

Reflecting Blues

Perceptions of policing students undertaking a
Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course
with regard to reflective practice and associated skills

By

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Abstract

This research considered the perceptions of policing students who attended a Preparing to Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course at a Central London College for Further Education, in relation to their study needs, motivation levels, relevant support and reflective practice. This phenomenological study considered 15 students from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) employing the use of semi-structured interviews to gather data. The findings were that the students' perception in relation to the support offered by the MPS was insufficient and this may be due to the pedagogical approach to learning favoured by many students. Several appeared to require support with learning and writing level at three or four. The college did very well in respect of the perception of the students in relation to the support they experienced. The scarcity of time and the intensity of the course was a prominent factor, where some had underestimated how much time they would need to allocate to study. Overwhelmingly the students required support when engaging in study at level three or four and there appeared to exist very little knowledge in how to write an assignment. Some of the students appeared to favour a more pedagogical approach to study and in some cases reacted against the andragogical style employed by the college. Support from the mentor was valued considerably by most of the students and this appears to be a contributory factor in easing the students back into study. In relation to students' perceptions of Reflective Practice (RP) there existed three distinct groups, namely those who considered that they used reflective practice, those who considered they did on certain occasions and one who did not. In general there existed a positive attitude towards the concept of RP although none of the students kept a record of their subsequent RP following the PTLLS course. The phenomenon of Situational Reflective Practice was observed which took the form of Reflection-re-Action and Reflection-re-Inaction. This is concerned with the way in which a social group or an organisation is behaving and the impact this has upon an individual. Further research in relation to the idea of Situational Reflective Practice is called for.

The following published works have drawn upon the research in this thesis:

Malthouse, R. Kennard, P. and Roffey-Barentsen, J. (2009) *Interactive exercises for the Police Recruit Assessment Process*. Exeter: Learning Matters

Malthouse, R and Roffey-Barentsen, J. (2010) *Interview Exercises for the Police Recruit Assessment Process*. Exeter: Learning Matters

Malthouse, R. and Roffey-Barentsen, J. (2010) *Study Skills for Policing Students*. Exeter: Learning Matters

Malthouse, R. and Roffey-Barentsen, J. (2009) *Written Exercises for the Police Recruit Assessment Process*. Exeter: Learning Matters

Malthouse, R and Roffey-Barentsen, J. (2010) *Verbal and Numerical Reasoning Exercises for the Police Recruit Assessment Process*. Exeter: Learning Matters

Roffey-Barentsen, J. and Malthouse, R. (2009) *Reflective Practice in the Lifelong Learning Sector*. Exeter: Learning Matters

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Chapter 1

Introduction to the research

Introduction

This chapter aims to set the scene for this thesis. It will outline my personal motivation and the context of this research. Terminological assumptions will be discussed regarding the central concepts of this research and the aims and objectives will be outlined. Finally, the structure of the thesis will be summarised chapter by chapter.

Within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) my role is that of a training designer and a performance needs analyst. This includes training students in lesson design and the delivery of workshops and master classes on topics such as reflective practice and course design.

Personal Context: research motivation

The focus of this study was a group of policing students. The term policing students is employed to include both police officers and police staff; non-warranted staff employed within the service. Specifically, this group were police trainers who were being taught the principles of how to teach adults. Characteristically they were experienced officers and were specialists in their chosen field. This group can be described as being generally mature with

53% aged between 40 to 49 and 27% aged 50 to 59. The purpose of this research was to explore the perceptions of these students having undertaken the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of their study skills needs in relation to motivation levels, relevant support and reflective practice.

According to the awarding body City and Guilds (2010:1) the award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector encompasses the 'basics of teaching in continuing and adult education, including how to plan sessions, motivate learners and use a variety of assessment methods.' As such it is the, 'first step towards official practitioner status' (ibid.). As this award has been written especially for new entrants to the Lifelong Learning Sector it is not necessary for those enrolling on the course to have any prior teaching experience or qualifications. In effect, the course is an introduction to teaching and is typically taught over a period of ten days and can be awarded at level 3 or 4.

This research project considers proposed recommendations for change within the Learning Management Unit (LMU) within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The LMU has responsibility for aspects of the delivery of the MPS training and management of learning policies. The LMU comprises of two departments: the Client Services Team (CST) which undertakes activity connected with the application of the 'Systems Approach' to training and development, and the Learning Support Unit (LSU) which manages the MPS

Trainer Development Programme. Although the LMU were responsible for the training of trainers within the MPS the PTLLS course was not taught. The reason for this is that the PTLLS course was not introduced until 2007 and as the MPS was not funded by the then Learning and Skills Council (LSC) they were not obliged to adopt the qualification. Instead, the MPS trained their trainers as they worked towards an NVQ in teaching. The MPS adopted the PTLLS course in Spring 2010.

The motivation for this research was to assist police trainers as they experienced instruction in how to teach others. Interest in this field was fourfold, first as a trainer and training designer in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), second as a lecturer in various FE colleges, third working closely with the Institute for Learning (IfL) and fourth as an author. The motivational issues will now be discussed.

Motivation as a training designer and performance needs analyst

As previously alluded to, my role is that of a training designer and a performance needs analyst within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

This includes training students in lesson design and the delivery of workshops and master classes on topics such as reflective practice and course design.

Further, I am employed as a lecturer within various FE colleges, teaching the PTLLS and DTLLS courses, I have worked in the capacity of consultant for those involved in the proposed introduction of the PTLLS course for the MPS

trainers. In this capacity I was to consider the suitability of engaging local FE colleges to deliver training for the new MPS trainers. Until this time the training had been conducted in-house by police officers. The number of those requiring this form of training meant that the change was economically viable.

A part of this study has been aimed at informing the MPS in relation to the students' perceptions of their ability to engage in study and engage in reflective practice. Further questions were considered for use by the MPS in relation to the perceptions of the students and the suitability of the PTLLS course in preparing them to teach. In response to these questions three reports were compiled by me to inform the MPS' practice.

Motivation as a lecturer

Being a lecturer in an FE college delivering the PTLLS course offers a unique perspective of the characteristics of the attending students. These students are not restricted to just policing students and include people from a wide variety of backgrounds. This perspective affords an insight to the various needs of the students in relation to approaches to study both cognitively and affectively. Within a PTLLS course it is not uncommon for there to exist a wide range of abilities from those benefitting from a PhD to those who had not studied since their compulsory education. In order to support the students in accordance to their individual needs it is necessary to focus on those within a cohort who require support in the process of how to learn and their ability to express themselves in writing. The PTLLS course represents the first step for

students as they embark on the teacher training qualification and benefits the students as it can be studied at level 3 or 4 within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). QCF is a relatively new framework which compares vocational qualifications (Directgov, 2010).

My experience indicates that there appears some reluctance by some students to embark on a written assignment as part of the academic requirements of the course. Careful consideration has been given to this first step in the process of learning and the associated strategies available to the teacher to engender activity by the students. It appeared that the fear of 'getting it wrong' or not being able to accurately relate the criteria to the assignment were two influencing features. This was coupled with not wanting to 'appear dim' in front of their peers or lecturer, this is reminiscent of what Huneker (2008:4) observed commenting that: 'He dares to be a fool, and that is the first step in the direction of wisdom.' It is argued that in some instances being prepared to look a fool is a necessary element in returning to learning. This is because within a classroom environment, asking what may appear to the student to be a 'dim' question may be necessary for a student to make sense of a topic or subject being studied. Associated with the willingness to pursue a course of study are motivational issues. These can be assisted by the teacher as the students embark on the first steps of study. In support of this, within the initial lessons of the PTLLS courses, it has been necessary to introduce strategies designed to pacify some students and allay the associated fear of failure. What was missing, it appeared to me, was guidance in relation to the students' first steps in the learning process.

Motivation working with the Institute for Learning

Third, close professional links with the Institute for Learning (IfL) enabled me to identify best practice deemed suitable for adoption by the MPS. For example, a person who is studying to become a teacher within the Lifelong Learning Sector is required to join the associated professional body, namely the Institute for Learning, (IfL). As a part of this membership, each person is expected to complete 30 hours Continuing Professional Development (CPD) per year, pro rata. Although the MPS is not considered to be a part of the Lifelong Learning Sector and as such not bound to the rules specified by the then Learning and Skills Council (LSC), it was considered beneficial to draw on best practice offered by the IfL. It was my intention to recommend the MPS introduce this practice into the MPS for those suitably qualified trainers to enable them to claim an element of professionalism. In fact, as full time teachers within the MPS, the trainers would be able to boast dual-professionalism benefitting from both their policing and the teaching professions.

Motivation as an author

Fourth, my motivation as an author has resulted in the publication of six books during the progression of this research. Two relate directly to this study, the other four have drawn upon various aspects of this study. The two main publications include 'Reflective Practice in the Lifelong Learning Sector,' (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, 2009) and the second entitled, Study Skills

for Policing Students (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010). It is contended that reflective practice is representative of the underpinning support individuals could offer to themselves as they engage in study. The subjects of study and reflective practice are inexorably linked. The purpose of the study skills book was to offer advice in relation to study skills for students as they studied to become a police officer within their initial training, completed their Diploma in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) or embarked upon a degree.

Research Context: overview and terminological assumptions

This study considers the existence of knowledge from the perspective of an interpretive stance in terms of a phenomenological study. The theoretical perspective of this study is anti-positivist and is situated within an interpretive paradigm (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). The selection of an interpretive paradigm acknowledges that the theoretical assumption of the knowledge of reality sought is regarded as subjective, because it is based on an individual's unique experiences and personal insights. Here, reality is created by the person experiencing it in a form of individual constructs. Husserl (1970), the main exponent of phenomenology, suggested that what phenomenology may offer is an insight into the essence of cognition employed by others. Makreel and Luft (2010:28) suggested that what was proposed by Husserl was a 'radical presuppositionlessness' representing an important characteristic of this philosophy, which was to reassess assumptions about things and situations and to reassess things from a

position that 'goes back to the ultimate origins,' (ibid.). Husserl (1970) spoke of placing the world in brackets which, he countered, would have the effect of freeing individuals from the ways in which they normally viewed the world. The aim of this process was to free the observer from the preconceptions associated with their norms. An important factor in this process was to be reflexive.

Schutz (1979) further observed that the interpretation of a phenomenon is inextricably linked to the nature of the observer. This person will interpret what they experience in their own model of the world, employing their own values and experiences. What characterises phenomenological research is the researcher's search for a constant, or 'essence' found within an account.

Phenomenology seeks to identify the essence of an experience. This study sought to identify the invariant composition of human experiences experienced by the police trainers as policing students. For example it sought to identify the specific individual experiences of each student and from these identify general experiences in relation to the students' experience of returning to study. According to Bogdan and Taylor (1975:13) '...In order to grasp the meaning of a person's behaviour, the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view.'

A theory of personal constructs informs this work, in particular the work of Kelly in the 1950s (Kelly, 1963). He suggested that constructs enable people to construe the world and further, they are constantly updated, changed and

are rearranged within a form of hierarchical taxonomy; these positions are also subject to change as a result of experience. He suggests that these 'construction systems' can be communicated and shared (ibid.) A significant characteristic of Kelly's theory is that a construct is both predictive and motivational in nature. Predictive because he claims people need to anticipate events in order to ensure their '...future reality may be better represented' (ibid.: 48). Kelly claimed that to understand behaviour it is necessary first to identify how the person construes reality.

As a consequence of the above theory the methods that were employed, namely interview and interpretation, enabling the study to take into account the fact that people consciously and unconsciously construct their own sense of social reality.

The intention of this research has been to identify the perceptions of a group of students. This entailed identifying the feelings, values, ideals, beliefs, opinions, views and assumptions, etc, of the members of that group in relation to their study on the PTTLS course. What was being observed was the reaction to a phenomenon and as such, arguably, those reactions took the form of a social construct. Characteristically these were not directly observable nor were there suitable instruments available to measure these qualities.

The research question

The purpose of this research has been to explore the perceptions of policing students enrolled on a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of the following general themes:

- study skills
- support
- reflective practice
- developmental and motivational issues

The general topics listed above are linked to the interview schedule and are considered here.

Study skills

Study skills considered the perceptions of the students' learning needs in relation to study and the support that was received and which was directly relevant to their study needs. Next, they were asked if they considered this to be sufficient and, if not, what they would have liked.

Support

In relation to the topic of support during the course, the questions considered the support offered by the Metropolitan Police Service and the Further Education College and the perceptions of the students in relation to any additional support they felt they required.

Reflective practice

Next, the topic of reflective practice was considered where the students were asked if, following the PTLLS course, they continued to use reflective practice and whether they had learned from experience. The associated questions considered whether they were able to use reflective practice in the development of their teaching and the difficulties they may have experienced in acting on their reflections.

Developmental and motivational issues

Then developmental and motivational considerations were discussed, in order to identify any shortcomings or perceived gaps in learning or skills. The questions employed at this stage asked for the identification of any need for further development and, if there were, how they would meet these needs. Further support and perceived barriers to personal development were considered. Finally, additional comments were requested to ensure all possible data were collected.

The responses were recorded and transcribed. Next, the data were coded and analysed. During the process of analysis a further significant emerging theme was observed. As a result, the students were contacted again and five more interviews took place, one via e-mail. As a result, an idea was then developed and postulated in relation to reflective practice, and this was referred to as Situational Reflective Practice. This new phenomenon was then considered in terms of the external factors influencing an individual, about which they have no control. For a full account of the research questions contained within Chapter 4 and 5 please refer to Appendix 1.

Organisation and Structure

Chapter 2 considers the proposed recommendations for change concerning the Learning Management Unit (LMU) within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and specifically the introduction of the Service Improvement Plan (SIP) Review (2009). Links are made to the changes faced by teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector and the introduction of the award termed Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS). The literature surrounding the general nature of adult learners is considered in terms of the dialectic positions of andragogy and pedagogy. Next the chapter considers the topic of learning how to learn and the various issues surrounding supporting adult learners. Learning style instruments are discussed and the needs of the learners are examined. Motivational aspects of adult learners, reflective practice and transformational learning are raised. The chapter concludes by

identifying the relationship of this study to previous research, identifying any gaps in the body of knowledge.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology and methods of this research. It consists of two main sections. Section 1 outlines the purpose of this research, followed by a discussion of the research paradigm that underpins it.

Section 2 presents the procedures employed for collecting data, the use of semi-structured interviews and identifies how the participants have been selected. It then discusses data analysis, ethical considerations and issues of reliability and validity, contextualising these subjects within the research conducted.

Chapter 4 offers data presentation and analysis which are presented together in this chapter. This format has been chosen because of the nature of the qualitative interviews undertaken and the unsuitability of this type of research to produce numerical data, graphs etc. The data presentation and analysis are woven together and discussed as each interview question and response is considered in turn. Each question is listed and the analysis of the responses is offered linking the topic to the relevant literature; these are placed under sub headings where appropriate.

Chapter 5 describes the emergence of Situational Reflective Practice. It describes the data collection process, offers the very limited related literature and presents the data and data analysis. It then offers and explains the model in relation to the concept.

Chapter 6 discusses the overall conclusions of this research. The chapter opens by considering how this research has contributed to the pre-existing literature and how it might explain the personal context outlined in Chapter 2. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of the research and what implications these findings may have. Finally, the areas for which further research is required are outlined and the overall conclusions of this research are drawn.

The appendices contain the following documents:

Appendix 1	Details the research questions contained within chapters 4 and 5
Appendix 2	Record of Management of Themes
Appendix 3	Participation Information Sheet
Appendix 4	Interview schedule
Appendix 5	Consent form

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This research project considers proposed recommendations for change within the Learning Management Unit (LMU) within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Within the MPS, I work within the Client Services Team as a training designer and performance needs analyst. My interests in this subject are such that I have co-authored a number of books relating to the subjects being considered within this paper including, *Reflective Practice in the Lifelong Learning Sector* (2009), *Study Skills for Policing Students* (2010) and a series of publications in relation to the police recruit assessment process. My interest in the proposed changes is the desire to effect change that will benefit the organisation, trainers and policing students.

The research question

The purpose of this research has been to explore the perceptions of policing students on a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of their study skills, relevant support, reflective practice and students' needs in relation to developmental and motivation issues. It was anticipated that in light of the data analysis the students could then be supported with these needs

where practical and appropriate. In support of the aim of the study this chapter will consider the pertinent issue in terms of literature under the following headings:

- Changes faced by teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector
- The general nature of adult learners
- How adults are supported in terms of study skills
- What motivates adults to study
- The nature of reflective practice
- The nature of transformative learning

The above headings have been chosen as they encapsulate the subject in broad terms; here each topic relates to an aspect of teaching and learning faced by my students. For example, 'Changes faced by teachers in the lifelong learning sector' identifies the demands made upon individuals who wish to teach, by the Government. It sets out the legislative requirements and considers the professionalisation of teachers in terms of standards and expectations. Next the literature focuses upon the 'General nature of adult learners' and aims to identify the possible needs and nature of students in terms of their ability and willingness to learn, the various types of learning my students may experience and the general nature of adult learners. An intention of this research was to support the PTLLS students and to this end the literature considered 'How adults are supported in terms of study skills.' Motivation was considered to be an integral part of the learning process and in support of this the associated literature pertaining to 'What motivates adults

to study' was identified for the purpose of later comparison. Similarly the ability to engage in reflective practice was considered an important aspect of learning. The 'Nature of reflective practice' has been included within the literature review as this topic formed a significant element of the PTLLS course. Lastly the literature supporting the 'Nature of transformative learning' was included as it represented the possible outcome following reflective practice.

The issue

The Service Improvement Plan (SIP) Review (2009), within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) recommended the following:

- Total civilianisation of the unit (i.e. replacement of all Police Officers with Police Staff)
- Outsourcing of Trainer Development Programme to FE colleges
- Change of focus of Client Services Team from 'contractor' (undertaking needs analysis, design and evaluation projects for business groups) to 'consultant' (guiding and supporting business groups in undertaking their own projects)

MPS (2009:1)

The drivers for the SIP review were the requirement for all MPS units to deliver an economic and efficient service following the changes in the staff

profile of the unit; the CST [Client Services Team] had experienced staffing cuts within the previous five years which had seen the loss of seven posts [from the original ten] (MPS, 2009).

This thesis considers the second of the above recommendations which, by its very nature includes the adoption of the new Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification and a move away from its present NVQ teacher qualification. In respect of this the MPS observed a lack of equality of access to the present programme (MPS, 2009). Developments in the world of Further Education have led to the phasing out of Learning and Development NVQs and the MPS no longer offers an NVQ teacher qualification. These changes followed a call for the culture of training to be reassessed within the police service nationally (Flanagan, 2008). Flanagan advocated the need to consider other sectors for comparisons in training observing that within education and social care, the students take responsibility for their pre-employment training by undertaking relevant degrees at their own expense in order to enter the profession.

Although the award Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector is not compulsory for the MPS, due to the nature of the method of funding, it is anticipated that the PTLLS course may provide trainers the basic skills to equip the police trainers to teach; although it is recognised that this qualification alone is not sufficient to qualify an individual to teach. It further offers an opportunity for the MPS to make significant financial savings.

Although it has been suggested that the only kind of change acceptable to the

police service is that which is 'designed to keep things the same' (Adlam, 2002:28), perhaps this move to embrace PTLLS on the part of the MPS is a departure from what was once deemed as acceptable. The reason for this may be because of the requirement on behalf of the coalition government to make huge monetary savings.

The managerialist / performativity discourse

It appears that there exist misguided approaches to teaching that some elements of the police appear reluctant to lose. For example the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) produced a document entitled, Models for Learning and Development in the Police Service (NPIA, 2007). The document describes itself as offering guidance to 'Anyone undertaking the delivery of a learning and development programme in the police service' (2007:4). Section 3 is entitled, 'Good practice in delivering learning and development' and contained within this section is the observation that, 'The delivery of learning and development is underpinned by common principles such as ethics, delivery values, contextualising learning and embedding race and diversity' NPIA (2007:12).

I would advocate that the term 'delivery of learning' is fundamentally incorrect and should be replaced with the term 'delivery of teaching', subsequent study of the related literature indicate that this term was once generally more associated with e-learning than teaching in the classroom (Weller, 2002, Duggleby, 2000). However, it now appears to have been adopted for use in

the classroom (Wilson, 2005, Lucas, 2009.) Of this approach to 'delivering learning,' White (2004:394) identifies the 'exposure to the pedagogy is to have been *learned-to*' and further notes 'This change in rhetoric reveals the underlying discourse: participants' subjective experience of learning has a necessary causal connection with the pedagogy' (ibid.). In an email conversation he further suggested that,

'Teaching=learning. If I deliver something it is necessarily received; there is a one-to-one relationship between the thing I teach and the skill you acquire (and if you subsequently behave incorrectly then you are to blame). It reflects technical-rational assumptions about relationships between skill sets, competencies, measurement, performance etc. (i.e. the current managerialist/ performativity discourse). It may also say something about the education/ training binary; in the sense that the technologies of competence and assessment (in vocational learning) promise a more certain return on investment than 'wooly' education.

Our experience as educators of the relationship between teaching and learning is that it is entirely contingent. We may or may not learn what is intended, and we will almost certainly learn other things besides (the hidden curriculum).'

White, (email 17th September, 2010)

The 'managerialist / performativity' discourse referred to above is explained by Jeffery (2005) as representing a clash between two different epistemic cultures in education namely:

'That of management, audit and accountability and a humanistic culture based on the notion of professional autonomy. The universalising and colonising features of audit culture suggest that educational outcomes can be standardised nationally or internationally, measured objectively and be subject to 'random controlled trial.' Yet many communities of professional practice, supported by socio-cultural educational research insist that educational outcomes cannot be simplified down to units of achievement, to absolute values or to replicable, idealised models of 'best practice' which fit all settings. A way needs to be found between the culture of public accountability, audit and quality control and the culture of a socially produced dialogue between professional expertise, established and emergent knowledge.'

Jeffery (2005:132)

The email from White and the observations by Jeffery (2005) helps to distinguish the bi-polar or 'binary' positions between education and training. The police service appears to retain an entrenched approach to teaching relating to training which is very suited to the managerialist philosophy. Whereas delivering PTLLS in an FE institution has its roots firmly planted in an andragogical approach to teaching which is, arguably, more aligned to a

humanistic philosophy. It could be that policing students may experience tensions when moving from one to another. Further to the above, the issues that may arise as the student trainers are involved in learning reliant upon more formal methods of study, such as assignment writing, may offer some interesting challenges for some student trainers who may have not have participated in any formal education since school. My own experience, having taught MPS student trainers, both within the MPS and in an FE environment on Certificate of Education courses, are that the change from one learning culture to another may be demanding for some. This is because the transition from the 'spoon fed', behavioural style training experienced within the MPS, to that of the more cognitive / humanistic, academic style learning offered by the FE colleges will be difficult for some students; both intellectually and culturally. I have witnessed difficulty experienced by some student trainers in terms of writing academically, use of grammar, engaging in analysis, researching a subject, taking responsibility for their own learning and the acceptance of more than one point of view etc. My aim is to support them in such circumstances. Student trainers may benefit from support with their study skills either prior to, during or after their PTLLS course. This research endeavours to identify the needs of the PTLLS student trainers within the MPS with a view to supporting those needs. To this end this chapter will consider the related literature in respect of:

- Changes faced by teachers in the lifelong learning sector
- The general nature of adult learners
- How adults are supported in terms of study skills
- What motivates adults to study

- The nature of reflective practice
- The nature of transformative learning

These subjects will underpin the scope of this research.

Changes faced by teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector

Over the last ten years there has been a move towards professionalising teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector. The Lifelong Learning Sector includes those working in career guidance, community learning and development, further education, higher education, libraries, archives and information services, and work based learning across the UK (Lifelong Learning UK, 2010)

Prior to September 2001, if an individual was competent in their subject matter they could be employed to teach that subject, regardless of whether or not they held any teaching qualifications (Ofsted, 2003). This changed in 2001 with the introduction of The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations (HMSO, 2001), where those who taught were expected to gain a qualification such as a Certificate in Education. This represented the first step towards professionalising, what was referred to then as, the Further Education (FE) teacher.

In 2002 the government published a reform agenda for the benefit of the FE sector, 'Success for All.' This suggested insufficient attention had been afforded 'teaching, training and learning' (DfES, 2002:4). Essentially the issue

expressed was that learners were not being taught by people with either the appropriate skills or qualifications. However this went further than the previous report by taking a holistic and arguably more balanced approach to the issue. Whereas the 2001 report asserted the need for suitable qualifications for teachers, the 2002 report acquiesced that not only should the majority of part-time and full-time college teachers and lecturers be suitably qualified, it further aimed to combat the diverging standards of learner achievement, in order to increase standards and to meet the needs of local employers (QIA, 2009, DfES, 2002). These recommendations represented a further step towards an attempt to professionalise teachers in the FE sector.

The introduction of Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector

The changes contained within the 2007 regulations included:

- the introduction of new qualifications - an initial award taking the form of either a Certificate qualification for teachers in associate teaching roles or a Diploma qualification for teachers in full teaching roles
- the introduction of professional status – Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status
- the requirement to complete the process of professional formation
- qualification requirements determined by a teacher's role and responsibilities
- a time limit of 5 years for FE teachers to obtain the appropriate qualifications (QTLS/ATLS status).

It is the introduction of new qualifications that relates to the focus of this study and, in particular, the initial qualification, which is referred to as Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS). Responsibility for setting the standards for the new qualification rested with LLUK (LLUK, 2006). From 2007 all new entrants to teaching were required to complete PTLLS and then the Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) or the Diploma in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) within 5 years. According to LLUK, (2006:i), 'the target audiences includes the whole of the learning and skills workforce: further education (FE) and higher education (HE), Work Based Learning (WBL) and Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers.' In 2007 these organisations received funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The 2007 regulations further demanded that all LSC funded teachers should be registered with the Institute for Learning (IfL). The IfL is the professional body for teachers and trainers within further education (IfL: 2010). To ensure a 'unified expectation of behaviour and conduct across the sector' (ibid.), the IfL developed a 'Code of Professional Practice' with which all its members were required to adhere. The IfL suggest that:

'If we can create a uniform understanding of professionalism, where all teachers believe that through striving to maintain their good standing they provide the best possible teaching and learning, we can deliver self regulation at the level of the individual practitioner.'

IfL (2007b:3)

'Professionalism results as a consequence of setting high standards, by maintaining appropriate specialist knowledge, and by shared values.' Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009:15). This is illustrated by the adoption of standards which were made possible with the introduction of the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications Regulations 2007; maintaining appropriate specialist knowledge was achieved by commitment to Continuing Professional Development; and shared values were achieved by adhering to the Code of Professional Practice and the associated disciplinary processes. The ultimate aim is for self-regulation ('controlling own work', 'autonomy'). It should be noted though that although adoption of the PTLLS course by the MPS was, on the face of it, a step towards professionalising the trainers, in fact the choice of training provider was concerned more with economics; issues of professionalisation appear to be a fortuitous bi-product.

This study has detailed the legislative setting and the resulting implications in relation to teachers within the Lifelong Learning Sector, it will now consider the general nature of adult learners drawing on the work of Knowles and Illeris.

The general nature of adult learners

For researchers and practitioners alike, the task of describing how adults learn has been a fundamental question in the field of adult education (Merriam, 2004). Years of study have provided no single definitive answer, no one set of principles and instead there exists a myriad of theories, assumptions and models relating to adult learning. In order to make sense of

the identity, nature, shape and characteristics of adult learners it will be necessary to select and focus upon some of the underpinning theories. It is perhaps pertinent to observe that the learning of the majority of adults in the United Kingdom may have been fashioned into a homogenous condition shaped by the provision of state education. For as Illeris (2007:1) identifies 'All normal young people and adults have spent more than 10,000 hours of their lives at school.' The extent to which this may have affected learners is a moot point, but is not one that will be discussed here for reasons of time and focus.

What is learning? For the sake of consistency, Illeris' (2006) definition of learning has been selected from the vast array of available definitions. This has been chosen because he speaks from the perspective of late-modernity. The concept of late-modernity recognises a clear continuation of modern cultural developments. Learning, according to Illeris (2006:16), consists of two united but very dissimilar forms, 'The external interaction process between the learner and the social and material environment and internal psychological process of elaboration and acquisition.' Illeris (2006: 38) offers three learning types, 'cumulation, assimilation and accommodation'. Cumulative learning takes place in a form of *tabula rasa*, where the individual is first introduced to a subject and where no mental scheme has been constructed and is associated with that of a child making sense of the world. Assimilative learning on the other hand adds to that which has gone before and develops the existing mental schemas, new learning is placed in existing schemas or frameworks (Newel-Jones and Lord, 2008). This is recognised as

the every day form of learning and is sometimes referred to as additional learning where the learner makes changes to existing schemas.

Accommodative learning however differs in that it is the partial or whole restructuring of a schema in light of received knowledge. It is characterised by being a relatively quick and radical process, where an individual reassesses their previous assumptions, however it must be noted that the individual can experience cognitive dissonance for some time before the 'aha' moment. The caveat here is that this process can be painful because it is a process which involves dismissing previous schemas upon which an individual once relied.

Pedagogy versus Andragogy

It is Knowles who is generally credited with distinguishing between the way in which children and adults learn in the 1970s, (Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005). The term andragogy was coined to differentiate adult learning from the more traditional form of teaching associated with children, namely pedagogy, (Knowles, 1999, Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005, Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, Reece and Walker, 2007). However due credit must be attributed to Lindeman, (Lindeman, 1925, 1926 and 1930 in Thompson (2009), who offered four general assumptions in relation to adults and learning. First was the need for relevance, second was adults' interest in applying their learning to real life situations, third was adults' desire to be self-directing and fourth was that individual differences increased with age.

The essential quality of the terms 'andragogy' and 'pedagogy,' according to Knowles, are that whereas a pedagogical approach assumes responsibility for learning rests with the teacher, the andragogical approach assumes that the responsibility for learning rests on the part of the learner. Further, Knowles (1999) highlights the fact that distinction between the two approaches exists within the learning process, observing of andragogy that the student's experiences counted as much as the teacher's knowledge.

According to Knowles (1980, 1984) at that time andragogy was based on five assumptions regarding adult learners, namely:

1. As a person matures, his or her self concept moves from that of a dependent personality toward one of a self-directing human being
2. An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of experience, which is a rich source for learning
3. The readiness of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role
4. There is a change in time perspective as people mature – from future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus an adult is more problem centred than subject centred in learning

5. Adults are motivated to learn by internal factors rather than external ones (added in 1984)

Knowles' 'model of assumptions' or as he also referred to it 'system of concepts' (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999:272) was not without its critics, for example, Hartree (1984) observed that those assumptions were 'unclear and shaky' suggesting that Knowles had simply identified good practice. Brookfield (1986) was also critical of Knowles' theory suggesting that in relation to the list above, that only Knowles' observations in relation to 'experience' were valid.

McKenzie (1977) was more damning asking if the '...distinction between pedagogy and andragogy represent[s] a mere word game, a fruitless semantic joust, a futile exercise in the fabrication of jargon?' Again, in relation to semantics, Elias (1979) observed of andragogy that it was just another name for progressive education which could be applied equally to both adults and children (ibid.); he questioned whether andragogy should be considered a theory of adult learning. Knowles was to continuously refine his assumptions and in 1985 identified what he termed as the 'core andragogical principles', namely:

1. the learner's need to know
2. self directed learning
3. prior experiences of the learner
4. readiness to learn

5. orientation to learning and problem solving
6. motivation to learn

Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005:183)

My own experience leads me to question whether or not all the characteristics listed above relate exclusively to adults and not to children; it appears a matter for conjecture. Knowles' later ideas in the 1980s appear to have metamorphosed towards the assumption that pedagogy and andragogy are more akin to a continuum from teacher directed to student directed learning and importantly that both approaches are appropriate to both adults and children depending on the situation, (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). I would argue that, both children and adults may exhibit some behaviours listed above to a greater or lesser degree; the variations being found in the intensity, frequency and quality of the experience the individual brings to the learning.

As previously mentioned it was not unusual for Knowles' assertions regarding andragogical assumptions to be added to and changed since his first ideas in the late 1960s. One of the more notable departures from his original ideas was the assumption that adults were 'self directed learners'; my own experiences as a teacher in both FE and the MPS is that some are but many are not. I would further argue that to become a self directed learner people require guidance on how to achieve this.

In support of this assertion, it was later acknowledged by Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005:117) that amongst a group of adults with whom they worked,

the majority were 'dependent on teachers to teach them' and '... often experienced a form of shock when first exposed to truly adult educational programs.' As a result it was felt necessary to offer later entrants a form of learning how to learn activity.

Have Knowles' original ideas regarding adult learners stood the test of time? Today a person is generally assumed to have become an adult in our society at the age of 18. However, from a psychological perspective, the process of maturity is taking longer (Illeris, 2007). Some reach the stage of what was traditionally considered adulthood in their late 20 and some even later. The phenomenon of the promotion of youth in late society means many are reluctant to relinquish this status. Further, modern government offers financial incentives for individuals to remain in school, whereas 50 years ago it was not uncommon for people to leave school at the age of 14 or 15 years. Illeris, (2007) offers an alternative list of the characteristics of the late societal adults:

- Adults learn what they want to learn and what is meaningful for them to learn;
- Adults draw on the resources they already have in their learning;
- Adults take as much responsibility for their learning as they want to take (if they are allowed to); and
- Adults are not very inclined to engage in learning of which they cannot see the meaning or have any interest in.

Illeris (2007: 208)

Is it possible to generalise regarding the characteristics of adult learners? Knowles, the renowned exponent of andragogy, has suggested that children learn differently to adults, however, this assumption has been questioned by Jarvis (2009) who suggests that the process of learning from unique situations is an unvarying process which can be experienced during the whole of our lives. Jarvis further observes that children experience more unique circumstances than adults, but argues that this fact gives only the appearance of a distinction between children and adults in terms of experience and learning. These experiences he refers to as primary experiences situated throughout our lives, observing: ‘...we all have new sensations in which we cannot take the world for granted’ (Jarvis, 2009:27).

Pedagogy, andragogy and policing students

The observations offered by Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005), Illeris (2007) and Jarvis (2009) appear to apply equally to policing students. Traditionally, within the MPS, training has focussed upon a ‘spoon fed’ approach to teaching in many instances especially during the early stages of a police officer’s training where it is essential for them to grasp the rudimentary aspects of the law, policy and procedure; this represents a pedagogic approach to learning. Later as officers are expected to engage this knowledge in, for example decision making exercises, an andragogical approach is employed. A typical example of this would be the use of the Hydra/Minerva software, created initially by the Metropolitan Police Service

and employed as an in-house development programme for decision makers offering the potential for immersive learning programmes (Peacock, 2004).

The expectations of policing students may vary dependent upon their learning experiences within the MPS. However, for many a pedagogical approach to learning will be the norm. Figure 1, below, is representative of the phenomena that policing students can be influenced by the adoption of either pedagogical or andragogical approach to learning on behalf of the organisation:

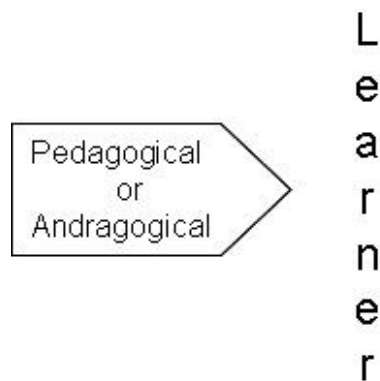


Figure 1. Pedagogical / Andragogical influences upon the learner

The pedagogical / andragogical debate appears to continue, but it is possible that both approaches have value at various times in relation to the style of teaching adopted. There appears to exist a bi-polar axis between the experience of something new, representing a pedagogical approach to learning and that of the previously experienced phenomenon relating to an andragogical approach. This appears to correlate with reliance upon the

teacher (pedagogical approach) and the willingness to accept responsibility for one's own learning, (andragogical approach) e.g.:

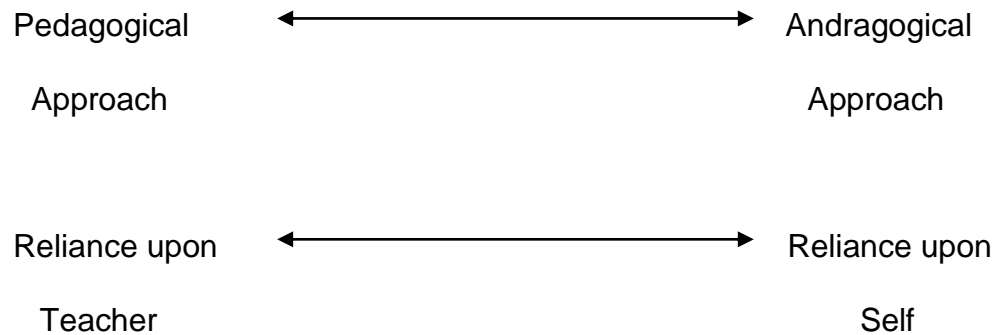


Figure 2 The bipolar positions of pedagogical and andragogical approaches to learning and the associated locus of reliance

Factors that influence the act of learning

The body responsible for professional standards for teachers in lifelong learning requires teachers to 'value learning and to understand ways in which learning has the potential to change lives' (McLay et al., 2010: 79). Learning can be influenced by many factors not necessarily an individual's innate ability to learn. There are a number of influences for the adult learner returning to learning (Rogers, 2007) these can have a dramatic effect on a person's ability to learn. These factors include the anxiety of looking 'dim' in front of peers, the feelings associated with the classroom from childhood experiences, challenges to students' beliefs about learning, the ability to manage change and an individual's expectations all of which contribute to a person's ability to engage in learning and his or her motivation to remain engaged; motivation will be considered later in this chapter.

Attitude

One significant affect upon a person's ability to learn is their willingness to engage in learning activities. There appears to be a scarcity of contemporary research within the UK in relation to police officers studying within Further Education and there exists relatively few studies in relation to police students entering Further Education. A study by Lee and Punch (2004), which examined the perceptions of officers attending Higher Education in the 1970s, found that the associated literature included observations of a 'war between the police and the academe' and an 'inherent anti-intellectualism' that permeates police thinking (Lee and Punch, 2004:234). However, they recognised that even if in practice there existed tensions between the police and the world of academia, educational attainment on the part of the police, both individually and collectively, was considered to be beneficial. This was because it was recognised that the benefits of an academic qualification for an officer represented an element of professionalisation to which they aspired (ibid.). In the early 1990s more universities became involved with developing undergraduate programmes aimed at policing in the UK (Wood and Tong, 2008). Following the Police Reform Act in 2002, a number of police services began working closely with local universities. Here initial police training were linked to academic awards, for example a Foundation Degree in Policing. Within the police service there were those who offered serious doubts regarding the moves towards greater university involvement in police training (ibid.). In relation to attitude it was further suggested that a tension existed between the educational requirements of the policing students and their

deployment as an operational resource (ibid.). Wood and Tong (2008) offer a dichotomy between the short term operational needs of the organisation versus the longer term institutional learning requirements. They concur with what appears to be the trend of outsourcing police training observing, 'The only way to satisfy the learning requirements of police employees is to externalise their training and education' (Wood and Tong, 2008:303).

Attitude and policing students

Heslop (2009) observes that in the last five years there has been some progress towards professionalising the police service in the area of training and qualifications. This was focussed upon recruit training where police forces collaborated with universities enabling recruits to study towards achieving a foundation degree. It is acknowledged that Heslop's research focussed upon recruits whereas this study considered more mature students. Heslop (2009) found that within the group of policing students studied:

'The majority of participants held negative views about their experiences at the University. This was to the extent that there was an overriding theme of *conflict* in the data, and some of the interviewees explained that they had been: 'talked down to', 'looked down on', 'patronised', 'treated like kids', and that some of the tutors were 'condescending' towards them.

Heslop (2009: 6)

Heslop's (2009) analysis of the situation was that there existed tension between those regarded as 'academics' and the police students. On the one hand, allegedly, the academics looked down at the students which was attributed to their '...previous professional experiences and even prejudices' (ibid.). On the other hand the students' 'unprofessional behaviour' was attributed to, 'their own background dispositions which they brought with them into the police service' (ibid.). The figure below indicates attitude as being a further influence on an individual's learning. In the instance identified by Heslop being 'talked down to', 'looked down on', 'patronised', 'treated like kids'(ibid) may induce a pedagogical approach to learning, but it is acknowledged that attitude can be influenced many other factors.

