ensuring placements offered environments conducive to learning. Some universities in Carrington's et al (2001) study did allow trainees to be involved in decisions about their placements, and this is something we return to in our conclusions and recommendations.

## **5.9 Racist harassment and social isolation**

A key reason for including an anonymous questionnaire as part of the methodology was to allow trainees space to tell us in private about any experiences that might have been too difficult to recount in person. Few trainees, however, suggested that they had been on the receiving end of racist harassment either in the questionnaire or in the interviews during their training per se<sup>18</sup> (see Figure 11).

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<sup>18</sup> The Macpherson Report suggests that if a person experiencing a situation perceives it to be racist it must be taken seriously and treated as such (Macpherson, 1999). We have used this definition in this research, but recognise that trainees may under report incidents on school placement for fear of being seen as less effective teachers.



However, two Asian women trainees did tell us about incidents of abuse that happened outside of the university context – one trainee suffered a fractured eye socket as a result of a physical attack and the other, verbal abuse from young men at the bar where she was socialising with friends. Trainee 15 was quite philosophical about her physical attack, suggesting that she knew in choosing to study PE as a Muslim woman, that she was challenging the ‘*norms of that environment*’. Whilst training within the context of 9/11 terrorist attacks had been difficult, she suggested that this had made her even more determined to challenge Islamophobia and succeed as being ‘different’ within PE.

*9/11 did me no favours and then, you know, you always get people... The last time I was attacked was May last year, so a year ago, and that was in [City close to the university]. A lot of it you just take on the chin, but you know that it's not you that they're attacking, it's what you supposedly represent. But that, for me, just means that there's more for me to try and disprove, so I keep going and I don't walk away from it. But because I'm the only one of the children that's had these issues my parents are extremely – and family – they're all like, well, maybe you shouldn't be in this situation [PE] by yourself [Trainee 15].*

Although we only heard about two incidents described by participants as racial harassment, several trainees did suggest that dealing with ‘*low level*’ racism was ‘*part of everyday life*’ for them, and something that they had come to expect. Several trainees recounted their parents’ sometimes extreme experiences of racism, and the way in which this had impacted on their childhood experiences, including their own schooling.

When talking specifically about their training, many of the difficult experiences that were voiced related to relationships with staff and other trainees, rather than students in school. Only one out of twenty five interviewees reported experiencing a racist incident from a student in school serious enough to report it to a member of

staff. This trainee had been on the receiving end of a racist comment, but the incident had been quickly and professionally dealt with by the school based mentor. Most suggested that they had not experienced hostility from students, despite some anticipation that this might happen. Trainee 16's comments are typical of this anxiety:

*I mean, in all honesty I was surprised. I thought I would get a little bit more abuse from the children because of being from my ['Asian'] heritage, I thought I would get remarks, none whatsoever, which was very surprising, only because possibly just being told that in rough schools I might get it...get it in a difficult situation. But it just comes to show that you have got to just throw yourself in there and just see what happens.... [Trainee 16].*

However, one participant, now in his first year of teaching, admitted to struggling with discipline, and what he called 'problematic individuals', and talked at length about what he perceived to be the lack of support from his school. In addition, several of the current trainees recounted situations where '*comments were made*' by students under their breath, or in ways that made it difficult for them to do other than accept them. Some male trainees explained this away as '*just banter, the normal stuff that goes on*', and chose to ignore it; others were more concerned. Clearly, all trainees need to be helped to develop good classroom discipline strategies, but this is particularly the case for BME trainees, where the possibility of racist comments and/or abuse may heighten their challenges of building positive relationships with students.

Whilst no trainee reported experiencing racial harassment from school or university staff, and most reported good support from tutors in both contexts (see Figure 7 and 10), a minority reported relationships with school tutors being somewhat strained, or decidedly 'chilly'. One or two suggested that they had sensed tutors' 'surprise' when meeting them for the first time and realising they were from a BME background. Another recounted feeling that he had had less support from his mentor in preparing GCSE classes compared to his two white counterparts in the school, and was '*basically told to do what I liked*'. This had made him feel uncomfortable and unsupported, yet he was reluctant to label this as racially discriminatory treatment. Another trainee, a mature woman, recounted how the university had eventually moved her to another school as it became clear that relationships between school staff and herself had broken down on her second teaching placement. From her perspective, school staff had unrealistically high expectations of her, 'picked on' her relentlessly and undermined her confidence by 'bullying' and 'snide remarks'. For this trainee, having a relatively inexperienced school PE mentor had not helped the situation, nor the fact that the school was predominantly white. Having moved to another, more ethnically mixed school, and working with a different mentor, this trainee recounted how she had been 'able to relax' and felt supported enough to move forward in her development as a teacher. She had gone on to successfully complete her placement and had been interviewed for and offered a teaching post at this same school.

School placements represent a significant element of the training experience, and establishing good relationships with school tutors and mentors are central to trainees' success. However, these relationships are inevitably unbalanced in relation



to power, with school tutors having considerable influence over whether or not a trainee is deemed suitable to successfully complete their course. Whilst all trainees experience these pressures as other studies have shown, racism can play a part, although few trainees are, understandably, reluctant to complain (Basit et al 2005; Jones et al, 1997; Siraj Blatchford, 1991). Most adopt instead, coping strategies designed to simply 'get them through' the placement. Whilst most of our trainees suggested they were clear about the process by which they might report a racist incident from a student at school should this happen (with some describing very good 'zero tolerance' school strategies), they were far more reticent about taking forward a complaint at university.

Our data gives glimpses of some of the difficult circumstances faced by some of our BME trainees on school placement, and how these can vary significantly depending on interpersonal variables such as the gender, age and experience of trainees and mentors, and the particular school ethos and environment. One trainee felt strongly enough to state on her questionnaire that her appearance and gender were key factors in her *not* having experienced racial harassment in her training:

*Personally, I haven't experienced any incidents of racial harassment or abuse throughout my 4 year degree. But unfortunately I believe that appearance and gender plays an important role on how people treat each other. Which means that if I was ugly, or short, or fat or even a male, I think racial harassment incidents would have been listed in this paragraph.*

Section 4 highlighted the ways in which some of our participants struggled to 'fit into' the course, particularly in the first few weeks when trainees were getting to know one another. The majority of our trainees suggested that over time, they were able to get to know each other, and feel accepted into the group. However, for one or two trainees, this was not the case. Trainee 24 talks about living 'separate' lives – his university life and his life at home:

*Yeah, I live at uni [university] Monday to Friday and go home at weekends and it is kind of like living two lives. At uni I am isolated and I have no friends and I just go there, do what I am doing and come home. Then at home, obviously, it is a completely different situation, I go and see my friends, go to work and go live my life really.....It is a bit disappointing. I would have loved to have had maybe not just necessarily people of my own ethnicity but also just different kinds of people, maybe like ...I am the only mixed 'race' person on my course, which is a bit weird really. There's no black people there, there's no Asian people there, literally nobody of any different ethnicity at all [Trainee 24].*

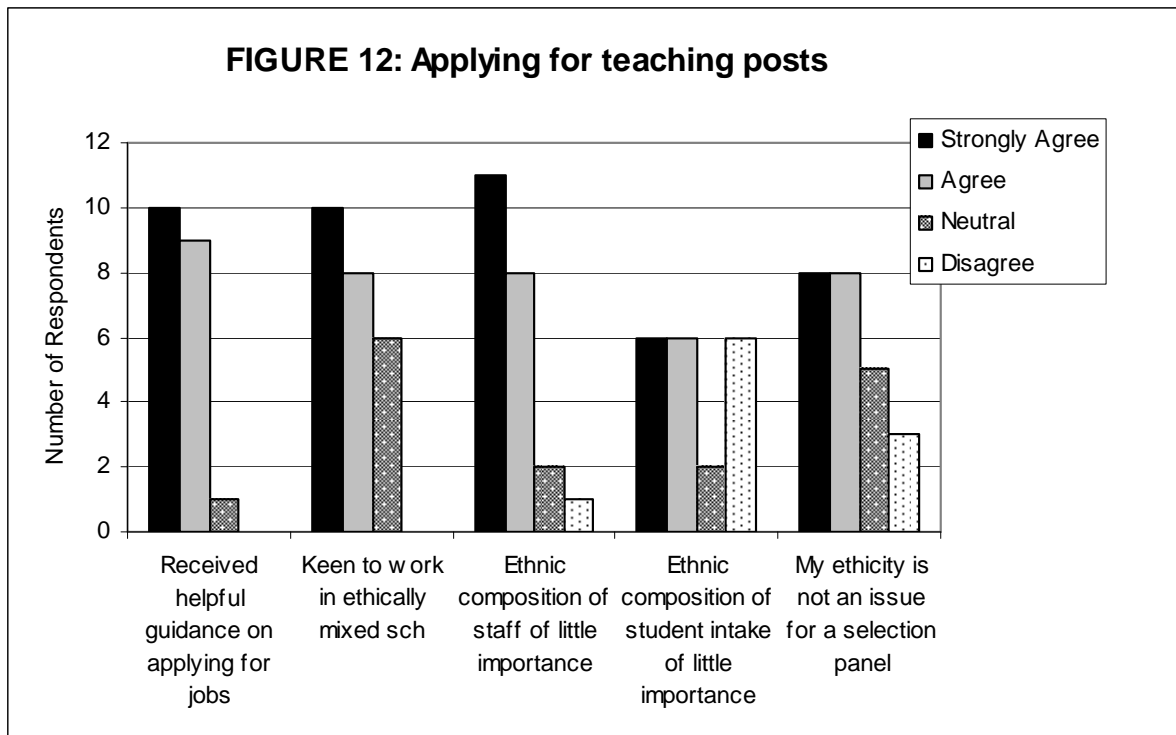
Another trainee explained he had decided to take a year out to think about whether he really wanted to go into teaching as he had had such a difficult time on his PGCE course.

## **5.10 Applying for teaching posts in schools**

In this section of the research, we were interested in two aspects: firstly learning about trainees' views about the kinds of schools they would most like to work in, and

secondly, their thoughts on how their ethnic identity might impact on the process of getting a job. As our respondents were at different stages in their professional socialisation, and from both PGCE and undergraduate courses as well as those already in their first years of teaching, our data sheds light on different aspects of the process of moving from training into work<sup>19</sup>.

All but one of our questionnaire respondents had had good support in how to apply for jobs, and most were keen to work in schools with ethnically mixed student intakes (see Figure 12).



However, as with the other aspects of this study, the interview data revealed a much more complex picture of trainees' views of the kinds of schools in which they would like to teach. Some trainees stressed the importance of a 'sense of belonging' in a school - the make up of the student body, its locality in relation to their home communities, or the broader ethos and leadership within the school might all play a part in schools 'feeling right'. However, trainees who saw themselves as important role models for BME students were not simply looking for a job in a school with an ethnically mixed student intake. Some suggested that this was important, and felt their ethnicity would be a positive resource to build relationships with students from similar backgrounds; others felt that there was equally much they could offer in working in a predominantly white school. These two different view points are highlighted in the responses below:

<sup>19</sup> These differences are reflected in the different kinds of responses of trainees to this part of the research: some were able to talk about their actual experiences of teaching, having had a successful interview; job applications were more immediate concerns for the PGCE trainees given the timing of the research compared to trainees in the early years of a undergraduate course.

*It will be quite important [the ethnic breakdown of the student intake] because obviously that is why I am going into teaching, there is no other reason. It is not like I am going into teaching because that is the only thing that I can do, I am going into it because I want to promote black kids in sport and I want to really get them thinking about getting through school and going on into further education and stuff and being a positive role model [Trainee 24].*

*Yeah. I think it's always nice to know [the ethnic breakdown on the intake], but it really doesn't make a difference. I welcome the challenge, so mono-ethnic is great because I think there's more barriers to break down there and more areas for me to actually facilitate some education... because I don't think subjects should be taught isolated, it should always branch into other things and if PE can branch into citizenship and all that kind of stuff, given the social problems that we've got at the moment, I just think it's a positive thing....At the end of the day it's more about the school than it is about the cohort. I think you can teach anywhere if you're prepared to [Trainee 15].*

Other trainees stressed the overriding importance of having a school that has a 'good ethos' and strong support for PE:

*Personally, I'm used to being in schools which are predominantly white so I'm not worried about how they are, it's more the school itself, how's it's run which would be my major factor...[Trainee 3].*

*I hadn't made my mind up ...the first school I applied to was an academy, newly opened and was heavily heavily ethnic minority and mixed 'race' and that really interested me because I thought, you know, coming from my background and being aware that there was a lack of representation I thought I could definitely get my teeth into that and I felt I had a better understanding of maybe where those kids were coming from and I might be able to be a positive role model for them but I didn't like the school, I didn't like the academy side of it..... the next one I applied for [my current school] which is kind of the absolute opposite because its kind of middle class and quite wealthy families...but all very very white ...the absolute opposite but again that didn't phase me either, I just wanted a school that had a strong PE department and that had good ethos about it and I felt that [this school] offered that as well so I was happy to go there [Trainee 19].*

Trainees were less concerned with the ethnic makeup of the staff in their future schools than the students, and were realistic and accepting of the fact that they may well end up working with predominantly white school colleagues. Having supportive colleagues, good at their job, was seen as far more significant, than their ethnicity per se:

*I don't think it's important to me. It would be nice to see a more culturally diverse staff, but if they're good at their job I think that's the main point [Trainee, 14].*

As some trainees were moving towards job applications and interviews, we were interested in how trainees felt their ethnicity might impact on their ability to get a job.