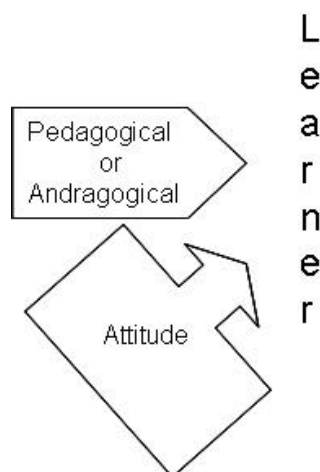


Figure 3. Various influences acting upon the adult learner (1)

Within Heslop's (2009) study a number of tensions existed which may be analogous to my own study. For example, in order to enter the police service, no academic qualifications are necessary, but on the other hand policing students are expected to produce work of an academic nature. In such cases

supporting learners would be appropriate; however the nature of any intervention requires careful consideration. Any intervention if approached in an insensitive manner can bring about resentment. This study will now focus upon interventions under the title of supporting adult learners.

Supporting adult learners

If a teacher is to offer effective study skills support then it is necessary to consider the time, nature and purpose of an intervention. Support offered inappropriately can have the effect of demoralising a student. The figure below is added to, indicating the need to support learners.

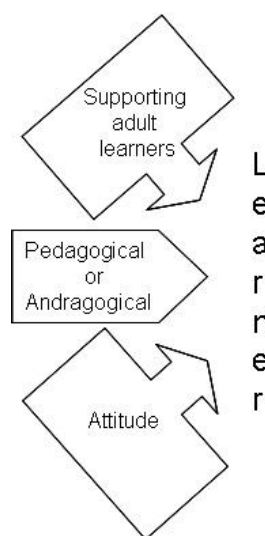


Figure 4. Various influences acting upon the adult learner (2)

Light, Cox and Calkins (2009: 48) observe that teachers recognise the importance of supporting their students, but they note that, '... they frequently have a very limited idea of why students are failing to achieve.'

This situation is explained in terms of five learning gaps namely:

1. recall and understanding
2. understanding and ability
3. ability and wanting to
4. wanting to and actually doing
5. actually doing and ongoing change

Light, Cox and Calkins (2009:48)

Arguably, it is the recognition of these gaps that will enable the teacher to offer the appropriate intervention at the appropriate time. Each gap, according to Light, Cox and Calkins (2009) will be considered in turn.

Learning gaps

Recall and understanding

This has much to do with surface and deep learning (Hattie, 2009, Jarvis 2005, Moon, 1999), it is seen as the distinction between being able to regurgitate facts as opposed to understand and recreate those facts and ideas in terms of an individual's unique experience. It is possible to recall something without actually understanding it. There exists a relationship between surface learning and behaviourism and deep learning and cognitivism. Based on experiments with animals behaviourism considers the effect of stimulation and response (Cross, 2009). In respect to learning, the

teacher can control the process by selecting the stimuli and reinforcing the approved responses (Rogers, 2002). Learning is achieved by reward and punishment, for example the teacher setting a task such as an assignment and the student receiving a mark. Behaviourism is more concerned with product rather than process and is concerned only with knowing 'what' rather than, for example, 'how'. It gives no consideration to the process of thinking only considering what can actually be measured (Jarvis, 2010). Cognitivism on the other hand considers the activity of the learner and their unique relationship to knowledge. An individual actively engages with propositional knowledge; knowing that (Cross: 2009). Learners construct new knowledge by considering what they already know and adapting it to accommodate the new information.

Understanding and ability

This refers to the gap between understanding something and having the ability or skills to practice what is known effectively (Light, Cox and Calkins, 2009). Essentially this gap refers to the importance of experience in learning. Here Kolb's (1984:38) theory of experiential learning is drawn upon where learning is described as '...the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.' Such experiences include, writing assignments, giving presentations, participating in discussion and conducting research. Although Kolb is considered in more detail later in this chapter, it is pertinent to identify the importance of reflective practice which is a significant aspect of learning. Non-reflective learning can result in what Light, Cox and

Calkins (2009:59) refer to as 'reproductive practices such as memorization, imitation and the development of rote skills.' In comparison, 'reflective learning includes contemplation, experimental learning and the development of reflective skills' (ibid.) Again it appears that as with shallow and deep approaches to learning, the willingness or ability to fully immerse one's self and actively engage in the learning process reaps rewards.

Ability and wanting to

This focuses upon someone having the skills and abilities and actually wanting to use them and is attitudinal in nature. However the reasons for not wanting to participate in an activity may be unclear to the observer. By way of example the work of Belenky et al. (1997:7) is used to describe the emergence of women's voice in the academic world they observe, 'From the moment women gained a foot in the academic world, they sought to examine and dispel beliefs suggesting sexual polarities in intelligence and personality characteristics.' This metamorphosis was interpreted into five positions or categories (1997:15) and describes the various positions from feelings of apparent worthlessness to empowerment, namely:

- 'Silence (women experience themselves as mindless and voiceless and subject to the whims of external authority)
- Received knowledge (women view themselves as receiving , or reproducing knowledge, from external Authorities, but unable to create their own knowledge)

- Subjective knowledge (women view truth and knowledge as 'personal, private and subjectively known and intuited')
- Procedural knowledge (women are 'invested in learning and applying objective procedures for obtaining and communicating knowledge')
- Constructed knowledge (women perceive all knowledge as contextual, consider themselves to be creators of knowledge and 'value both subjective and objective strategies for knowing')

Light, Cox and Calkins (2009: 62-63)

The example above is indicative of the correlation between perceptions and attitudes which relate to the willingness of an individual to participate; they can be viewed as the metaphorical links in a chain. An individual's reasons for not participating in an activity can be varied and many and exist as a result of their perceptions of any given situation. Before supporting intervention is offered it would appear that consideration should be given to the exact nature of a given situation, by identifying and considering the nature of the links in that chain.

Wanting to and actually doing

This relates to the gap between possessing the abilities and wanting to use them and actually doing so. The reasons for not doing something that an individual wishes to do may sound paradoxical but in fact the unwritten rules within a classroom or during the time when studying alone may inhibit action.

For example there may exist assumptions on the part of the student that, they cannot contact their teacher other than during class times, believing that the over use of e-mail is an intrusion on the teacher's time. Others may feel that they alone will have to deal with any problems they encounter and further they do not wish to be viewed as being weak or incompetent (Light, Cox and Calkins, 2009). Issues pertaining to the bipolar position between pedagogy and andragogy may also restrict an individual if the individual's desire is to be self directed but experiences the relentless intrusion of external authorities (ibid.)

Actually doing and ongoing change

Finally, the gap between actually using the skills and abilities and changing is considered. This is concerned with an individual's ability to deal with change. The resistance to accept change is rooted in issues of identity and self worth and as such the experience of change can be a difficult if not painful experience for students. The challenge is to prepare our students for change (ibid.) The five gaps appear to be a useful tool in identifying stages when students may struggle; they are useful because they offer the teacher a meter with which to consider the situation and engage meaningfully at appropriate times. The relationship of learning gaps and policing students will now be considered.

Learning gaps and policing students

The learning gaps postulated by Light, Cox and Calkins (2009) may offer an element of structure when attempting to determine the ability of the policing students to study. Further where difficulties are observed on the part of the learner, identification of the learning gaps may facilitate an appropriate intervention. At present there is no system in place within the MPS to support policing students with the exception of that offered by FE colleges during the PTLLS course. Although the policing student could experience a learning gap at any of the above stages, there has existed a culture in relation to learning within the police service that has consisted of regurgitation verbatim of text to be the norm. This is synonymous with the Recall and Understanding stage (ibid) where the ability to, for example recall Section 1 of the Theft Act 1968 verbatim, does not mean that the Act is understood.

However, it must be stressed that training within the MPS is generally moving away from the form of almost rote learning but it does not include learning that incorporates any form of reflective practice. The use of reflective practice can be suitably employed within the second stage, namely, 'Understanding and Ability'. Arguably, if there is no form of reflective practice within learning, it would be likely that the MPS policing students would experience greater difficulty as they progressed to the stage of 'ability and wanting to', in comparison to those engaging in reflective practice. It is not argued that it is not possible; simply that reflective practice would enrich the learning process.

As previously stated, by Light, Cox and Calkins (2009:48) teachers recognise the importance of supporting their students, but observe that, ‘... they frequently have a very limited idea of why students are failing to achieve.’ A correlation is observed here to the policing students. Within the PTLLS course, it is highly likely that learning gaps will be identified, for example by diagnostic assessment in relation to numeracy and literacy. As the teacher supports the learner by identifying any learning gaps and shares this knowledge with the student, arguably the onus falls to the student to consider how best to manage that learning gap. In the case of the policing students this can take the form of adapting and improving their writing skills. The figure below acknowledges this feature.

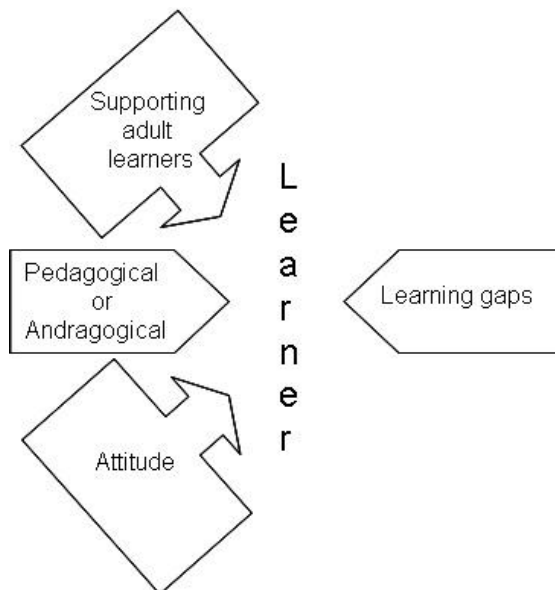


Figure 5 Various influences acting upon the adult learner (3)

Further to consideration of the five learning gaps, another tool available to support learners is that of the identification of students' learning styles as a

means of supporting students' learning. Consideration will now be given this subject under the heading learning style instruments.

Learning Style Instruments

Learning style instruments often take the form of questionnaires. These are designed to assist individuals identify their preferred way of learning. A wide range of learning style instruments exist many of which are based upon some form of theoretical basis. Brookfield (1995) identifies a number of characteristics displayed by adult learners:

- It is part of adult behaviour to be self directed
- Adults explain what their educational needs are to their tutor
- Adult learners work well on their own
- Adult learners need to know why they are learning something and will decide if it is relevant to them
- Adult learners are practical problem solvers
- Adult learners have accumulated life experiences
- The adult learning process and practice are unique

Brookfield (1995)

Arguably there could be as many characteristics of learner as there are people and any attempt to categorise would be met with the inevitable exception to the rule and the dilution of that rule. In attempting to support

learners efforts have been made to identify students' learning styles. If the students' learning styles are indentified, then it is thought possible that the teacher may strive to match the student's learning styles. This can be achieved by the teacher carefully selecting the teaching strategies employed. On the other hand mismatching a student's learning style can also reap rewards. Cartelli, (2006:128) suggests that 'mismatches are sometimes desirable and that learners should be exposed to multiple alternative teaching-learning strategies for their own benefits.' The learning style instruments will now be considered in terms of matching teaching strategies to learning styles.

Learning style instruments are used in further and higher education enabling lecturers to match teaching and learning activities (Hayes, 2006). It has been suggested there exists at least 70 various learning style instruments, inventories and systems (Coffield, 2004). These are tools designed to diagnose the way in which a person functions during the learning process, in turn the teacher is then able to fashion their teaching to match (or mismatch) the person's learning style. Often students are offered a learning style test during the initial assessment at the beginning of an academic course. This enables the student to recognise their particular learning style. However, some are critical of the benefits of such instruments (McLay et al., 2010, Hoblely, 2003, Scales, 2008) often this is due to the students being labelled as a particular type of learner which has a limiting effect. These learning style instruments often take the form of a learning style questionnaire (Flemming, 2008:1). Included are the following:

Learning Style Instrument	Authors	Cited in
Cognitive Styles Index	Allinson and Hayes	Pedrosa de Jesus, Ameida, Teixeira Dias and Watts, 2006)
Motivational Style Profile	Apter	Apter, 2003
Learning Styles Inventory	Dunn and Dunn	Garnett, 2005
Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students (ASSIST)	Entwistle	(Entwistle, 2000)
Mind Styles Delineator	Gregorc	Zhang and Sternberg, 2006
Brain Dominance Instrument	Herrmann	Leonard and Straus, 1997
Learning Styles Questionnaire	Honey and Mumford	Honey and Mumford, 1982
Learning Styles Profiler	Jackson	Van de Vijer and Van Hemert, 2008
visual, auditory, feelings, taste and smell	Knight	Knight, 2002
Learning Styles Inventory	Kolb	Kolb, 1999
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)	Myers and Briggs	Bayne, 1997

Learning Style Instrument	Authors	Cited in
VAK	Petty	Petty, 2004
Cognitive Styles Analysis	Riding and Rayner	Riding and Rayner, 1999
Thinking Styles	Sternberg	Sternberg, 1997
Inventory of Learning Styles	Vermunt	Ireson, 2008

Table 1 Matrix 1 of learning style questionnaires

There appear three general types of instruments, those relying on the senses, those considering cognitive activities and those based on existing educational theory. The figure below lists these instruments under the appropriate headings:

Cognitive Activity	Senses	Educational Theory
Mind Styles Delineator	VAK	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
Learning Styles Inventory	Learning Styles Inventory	Learning Styles Inventory
Cognitive Styles Analysis	Knight	Honey and Mumford
Motivational Style Profile		Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students (ASSIST)

Cognitive Activity	Senses	Educational Theory
Learning Styles Profiler		
Brain Dominance Instrument		
Cognitive Styles Index		
Inventory of Learning Styles		
Thinking Styles		

Table 2 Matrix 2 of learning style questionnaires

What is apparent from the above chart is that the majority of the chosen instruments involve considerations which are cognitive in nature. Three models, one representing each type are briefly considered next.

First, Herrman (1996) offers Whole Brain Thinking. Based on left/right brain dominance theory with the addition of the upper cerebral and lower limbic divisions within the brain. 'These are taken to form four quadrants through exploring the combinations and characteristics of these quadrants a learner can develop an insight into his or her own unique mentality' Rylatt (2001:69). The idea supporting this model is that people have a collective whole brain 'constituting an unlimited range of learning preferences and mental dominance within the four quadrants' (ibid.) As a result an individual can be viewed as thinking analytically, sequentially, interpersonally or imaginatively.

Second are those relying on the senses include Knight (2002:33) who offers five thinking patterns which includes visual, auditory, feelings, taste and smell. Petty (2009:149) also links learning to the senses but offers only visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles. These consider the way in which an individual relates to their world however, what these appear to lack is any reference to the sense of time.

Third is the example of a learning style instrument based on educational theory is that by Honey and Mumford (1982). They suggest four types of learners, Activists, Reflectors, Theorists and Pragmatists. The roots of this learning style questionnaire can be linked directly to the work of Kolb (1984), specifically the four stage model of learning (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, 2009). The following are analogous:

Activists	-	Concrete experience
Reflector	-	Reflective observation
Theorists	-	Abstract conceptualisation
Pragmatists	-	Active experimentation

According to Honey (2009:1) 'Learning style preferences determine the things people learn and the ease with which they learn them. They exert a hidden, but powerful, influence on learning effectiveness.' That is perhaps only partly the case as arguably there are as many categories of learning style as we choose to invent. Many people have found the Honey and Mumford Learning style questionnaire and other similar tests to be useful, for others it labels

them and restricts their desire to participate in any activity other than the ones suggested by the result of the questionnaire, 'the temptation to classify, label and stereotype is clearly difficult to resist', Coffield (2004:145).

However, not all consider learning style instruments to be a useful way to delineate learning styles. In contrast to the assertion that the above Learning style instruments offer an insight to an individual's psychological makeup or learning preference, Hayes (2006) questions the validity of these instruments observing they are not sampling the actual behaviour of the students but only their ideas of how they may be learning. She suggests that these ideas may be '...self-deluding or influenced by what the respondent thinks the tester wants to hear, (2006:4). Hayes does appear though to be in the minority of those who are willing to warn of what appears to be a phenomenon akin to the 'Kings New Clothes' She offers the following, 'Great caution should be applied in seeing current learning styles as 'scientific instruments' and 'the answer' in all contexts. Experience suggests that for students of any age, the most effective strategies are to reinforce learning through a wide range of stimuli and activities' (ibid.)

On the other hand, Coffield et al (2004:145) consider that the benefits of a 'reliable instrument which measures learning styles and approaches could be used as a tool to encourage self development.' They suggest that an increased awareness of learning styles and the process of metacognition enable the learner to choose the most appropriate learning strategy. The learning style represents only a part of what is required to enable learning; the

student will have other learning needs. It appears that learning style questionnaires do serve a purpose by focusing the students upon issues of metacognition, but they sometimes run the risk of labelling and therefore potentially restricting a student's ability to learn in various other ways.

Learning styles instruments and policing students

It is asserted that the benefits to policing students in relation to learning style instruments are that they appear to offer students a scaffold on which to support their initial concepts in relation to the process of learning. These ideas can always be revisited and amended in the knowledge that, arguably, there is no actual right way for every student. It is that fact that the policing student is made aware of the various styles, which represents one of the first steps in learning about learning. The figure below incorporates this as being a significant factor in relation to policing students:

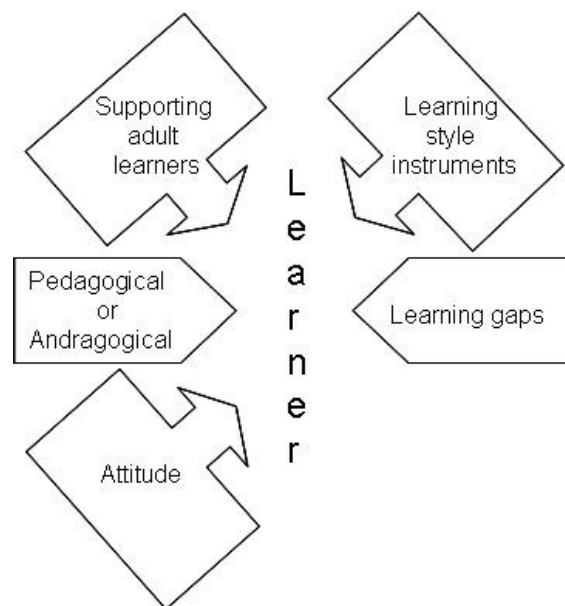


Figure 6 Various influences acting upon adult learners (4)

Having identified a suitable learning style, consideration can then be given to the skills required to enable learning in that style. The concept of learning styles offers a relatively simple approach to understanding learning and although each is a form of generalisation, they do appear to offer an accessible door through which the policing student can enter the world of learning theory. This study will consider the needs of learners in relation to study skills and the various levels of ability associated with their learning journey.

Learning needs

Learning styles differ from learners' needs, the latter being the intuitive and unstructured knowledge of how we learn possessed by a student often at an unconscious level (Petty, 2009). Variations in the needs of learners occur as a result of the school they attended (or not), differences in social class, ethnicity, opportunity, culture, gender, personality, cognitive style, learning style, attitude, ability, self efficacy and motivation (Bedford and Wilson, 2006). What can be inferred from this is that the teacher can be faced with a vast array of learner needs. These needs can be catered for by the appropriate use of study skills; these may need to be taught. Some of the skills necessary to achieve success in academic study are referred here in terms of the essential skills and include:

- Reading
- Note making

- ITC skills
- Presentation skills
- Research skills
- Essay writing
- Reflective Practice
- Personal development planning

Adapted from Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010)

The skills listed above are considered essential skills which should be in place in order to facilitate learning. However, it may be that a student is unaware that they are not able to perform any of the above tasks. Often it is not until a person is asked to perform a certain activity that they realise their ability or lack of it. An analogy is drawn to Herzberg's four steps, (Apparently there exists no known reference of this model, however Herzberg is cited in Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2009). The model attributed to Herzberg was adapted to include the 5th step (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen: 2010:16) referred to here as the Steps of Competence.

The Steps of Competence

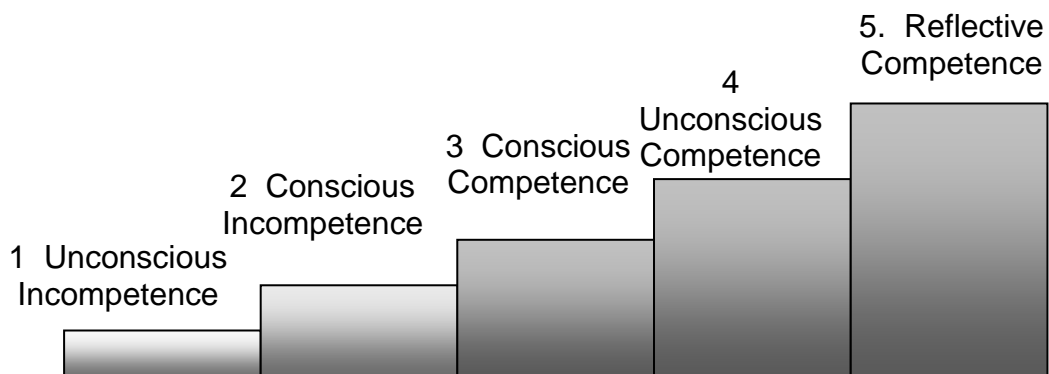


Figure 7

Five levels of competence are identified, from unconscious incompetence to reflective competence.

Step 1 Unconscious incompetence. This relates to a person who has never engaged in academic study. They have no concept of how to go about studying as they have not been required to learn anything more than regurgitate verbatim. They have simply no idea of what will be asked of them and they have given this no meaningful thought and are described as being at the first step, that of unconscious incompetence.

Step 2 Conscious incompetence. Later the person enrolls in a course such as PTLLS and realises that there may be more to study than simply recalling facts. This person now stands on the second step referred to as conscious incompetence. This is because they are aware that they may be lacking in ability at this stage.

Step 3 Conscious competence. After a while the person has taken advice on how to study and has perhaps read up on the subject. They are conscious that they have difficulty with some aspects of for example assignment writing but are keen to ensure their writing improves. Here they have reached the next step, conscious competence.

Step 4 Unconscious competence. Later the person has been writing at a certain standard for quite a while. Their level of writing has improved to such an extent that they don't even have to think about it. They have reached the step of being unconsciously competent.

Step 5 Reflective Competence. This is the position where the person makes a conscious effort to review their ability from time to time. Reflective competence describes that process of thinking about what has been done and asking if what they are doing is in fact the most appropriate way. It does this without the person needing to go back to conscious incompetence.

Learning needs and policing students

The steps of competence is a useful concept because they distinguish between a policing student who is not engaged in purposeful or reflective thought, (occupying in the first step), and those who have become aware of their shortcomings, (occupying the second step). In general it is not until the person reaches that second step that any move towards improvement is considered, this may coincide with a greater awareness of what is entailed in being an adult learner. Arguably the step from unconscious incompetence to

conscious incompetence may be the most steep, where a learner is made aware of their shortcomings. It is anticipated that many policing students on the PTLLS course will identify the passage from the step of unconscious incompetence to the next of conscious incompetence. Acknowledging this phenomenon will enable the policing student and teacher to consider a suitable support structure. The desired outcome for the policing student and teacher alike is to arrive at the position of reflective competence, where although the person is unconsciously competent, they ensure that from time to time the given subject is revised and they remain up-to-date with developments within their chosen field. The figure below has been modified to include considerations of policing students' learning needs. Arguably learning needs represent a further significant feature influencing a student's ability to learn.

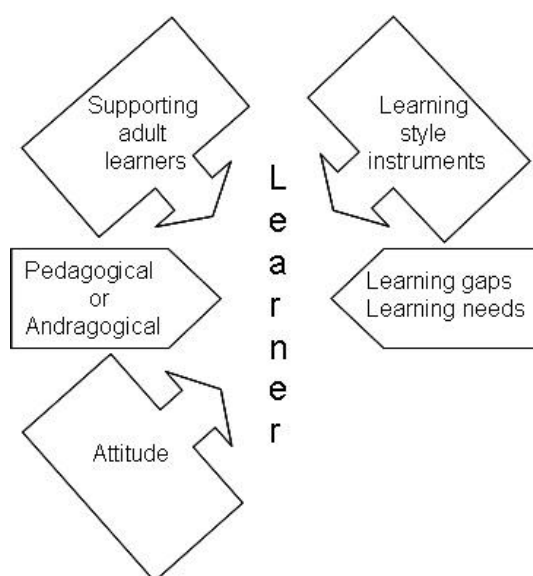


Figure 8 Various influences acting upon adult learners (5)

The Steps of Competence (op cit) assumes the student is motivated to study. Although this chapter has considered the nature of adult learners, the

associated learning theories and lists of skills etc. these have been considered in a linear form. However, it is recognised that at any time, all of these topics can influence an individual concurrently and to a greater or lesser extent depending on factors such as interest, need, expectations etc. Underpinning all of the above learning styles, the needs of the students and teaching strategies is that of motivation to learn. Without motivation opportunities to learn can, arguably, be wasted. Motivation is next discussed in relation to adults and study issues.

What motivates adults to study?

What is motivation? Ormrod (2008:407) identifies motivation to be, 'an internal state that arouses us to action, pushes us in particular directions, and keeps us engaged in certain activities.' Weiner (1992:17) suggests motivation to be, '...the study of the determinants of thought and action-it addresses why behaviour is initiated, persists and stops as well as what choices are made.' Child (1997:44) offers a more practical definition, observing it, '...consists of internal processes and external incentives which spur us on to satisfy some need.' What can be concluded from these definitions is that motivation is cognitive, affective, behavioural and temporal in nature. A difficulty therefore arises for the observer because although an individual's behaviour is observable, the reasons which sit behind a particular behaviour are unobservable. Fredenburg et al. (2001:3) suggest an important factor pertaining to motivation is the 'learner's interpretation of his or her ability that has been linked to concrete achievements.' They relate this in terms of

‘perceived competence, self-efficacy, perceived ability and self-perception of ability.’

According to Fisher (1990:196) ‘...persons with high self esteem tend to be more independent [and] more consistent in their efforts....’ This is supported by Bandura’s self-efficacy theory (Bandura 1997), who noted the link between the quality of engagement in an activity and a sense of competence experienced by an individual. Boekaerts (2002:12), maintains that a student’s ‘self-concept’ of ability is directly linked to the amount of effort an individual is willing to give a learning task. Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010) identify an analogy between motivation to study and a journey, observing that the first step in a journey can be the most difficult. They suggest an obstruction to study, faced by the students, is an inclination to procrastinate observing the reason for not starting a task may differ from person to person but frequently the reasons can include:

- a lack of confidence
- low self-esteem
- stress
- anxiety
- fear of the unknown
- not wanting to take responsibility
- lack of self-belief
- being too busy with other things

(Ibid. 3)

‘People are motivated by many influences, but to generalise they can be any where between two points:

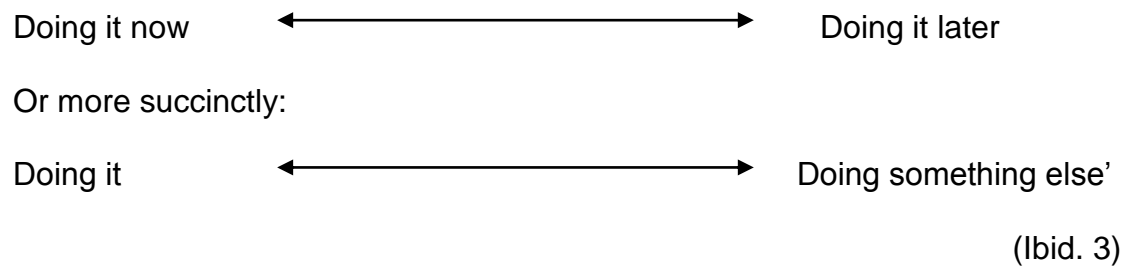


Figure 9 Bi polar motivational axes

If a person's self-perception is poor this may impact upon the effort given to a task such as to study. How does an individual arrive at a particular self-perception? One possible answer is to be found in attribution theory which relates to 'causal perception' (Child, 1997). This relates to what an individual believes are the reasons for their success or failure and the effect this then has on their future expectations. Attribution theory includes the way in which an individual interprets the 'reinforcements and punishments' they have experienced (Ormrod, 1999). She suggests that a person may view these experiences in terms of something that they themselves have done, or instead the result of something that has been done to them. Child (1997) identifies those individuals:

'...with a high need to achieve, attribute their success to internal causes of aptitude and effort and their failure to lack of effort, while low need achievers attribute their failure to external factors (and in some cases to lack of ability)

Child (1997:70)

The above indicates the presence of internal and external factors acting upon the causal perception and therefore the motivation, of an individual, which

affects the way an individual interprets daily events and consequences. This is an example of a person's 'explanatory style' (Ormrod, 1999) who observes:

'Some people typically attribute their accomplishments to their own abilities and efforts; they have an I-can-do-it attitude known as mastery orientation. Others attribute success to outside uncontrollable factors and believe that their failures reflect a lack of ability; they have an I-can't-do-it attitude known as learned helplessness.'

Ormrod (1999:453)

The above indicates a bi-polar axis between mastery orientation and learned helplessness; an individual may be at any stage between the two states (ibid.). So it could be argued that a person's motivation is influenced by their self-perception, self-efficacy, and self-perception of ability. These are, in turn, influenced by the person's causal perception or explanatory style, which can result in an individual who may be inclined towards 'mastery orientation.' This is then related to their own efforts, intrinsically, or lean towards 'learned helplessness' which is related to uncontrollable factors, extrinsically. The relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and how this affects a student's motivation to learn will now be considered.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to an individual performing an activity for its own sake. As Gilbert (2002:1) observes, the 'Carrot and stick may work if you want a classroom full of donkeys, but real motivation comes from within.' The

advantages of this type of motivation are that it affords an individual, feelings of efficacy and autonomy (Mischel, 1999) and promotes, logical information gathering and decision making strategies (Lumsden, 2003). However, for intrinsic motivation to be present Ormrod (1999) identifies that two conditions must be present, the individual must have a sense of competence and self-determination which in turn would generate satisfaction in performing the task. Conversely, extrinsic motivation relates to an individual who engages in an activity to obtain a separate goal, for example to ‘...orient the students toward working for the ultimate goal of examinations.’ Bogler and Somech (2002:2). The overriding disadvantage of the existence of extrinsic rewards is that they can negate the effect of any intrinsic motivation, referred to as ‘overjustification’ (Child, 1997). Equally, students who are motivated to avoid a penalty are extrinsically motivated (Boakearts, 2002). Although there are benefits associated with extrinsic motivation, such, ‘as increasing an individual’s time on task’ (Ormrod, 1999), with a subsequent improvement in performance, there are many disadvantages. For example, the students tend to do only the minimum to achieve the task, which may stop completely once the reinforcement disappears (ibid.). Intrinsic motivation offers many advantages to assist a learner, over extrinsic motivation (Ormrod, 1999), for example,

‘... they are more likely to pursue a task on their own initiative, keep their attention focussed on it, learn meaningfully and persist in the face of failure.’

Ormrod (1999:456)

The issue of differentiating intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was alluded to earlier. However, certain observable behaviours may identify a leaning towards a particular type of motivation. For example, there is a correlation between the existence of intrinsic motivation and self-determination. Self-determination relates to an individual's belief that they can choose their behaviours and ultimately their fate (ibid.). An individual who displays self-determination is more likely to engage in a task longer, to engage in thought for longer and to take pleasure when undertaking those tasks and to achieve at a higher level (ibid.). This is supported by Thompson and Schlebofer (2008:51) who suggest that students are 'more motivated to perform well when they perceive a high degree of control over their academic choices and decisions'. So far this study has concluded from the chosen definitions, that motivation is cognitive, affective, behavioural and temporal in nature. It identified that an important feature of motivation as being the learner's interpretation of their ability and considered this in terms of perceived competence, self-efficacy and self-perception of ability. It further considered causal perception, the reasons for an individual's success or failure and explanatory style, identifying the bi-polar axis of mastery orientation and learned helplessness. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was analysed, identifying that intrinsic motivation was a preferred state.

Motivation and policing students

Features of motivation have been discussed and all appear relevant to that of the policing students. The figure below has been added to, situating motivation above attitude. This has been done to represent the link between

the two where, arguably, attitude is an influencing factor in relation to motivation.

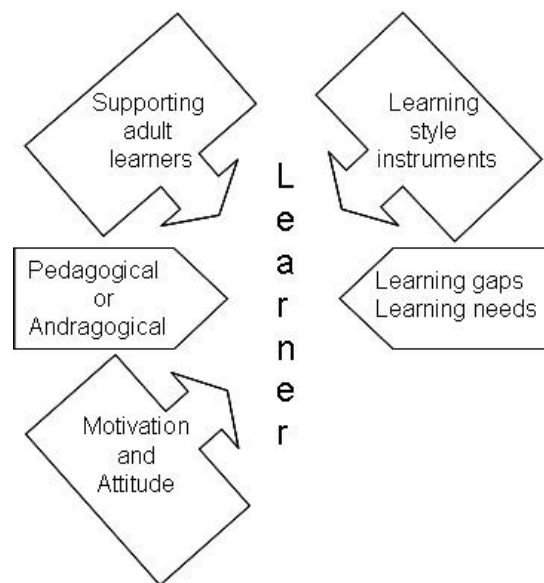


Figure 10 Various influences acting upon adult learners (6)

But with this knowledge, does it help to recognise whether a policing student's motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic and can it be changed anyway? Givvin et al. (2001) offer the following:

'There are...limits to the degree to which teachers...can differentiate among different dimensions of motivation, especially given that motivation is a psychological and internal phenomenon that can only be inferred from observable behaviour.'

Givvin et al.(2001:329)

Arguably it may not be necessary for the teacher to identify internal phenomenon, as perhaps this function is best left in the hands of the policing

student. In order to achieve this realisation the use of reflective practice on behalf of the student is proposed. Reflective practice may be key to unlocking an individual's potential regardless of the source of motivation. The nature of reflective practice is now discussed and in particular, the theories and models which may assist students' understanding of any given phenomenon.

The nature of reflective practice

The introduction of the Further Education Teacher's Qualification (England) Regulations 2007 and the Further Education Teachers' Continuing Professional Development and Registration (England) Regulations 2007, made it compulsory for all teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector to register with the Institute of Learning (IfL) and conduct a minimum number of hours of continuing professional development (CPD) each year. The CPD is formally recorded and audited (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, 2009). An important element of the CPD is reflective practice, those teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector now have to partake in and reflect on their professional development. However the MPS is not included within Lifelong Learning and so there is no compulsion for the trainers within the MPS to partake in CPD and as a consequence there is no compulsion to engage in reflective practice. In fact unlike the health service or legal services, reflective practice is not used as a developmental tool within the MPS. According to the Quality Improvement Agency (2008),

'Within the police service, the trainer educators understand the reforms and are aware that although not currently impacting on their role they note they '*...expect it to at some time*', and they say it is '*desirable*' and see it will be a '*...requirement in the future.*'

QIA (2008:17)

In fact the police trainers are only required to hold the NVQ level 3 in Learning Development and for some the assessor award. It is acknowledged by QIA that some trainers have completed the Certificate in Education / PGCE as part of their developmental practice and some have onto the BA (Hons) in post compulsory education and training. But within the police service according to the QIA (2008:10), 'There is currently no requirement from the professional governing bodies that regulate the police sector to provide additional training qualification above the minimum set out.' As previously stated, the fact that the MPS trainers are not part of the Lifelong Learning Sector means that they will not have to become acquainted with reflective practice. However, the students within the MPS who attended the PTTL course were expected to complete a diary; this consisted of reflective practice following each teaching session; this is a rare exception. So what is reflective practice? In its simplest form, reflective practice is all about an individual taking responsibility for their own efforts in an attempt to improve whatever they are doing (Malthouse, Kennard and Roffey-Barentsen, 2009). However there are a number of ways in which an individual can reflect, these will now be considered.

Common Sense Reflecting

A 'common sense view' of reflection is offered by Moon (2004:82), which employs the everyday meaning of the verb to reflect. She views common sense reflecting as being '... akin to thinking but with more added to this' (ibid.); here she is referring to the thoughts that occur during the day-to-day living. An example of this reflection takes the form of a description of what occurred in a situation, what was done and what others did as a result etc. What distinguishes common sense reflecting is that it lacks the element of directed learning from the experience and as a result is often vague. This is often due to the inherent lack of structure. In order for reflection to be of a practical use for a student it is necessary for a clear link be made from the past to the future. It was Dewey (1910) who first introduced the concept of reflective thinking as it is known today. His main interest was problem solving, observing that when the process of thinking about something is begun it normally starts with a problem or a worrying or upsetting situation that apparently cannot be resolved. Loughran (1996:14) summarises this form of reflective practice observing, 'Reflection is clearly purposeful because it aims at a conclusion. The purpose of reflecting is to untangle a problem or to make more sense of a puzzling situation; reflection involves working towards a better understanding of the problem and ways of solving it.' A key aspect of reflective practice is observed by Hillier (2005:17) who suggests: '...we are actively challenging the comfortable, taken-for-granted parts of our professional selves'.

Reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action

The second approach to reflection is referred to as Reflective Practice and was introduced by Schön (1983). Schön referred to two forms of reflective practice: 'Reflection-in-action' and 'Reflection-on-action.' 'Reflection-in-action' refers to a person who is required to think on their feet as they perhaps discover what they are doing is not working as well as they had hoped.

On the other hand, 'Reflection-on-action' relates to the organised thoughts experienced after an event. It is the temporal element that distinguishes the two, where on the one hand very little time is afforded the problem in reflection-in-action, with reflection-on-action there is more time to mull over the situation. However, there is not a uniform belief that reflective practice is proven to an improvement in performance. Schön (1983) asserts that reflective practice is a key attribute of being a professional, but according to Roberts (2009:634) 'there appears to be rather less literature providing evidence to show that encouraging students to reflect improves their resultant actions.'

Kolb (1984:4), approached experiential learning by, '... pursuing a framework for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development.' (Figure 12 below). He recognised the importance of identifying the link between '... the workplace as a learning environment that can enhance and supplement formal education and can foster personal development through meaningful work and career development opportunities.' (ibid.).

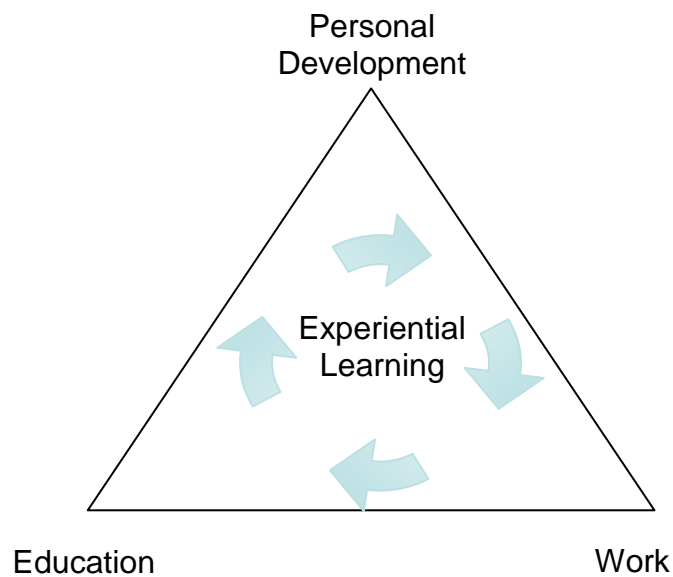


Figure 11 Kolb's framework for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development.

All three areas benefit by careful thought given to experiential learning. However this learning can be more meaningful when suitably organised, to this end Kolb (1984) introduced a four-stage model of learning. Here Kolb refers to, 'Concrete Experience' (Doing it), 'Reflective Observation' (Reflecting on it), 'Abstract Conceptualisation' (Reading up on it) and 'Active Experimentation' (Planning the next stage). In the figure below the language has been altered to offer a more accessible version of Kolb's four-stage model of learning.