Again, responses were varied; a few trainees argued that their ethnic, cultural and religious identities were positive assets in their teaching, but with many more suggesting that these had little bearing on the process of them getting a job (see Figure 12). Again, two contrasting views are evident. With faith a central part of her identity, Trainee 15, a Muslim woman, chose to be proactive, and described how she used this to her advantage in a recent job interview:

*Yes, it worked to my advantage, without a doubt. Because the job spec, it didn't want a particular specialism, it wanted somebody qualified, it wanted a female, welcomed NTQs.... They were actually struggling to bring it up, so I brought it up myself, 'You're going to ask me about being a Muslim, aren't you?' And they're like, 'Yeah.' And I know because I can be and would like to think I can be this resource for positive exposure, additional to my subject. You've got to play on that. I've used it to my advantage. I'm extremely aware of what I could help with and I'm extremely proactive in suggesting, well, I'll make you units of work in your lesson plans.... I think I'd be stupid to have tried to hide it or to have gone, I'm not going to talk about that because it's not important [Trainee 15].*

*I would like to think everyone walks in on a level playing field. Okay, experience wise so be it, but as soon as we step through the door, everyone is treated equally as far as I am concerned, and I have not had any experience yet when it has not been the case [Trainee 16].*

Others were a bit more circumspect and admitted having some concerns that their ethnic identity might work against them in others' judgments of their abilities for a teaching post:

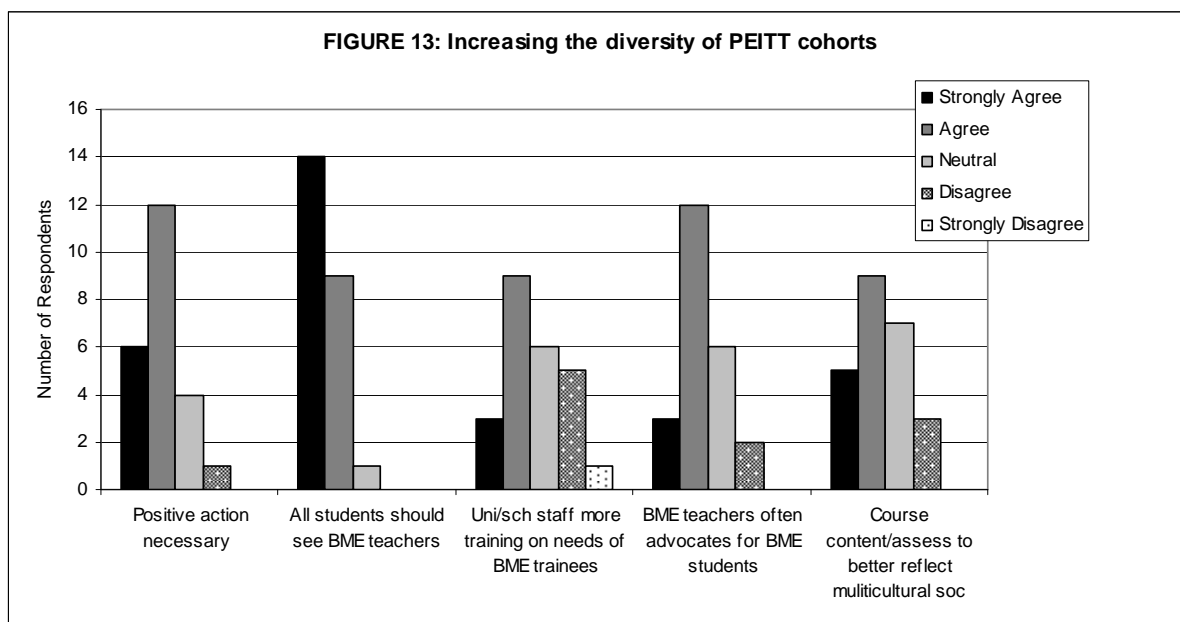
*Honestly, I don't know about that one, because I thought about it and I thought, kind of, I don't know, when people are looking at it, because obviously you have to fill out an ethnicity form as well. And my name's not the average name, so I don't know. Honestly, I don't know if the people would think,....I'd like to hope it wouldn't go against me, but it's the real world, isn't it, so you don't know. Obviously in some cases it will do....Well, it's the real world, isn't it? [Trainee 5].*

*But, I'd be lying if I said it didn't cross my mind as to whether, when I go for an interview, does it... do they see that and think, oh, I don't know... Not because it's a racial thing...But more of a culture thing, as in... because I know, when you go there that people see... they want someone who's going to fit in to their department, work well with the people there and have the same sorts of views on things... So I think, maybe, at first they might think oh, is she going to fit in and that kind of thing... more the culture thing...So I'd hope that didn't have an impact but, obviously, it does cross my mind... [Trainee 17].*

The final section of this report follows which addresses trainees' views of increasing the diversity of PEITT cohorts.

## 6. Trainees' views on increasing the diversity of PEITT cohorts

In the final part of the research we were interested in trainees' views on why there were so few BME trainees in PEITT, and what they thought might be done to increase their numbers. All but one of the questionnaire respondents agreed that it was important that students in schools should see and be taught by BME teachers, and the majority also agreed that positive action was necessary to address the under representation of BME in PE (see Figure 13). However, the interview data showed the complexity of trainees' views about what this might mean in practice.



As described earlier, some trainees had been on the receiving end of comments from white trainees suggesting their place on the course had been achieved only because of the pressure on institutions to meet their so-called ‘race’ targets’ rather than because of their abilities. Not surprisingly, several trainees were adamant that BME trainees should not be given ‘special treatment’, such as lowering the admissions and selection criteria. The following comments were typical:

*I don't know how you can boost it ...you don't want to be picking ethnics (sic) with lower scores than predominantly white males (sic) because that's racism there as well, isn't it? Honestly I don't know [Trainee 5].*

*I don't know... it's a very difficult question. I can't think that of anything that the universities can actively do, I think especially for [this institution] because of the grades that they want to get onto the sports science course and the fact that if you look at it in terms of how Afro Caribbean boys are, they seem to under achieve at school... You're kind of fighting a losing battle anyway, because if they are under achieving they are not going to get 3 As so do you go down the route of positive discrimination in terms of you lowering the boundaries ... I don't know how politically correct that would be? [Trainee 19].*

*If the people that we have already [in PEITT] are the top teachers, the top candidates, then you can't really try and drag people in if they're not that kind of standard? [Trainee 22].*

The admissions and selection criteria are clearly important factors in the recruitment of ITT cohorts. The somewhat different positioning of PE as a specific subject area within secondary teaching is worth highlighting here. Unlike recruitment into some other subject areas, applications for PE are heavily over-subscribed, making it a highly competitive process to gain a place. Although ITT providers are required by the TDA to ensure that all applicants accepted onto a teacher training place meet the stated 'baseline' requirements (TDA, 2008), in practice, because of the over-supply of applicants, individual PEITT providers have considerable autonomy in deciding which attributes and personal qualities are valued, and in the selection of particular candidates over others. For many institutions, this over demand for places has resulted in increasingly high A level tariffs being requested as a key element in the initial admissions criteria (see Teeman et al, 2005). In addition, the interview process allows for an appraisal of candidates' interpersonal 'merits' for teaching based on the subjective assessment of admissions staff. Two of our trainees specifically stressed the importance of '*taking time to get to know candidates*' on interview day and guarding against stereotyping individuals, for example, on the basis of their clothing, self presentation or previous PE experiences. In the context of this study, the nature of the admissions and selection criteria, and the selection process itself, becomes highly significant in institutions' efforts to widen the diversity of their intakes. Whilst not straightforward, this highlights the need for further consideration of these processes. We return to the issue of candidate selection in our conclusions.