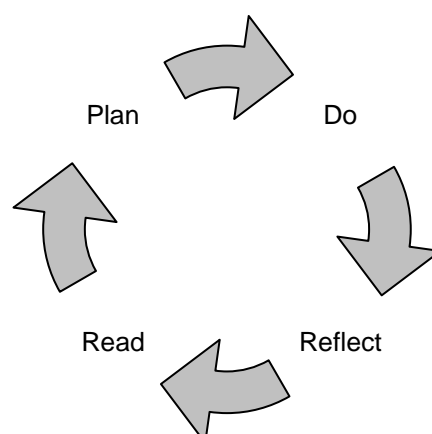


Figure 12 (Above) Kolb's (simplified) four-stage model of learning.

As can be seen, the model comprises of four stages and can be applied to any activity. Reece and Walker (2000:531) point out that the importance of this model is that it can be started at any stage, it combines reflection with experience and that once started the cycle should be completed. This model can be very useful for people who are new to teaching. The reason for this is that it is clear, unambiguous and follows a logical progression.

Further it enables them to benefit from time away from the situation, often the classroom, away from the associated pressures of the work environment.

Kolb's model was further developed by Gibbs, who, in 1988, offered another model (figure 13).

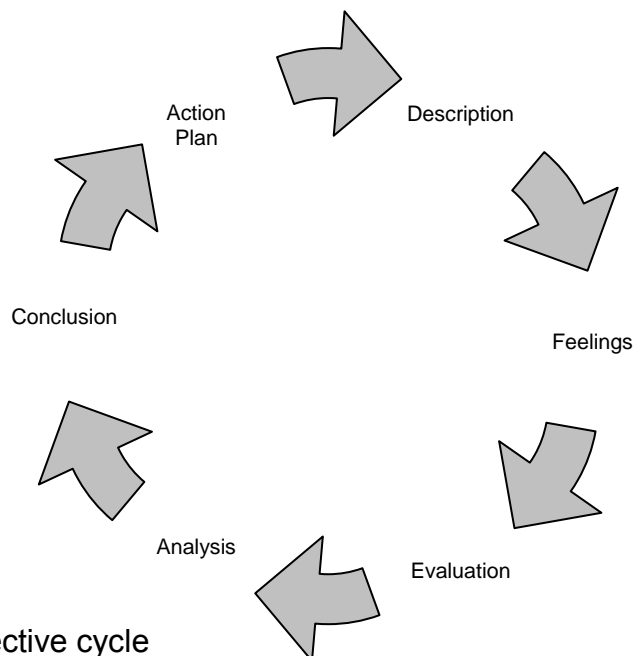


Figure 13 Gibbs' reflective cycle

Gibbs' reflective cycle is fairly self-explanatory but in being more descriptive arguably has the effect of restricting the user to consider only the points offered. On the other hand it encourages reflective practice by asking questions at six stages, described below:

1	Description	A description of the situation or event.
2	Feelings	The feelings of the participant are considered.
3	Evaluation	It evaluates the experience by considering what was good and bad about the experience.
4	Analysis	Analysis is employed to make sense of the experience and to state what was learned about the event.
5	Conclusion	Considers what could have been done differently or in addition.
6	Action Plan	Considers the possibility of it happening again and the appropriate actions.

Table 3 Explanation of Gibbs' reflective cycle

There are a number of other definitions of reflective practice available, Boyd and Fales (1983) define reflection as the process of internally examining and

exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which results in a change in perspective. Another, offered by Osterman and Kottkamp (1993:19) is that 'reflective practice is viewed as a means by which practitioners can develop a greater level of self-awareness about the nature and impact of their performance, an awareness that creates opportunities for professional growth and development.' These definitions of reflective practice, it appears, are in congruence.

Reflective practice is therefore all about thinking about an experience with a view to gaining an improved understanding of that experience, and involves an ordered, systematic and documented approach with a view to gaining self-improvement. The principal reason for using reflective practice is to improve performance. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) believe that it is by reflection and analysis that the learner attempts to understand an experience.

Brookfield's Critical Lenses

Brookfield (1995) considered the topic of reflective practice from the perspective of a teacher and identified the importance of researching critically what teachers do. He argued that 'critically reflective teaching happens when we identify and scrutinize the assumptions that undergird how we work.' (1995:xii). Brookfield offers, four 'critical lenses' through which a teacher can consider their practice:

1. the point of view of the teacher's self;

2. the point of view of their learners;
3. the point of view of their colleagues;
4. the point of view of theories and literature.

Although reporting on teachers, obviously the above ‘critical lenses’ are equally appropriate to students embarking on reflective practice. Using Brookfield’s critical lenses enables an individual to undertake reflective practice from the perspective of these four positions and in so doing considers an experience from many positions, drawing upon relevant theory to identify an appropriate way forward. What differentiates common sense reflecting from reflective practice (Dewey 1910, Schon 1983, Boyd and Fayles 1983, Kolb 1984, Gibbs 1998, Osterman and Kottkamp 1993, Brookfield, 1995, Loughran 1996, Hillier 2005) is highlighted in the table below:

Common Sense Reflecting	Reflective Practice
No consideration of organisation	The use of the reflective practice cycle
Descriptive writing	Analytical writing
Few or no links to previous reflections	Links to previous considerations
Usually not recorded	May be recorded formally
A solitary process. Not intended to be read by others	Generally a solitary process but ideas may be shared with others
Not used as a developmental tool	It is developmental mainly personal development

Common Sense Reflecting	Reflective Practice
It considers that past more than the future	It is often aspirational in nature
It is self absorbed	It makes clear links to professional practice
No considerations given for future practice.	It employs the use of an action plan

Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009:9)

Table 4 Comparison between Common Sense reflecting and Reflective Practice.

In essence, the general differences between the two methods of reflection are that, unlike common sense reflecting, the purpose of reflective practice is to produce a learner who is autonomous where the process of reflection improves a person's understanding of the subject. Here the learner's critical thinking, problem solving and individual change management skills combine to create a new understanding of a phenomenon. Biggs (1999:6) alluded to a mirror analogy suggesting that 'a reflection in a mirror is an exact replica of what is in front of it.' However, he recognised a distinction between this and reflective practice by observing that, 'Reflection in professional practice, however, gives back not what it is, but what it might be, an improvement on the original' (ibid.). Because reflective practice is used for the purpose of self-

improvement it lends itself to inclusion within continuing professional development. This topic is now discussed.

Professional Reflective Practice and Continuing Professional Development

Arguably, within teacher education, reflective practice appears to have become stuck within the confines of the classroom, where the locus of attention is restricted to considerations of the interactions between (what is often) the new teacher and their students, selected teaching strategies and the students' associated learning styles. This appears to then continue into the teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD). To counter this practice Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009) advocate broadening the perspective to include all aspects of professional practice and argue that whereas reflective practice is concerned with personal achievement and growth, when combined with Continuing Professional Development it becomes a means by which teachers can expand their knowledge and skills to maintain and increase competence throughout the spectrum of their professional lives. In this context, reflective practice can be extended to include the many and varied situations faced by a teacher within their professional capacity. This they call Professional Reflective Practice (ibid.). This term is used to differentiate between the personal reflective practice associated to an individual's development as a teacher and the broader view within the professional arena. Reflective practice has, until now it appears, become restricted to considering only personal development within the

classroom and has shifted away from Kolb's original framework which examines and strengthens the critical linkages among education, work and personal development, (ibid.). In an attempt to extend and develop the teacher's perspective, Professional Reflective Practice extends this long established concept as it seeks to capture the various features that influence the role of teacher upon which teachers can reflect. There is another important key issue to take into account here, whereas reflective practice is concerned with an individual's development and growth within naturally occurring events, Professional Reflective Practice is reliant upon the individual actively looking for and participating in activities that will improve their professional practice. Tummons (2007:69) refers to this as involving 'A constant critical appraisal of teaching and learning, and of the work of a tutor more generally.' Professional Reflective Practice is not restricted to thinking about the experience of learning or teaching alone. What differentiates Professional Reflective Practice from common sense reflecting and reflective practice is highlighted in the table below:

Common Sense Reflecting	Reflective Practice	Professional Reflective Practice
No consideration of organisation	The use of the reflective practice cycle (Kolb)	The use of the professional reflective practice cycle
Descriptive writing	Analytical writing	Writing at an analytical, evaluative and synthesised level
Few or no links to	Links to previous	Links to previous

Common Sense Reflecting	Reflective Practice	Professional Reflective Practice
previous reflections	considerations	considerations
Usually not recorded	May be recorded formally	It is recorded formally
A solitary process. Not intended to be read by others	Generally a solitary process but ideas may be shared with others	A shared process, read by colleagues and the Institute for Learning
Not used as a developmental tool	It is developmental mainly personal development	It is developmental, mainly professional development
It considers that past more than the future	It is often aspirational in nature	It is goal orientated with SMART objectives
It is self absorbed	It makes clear links to professional practice	It makes clear links to professional practice in a broad sense
No considerations given for future practice.	It employs the use of an action plan	It employs the use of an action plan

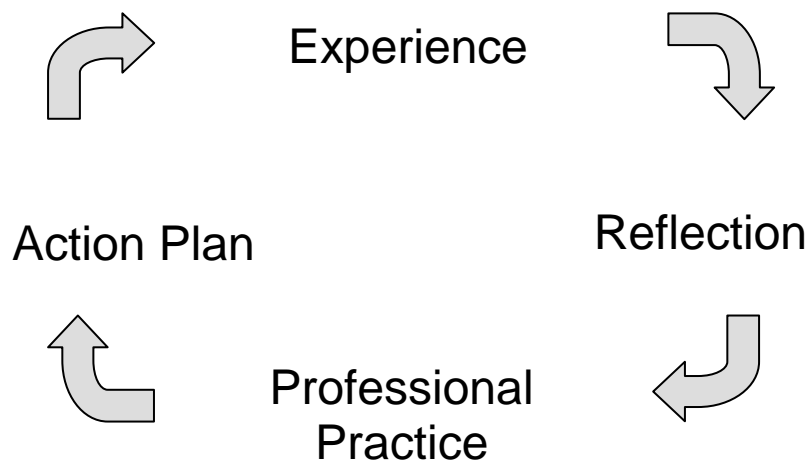
Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009:10)

Table 5 Comparison between common sense reflecting, Reflective Practice and Professional Reflective Practice

The table above indicates the characteristics of Professional Reflective Practice. To generalise, the activities associated with this practice seek to embrace a broader perspective and can involve any activity conducted as a part of an individual's professional capacity.

Professional Reflective Practice Cycle

To support the process of reflecting within Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009) introduced the Professional Reflective Practice Cycle. This shares best practice from Kolb, Schön and Gibbs (op cit) and introduces elements that are pertinent to a student teacher's own working environment as they prepare for their teaching practice. It includes four stages as shown below:



Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009:10)

Figure 14 Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse Professional Reflective Practice Cycle

The model above considers Professional Reflective Practice by drawing on four distinct areas:

1	Experience	Considers what actually occurred?
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2	Reflection	The process of thinking about the experience
3	Professional Practice	Considers how this relates to professional practice?
4	Action Plan	The identification of SMART objectives and an Action Plan

Table 6. Description of the Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse Professional Reflective Practice Cycle

It is anticipated that by broadening the field to include those aspects available for consideration within professional reflective practice, a window will be opened to widen the perspective offered to students engaged in reflective practice.

Reflective practice and policing students

My experience within the police service leads me to conclude that without suitable guidance, it is unlikely that policing students participating in the PTLLS course will have engaged in reflective practice in any meaningful way. The police service has not engaged with the concept in any significant way; it is however alluded to briefly during training offered to the recruits. Arguably reflective practice represents an important feature of a policing student's ability to study. The figure below has been adapted to incorporate the significance of reflective practice. The characteristics of this figure are that features such as motivation, attitude and reflective practice have been placed

within the lower aspect of the model. This is representative of the intrinsic nature of the experiences or activities. Conversely, the topics relating to supporting adults and learning style instruments have been placed within the higher aspect representing the extrinsic aspects influencing learning. This is further supported by the position of the pedagogical and andragogical approaches to learning, with the pedagogical label placed above the andragogical. Equally learning gaps can be indentified by an external source and learning needs can be (but not exclusively) identified by the students.

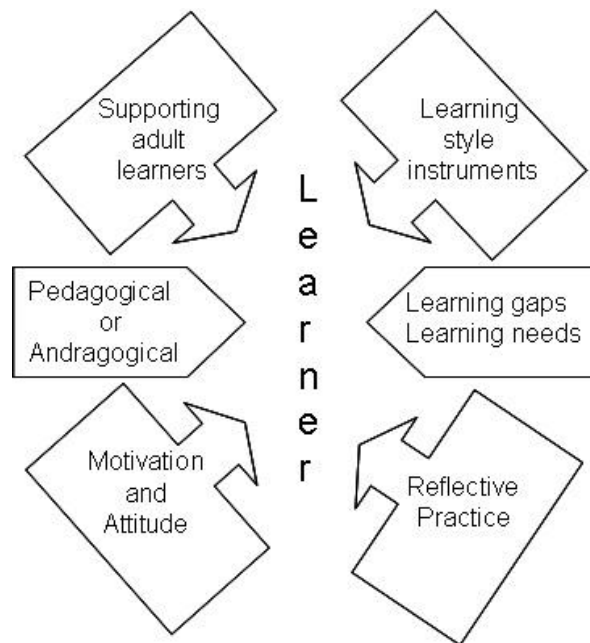


Figure 15 Various influences acting upon the adult learner (7)

The aspiration is that professional reflective practice may bring the policing student closer to experiencing transformative learning. To this end this study considers the key characteristics of transformative learning.

Transformative learning

It was Mezirow who first presented transformational learning to the arena of adult education in 1978. He described transformational learning as 'a constructivist theory of adult learning' Mezirow (1991:31). Transformative learning challenges underlying assumptions and this is achieved by the use of reflection that is key to the process of transformation. Mezirow offers three kinds of reflection (Cranton, 1996):

- Content Reflection – Reflecting on the content or description of an issue
- Process Reflection – Reflecting on the methods or strategies employed to understand the issue
- Premise Reflection – Reflecting on the assumptions, beliefs and values underlying the issue

The three kinds of reflection offered by Mezirow represent a hierarchy of reflection from considerations of the 'what' to that of the 'how'. These types of reflection may be viewed in the form of a bi-polar axis with at one end content reflection, which may lack depth, and at the other premise reflection which touches on epistemological considerations. Epistemological assumptions lie at the heart of transformational learning. Erikson (2007) examined patterns in the epistemic assumptions of college students' learning process and beliefs about the nature of knowledge. The patterns of epistemic assumptions were placed on a developmental continuum. It was speculated that if epistemic

assumptions change then the associated meaning making in relation to the learning experience would also change (Erikson, 2007). So as students developed their epistemic assumption would become more complex.

What is it about the type of reflection that makes it transformative? Cranton (1996:113) suggests that, 'If the process of reflection leads to an awareness of an invalid, undeveloped, or distorted meaning scheme or perspective; if that scheme or perspective is then revised; and if the individual acts on the revised belief, the development has been transformative.' The transformative aspect related to an individual's beliefs, or constructs. Constructs in this context is the assumption that knowing is '...an active process of constructing meaning or making sense of experience.' Erickson (2007:64). Mezirow (2000) considers an individual's understanding and beliefs in terms of their dependability (suggesting value) by proposing that:

'Our understanding and beliefs are more dependable when they produce interpretations and opinions that are more justifiable or true than would be those predicated upon other understandings or beliefs.'

Mezirow (2000:4)

Arguably Mezirow is suggesting that there is more than one way to arrive at a position of knowing; here knowledge is referred to in terms of understanding and beliefs. Mezirow contends that understanding and beliefs can be viewed

as being less dependable than knowledge that is arrived at as the result of analysis and explanation. This is achieved by an individual challenging their assumptions rather than knowledge being simply acquired as the result of an affirmation or proposition produced by regurgitating assumed and unquestioned knowledge. He suggests that a condition of human behaviour is the need to understand experiences and integrate them with what is already known. However he puts forward the idea that if we are unable to achieve understanding, 'We often turn to tradition, thoughtlessly seize explanations by authority figures or resort to ... projection and rationalisation, to create imaginary meanings' Mezirow (2000:3). This knowledge referred to here is assumed and unquestioned and for this reason he suggests that adult learning should call attention to the way in which knowledge has been subsumed or appropriated. Jarvis (1987a:11) observes that 'Learning rarely occurs in splendid isolation from the world in which the learner lives ...it is intimately related to the world and affected by it.' Mezirow (2000:3) notes that adult learning should be subject to 'contextual understanding, critical understanding on assumptions and validating meaning by assessing reasons,' (ibid.). The justification for what we know and believe, he advocates, depends on the context in which they are embedded, these being biographical, historical or cultural. Mezirow (1991:6) considers the topic of assumption noting that, 'Reflective Learning involves assessment or reassessment of assumption' and that, 'Reflective learning becomes transformative whenever assumptions of premises are found to be distorting, inauthentic, or otherwise invalid.' He also distinguishes between the knowledge assumed as children in comparison to that appropriated as adults, the former being less reliable.

The constructs fashioned during childhood are frequently unsuitable for adult life but frequently remain unnoticed and therefore unaltered. Mezirow (2000:6) identifies an issue in relation to the acquisition of knowledge, suggesting that 'human beings have no conscious access to the non-conscious process that they use to acquire information.' Transformative learning is much about challenging constructs, assumptions and beliefs.

Epistemic considerations

What differentiates humans from many other animals is not only that they know but the fact that they know that they know (Illeris, 2007). Arguably, transformative learning is representative of the conscious act of knowing about knowing and is akin to the epistemic conditions of consciously acquiring knowledge. How then does an individual pursue knowledge? Jones (2002:5) refers to the transformative learning occurring as a result of critical reflection. Critical reflection has the effect of, to use an analogy, opening doors to expose the students to '...an explicit recognition of [their] pre-existing meaning structures.' Jones (ibid.) observes that where critical reflection is encouraged there may exist a 'transformation of meaning structures.' It is by 'challenging our abilities to communicate, understand, and learn' (Merriam and Caffarella, 1999:322) that we are able separate ourselves from the inappropriate constructs and assumptions we once possessed. According to Taylor (1997:51) 'The revision of meaning structures seems to be initiated by a disorienting dilemma followed by a series of learning strategies involving critical reflection, exploration of different roles and options, and negotiation

and re-negotiation of relationships.’ The advantage of transformational learning is that ‘transformative learning develops autonomous thinking’ Mezirow (1997:5) and enables the transformation to a self-authoring frame of reference (Kegan, 2000). Arguably transformative and accommodative learning occupy the same space as they share similar characteristics. Both have the effect of engendering a deeper understanding of a phenomenon whereby a person’s schema or existing frameworks are partially deconstructed and rebuilt (Newell-Jones and Lord, 2008). Illeris (2007) suggests that accommodative learning can take place comparatively quickly or can be a laboured process. This process though is restricted to experiencing the problem and not thinking about possible causes. On the other hand transformative learning follows a process of in-depth reflection. Although both share a very similar outcome, it is argued that the difference between them is that in the case of transformative learning the process is undertaken with the specific intention of achieving insight representing a conscious act on the part of the practitioner. However, with accommodative learning the change comes about as a result of an unconscious gestalt type experience.

Transformative Learning and policing students

Whether evidence of transformative learning will be found within this study is a moot point and further it may be difficult to identify. It is anticipated that evidence of transformative will become evident by the result of careful scrutiny of dialogue. The challenge is to create the conditions within which meaningful

and rich dialogue will permit the observation or identification of evidence of transformative learning. The figure below is alluded to again to reflect the adoption of transformative learning. Here the analogy is that the information and the position of that information remains the same, what has changed is the nature of the model, it remains essentially the same, but is different, somehow richer.

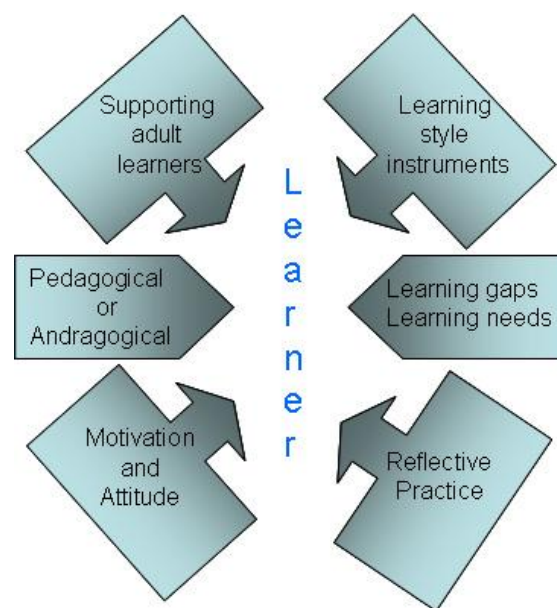


Figure 16. Various influences acting upon the adult learner (8)

The study of, learning styles, reflective practice, and the various epistemic considerations have been discussed and differentiated. The relationship of this study to relevant previous research is now considered.

The relationship of this study to existing studies

My research question focuses upon policing students on a PTTLS course in terms of study skills needs. These issues are explored in terms of study

support, reflective practice and motivational issues. However, supporting these topics are other topics alluded to within the study skills model:

- Pedagogy versus andragogy
- Attitude to learning
- Supporting adult learners
- Learning gaps
- Learning style instruments
- Learning needs
- Transformational learning

In general there appears no previous study in relation to the PTLLS course. Consequently no study has been undertaken in relation to policing students embarking on a PTLLS course. Existing studies have been undertaken in relation to policing students embarking on foundation degree courses in Further Education establishments (Heslop, 2009) and studies exist in relation to police training in general (White, 2006) which considers issues surrounding curriculum. Studies of police training in University include considerations of the contradictory nature of police status (Wood and Tong, 2008).

Comparative studies include considerations of the issues facing in-service Initial Teacher Training in the post compulsory sector (Samson, 2009) but are considered to be not closely aligned to policing students to be of use within this study. The study of policing students in countries other than the UK was

not considered due to the inherent cultural differences and the size of the task.

In relation to study support, there appear possible gaps in the body of knowledge relating specifically to policing students. For example there appears no data in relation to:

- Policing PTLLS Students' autonomy as learners and the support required
- Policing PTLLS Students' perceptions of studying PTLLS in an academic environment
- Policing PTLLS Students' ability to study and produce academic assignments within a Further Education environment

It appears that considerations of students' attitude in relation to study and their relationships with the FE establishment have not been considered.

However there exists recent research from Heslop (2009) in relation to HE establishments. As a consequence the possible gaps in the body of knowledge relate to:

- The attitude of Policing Students on a PTLLS course in relation to study and the FE establishment

In relation to motivation, there appear possible gaps in the body of knowledge relating to:

- The general motivation of Policing Students embarking on a PTLLS course
- How Policing Students on a PTLLS course can be motivated and supported

In relation to reflective practice and the students' teaching practice, the body of knowledge does not consider the perceived developmental issues of policing students in relation to the following topics:

- The use of reflective practice by Policing PTLLS Students
- Whether reflective practice, if employed, actually informs Policing PTLLS Students' teaching practice

It is proposed that the above topics be studied to bridge these perceived gaps to support policing students. Further, it is acknowledged that in relation to policing students, there exists no contemporary research in relation to Policing PTLLS Students in relation to the following subjects:

- pedagogy / andragogy,
- relevant support for adult learners,
- learning gaps,
- learning style instruments and
- learning needs

The general gaps in knowledge apparent here are:

- The identification of essential study skills for a Policing PTLLS students
- The study skills support appropriate for Policing PTLLS Students

Conclusions from this Literature Review

The purpose of the research

The purpose of this research has been to explore the perceptions of policing students on a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of their study skills needs in relation to motivation levels, relevant support and reflective practice.

Influencing legislation and recommendations

This chapter identified recommendations for change within the Learning Management Unity (LMU) within the Metropolitan Police Service. In particular it described the Service Improvement Plan Review and the recommendations therein. The introduction of the Preparing to teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector was discussed and links were made to the opportunity for the MPS to make significant monetary savings. It further considered recent moves towards professionalising teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector and the effect of the introduction of the 2007 regulations on teachers. This chapter

then considered the general nature of adult learners drawing upon the associated literature.

The managerialist / performativity discourse

This literature review identified that research existed in relation to policing students entering Higher Education establishments, and attention had been given to the managerialist / performativity discourse (Jeffery, 2005) which is representative of a clash between two epistemic cultures discussed in terms of managerialism on one hand and the notion of professional autonomy on the other.

What appears to represent a gap in knowledge is that of how a PTLLS student will experience and react to that 'new culture' offered by a Further Education establishment in relation to professional autonomy. This gap was previously described as:

- Policing PTLLS Students' autonomy as learners and the support required

Issues of pedagogy versus andragogy

Issues of pedagogy versus andragogy and the work of Knowles were then considered, questioning his assumptions in relation to the variance between children and adult learners. It was acknowledged that it was likely that

policing students were influenced by the adoption of pedagogical approaches to learning employed by the training deliverers. The gap in knowledge relate to the students' willingness or ability to participate in study in either form. This gap was previously described as:

- Policing PTLLS Students' perceptions of studying PTLLS in an academic environment
- Policing PTLLS Students' ability to study and produce academic assignments within a Further Education environment

Factors influencing the act of learning

Factors influencing the act of learning were next considered and the influence of attitude was considered. It was acknowledged that there existed a scarcity of contemporary research in relation to policing students entering Further Education. That which does exist identified tension between policing students and the academic establishments. This was further supported by Heslop's research (2009) which focussed upon a Foundation Course. This gap was previously described as:

- The attitude of Policing Students on a PTLLS course in relation to study and the FE establishment

Supporting adult learners

The issue of supporting adult learners was next detailed and in particular the five 'learning gaps'. There exists no system in place on behalf of the MPS to assist policing students on a PTTLS course. What does exist is that offered by the FE establishments. Learning gap theory may offer an element of structure when attempting to determine the ability of the policing students to study and where difficulties are observed on the part of the learner, the ability to offer an appropriate intervention. This then led to the identification of various learning style instruments, which were analysed and questions of effectiveness were considered. It was asserted that the benefits to policing students, in relation to learning style instruments, are that they appear to offer students a scaffold on which to support their initial concepts in relation to the process of learning. Further, they appear to offer an approachable door through which the policing student can enter the world of learning theory. The knowledge gap in relation to this topic has been alluded to previously as being:

- The study skills support appropriate for Policing Students

Essential study skills

Next student's learning needs were discussed in terms of the essential study skills and motivational issues; these were linked to a person's self perception and their willingness to study. The steps of competence were considered a

useful concept because they distinguished between a policing student who has not engaged in purposeful or reflective thought, in the first step, and those who had become aware of their shortcomings, on the second step. It was anticipated that many policing students on the PTLLS course are likely to become aware the passage from the step of unconscious incompetence to the next of conscious incompetence. Acknowledging this phenomenon will, it was suggested, enable the policing student and teacher to consider a suitable support structure. Although essential study skills have been identified within this chapter, it remains to see if they are appropriate for policing students within a PTLLS course. The gap in knowledge in this respect has previously been alluded to as:

- The identification of essential study skills for a Policing PTLLS student

Motivation

Issues of motivation were considered and in particular intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The issues discussed were considered to apply equally to policing students and a link was made to motivation and reflective practice. The learning gaps were referred to previously as:

- The general motivation of Policing Students embarking on a PTLLS course
- How Policing Students on a PTLLS course can be motivated and supported

Reflective practice

The nature of reflective practice was examined and various models compared and analysed. The suitability of reflective practice to be included within continuing professional development and the professional reflective practice cycle was observed. My experience within the police service were discussed which lead me to conclude that it was unlikely that policing students participating in the PTLLS course would have engaged in reflective practice in any meaning full way. It was further suggested that culturally the police service has not grasped the concept in any meaningful way. Arguably reflective practice represents an important feature of a policing student's ability to study.

The gap in knowledge was previously referred to as:

- The use of reflective practice by Policing PTLLS Students
- Whether reflective practice, if employed, actually informs Policing PTLLS Students' teaching practice

The nature of transformative learning

The nature of transformative learning was analysed and links were made to epistemic knowledge where it was acknowledged that difficulty may arise when attempting to identify incidences of transformative learning within this research.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the relevant literature with respect to adult learners in terms of study skills and reflective practice. It has considered the managerialist / performativity discourse, issues of pedagogy and andragogy and the attitudes of policing students in relation to study other than that offered by the police service. Supporting adults was then considered and the ability of the MPS to support PTLLS students in terms of learning style instruments. Learners' needs were discussed, linking these to self perception and a willingness to study. Motivation was examined in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Various aspects of reflective practice were considered linking this to transformational learning. Within all of the aforementioned topics, there appeared to exist gaps in knowledge in relation to policing students within a PTLLS course.

Chapter 3 will now identify how these gaps will be explored.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

Chapter three presents the methodology and methods of this research. This chapter consists of two main sections.

Section 1 outlines the purpose of this research, followed by a discussion of the research paradigm that underpins it.

Section 2 presents the procedures employed for collecting data, use of semi-structured interviews and identifies how participants were selected. It then discusses data analysis, ethical considerations and issues of reliability and validity, contextualising these subjects to the research conducted.

Section 1 - The purpose of this research

The purpose of this research has been to explore the perceptions of policing students on a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of their study skills needs in relation to motivation levels, relevant support and reflective practice. It was anticipated that in light of the data analysis the students could then be supported with these needs where practical and

appropriate in terms of, critical thinking, writing assignments and reflecting upon their work.

The research paradigm

There appears to be an element of confusion in relation to the terminology employed to describe the methodologies and methods available to the researcher (Crotty, 1998). This is further compounded by the same terms sometimes being employed in inconsistent and sometimes even conflicting ways.

The theoretical perspective existing behind this methodology is anti-positivist and is situated within an interpretive paradigm (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). The selection of the interpretive paradigm acknowledges that the theoretical assumption of the knowledge of reality being sought is regarded as subjective, because it is based on an individual's unique experiences and personal insights. In other words, the reality sought is considered inimitable and exclusive pertaining only to the person experiencing his or her own particular reality. Here, reality is created by the person experiencing it in a form of individual constructs. It is acknowledged that some constructs, e.g. social constructs, are created through social exchange and communal criticism, enabling some sharing of constructions. This is differentiated from the positivist stance which advocates that qualitative research views reality as objective, existing not as the result of interpretation on the part of the observer

but independently; further this reality can be observed and measured with instruments or with a questionnaire.

Epistemological stance

An epistemology is a theory of knowledge describing an accepted way of comprehending and explaining how we know what we know about the social world (Bryman, 2008, Crotty, 1998). An individual's epistemological assumptions will assert, on the one hand, whether knowledge is something that a person can obtain or, on the other, whether knowledge is something that has to be experienced in person (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). This epistemological assumption and subsequent alignment to a certain position will affect the act of investigating social behaviour. For example, the view that knowledge exists independently of the observer lends itself to a detached impersonal approach dependent upon detached observation. Conversely, those who view knowledge as existing as a result of, and because of, an individual's personal experience will necessitate a more intimate and involved approach with the subject. This chapter considers the existence of knowledge from the perspective of an interpretive perspective in terms of a phenomenological study.

Phenomenological study

This research has been qualitative in nature and, to compliment this, a phenomenological study has been proposed. This has been considered an

opposite approach to examine and seek to understand the meaning the participants of group's attribute to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009). Denscombe (2007:75) suggests that in direct contrast to positivism phenomenology emphasises:

- subjectivity (rather than objectivity)
- description (more than analysis)
- interpretation (rather than measurement)
- agency (rather than structure)

Phenomenology is further distinguished from positivism in that in general it considers, 'perceptions or meanings, attitudes and beliefs, feelings and emotions' (ibid.)

Phenomenology's roots can be traced back to neo-Kantianism which was the most dominant philosophical movement in Europe between approximately 1870 and 1920 (Makreel and Luft, 2010). The link here is essentially that Kant's philosophy included the idea that the mind created its own structure in relation to perception and concepts. As was suggested in chapter 1, Husserl (1970), the main exponent of phenomenology, suggested that what phenomenology may offer is an insight into the essence of cognition employed by others. Makreel and Luft (2010:28) suggested that what was proposed by Husserl was a 'radical presuppositionlessness' representing an important characteristic of this philosophy, which was to reassess assumptions about things and situations and to reassess things from a

position that 'goes back to the ultimate origins,' (ibid.). Husserl spoke of 'placing the world in brackets', which would have the effect of freeing ourselves from the ways in which we normally view the world (ibid.) What characterises this style of research is the researcher's search for a constant, or 'essence' found within an account.

Creswell (1998:52) describes how the researcher having searched for the essential meaning of the experience, '... emphasises the intentionality of consciousness where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness based on memory, image and meaning.' The idea of the 'intentionality of consciousness' is the suggestion that consciousness is always linked to an object, however the reality of that object can only be perceived by the individual within the limitations of their own experience. The aim of this process was to free the observer from the preconceptions associated with their norms. An important factor in this process was to be reflexive.

This represents the first of two types of phenomenology derived from the European tradition (Denscombe, 2007:83). Characteristically, this form of phenomenology seeks to 'identify the essence of human experience' (ibid.). This can also be said of existential phenomenology advocated by Sartre and hermeneutic phenomenology associated with Heidegger; although it is recognised that the approaches differ.

The second type of phenomenology found in North America and was advocated by Schutz (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) who considered the ascription of meaning to the act of reflexivity to be dependent upon the individual interpreting what they observed. Schutz further suggested that the interpretation of a phenomenon is inextricably linked to the nature of the observer. This person will interpret what they experienced in their own model of the world, employing their own values and experiences. Berman (2008) distinguishes between the observed and the observer noting that the essential quality of this activity is that it does not describe the point of view of the observer but of the observed. This kind of phenomenology is less preoccupied with 'revealing the essence of experience' Denscombe (2007, 84) as advocated by the Europeans, instead it attempted to describe the ways in which humans give meaning to their experiences. In essence it 'was concerned with 'the way in which people interpret social phenomena' (ibid.). Significantly Denscombe (2007) observes of the north American approach that 'The experiences of the individual are taken as significant data in their own right, not something to be put to one side in order to identify the universal essence of the phenomenon' (Ibid.) In relation to the generalising from a phenomenological study, because it does not generally involve large numbers or instances, this will raise questions about the representativeness of the data and how far it is possible to generalise from the findings (ibid.).

The starting point for this research involved a study of an individual's perceptions. However the caveat here was that I should consider the affect of my own assumptions which may include causal consequences or levels of

significance (King and Jiggins, 2002). In broad terms a phenomenological study attempts to understand the nature of a lived experience. Unlike a biography which considers a single person, the study considers a number of perspectives in relation to a phenomenon (Creswell, 1998). According to Denscombe (2007:79) 'Phenomenology rejects the notion that there is one universal reality and accepts, instead that things can be seen in different ways by different people at different times in different circumstances and that each alternative version needs to be recognised as valid in its own right.'

Specifically this study has focused on the specific meanings of the various and individual experiences of those observed. Here the study sought to identify the invariant composition of human experiences. Phenomenology seeks to identify the essence of an experience. According to Bogdan and Taylor (1975:13), 'In order to grasp the meaning of a person's behaviour, the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view.' In order to appreciate a person's point of view it may be useful to consider the existence of an individual's personal construct.

Construct theory

It was Kelly (1963) who is generally attributed to have introduced construct theory, he observes:

'Man looks through his world through transparent patterns or
templets which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of

which the world is composed. This fit is not always very good. Yet without such patterns the world appears to be such an undifferentiated homogeneity that man is unable to make any sense out of it. ... Let us give the name constructs to these patterns that are tentatively tried on for size'

Kelly (1963:8)

Kelly suggests that these constructs enable people to construe the world and further, they are constantly updated, changed and are rearranged within a form of hierarchical taxonomy; these positions are also subject to change as a result of experience. He suggests that these 'construction systems' can be communicated and shared (ibid.) A significant characteristic of Kelly's construct is that it is both predictive and motivational in nature. Predictive because he claims people need to anticipate events in order to ensure their '...future reality may be better represented' (1963:48). They are motivational due to the, 'push and pull of the psychology of personal constructs' (ibid.). Kelly claimed that to understand behaviour it is necessary first to identify how the person construes reality. Within one of his many corollaries, he suggests the existence of dichotomised constructs, where the position of the construct may lie between two opposite points, referred to as 'constructive alternativism' (ibid.). However, although the construct has been described as anticipatory, the development of constructs relies on past experience. Kelly, in Franscella (1995: 41) adopts the assertion of Herbart (1776 – 1841) in that '...the mind could not accept a new idea unless it fitted into the ideas which were conscious at the time.' And went on to explain that, 'Our perceptions are then

really more than perceptions, they are apperceptions, experiences into which all past experiences are fused as well as the object of the moment' (ibid.).

As a consequence of the above theory the methods that were employed within this study, namely interview and interpretation, enabled the study to take into account the fact that people consciously and unconsciously construct their own sense of social reality. There appear two separate qualities in relation to a construct; one is an individual's construct relating to a physical object, the second is much more difficult to define, relating to a situation or process. Searle (1995) identifies two types of construct, those facts which are largely independent from human opinions such as the fact that Mount Everest has snow near the summit; these facts he terms as 'non-institutional facts'. Conversely he refers to 'institutional facts', those which are dependent upon human institutions for their existence, for example the concept of money. However what can be interpreted from this is that in acknowledging the existence of non-institutional facts, there exist a totally independent reality. This chapter will restrict itself to consideration of 'institutional facts' in terms of social constructs. The intention of this research has been to identify the perceptions of a group of students. This entailed identifying the feelings, values, ideals, beliefs, opinions, views and assumptions, etc, of the members of that group in relation to certain aspects of their study on the PTTLS course. What was being observed was the reaction to a phenomenon and as such, arguably, those reactions took the form of a social construct. Characteristically these were not directly observable nor were there suitable instruments available to measure these qualities.

The nature of a social construct

What is the nature of a social construct in relation to knowing? Knowing is not simply possessing static representations of reality, it is broader than that, involving the possession of 'ways and means of acting and thinking', according to McCarthy and Schwandt (2000:45). Their interpretation of knowing may be regarded in terms of the existence of process rather than product. As Howe (2003:89) observes, '...unlike the case of physical objects the description and explanation of human behaviour requires appeal to human purposes that in turn can only be interpreted within a system of shared norms that determine what counts as what.' This social characteristic is central to the process of making meaning.

Ways of knowing

These personal and subjective ways of knowing may not vary to a great extent for as Glaserfeld (1995:12) points out, 'If all knowledge is the knowing subject's own construction, how can one know of other subjects?' In reply to this question, it is the fact that we can know of 'other subjects' that gives weight to the argument that that the degree of variation experienced by the diverse observers is so slight as to enable distinction between various phenomenon. Take for example the identification of colour, if this was experienced so differently that each observer's construct interpreted a different specific colour, then arguably no consensus could be drawn as to the distinctions between the colours. As it stands, excluding those with

monochromasy, there is general agreement that there exist seven distinct colours distinguishable to most and most are able to agree upon the order of the colours within a rainbow. What we cannot be sure of is that the actual colours experienced by various individuals are the same; although the light waves can be measured scientifically an individual's construct of that phenomenon may differ, further, we have no way of knowing, it cannot be discussed. Paradoxically, it was Newton who suggested seven colours which was generally accepted, in fact a modern day physicist recognises an uninterrupted spectrum, it was the effect of interpersonal collusion that caused the adoption of the seven colours.

It appears that where distinctions are more problematic, for example the interpretation of ideas in relation to subjects that are less easy to define, such as feelings or the existence of a God, then such constructs benefit from the process of 'negotiation and consensus building' (Tobin and Tippins, 1993). Constructs of reality are shared and adapted in a socially mediated way where reality exists as the result of socially negotiated understandings, in other words, reality is created as a result of social interactions (interpersonal collusion). But although Kelly (1963) suggests some construction systems can be communicated and widely shared, he identified an assumption pertinent to the researcher when observing what appear to be shared personal constructs. He suggested that where constructs are symbolised by words, the constructs may not be similar just because the words are similar. Conversely, he suggested that constructs may be similar between people, even though different words were used to describe a phenomenon.

Fransella (1995:43) suggests that although we all perceive events differently, we never the less 'share some common ground (commonality corollary), otherwise we would not communicate at all.' She observes that the commonality will never be total as people observing the same phenomenon will see it differently because she suggests, '... for no other reason that each has a different 'self' on the centre of that stage' (ibid.).

As previously mentioned, the intention of this research has been to identify the perceptions of a group of students and therefore a phenomenological study was considered appropriate. The phenomenologist attempts to see things from another person's unique point of view (Bodgan and Taylor, 1975) and the phenomenological approach benefits my research in two ways. First it seeks to study an individual as they interact with and react to others, creating a social reality; this exists above and beyond mere existence or observable interaction and takes the form of social constructs. Second the phenomenological approach seeks to gain access to people's thinking and to take meaning from their actions and social constructs. The essential quality of this activity is that it does not describe the point of view of the observer but of the observed (Bryman, 2008).

Procedural Issues

In order to reflect the procedural issues in relation to using phenomenology I was mindful of the following:

- An understanding on the part of the researcher of the philosophical perspectives behind the approach in relation to the concept of how individuals experience a phenomenon (Creswell, 1998)
- The researcher composes research questions that investigate the significance of the individuals' experience. This should take the form of a description of their everyday lived experiences (Creswell, 1998)
- Data is then collected from the individuals who have encountered the phenomenon being researched. The number of participants can range from between 5 to 25. The data collection takes the form of interviews (Polkinghorne, 1989)
- The original protocols are divided into statements, this is also referred to as Horizontalisation; these are afforded equal status (Langdrige, 2004)
- The data is transferred into clusters of meanings (Langdrige, 2007)
- The clusters (now in the form of what are described as transformations) are joined together to make a broad description of the phenomena (Langdrige, 2007)

What is characteristic about the qualitative nature of the data collection and later analysis is that of building inductively from particular to general themes in

an inductive style; at this stage it is the researcher who interprets the meaning of the data.

Summary

To summarise, section 1 has described the theoretical perspective by signalling the researcher's intention to discover the perceptions of a group of PTLLS students. To do this it was necessary to identify the student's unique perceptions of the phenomenon. The epistemological stance sat comfortably within the interpretivist paradigm as the research sought to identify what were described as institutional facts (Searle, 1995). These took the form of social constructs, unique to each individual and which were not directly observable. Because of this it was considered appropriate to conduct a phenomenological study as this studies an individual as they interact with and react to others, creating a social reality in the form of social constructs. Further it sought to gain access to people's thinking and to take meaning from their actions and social constructs from the perspective of the observed. Another reason for adopting a phenomenological approach was that it looks beyond or through a situation in order to identify the underlying, influencing qualities. The procedure for collecting my data will now be discussed.

Section 2 - The procedures for collecting data

Section 2 of this chapter will present the procedures employed for collecting data, it will discuss the use of sampling, the initial contact with participants

and data collection. The transcription of data and the data analysis will be described and issues in relation to data analysis will be discussed. The emergence of Situational Reflective Practice will be introduced. Issues of validity and reliability will be considered, including reactivity, researcher bias, respondent bias respondent reliability and consequential validity. The interview schedule and issues in relation to questioning will be explained. Lastly alternative criteria for evaluating qualitative research are offered. All topics are contextualised to the research conducted.

Sampling

The selection of participants has been achieved by the use of purposive sampling (Punch, 2005) which is also referred to as judgemental or selective sampling, this is sampling in an intentional way with a specific aim or purpose in mind. In this case the population consisted of a group who had attended a central London college and studied towards the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification. There were 15 participants in total and all 15 agreed to be interviewed. Initially these 15 had been selected by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) from a list of attendees. These attendees were originally expected to attend in-house training to teach policing students to be trainers. The PTLLS course was the first course of its type to be delivered for MPS students and as such represented a pilot for the MPS. The group had participated in the PTLLS course in October 2009 and the interviews were held in the following February to March 2010 and some participants were revisited again in May 2010. Although other groups had

attended the course since this group, the group were selected for the purpose of the research because they were the first to have experienced the course and may have possessed fewer expectations. This assumption was based on the fact that no group of students like these from the MPS had attended this or any other college and therefore it was anticipated that fewer assumptions may have existed as a result of conversations with their peers or even incorrect shared knowledge in the form of rumour or conjecture.

The research sought to select a specific group to ascertain their views of a shared phenomenon namely a PTLLS course at a specific time with one group of tutors. In this case, all the students had experienced more or less the same lessons, with the exceptions of any one to one tuition in the form of tutorials or informal conversations with their tutors. If the population had been chosen from different courses the variables would have been increased and the picture would have been obscured by factors such as varying teaching strategies on the part of the tutors, different personalities of both tutors and students and familiarisation with MPS students on the part of the tutors at the college.

Permission was granted from the MPS to undertake the research for the organisation on the proviso that certain topics, such as questions relating to the progression of their teaching and the use of reflective practice were fed back to the organisation. This opportunity was granted due to the fact that the MPS were keen to identify the experiences of the students, in order to inform

the adoption of the PTLLS courses being delivered by external agencies. From the point of view of the researcher, this opportunity was unique.

Initial contact with the participants

Following considerations of ethics from the Brunel University Ethics Committee (which will be considered in detail later) an outline of questions was designed, adapted and approved. The students were contacted by a member of the Learning Management Unit (LMU) from the MPS via an email; this person had organised this pilot course and had worked with the students during that course.

The email introduced myself and explained the purpose and reasons for the research. Following this I then contacted the students, again via email explaining the purpose of the research and asking if they would be prepared to participate. If they were to have expressed an unwillingness to be contacted, no further communication would have taken place. Using the email appeared an efficient means of communicating due to the fact that it was inexpensive, quick and the recipients could ensure that I represented the MPS as the system was closed and secure. Further it was easy to respond to as it did not entail writing memos or letters to be returned via the internal mail system or via Royal Mail. Attached to my request a Participant Information Sheet was sent to the participants (see Appendix 3). This explained the title of the investigation and offered a brief outline of the project including the outline of the procedures to be used. The result of the request revealed that

all students volunteered to be interviewed. The students were given a choice of location in which to be interviewed. As a result most of the interviews took place at New Scotland Yard, some in the canteen and others took place at various locations within Greater London. Where possible, the location was chosen to suit the wishes of the participants.

Data collection

In keeping with the epistemological stance, the phenomenological study employed the use of semi-structured interviews as a means of collecting data. This was considered the most appropriate means of collecting the data due to the interactive nature of this method of data collection where the participants are face to face (Grix, 2001). Here the questions are specified but can be open ended with a mix of open and closed questions (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010). Fully structured interviews were considered but rejected due to the restricting nature of the process and the characteristics of the data generated. For example, according to Punch (2009:146) 'Flexibility and variation are minimised.' For my purposes the ability to be flexible and deal with variation was an important aspect of my questioning style. Further to this, it is suggested that the fully structured interview produces a rational rather than emotional response, (ibid.); I intentionally sought to identify the emotions. On the other hand, unstructured interviews could have been utilised, however, these were rejected due to the fact that I would have been unable to use the very broad categories with which I wished to populate

There were a number of alternatives to using an interview, for example a self-completion questionnaire sent via an email could have asked the same questions as were contained in the interview prompt sheet. Although these would have saved a considerable amount of time, there are a number of disadvantages associated with this form of data collection. For example, the self-completion questionnaire may contain fewer open questions, as this type of data collecting instrument is more inclined to employ closed questions. Further, the design of the form is an important consideration because careful consideration of the order and flow of the questions will help reduce the likelihood of the respondent missing a question. The length of a questionnaire will necessitate considerations of 'respondent fatigue' (Bryman, 2008:216).

Another alternative was to employ the medium of telephone to ask the questions. The issue of cost in this case was not a problem as the Metropolitan Police Service has its own internal telephone system. However, what would be lost in the telephone conversation would be the associated body language such as the non verbal communication associated with two-way face-to-face communication. For example, the non-verbal communication (NVC) used by those interviewed included, the raising of the eyes, many hand gestures, the shape of the mouth and the raising of the hands to indicate them not understanding, the screwing up of the nose, to mention a but a few. It is highly likely that all these would have been lost in a telephone conversation; perhaps I would have been able to recognise the significance of a pause but that is all. Failure to notice the NVCs would mean that I would lose the opportunity to enquire further as to the meaning of the act or gesture; if it was considered pertinent.

A further consideration significant to the interview situation was the notion of power. This is observed within the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee in relation to rank, power or status. A key concern is that of the asymmetry of power found to exist within many interviews (Kvale, 2007). This resonated for me where I found myself on the one hand interviewing people of a higher rank than myself and on other occasions those of the same rank, but who obviously recognised my knowledge of the subject. Then there were the police staff amongst which some were situated in a position of higher authority to me but without jurisdiction and those whose authority was indeterminable in comparison. The importance of recognising the distorting effects of power was appreciated however, fortunately, there were no individuals who represented an elite position or, on the other hand would appear to want to appease me by offering what they thought I would want to hear (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989)

Interview

The key characteristics of the interview are that firstly it is designed to improve knowledge; it requires planning but benefits from improvisation on the part of the interviewer and enables conversation to be in depth (Wengraf, 2001). The advantage of the semi-structured interviews was that they offered both structure and an element of fluidity, where although the questions are pre-formulated, the answers to the questions were open ended and could be fully investigated and probed (Stephen et al, 1999). For example, it was important to ask the same questions to each of the participants, however, where something interesting or different appeared it offered the flexibility to go from a

certain point and focus on an issue that had arisen; returning again to that point in the list of questions within the interview schedule. Furthermore, the other advantage was that where a question arose, it could be dealt with there and then. It is though acknowledged that there are inherent strengths and weaknesses to be found in semi-structured interviews. For example Cohen, Morrison and Mannion, (2000) suggest that the general outline of questioning assists the comprehensiveness of the data and makes the data collection more systematic.

Further to this, the interviews benefit from being both 'conversational and situational' (ibid.). On the other hand, the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews are that they omit important or pertinent topics and the comparability of responses may be made more difficult due to the interviewer's flexibility in sequencing and wording questions. However, my justification for employing the use of a semi-structured questionnaire was that it was a suitable compromise between on the one hand an over rigid and inflexible process and on the other an unwieldy and relatively unmanageable process.

The interview schedule considered two main areas of interest representing the following phenomenon:

- General study support and study skills support for those embarking on academic study within a PTLLS course, including
- Reflective practice and how it informed teaching practice

However, the interview schedule was broken down further into six more specific questions in relation to the following phenomenon:

1. Study skills
2. Study skills support
3. Reflective practice
4. Teaching practice
5. Developmental issues
6. Additional comments.

Within the six headings above it was anticipated that an insight would be offered in relation to the student's level of conscious awareness and motivation would emerge. (For a copy of the Interview Schedule see Appendix 4.)

Before each interview the participant was asked to read and sign a consent form, which were retained (see Appendix 5). The data were recorded by using a small digital recorder with a lapel microphone attached to the participants, their permission had been granted prior to this. The microphone did not appear to affect the participants, but if it did I was unaware. Open questions were employed at the start of the interviews, it was anticipated that this would offer the freedom for the students to express themselves in terms that were relevant to their experiences; this technique employs the use of clean language (Sullivan and Rees, 2008). Using clean language attempts to

imitate the use of language/terms used by the interviewee. These terms were appropriated by the interviewer and used for the subsequent questions to communicate with the interviewee, but only where it appeared appropriate. It was anticipated that using a form of wording common to the interviewees would enable them to remain within their own model of their world. The meaning of specific ideas would then, it was anticipated, be made clear to the interviewer as the conversation developed. Later, if there were questions in relation to any subject, closed questions were used for the purpose of clarification.

The location of the interviews was generally very suitable, being in classrooms or offices. The canteen at New Scotland Yard was used, but only as a last resort. However it was very large and although open plan, it meant that a degree of privacy was achievable. It was also ascertained with the participant whether they were happy to be interviewed there or whether another location would be appropriate; they all elected to remain in the canteen. The only problems caused within the canteen were that of the microphone picking up a lot of background noise and in one instance a very zealous cleaner who vacuumed around and under our chairs as we spoke. Although the interviews could have been recorded contemporaneously by me taking notes, it was felt that the time spent recording the written word would interfere with the spontaneity and flow of the conversation. This may have resulted in incomplete answers due to the difficulty of asking and recording questions (Creswell, 1998).

Transcription of data

After each interview I transferred the data to a laptop computer, next I transcribed the interviews onto a Word document; this was a very time consuming process and it was at this stage that the accounts were made anonymous. Information that may have identified the participant by them describing their role was removed, as were any references to matters of national security. As a result some of the more interesting descriptions of lessons, used by way of an example, were omitted, but the questions were still answered. Undoubtedly, some richness was lost as a result. I felt that that this was the price I had to pay for removing the identity of the participants. The context was an important feature of the data and some was lost, however I contend that the essence of the data was left intact. It was felt important to transcribe the accounts word-for-word so as to capture patterns of words which may have been important at a later time. This process, although very time consuming, provided plenty of rich material (Bryson and Rastle, 2009). This would, it was intended, furnish me with an insight into human experience in terms of feeling, thought and human interaction. This richness can be found by paying close attention to the ways in which people actually choose and use their words, how they express their feelings and arguments by exploring these ideas in discussion (Martin, Carlson and Buskist, 2007). Any emerging themes and ideas can then be interpreted from the later transcriptions of those discussions. This approach is phenomenological as it considers the experience, reactions and feelings of an individual as being of foremost importance.

Emerging themes

As the interviews progressed, some trends began to emerge as was anticipated. However, one trend in particular related to some participants finding themselves in a situation which was not of their making but which affected them in some way. This was not pursued at the time because although it registered with the interviewer cognitively, it did not appear significant enough to warrant further questioning at that point; not least because it was buried in amongst a significant amount of other data. Further, this phenomenon was offered as part of a response to another question. This theme, referred to as 'Situational Reflective Practice' will be referred to in greater detail later in this chapter.

Data analysis

Following the transcription of the data, the data were separated from the respondents' transcript and placed under the headings of the individual questions; being careful to retain the original documents. There existed 23 separate questions and there were a possible 15 responses from each totalling a possible 345 individual responses.

Thematic induction

Next the process began of coding the responses by listing them under the individual questions where they were examined for the emergence of themes,

this process involved reading and re-reading the data, over and over. Induction is the process of inferring general rules or commonalities from specific examples and is considered a bottom up approach (Tredoux and Smith, 2006). Here the material was scrutinised to identify which 'organising principles naturally underlie the material' Tredoux and Smith (2006:232). To assist this process, the exact language of the participants was retained within the emerging themes. It would have been possible to employ a more technical language, however the interpretation involved in this process may have taken me away from the meanings creating bias. For example, in response to Question 13 'Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?' One student perceived that she was not valued and that she had not received sufficient training for her role. This was recorded under an emerging theme as 'Feelings of being undervalued, undertrained.' David and Sutton (2004:204) recognise the distinction of codes in terms of 'manifest' and 'latent.' Manifest codes refer to the specific terms found within the text and latent are those which the researcher identifies as existing under the surface of the text. Within this study, both manifest and latent codes were employed.

At the earlier stages of the process of conducting the thematic induction, it was not possible to identify whether any statement was shared by others or offered as a lone observation; the themes emerged during the process.

The previous example is indicative of what Tredoux and Smith (2006:232) consider to be a move away from just content when they suggest identifying thinking in terms of 'processes, functions, tensions and contradictions.' The

previous example of not being valued identifies tension between the desire to be suitably trained and the reality of the situation.

During the thematic induction stage it was necessary to constantly remind myself of the purpose of my research as this guided me in the choice and categorisation of the emerging of themes (ibid.). However, what happened was that all themes were gathered and consideration of their suitability to answer the research question was considered at a later stage of the analysis.

Coding

During the process of thematic induction, the data was colour-coded into the various emerging themes by use of the highlighter system contained in the Word document. This was done for each question contained within the semi-structured questionnaire. The use of computer software was considered to assist with this task and will now be discussed.

There were various computer software packages available to assist with this process for example Atlas/TI, the Ethnograph and NUD.IST. I recognised there were both advantages and disadvantages involved in employing the use of computer software. For example, one disadvantage is that it takes time to become conversant with how to operate the program. Further, the initial coding is done manually which is a slow process and in comparison to doing this function manually offers no benefit. Following the coding the program is run and sifts through the data summarising the codes. In fact the program

does not analyse data, instead the data is sorted and grouped so that similar statements appear next to each other (Goslino, 2007).

A problem with qualitative research is that of selecting what appears to be a relatively small amount of data for use in the data presentation. The positive aspect of the software is that it makes this process easier by 'outlining' and 'hyperlinking' the data. Outlining is a way of indicating the contents of the data in terms of headings and first lines and is useful to view an overview of the data. Hyperlinks link various parts of the document which can be accessed with a click of the mouse; saving time. Having considered some of the pros and cons of the software I chose not to use them because I wanted to stay in contact and close to the process, further I was impatient and did not want to give time over to learning a process when I could have been dealing with the data. I was also disappointed with the technology as I had purchased a Dragon voice recognition package to assist me to transcribe the data. It took me two days to install the software and recognise my voice. I was unsuccessful in this task and at the end of the second day decided to give up and write the interviews manually. The thought of wasting more time on another computer package did not appeal to me in the slightest. The size of the project was manageable if not time consuming and it afforded me the ability to see the process all the way through.

As a result, the data from each question was re-ordered onto the various themes, a colour code was placed at the top of each document and cross-referenced to the emerging themes. This assisted the process of analysis

where two or more emerging themes appeared which were, in fact, the same phenomenon but listed under differing headings. The next step in the data analysis was to compare the various questions to identify common themes shared between the topics. An example of the management of the themes is shown below:

Question 1 Analysis Phase 2

1. What support was provided by the organisation? (Met)

1	Turquoise	None	5	Pink	Direct Contact
5A	Blue	Email	4	Green	Pre Read
2	Teal	A Little	6	Yellow	Books
3	Grey	Sufficient	9	Dk Yellow	Uncertainty
7	Red	Time	8	Violet	Expectations
4A	Dk Green	Web site			

Table 7 An example of the management of the themes (For a full list of the phase 2 emerging themes see Appendix 2).

When the process of collecting the various themes was complete, the coloured highlights were removed and the data listed under the emergent themes. In order to validate these, I contacted one of the participants and requested that she critically evaluate the themes in comparison to her own experiences of the course. In her reply she identified that the themes appeared to represent her own experience of the course with the exception of comments made regarding a member of the teaching staff whom many

considered less able to teach. As this did not fall within the focus of my research question it was not included. (This is further discussed under the heading of validity.) I was mindful that employing respondent validity had the disadvantage in the fact that, as each respondent was interviewed separately, they would be unaware of others' responses. As a consequence, they may not be aware of emerging issues. The processes of the generation of the themes were shared with a critical friend, where each stage was shown to them. This individual agreed with the selection and management of the emerging themes. This resulted in a record of the views of the participants in relation to the questions asked and is recognised as 'systematic coding' (David and Sutton, 2004) this involves the process of identifying all the emergent themes that the researcher can find. It was from these that the final stage of analysis took place. During this stage, the relevance of each statement was considered in terms of whether it answered the question posed. Where the response clearly answered another question the data were placed under that heading; this occurred in only two instances. The data that was not considered within this study was that which related to the respondents' teaching practice. On some occasions the focus of the replies wandered onto this subject, as a result if the data had no relation to the question asked it was ignored; this is referred to as a process of 'reduction' (ibid.).

However, as mentioned above, there appeared to be a theme, named Situational Reflective Practice, which although not included within the original questionnaire appeared to impact the participants and which was considered worthy of further research. This will now be considered in further detail.

The emergence of Situational Reflective Practice

During the process of analysis, a theme began to emerge that had not been considered in the original design of the semi-structured questionnaire. As a result, the data in relation to this emerging theme was scant but nevertheless it appeared increasingly relevant and a significant feature. The theme, as mentioned, related to some participants finding themselves in a situation which was not of their doing but which in any case still affected them in some way, this was termed 'Situation Reflective Practice' and considered reflection-re-action; as opposed to reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action (Shön, 1987).

Following a discussion with my tutor at Brunel University and my own organisation, the MPS, it was agreed that I should make contact with the students once again with a view to re-interviewing any interested parties. Consideration was given to piloting the questionnaire. As Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2006) observe, 'You may think that you know well enough what you are doing, but the value of pilot research cannot be overestimated. Things never work quite the way you envisage, even if you have done them many times before.' However my issue was that I had only one question I wished to find an answer to and provided the question made sense to the respondent it would suffice. Gray (2009) suggests trying out the question with people who are not a part of the target group. As a result the question was designed and discussed with a two of my peers and my supervisor. This

resulted in a question that could be understood and which was capable of answering the research question.

A letter of explanation was drawn up which was disseminated to all 15 original participants via an internal email; this contained the same information as the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix 3). As a result, 5 participants from the original group were re-interviewed. On this occasion, unstructured interviews were employed, this was because I had only one question and wanted to say as little as possible during the interviews, restricting myself to dealing only with the perceptions of those interviewed. The interview was selected as the most appropriate tool to gather this data as it sought to gather information that may be difficult to gather by any other means (Kumar, 2008), for example, information in relation to past experiences and that individual's reactions to those experiences. Further, it benefits the research process whereby misunderstandings can be cleared up almost immediately. The characteristic of an unstructured interview is that it seeks to engage the interviewee in a focused way which, at the same time, benefits from natural conversation (Krippendorff, 2006). This was a pertinent data collection tool for me at this stage of my research because it enabled me to steer the conversation to the topic being researched and at the same time enabled me to deal with any unexpected responses. On the other hand, the unstructured nature of the interviews (Krippendorff, 2006) produced data that was not easily comparable with other data collected in the same way and further was not easily summarised (ibid.). The question asked within the second interview was:

'Have you ever found yourself in a situation where because of a change in circumstances, you have been affected by factors about which you had no control?'

Again those who volunteered were interviewed and their accounts were recorded, the data was transcribed to individual word documents. These 5 accounts, coupled with the original 4 from the previous, original data made a total of 9 out of the 15 participants who had experienced the phenomena being suggested in some form. Many participants offered more than one example so a total of 21 examples were collected.

This concludes considerations of Situational Reflective Practice within this chapter. The presentation of the data in relation to Situational Reflective Practice will be discussed in chapter 5.

Issues relating to data analysis

The process of data analysis, rooted as it was in the epistemological position of a phenomenological study, did not seek to identify perception in terms of the cognitive processes that may have taken place within the brain which creates a reality; instead it was concerned with the experience of things and the way they appeared to those as they considered them (Langdrige, 2007). As such this phenomenological study attempted to capture ways of knowing that were clearly subjective in nature and as a consequence the associated

methodology entailed the 'collection of naturalistic, first person accounts of experience, recognising the need to account for the influence of the observer in the data collection and analytical process' (Langdrige, 2007:4). In applying this phenomenological philosophy I was attempting to focus my attention upon my students' perceptions of their experiences and identify what it meant to them.

This data analysis did not seek to interpret the meaning of the experiences, but instead to describe the phenomenon as experienced by the student. To achieve this, the accounts were read over and reflected upon on many occasions. The phenomenological approach to enquiry requires three distinct stages which take the form of three basic rules, namely epoché, description and horizontalisation (Yontef and Fairfield, 2008).

The rule of epoché, also referred to as bracketing, involves the suspension of the researcher's opinions, assumptions or preconceived interpretations of an observed phenomenon. Is epoché possible? According to Cahoon (1988) the epoché is not a human possibility. However Langdrige and Hagger-Johnson (2009) suggest the argument is not so clear cut. They identify several positions within phenomenology and generalise to an extent to make the distinctions clear; these generalisations are reflected here. Firstly the transcendental phenomenologists (those who followed Husserl) argue that it is possible to see a situation as others may. On the other hand the existential phenomenologists (those who followed Satre and Merleau-Ponty), argued that it is possible to go some way to achieving this view point but stressed the

'grounded and embodied nature of our being in the world' from which it was impossible to escape' Langdrige and Hagger-Johnson (2009:390). Further more are the hermeneutic phenomenologists (those who followed Heidegger, Gadamer and Ricoeur) who 'employ a more reflexive notion of epoché, with the role of the researcher focusing upon the co-constructing of the findings more directly recognised within the research process. As previously asserted, the argument is not clear cut, however the position of the existential phenomenologists appears to hold some truth; it may be possible to go some way towards epoché.

In attempting to mirror epoché I endeavoured to suspend any preconceived ideas I may have had and I attempted to be aware and to restrict my thoughts and opinions only to what was presented in the data. It is acknowledged that I held my own opinions, but I tempered these in the attempt to avoid any allegations of bias.

Following this the next stage of description was employed. The rule of description involves consideration of the variables as opposed to explaining the variables. Here I focused on the more concrete accounts as they were easier to deal with than the more abstract concepts which I dealt with previously. This was a far easier process than bracketing as all that was necessary was to deal objectively with the data.

Next the rule of horizontalisation, also referred to as equalization rule was employed. This discourages the manipulation of the data where certain

elements are ignored in favour of others. Langdridge (2007:19) warns against the temptation of 'inventing hierarchies of meaning' and instead suggests we '...treat all detail with equal value.' By employing horizontalisation I was able to ensure that all data was considered and not discarded due to my, perhaps, subconscious perspective.

It is recognised that this method of data collection is apt to be influenced by the bias of the researcher. This and other issues will now be considered.

Ethical considerations

Three main areas of ethical issues exist when interviewing (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007), namely, obtaining informed consent, promising and ensuring confidentiality and the consequences of the main interviews. These and other questions in relation to ethical considerations will now be considered and are informed by ethical questions offered by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:292). Before attempting to obtain the informed consent of the interviewees, permission was sought from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). This was because the participants were to be interviewed when at work and therefore at the expense of the MPS. Permission from the MPS was obtained in writing via my line manager. Next the consent of the interviewees was sought. This was achieved by me first being introduced to the participants by my line manager who had been present at times with the participants when being taught on their PTTLS course. That had the effect of validating my position and making the possible interviewees aware that I

would be contacting them in the near future. Next I sent an email to each of the possible participants explaining who I was and the describing the nature and purpose of my research. The general characteristics of the students will now be considered.

Student Characteristics Analysis

The following data relates to the participants within this study. The names have been changed to ensure the anonymity

Gender	No.	%
Male	9	60%
Female	6	40%

Table 8 The composition of the group by gender

Age	No.	%
20 – 29	1	7%
30 – 39	2	13%
40 – 49	8	53 %
50 – 59	4	27%
60+	0	0%

Table 9 The age composition of the group by age

No.	Name	Teaching	Previous qualifications	Reasons for training
1	David	2009	O' Levels	As part of role
2	Ajay	2008	O' Levels	Career development
3	Rachel	2008	NVQ 7302	Appealed to me
4	Patrick	2005	A' Levels	Development of role
5	Melanie	2008	HND Business studies	As part of role
6	Tracey	2010	HNC Policing	Recuperative duties
7	Tony	2002	O' Levels	As part of role
8	John	2008	B Tech	Enjoy teaching
9	Robert	2005	BSc Geography. QTS Primary Teacher	To raise awareness of project
10	Mita	2007	A' Levels	As part of the projects team
11	Renee	2005	GCSEs	As part of role
12	Pryon	2007	None	As part of role
13	Abdul	2009	A' Levels	Extension of course
14	Helen	1978	BSc Hons Micro Biology Food chemistry.	As part of role
15	Pete	2007	O' Levels	As part of role

Table 10 Previous qualifications of the group

Teaching since	No.	%
1978	1	7%
2002	1	7%
2005	3	20%
2007	3	20%

2008	4	27%
2009	2	13%
2010	1	7%

Table 11 Teaching experience of the group

Analysis of previous qualifications:

Qualification Type	No.	Level	%	%
None	1	0	7%	40%
O' Levels / GCSEs	5	2	33%	
NVQ 7302	1	3	7%	60%
A' Levels	3	3	20%	
HNC/ HND / BTEC	3	4	20%	
Degree	2	5	13%	

Table 12 Analysis of previous qualifications

40% of the participants have achieved up to level 2 qualifications. However, despite the fact that 60% had achieved a level 3 or above qualification, the data indicates that this is no guarantee that study skills are met.

Attached to the email was a Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix 1), which detailed the title of the investigation and offered a brief outline of the research, this was considered important so as to inform the participants as to

the nature of the research enabling an informed view. To ensure informed consent I promised anonymity by stating, 'Please be assured that all the views I will be collecting will be used in such a way that they cannot be attributed to anyone specifically.' The participation information sheet then explained that their involvement in this research project was entirely voluntary and at any stage during the project they may withdraw from participation or withdraw the responses they had given. It also explained that their future employment as a trainer would not be influenced, whether they agreed to participate or if they would rather not. My telephone number and an email address were supplied in the event of anyone wishing to discuss any matter further. The consequences of the research were made clear in both the email and the Participation Information Sheet. As it happened no one did call me for clarification which means either the explanation were clear or the participants were not interested. I contacted each participant by telephone and ascertained if they were willing to being interviewed and to have the interview recorded. All agreed to this with the exception of one who stated that they did not want to have their voice recorded. As a result it was agreed to place what they wished to say directly onto a Word document. The effect of this was the interview took about twice as long as the others and only produced about a quarter of the data that I would have expected if I were to engage in free flowing conversation which was recorded.

Interview strategies

The main interviews were conducted in an appropriate, non-stressful, non-threatening manner by employing a number of strategies. First, where possible they were conducted at the participant's place of work at a location decided upon by them. Although they had been informed regarding the purpose of the research, they were again given a participation information sheet to remind them of the nature of the research as in some cases it had been quite a while since my original request. Next they were asked to read and sign the consent form, in fact this was read aloud to them and it was ascertained that they understood what had been written. The topics included recording the fact that they had read the information sheet and that they understood the purpose of the study. It was also explained that they had the opportunity to ask questions and that they were to be answered to their satisfaction. Next the consent form confirmed that they understood that their participation was voluntary and they were free to withdraw at any time. They stated that they agreed to take part in the study and finally they agreed to the interview being audio recorded.

The emergence of significant issues

Although no harmful effects were anticipated at the start of the research, the data collection revealed two participants who had been allegedly ill-treated; this took the form of bullying and possibly ageist and sexist behaviour. This threw up other ethical considerations that until then had not been considered.

For example, now I had been made aware of the situation, was I in a position to draw these matters to the attention of the MPS? In so doing I would then break my promise to anonymity on behalf of the participants. On the other hand if I chose to do nothing and as a result, the ill treatment continued would I be culpable? As it was I chose to discuss the issue with those concerned, recorded the details and offered these as supporting evidence if subsequently they wished to proceed with a formal complaint. Further I discussed the issue with my line manager and my tutor at Brunel University, both of whom offered sensible and pragmatic advice. I then considered the question of whether or not to include this data in the research as I was unhappy with highlighting such an issue as it did not fall under the focus of the original research question. This brought me to another ethical question that considers the potential benefits outweighing the possible harm being done by the research. After much reflection, I decided to include the data in the hope that highlighting such issues within the organisation may affect change. The MPS does not tolerate bullying and the fact that two examples existed within a relatively small sample meant that whatever policy that may have existed or training that had been delivered may in fact be ineffectual. Reflecting on the situation I realised that in truth I didn't want to show the MPS in a bad light, my experiences of the organisation were generally very positive with some notable exceptions. I was reconciled by the fact that to withhold the data would be unethical and that by embarking on this study, I should not choose what to include and what to leave out.

Benefits to the participants

Consideration of how the participants of the research would benefit from it, led me to conclude that the respondents themselves were unlikely to benefit from this research, however it was hoped that later groups attending the PTLLS course would benefit from the study. Issues of confidentiality, anonymity, non-identifiability, non-traceability were taken into consideration following the transcription process. Here any references to the participant's name, location and role were removed. The difficulty encountered in so doing was that some of the accounts relied on a description of the work in which they were involved and I appreciated that this type of research relied much on the observation of a phenomenon set against the backdrop of context. On occasions identification of the geographic location coupled with an explanation of the exercises involved in a particular lesson would have easily identified the individual; as a consequence they were removed. Some of the richness of the material was lost, but the essence of the example offered remained; this was considered a reasonable compromise.

Considerations of the Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998, in relation to the data retained on computer and the Human Rights Act 1998 were informed by the Expedited Review Checklist, from the Department of Anthropology at Brunel University (2008). Section 5 of this document relates to the rights to confidentiality and anonymity of informants and other research participants stating that participants should have the right to remain anonymous and to have their rights to privacy and confidentiality respected. To this end once the

data had been recorded and then transcribed, the records were then anonymised and the earlier records containing the identification of the participants were removed from the computer. The participants were then referred to by randomised number. A guarantee of privacy and confidentiality were made with a view to reflect S5 (d) of the Brunel Checklist (2008) which states, '...they must be honoured unless they are clear and over-riding ethical reasons not to do so' there existed no over-riding ethical reasons in this case.'

Access to original data

In relation to consideration of who would have access to the data, the participants were offered a copy of the MPS internal reports which were written in May 2010. No person within the MPS has requested or will be provided the original data. The available data will take an anonymised form within the body of the various reports written expressly for the MPS.

Results

The results of the research were made available in part to the MPS in May 2010, however they did not benefit from all of the data as they requested consideration of the appropriateness of the PTLLS course for their students, the support required by the students in relation to study needs and the appropriateness of reflective practice for policing students. That data and the remaining relevant data are incorporated within this research and will be published at an appropriate date.

The results of this study will be made available to any interested parties; there exist three MPS documents and this thesis. Sensitive data was removed by me as I recognised what information would be inappropriate for inclusion within the public domain as it concerned matters of national security or may undermine any legal process. The application for research ethics approval went before the Brunel University Research Ethics Committee and following some minor amendments was approved.

Issues of validity and reliability

Validity

Validity considers the effectiveness of the measurement of a concept (Bryman, 2008), in other words validity asks whether the research does what it sets out to do. Whether or not the act of collection and interpretation can be considered actual measuring is a moot point. In fact a phenomenological study does not purport to measure anything. Within the constructivist paradigm validity can be problematic (Cohen, Lawrence and Manion, 2000) and qualitative researchers face a paradox where they are expected to progress an impartial interpretive science based upon what are essentially subjective human experiences (Klenke, 2008).

Reactivity, researcher bias and respondent biases

Padgett (1998) observes three possible threats to the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research, existing under three headings, reactivity, researcher bias and respondent biases; these will be considered in turn.

Reactivity

Another aspect of validity was that of reactivity, which refers to the effect of the qualitative researcher's presence in the field which may have the effect of distorting the observed phenomena (Padgett, 1998, Holloway, 1997, Maxwell 2007). Issues of reactivity may affect the attitudes, behaviours and feelings of those observed. It is not possible to remove the actual influence of the researcher but that is not an issue as according to Bickman and Rog (1998:92) who suggest '... the goal a qualitative study is not to eliminate this influence but to understand it and use it productively.'

Researcher Bias

'A bias is a judgement that inhibits impartial judgement' (Lichtman, 2010:16). Further, bias refers to the ways in which data collection or analyses are distorted by the researcher's theory, values or preconceptions (Bickman and Rog, 1998). The circumstances in which bias may be found are within the attitude of the interviewer, the predisposition for the interviewer to view the

interviewee as being similar to themselves, a tendency for the interviewer to seek out answers that support the views of themselves, the interviewer perceiving the replies to the questions incorrectly and the interviewee misunderstanding the questions (Cohen, Lawrence and Manion, 2007).

When undertaking qualitative research it is the researcher who decides what information to collect (Lichtman 2010). Subsequently that information is filtered by the researcher; as a consequence this process is subject to the individual's knowledge, experience, skill and background (ibid.) The most practical method of achieving validity when interviewing is to reduce bias as much as is possible.

It is acknowledged that during this research many, if not all, of the examples of bias, identified above could be present to some extent within this research. This is because which ever decision is made by the researcher, there is always the possibility that bias could creep in. For example bias can be found in my selection of the chosen topics, my responses or lack of them during the interviews, the coding and manipulation of the data, the subsequent data presentation and anywhere in-between. The most concerning aspect of bias prevention is the fact that the bias exhibited by me could have occurred at a subconscious level, as a result this could make prevention difficult if not impossible. As Lichtman (2010:16) observes, 'Most qualitative researchers acknowledge the dilemma of trying to be objective or unbiased. In fact [many qualitative researchers] acknowledge that the elusive objectivity often sought in scientific research is inappropriate in the qualitative research arena.'

However, an awareness of the existence of such potential bias served to draw

attention to the researcher of such a possibility. I was mindful of the observation offered by Maxwell (2005:108): 'Validity in qualitative research is not the result of indifference but of integrity.'

Respondent biases

Padgett's last threat to validity was that of respondent biases which could include withholding information to suit their own argument or to hide unpleasant events or they may provide information in the belief that they are being helpful. There were occasions when I felt as if the interviewee was either struggling to identify issues with a view to assist me, or was using the interview as an opportunity to publicise their own views via me. What was apparent was that there appeared no one objective reality, what I was presented with was multiple subjective realities (Rubin and Babbie, 2010).

Respondent reliability

In order to achieve integrity it was obvious that I would be unable to make any claim for validity by relying solely upon my own interpretations of the data. As a result I employed the use of respondent reliability (Maxwell, 2005) or to coin another term, member checks (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) which in turn lent weight to a claim of inter-rater reliability (Lichtman, 2010). Obtaining feedback in relation to my data from those I studied was the most important way of preventing misinterpretation of the meaning the participant's words and actions (Maxwell, 2005). It further ensured an accurate understanding of their

perspectives as well as identifying my own biases and misunderstandings of what I observed. I cannot discount the fact that if an individual was willing to spend time to talk and in return I valued their contributions, that interaction may have influenced the data; I will not know. The researcher's bias may have the affect of filtering out information as their preconceptions affect their observations. Try as I may, it may be impossible to differentiate the various aspects of a phenomenon in such a way as to negate the effect of my own filters in relation to what I heard, interpreted and chose to record or identified as a pertinent issue.

Consequential validity

Consequential validity first appeared from concerns relating to social implications of assessments. It considers the evidence that addresses both the intended and unintended consequences of a test; including the interpretation of the results (Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao, 2004). In relation to research Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:140) observe, 'The way in which research data are used (the consequences of the data) are in keeping with the capability or intentions of the research, i.e. the consequences of the research do not exceed the capability of the research and the action-related consequences of the research are both legitimate and fulfilled.' In essence it is all about the consequences of the research and the, all be it limited, responsibility of the researcher in relation to this (Stake, 1995).

As has been described, some aspects of this research were undertaken solely for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and as a result the results of some aspects of this research have been reported to them. It is hoped that this enabled them to take an informed position when deciding upon the adoption of the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector course. Other issues that have emerged have as yet not been shared with them. Amongst these issues are allegations of sexism, ageism and bullying. It is recognised that once the research is published I will have no control over this work. In an attempt to control the consequential validity of this research, I have drawn the MPS's attention to my findings in the hope that appropriate changes can be made; either in the form of training or of a change of practice.

Interview schedule

To effect validity it was necessary to first identify whether the questions contained within the interview schedule were those which would yield a suitable response, if they did not then no claim to validity would have been possible. Having identified the appropriate literature within the review, I was then able to construct my questions. Careful consideration was given to ensure that the questions used would harvest the desired material. I could not be sure that, for example the interviewee would interpret the question in the way I had intended, or that the person would be able to verbalise the response sufficiently as it was probable that they lacked any technical language, or that the person was grounded temporarily (in other words they were speaking for that time, rather than relating to a past or future time) and

lastly would they provide a response that was skewed due to the desire to offer a response that they thought was wanted by me (Gratton and Jones, 2004).