Whilst some trainees suggested that high A level tariffs might work against the inclusion of BME trainees in PEITT, others were reluctant to explain the under representation as anything other than a reflection of individual preference. As one trainee suggested, it was down to individual choice:

*I still don't think institutes can do that much personally in terms of recruiting....I think you can do a great deal once you have them, but I don't think you can do anything until they sign up. You can't go and grab someone off the street and force them to come to [this university] to do a PE course. So I think it is down to the person [Trainee 11].*

Other trainees were more perceptive, suggesting that the nature of the subject might be a factor. The close link between sport and PE, for example, was not seen as necessarily positive in 'marketing' PE teaching to BME groups, particularly woman, given the often racist and sexist nature of sporting cultures.

*Many different issues... I think sport, along with it being quite male dominated, it also has sexist problems and racist problems entwined with the whole institution of sport. If you take football for example, we are still getting racism in that...Certain sports, like golf, I would never really imagine doing golf. It is a stereotype that I didn't feel comfortable with... Tennis, I did quite a lot of tennis but tennis was a very, predominantly middle class white type of sport. I got to county representation [but I was] not that comfortable. So it was*

*brilliant to see Venus and Serena Williams, but then they had to fight a lot harder for that [Trainee 22].*

For Trainee 15, a Muslim woman, her experiences of mainstream sport has been a long struggle to get a dress code acceptable to her, and accepted by the governing body:

*I think PE teaching is extremely inclusive, actually, of people like me. It's actually the sports, I've had issues in sports and that's to do with the rules with some of them. Like in netball you have to wear a dress and you have to wear a skirt and so for a Muslim to do that, as well as tracksuit bottoms and a long-sleeved top, that's difficult. ..To get clearance to wear certain garments so that you can take part in mainstream sport, there's a lot of loopholes that you've got to go through....There's so many different points where I should have probably not carried on, but I have done because I'm a little bit stubborn. At the end of the day, I know I'm good, I want to be good at sport, I want to be in mainstream sport [Trainee 15].*

As Houlihan (2000) has noted, PE teachers' work is situated between the sometimes contradictory and competing policy agendas of education and schooling, and sport. On one hand, PE teachers are expected to contribute to the wider educational goals and aspirations of schools; on the other, identify and produce talented sports performers. Some trainees argued that widening participation strategies needed to directly address the educational contribution of PE to young people's schooling, rather than its links to sport:

*..it's heart breaking sometimes when you find a really educated mature person talk about a subject like that and you think, oh my god, not only do I have to educate the children I have to educate you as well. And I don't know, when you associate maths and the sciences, people have so much respect for it, rightly so, but no-one has respect for our subject ... It's got to be the subject, the stereotypes, if you get rid of the stereotypes, if you educate people on what we actually do, there's going to be a massive increase I think [Trainee 10].*

Strategies needed to consider how they worked with families and community members. Opportunities for career advancement within teaching were considered important to stress:

*I think your marketing has got to make it clear that you've had experience of working with people from a diverse cohort and that it's been successful... it's the immediate family that think the status [of PE] is really low, I think they need to see evidence that career pathways do exist for people of similar backgrounds. And so, you know, I'm not intending finishing my education now, I'm going straight into teaching, I'm doing teaching, I'm hoping to get onto Masters, eventually progress up. And maybe that way, again, see the positive reinforcement that it can happen and it's not just about throwing a ball. The status has changed and people respect it more, but I think it needs to be more deliberate in the way that it's marketed....You [also] need to get the community heads, the religious heads, the Imams in the Mosque, for them to*

*agree that, religiously, there's nothing wrong with what you're offering and the service that you provide...they're always going to be much more powerful than you guys will ever be able to be with your marketing because some people refuse to listen to anything other than the familiar ....[Trainee 15].*

Some trainees were aware of the TDA publicity campaigns designed to promote teaching, but pointed out that these rarely featured PE teaching. The use of case studies of successful trainees, including themselves, was suggested as a mechanism to help raise the profile of PE teaching as a career for BME youngsters.

This section has explored trainees' perceptions of the challenges of widening the diversity of future PEITT cohorts. As with the other aspects explored in this study, the findings highlight the diversity of views within the participant group. Whilst some show an appreciation of the complexities of factors influencing youngsters' career 'choices', others remain rooted in individualistic interpretations. The findings also highlight, again, the significance of the specific subject, with many stressing the importance of addressing the low status of PE. The final section of this report below considers conclusions and recommendations emerging from the research.



## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Our study shows that BME recruits to PEITT share many similarities with their white counterparts, and are somewhat different from BME trainees in other subject areas. BME trainees in PEITT are more likely to be younger than BME trainees generally, and to have followed the 'traditional' route to university directly from school, rather than be 'career changers'. The low status of PE and teaching did not seem to be a factor in their decisions to teach, although this had clearly been a concern for some of their parents. These findings suggest that attempts to increase the diversity of new recruits should include strategies aimed at raising the profile of PE teaching in career guidance sessions with appropriately aged students. These should highlight the specific educational contribution of the subject to the development of young people, and the overall wider goals of schooling as well as the intrinsic satisfactions of teaching. We find it disappointing that the status of PE continues to be a challenge, despite the recent attention and significant levels of financial backing from government, via the national PE and School Sport for Young People Strategy (DCSF, 2008) and associated Public Service Agreements (Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 2007; 2008). The majority of our trainees were passionate about teaching PE and the contribution it could make to young people's lives, including challenging stereotyping and discrimination.

For some trainees, being a role model for BME students and being able to 'make a difference' was an important aspect of their decision to teach. Whilst most were keen to seek out multi ethnic schools, others were happy to accept the challenge of working in predominantly white schools, as long as they felt that they would receive support for the subject area, and from other staff. Other trainees were reluctant to see their ethnicity as significant to them becoming a teacher: they simply wanted to be regarded as 'good' teachers, regardless of where and who they taught.

Our findings show the importance of developing a more sustained attention to issues of 'race' and ethnicity in PEITT. None of our trainees had specifically been engaged in issues of 'race' and ethnicity on school placements and this suggests that PEITT institutions need to build in appropriate learning experiences into this important element of the training. These sessions should help trainees to understand the educational importance of ethnicity and 'race' to students' achievements and experiences of schooling, and their role as teachers in promoting good 'race' relations. In addition, the specific practical experiences of our trainees highlighted in this study suggest that these sessions should contain an explicit focus on the practices and culture of PE and how these can operate to reproduce - or challenge - racialised thinking, stereotyping and inequalities. In building up the learning materials and resources for ITT tutors (for example, through Multiverse) the specific learning environments within PE should be addressed.

Finally, our study has highlighted the importance of ensuring that widening participation strategies should not be able to be viewed as conferring any advantage on BME trainees. Several of our trainees had felt their place on the courses had been undermined by such assumptions, and they strongly rejected any strategies that could be questioned in this way. The large, national, over-demand for PEITT places suggests that there is room for the profession to undertake a critical

examination of the admissions and selection criteria and processes and their impact of these on widening participation.