It was obvious that some issues were out of my control, however, selecting and phrasing the questions prior to the data collection was considered an important element in attempting to achieve validity. As David and Sutton (2004:123) point out, 'the first step in the piloting process will involve showing your provisional themes and questions to colleagues and experts in their field for critical review'. As a result I consulted widely with significant peers and experts. Following this I discussed the questions with a critical friend; these were again discussed with my tutor and were then sent to Brunel University for further feedback. The effect of Socratic questioning from these individuals ensured that the research benefitted from a clearer focus. Following this it is advisable to interview a small number of people from the population (David and Sutton, 2004). However I had a population of 15 available to me within my sample and wanted all to be included within the study. Further, having been granted permission from the MPS to conduct the research I was given time away from my normal duties to conduct the research. This window of opportunity meant that in effect I have no time to conduct a pilot. I took the decision not to pilot the interview schedule with this group. Boynton (2005:64) warns of the dangers of not piloting pointing out that piloting is more than just proof reading. He offers a checklist for piloting which include the following;

- Was there any aspect of your study that had to be repeated or explained before the participants understood it?
- What comments did the individuals who completed the pilot study make? Did they give feedback that suggested the study was flawed or explain how their answers / actions were affected by your research
- Note any persistent errors or misunderstandings by either participants or researchers.
- Ask the respondents to tell you exactly what they thought the study meant and how this affected their responses / reactions

Boynton (2005:66)

With this advice in mind I engaged in coping strategies to guard against any problems I may have encountered. For example, the interview schedule was shared with colleagues to ensure understanding. This did highlight one question that appeared to confuse the recipient and as a result it was changed to become clearer. In respect of the respondents' understanding the meaning of the research the participant information sheet contained the relevant information. Some of this would be reiterated prior to each interview. David and Sutton (2004:124) highlight the importance of 'asking pilot respondents whether they felt the interview was leading or biased in any way.' This option was not available to me in these circumstances however they further add that feedback from experts and peers can contribute to this process; this I was able to achieve. Having amended the interview

schedule my thoughts then focused upon the method of communication; specifically questioning'

Questioning

Another aspect of the data collection process, in this case interviewing, that would influence the claim to validity was that of poor questioning. A comparison of open and closed questioning within an interview revealed that responses to open questions contained a greater quantity of self revelation than responses to closed questions. This though existed when the subject being discussed was objective and was lowered when the subject was subjective (Hargie and Dickson, 2004). However it was found that the responses to open questions took, in general, three times as long to answer than closed questions and they place greater demands on the interviewer who must then transcribe the replies (Crano and Brewer, 2002). This appeared to be the case during my own research, where the use of mostly open questions produced what I considered to be a vast amount of material, the consequences of which were that the initial transcription process alone took roughly 80 hours.

Another obstacle to a claim of validity was the use of leading questions (Wengraf, 2001) or alternatively what I term a 'guided response'. The latter consists of the interviewer showing a particular interest in certain responses which may then lead to the interviewee attempting to please the interviewer by responding in a similar fashion to further questions in the belief that this is

what the interviewer wishes to hear. This meant that if, during the interview, where I heard something that was particularly interesting, it was appropriate to temper my response so as not to influence the participant; this was not an easy task as I found my first reaction to hearing about certain events was an emotional one where I found the cognitive reaction to that event a slower phenomenon.

Types of questions

The appropriate use of open and closed questions was an important consideration for me during the interviews, for example a closed question at the start of my interview may have been inappropriate such as 'So, you enjoyed the course?' It can also be described as a leading question because it assumes that the interviewee enjoyed the course. Closed questions are best suited to confirm what has already been established often at the end of an interview. Where ever considered appropriate, open questions were used in the interviews and I was careful to guard against the use of leading questions. My training and experience of cognitive interviewing within the MPS with witnesses and the accused certainly assisted my interviewing skills, the most important element of which was the ability to listen and to stay in the here and now. If I felt my mind wandering as it gave consideration to the next question, I checked myself and paid attention to what was being said at that moment.

Within this research, the issue of plausibility and credibility may be claimed in terms of the consistency held within the data. As Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont (2003:124) observe when speaking about plausibility observing the presence of ‘...culturally shared resources that establish issues of motive and causation.’ The plausibility contained within this research exists as a consequence of the emergence of culturally shared issues which are expressed independently but are later seen to be shared. I maintain that issues of plausibility and credibility are an inherent quality of this research evidenced by the common characteristics that are evident in the data.

In considering the kinds and amounts of evidence required, Hammersley (1992) asserted that the greater the claim made the more convincing the evidence should be for that claim. This research claims no more than the evidence supports but acknowledges the limitations of a phenomenological study. A number of perceptions are considered from various positions, at times I took a step back in order to get a closer look (Silverman, 2010). In other words, moving in between perspectives considering them alone and in combination with other accounts, taking a few steps back to view the situation as a whole, has enabled me to establish my own perspective. In my opinion, 15 accounts are a suitable number for this type of qualitative study, because the number is not so large that the picture cannot be seen in its entirety and not so small that it is considered inconsequential. It is the quality of the data that legitimises any claim made within this research.

In considering Hammersley’s (1992) clarity of the kinds of claim made from the research, this research originally sought to do just one task, to describe a

phenomenon. However, as the research progressed, as discussed earlier, the separate idea in relation to reflective practice emerged. This generation of this idea was in a way, unintentional. However it was by looking at the data from 360 degrees that revealed the apparent gap in knowledge, this gap it is suggested, may not have been seen if viewed from a more conventional standpoint. By conventional standpoint I refer to observing a play from the auditorium; watching from the wings or from an elevated position offers an alternative viewpoint which may result in varying conclusions.

In light of the above I maintain that internal validity can be demonstrated within this research. On the other hand the degree to which these results can be generalised to that of a wider population, other cases or situations is debateable. This research sought only to observe one group at a particular point in time. No claim therefore is made in support of external validity.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the uniformity of a measuring process, however as this research is phenomenological in approach and therefore is not seeking to measure what is being studied, issues of reliability are not pertinent to this study.

Alternative criteria for evaluating qualitative research

Are the terms used within qualitative research appropriate? After all they borrowed from the quantitative domain and in so doing are perhaps inappropriate. As a result of the above incongruity in relation to the measurement and the nature of phenomenological research, two things have occurred. First the meaning of the terms requires changing to suit the needs of the qualitative domain and second the terms reliability and validity need to be replaced by more relevant measurements of quality. Maxwell (2005) supports this argument by suggesting that within the qualitative domain the term validity could be exchanged for that of understanding. Because we as researchers form a part of the world we are researching we cannot be totally objective and it is argued that other people's perspective are said to be as valid as our own (ibid.), 'it is the meaning that subjects give to data and inferences drawn from that data that are important' according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:106).

Some writers have progressed further away from the positivist terms (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Guba and Lincoln, 1994) and suggested alternative terms to describe the criteria experienced by the constructivist researcher. Rather than viewing the research in terms of its reliability or validity they suggest the two primary criteria for assessing qualitative study as being 'authenticity and trustworthiness.' By way of explanation, authenticity is a combination of fairness, ontological, educative, catalytic and tactical authenticity. It serves to consider the wider impact of the research and acknowledges that that

research accounts represent a 'sophisticated but temporary consensus of views about what is considered to be true' (Klenke, 2008:39). However I would argue that it is unwise to disregard issues of validity.

Each term will now be considered and related to my research. Issues of 'fairness' ask whether the research accurately represents the different viewpoints from within the selected social group. On reflection initially my data analysis had a tendency to favour trends, which relied upon a number of people identifying the same or a similar phenomenon. The use of horizontalisation enabled me to look beyond the popular. To use an analogy, it was like taking a photograph of a beach to capture the data rather than just counting the bathers; the former seeks to capture the phenomenon whereas the latter (more positivist approach) seeks out only that which is easily counted and as a result is more likely to be considered.

How does my research fair when judged against the alternative values advocated by Guba and Lincoln (1994)? 'Ontological authenticity' asserts that the research should contribute to an improved understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Arguably, before this research the phenomenon had not been studied within the context of MPS appropriating the PTLLS course, so it is argued that this research will contribute to the phenomenon being studied. The appropriation of PTLLS into the MPS trainer training is ongoing.

'Educative authenticity' considers whether the research has assisted people to identify the viewpoints of others. This research sought to identify the viewpoints of the participants and to share that knowledge (Klenke, 2008) to that end it contains educative authenticity. This in turn should lead to an enhancement in the understanding of other's constructs and also to have promoted some form of action, referred to as 'catalytic authenticity'. It is anticipated that the study of the introduction and suitability of the PTLLS course within the MPS will continue to be monitored following this research, it is hoped that the recommendations contained within the various internal reports and this research will assist this ongoing process and will enable me to lay claim to 'catalytic authenticity'. Last in the chain is 'tactical authenticity' which considers whether the improved understanding of others' constructs has encouraged some form of action. It introduces value to the interested parties by offering an applied use of the research findings. As a result of my research I intend working with my peers to introduce advice and guidance to those engaged on their PTLLS course. It is anticipated that this will include advice in relation to study skills in general.

Trustworthiness was the other condition required to satisfy the conditions stipulated by Guba and Lincoln (1994). This consists of a combination of 'credibility' which is very similar to internal validity, transferability which parallels external validity, dependability which is similar to reliability and conformability which is akin to objectivity Bryman (2008:377). The credibility of my research was supported by the use of 'respondent validation' (ibid.) where the account of my findings was later shared with one of the

participants, the purpose of which was to seek corroboration. Issues of transferability take the form of the appropriate, detailed description of a relatively small study. It is the detail upon which a judgement of transferability of findings can be made. Within my research I felt stuck with the material with which I had been provided, the detailed description depended on the initial contributions from the responders and to a point my ability to record that, however, if it did not exist in the first place I could not create it. 'Dependability' (ibid.) is evidenced by the use of a suitable audit trail; here the researcher collates details at all stages of the research process. In relation to my research I feel that in general my audit trail is relatively reliable. The reason for this is my fear of progressing too far along a path and then not being able to re-trace my steps. As a consequence, each stage of the data manipulation has been recorded to as to enable me to take a step back and to review my progress. The last criterion in support of trustworthiness is that of 'confirmability' (ibid.). This is a relatively vague term which recognises that although complete objectivity is impossible in social research, the researcher has not allowed their own thoughts, feelings, opinions etc, to sway the research. This is difficult for me to evidence, because my intentions were to be as objective as I possibly could, if I have not, I am not aware of it. For me the Meno paradox is analogous, Meno asks of Plato, How can I find something if I don't know what it is I am looking for and even if I find it, how will I recognise it as being the thing I was looking for? In other words, even if I look for it, the question I ask is, will I recognise it in my own research? I may not.

The data will be presented in Chapter 4. Data presentation and analysis will be offered concurrently due to the unsuitability of this type of quantitative interview to produce numerical data, graphs etc. The data and analysis will be woven together and discussed under the heading of the relevant topic and the subsequent interview questions.

Summary

Section 2 of this chapter presented the procedures employed for collecting data, it discussed the use of sampling, the initial contact with participants and data collection. The transcription of data and the data analysis was described and issues in relation to data analysis were discussed. The emergence of Situational Reflective Practice was introduced. Issues of validity and reliability were considered, including reactivity, researcher bias, respondent bias respondent reliability and consequential validity. The interview schedule and issues in relation to questioning were explained. Lastly alternative criteria for evaluating qualitative research were offered. All topics were contextualised to the research conducted.

Chapter 4

Data Presentation and Analysis

Introduction

The data and analysis are presented together in this chapter. This format has been chosen because of the nature of the qualitative interview and the unsuitability of this type of research to produce numerical data, graphs etc. Further, the questions from the data collection are listed prior to the analysis. The selection of this format is employed to act as a reminder to the reader linking the original questions to the analysis. The data and analysis are woven together and discussed as each interview question and response is considered. Each question is listed and the analysis of the responses is offered linking the topic to the relevant literature; these are placed under sub headings where appropriate. Before embarking on the data presentation and analysis it was felt pertinent to remind myself of Denscombe's (2007) observation that, 'The phenomenologist's task, in the first instance is not to interpret the experiences of those concerned, not to analyse them or repackage them in any form. The task is to present the experiences in a way that is *faithful to the original*' (Denscombe, 2007:78).

Before embarking upon the data presentation and analysis it may be useful to recapitulate some of the key points.

Recapitulation

The focus of this study was a group of policing students within the MPS. Specifically, this group were police trainers who were being taught the principles of how to teach. Characteristically they were experienced officers and were specialists in their chosen field. The purpose of this research was to explore the perceptions of these students having undertaken the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of their study skills needs in relation to motivation levels, relevant support and reflective practice. What was being observed was the reaction to a phenomenon and as such, arguably, those reactions took the form of a social construct. Characteristically these were not directly observable nor were there suitable instruments available to measure these qualities.

The research question

As previously stated, the research question considered in this study was, 'What were the perceptions of policing students attending the Preparing to Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Course in relation to their study needs?' To this end it has considered two very general subjects, study skills and reflective practice; these represent the broad aims of the research.

Chapter 2 considered the following topics related to study skills and reflective practice:

- Changes faced by teachers in the lifelong learning sector
- The general nature of adult learners
- How adults are supported in terms of study skills
- What motivates adults to study
- The nature of reflective practice
- The nature of transformative learning

Not all of the above topics are represented explicitly within the interview schedule. This is because it was considered that in some instances relevant data would be richer if contextualised in an explanation that was naturally occurring as opposed to being answered by use of a direct question. A number of topics were included specifically within the interview schedule and include:

1. Support – during the course
2. Support – in terms of study skills
3. Reflective practice
4. Teaching practice - not used within this study
5. Development issues
6. Additional comments

The topics are directly linked to the interview schedule and the questions asked are reproduced before the relevant responses by way of explanation.

Data and analysis are now presented under the topics contained within the interview schedule.

Topic 1. Support – During the course

In relation to Topic 1, that of general ‘support’ during the course, the following questions were asked:

‘I would like to focus on the subject of support during the PTLLS course:

Question 1 What support was provided by the organisation?

Question 2 What support was provided by the college?

Question 2a What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?’

The above questions considered the support offered by the Metropolitan Police Service and the college delivering the PTLLS package and the perceptions of the students in relation to any additional support they felt they required. These will now be considered in turn.

Question 1. What support was provided by the organisation? (MPS)

None or a little

In general the respondents considered they had received either no support from the MPS or a little. Helen observed, *“There was not really enough front loading of information that would have given a better perspective of what was to be expected. We didn’t know that we would have to produce such a big portfolio of essays that was a bit of a shock.”*

The responses to this question suggest that all learners had studied up to a certain standard from O-levels to degree and that as a result, they were all returning to study. The comparable literature suggests a number of influences on the adult learner who is returning to learning (Rogers, 2007), which can have a dramatic effect on a person’s ability to learn. These factors include the anxiety of looking ‘dim’ in front of peers, the feelings associated with the classroom from childhood experiences, challenges to their beliefs about learning, the ability to manage change and expectations all contribute to a person’s ability to engage in learning and their motivation to remain engaged.

It appears here that some students’ expectations were not managed as well as they could have been by perhaps providing more information to the students prior to the start of the course.

None of the respondents stated they considered the support to be sufficient. This appears to reflect Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005:117), that amongst a group of adults with whom they worked, the majority were ‘dependent on teachers to teach them’ and ‘... often experienced a form of

shock when first exposed to truly adult educational programs.’ This dependency is typical of the pedagogical approach to learning espoused by Knowles, 1999, Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005, Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, Reece and Walker, 2007.

Pre-read

Students were offered information in relation to the PTLLS course in the form of a pre-read. This contained a brief description of the course and the FE College and took the form of a web-site link. Some respondents commented that they had received a pre-read but considered it to be not as comprehensive as they would have preferred. Tony observed, *“So I don’t think we were prepared as a group ... The pre-read was scant, it wasn’t very detailed.”* And Ajay commented *“... it was just a very brief précis of what the course is, just literally blurb of what the course is.”* It would appear that managing expectations has not been achieved in this instance. The pre-read was limited to providing a description of the course, the general criteria and listing various supporting websites. Light, Cox and Calkins (2009) suggest that support is about helping students to learn to make decisions rather than simply transferring knowledge and deciding for them. Arguably, it was for the students to study the pre-read and to follow the links to the relevant web sites. However a failure to do this could be cultural as offering a pre-read represents a departure from the norm for MPS students, who would be used generally to being provided only the location and start time before attending a course.

Use of emails

Some respondents referred to the support that was offered via the use of emails, but a number of the opinions appear contradictory. For example whereas some considered that there was insufficient information within the pre-read, (as described by Helen above) Rachel stated, *“Before going on the course I was given an email, sent to me by [the MPS]. The email detailed that there would be a lot of work in this course. That we would be required a certain amount of study time, that we would need to speak to our managers before this, about this.”* It appears whereas Helen felt that being asked to complete a portfolio came as a bit of a shock, (as detailed above) Rachel appeared to appreciate the amount of work the course would entail. It seems appropriate to ensure the students have read the pre-read or a suitable alternative or at the very least have access to it. This could be achieved by use of an email within the pre-read where the student can declare they have received the document. Arguably, e-mailing the pre-read represents an innovative change on the part of the MPS but as Light, Cox and Calkins (2009:161) warn, ‘risks are very difficult to take if students are feeling very insecure’. The risk here is that the students, some of whom are likely to feel insecure, may resent being asked to prepare prior to the start of a course or may over-estimate the amount of work required.

Direct contact

What appears to be valued the most was the fact that a representative from the MPS was present during the course. It must be pointed out that this will not be the norm and their presence was by virtue of the fact that the course was a pilot. The support the representative from the MPS offered existed both before and during the course, which lasted five days. As Pryon observed, *“She was most approachable and she acted as a link if you like between the service and the establishment. If she didn’t know she would find out.”* This individual was considered a means of support if problems arose. The students were aware that their course was a pilot and Helen observed, *“If we had any problems we could go to her. That was good to have her there.”* Conversely the support was considered by one to be limited John observed that, *“...although they were supportive, supportive in as much as listening to us and nodding, but when it came to doing the work and everything it was kind of like yea we know it’s tough but try and get through.”*

Counter to this opinion takes the form of a direct intervention by the representatives from the MPS from Pete who noted, *“[they would] listen to our arguments our issues but their hands were tied in relation to what they could do. We got really annoyed with one teacher and they went back to [name] and said that the teacher had lost the class and the next day they changed it to reflect all of our comments. That was really, really good.”* Unfortunately, this course being a pilot will be the only one benefitting from the additional presence of an MPS representative.

Availability of books

The respondents recounted the advice from the MPS to purchase the title, *Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector* (Gravells, 2008). However the availability of this book at the time of the course was questionable, which may have impacted upon their perceptions of support received from the MPS. For example Tracey observed, “... *I thought the support was as in books, go and buy your own books, that were quite poor.*” However this person was not talking about the availability of the book in the library by way of support but purchasing the book. In support of this issue she further observed, “*We didn’t know because it was very short notice. Previous to the course they didn’t say you need to bring this with you or go out an’ buy a book. There was none of that sort of thing.*” Again there appeared an inconsistency in the perceptions of the respondents’ in terms of what they had been told prior to attending the course. As Patrick stated, “*Obviously there were emails from [the MPS], they advised in that email to get the book that we would need.*” So either the emails did not get through, or if they did they were not read, or possibly if they were read, the salient information was not remembered.

The expectations of some were that the relevant books would be made available to them from the MPS in a similar way in which the Road Craft manual (Home Office 1994) was issued prior to a driving course at the expense of the MPS. For example, Tracey observed that “*When we were on the course I expected that the book would be given to me and that would be yours; Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector, that’s your book,*

there you go. But it wasn't, it was a case of this is the book that you should be reading and if you would like to go down to Waterstones and I went there in my lunch break and bought as many copies as I could for every body, 'cos none of them, hardly any of them had one on the course we all went and bought them." However, Tracey had an issue in relation to purchasing materials as part of the support for the course, explaining, "...so either the job [MPS] buys the book, which I think they should do as they are expecting you to go on it and it is something you are going to do for most trainers now and should we be paying for our own stuff? I don't think so." It appears that whereas the respondent did not like the idea of spending money on a book, they did however purchase the book. This is a moot point from which the question arises should the students be expected to purchase their own books? Conversely, should the books be made available to them from within the learning resource centre/library within the college or should the MPS purchase the books on their behalf? Some students expected to be provided with the suitable material. This situation is analogous with the bipolar positions of pedagogy and andragogy (Knowles, 1999, Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005, Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, Reece and Walker: 2007). As was discussed in chapter 2 the essential quality of these terms are that whereas a pedagogical approach assumes responsibility for learning rests with the teacher, the andragogical approach assumes that the responsibility for learning is on the part of the learner. It appears that the expectation in some cases was that responsibility for obtaining the reading material was that of the MPS. However, although the expectation was that the books should be provided from and at the expense of the MPS, the students were willing to

purchase these themselves. No mention was made by the students of the Hendon Library loaning the Gravels (1998) or any other suitable publication for the PTLLS course.

Experience of uncertainty

It appears a common theme that students exhibited uncertainty in relation to expectations of the PTLLS course, for example Renee observed, *“Still on the first day it was, I know I am going on a teaching course but it was not entirely clear what’s going to happen and I know probably at the end of the week I will have to deliver a lesson, but that was about it.”* And David observed, *“It was fairly basic, turn up at the college, I didn’t really know what to face when I got there.”* It appears that in some instances the learners were not equipped with the necessary knowledge to enable them to begin to construct an idea of how they may learn within the course. As a result the students in this situation may not be supported in light of the needs of adult learners. As was alluded to in chapter 2 Illeris (2007) offers an alternative list of the characteristics of the late societal adults:

- Adults learn what they want to learn and what is meaningful for them to learn;
- Adults draw on the resources they already have in their learning;
- Adults take as much responsibility for their learning as they want to take (if they are allowed to); and

- Adults are not very inclined to engage in learning of which they cannot see the meaning or have any interest in.

Illeris (2007: 208)

By failing to ensure the learners have been sufficiently prepared by way of support may mean that they are less inclined to, for example, take responsibility for their learning (ibid.). This perceived lack of support may produce individuals who are less inclined to engage in learning. The reasons behind this attitude could be that if significant facts are not explained to them sufficiently or they cannot see the relevance of information offered, they may be less inclined to participate during the course.

Summary of Question 1

(What support was provided by the organisation? (MPS))

The data indicated that in general it was considered that little or no support had been received from the MPS. The pre-read could have assisted them by being more comprehensive. The use of emails produced various responses, some found them useful and others did not. Direct contact from the MPS representative was valued in terms of support; however this was not to be the norm. The availability of books was poor, rather than being available from the MPS library or the FE College's learning resource centre, the students were required to purchase them themselves. In general the students experienced

uncertainty in relation to their expectations of the course which appears to have been communicated poorly and unevenly.

Question 2. What support was provided by the college?

Without fail the respondents considered the support offered by the college was good, e.g. Melanie suggested “... *lots of support was offered by the college, yes they were fantastic; very, very good.*” Mita concurred observing they offered “*Very good support, they were superb.*” And Melanie suggested “*The College was fantastic I can’t fault them at all.*” What was it about the support that the respondents considered good? Responses to this question suggest that the accessibility of the staff may have been a contributory factor for example. Tony observed “... *they gave us the information the way they taught ... they were very dynamic they engaged the class, a lot of fun, handouts, access to the Moodle web site, any questions come and speak to them.*” It appears that the approach employed at the college engendered feelings of safety, for example John observed, “*If there was anything that you weren’t sure of or anything that perhaps wasn’t clear you could ask in the classroom environment or afterwards. In fact I chatted quite a bit before and after on the steps of the college, there was no sort of boundaries.*”

The respondents appeared to accept that they would require assistance with their study. This is analogous to the second step from the Steps of Competence (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010:16). Step two is that of ‘Conscious Incompetence’ where the student realise their shortcomings.

What appears to be the case here is that the support offered by the college, is suitable to support the student at a time that is arguably potentially vulnerable for the adult learner. The state of 'Conscious Incompetence' is a time when a student realises their inadequacies and will benefit from support. The support offered by the college continued after the taught element being made available during what was referred to as protected learning time, in which the students were given 30 hours paid study time. As Pryon observed, "*After we had finished the course there was a woman who was doing outreach via the phone, when you were in dark alleys [being lost] she was quite useful pointing [us] in the right direction...*" Further, the assistance offered by the college appears to have supported the motivation of some learners. For example, Pryon continues, "*...and another thing that was quite useful was you could submit an 'assessment' [assignment] and in two days you would get it back pointing you in the right direction. So that was good support, it was good feedback.*" Whether this is an example of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation is impossible to say, but the timeliness of the feedback offered may be a contributory factor in what Ormrod (1999:456) observes as people who are '*...more likely to pursue a task on their own initiative, keep their attention focussed on it, learn meaningfully and persist in the face of failure.*' Here the speedy feedback was considered to be a good thing. The speed of the feedback did not go unnoticed by other respondents, for example Abdul suggested, "*They were amazingly quick to respond. This was very useful and probably got me through the course to be honest.*" Again there may be a correlation between the efficiency of the college and the motivation of the students. It appears that the perception of the students in relation to the

support they experienced from the college was positive. This situation is contrary to the suggestion by Light, Cox and Calkins (2009:48) that teachers, ‘...frequently have a very limited idea of why students are failing to achieve.’ On this occasion it appears the teaching staff was aware of the needs of the students and provided excellent support.

Summary of Question 2. (What support was provided by the college?)

The data indicates that all students considered the support offered by the college to be good and this included:

- accessibility of staff
- appropriate teaching strategies
- access to Intranet site
- providing a safe learning environment
- motivational support
- timely feedback

Question 2a. What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?

Preparation

Many considered the information about the course, which took the form of the pre-joining packs could have been improved, David observed, “*The course syllabus would have been good, you know to tell me what we were doing on*

the course an overview of the course would be really helpful and to know that you are expected to produce a 20 minute lesson.” Some respondents appeared to require time to adjust to the idea of attending the course, here the joining instructions may assist, for example Rachel observed, *“I would have liked a better pack and I would have liked it before that Monday.”* And Melanie suggested *“I would like to know what we were going to be doing; that was a big problem for all of us.”* Both statements appear to indicate that these students required time to adjust or prepare for the act of learning. Again the needs of learners returning to study appear to have an influence upon their expectations. In this instance, not knowing exactly what to expect appears to engender feelings of the existence of ‘a problem.’

Again the return to learning (Rogers, 2007), may engender feelings of the inability to manage change where in this instance they were faced with delivering a 20 minute lesson, perhaps prior to the course they felt uncomfortable with the thought of delivering a micro-teach. Change here is to do with the change in behaviour and perhaps the ability to achieve the goal or to have sufficient time to prepare for the task, where Rachel stated that they had not been provided with the pack until the Monday of the course. The feeling of not being prepared could have included the anxiety of looking dim in front of peers, the feelings associated with the classroom from childhood experiences or challenges to their beliefs about learning (Rogers, 2007).

Time

Time was a theme about which all students commented. These issues consisted of travelling time, time to study and protected study time. Although the respondents were provided 30 hours protected study time, this was not always a viable option. For example, Tony remarked, *“I was given 30 hours by the organisation, but if I had taken that off then my work here would have suffered.”* It appears that many of the respondents attempted to complete the assignments within the duration of the course and because of this it appears that they subjected themselves to a certain amount of pressure. The ability to study within the duration of the course was influenced by the remaining availability of time for that study, as Mita observed, *“When you have been there all day and you have travelled back from London as well, I was not getting home until about sevenish so by the time you eat and get everybody sorted out for bed and any issues that have come up that need sorting out and probably I would start working again at about 9.30 – 9.45 so it was very late.”*

Some had not realised how much time would need to be allocated to study and consequently experienced feelings of shock, for some it appeared to make quite an impact, Tony commented that, *“... you are talking of writing off not just that week, you are taking no social life, no work life balance at all, for like five weeks.”*

The topic of the allocation of time was a moot point; it may be that the students will benefit from receiving more accurate information regarding how much time

should be allocated to this course. On the other hand, people work at various rates, so any advice may not apply to the students equally. However, it appears that in relation to considerations of the time it takes for the purpose of study, expectations can be managed more effectively. The issue of time may be representative of the presence of internal and external factors upon the causal perception which may influence motivation, which in turn could affect the way an individual interprets daily events and consequences; in this case the effect of time on their ability to complete their work. This is an example of a persons 'explanatory style' (Ormrod, 1999).

Expectations

It is clear that a gulf exists between the PTLLS course and the students' expectations of the PTLLS course. For example it was commented by Patrick that, *"I found it quite a bit of an eye opener because it is multi faceted isn't it, training and delivery and stuff and it gave us a whole load of things that lots of us probably hadn't taken account of."* The question that exists is what effect would a greater understanding of the process have upon the student's study skills prior to attending the course? It may be that the students would then be able to orient themselves, mentally to the process of learning in an academic arena. For example, some people appeared to worry about academic terms Pryon for example stated that *"I think maybe to have some of the course material before hand so the booklets they gave us that detailed the assignment, because I think if sometimes when you say assignment to people it doesn't register what that means."* Therein lays a difficulty where by

explaining the fact that the students were expected to write assignments may have increased the stress of those who had no knowledge of what an assignment entailed. However, it appears that the general perceptions of the students were that they would have preferred more information, e.g. When asked what would they would like to see in the pre study pack exactly Tracey suggested, *“Just more explanation of what was expected, what the assignments were all about.”* These sentiments appear to sum up the general wishes of the students, who desired more information prior to attending.

An academic study environment

The students' perception of writing at level 3 or 4 was that they were writing in an 'academic style.' It is acknowledged that this is arguably not the case, however, the style of writing within the PTLLS course differed significantly from that which many students had been used to. In keeping with the terminology employed by the students, allusions to writing assignments will be referred to as 'writing in an academic style'.

Learning to write in an academic style was a concern for many students, for example Pryon remarked that, *“I felt that not being an academic person, not having ever done academic writing before, I would have liked much more direct instructions.”* These instructions relate to the structure of writing in an academic style, it appears that the students recognised they would be required to adapt their writing style but in some cases were unaware of how to go about this, for example John observed, *“... it's all about how you phrase*

things and terminology and stuff isn't it. I hadn't done anything of this nature since... well not that I've ever done it because you never did academic writing, but the fact you are doing research and writing and stuff not since I was at school which was a long, long time ago and I just didn't feel that was really taken into account." This statement is analogous to what Illeris (2006: 38) regards as one of the three learning types between, 'cumulation, assimilation and accommodation'. This example, it is argued, is not cumulative learning where the individual is first introduced to a subject and where no mental scheme has been constructed because this individual expresses some idea of what academic writing entails; albeit in a very general manner. It is though in line with assimilative learning which adds to that which has gone before and develops the existing mental schemas. Here new learning is placed in existing schemas or frameworks (Newel- Jones and Lord, 2008, in Howkins, Bray and Barr, 2008). This is recognised as the every day form of learning and is sometimes referred to as additional learning where the learner makes changes to existing schemas.

A further issue is that of the andragogical / pedagogical approach to learning. Some of the students appeared to favour a more pedagogical approach for example Tracey asserted that, "*...it wasn't tailored for the Met, it was a national course and I don't think they know how we think and how we act in the training world or the Met world. We are used to being told, um right this is this, this is that...*" The key feature of this statement is that of 'being told ... this is it this is that.' When comparing this statement against the characteristics of social adults offered by Illeris (2007:208), he suggests that,

'Adults take as much responsibility for their learning as they want to take (if they are allowed to).' It would appear that little responsibility for learning is being taken here which is representative of a pedagogical approach to learning. In fact the respondent alludes to the cultural norms found within the MET observing, "*...it wasn't tailored for the Met, it was a national course and I don't think they know how we think and how we act in the training world or the Met world.*" What appears to be occurring is that on one hand the college are encouraging an andragogical approach to learning whereas, culturally Met (MPS) students are used to and have come to expect a pedagogical approach to teaching and learning.

Increased support from the MPS

Some were of the opinion that they would have liked more support from the MPS which included alluding to the amount of work that the course would entail and the fact that they would be expected to work into the evenings, for example Mita observed that "*... it would have given me a better informed decision around whether I even went on the course. So that kind of information about the work you were expected to produce and the fact that there would be a daily journal and the length of days etc would have been better.*" Mita appeared to want to be better informed, the reason for this could be that according to Illeris (2007: 208), 'Adults are not very inclined to engage in learning of which they cannot see the meaning or have any interest in.' An informed decision may have enabled this student to decide whether or not they wished to engage in the course.

Summary of Question 2a (What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?)

The data indicates that it was felt by some that the pre-joining packs could have been improved. Time was an issue for all students. They were provided 30 hours protected study time but not all were in a position to take advantage of this. As a result making the line managers aware of the available support in the form of protected study time, may increase support. Some students subjected themselves to pressure by attempting to complete the assignments during the course; they could be supported by being made aware of a more appropriate time scale for completion of the assignments. They could be further supported by being made aware of the intensity of the course. There is a need to manage expectations in relation to the demands of a PTLLS course. Advice in relation to writing an assignment was pertinent for many. Many of the students expected a pedagogical approach to teaching as opposed an andragogical approach experienced.

Topic 2 Study skills Support

Next, Topic 2 'study skills' support considered the perceptions of the students' learning needs in relation to study and the support that was received and which was directly relevant to their study needs. Next, they were asked if they considered this to be sufficient and, if not, what they would have liked.

“In relation to study skills, that is your ability to study in a more academic way and the support you were offered:

Question 3. What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?

Question 4. What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?

Question 5. Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course? If no:

Question 5a What additional support would you have liked?

Question 6. What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?”

Question 3. What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?

Engaging in Study

Overwhelmingly the students considered engaging in study to represent a learning need. For example Pete considered that, *“Probably for me it is being over 20 years of not being in the study environment, not in the classroom environment, not properly and not like externally credited type thing.”* It

appears the first step into the world of academia to be a particularly difficult one for example Pryon commented that *"I would like to have seen maybe a little bit of insight on how to prepare an assignment ... just knowing how to prepare one, how to start off, how maybe to set it out, where to get your information and where to include it in the assignment."* Renee observed *"... I didn't have an idea of what an assignment should look like because I haven't been involved in that side of things."* For some this caused them to worry as many had not written an assignment since their school days for example Tony commented that, *"It was the apprehension behind it and knowing what I am like as an academic and not having done any form of study since when I left school really."* The following responses are typical from John, *"I had never done assignments before,"* and Helen observed, *"Well again it's how to write essays."* *"...it was how to learn to write academically."* *"Well I hadn't written an essay since 1977."*

The ability to construct a coherent, well structured assignment represents a skill necessary to enable an individual to function at a more academic level. This corresponds to a learning need on behalf of the learner. Variations in the needs of learners occur as a result of the school they attended (or not), differences in class, ethnicity, opportunity, culture, gender, personality, cognitive style, learning style, attitude, ability, self efficacy and motivation, (Bedford and Wilson, 2006). Not all students experienced difficulty writing assignments, these included those who had recently studied academically, but these represented few within the group; a total of 4 who had worked at level 5.

Some of the skills which must be in existence in order for a student to achieve in academic study include reading, note making, ICT skills and essay writing. Support in any of these areas may be necessary to enable a learner to function academically. An analogy is drawn to the Steps of Competence (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010:16). The students who recognise shortcomings in their ability to write academically can be said to be at the second step, namely 'conscious incompetence'. Here, '... the person enrolls in a course such as PTLLS and realises that there may be more to study than simply recalling facts, (ibid.). Arguably, the distance from the first step, unconscious incompetence to the next, conscious incompetence is the greatest and the point at which a student experiences the most stress in the realisation that there is so much for them to achieve.

Study practices

The activity of study appeared to be problematic for some who were unused to finding their way in the more academic environment, for example Ajay wondered, "*We were thinking OK are we taking notes, what do we need to write? I think most people got confused with that and we spent most of the time, or a lot of the time, with people confused and asking questions.*" Again two issues are evident here. The first is the pedagogical approach to learning (Knowles, 1999, Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005, Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, Reece and Walker, 2007) where the responsibility for learning is considered to be the responsibility of the teacher, for example, "*...what do we need to write?*" Secondly if an individual is asking what notes

they need to make, this could be indicative of the lack of one or more of the essential skills, namely note taking skills; we cannot assume that students possess those essential skills.

(NB. Although these skills are considered within Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010), but are not listed as one definitive list and so any reference to the essential study skills should be considered as being adapted from Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010). The term 'essential skills' has emerged as a direct result of the analysis of the data.)

John appeared to experience difficulty in identifying how the lesson related to the assignments, for example, suggesting what they would like to hear was a more structured approach within an explanation observing the tutor could recap and state, "*Assessment 1 Roles and Boundaries, we have spoken about it today, you need to know, bonf, bonf, bonf, [makes chopping sign with hand] you know, this is what you need to put in, we have all ready discussed it, is everyone happy with it? This is what I would have liked at the end of each day to just reflect what we did that day and then exactly what assignments relates to that, from what you learned in that day.*" Again this is indicative of the desire for a pedagogical approach to learning. Further, no attempt was made to assess the students prior to attending the course and as a result it could be that there existed a mismatch between the learning style of some students and the teaching strategy of the lecturer.

The distinction between the students' experiences and theory was an issue, for example Robert suggested, "*The other thing was that you would come up*

with something from your own experience, which you would then read in a book and you would end up having to reference it because you didn't want to be accused of plagiarism." There appears some confusion between the need to relate phenomena to theory. Whereas some students felt that their own experiences alone were suitable for inclusion within an assignment, it was not always appreciated that it was necessary to support this, or link it with the relevant theory. Again, this is an essential skill necessary to write in an academic style (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010). Arguably with the lack of some essential skills some students may benefit from tuition in learning how to learn, as the data indicates a lack of some of the essential skills necessary to facilitate study.

On the other hand, some skills were catered for during the course for example citing and referencing was alluded to by Tony observing that, *"the academic side of things like referencing everything and making sure that you are either quoting properly or you are actually quoting in a certain way plus the actual format of how you reference as well was quite labour intensive to make sure you are recording everything in a certain way."* But in general issues of citing and referencing appeared not to be a significant learning need. This may be because the subject was taught well on the course, for example Tracey observed, *"...yea you have to reference where you got the information from and who it was. We were told all about that. I wouldn't have known about that unless they told me."* In one instance Renee observed, *"... when they said this essay has got to be 750 words I wrote the first one and it was 3,500 I*

thought OK I need to do something about cutting it down a bit.” Fortunately others did not express a similar problem.

Support in relation to study

Again it was the assignments that the students commented upon the most. Pryon appears to exhibit an element of insecurity when observing, *“I would like to have seen maybe a little bit of insight on how to prepare an assignment ... just knowing how to prepare one, how to start off, how maybe to set it out, where to get your information and where to include it in the assignment...”*

Essay writing represents one of the essential skills necessary for academic study (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010). There appears to exist very little knowledge in relation to writing an assignment, this could be representative of what Illeris (2006: 38) refers to as ‘cumulation. Cumulative learning takes place in a form of tabula rasa, where the individual is first introduced to a subject and where no mental scheme has been constructed and is associated with that of a child making sense of the world. The student obviously possessed the relevant knowledge but was unable to express themselves on paper due to a lack of knowledge and in particular having feelings of not being able to make a start. It appears that this is not a case of what Illeris (2007:208) describes as adults not being ‘...very inclined to engage in learning of which they cannot see the meaning or have any interest in.’ On the contrary, Pryon appears to be willing to write. What is preventing this is perhaps the inability to continue. It appears that Light, Cox and Calkins

(2009:48) observations of the five learning gaps may be pertinent here, however different factors come onto play. The gap which exists is that of 'understanding and ability'. This refers to the gap between understanding something and having the ability or skills to practice what is known effectively. However in this case although the individual understands something, they cannot practice what is known in terms of engaging in an assignment. The reason for this appears to be that a gap within another field is affecting this learning, namely the ability to write academically. Here the gap referred to is the first of the five, namely that between 'recall and understanding'. This is seen as the distinction between being able to regurgitate facts as opposed to understand and recreating those facts and ideas in terms of an individual's unique experience. The phenomenon which appears to exist here, is one learning gap creating another, the person is conversant in some related theory but is unable to express themselves due to their inability to write academically.

John felt that the tuition in relation to writing assignment was insufficient observing, "*I would have liked to have seen something from the college to say "Right we are going to ask you to do some assignments, does anybody know how to prepare or plan for an assignment? What you need to, how you are going to set it out, in chronological order and things like that and I would have liked to have seen that if ... yea."* For some it appears that guidance in relation to preparing and structuring an assignment would be appropriate. Again this points to the need to incorporate a base level of essential skills

(Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010) perhaps prior to engaging in the academic study.