Funded by a small Recruitment and Retention Challenge Grant, the scope of this study was limited to a small number of interviews and questionnaires from those trainees that chose to take part, and therefore any findings and conclusions must be viewed in this light. Nevertheless, we argue that the insights gained are important ones, and the interviews in particular have yielded rich, in depth qualitative knowledge of BME trainees' experiences within PEITT. Whilst some of these are similar to those of other BME trainees in other subject areas, our research has also shown the significant differences due to the specific subject culture of PE. The scale of this study has limited the extent to which we can say much about the differences either university based training routes, and of course, nothing at all about the increasing numbers of trainees that opt to train via school-based routes. This limitation points to a need for further research, building on this initial study.

## Recommendations

1. Our research highlights the significance of widening participation initiatives specifically addressing the low status and anti intellectual view of PE. Youngsters at school need to be helped to appreciate the intrinsic satisfactions of teaching, the specific rewards of teaching the subject of PE, and the avenues for career advancement in school. The development of learning materials for teachers to use in school in careers education, and with Key stage 3 youngsters considering their GCSE and A level options, should be considered. In addition, trainees should be engaged in sessions that specifically address the importance of the subject, help develop their advocacy skills, and that challenge the 'partying', anti-intellectual culture of PE.
2. Our research shows the importance of trainees' initial impressions of the ITT institution and of their experiences on interview, particularly their interactions with staff. It is therefore crucial that institutions consider carefully the messages they promote during these days. Signalling commitment to diversity can take a number of forms, including the kinds of visual imagery that is used to advertise and promote the course, involving current or former BME trainees on the interview day, and specifically addressing 'race' and ethnicity as equity issues in discussions about the course.
3. Presentations and written materials about teaching placements, in particular, should be carefully considered. BME trainees' anxieties about working in predominantly white schools should be explicitly addressed, as well as the more general concerns impacting on all trainees. The strategies in place to support trainees experiencing difficulties in school should be clear, including the procedures for making a formal complaint if necessary. Overall, it was interesting to learn that our trainees appeared to feel well supported against racism in school settings - many of which had explicit 'zero tolerance' policies – perhaps more so than in their university settings. We propose, therefore, that ITT tutors review their course materials, including trainee handbooks, to ensure that their commitment to the promotion of good 'race' relations is explicitly and clearly stated.

4. Although trainees agreed it was appropriate for them to have experience of different kinds of schools, few had been involved in the decision making about the allocation of schools. Whilst recognising the complexities involved - not least that ethnicity is only one factor alongside many that could be equally important, such as gender, location and so on – we propose that ITT tutors consider how they can involve trainees in this process.
5. Although a statutory requirement, our findings show that addressing ‘race’ and ethnicity issues as part of the professional development of PE teachers is sporadic at best. PEITT tutors need to carefully audit how and where these issues are addressed and how these might be better integrated into the courses more centrally. School-based learning tasks specifically addressing issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity in PE should be devised and implemented. However, underpinning these recommendations is the recognition that ITT tutors themselves may require support to develop their own knowledge and understanding of these issues.
6. In initiating this research, we were aware of the paucity of literature, research and resources addressing issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity in PE, either at school or ITT level. For example, the Multiverse website, designed to help teacher educators and student teachers in addressing the educational achievements of students from diverse backgrounds, has few resources addressing the specific subject area of PE, compared to other subjects. This, of course, must reflect a lack of commitment by us as ITT tutors to centralise these issues in our work. We propose, therefore, that the PEITT network make this a priority, and suggest two avenues for actions under the section below.
7. Finally, this study has identified a number of different avenues for further research. Firstly, we recommend that this small study be viewed as a pilot and consideration given to extending it to a national study of BME trainees in PEITT, including school based routes. It may also be valuable to consider the possibilities of tracking some of the participants from this study, as they progress into work.

Secondly, although a focus on BME trainees’ experiences is valuable, we also believe there is a need for research that addresses white trainees’ experiences of ‘race’ and ethnicity issues as part of their PEITT. Although we live in an increasingly multi-ethnic society, this is not necessarily reflected in the populations of all schools, or, as this study has shown, within particular departments within schools, such as PE. Some of our trainees agreed that there is a need for BME PE teachers to teach in predominantly white schools, and play a positive role in challenging stereotyping and discrimination. However, it is clearly equally important that white PE teachers are able to work to challenge these issues too.

Alongside this, there is a need to identify examples of good practice in teaching and learning about ‘race’ and ethnicity in PEITT, and through this, look to develop and share resources aimed at supporting ITT tutors, through, for example, the PEITT Network and Multiverse. The Multiverse website already provides some excellent materials, but our research has shown the importance of addressing the specific and embodied learning area of PE, and the need to add to this developing resource base. For example, some of our BME trainees’ experiences shared in this report could be used to develop short ‘narratives’ designed as learning tools to help tutors address issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity with future PEITT cohorts.

Finally, the huge, national, over-demand for PEITT places suggests that there is room for the profession to undertake a critical examination of the admissions and selection criteria and processes and their impact on widening participation.

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## Appendix 1 Email Invitation to Participate

### Research Project: Experiences of Black and Ethnic Minority students in

#### PE Teacher Education

As part of our continual process of trying to improve our teacher training courses, and supporting all students to do well, **[insert university's name]** is involved in a national research study focusing on the experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) students in PE teacher education. This email is to tell you a little more about the project, and invite your participation.

The project is being funded by the Training and Development Agency who is keen to help institutions, like **[insert university's name]**, to both recruit and retain more BME students. The teaching profession should reflect the diverse school populations that it serves, but PE is doing poorly at present. Just 4% of current students come from a BME background, compared to 11% across all subjects.

As PE staff we are interested in how we can improve our practice in this area, and are therefore involved in the project. It is being led by Dr Anne Flintoff, from Leeds Metropolitan University, and **[insert research collaborator's name here]** is the collaborator from this university. She would like to invite any of you who identify yourself as belonging to a minority ethnic group to be involved in the study; it would involve the completion of an anonymous questionnaire, and an interview about your experiences of your course. All information provided will be kept strictly confidential, and no student will be able to be identified in any subsequent report. Importantly, involvement in the project will have no impact on your progression/success on the course. If you are a student who falls outside these minority groups, but are also interested in learning more about the project, you are encouraged to contact **[insert research collaborator's name here]** too.

The project recognises there are complex issues in the 'categorisation' of ethnicity for monitoring, good practice and research purposes. However for the purposes of this study, the project is using the GTTR/UCAS form categories (see the list at the end of this email). As teachers, and teacher educators, issues of 'race' and ethnicity are important to all of us, hence we do hope that students will support the project and get involved.

If you would like to contribute to the project, please email **[insert your name here]** in the first instance, so that she can then send you more information about what would be involved. Her email is: **[insert your email here]**. After reading the information sheet, you can then decide whether or not you want to get involved.