Summary of Question 3 (What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?)

The data indicates that engaging in study was considered a learning need. Closely related to this was the perception that the act of study within a more academic learning environment was a problem for some. The assignments are an issue for many students who clearly require guidance in writing assignments in an academic style.

Question 4. What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?

Overwhelmingly the support from the mentor was valued considerably, a typical response was offered by Abdul who observed, *“If you had any problems if you didn’t understand the question the demands of the assignment themselves you could ask them. You could either email them or call them up either way present them with what your query is and they would look into it and get back to you and if you needed further you could set up the tutorial.”* The tutors were available on the telephone or via emails until 8pm each evening; this support was appreciated by many of the students. It appears that some students required guidance in relation to the pitch of their work, for example Tracey observed, *“I thought right I will write this one out*

now, see what happens I will send that in as a completed assignment and it came back as a pass and I was like oh, OK. So I have written that one I have got the idea of what to do." This act is analogous to the transition between conscious incompetence and conscious competence (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010). In this instance a student has made a conscious effort to gather feedback which could influence their motivation to continue to improve. A similar condition is offered by Fredenburg, et al (2001:3) in chapter 2, who suggest an important factor pertaining to motivation is the, 'learner's interpretation of his or her ability that has been linked to concrete achievements.' They relate this in terms of 'perceived competence, self-efficacy, perceived ability and self-perception of ability.' Clearly Tracey's individual's concrete achievements where that she felt that she had "*got the idea of what to do.*"

In some cases there appeared moments when the students faced a block, which was insurmountable, the existence of the tutor appeared very beneficial for Pryon who observed, "*So I went back and we thrashed it out for about an hour and a half. We sat down and she said right you have done this and that's fine, this is what you need to do and she said this is what I need to do.*" Q "*Did you find that useful?*" A "*Oh yes that was a great help.*"

Illeris (2006: 38) offers three learning types, 'cumulation, assimilation and accommodation'. It could be that this is an example of accommodative learning. Accommodative learning is the partial or whole restructuring of a schema in light of received knowledge. It is characterised by being a

relatively quick and radical process, where an individual reassesses their previous assumptions, however it must be noted that the individual can experience cognitive dissonance for some time before the aha moment. There is no reason why an individual cannot reassess their previous assumptions as a result of a conversation such as the one described above. Here the individual was completely stuck and unable to rely on their existing schema. A schema does not necessarily need to be a complicated phenomenon; in fact the existence of confusion in relation to one aspect of an idea can render a schema unusable. Here for example, once an explanation was received, it enabled the student to continue with their studies. Again issues of pedagogical approach to learning were evident during a discussion regarding the mentors, for example Tracey observed, "*They talked about references, well you know, how many, if this is a 500 word piece how many references are you looking for? Give us a clue!*" The need for guidance in this form is similar to the observation by Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005:117) that amongst a group of adults with whom they worked, the majority were 'dependent on teachers to teach them' and '... often experienced a form of shock when first exposed to truly adult educational programs.' As a result it was felt necessary to offer later entrants a form of learning how to learn activity. This lends itself to my assertion that before embarking on the PTLLS course, some students will benefit from learning the essential skills; further an element of this would be learning how to learn.

Embarking upon the work

In relation to embarking on the work some students appeared to find it difficult to take the first step and a few shared how they relied upon a relative or friend for guidance. For example Robert observed, *“I asked my wife ... for guidance on how I need to prepare really. Maybe to plan it out a little bit, so she told me what I needed to do and how I needed to do it. It was just basic stuff; first of all it was how do I start this off?”* Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010) identify an analogy between motivation to study and a journey, observing that the first step in a journey can be the most difficult. They suggest an obstruction to study on the part of students is an inclination to procrastinate observing the reason for not starting a task may differ from person to person but frequently the reasons can include:

- a lack of confidence
- low self esteem
- stress
- anxiety
- fear of the unknown
- not wanting to take responsibility
- lack of self belief
- too busy with other things

Often the inability or the unwillingness to make a start can be the combination of the above factors.

Taking responsibility for one's own learning appears to be a persisting issue, for example John stated, *"I got the information, it is just knowing how to prepare the assignment what do they need to see? Or be able to read and in what order and how do you set it... that was the main thing I found."* Q *"Is there anything you would have liked from them before you started putting pen to paper?"* A *"Yea, tell me how to do it. I know it's difficult because obviously everyone is different and your content and your thoughts are different..."* It sounds as though John lacked the confidence to actually engage in the assignment; if a person's self perception is poor this may have a direct affect upon the effort given to a task such as to study. How does an individual arrive at a particular self-perception? One possible answer is to be found in attribution theory which relates to 'causal perception' (Child, 1997). This relates to what an individual believes are the reasons for their success or failure and the effect this then has on their future expectations. Any previous experiences may have an influence on an individual's perception of their ability or willingness to engage in a task. Any study skills support may not be in a position to identify the underlying reasons for a student's belief in their ability, in fact the student may not be aware of these factors themselves.

Summary of Question 4 (What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?)

The data indicate that the mentor was highly valued by the majority of students due to their availability either responding to e-mails or via the telephone. The need for a didactic, pedagogical approach was mooted

identifying a mismatch in expectations between the students and the college. Some found the first steps difficult and required assistance to actually get started in relation to the assignments. It appears that the first steps are the most difficult and demanding for some.

Question 5. Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course?

The majority of students considered the support sufficient to help them complete the course. Within those positive replies a number of themes emerged. For example feedback was referred to by Mita in terms of, *“immediate and constant feedback throughout each stage which reinforced my belief in my own ability.”* The other responses were more disparate including the structure of the course, the ability to apply for an extension and the use of tutorials.

Of those who did not consider the support to be sufficient cited the time in which feedback was received, for example Pete observed, *“I think they were a little bit slow at the start returning some of the documentation when we had written something, I had already written the next one before I got the previous one back.”* This was not a common complaint however, but does serve to highlight the issue of expectations and highlights the importance of managing expectations. Arguably expectations can only be managed if they have first been identified, perhaps this issue could be dealt with by stating what could and could not be expected from the college.

One student, David, felt that the course was too intense, observing, “*In all honesty they was trying to put too much into one week. I think it was almost like [makes swish sound and points backwards over head] Because not only, you’ll be aware that not only did you have to write your assessment [assignment] you had to write your journals as well and it was almost where do I start?*” An element of pressure was also evident from David, but the existence of pressure was a common theme. The nature of the work load could be discussed with the students at the start of the course or be contained within the joining instructions.

Summary of Question 5. (Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course?)

The data indicate that support was considered sufficient by the majority of students. Although the majority considered the feedback to be very good, one observed the college to be slow. Another considered the course to be too intense. Again, managing expectations appears to be a significant feature in relation to these two previous observations.

Question 5a. What additional support would you have liked?

The responses to this question were quite varied, for example, they included being valued by the MPS for their achievements, support with returning to study and the college providing an overview of the course. Many observed the intensity of the course but did not state what support they would have

liked in response to this. Some felt that they would have liked further guidance in relation to writing an assignment. It appears that guidance was available electronically via the Moodle and in one case it was suggested by Abdul that, *“Had I known the purpose of the Moodle, the fact the marking sheets were there and the benefits I would have derived, it would have been more beneficial.”* It appears that a supporting mechanism was available, but this fact was not adequately shared with the students on this occasion or that the students had forgotten or not understood the explanation provided.

Support was interpreted in some instances in terms of teaching styles in one case, the style of teaching did not always concur with this student’s expectations where Rachel observed *“It was all kind of a bit airy fairy and very touchy feely. One instance I was not clear on this certain issue so I then said can you give us an example and the response was, Yes discuss that, and I’m like no I want you to tell me the answer because I’m trying to think it through and I can’t get to the answer, so tell me the answer. [...] So there’s a bit, for me, just be clear about what you want me to do and you know I’m fine with that. Don’t be asking me to think outside the box and all the rest of it, just tell me, this is what we want you to do and this is how we want you to do it. To me it would have been, much easier.”* Again there appeared a mismatch in relation to some of the students’ wishes to be taught via a pedagogical approach when they received an andragogical approach. Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005) offered the ‘core andragogical principles’, namely:

1. the learner’s need to know

2. self directed learning
3. prior experiences of the learner
4. readiness to learn
5. orientation to learning and problem solving
6. motivation to learn

Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005:183)

Comparing these to the above statement, it appears that as in 1, the learner did appear to want to know, in 2 they were not self directed and in comparison to 5 there was no orientation to problem solving. In some cases, for example from Rachel (op cit) a pedagogical approach to the teaching / learning process was demanded.

The amount of additional support considered necessary was linked to the perceived ability of the lecturer, for example Patrick observed, *“This is difficult because there were different instructors some of whom were better than others. Some lessons I would have said the support and the teaching was absolutely fine. Then on other lessons I would have said I came out more confused than when I went in.”*

Not all students considered that they required additional support for example Helen suggested, *“From the college... this is probably the first foray for a long, long time outside the Met and I thought they were really, really good in the support that they gave, I thought they were very open very accessible, so I don't think there was anything additional really.”*

However the majority of students highlighted time as being an issue, the problem appeared to be the fact they were given a five day course, which included the micro teaches on the last day and then being asked to complete the reflective practice journal and prepare for the micro teaches concurrently. Following the contact learning hours, the students were given 30 hours protected study time in which to complete the assignments. One discussion in relation to the various options available included the observation from Ajay who suggested, *“I don’t think doing it over five weeks for a day is a good use of our time as police officers, because, A, it is over five weeks so you are elongating the amount of time you can actually officially train people. B, because it gives you a week to do 2 essays which, that is not necessarily what I am talking about, I am not saying that you need a week to do two essays, if you can’t write a bloody essay in a couple of days then there is something seriously really wrong. It is when you put your day job into the mix that is when it becomes very, very difficult....”* Keeping the duration of the course for five days was clearly though beneficial in this instance due to the fact that demands of the police work could interfere with the study.

Further the protected study time was appreciated by the students for example Tony was asked, Q *“The 30 hours protected time, how was that for you?”* A, *“... the 30 hours was still excellent I mean the fact that the job were offering 30 hours was amazing. I don’t know if you would get any more to be honest to you.”*

Summary of Question 5a (What additional support would you have liked?)

Varied responses included being valued by the MPS, support returning to study by being provided an overview of the course, and further guidance in relation to writing as assignment. Time and the availability of protected time was again an issue.

Question 6. What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?

Securing the protected study time and ensuring the MPS line managers were aware of this benefit was a consideration for some. Time was again an issue; generally the students recognised that they had to work hard to keep to the imposed deadline for completion of the assignment. Renee observed that *“...the allocation of time needs to be looked at that month after the course is really tight ... particularly for people who were on earlies, lates and nights.”* Perhaps the deadline could be negotiated with individual students in an attempt to identify mutually acceptable hand in dates.

Preparing the students

One popular consideration was that of the MPS adequately preparing the students for the course, a typical response was offered by John who suggested, *“Let them know exactly what is required on this course is a good start, way before. They need to be told it is full days, the kind of topics that*

are going to be dealing in ... and the essays that you need to do and is there any kind of literature you can look at before so you can at least start getting your mind in the groove before you start doing that." Rachel mirrored these sentiments and added, *"I think its just about preparing people and I think like it was an amazing opportunity to be given, you know my Mum's a teacher and a couple of my friends are teachers so when I told them I was going on this course, they were all like bloody hell."* The request for the students to be adequately prepared for the course may stem from the characteristics of adults identified by Illeris (2007), who suggests that:

- Adults learn what they want to learn and what is meaningful for them to learn;
- Adults draw on the resources they already have in their learning;
- Adults take as much responsibility for their learning as they want to take (if they are allowed to); and
- Adults are not very inclined to engage in learning of which they cannot see the meaning or have any interest in

Illeris (2007:208)

If the students are not informed in relation to the nature, content and style of the course then they cannot identify what about the course is 'meaningful to them.' (ibid.). Further, if, as Illeris asserts, 'Adults are not very inclined to engage in learning of which they cannot see the meaning or have any interest in' and they have been given no opportunity to consider these issues, then it appears unlikely that the students will engage in the learning in an

andragogical manner. If on the other hand they are told to attend the course having not been given the opportunity to buy into that course by virtue of lack of information, then it is possible that a pedagogical approach to the learning could result.

Here the topic of pedagogy and andragogy is considered further. It would appear to represent a stumbling block for many students, for example Rachel observed, *“So I am saying this to her and she just said, well what do you think it means? I just said to her, no that is why I am asking you to give me an example so I know where to go with this and she said what do you think it means and that was it I was just like humph, fine, obviously I am not going to learn a thing in this class.”* In this instance the justification for the behaviour was described as being cultural coupled with an acknowledgement of the need for policing students to be tolerant, *“With strong groups you are going to have to have strong teachers, who are able to deal with that and also we need to understand that outside of the police service it is much more relaxed and flowing than perhaps we are used to.”*(Rachel). However that justification suggests an unwillingness to change position on the part of the student and to consider an alternative, andragogical position. Can the change be engendered? Should it be engendered or occur naturally as the result of a change in attitude? These appear to be areas for further research being out of the remit of this study.

Information Technology

Pete did not own a computer. Q, *“Do you have a computer at home?”* A *“No, I needed to go into work for that reason. It would possibly have been useful to have a computer at home I pass the station on the way home and it was just a case of getting off the tube and calling in...”* However this issue was compounded by the fact that the college issued memory sticks to the students containing the necessary guidance and forms. Pete, who had no computer at home, was unable to use the memory stick in the MPS computer because MPS policy is not to accept memory sticks in order to protect the computer system; data can only be entered via a down load which is guarded by a secure firewall. Pete did manage to get around this problem, Q, *“They gave you a memory stick which you would not have been able to use is that correct?”* *“I think a colleague used it at his home to put some slides on for me for the lesson that we... yeah.”*

The function of preparing the students for the course via the MPS internet was also considered a useful idea. For example Mita suggested that, *“Maybe just having that reference material available on the Intranet even, something you can go to and say right I need to ... here is an example of... OK this is how you structure it; this is how you start it. Here the act of actually commencing an assignment appears to be an issue for some.* For example, Pryon observed, *‘Cos it is that staring at that blank piece of paper in the first instance. Have an example and then a few key points around, suggestions for structure headings that sort of thing....’* It appears that the first step in

writing can be the most difficult function for some. Perhaps seeing an example of another's work or a set example may enable imitation, this at least would provide some structure upon which later writing and ideas may flourish.

Summary of Question 6 (What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?)

The data indicates that securing protected study time was again an issue. Likewise an issue of time was again cited as a concern. It was considered that the MPS should prepare the students adequately to enable them to participate in the course. A mismatch in expectations existed in terms of andragogical and pedagogical approaches to education, where on the one hand the college favoured an andragogical approach and the students a pedagogical approach. Issues existed in relation to the use of ICT but these were minor and related to the possession of a computer and the use and protection of the MPS intranet site. Lastly the issue of embarking on written work was considered and incidents of students feeling unable or unwilling to engage in an assignment were discussed.

Topic 3 Reflective Practice

Next, the topic of reflective practice was considered where the students were asked if, following the PTLLS course, they continued to use reflective practice and whether they had learned from experience. The associated questions considered whether they were able to use reflective practice in the

development of their teaching and the difficulties they may have experienced in acting on their reflections.

“During the course of your PTLLS course you were introduced to the notion of reflective practice.

Question 7. Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?

Question 7a. Have you learned from experience?

Question 8. How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your teaching?

Question 8a What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?”

Question 7. Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?

The use of Reflective Practice following the course

Three distinct groups were evident, those who considered that they used Reflective Practice (RP), those who thought they did on certain occasions and one who did not. A typical response from John, who did use RP explained, “/

enjoyed the reflection because it was good practice, it was recounting. It's almost like being back on the streets because you do it with your IRBs, [Incident Report Books] an incident happens and then you reflect and then you learn from that. I am running a course next week and because it's police we haven't really got that opportunity to reflect ... yeah I'd like to see that more introduced, I thought it was good ... I have just done 4 new lessons that I have certainly sat and reflected upon. Q, Do you record it? A, No, it's all stored up here [points at head]."

Some students were unaware of the terminology prior to the PTLLS course for example Pete observed, *"Yea I think I do actually. I probably used it before but I never actually realised what it was called, basically you learn by your mistakes. You look at the way you have done something and try and improve it. But it does help with stuff."*

Of those who claimed to use RP in certain circumstances, Robert was asked, *"On your way home on the train, do you think about how your lesson had gone? In response he/she suggested "Yes, you go "gaw I wish, I think oh, I wish I had put that in" or "I missed that"* It appears that none of Robert's thoughts or musings were recorded.

In fact the data suggests that without fail, no one recorded their thoughts. For example Helen observed, *"I use it but not to the point that it has been used. I don't sit there and write a journal of what I have learned, what I have done, because to be honest with you that would be totally tedious and not relevant."*

Well it isn't to be honest, however when I do training or when I am doing a presentation I will say to the people afterwards, is there anything I could have taught better, is there anything that you need and then if there is I will incorporate that if I think it is relevant". Q "What about thinking about how you have done?" A "I do that as well, and if there is something that needs changing, I will change it, but I don't write journals on it, no." The failure to record the RP was mirrored by other students, for example Renee observed, *"I don't sit there and write a journal of what I have learned, ... and "If there is something that needs changing, I will change it, but I don't write journals on it, no."*

The phenomenon appears to be that the students were willing to conduct a form of what they thought was reflective practice but only to a point and as such it is debateable whether what they were doing was in fact conducting reflective practice at all. What they were doing represents what was referred to in Chapter 2 as a "common sense view" of reflection offered by Moon (2004:82). This is indicative of employing the everyday meaning of the verb to reflect. She sees common sense reflecting as being '... akin to thinking but with more added to this' (ibid.); here she is referring to the thoughts that occur during day-to-day living. An example of this reflection takes the form of a description of what happened, what was done and what others did in response etc. What distinguishes this form of reflection, employed by the students, is that it lacks the element of directed learning from the experience and as a result may be vague due to the inherent lack of structure. In order

for reflection to be of a practical use for a student a clear link has to be made from the past to the future, this appears not to be the case in these instances.

The use of Reflective Practice during the PTTLS course

In relation to the use of the learning journal during the course the general views were that it was a relatively new concept, for example David observed, *“I did record it on the reflective journal that was part of the course and when I am doing structured learning or teaching I would certainly be doing that as part of my lesson planning. I think it is important to use it to learn but it is something I still need to get used to. Going back to when I was at school, you are not encouraged to have reflective learning it is something that was totally alien to me.”*

This individual appears to have fully embraced the notion of reflective practice postulated by Kolb (1984) who introduced the four-stage model of learning. Here Kolb refers to, 'Concrete Experience' (Doing it), 'Reflective Observation' (Reflecting on it), 'Abstract Conceptualisation' (Reading up on it) and 'Active Experimentation' (Planning the next stage). It is only when all four stages are completed that reflective practice can be claimed to have taken place, as Reece and Walker (2000:531) point out that once started the cycle should be completed. This model can be very useful for people who are new to teaching. The reason for this is that it is clear, unambiguous and follows a logical progression.

Abdul reported that its usefulness depended on the approach one adopted suggesting it, “... was just left and left and left to the last minute and then you can’t remember what you have done.” Tony, when asked if it made a difference recording the journal stated, “No not really. It was just something else to do. It was more like a diary. To be fair it was semi explained, write down what you achieved, what you got out of it. ... But to be honest, what you tended to be filling in was very generic, “I will learn to be more aware of legislation, and what ever else.””

Perhaps the process of completing the learning journal would benefit from a more prescriptive approach; this would after all benefit those students who preferred a pedagogical approach to learning. To this end the Gibbs (1988) reflective cycle is fairly self-explanatory and it encourages reflective practice by asking questions at six stages as shown below:

1	Description	A description of the situation or event
2	Feelings	The feelings of the participant are considered
3	Evaluation	It evaluates the experience by considering what was good and bad about the experience
4	Analysis	Analysis is employed to make sense of the experience and to state what was learned about the event
5	Conclusion	Considers what you could have done differently or in addition

6	Action Plan	If it were to happen again what would you do?
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Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009: 8)

Table 13 Gibbs six stages of reflective practice

Impact of reflective practice upon teaching practice

Melanie recounted an insight in her reflective practice where it had impacted upon her own teaching stating, *“One of the first things I did when I finished the course was I went back and looked at our team and the training that we deliver and I really thought about what we have a tendency to do on our team is. Like one of the things that really hit home on the PTLLS course was the difference between delivering a presentation and teaching. And I realised that what I had been doing was delivering a presentation. Did I know that it had gone in? Did I know that anyone had learned anything? Not really, probably not. So I remember going back and having a look at all the courses that we tend to deliver and you know a lot of them we don’t have lesson plans or schemes of work so it was about thinking, in some ways going back to basics and thinking about what is it that we are aiming to teach? How can we do that better? How can we knowledge check what people have learned? So how can we change what we have got on our team.”* This is indicative of how reflection has benefitted practice and will, as a result of the willingness to embrace change will hopefully improve the style and method of teaching within one

MPS department. One pattern of thought that emerged during the interview was for some of the students to change their minds in mid flow in relation to thinking about RP. When asked if he used reflective practice Robert replied, *“I don’t really no. Well, saying that I do yea” and “I don’t think I, ... well I do, as in how I went, how I delivered the day, I do that after every time I deliver. Yea, I don’t write anything down, I do go through it.”* It was as if until that point they had not realised that they were conducting some form of RP.

Summary of Question 7. (Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?)

The data reveals that three groups were identified, those who regularly used Reflective Practice (RP), those who used it on occasion and one who did not. Many appeared to have engaged in RP had not been aware of the term. No one recorded their reflections following the course. During the course all students engaged in some form of RP but perceptions of its value were varied. A clear link to RP and practice was evident in one instance, however in general students were willing to think about their teaching, but whether this actually amounted to RP as identified by Kolb (1984) is debatable.

Question 7a. Have you learned from experience?

This question was interpreted in various ways and mostly it appears the question was understood as, ‘Did you learn from the experience of this course, as opposed to learning from an experience in relation to reflective

practice. In fact this misinterpretation did not present a problem as the course can be considered an experience.

Those relating the question to the experience of the course

The PTLLS course did offer many experiences on which to reflect, for example Rachel observed *“But when you go on the course you realise that there is a lot more to it than you maybe initially thought so you reflect back and think even though that came out well, I probably could have improved it by doing this and that.”* And, *“I am more aware of the different teaching methods and try to incorporate the different learning styles into my presentations.”* Abdul left it rather late to complete the reflective journal, Q, *“Was that learning journal useful?”* A, *“No”* Q, *“Was that because you left it too late as you mentioned previously?”* A, *“Yes, it my fault entirely and if I had thought about it, if I had known how important it was at the very beginning, this perhaps goes back to having a web site, is to emphasise how important it is to do it at the time perhaps or get rid of it. But it is to make people aware that, look don’t leave it to the last minute you need to do it.”* Preventing procrastination on the part of the students may not be possible to achieve. However in relation to study skills support, perhaps a warning could be given in relation to the failure to keep the learning log fully up to date on a regular basis.

Those relating the question to reflective practice

Amongst those who interpreted the question as relating to reflective practice, which was just under half of the group, Pete suggested, “*Yea, definitely, having done it. I’m like, I wouldn’t do that again and I would do that better.*” And Mita observed, “*Yea definitely, but I don’t think that’s necessarily just PTLLS, I think you should learn from your own experiences anyway and the roles that you do.*” Helen mused about the practice as, “*...being able to look at myself and what I’ve done and how I could do things better a bit of self reflection I suppose.*”

Others obviously did not find the concept a new experience, for example Ajay observed “*I think we do that anyway, in training you reflect on the day and when you are working somewhere else.*” The course does appear to have introduced some to the concept of RP, observing of the course Renee suggested that, “*... when you go on the course you realise that there is a lot more to it than you maybe initially thought so you reflect back and think even though that came out well, I probably could have improved it by doing this and that.*” John considered, “*The term reflective practice, I think is quite new but to be fair I think we do it every day don’t we. Because even in everyday situations, a row for example, you go back and you know, aw I shouldn’t have said that, or maybe I should have done this instead of doing that. So it’s something that you do everyday any way, the term reflective practice just puts a title on it. Yea, how did it go, what would I do differently next time? Good bits bad bits but I think we do that any way.*”

Analysis of the above data suggests a positive attitude towards the concept of reflective practice and although none of the students kept a record of their subsequent reflective practice following the course. (This question drew some students' thoughts back to the PTLLS course and so this analysis reflects this by including the analysis of the response in relation to its position within the interviews.)

For some during the course record keeping appeared useful, however this took the form of notes during the lesson to inform subsequent reflective practice, for example, Tracey noted, "*I made copious notes during the lectures and the sessions that we did, which enabled me when I did come to do the reflective journals, that was one element of the portfolio you had to produce... that did actually enable me to write them down and then go oow yea we did.. oow yea I remember that now and there were things in there that you were sort of blinded by the information probably. It is good practice to go back over what you have done ...*" Although this student appeared to value the notes at the time, she has not considered keeping a record of her own reflective practice following the course. As considered within Chapter 2, reflective practice is all about thinking about an experience with a view to gaining an improved understanding of that experience, and involves an ordered, systematic and documented approach with a view to gaining self-improvement. The principal reason for using reflective practice is to improve performance. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) advocate that it is by reflection and analysis that the learner attempts to understand an experience. Further to this, it is the documentation, the recording of the reflection that affords the

mind the opportunity to both focus upon the subject and to release thoughts as the process of thinking is freed to the time of the pen (or the speed of the fingers over the key board). The writing enables insight into the phenomenon.

Summary of Question 7a (Have you learned from experience?)

The perceptions of roughly half of the students were that they learned from the use of Reflective Practice. Some did not find the concept a new experience and exhibited a positive attitude towards the subject and relating it to their everyday activity of thinking about situations. It appeared that some records of RP took the form of an account of the content of the lesson. Few appeared to fully embrace the concept of reflective practice as advocated by Kolb or Gibbs.

Question 8. How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your training?

Correlation to teaching practice

Some of the students appear to have reflected upon their teaching practice, bringing about a change in the way in which they delivered a lesson, For example John observes, *“Now my normal technique would have been, “Look you lot, get a grip, this is a [describes how the students would have been chastised]. Now in reality that didn’t happen and what we did was I managed to take that [‘that’ being the results of reflective practice] back into the*

*classroom and through photographs which we had taken we were able to show them how we wanted it done and what they were doing... and the reality is it was a better way of debriefing. I felt I had more control. Instead of saying look you are a bunch of **** ***** it was a better way of dealing with it.”*

It appears that this may be synonymous with Brookfield's (1995) theory where he identified the importance of researching critically what teachers do. He argued that “critically reflective teaching happens when we identify and scrutinize the assumptions that undergird how we work” (1995: xii). Brookfield offers, four ‘critical lenses’ through which a teacher can consider their practice:

1. the point of view of the teacher self;
2. the point of view of our learners;
3. the point of view of our colleagues;
4. the point of view of theories and literature.

Brookfield (1995: xii)

It would appear from the account of John above that the first two lenses have been considered, that of the teacher and the learners.

Another example of considering things from the perspective of another is offered by a Pete who described how reflective practice informed the development of new lessons observing, (Example A) *“What we do is when there is a new round of training I will get someone to sit in, or I will sit in on their teaching and we will tweak it that way. It is not always formalised and*

we say, *“How do you think that went, was it too long, too involved?” We don’t formalise it I guess although we have lesson plans I guess we should fill it out on the lesson plan.*” Again this appears to mirror Brookfield’s critical lens theory, but on this occasion the perspective is offered by peer review representing Brookfield’s third critical lens. This was not the only example of involving colleagues in feedback for example, Melanie observed how reflective practice had informed her own practice and in turn her peers, e.g., (Example B) *“As in I would have before, I would have just stood up there and spoke at people, but now I’m thinking, I could break people up into group work, how can I deliver things better, if I was sitting in the audience, (you see audience is the wrong term it should be class), if they were listening to me, what would I do to make things better. And also working with my peers as well and trying to get them around to the way of thinking that it’s not just about giving presentations.”* Involving peers was considered by Abdul offering, (Example C) *“I think the other thing which amongst the instructors is that if you reflect on something you think I wonder how I can do that a bit better, it is by speaking to other instructors as well.”*

Another example relates to a move away from a didactic style of teaching towards a more student centred style of teaching for example Robert who observes (Example D) *“So I am hoping that we have changed our training styles slightly in the unit. We make it a bit more ... it’s not a powerpoint presentation all the time you know we do other things, we get people up and they do stuff. I think that because although not every one learns in the same way we try to encompass everything so people have a bit of hands on a bit of*

writing and reading and we do everything really and it has all changed and we are getting some very good feedback from people who say God, I thought it was going to be really boring and 8 hour training session but, you have surprised us. For example you can teach searching with just a powerpoint can't you, this is the legislation, we demonstrate searching we get them to do searching we build a room down stairs where they search a room we have a vehicle where they actually search a vehicle, so they are actually getting up and we are showing them legislation we are telling them all about that and then putting it into practice, but not by just sitting there. They are getting up; they are going down stairs they are searching. They are searching each other. They are looking for cream eggs down stairs in the basement. That's what we put down. As soon as you find an object and then that's you finished and the next person can take over. And we have got, the trainers are quite young and they have some really good ideas and we try to encompass their ideas about how training should be."

The above example alludes to Brookfield's fourth lens which appears to be viewed from the point of view of theories and literature. Although no theory is alluded to specifically the comment, "...*although not every one learns in the same way we try to encompass everything so people have a bit of hands on a bit of writing and reading and we do everything really*" alludes to the need to vary the methods of teaching to suit the needs of the students' learning styles.

This change of approach reflecting Brookfield's fourth lens is not a lone example Helen observes that, (Example E) "*To be fair, it has effected the*

presentations I have done since the course, there is more awareness about the different kinds of learner, so rather than just standing up and presenting, there is more sort of understanding of the kinaesthetic learning and that side of it so. So things like I actually picked up upon during the course and used in the training delivery at the end of the course have now moved on to, ... the method of training. Basically my presentation has moved away from standing up and talking and pointing at PowerPoints to more involvement from the students. It is more to do with introducing a concept, and right so “what are the key things that we are looking for when we are doing this or what are the considerations around this? When you talk about the Lockhart’s principle and the cross contamination issues, something I did on the course that worked very well was to get students to move about in their seats and then point out that actually you have left a trace there on that seat, but you are now sitting in that seat, but I can tell you from forensics that you were sitting in that seat, but not only that, you now move over to there and you move to that seat and although you in that seat, who have never been in that seat, you could well have fibres from that seat on the back of your jacket. So it is getting them to move about and it is a more involved way of learning. It definitely, so it had moved from rows of people falling asleep in the classroom to a bit of involvement.”

Reflection – the planning stage

Reflective practice was evident in what Kolb described as the planning stage, for example Pete noted, (Example F) “*Even yesterday to today something*

happened on the course they were running yesterday, which means it was re-structured and turned around.” David suggested that, (Example G) “During the course between the Monday and the Friday I went through the stuff and I got paper copies of the overheads that we would be using so I had the chance to practice in a sense what I would be delivering to them. So on my idiot guide I noted down when we were talking about [Technical data] to draw their attention to this and stuff like that. So I guess that would be some form of reflection and preparation.”

Tony observed, (Example H) *“A part of my portfolio is responsibility for the experts and the training of those experts around assessing which is analysing those trainees that are coming through, their technical skills the way they articulate those technical skills so I run panels for people to come and present what they have produced and they have to produce as well fifteen of these assessments that they do over three years and I allocate each one of the trainees an assessor who is an expert and I monitor what goes on with those so I deliver the training up front on both sides and monitor those and do the panels and get other people involved in doing the panels so we have a real knowledge spread in there of what is expected and so everybody knows the standards of what is expected as well.”*

There exists a number of qualities of reflection that distinguish reflective practice from common sense reflecting (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, 2009), these include:

- The use of the reflective practice cycle
- Analytical writing
- Links to previous considerations
- May be recorded formally
- Generally a solitary process but ideas may be shared with others
- It is developmental mainly personal development
- It is often aspirational in nature
- It makes clear links to professional practice
- It employs the use of an action plan

Examples A to H were examined for inclusion of these characteristics:

Characteristic	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
The use of the reflective practice cycle								
Analytical writing								
Links to previous considerations		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
May be recorded formally								
Generally a solitary process but ideas may be shared with others	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
It is developmental mainly personal development		X	X		X	X	X	X
It is often aspirational in nature	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
It makes clear links to professional practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
It employs the use of an action plan						X	X	X

Table 14 (Above) Matrix indicating trends in reflective practice among the students

The examples were chosen on the basis that these students were generally the more vocal and as a result analysis was possible from the quantity and quality of the data. Generally the shorter responses were not suitable for analysis in the form of a matrix such as this or their answers were not suitable for analysis in relation to the characteristics listed above. Some shorter statements have been included as they indicate the existence of certain phenomena within this study.

The above matrix contains with a caveat that it is recognised that this data represents a very generalised picture from a selection of respondents. However, it is considered useful to observe distinct trends. What can be seen at a glance is that none of the selected examples stated they employed the use of the reflective practice cycle (Kolb, 1984). It appears that a part of the cycle has been utilised namely, Concrete Experience, (Doing it), followed by Reflective Observation (Reflecting on it), the following stage of 'Abstract Conceptualisation' (Reading up on it) appears to have been missed completely and lastly, Active Experimentation' (Planning the next stage) is considered. However what is missing from the Reflective Observation is any attempt to record the reflections; this is further ignored at the stage of Active Experimentation where apparently there exists no action plan for most students; a few though (3) did suggest they planned within their reflective practice.

On the other hand, consideration of the selected data suggests that the majority appeared to make links to previous considerations, which would be expected if they were attempting to improve their own practice. All shared their ideas but this could be due to the fact that some of these ideas occurred as a result of the PTLLS course attended, for example Abdul observed, "*To be fair, it [The PTLLS course has] effected the presentations I have done since the course.*" Most considered their personal development as a part of the reflective practice. All aspired to improve their teaching practice and made clear links to their professional practice.

Reflection in action

There existed practices during which reflection in action appeared to be evident, for example Melanie observed, "*Your presentations evolve and develop according to the reactions and responses of your audience, during and afterwards.*" This approach to reflection was introduced by Schön (1983). Schön referred to two forms of reflective practice, "Reflection-in-action and "Reflection-on-action." Reflection-in-action" refers to a person who is required to think on their feet as they perhaps discover what they are doing is not working as well as they had hoped. Whereas reflection-on-action relates to the organised thoughts experienced after an event. Another allusion to reflection-in-action was offered by David suggesting, "*I suppose the reflection of that is that as the course is going on, we are talking about it and he is letting me take on a hands on role within it and he takes a step back and I take the lead in the practicals and I explain things to the students. With the*

last one it involved using the power point obviously dealing with the handouts and everything.”

Those able to employ reflective practice in their own teaching

Some students valued reflective practice as a learning tool and were able to introduce it into their own lessons, for example John observes, *“The courses we run, I am not going to get them to write an assignment on it. But I may get them to a feedback or a reflectiveness on that ... Especially in some parts of [the world] we do train the trainer courses. We give them all the property, all the handouts and it’s up to them then.”*

Robert appeared to be motivated to do better by incorporating the use of reflective practice observing, *“Reflective practice does make you think. It’s all about succession planning. I don’t imagine a teacher ever gets up in the morning and thinks, oh I can’t be arsed. The teacher gets up and thinks I want to change somebody’s life or give them a thought, so I think in that respect it’s important. What motivates me I think is to make things better I suppose.”*

Kolb (1984:4), approached experiential learning by, “... pursuing a framework for examining and strengthening the critical linkages among education, work and personal development.” He recognised the importance of identifying the link between “... the workplace as a learning environment that can enhance and supplement formal education and can foster personal development

through meaningful work and career development opportunities” (ibid.). All three areas benefit by careful thought given to experiential learning. Pete suggests how he employs the use of experiential learning within the classroom with the use of role plays, *“But again it is to do with making it a story, making it interesting for them, because at the end of the day they may not like role plays, but they are still sponges they love learning so that in a way makes it so much easier for yourself”*

Summary of Question 8. (How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your teaching?)

A correlation was made by some between Reflective Practice (RP) and students’ teaching practice. In some instances students have changed their approach to training as a result of RP. RP was evident in the re-design of lessons where change was deemed necessary. A matrix indicated that without exception no students employed the use of the full reflective practice cycle (Kolb 1984). Conversely there was a general desire to improve teaching practice. Reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) was evident. Reflective practice was introduced by some into their own courses.

Question 8a. What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?

Although five respondents suggested they had experienced no difficulties in acting on their reflections, the responses to this question were very diverse.

Unable to make changes

Some courses delivered within the MPS were described as being mandatory, where all members of certain groups within the MPS were expected to attend the training. These mandatory courses and others were also described as being corporate, where the training packages were designed by the MPS specifically for certain groups. Neither were considered suitable for change in any way. It appeared that elements of mandatory training can cause problems for the trainer, where the material is prescriptive. For example Mita observed *“Let’s say you have a very difficult group, some of them are just horrendous, they don’t want to be there and it’s how you deal with them and then afterwards when you come out and you think did I get that right? Did they learn anything? They think gaw it’s mandatory training I don’t want to be here it’s boring it is not going to be interesting.”*

Corporate packages appeared to cause a similar dilemma to mandatory courses where Ajay found himself in a position where he observed, *“...I will eventually be doing ELS ... there is not a lot I will be able to change to be honest with you, it’s a corporate package and it has to be dealt with that way. But maybe the way I pitch that eventually might be different.”* In this example, external factors prevented him from making changes to his teaching practice. Similarly Pete offered, *“We are corporate so we all do the same thing so it doesn’t matter if I decide tomorrow to take annual leave, another instructor will know where I left off and will carry on exactly the same and will deliver exactly the same lesson in exactly the same way and use the same practices.”* The

reasons for this are that, *“... if it is a corporate package you can't really change it. You start changing things you are going to end up in court to say why you changed it.”* Health and safety issues are also a consideration where Ajay observed, *“The taser course has to be taught in a certain way as it is a national course, we'll follow a certain pattern, so that every instructor stands up and teaches it exactly the same, it's the same package because that's exactly how they want it. [A taser is a non-lethal defence weapon that shocks an attacker electronically with two probes.] You will do exactly what I say, when I want it, it's health and safety as they will either fire into their head or electrocute someone else, so it has to be done, no one does anything until I tell you.”*

Arguably no amount of reflective practice will result in these types of courses being changed, that would serve no useful purpose. This is due to the fact that the MPS on occasion is expected to explain in a court of law the training delivered to its employees. To this end, the organisation is keen to ensure the aims and objects of a course are recorded and a version control is strictly adhered to and recorded. In this way the organisation can explain who was taught what they were taught and when. The example of the taser above is pertinent. But although the content of the course cannot be changed, arguably the method of delivery can and reflective practice is a suitable vehicle for improvement. Any changes can be considered within the planning stage.

Planning

It is at the stage of planning the delivery of lessons that offered an opportunity for change for some, for example Robert observed, *“We have changed, well the whole unit have changed their style of presenting. We are looking at when we get packages of how we can change that package from just being a PowerPoint to something more than.”* Mita suggested *“...obviously I’ve done these lessons once I’ve thought and analysed them and thought I’m going to do this and do that, so on the next course, those lessons are actually be going to be different, than they were. I mean the information is still the same.”*

The purpose of reflective practice is to produce a learner who is autonomous where the process of reflection improves a person’s understanding of the subject and the various methods of delivery. Here their critical thinking, problem solving and individual change management skills can combine to create a new understanding of a phenomenon. Biggs (1999:6) alluded to a mirror analogy suggesting that ‘a reflection in a mirror is an exact replica of what is in front of it.’ However, he saw a distinction between this and reflective practice by observing that, ‘Reflection in professional practice, however, gives back not what it is, but what it might be, an improvement on the original’ (ibid.). Reflective practice is used for the purpose of self-improvement. Helen identified difficulties she had experienced as she planned for change observing, *“Opposition to change and the old, that’s the way we’ve always done it, is there a need for it and the way we have always done it has always worked”*. Q, *“Where has that come from, the expression of*

that attitude?” A, “It could come from the person who, you know has done a good job of what they had at the time but had to put something together to deliver and sometime it can be it can feel like a bit of criticism.” What was significant about this statement is that even though Helen was being criticised by some, she did not allow this peer pressure to sway her.