#### GTTR/UCAS ethnicity categories

- White – British
- White – Irish
- White – Scottish
- Other White background
- Black or Black British – Caribbean
- Black or Black British – African
- Other Black background

- Asian or Asian British – Indian
- Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- Asian Chinese
- Other Asian Background
- Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed - White and Black African
- Mixed – White and Asian
- Other Mixed Background
- Other Ethnic Background

**[insert the course leader's name and contact details]**

## Appendix 2      Covering Letter

May 08

Dear PE Student,

### **Black and Minority Ethnic students' experiences of Physical Education Teacher Education**

Thank you for responding to the email about the research project exploring black and minority ethnic students' experiences of physical education teacher education. This research is being funded by the Training and Development Agency (TDA) and involves five universities that train secondary physical education teachers. We are keen to learn more about your experiences in order to try and improve our practice.

I have enclosed a Participant Information sheet that gives you full details of the study. It consists of two stages – the completion of a questionnaire (a stamped addressed envelop is enclosed for your reply), and an interview. If you would like to take part, please complete the questionnaire and use the stamped address envelop to return it directly to me, and if you wish to take part in an interview, please email me so that I can contact you to set up the interview at a time and place convenient to you.

Please note that any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and you will not be able to be identified in any subsequent report. Importantly, involvement in the project will have no impact on your progression/success on the course.

We do hope you will feel able to take part in this important research. For additional information about the research, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Flintoff

Leeds Metropolitan University,

0113 2832600

[a.flintoff@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:a.flintoff@leedsmet.ac.uk)

## Appendix 3 Participant Information Sheet

**Study Title:** Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Experiences of Physical Education Teacher Education

**Lead Researcher:** Anne Flintoff

### **Invitation to Participate**

This is an invitation to be involved in a research project aimed at understanding black and minority ethnic (BME) students' experiences of secondary PE teacher education (PETE) courses. It aims to produce findings that will be helpful to university staff in supporting BME students successfully complete PETE courses, find a job and enter the teaching profession. Please take time to read this information sheet and decide whether or not you would like to be involved.

### **Purpose of the Study**

People from BME backgrounds are currently under represented in PETE cohorts nationally, and as secondary PE teachers. The Training and Development Agency (the government body responsible for funding and developing teacher education) is keen to support universities in their efforts to increase the diversity of the teaching profession to better reflect the school populations, and has funded this study. We are interested in learning about your experiences of PETE as a BME student and would like to interview you to find out about these, and ask you to complete an anonymous questionnaire. We will use the information to improve our practice in this area.

### **Why have I been invited?**

As one of our BME PE students, learning about your experiences is essential to the study. We expect to include between 5-10 students on PETE courses this university, and four other universities involved in PE teacher education.

### **Do I have to take part?**

Participation in the project is entirely voluntary, and your decision to take part or not will have no impact on your progression on your course.

### **What will happen next if I agree to be involved?**

This study will involve the completion of an anonymous questionnaire and interviewing you to try and understand how you think and feel about your experiences on PETE. A member of the PE staff will contact you about when you are able to be interviewed, which should last no more than an hour. Although we will have some questions we would like to ask you, there will be time for you to tell us about what has been important to you. You don't have to answer any question that you would prefer not to. We would arrange to conduct the interview at a time and place convenient to you and in a quiet spot where we wouldn't be disturbed. We would record the conversation so that we are not distracted by having to take notes, and the interview will then be typed. This will then be anonymised, so you will not be identifiable from the typed sheets.

### **What happens if I withdraw from the research?**

You can withdraw from the research at any time, and if you decide to withdraw, you can decide whether or not you would like us to use any of the interview contributions you have made up to that point. (Clearly it would not be possible to exclude your questionnaire data as this is anonymous).

### **What do I have to do?**

Other than completing an anonymous questionnaire and talking to the researchers about your experiences, nothing else will be involved for you.

### **What happens when the research study stops?**

I can send you a summary of the findings, if you are interested. Please ask the person who interviews you about how you can receive a copy

### **Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

All information collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. What you say will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to others so you can be linked to the comments. If necessary, we will omit information from the research interviews if we are in any doubt that they might be linked back to you. We recognise that you may want to talk about sensitive issues in the interview, and in some cases, feel you want to talk further, or make a complaint. We will ensure that you are given the contact details of the student services and a senior academic within the university should you wish to talk to a counsellor, or want to take forward a complaint.

### **What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results of this study will be stored at Leeds Metropolitan University. Results will be used in a research report for the Training and Development Agency, used as part of staff development workshops and seminars, and published as research papers in academic journals.

**What do I do if I have a complaint about this research?** [h.fitzgerald@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:h.fitzgerald@leedsmet.ac.uk) is a person independent to the research and would be happy to discuss and try and solve any problems which you might have with this research.

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

The Carnegie Faculty Research Ethics Committee of Leeds Metropolitan University has reviewed this study.

### **Contact details for further information?**

The lead researcher is Anne Flintoff, Fairfax Hall, Headingley campus, Leeds Metropolitan University, LEEDS, LS6. England. Tel 0113 283600 ex 26148 email [a.flintoff@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:a.flintoff@leedsmet.ac.uk)

### **What next?**

After you have taken time to read this information sheet, you can choose to participate in the project, by completing the anonymous questionnaire and returning it direct to the lead researcher, Anne Flintoff, in the Stamped Addressed Envelope provided, and – if you are happy to be interviewed about your experiences – emailing the identified staff member at your university (details are on the introductory letter), so they can contact you to agree an interview time. You will be asked to read and a copy of the enclosed Consent Form and return it to your interviewer before the start of the interview.

Thank you for reading this information and hopefully taking part in this important project.

## Informed Consent form

Please tick (✓) all boxes and date and sign twice, where indicated below (X):

- A. I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study  
and understand what is expected of me .....
- B. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that I am  
free to withdraw at any time, without any detriment to my studies.....
- C. I understand that any written record of my contribution(s) will be anonymised  
by use of a false name.....
- D. I confirm that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the study  
and, if asked, my questions were answered adequately and to my full satisfaction .....
- E. I give my consent for the recording of the interviews and the storage of tapes/data at  
Leeds Metropolitan University under Data Protection regulations .....
- F. I agree to take part in the study.....

_____	_____	_____
Your name (PRINT)	Date	Signature X
_____	_____	_____
Interviewer's name (PRINT)	Date	Signature

### Data Protection Act

I understand that any data collected about me during my participation in this study will be made anonymous before being stored on computer. I agree to the Leeds Metropolitan University recording and processing this information about my experiences. I understand that this information will be used only for the purpose of this study and my consent is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act.

Signature: X .....

Date: .....