Summary of Question 8a . (What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?)

The data suggests that some students perceived that they were unable to make changes to their lessons as these were mandatory or corporate courses. Students perceived that an appropriate occasion to make change occurred at the planning stage of their sessions, as they revisited the design of sessions. It appears that some changes to the delivery of sessions are easier where the trainers have more autonomy by virtue of the type of subject delivered. It is though acknowledged that some lessons are less easy to change. However, there is no reason why the mandatory lessons should not be improved if the trainers identify areas for improvement and ensure that these observations are communicated to those responsible for the design of the courses.

Topic 4 Teaching practice

The following questions related to the students' perceptions of their teaching practice and were not intended for inclusion within this research. Instead a

number of reports have been written and shared with the MPS. These questions were:

Question 9 How well do you feel you are progressing in your teaching practice?

Question 9a What do you wish to achieve in your teaching?

Question 10 How will you go about developing your teaching?

Question 10a Who will you approach for advice?

Topic 5 Developmental issues

Topic 5 considered any developmental considerations, in order to identify any shortcomings or perceived gaps in learning or skills. The questions employed at this stage asked for the identification of any need for further development and, if there were, how they would meet these needs. Further support and perceived barriers to personal development were considered.

“Moving on to considerations of your own development:

Question 11 Have you identified your individual needs for further development?

Question 11a How are you going to meet those needs?

Question 12 What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?

Question 13. Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?

Question 13a What kinds of barriers to development have you met? (e.g. resources, use of ICT, access, time etc)”

Question 11. Have you identified your individual needs for further development?

The responses to this question were quite diverse and many of the responses to this question included responses in relation to the practice of teaching which is out of the remit for this research. However of those responses that included an allusion to study skills the following were offered:

Taking stock

Two students felt the need to take stock of the situation they were in before making changes. Helen observed, *“Educationally, because the training thing is relatively new as far as I am concerned I have taken on board something that is quite a big part of what I do at work now and what I want to do is make sure that I am any good at it, before I consider anything else.”* And Renee suggested that, *“I know I would like to explore further the learning that was instigated by the PTLLS and by the fact that it has helped me so much with what I am doing now I think I would just like to expand on that further.”* Here

Renee was looking to the future but not actually making plans for development at that stage.

Reflective practice

Pete identified reflective practice as being included in his development observing, *“I think that comes from continually doing training yourself, reflection on your practicing, how you’re incorporating that into what you are doing. DTLLS as well as looking in the website for new and up coming curriculum activities and that kind of thing and maybe teaching magazines and stuff like that.”* Pete appeared to value the effect that reflective practice could have upon his own development and the development of his lessons. Unlike the previous examples above, Pete appeared to be in a position to consider his development and achieve his goals.

Improving writing and IT skills

Having commenced study Rachel exhibited an awareness of her ability at that stage, observing, *“Yes it’s the written word, I need to involve myself more in the learning side of it.”* Q, *“What could you do?”* A, *“I could talk more to people maybe um, I could ask them to set me an assignment and I could go away and just practice writing one, I’ll write it and see, ‘cos you need to know how to structure written pieces sort of thing. I don’t get there, but once it was explained to me by my friend who is a teacher, she said I need to develop and we talked about it, ‘cos I love talking about things I could talk and discuss*

until the cows come home and I learn that way. But then they say go away and write it and that's just phworr. With her by my side saying no, no you need to structure it this way and do that. Also typing because typing is very slow for me because I can't touch type or anything like that, and it's like oh no I've left the caps lock on." The reflective nature of this passage has indicated two distinct study skills requirements, namely constructing an assignment and the associated IT skills.

Within another account a significant observation was made in relation to temporal considerations of training, Abdul was asked Q, *"Were there any other things you need to develop do you think?"* A, *"I think it's IT ... The trouble with me is I can be taught things but if I don't use it I lose it because at my age now if I use it a few times I will be fine. With the Met they do send you on these courses and you never use the dam skills you have learned for ages and then you forget about it; it fades definitely."* It would appear that considerations could be given to the allocation of courses and actual need for training. The response to this question indicates the existence of skills fade if the new skills are not utilised. In particular, if a person does not have an opportunity to use the skill, and get into the habit of using it the chances are that it will indeed fade (Howe, 1998).

Summary of Question 11. (Have you identified your individual needs for further development?)

The data reveals a diverse array of responses to this question. Rather than needing to develop, two students identified a need for staking stock. Another perceived that Reflective Practice (RP) should be included as part of his development and another considered RP would be used to improve her ability to write and improve her IT skills. It appears that developmental issues can be varied and any developmental support will require attention to the diverse needs of the individuals. This may be achieved by the use of interview with the attendees following the PTLLS course.

Question 11a. How are you going to meet those needs?

Professional Reflective Practice

Ajay suggested he would partake in a form of collaborative reflective practice involving continuing professional development noting, *“It is by talking to other trainers, it would be useful if we all went back and swapped our experiences since the course if you could get the group back for a day or half a day with the trainers....”* The characteristic nature of collaborative reflective practice is akin to Professional Reflective Practice (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, 2009). In chapter 2 it was argued that within teacher education, reflective practice appears to have become stuck within the confines of the classroom, where the locus of attention is restricted to considerations of the interactions

between the new teacher and their students. This appears to then continue into the teachers' Continuing Professional Development. To counter this practice Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009) advocate broadening the perspective to include all aspects of professional practice and argue that whereas reflective practice is concerned with personal achievement and growth, when combined with Continuing Professional Development it becomes a means by which teachers can expand their knowledge and skills to maintain and increase competence throughout the spectrum of their professional lives. In this context, reflective practice can be extended to include the many and varied situations faced by a teacher within their professional capacity.

The term Professional Reflective Practice is used to differentiate between the personal reflective practice associated to an individual's development as a teacher and the broader view within the professional arena. A key characteristic is that the focus is on the shared nature of reflective practice making clear links to professional practice in a broad sense.

The importance of preparation

Reflective practice was again alluded to, coupled with the need to adequately prepare, for example Mita observed, *"Oh a bit more time to prepare you are still going to feel like this. I think its that whole (Sharp intake of breath) I have to get over these nerves, I've got to get myself used to that and settle down and get into it, if you just settle down and go right, I have no option, get in get*

it done... but I think if you are confident in your preparation then that helps.”

Mita identified the importance of preparation time. Arguably there is a need for the organisation (MPS) to ensure their training staff is adequately supported by ensuring adequate preparation time for their trainers.

A Focal Point

Pete suggested looking at *“Home office websites educational websites that sort of thing.”* And Patrick sought professional guidance observing, *“As well other people do approach us as development managers around what else is there I can be doing and sometimes it is nice to be able to point them in a more specific direction really. If there was a focal point we could say go and have a look here because they can approach us as a development team and our meetings will raise, look somebody wants funding for this would we support this or not, then you know everything from joining another professional body right the way through to additional training and then we can look at our business need around that perhaps.”* There is no reason why this could not be developed within the MPS by using the intranet site. This could also include links to other, relevant sites; at present there appears no single focal point for interested parties.

Summary of Question 11a. (How are you going to meet those needs?)

The data indicates a varied response to considerations of meeting the needs of the trainers. These included the call for collaborative reflective practice

with other trainers and another identified the importance of adequate preparation in order to combat the affect of nerves. Visiting educational and Home Office websites as a source of information was suggested as was sharing best practice with other managers in order to achieve best practice. At present the MPS offers no single intranet site where students may access developmental information and guidance.

Question 12. What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?

Recognition

Renee spoke of support in terms of acknowledgement or of being valued for example, *“I have completed this course and I feel like, well who do I tell? Who needs to know that I have completed this course? ... so I contacted [name] at Hendon and said who do I need to notify, so s/he put me through to someone else, but that’s it, I have not heard anything else. So after having had this talk I will go back and I will pursue it a bit more but really, if had notified the persons should there be something coming back to me?”* Q, *“So is it that you want to be valued with your new qualification?”* A, *“Yea, a bit more acknowledgement, oh she’s got this let’s use it sort of thing.”* Although a record is kept centrally of those who have attended and successfully completed the PTLLS course, there exists no central unit responsible for communicating with and updating those who have completed the course. In

this case it appears that this failure to acknowledge the achievements in a meaningful way can engender feelings of not being valued.

Refresher training

The topic of being valued resonates again in respect of a request for refresher training. Robert observed, *“I think maybe occasional refreshers would be a good idea. I think any thing that PTLLS or training covers, yes I have done the PTLLS course [and in a recent workshop] we talked about lesson planning, but it wasn’t oh you are teaching me stuff that I already know. There was stuff that was new and a refresher never does any one any harm So if things change I think continual development, continual workshops, are a good idea, I think they help and I never felt that I was bored for want of a better word because I had just done this because it is a constant revision reflection”* There exist no refresher workshops or courses within the MPS. At present, once an individual has completed their PTLLS course, they will receive no further training unless they choose to attend a CTLLS or DTLLS course; this will though be done in their own time and at their own expense.

The use of IT

The use of IT was again considered appropriate by Abdul who suggested *“... they could put together training or information that has come up that may be suitable for us [on a web site] and it’s a one stop shop then.”* IT for some appears to be a significant issue even after the PTLLS course where,

arguably, some attention would have been given to these skills. There appears to be no accepted minimum standard of IT skills within the MPS.

Summary of Question 12. (What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?)

The data suggests the need for three general areas of support. These issues included the wish to be valued by the organisation, the introduction of refresher training and further support in relation to IT skills training was considered to be required. Another valued refresher training. The MPS appears to have not considered support for the trainers once they have completed the PTTLS course. Some apparently exhibit perceptions of abandonment where they consider the MPS is not supporting their needs sufficiently. However, on the other hand it may not be the role of the MPS to support these needs the onus may be on the individuals to promote themselves, take responsibility for keeping up to date with teaching and training activities and to engage in activities that will improve their IT skills.

Question 13. Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?

Approximately half of the respondents considered they had not experienced any barriers to their personal development. However during the subsequent discussion with those who stated they did not, the following emerged:

Mita observed how busy she was, saying, *“No I suppose I am only limited by time really and the demands of what I do myself. For example today I have got two portfolio meetings, meeting you, in amongst that I have got far too many emails to respond to, I have got a whole structure that I am trying to put through and change, I have the training delivery that I am trying to ratify. Because of these portfolio meetings have got court workshops I am trying to work out I think hours in the day juggling the priorities is the issue and so to take time out for yourself for your personal development is bottom of the list. I think through experience and the job that you do you are learning anyway and you are bringing elements into it but from the perspective of learning yourself from the course, it actually takes you away from that and gives you that opportunity to actually engage in something for yourself which is of wider benefit anyway, but in terms of personal development, other than when you get your PDR and you are looking at that and you are going, ah yes that was my target oh yes I did that or the goal posts changed or ... you don't tend to be very reflective in that sense and think I must stretch myself and do something else this week.”* It appears that the single, most significant obstacle in relation to Mita's personal development is that of a very busy work load. As a result she has very little time to consider her personal development. Considerations were not given to the issue of personal development during the hours when not at work. There appears to exist an assumption that any personal development will occur in the workplace only.

Feelings of being undervalued by the MPS

Again some students expressed feelings of being undervalued by the MPS, for example Mita observed, “... *I’ve done this course, it was hard work, I have passed which is great, but now what? What do I do with it? What happens now? And you know I can put it to use on my team because we do training of groups and individuals, but I also know that there’s a lot of training with my directorate, that I would like to get involved in. So maybe something like she’s now passed she’s available for training so maybe a bit more structure that way ... I don’t want it to be a waste, because I enjoyed it, it was hard and I feel like I could be utilised a but more.*” At present Mita appears motivated to employ her skills and is pleased with her achievements. As Fredenburg et al., (2001:3), suggest an important factor pertaining to motivation is the, ‘learner’s interpretation of his or her ability that has been linked to concrete achievements.’ They relate this in terms of ‘perceived competence, self-efficacy, perceived ability and self-perception of ability.’ However, how long this motivation will remain unless the individual is valued, or feels valued, is questionable.

John was highly critical of the MPS observing, “*I think we are fundamentally poor within our own organisation ... we are now so top heavy with senior managers that no body really has got a clue, they have all been massively over promoted and what happens is that you get a problem, it’s highlighted and it’s seen by a senior manager as a problem, knee jerk reaction without any thought, any research, any fundamental intelligence to anything and this*

order goes out and in my service I have seen it time and time again.” The concerns John has in relation to the MPS appear to reflect the external factors acting upon the causal perception of an individual, which affects the way an individual interprets daily events and consequences. This is an example of a persons ‘explanatory style’ (Ormrod, 1999), who observes,

‘Some people typically attribute their accomplishments to their own abilities and efforts; they have an I-can-do-it attitude known as mastery orientation. Others attribute success to outside uncontrollable factors and believe that their failures reflect a lack of ability; they have an I-can’t-do-it attitude known as learned helplessness.’

Ormrod (1999:453)

In this example it would appear that although John is expressing neither an I-can-do or I-can’t-do attitude, he is associating the “*knee jerk reaction without any thought, any research, any fundamental intelligence*” on the part of the MPS to his own practice; this is indicative of the effect of external factors affecting this individual in some way. This though is a moot point and raises the question, are those who are promoted to positions of management, suitably qualified to function within the arena for which they are responsible? However, this question is out of the remit of this research.

Issues affecting motivation were again considered by Rachel who commented “... *we have been starved in our occupation of a whole history of*

underachievement, under valued, under trained, and it is so refreshing to go out to an organisation where you have got someone saying, look we are going to teach you this and it is the right way and it is not some higgledy, higgledy, God knows what reaction to, um and I thought no it's good."

What appears to be a negative statement at first glance is in actual fact very positive, where here the individual is expressing that where previously the in house training was considered lacking in some ways, she was pleased that an outside agency was being employed to train the MPS staff. In general, the students were very positive about the use of the college to teach the MPS trainers; this will now be considered further.

Advantage of outside agencies

In response to this question in relation to experiencing barriers, some students compared the MPS with the college responsible for the training. John observed, *"So when you do come into contact with outside agencies, you suddenly realise this is not a knee jerk reaction, this is a person or an organisation that has been doing this for a long time and has had success has had problems, admits to problems and that's what I find refreshing and I am not saying ...In our organisation what happens is that we knee jerk to every single, problem, public opinion. So if there is an issue around let's say domestic violence what happens is they put a superintendent in charge, right training around domestic violence. But it doesn't work and it stays for about two years and then becomes a buzz word and then disappears again."* John's

perceptions about outside agencies appear to be very positive; he contrasts this to the MPS who, it is suggested, are re-active as opposed to pro-active. Some comments appear to be transformational in nature, for example the following response to the question is reflective in nature. John again observes, *“But when you get something like education, people who have been in it a long, long time and who have worked with confidence you certainly feel part of something and you think how refreshing is that? I dunno you think, core, wow, wonderful. And doing this and then going home and speaking to my wife and saying we are doing this and s/he said I have been talking about this for years and you never listened, you know and I hadn’t. But in reality you suddenly now realise that ah, yea that’s right.”* In chapter 2, the question was posed, ‘what is it about the type of reflection that makes it transformative?’ Cranton (1996:113) suggests that, ‘If the process of reflection leads to an awareness of an invalid, undeveloped, or distorted meaning scheme or perspective; if that scheme or perspective is then revised; and if the individual acts on the revised belief, the development has been transformative.’ The transformative aspect related to an individual’s beliefs, or constructs. Constructs in this context is the assumption that knowing is “...an active process of constructing meaning or making sense of experience.” Erickson (2007: 64). Whether this transformation was epistemological is difficult to say from the statement provided. However the realisation that the individual had been discussing this with his wife *“...and s/he said I have been talking about this for years and you never listened, you know and I hadn’t. But in reality you suddenly now realise that ah, yea that’s right.”* Perry (1968), (1999) in Erikson (2007), examined patterns in the

epistemic assumptions of college students' learning process beliefs about the nature of knowledge. The patterns of epistemic assumptions were placed on a developmental continuum. Whether transformative or not, it is clear that Johns experience of the course was a very positive one and one that has perhaps changed the individual's perspective on teaching in some way.

Another example of the positive sentiment in relation to the use of outside agencies was offered by Tracey, "*We battle all the time and it's quite nice to go to a course and listen to people who haven't got an ego, who haven't got a promotion thought in their head, have not thought about diversity or communication or maximising potential, or all of the above. It is an organisation that say look, this is what we do and we are good at it because we have got the experience.*"

The perceptions of this individual suggests that in comparison the MPS training experiences, their experiences of the college were very favourable and could contribute to the individual's motivation. Ormrod (2008:407) identifies motivation to be, 'an internal state that arouses us to action, pushes us in particular directions, and keeps us engaged in certain activities.' Weiner (1992:17) suggests motivation to be, '...the study of the determinants of thought and action-it addresses why behaviour is initiated, persists and stops as well as what choices are made.' Child (1997:44) offers a working definition, observing it, '...consists of internal processes and external incentives which spur us on to satisfy some need.' The negative connotations contained within Tracey's statement, e.g. "*... it's quite nice to go to a course*

and listen to people who haven't got an ego, who haven't got a promotion thought in their head, have not thought about diversity or communication or maximising potential, ..." could indicate a certain frustration with the style and content of the training being offered by the MPS which may have a negative impact on the student' motivation to participate and therefore learn.

Summary of Question 13 (Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?)

The data indicates that approximately half the students considered they experienced no barriers to their personal development, however as the conversation progressed various issues permeated. The issues expressed included that of an overload of work obstructing development, however no consideration was given to overcoming this issue outside of the working environment. Again the perception of being undervalued by the organisation was considered an influencing feature; here links were made to motivational issues. Senior management within the MPS were perceived to represent a barrier to personal development, a link was made to external factors acting upon causal perception by an individual. The issue of motivation relating to a general lack of training from the organisation was another emerging issue. A comparison was made between training provided by the MPS and the college, with the MPS perceived as being re-active and the college pro-active. Some comments appeared transformative in nature.

Question 13a. What kinds of barriers to development have you met?

(E.g. resources, use of ICT, access, time etc)

Of those students who considered they had experienced barriers to their development the following issues were raised:

Time

The responsibility of children and time appears to have been a concern for some, for example Renee observed. *“... It’s not just about professionalism it’s about wives, mothers, kids, school, all those things. Q, “The other things going on in your life other than work?” A, “Yea, well not me I’m married and I have two kids and I have a partner who is very, very good, but I know there was a lot of people on the course and I thought, they’re rushing off you know and I thought aw gawd.”*

Some offered suggestions as to how the issue of time and in particular the lack of it, could be overcome, Ajay suggested, *“Maybe stretching out the course so that you have got more time to do that particular or two assignments for that one week rather than having to. Now [****] is on his/her course and s/he has a block of four days study leave. Personally if I had my chance again at doing it I would book my study leave in advance but maybe just have one or two days max over a period of weeks. Because I know I couldn’t sit down over four days and knock out 9 assignments. I would have to have it staggered.”*

Time did appear to affect some in relation to their ability to study within a relatively short time frame for example Melanie observed *“ I don't know if it is just me, well I think it is just me but, it takes me a long time to prepare a lesson, because I have to think about it, then I write my ideas down and then I think no I won't use that bit after all, then I go back and then do some notes and then read my notes and the cross them out ... so it takes you know a long time to actually prepare for the lesson. Then I think that is just me in as much as if I know I am well prepared I feel better when I am actually standing here doing it.”* Q, *“So your preparation performs the function of a security blanket would you say”?* A, *“Yea, definitely.”*

It appears that if the students are to prepare for a micro teach during the course on top of writing the learning journal and embarking on assignments, consideration could be given to how the time is managed within the course. Perhaps starting on a Wednesday and including the weekend for the purpose of preparation for the micro-teach may assist time management.

Training culture within the MPS

It appears that the experience of the PTLLS course for some has had the effect of highlighting the differences in the learning culture between the FE College and the MPS in some cases. For example Tracey observed, *“The barriers are all there for everybody to see. But only if we learn how to teach, because what I am saying is that the community, the ICT, the response to McPherson was like, I tell you what we will do, we'll get a bloke form the*

community, the Asian, Bangladeshi community he can come in and talk to 25 coppers. If that was PTLLS it would be totally different, it would have been more structured, what were the aims and objectives, what are your lesson plans, why are you bringing this person in? Who's your target audience? Now I recon if I had sat with him and done it differently we could have something like a reflective journal and you come back tomorrow and tell me what have you learned from that? But what it was, bosh have that, right done it, tick a box the governor's promoted, the job's done. They are the barriers. But that's what I learned, if you said to me right we are going to do a similar thing now, I recon it would be totally different." This student appears to recognise and welcome the approach employed by the FE College where the use of reflection has engendered a projected comparison between the MPS and the FE College. As a result, in hindsight she is critical of the approach to one aspect of diversity training engaged upon by the MPS. It appears that at the time, she had not recognised the poor standard of training design. Now however, the historic approach to training on the part of the MPS is perceived as a barrier to development.

Summary of question 13a. (What kinds of barriers to development have you met?)

Time and family commitments was perceived as an issue for one and again the issue of time was alluded to. Attending the course over a period of weeks was suggested and preparation time was an issue for another. A comparison

was made between the learning culture of the MPS and the college, identifying how the MPS can improve its practice.

Topic 6 Additional Comments

Finally, additional comments were requested to ensure all possible data were collected. The data relating to questions 14 and 15 are placed together as the responses were indistinct.

Question 14 Is there anything further you would like to add about your learning experience on the PTTLS course?

Question 15 If there is one thing you would change about your training course that would help you in your role, what would that be?

Issues relating to study at level 3 or level 4

Patrick explained a greater understanding of what was expected between a level 3 and 4 observing, *"I was ready to go in there and study I wasn't ... the level and amount of input from me I was inadequate. I kind of hit the ground running if you like. They gave us advice on what was a level three or a level four. The difference was your debating skills, your reasoning, your ability to pull out the information and use it rather than just regurgitate it, to apply it. When I went in there I was probably level 3 and they took me to level 4 by their instructions, their background behind the questions that they were asking, the core elements that they were expecting you to hit. They were quite clear in what they wanted you to achieve and the differences between*

them, they had them listed, this is level three and this is what you would expect at this level. But at level four you would expect to do all those but these too. It was very clear.” In this instance, the college were able to guide the individual, providing an understanding how to write at level 4. Not all students appeared to grasp this point and perhaps some guidance in respect to the difference between the two may be useful for the students prior to attending the course.

The experience of school

Tony's previous experience of school influenced his motivation, he explained, *“I thoroughly enjoyed it I enjoyed it more than I expected to because I did feel that I was going back to a learning environment and I was uncomfortable at school. When I was at school they called a child psychologist in for me and both primary and secondary school because I was not a good student and on both occasions the head master or head mistress were told it is because he is more intelligent than the rest of the people in the class and you are boring him. Both schools I went to never had the facilities to do anything with that. So when I first went there I had some fairly negative views because my schooling has been a negative thing for that reason I was always disruptive because I was always bored, because they were not challenging me. But when I got there I think the thing worked really well and because I suppose it is a bit more vocational to an extent, yes it is academic I am doing this as a job and so I need to have these courses to learn how to do my job. I really enjoyed it. Having said that the first day we all went away feeling we have*

been hit with a cricket bat. ... But once you had got over that people I think accepted that it was a high pressure, an intense course.”

This is synonymous with Rogers (2007) who identifies the various influences for the adult learner returning to learning. These factors include the anxiety of looking dim in front of peers, the feelings associated with the classroom from childhood experiences. Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010) identify an analogy between the motivation to engage in study and a journey, observing that the first step in a journey can be the most difficult. They suggest an obstruction to study on the part of students is an inclination to procrastinate observing the reason for not starting a task may differ from person to person but frequently the reasons can include:

- a lack of confidence
- low self esteem
- stress
- anxiety
- fear of the unknown
- not wanting to take responsibility
- lack of self belief
- too busy with other things

In this instance, it is possible that the difficulties this student faced during their school years could include elements of the above list.

Writing assignments

Many were new to writing assignments and some had not written academically for a considerable time. One observation that was typical of many is summed up here by David, *“It is really hard work, I can’t stress that enough really, plus again coming from a work environment suddenly having to do study that was hard, it was difficult. It is just that you have essays to do, how do I do the essays what’s the format what do they want? We live in the culture here ... that you do what you have to do what you need to do to get it past somebody else and that is exactly the same as doing the same as getting it past the teacher. Does the teacher like what you have done, it is enough? But with this course it was a new course anyway, we were all learning but none of us knew what the expectation of the essay was.*

Q. *“Were you given any guidance re the essay?”* A *“No to be honest with you*

Q *“So you had guidance on reflective practice, what about the assignments?”*

A *“On the assignments I think we were shown some peoples but it would be kind of oh if you want to there are some assignments over there that other people have done but you can’t take it away and you understand that, we were all adults and you understood that it might be the same question as you are going to get later on in which case you are going to just plagiarise it, you could rip it off sort of thing. But the down side is that you didn’t get literally how they wanted bullet points or do you want it explained or do you want it to show, do you want us to demonstrate in the text an ability for us to show our learning or do you want us to do a factual bang, bang, bang you know and that obviously revolved around the question of can you show an example*

of how you demonstrated this for your practical assignment and then you might go off on one, but have you covered it? Sometimes you just don't know and at least there was that referral thing where you would hand in your assignment, did it fit the requirement of what they were looking for yes or no?"

In this example, the student had the opportunity to look at examples of assignments from previous students, but still appeared unsure of what was expected exactly. In fact he didn't recognise that looking at others' assignments was a form of guidance. It may be that until a student has attempted to write an assignment any instructions offered are superfluous to the needs of the student. Perhaps access to others' assignments may be pertinent later in the course.

Summary of responses to questions 14 and 15. ('Is there anything further you would like to add about your learning experience on the PTTLS course?' And, 'If there is one thing you would change about your training course that would help you in your role, what would that be?')

The data suggests that although one person recognised the distinction between writing at level 3 and 4 this experience was not shared by all students who identified difficulty with writing assignments. Prior experience at school had a direct bearing on one respondent's attitude to learning in a classroom. Some felt they would have benefitted from further guidance in relation to the writing, pitch and structure of assignments. In general the attitude of the PTLLS students towards their learning appeared positive.

A holistic view of the phenomenon

Due to the nature of phenomenological research this study has recorded and considered the participants' individual perspectives. This has resulted in the above data analysis which at times may have appeared to be of a disparate nature. Because this study has focused on the perceptions of individuals, to some extent it has neglected the overall picture. This analysis will now take a holistic view of the phenomenon.

Taking a step back from the minutia of the accounts discussed above enables a holistic view of the phenomenon (Silverman, 2010). The literature suggested the existence of an apparent traditional intolerance between the Police Service and the Academic Institutions. However this study revealed no such issues. In fact, the issues that did arise appeared to exist as a result of the student's insecurity or lack of belief in their own abilities. There existed one instance where a lecturer had confused the class, but that was considered to be a one off incident which was aired and corrected the following day. This study is in contrast to Heslop's (2009) description of the tension between those regarded as 'academics' and the police students. Heslop describes a situation where on the one hand, allegedly, the academics looked down at the students which was attributed to their '...previous professional experiences and even prejudices' (ibid.). On the other hand the students 'unprofessional behaviour' was attributed to, 'their own background dispositions which they brought with them into the police service.' I can find

no correlation between Heslop's observations in relation to the poor relationship between the police and the academics and this study. The nearest example of tension took the form of frustration, where a student highlighted the fact that to enter the police service no academic qualifications were necessary. Further there existed no 'war between the police and the academe' and there was no evidence of an 'inherent anti-intellectualism' that permeates police thinking (Lee and Punch, 2004:234). Perhaps times are changing and with it the Universities, Colleges of Further Education and the Metropolitan Police Service. However the students were expected to produce work of an academic nature which resulted in feelings of being out of their depth. The attitude of the students attending the PTLLS course remained positive, e.g. *"I thoroughly enjoyed it I enjoyed it more than I expected to because I did feel that I was going back to a learning environment and I was uncomfortable at school..."*

Attitude

In general the attitude of the PTLLS students towards their learning appeared positive. It appears that some were taken by surprise by the demands placed upon them and responded by exhibiting an attitude of frustration. The data appears to suggest that this frame of mind, on behalf of some, was transitory in nature and that in response they worked hard to achieve success.

However this success and the attitude of the students appear to mirror the great lengths the lectures went to in order to support these students. Without fail, the students considered the support offered to them by the staff to be

good. It may be that the ability of the staff prevented the situation where the students could attribute 'success to outside uncontrollable factors and believe that their failures reflect a lack of ability; they have an I-can't-do-it attitude known as learned helplessness' Ormrod (1999:453). In fact the students presented a very positive I-can-do-it attitude. It appears that learning journey experienced by these students was a positive experience, guided by the staff; the students appear to have not dwelt upon the more difficult or demanding elements of their learning.

Reflective practice and study skills

I assert that the combination of study skills supported by reflective practice combine to facilitate meaningful learning. On the one hand, developing suitable techniques for study are necessary if a student is to be able to function both in the classroom and when studying alone. However, it is the ability to reflect upon the learning and to plan to improve that is key to achieving success. Whereas a variety of study skills techniques can be offered to a student, it is the use of reflection that will determine the adoption or otherwise of these study skills techniques.

This study has examined the perceptions of policing students in relation to both reflective practice and study skills. It is acknowledged that although reflective practice is employed on some occasions by some students, it has not been widely embraced. In particular the recording of the process has been neglected. In relation to study skills, it appears that the availability of a mentor is of great value to the students. Further, it is the more obvious tasks

that appear to be desired, for example, assistance with writing assignments, access to the relevant literature and how to use a computer. Once this first step is taken, it appears the students are able to learn from their experiences. It appears that it is the first step of preparing to enter into the world of academia that presents the greatest demands upon the students.

This study will now consider the data in relation to Situational Reflective Practice.

Chapter 5

Situational Reflective Practice

Introduction

This chapter describes the emergence of what is referred to as 'Situational Reflective Practice'. It describes the data collection process, offers the very limited related literature and presents the data and the data analysis. It then offers and explains the model in relation to the theory.

The emergence of Situational Reflective Practice

During the semi-structured interviews discussed in Chapter 3, four students identified the existence of a phenomenon in which they found themselves constrained by external factors which had a direct effect upon them. Further, they explained that they had no control over the situation, but never-the-less the situations represented a considerable influence upon them. At the time the significance of these accounts and explanations went mostly unnoticed due to the fact that they were buried in a considerable mass of data; they existed outside of the scope of the research and were also widely dispersed across the interviews. At the time I made no significant links because I was more concerned with the data being collected in relation to the more narrow focus of the research question.

Following the data analysis, described previously in chapter 4, there emerged four accounts which referred to these external factors affecting students. The existence of these four similar situations led me to consider whether other respondents had encountered similar experiences. Upon re-examination of the data there existed no other examples of this phenomenon. Because this topic was not a part of my initial research question, there existed no further data on the subject with which to examine.

I realised at this point that, in relation to reflective practice, in general the existing theory examined reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The work of Schön (1983), Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988) had only considered reflective practice from the perspective of an individual's own actions having some bearing on the situation. What these theories did not consider was a situation that may exist that could have a direct influence upon an individual and that was largely external to the individual. The important factor here is that the individual experiencing the phenomenon has no control over the situation whatever. The phenomenon is primarily concerned with the way in which a social group or an organisation is behaving and the way in which this affects an individual. I termed the notion that was emerging and taking form 'Situational Reflective Practice.' However at this stage it was necessary for me to gather further data in order to establish whether other members of the original group had experienced a similar phenomenon.

Further data collection

As a result, in order to research this further the original respondents were contacted again via an email. This asked them to consider whether they had found themselves in a situation that had impacted upon them about which they had no say or control. 15 emails were sent to the original population and most replied negatively and some made no reply. However, of the original population of 15, 5 replied affirming they had experienced such a situation. These respondents were then invited to be re-interviewed. All five respondents agreed to being interviewed for the second time. These interviews took place two months after the first interviews and so some of the momentum of the first interviews may have remained. Further, the relationships established on the first occasion assisted rapport on the second occasion.

During the second interview, which was conducted in exactly the same manner as the first interview as described in chapter 3, the students were asked only one question, namely, "Have you ever found yourself in a situation that has impacted upon you, about which you had no say or control?" It is acknowledged that this question is somewhat leading and, as a result, the value of the data generated may be limited; this was further exacerbated by the limited response. However, it was selected on the basis that the question sought to focus only on that specific topic; nothing else. Obviously I could not look for examples of Situational Reflective Practice as that was an action practiced by individuals as they contemplated a particular phenomenon.

What I could examine, though, were phenomena that appeared suitable for subsequent Situational Reflective Practice.

The essential difference between Reflection-in-Action, Reflection-on-Action and Reflection-re-Action is the focus of the reflection. In Reflection-in-action and Reflection-on-Action the focus is very much upon the individual and considers what they are actually doing at the time. In reflection on practice, the focus is upon the individual and the action that took place at the time of the action. Whereas in regards to Situational Reflective Practice the focus is on the situation and the impact this has on the individual.

Associated literature in Support of Situational Reflective Practice

There exists no literature in support of Situational Reflective Practice or for that matter anything sharing the unique perspective. However consideration was then given to the more peripheral literature. The Institute for Learning (IfL) consider the relationship between the teacher and their environment noting that 'Members sometimes feel that their environment hinders them in their quest to offer the best quality and most professional teaching and training.' IfL (2009:14). Because I view the nature of Situational Reflective Practice as being a process that consists of an external stimuli acting upon the perceptions of an individual, it is argued that in some instances it may represent a part of the process of dealing with change. Illeris (2009) suggests that:

‘In the most important cases, for instance when a change to a basically new situation in a certain life area must be overcome, most people react by mobilising a genuine identity defence which demands very hard work of a more-or-less therapeutic character to break through, usually by a transformative learning process. This happens typically in relation to a sudden situation of unemployment or the fundamental changes in the work situation, divorce, death of closely related persons and the like, ...’

Illeris (2009:16)

It is not the focus of this study to consider change management in any detail. But for the sake of informing the perspective of an individual who is experiencing change in whatever form it occurs, it is perhaps pertinent to consider what Jarvis (2009) observes,

‘Significantly, as adults we live a great deal of our lives in situations which we have learned to take for granted, that is we assume that the world as we know it does not change a great deal from one experience to another similar one (Schutz and Luckman 1974), although as Bauman (2000) reminds us, our world is changing so rapidly that he can refer to it as ‘liquid’.’

Jarvis (2009:26)

As a result Illeris (2009:16) suggests that a defence against change experienced by many is ‘ambivalence, meaning that in a certain situation or

connection one is both wanting and not wanting to learn or do something.'

When this occurs within the learning environment he suggests that 'In all such defence situations, learning is obstructed, hindered, derailed or distorted if it is not possible for the learner to break through the defence' (ibid.).

It is suggested that the theory that relates most closely to this sense of Situational Reflective Practice is that which relate to reflective practice, Schön (1983) and Kolb (1984) and which has already been considered in chapter 3. As a result the data will now be presented and discussed. Following this the proposed theory will be presented.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The data presented below was collected during two sets of audio-recorded interviews. The first four accounts below are taken from the original set of data. These interviews followed exactly the same format as the first group the only difference being that just one question was asked. The first interviews were conducted between February and March 2010, the second took place in May 2010. Due to the relatively small sample, it was not possible to identify trends within the phenomena and so each example will be listed.

It is acknowledged that some of the accounts are relatively long and could have been placed within an Appendix. However my reasons for including the accounts in this format were to give voice to the participants and to enable the reader ease of reference between the account and the associated analysis.

Many of the accounts indicate an element of emotion that serve to support observations such as feeling of disenfranchisement and disappointment.

These will now be presented and analysed.

Data from the first interviews

The following accounts are examples of situations suitable for reflection employing the use of Situational Reflective Practice.

Account 1

During the first interview David was asked was asked, 'What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?' He identified an inability to change a corporate package. He explained that:

"I will eventually be doing ELS too, so in relation to reflective practice in relation to ELS, there is not a lot I will be able to change to be honest with you, it's a corporate package and it has to be dealt with that way. But maybe the way I pitch that eventually might be different..."

Analysis of this short account suggests the existence of a phenomenon suitable for Situational Reflective Practice (SRP) appears to exist. This is by virtue of the trainer not being able to change the content of the lesson to suit

either themselves or the students. This inability to make changes stems from the need for the MPS to ensure all students are taught exactly the same topics in more or less the same way. This is not negotiable. If the trainer believes that the particular group would benefit from the introduction of further topics, this would not be permitted.

Account 2

During the first interview the students were asked, 'What kinds of barriers to development have you met?' Three responses were identified as relating to Situational Reflective Practice, the first being the lack of time, for example Mita observed:

"You know when I finished the course and I wanted to come back and I wanted to do everything from scratch and I wanted to do the training and do the lesson plan, there was certainly not time to do that. It's balancing priorities"

Within this account it is the lack of time that appears to be the influencing feature preventing the Mita from making the necessary changes to her lesson plans. However whether a heavy workload is the responsibility of the individual or the organisation is a moot point. What is obvious though is that this individual wishes to make changes but is unable to do so due to the external factors drawing upon the availability of available time. Quite simply, there exists no time in which changes can be made. Again this situation is

deemed suitable for SRP due to the presence of uncontrollable outside influences.

Account 3

A second response to the question stated in the above account highlighted a respondent's perception in relation to the trainer not being a high priority.

Robert observed:

“Certainly our borough, training is not at the top of the agenda so it is not given the importance that it perhaps should. Training seems to be, it goes from crisis to crisis so if there is something in the news we have to training it. ... So they are barriers that people don't understand and some of the subjects that we are asked to deliver just aren't either relevant or it is not a problem and you will have a day of about 15 different that don't hand together and you can't do a day's training on 15 bits of legislation, you don't have a proper flowing day.”

Here the participant appears to be reacting to a situation brought about by the expectations of others. The training department is bombarded with requests for training from various individuals. The disparate nature of the individuals indicates that have not consulted each other and as a consequence are unaware of the others' requests. However, due to the rank structure, their requests must be met where possible. This results in a training day that

includes a jumble of mismatched topics which appear not to compliment each other.

Analysis suggests that this situation represents the conditions suitable for SRP as it has been created as a result of a number of individuals acting independently; the result of which impacts hugely upon the individual attempting to deliver a coherent course. This individual has no control upon the others' actions.

Account 4

This response considered the participant's budget representing a barrier to the development of staff, Mita observed:

“Resources is probably the big one, budgets, can we afford to send all these people on courses that is always the question. Does it fall inside your training budget that you have bid for? Resources are going to be the big one and that's pounds, shillings and pence.”

It is monetary constraints that have affected the ability of this individual to train their staff. Analysis of this situation suggests that this account identifies the availability of money to have a direct affect upon the ability of the manager to offer suitable packages. The lack of funding resulted in the inability of the manager to be able to allow her students to attend courses, even though she has identified a specific learning need. Once the finances were exhausted no

further training could be had. This represents a phenomenon suitable for SRP due to the fact that the budgets were imposed by others and not the training manager.

The need to interview further

Having identified the possible existence of a phenomenon within the original data, it was decided to re-interview the participants. The following data was collected in May again by the use of interview and followed the principles previously discussed in Chapter 3. The responses will now be considered.

Data from the second interviews

These data were collected in response to the question:

'Have you ever found yourself in a situation that has impacted upon you, about which you have had no say or control?'

The following accounts were considered in relation to the phenomena being suitable to be utilised for Situational Reflective Practice (SRP). All of the following accounts are examples of situations suitable for reflection employing the use of SRP and are reproduced and analysed next.

Account 5

This account from Patrick relates to budget cuts which exist as a direct consequence of the new coalition government's demand to make financial savings:

"We have been seriously impacted upon by budget cuts now which is a Met wide, Nation wide thing but at a stroke my work load effectively has doubled because now I will be having to deliver twice as much training effectively because we are being cut in half as a training unit."