## Appendix 4 Interview Schedule

### BME students' experiences of PE initial teacher training: Interview schedule

1. What made you decide to become a PE teacher?
  - What were the key attractions of teaching?
  - Did you have any concerns about choosing teaching as a career?
  - Why PE teaching in particular, and not another subject area?
  - Did anyone either recommend teaching, or alternatively try to put you off teaching as a career?
  - What reasons did they give?
2. What were you doing before your teacher training course?
3. Why did you choose this university for your training course?
4. What happened when you came here for interview?
  - Were there particular things you experienced that day that helped you decide you wanted to come here if you were offered a place? Tell me about those.
5. How did you feel when you first arrived on the course, and realised that you were one of a small minority of students from an ethnic minority background?
  - Were you surprised there were so few students from an ethnic minority background?
6. How do you rate the quality of your teacher training course?
  - What have you found the most worthwhile aspects?
  - What have you found to be the least worthwhile aspects?
  - Which areas of the course have you found to be the most challenging for you?
7. To what extent has your ethnicity impacted on your experiences on the course?
  - If yes - In what ways?
  - Have you experienced times when you have felt different, or made to feel different, from the other students because of your ethnicity?
  - If no - Why do you think that is the case?
8. Do you feel that the university meets your needs as an ethnic minority student?
  - Has there been any specific provision that has been useful to you that you have used?
  - Are there areas where the university could do better in their efforts to support ethnic minority students?
9. To what extent do you feel that your course has prepared you for teaching in multi-ethnic Britain?
  - How were issues of 'race' and ethnicity addressed in your course?
  - Were there sessions that you remember as being particularly beneficial? Why were they good?
  - Are there aspects that you feel weren't addressed as well as they could be or things that were missed out that you felt should be included?
10. What kinds of schools have you worked in on your school placements?

- What was the ethnic mix of the pupil intake of your teaching placement schools? And the staff?
11. What have been your experiences on school placement(s)?
  12. To what extent did your ethnicity impact on your experiences on school placement(s)?
    - If not at all - Why do you think it didn't have any impact?
  13. To what extent have you been able experience teaching all of the different national curriculum activity areas on placement? (cf. remember some students might have only had a few/one placement)
    - Were there any activities that you weren't given an opportunity to teach?
    - Were there any particular activities that you felt were more difficult to teach than others?
  14. What has been your experiences of teaching boys and girls on placement?
  15. Given that PE is a very gendered subject, to what extent do you think that the opportunities and experiences you have been involved in on teaching placement have been influenced by the fact that you are a woman/man?
  16. Have you ever experienced racial harassment during your training course? (either at school or at university or both)
 

If Yes:

    - What form did it take? From pupils? From staff?
    - What did you do?
    - How did that make you feel?
    - Were you clear about where you might get support, or make a complaint, if you needed to?

If No:

    - Has it been made clear to you where you might get support, or make a complaint, if you needed to?
  17. Do you think that your experience of teacher training in PE might have been different to that of minority ethnic students in other subject areas?
 

If Yes,

    - In what way?
    - Why do you think that is the case?

If No,

    - Why do you think this is the case?
  18. Why do you think it is that PE as a specific subject area is not attracting many students from minority ethnic backgrounds?
  19. Are there specific practices in PE – the ways in which things are done in PE – that make it more difficult for, or less attractive to, ethnic minority students?
    - How important is it that we train more ethnic minority teachers in PE? Why is that?
    - Do you see yourself as a role model for ethnic minority pupils?
    - Have there been occasions when you have felt under pressure at being one of a few ethnic minority students in your cohort?



### **For PGCEs and final year students on Undergrad courses:**

Now you are at the end of your course, are you applying for teaching jobs?

20. To what extent is the ethnic composition of the pupil population of the school important to your choice of where to apply?
  - How important to you is being able to work in a school where there is an ethnic mix amongst the teaching body?
21. To what extent do you feel that your ethnicity will have an impact on your ability to get a teaching post?
  - Have you had any experiences of trying to get a job so far where ethnicity has been significant to the process? Can you tell me about those?

### **For alumni that are in a teaching post**

20. Which school do you work in? What kind of school is it?
21. Why did you apply for a job in this particular school?
  - To what extent was the ethnic composition of the school important to you applying for job?
  - What is the ethnic mix amongst the teaching body? Was the ethnic mix of the teaching body a consideration in your applying to this school?
22. Has your ethnicity been significant to your experiences of teaching PE to date?  
If Yes,
  - can you tell us a bit more about that?If No
  - why do you think it is that your ethnicity hasn't been significant?

### **For all interviewees**

23. How happy are you with the 'official' descriptions of ethnicity (such as those used on the GTTR or UCAS application form? (show the list of ethnic categories)
  - How did you/would you complete this bit of the form?
  - How would you prefer to describe yourself?
24. Have you any advice to offer tutors working in PE to boost ethnic minority recruitment and support such students in training?
25. Is there anything you would like to say about your experiences in PE that we have not had a chance to talk about?

## Appendix 5 Questionnaire

May 2008

Dear PE Student,

### **Black and Ethnic Minority Students' experiences of Physical Education Initial Teacher Education**

Would you please complete this questionnaire about your experiences of physical education initial teacher education?

The survey is anonymous and strictly confidential. For additional information about the research, please contact me. Please feel free to expand on any of your answers. A stamped addressed envelope is enclosed for your reply, but if lost, please use my contact address as below.

Yours sincerely

Anne Flintoff,  
Carnegie Research Institute,  
Leeds Metropolitan University,  
Fairfax Hall,  
Headingley Campus,  
Leeds,  
LS6 3QS  
a.flintoff@leedsmet.ac.uk

## SECTION A: FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUR DECISION TO TEACH

[if completing electronically, highlight the box before typing in an X]

- [1] At what stage did you first consider taking up a career in teaching? (Please tick only one.)

At school  At university  After following another career

At another time (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- [2] Did any person (or persons) recommend teaching to you as a career? (You may tick more than one.)

No  (Go to question 4.)

Yes - careers guidance officer  Yes - teacher  Yes - university tutor

Yes - parent or guardian  Yes - friend  Yes – sports coach

Yes - other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- [3] If you answered 'Yes' to the question above, what reasons did they give to justify their recommendation(s)?

- [4] Has any person (or persons) tried to put you off teaching as a career? (You may tick more than one.)

No  (Go to question 6.)

Yes - careers guidance officer  Yes - teacher  Yes - university tutor

Yes - parent or guardian  Yes - friend  Yes – sports coach

Yes - other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- [5] If you answered 'Yes' to the question above, what reasons did they give for trying to put you off teaching?

[6] What were your reasons for choosing to train to become a Physical Education teacher?

1 = Very important    2 = Quite Important    3 = Neither important nor unimportant

4 = Quite Unimportant    5 = Very Unimportant

Please answer for ALL of these reasons by ticking one box on each line.

Wanting to stay involved in the subject specialism of Physical Education	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	A1
Working with children or young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A2
Being inspired by a good teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A3
Helping young people to learn/develop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A4
As a route into becoming a school sport coordinator or community sports development officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A5
Giving something back to the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A6
Long holidays	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A7
The challenging nature of the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A8
Job security and pension	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>		A9
Wanting to teach theoretical aspects of examination Physical Education to older pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A10
To be a role model to ethnic minority pupils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A11
Wanting to make pupils' experiences of Physical Education better than own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		A12

The professional status of teaching	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	A13
As a route to becoming a coach and working with talented youngsters in a chosen sport/activity	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	A14
Other reason (s) ( <i>please specify</i> )	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	A15

### SECTION B: APPLYING FOR A TRAINING COURSE

[7] Please indicate the importance of the following factors in selecting your teacher training institution

1 - Very important      2 - Quite important      3 - Neither important nor unimportant  
4 - Quite unimportant      5 - Very unimportant

Please answer for ALL of these factors by ticking one box on each line.

The university's proximity to home.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B1
The university's reputation for Physical Education teacher training.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B2
The preferences of members of my family.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B3
The attitudes of staff during interview.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B4
The university's policies to attract ethnic minority students.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B5
The opinions of friends.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B6
The ethnicity of the university's academic staff.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B7
The university's portrayal of ethnic minorities in its publicity materials.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B8

The number of ethnic minority students attending the university.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B9
The university's reputation for equal opportunities.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B10
Previous study at the university.	1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B11
Other [please specify]	1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5	B12

### SECTION C: YOUR EXPERIENCES DURING TRAINING

[8] Please tick the box that most closely corresponds to your own view. Don't answer any question that is not applicable.

SA - Strongly Agree      A - Agree      N - Neutral      D - Disagree      SD - Strongly Disagree

So far, my teacher training course has fulfilled my expectations.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C1
I feel well equipped to teach in a multi-ethnic environment.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C2
I find it hard to cope with all the demands being made on me by the course.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C3
As an ethnic minority student, I encounter problems during my training that are different from those faced by majority students.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C4
I was anxious about the reception I would get in the staff room on placement.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C5
I had more problems with discipline in school than I have expected.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C6
The course provides a sound preparation for teaching Physical Education.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C7
The university makes satisfactory arrangements for my religious and other cultural needs.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C8

As an ethnic minority teacher training student, there have been times when I have been uncomfortable in Physical Education	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C9
To make ends meet, I have had to take on paid work during my training.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C10
Support is readily available for speakers of English as an additional language.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C11
The university has promoted the formation of student self-support groups.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C12
I have experienced a wide range of types of school for placement.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C13
I have encountered racial harassment from pupils during school placement.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C14
My personal tutor has been accessible and helpful.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C15
The schools I have worked in have been active in promoting a multicultural and antiracist atmosphere.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C16
I have had a say in the choice of schools for my placement(s).	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C17
I have experienced stereotypical comments about my physical abilities based on my ethnicity.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C18
I have found the support of my peers very helpful.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C19
I have encountered racial harassment from staff during school placement.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C20
I have been able to experience a multi-cultural school environment.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C21
I would recommend my friends to take this course.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C22
The climate in the university is positive towards equal opportunities.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C23

	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Combining the course with other personal commitments has been a problem for me.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C24
There have been opportunities to do placements in predominantly white schools.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C25
The staff at my placement school(s) were supportive.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C26
The placement school(s) made satisfactory arrangements for my religious and other cultural needs.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C27
Child-care facilities at my university have been adequate for my needs.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C28
I feel I could easily get help from my tutors to deal with any problems.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C29
The university's commitment to equal opportunities is carried through in practice.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C30
As an ethnic minority student I have felt very isolated at times.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C31
Issues of ethnicity have been avoided during the course.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C32
I have found it hard to cope financially during the course.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C33
As an ethnic minority student some of the specific requirements in Physical Education have been difficult for me.	SA <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	C34

### SECTION D: ACHIEVING A BETTER ETHNIC BALANCE IN THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHING PROFESSION

[9] Please mark the box that most closely corresponds to your own view.

SA - Strongly Agree      A - Agree      N - Neutral      D - Disagree      SD - Strongly Disagree



I think that 'positive action' is a necessary procedure to increase the numbers of ethnic minority students in Physical Education.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D1
I see myself as a potential role model for ethnic minority Physical Education teachers.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D2
Regardless of the ethnic mix of the school, it is important for all pupils to see teachers from ethnically diverse backgrounds in the staff room.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D3
Course tutors and school staff need more training to support the specific needs of ethnic minority students in Physical Education	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D4
Black and ethnic minority teachers are often called on to act as advocates for black and ethnic minority pupils.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D5
Course content and assessment should better reflect the diverse multicultural nature of society.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D6
Ethnic minority candidates are put off applying for Physical Education teacher training because of its low status.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D7
Course tutors should take account of ethnicity in school placements for ethnic minority students	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	D8

## SECTION E: LOOKING FOR YOUR FIRST JOB

[10] Please mark the box that most closely corresponds to your own view. Don't answer any question that is not applicable.

SA - Strongly Agree      A - Agree      N - Neutral      D - Disagree      SD - Strongly Disagree

I have received helpful guidance from my course tutors about how to apply for jobs.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	E1
I am keen to work in an ethnically mixed school.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	E2
My family support my decision to teach.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	E3
I feel that my ethnicity is not an issue for a selection panel.	SA <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	N <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	SD	E4

The ethnic composition of the school <u>staff</u> has relatively little bearing on my choice.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>SA</td> <td>A</td> <td>N</td> <td>D</td> <td>SD</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	SA	A	N	D	SD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					E5
SA	A	N	D	SD													
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>														
<input type="checkbox"/>																	
The ethnic composition of the school <u>pupils</u> has relatively little bearing on my choice.	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>SA</td> <td>A</td> <td>N</td> <td>D</td> <td>SD</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	SA	A	N	D	SD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>					E6
SA	A	N	D	SD													
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>														
<input type="checkbox"/>																	

**SECTION F: PERSONAL PROFILE**

Please give us some information about yourself

[11] Age: .....(years)

[12] Gender (please circle)    Male            Female

[13] ‘Official’ Ethnicity (please tick one box):

<b>White</b>	British <input type="checkbox"/> Irish <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other white background <input type="checkbox"/> Please write in .....
<b>Mixed</b>	White and Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/> White and Black African <input type="checkbox"/>	White and Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed background <input type="checkbox"/> Please write in .....
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background <input type="checkbox"/> Please write in .....
<b>Black or Black British</b>	Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	African <input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background <input type="checkbox"/> Please write in .....
<b>Chinese or other ethnic group</b>	Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> Please write in .....

[14] Your 'Preferred ethnicity' (the way you choose to describe yourself):

.....

[15] Are you a current student on a teacher training course? (please circle)    Yes            No

[16] If yes which course are you on (please tick) BEd (Hons)  BA/BSc (Hons) QTS   
PGCE

[17] If no when did you graduate? .....(month/year)

[18] Which training route into teaching did you follow? (please tick)  
3 or 4 yr (QTS) Undergraduate Degree in PE  One Year PGCE

[19] Previous career(s) (if any):.....

[20] Would you be prepared to be interviewed about your experiences? (please circle)  
Yes No

If yes please email the tutor involved in the project who is based at your university

### **INCIDENTS OF RACIAL HARASSMENT OR ABUSE**

If you have experienced racial harassment or abuse in the course of your training, please give a brief account of the incident(s) in the space below: (there is more space over the page if you need it)

### **OTHER COMMENTS**

Please use the space over the page to include any other information, comments or views that you think might be helpful to us in our research.

Thank you for participating in this research