Patrick further describes the uncertainty of his situation which represents a significant feature of this account. That uncertainty exists as a result of a reduction in funding. The participant has no control or influence upon funding for his unit. Further, it is unlikely that the Senior Management Team (SMT) have control over funding issues. The situation appears to be compounded emotionally as the SMT have not made a decision in relation to who will be required to leave the department. Uncertainty exists which has a direct affect upon morale.

Patrick expressed relief at still being employed within the unit, but this could be short lived and he is aware of this. In this situation the organisational needs are having a direct impact on the trainers which manifest feelings of uncertainty and perhaps worry. This appears to be a situation suitable for

SRP as the root cause of the situation is a combination of funding and arguably the poor management of people; uncertainty engenders anxiety.

Account 6

The following account from Tracey considers the difficulties experienced in the design and presentation of a course when communication is poor or actually being withheld. Decisions were made by the organisation which had a direct effect upon Tracey's ability to run the course effectively:

"We delivered training out in Saudi Arabia last year. For the second stage of that course they decided to send students over from Saudi to over here. Everything was short notice, we were told with about a month's notice that we had to design and deliver this course."

A pertinent factor in relation to the phenomena apparently in existence in this account was the affect that Tracey was expected to prepare the course during the same time in which she partook of her normal work. This could engender feelings of stress or worry if her normal workload was busy in the first instance.

Tracey describes that information was not always forthcoming, for example the date of the course, which would have a direct effect on considerations such as room booking and ordering the food. This is further compounded by

the fact that in general no common language was shared and the fact that no interpreter was made available during the course.

In this example, a number of factors have combined to create a situation which has become very difficult for the training designer. The roots of the problem appear to exist in the decision making process at a level far above the trainer. It may have been that no decisions had been made by the manager. On the other hand, they may have been made and not communicated for what ever reason. Political games of power are not uncommon within the MPS's management where knowledge appears to offer an element of power.

This example is considered suitable for SRP because the factors that have combined to create the situation appear to be a lack of funding resulting in no translator, the need to continue doing the 'day job', which impacts upon the availability of time and the need to use a number of locations for the delivery of the training. All of these factors are compounded by power issues or the inability to communicate decisions on behalf of the management.

Account 7

This account from Tracey relates to decisions made by people at a much higher level within an organisation upon those it affects:

“Often you will get word that instructions have come from above that will impact upon you. For example recently something came out about the dress code, it went around the office that the dress code was being implemented for men to wear shirt and ties and for women a blouse and suitable attire including weekends ... and this applies if you are being called out at 3 or 4 in the morning. Everyone thought this was an absolute joke ... There are decisions that go on way above our heads ...”

The decisions affecting this Tracey are made by someone who is unknown to them. This is another example of the organisation affecting a person as they suddenly find themselves in a situation that has impacted upon them and about which they have had no say or control.

Tracy describes how the practicalities of working in various locations and environments are not always conducive to wearing smart clothes; however an individual has made a decision and has ensured the dress code will be enforced. The root cause of this situation appears to be that what has not taken place is a discussion between both parties. As a result neither can see the situation from the others' perspective. Here there exists a lack of dialogue resulting in preventable resentment. This situation appears suitable for SRP due to the fact that it identifies the result of actions of others which are sometimes uninformed and occur independently of the recipient.

Account 8

This next account considers Patrick who designed a course for Special Constables and who was preparing to deliver it. He stated:

“I just found out last week that it has all changed. It is not going to happen now. It is now going to be Hendon still doing it. All we can do is offer our assistance in the interviews if you want to help. ... We could have seen people, noticed them, see them go through day one and day two and have had a personal impact on their lives.”

The above account appears to represent a phenomenon suitable for SRP because it considers organisational change that has affected their teaching practice. Apparently, no actions on the part of the participant has affected this change, however as a result of a decision made by another individual within the organisation this change has never the less been effected.

Patrick described how he spent time and effort in preparing for the training and was informed at short notice of the changes. A change in approach to the training had been made but apparently not communicated with Patrick, resulting in feelings of surprise and disappointment. Here Patrick was keen to improve the process but in light of the decisions made by others is powerless to change the situation. A recurring phenomenon appears to be the disenfranchisement of the part of the participant, often occurring with no forewarning.

Account 9

The perception of broken promises on the part of the organisation is pertinent here in Pryon's account:

"In terms of my study I am keen to do CTLLS and to pursue that avenue, I have been told off the record to expect absolutely no help at all. In terms of PTLLS one of the suggestions was that if you did the level 4 which I did, the job would look at giving you level 5 or the CTLLS as an extension as a progression. But every request I make for information along those lines seems to lead me to towards, no chance."

This account appears suitable for SRP due to the fact that the perceptions of Pryon are that he has been promised something but has been let down. He does not indicate who has let them down but, as in this instance, this person or these people are referred to as 'they.' The existence and actions of 'they' could represent a significant feature of SRP as it is used to refer to elements of an organisation that are unknown to another group or body within the same organisation; often management.

The root cause of this situation may be difficult to identify, due to the numbers involved in the decision making process and the passing of time; both serve to cloud such issues. It could be that a number of factors have combined to create the situation, however in this case these factors are unknown to the

participant. This appears to be a fact that irritates the participant and has had an impact upon their morale. It appears not always easy or even possible to identify the component parts of a phenomenon suitable for SRP.

Account 10

The following account is that of Tracey who perceived that she has been treated less favourably than others on the grounds of disability or gender.

“On a personal level I passed the Inspectors’ exam so I went to my Chief Inspector and said could I have a development plan put in place ... he said yes I will keep you in mind. I heard nothing of it. Then I came back from the Christmas break in January to find that they had made up 5 male sergeants who had passed at the same time of me as acting inspectors on the response team, with no formal process followed, they were just picked. So I saw the Ch Inspector and said to him I understand they are operational and I can’t be operational, but the precedent has been set, if you are going to give out acting inspector roles for response teams are you considering doing acting inspector roles for complaints for example, or custody. He said no, no plans to do that.”

Tracey’s perceptions are that she has been treated less favourably than her male colleagues. Based solely on the information contained within the account it would appear that this phenomenon is suitable for SRP. Tracey

has not been considered for promotion. Analysis of the situation is made difficult because the underlying cause of this situation is not apparent and only one side of the argument is offered. What is apparent is that the combination of the decisions made by others in the absence of this person has resulted in them stating they hate their job.

There appears to exist two realities in this case; the first is that of the feedback given to this person which was positive and that they met the criteria. The second reality is contradictory and suggests that she was not competent for the role of Inspector. The individual is unsure of the cause of the situation and appears unable to gain the facts in relation to the decision that was made about her. It appears that although she originally thought she was doing the right things, in fact she has had no say or control upon the situation in which she found herself. This example is perhaps indicative of an individual who, for no reason of their own, has been misguided; either by virtue of being misinformed or being uninformed.

Issues of equality (Gender)

The account offered by Tracey further identifies issues of alleged sexual discrimination in relation to equality in employment. Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against workers because of their gender. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) (2011:1) identify that:

Employers should ensure they have policies in place which are designed to prevent discrimination in:

- recruitment and selection
- determining pay
- training and development
- selection for promotion
- discipline and grievances
- countering bullying and harassment

ACAS (2011:1)

Selection for promotion is clearly identified under the Equality Act, but this issue is not restricted to issues of selection alone. Clements and Spinks (2000) observe that

Although women have equal rights to all but a very few occupations they continue to be overrepresented in both low paid and part time work and under represented in the professions.

Clements and Spinks (2000:71)

The situation described within Tracey's account is indicative of the position described by Clements and Spinks (2000:71). In this instance despite the legislation and MPS policy, a woman has been disadvantaged in respect of being afforded the opportunity to apply for a better paid position within the workplace. In fact they highlight that, 'It is particularly in the area of

employment that the effects of discrimination against women in society are well illustrated' (ibid.). It is clear that the effect of this situation on the perceptions of this individual has had a disheartening effect, as she states:

“So I am now at the point where you know what I hate this job, it's crap. But there you go, that's one very personal aspect of the rug being pulled from under me; constantly”

Account 11

A situation can take many forms and can be represented by something lost as well as something undergoing a change. The following account from Patrick refers to the loss of the administration day for a trainer:

“We are already looking at a situation where at the moment we train Monday and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and Wednesday is an admin day. The way things are changing the Wednesday may disappear, the admin day where I could possibly disappear to college is likely to disappear as well.”

Here it is likely that the time allocated to preparation and admin tasks will be withdrawn. The changes that will be required as a result are suitable for SRP because they exist as a result of a change in practice introduced, again, by other members of the organisation.

It appears that often those making decisions impacting on other apparently have little or no knowledge of what is involved in the role they are affecting. In this case contact time with students, e.g. actual teaching time is an important consideration to the decision makers. However, it appears that little thought has been given to time spent outside of the classroom, time to prepare for lessons and to complete the admin tasks. The situation could have occurred due to a lack of dialogue. It appears that effective communication plays a key element in the development of such situations.

Account 12

The following account from Mita concerns the introduction of a foundation degree and the difficulties experienced in terms of communication between groups of people:

“I suppose in terms of the foundation degree originally we had the module signoff things go out. I think where you are intrinsically involved in negotiating with the University and looking for how we can evidence for what we require, making sure that we are giving our staff the best opportunities for their learning. But then the line managers and the mentors are not in tune with that process and they are being asked to complete forms where they are signing off somebody’s competency and the evidence they are providing and they don’t even know how to complete the forms.”

Mita went on to explain how a situation arose which involved apparent confusion. This was based on the required criteria not being communicated effectively and other conflicting messages being broadcast by those attempting to make sense of a the situation. It appears that the lack of communication was not apparent until the confusion had become evident.

What was at the root of the lack of communication was that of perspectives. Although the University and the MPS had negotiated the content of the course in terms of the necessary criteria, consideration had not been given to the way in which the end users would interpret those criteria. As a result Mita's work increased because people felt it necessary to refer back to her to confirm that their interpretations were correct. The perspective of the end user had not been considered.

This is a phenomenon considered suitable for SRP because it was not Mita who had negotiated with the university, however, as the result of a lack of clarity and the position she held within the organisation meant that she was being repeatedly interrupted to clarify the same question.

Account 13

A change in practice is often associated with cost cutting. The following example from Tracey represents a consequence of cost cutting:

“I am the deputy for community engagement and it is all part of that process because we were doing motivation and first aid stuff for a mosque for example, outside the job. Well that’s all going to go out of the window now because we can’t do community engagement, because there is not the time, the money or the will.”

Here the loss of the community engagement appears to have come about as a consequence of the financial restraints enforced by the government. As a result the training staff cannot be used for the purpose of community engagement; this may have a knock on effect where the lack of community engagement could potentially result in a detrimental affect on police/community relations and is a situation that appears suitable for SRP.

A significant feature of this example is that it is anticipatory in nature. In fact at that time no detrimental affect on police/community relations had been identified; this represents another characteristic of SRP.

Account 14

It appears that the trainers have little say in what is taught in light of the competing organisational demands. The following account from Patrick is included and relates to a training intervention.

“There are times when you would like to teach a certain subject but it is not always possible. Unfortunately the direction from centre takes precedence.”

In this account Patrick describes the situation where his autonomy is apparently curtailed by the needs of the organisation; referred to here as ‘the centre.’ It is the organisation which represents the outside influence in this instance, because the directions it offers is affecting the smaller training unit’s ability to plan ahead.

Patrick describes the situation where on the one hand he is looking forward to a time when he can introduce the topic of dynamic risk assessment and link these to first aid training. At present, the time is available for him to plan for this within his lesson. However he is mindful that if he is informed that further training is to be delivered in other areas, then his plans will need to change.

Again this is a suitable condition for SRP as at present the situation is that he will be able to teach the subjects he wishes. However, at any moment this could all change due to the needs of the organisation; Patrick will have no choice but to acquiesce.

Account 15

Values are considered in the following account from Pryon, where measuring a phenomenon in monetary terms is contemplated:

"I have a big issue with policing by cost. In which ever department in the police it happens to be you get the police service that you pay for and if you cut the costs you will cut the effectiveness of the police, you can not run an efficient police service by cutting costs and what we now have is a situation where the police is run purely financially and you can't do that because you can't quantify. It is not cost effective to have police walking around the streets so we will put them in a car, how many robberies did that policeman walking down the street stop? And that is something you cannot quantify because they know up and down Bromley High Street, there are two police men walking up and down, there won't be robberies and there won't be shoplifting, so you have got no crime."

The above account considers the perceptions or values of the organisation and is reflective in nature. If this were written rather than being a response to a question, it could represent an example of a situation suitable for SRP. This is because it attempts to regard and interpret a phenomenon by considering why the organisation is doing what it is doing. This account considers values and in particular the managerialist / performativity discourse discussed in chapter 2. On the one hand management are concerned principally with efficiency and economy measuring performance in monetary terms, whereas the practitioners are more concerned with a quality product. It is anticipated that the use of SRP may assist an understanding of others' perspectives.

Account 16

There are a number of issues contained within this next account from Mita, which combine to create a difficult situation. These include, time management issues, managing people and communication.

“... I got a phone call from a manager, who was overall in charge, to say a certain person was creating and they were not happy that their trainee got rejected, they felt that they had done everything that they should, they have shown me why it was returned, I can see why you returned it but they are not happy, they are really creating saying that, there was no support in place, that they had been given wrong advice; in fact this advice came from other people. It is the old age thing Richard of seeking advice from me, the person who they really needed to talk to.”

The combination of factors contributed to a situation where an element of confusion occurred. Careful management of the situation took place which as a result, ensured that those concerned were managed sensitively. (For a full account see Appendix 6). Although much of Mita's account would be considered suitable for reflection-on-action, there were elements of the account that would be suitable for SRP, for example Mita describes the fact that incorrect information was obtained from an uninformed individual resulting in apparent annoyance. This situation contains both elements suitable for reflection-on-action and the resulting phenomenon associated with

Situational Reflective Practice which I term 'reflection-re-action.' Within reflection-re-action a person reflects upon the actions of another; those actions will have had nothing to do with the person involved but will nevertheless have a direct impact upon them. In this instance Mita has been directly influenced by incorrect advice given by other to others.

Account 17

The need to make cuts in the MPS's budget requires a change in what were considered acceptable practices by the organisation. Some of these changes are being observed by Patrick:

"You have got police officers who have been told, as has happened twice this week, you have reached 30 years service you are only 52 but here is 28 days notice, we don't want you any more. They are too expensive and they have introduced one of the pension regulations that says if the OCU has no where for you to go, regardless of your age, you can be got rid of."

This account is considered suitable for SRP due to the considerations of the changes in practice by the MPS. In this case, although the regulations have not been changed, the way in which they are being enforced have. As a result, officers who may have anticipated working beyond 30 years are now faced with retirement at that stage.

The implications of this are that long-term plans many officers may have had will need to be readjusted. Officers will need to consider their retirement plans at a potentially a much earlier stage. At the moment it appears that this change in the use of the regulations is not wide spread and so the implications are not clear. In relation to SRP, a person who has been made aware of the possibility of this change actually affecting them can make plans. These plans can then be implemented as and when necessary.

Account 18

There are times when it appears that when nothing happens people are disadvantaged due to not being exposed to learning situations. The following account is offered by Tracey:

“... its one of those things that is like a lot of it is until you are exposed to it so you can tell someone the theory but a lot of it, I know it sounds awful but I learned my trade on the back of [named incident] so you know when stuff like that happens, you get thrown in at the deep end but it is the best learning curve ever sort of thing. So whereas there are people on the team who through no fault of their have had nothing like that.”

Tracy’s example is indicative of the reliance of external influences, in this case terrorist incidents, to assist working practice experience and therefore exposing the individual to learning on the job. Where no such incidents occur

only limited learning can take place. This situation relies on workplace experience to ensure that an individual is fully conversant with procedural issues.

This phenomenon appears suitable for SRP but is inverted, rather than something occurring that has an affect on an individual, in this case it is the fact that nothing has taken place that in the critical issue. Because there have been no recent terrorist attacks, those learning how to perform certain tasks have not been afforded the opportunity to put their newly acquired theory into practice. This I term 'Reflection-re-Inaction.' However it remains situated under the umbrella of Situational Reflective Practice, due to the fact that it is a phenomenon that is totally out of an individual's control.

Account 19

This account from Mita considers the position of responsibility in the individual's absence:

"I put into place a panel for members of staff completing their foundation degree a couple of months ago, these I co-ordinated, there were about five or six to be held in a day. But one of the people needed an extra day in order to produce the documentation for the panel. So I said that's fine but I am not here in the office tomorrow, I asked somebody else to take the session."

Within this example, the manager had done all she could to ensure the event went smoothly in her absence. However this example highlights the need to check to make sure that what should have happened did actually occur as unfortunately for Mita, her carefully prepared instructions were ignored resulting in the need for an individual to re attend the panel for the Foundation degree.

Again, methods of communication and assumptions could be suitable upon which to employ SRP. Issues of management could also be considered. The main issue within this example is the fact that an individual had done all that they thought necessary and still, in their absence things fell apart. Arguably this example could be suitable for Reflection-in-action (Kolb 1984), however, the element of Reflection-re-Inaction is pertinent to the time after which the individual was no longer present and relates to decisions made by others. The decisions the others have made would be based on their own thoughts and not be related to any guidance offered by, in this case Mita. This is because to qualify as SRP the phenomena must be other than as a consequence of the actions or inaction by the person experiencing it.

Account 20

The experience of Mita in this account was that of losing status, due to the fact that another individual within the organisation had changed the criteria. Paradoxically following the learning experience it was the student who was labelled the expert and not the teacher:

“...I think if I were a practitioner I would feel that they were undervaluing my contribution as they are saying well actually we don’t need you to do that now, we are going to clear that register, we are going to competency test you, which is fine. And they are asking those people to support and train and to pass on their knowledge and experience to these people but not actually, nothing is going back to them they are just being [pauses to think]. What annoys me is the fact that those people who have the foundation degree will actually be regarded as expert and we wouldn’t”.

Due to a change in policy, Mita’s standing as an ‘expert’ was removed. A further blow to her perceptions took the form of her student being regarded as an expert, but not the teacher of that student. It is suggested that the above account is suitable for SRP due to the indirect nature of the changes faced by the Mita. It is similar to standing in the same place when changes are occurring all around. Arguably Mita has done nothing different as she engaged in her training practice. However, someone somewhere has changed the criteria necessary for a person to make a claim of being an expert. Because Mita had completed her training a number of years ago, the same criteria did not apply. This was though not considered by those introducing the new criteria and as a result this paradoxical situation has occurred. Mita appears helpless to do anything about the situation.

Account 21

The following account describes how other people's attitudes and behaviour can affect an individual. This behaviour takes the form of alleged bullying and ageism. The following accounts took place not in an interview but via emails with Helen:

"Hi Richard, I guess the biggest thing that affects me and that I can't do anything about is my age. People tend to have very preconceived ideas about older people and there is still some prejudice. It is the only thing that it still appears to be acceptable to bully people about in the work place, now racism and sexism have been taken out of the equation"

"Typical every day situations - references to Tea Lady, the smell of lavender and stale piss (as it is delicately put) which may be done in front of groups of people, some of whom I don't know, as happened at a training day and in front of Housing Officers I have a professional relationship with! Posters put up in each room in the Safer Neighbourhood office made from an A4 photocopy of my warrant card stating "Help the Aged.""

The perceptions of this person represent a very sad indictment on an element of the Police Service. Here it is the attitude and resulting behaviour of some officers that has resulted in this individual's observations. As awful as this representation appears, it is phenomenon considered suitable for SRP.

This analysis does not seek to identify the cause of the situation or attribute blame in any way and will restrict itself to the phenomenon based solely on the information provided; recognising that other accounts of the same situation may differ. The aspect of bullying in relation to age and the 'Help the aged' poster appear to represent a situation suitable for SRP. Helen's experience was such that Reflecting-re-Action would be appropriate. This may identify a number of issues, for example, some others' attitude towards her, her attitudes towards some others, the existence of Equal Opportunity legislation and issues of diversity. Further, issues of support from the MPS, or others could be considered. Whether she felt able to take action is also a moot point as, arguably, it takes a very strong personality to be willing to challenge inappropriate behaviour from peers. Engaging in SRP may have assisted Helen to identify all the pertinent influences before deciding on the most appropriate way forward. In fact, after careful consideration she decided at that stage to do nothing at that time.

Issues of equality (Age)

This account serves to highlight issues of inequality within the MPS.

According to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

(2011):

It is unlawful to discriminate against workers because of age.

Employers should ensure they have policies in place which are designed to prevent discrimination in:

- recruitment and selection

- determining pay
- training and development
- selection for promotion
- discipline and grievances
- countering bullying and harassment

ACAS 2011:1

The account described above reflects issues of bullying and harassment apparently due to issues of age. The MPS has gone to great lengths to combat allegations of institutional racism and to a lesser extent gender issues. However, the above account may be indicative of the organisations failure to train the workforce in relation to issues relating to the 2010 Equality Act; specifically ageist behaviour. Clements and Jones (2008) when referring to issues of racism offer a compelling argument observing:

There has been a tendency to take the view that, as time has passed since the changes to organisations made by the Macpherson Report (1999), the heat is now off and the agenda can shift to something else. The drift towards apathy makes it even more imperative that organisations wake up to the dangers that institutional discrimination can bring.

Clements and Jones (2008:6)

Although Clements and Jones (2008) were referring to institutional racism, their warnings regarding institutional discrimination appear timely and well

founded. There are established policies in relation to bullying and other aspects of diversity and equal opportunities within the MPS. But as Clements and Jones (2008:7) point out, 'It is no good for an organisation to have a diversity strategy and / or policies. Those policies must be turned into day-to-day realities for its people. It appears that the reality in some instances do not reflect policy. The reality of the situation appears to reflect Clements and Jones's (2008) observations which are reflected in part by Helen when she observed, "*The truth is, I don't think my colleagues realise the implications of what they are doing.*" Perhaps the MPS have become complacent.

Summary

The responses to this question suggests that there exists circumstances in which Situational Reflective Practice may be suitable as a means to reflect upon a situation, other than that found within the more traditional forms of reflective practice; namely Reflection-in-Action and Reflection-on-Action. Situational Reflective Practice takes the form of Reflection-re-Action; the action representing an act, situation or behaviour external to the person experiencing it and Reflection-re-Inaction, representing the influence of an absence of activity but where the absence of activity has cause to influence an individual. A significant element of this form of reflective practice is that it enables an individual to identify those factors about which they have no control what so ever. But although they may have no control of the situation, they can consider their reaction to the given situation. An explanation of this phenomenon is next discussed.

Situational Reflective Practice

Situational reflective practice is a term used to describe the acts of Reflection-re-Action and Reflection-re-Inaction. It offers a different perspective to that of the traditional forms of reflective practice because it is concerned with the way in which a social group or an organisation is behaving and the impact this has upon an individual; as opposed to considerations of the direct actions of an individual. The distinction between Reflection-re-Action, Reflection-re-Inaction and the more familiar Reflection-in-Action or Reflection-on-Action is that the focus of attention may have nothing to do with the person experiencing it. Further, the individual may have no control over the situation to which they have become aware. In fact, the perceived situation may not be affecting them; at least not at that moment. There are five distinct characteristics of Situational Reflective Practice, these are described as:

1. passive observation of a phenomena
2. experienced by proxy
3. found in social/organisational situations
4. can occur at the time or after
5. locus of power separate from the person experiencing it

These terms will now be discussed under the relevant headings.

1. Passive observation of an action

The person may be just a casual observer of the situation. What is significant is that the individual will have very little or no control whatsoever in relation to the observed situation. It involves phenomena that are independent of the observer.

2. Experienced by proxy

The person may become aware that the situation, although they are not directly involved with it at that time, it has the potential to affect them at some later stage.

3. Found in social/organisational situations

It is often something that happens to a number of people, such as a social trend or the restructuring of an organisation.

4. Can occur at the time or after

The nature of social or organisational change is that it occurs at a relatively slow pace and so normally it would be reflected upon it as it occurred.

5. Locus of power separate from the person experiencing it

The person is not at the centre of the situation and may be helpless to change what is happening. There is no control, the person's options are either to take action or to watch the situation as it is unveiled.

The process of Situational Reflective Practice is generally represented by five stages, indicated below:

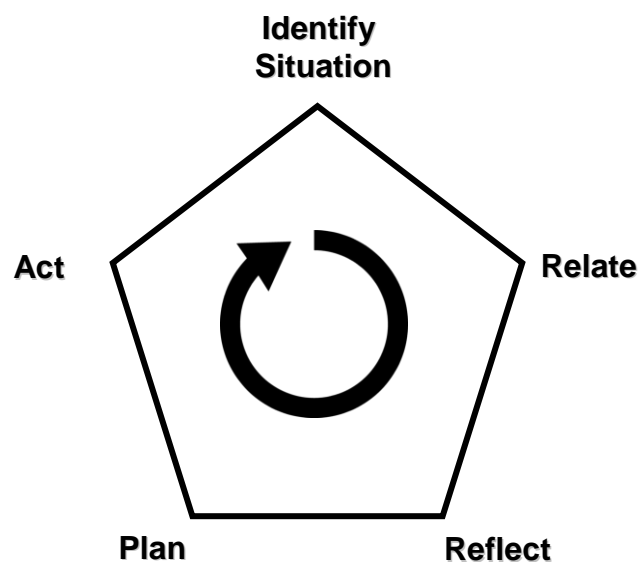


Figure 17 Situational Reflective Practice Model

Stage 1. Identify Action

In the first instance the person will have become aware of an emerging phenomenon. This can be situated socially or organisationally. In fact it could

be found anywhere, in any situation, what is important is that that person has become aware of it.

Stage 2. Relate

Having identified the action the person then relates the phenomenon to their own situation. In other words they see the possibility of the situation affecting them.

Stage 3. Reflect

The person thinks about the situation and weighs up the likelihood of their own involvement in the situation they are observing

Stage 4. Plan

Depending on the previous stage they decide upon the most relevant reaction to the situation

Stage 5. Act

The person either takes appropriate action or inaction according to their plan at stage 4. The situation can be reviewed at any of the stages. Often situational reflective practice is a reaction to social or organisational situations.

Variations on a theme

I again returned to the data and was able to distinguish variations to the proposed model. I observed that in some cases the data supported the notion of only a part of the cycle being utilised. The data supported a total of six variants. The variations will now be explained, drawing upon the data to support each example.

Variation 1

Identify Situation – Relate – Reflect – Act.

Re examining the data and comparing it against the proposed model enabled me to realise that is not always necessary to include each of the five proposed stages, for example Account 6, above, observes a phenomenon in relation to the availability of time e.g.

“So the actual designing of the course was easy, it was the other things that surrounded it. ... But I think it is nothing unusual I think it is the same all over the Met to be honest, you know the lack of information being fed down, being given dates at the last minute. I mean we have just found out that we have another lot coming over in a couple of weeks and that apparently someone had the date for a while but it wasn't confirmed and you just think that why don't you pass the information on.”

This is indicative of a situation where due to factors beyond an individual's control, the time constraints result in some or all of the planning not being possible. This is represented in figure 18 below:

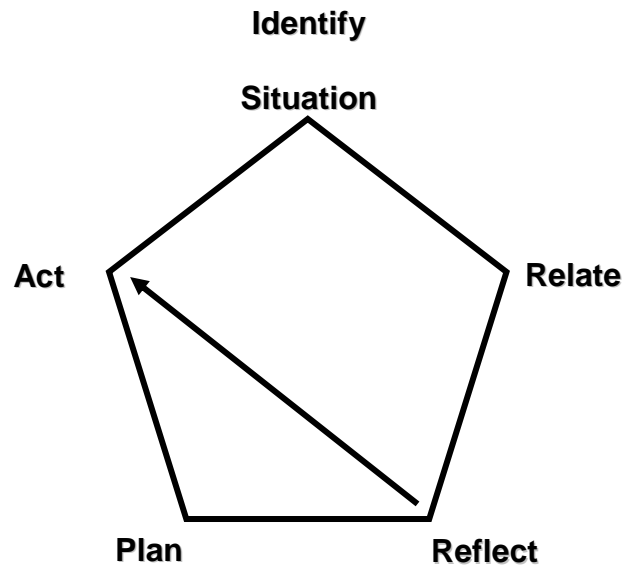


Figure 18 Variation 1 - Identify Situation – Relate – Reflect – Act

Variation 2

Identify Situation – Relate – Reflect.

Within Account 2 the person observed,

“You know when I finished the course and I wanted to come back and I wanted to do everything from scratch and I wanted to do the training and do the lesson plan, there was certainly not time to do that. It’s balancing priorities”

Here it is suggested that the phenomenon had been identified, i.e. the requirement for lesson plans, however due to time constraints this was not possible at that time. The model below is indicative of the situation being identified, next it is related to the person’s situation upon which they reflect. However, the nature of this variation is that the process stops at this point. In this case it is due to the lack of time and no more can be achieved; it is not possible to plan or act. This is represented in figure 19 below:

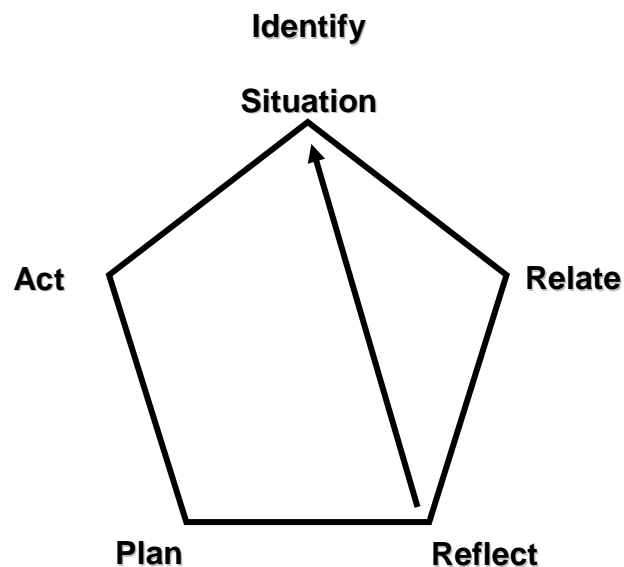


Figure 19 Variation 2 - Identify Situation – Relate – Reflect.

Variation 3

Identify Situation – Relate – Reflect - Plan

Account 4 offered the notion of monetary constraints observing,

“Resources is probably the big one, budgets, can we afford to send all these people on courses that is always the question. Does it fall inside your training budget that you have bid for? Resources are going to be the big one and that’s pounds, shillings and pence.”

In this example the individual had identified the situation, namely that of staff requiring training. Next they related it to themselves, reflected upon the situation and planned suitable training. However, due to the financial constraints the next part of the process ‘Action’ was not possible on all occasions. In the model below, having identified the situation, related it to themselves and having reflected upon it, the individual has made plans for the probable outcome. As yet though, no action has deemed to be necessary. However, the situation will be monitored regularly. This is represented in figure 20 below:

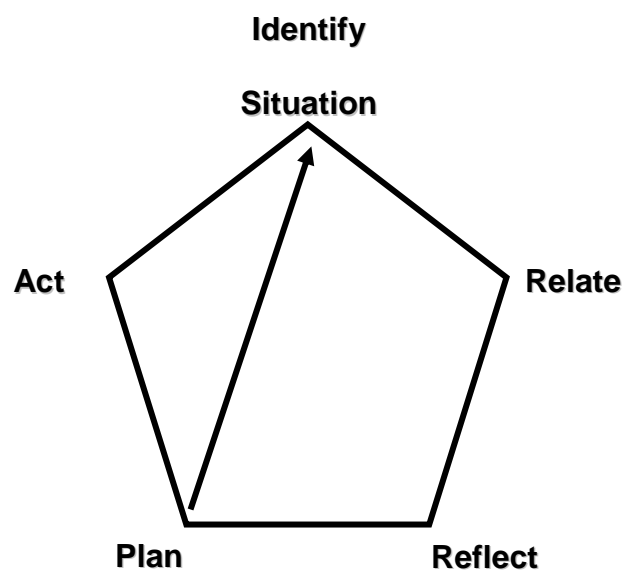


Figure 20 Variation 3 Identify Situation – Relate – Reflect - Plan

Variation 4

Identify situation – Relate - Act

The following example is taken from Account 14,

“Often you will get word that instructions have come from above that will impact upon you. For example recently something came out about the dress code, it went around the bureau that the dress code was being implemented for men to wear shirt and ties and for women a blouse and suitable attire including weekends ... and this applies if you are being called out at 3 or 4 in the morning. Everyone thought this was an absolute joke but if you are told you have to do something and your line managers come in and say right that’s it, I have given you the promotion if you don’t then you are on your own.”

The essential quality here is that the situation is not negotiable and as a result acquiescence is the only option. It is akin to a situation being so urgent that the individual simply reacts, for example a tiger has escaped and there is no element of reflection or planning. Here, any reflection or planning would be considered pointless. This is represented in figure 21 below:

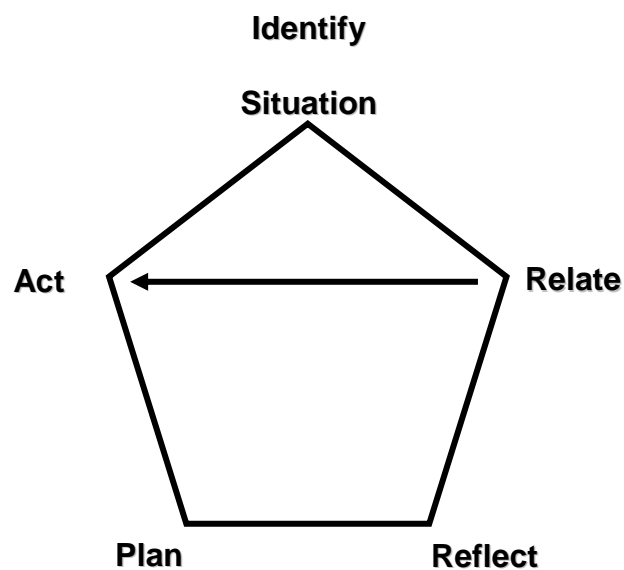


Figure 21 Variation 4 - Identify situation – Relate - Act

Variation 5

Plan – Act.

This variation involves a person who has monitoring the situation occasionally, but as yet has not acted upon the situation; it represents the completion of Variation 2. However due to further changes in the original situation the person considers it necessary to make plans and then act upon them. This example includes an exaggerated temporal element, where the planning and acting stage appear perhaps a long time after the initial elements of the cycle. Within Account 17 a person observed,

“You have got police officers who have been told, as has happened twice this week, you have reached 30 years service you are only 52 but here is 28 days notice, we don’t want you any more. They are too expensive and they have introduced one of the pension regulations that says if the OCU has no where for you to go, regardless of your age, you can be got rid of.”

These people, finding that the situation has developed significantly may choose to introduce plans within the next 28 days. Before this time they may have believed that they would not need to consider retirement for a number of years. This is represented in figure 22 below:

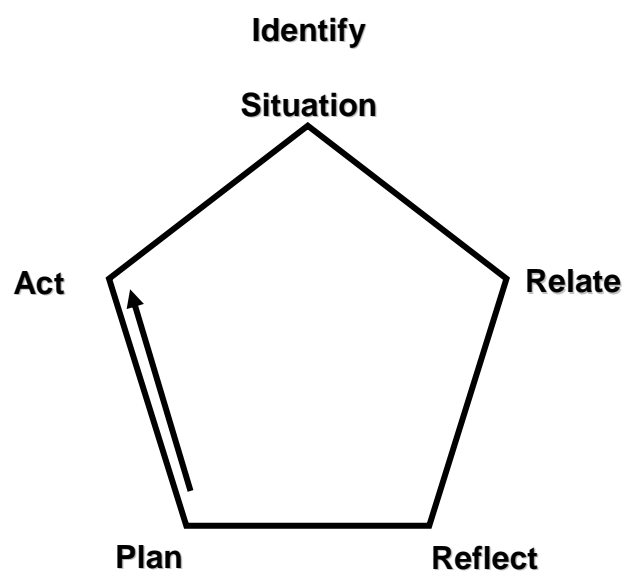


Figure 22 Variation 5 Plan – Act.

Variation 6

Identify situation – Act.

In this variation the individual may have been monitoring the situation regularly as in Variation 3 and so this represents the conclusion of that variation. The person has already followed the process and made plans. Now they consider it is necessary to act. For example the actions could be that of adhering to local customs as in Account 6 below:

“There were things like when we went over there, we adapted to their country and their needs so questions were asked why it wasn’t the same here. When I was over there I wore the long dress thing all the time. If you went to a shopping centre you were asked to cover your head, but we got armed escorts everywhere...”

The situation had been planned for and now finding herself in that situation it was necessary to act in an appropriate manner. As in variation 5 this example includes an exaggerated temporal element where the plans could have been made months in advance, all that was left was to take the necessary action. This is represented in figure 23 below:

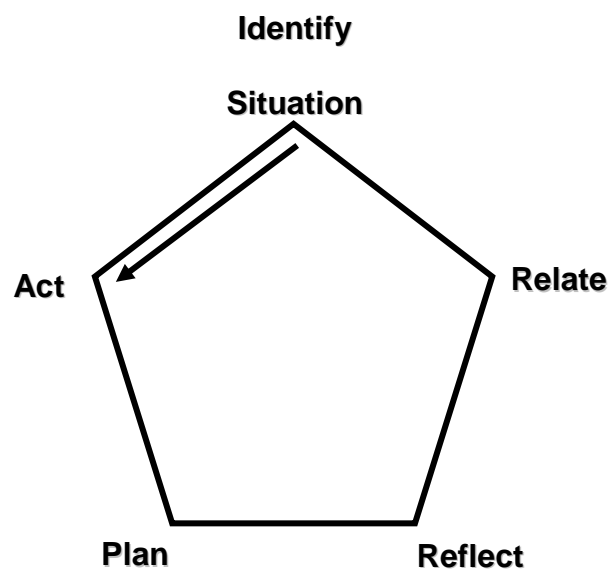


Figure 23 Variation 6 Identify situation – Act

Situational Reflective Practice. Reflection-re-Inaction

Analysis of the data further revealed a situation that existed as the result of nothing occurring. For example in Account 18 Tracy identified that,

“... its one of those things that is like a lot of it is until you are exposed to it so you can tell someone the theory but a lot of it, I know it sounds awful but I learned my trade on the back of [named incident] so you know when stuff like that happens, you get thrown in at the deep end but it is the best learning curve ever sort of thing. So whereas there are people on the team who through no fault of their have had nothing like that.”

As previously stated the above example is indicative of the reliance of external influences and where no such incidents occur only limited learning can take place. This situation relies on workplace experience to ensure that an individual is fully conversant with procedural issues. This phenomenon appears suitable for SRP but takes the form of a variation of the original Reflection-re-Action. Rather than something occurring that has an affect on an individual, in this case it is the fact that nothing has taken place that is the critical issue. Because there have been no recent terrorist attacks, those learning how to perform certain tasks have not been afforded the opportunity to put theory into practice. This I term ‘Reflection-re-Inaction.’ However it still sits under the umbrella of Situational Reflective Practice, due to the fact that it is a phenomenon that meets the necessary criteria:

▪ passive observation of a phenomena	Tracy is observing the fact that nothing has occurred
▪ experienced by proxy	As a result her colleague cannot benefit from a learning experience
▪ found in social/organisational situations	Found in social situations e.g. acts of terrorism
▪ can occur at the time or after	At this time nothing has occurred
▪ locus of power separate from the person experiencing it	The individual has no control over this situation

Table 15 Reflection-re-Inaction matrix

There are occasions when in order to be able to engage in a task or complete a task, some things which are situated out of an individual's control need to occur. Reflection-re-Inaction results when the thing a person is relying on does not occur. Examples could include redundancies that have been expected but do not take place, an Ofsted or internal audit where an individual anticipated having their teaching observed but which does not actually happen or where they anticipate a student may display challenging behaviour and, having prepared for the worst, instead they are very well behaved. It is anything for which an individual anticipates and plans for but which then does not then transpire. From that point onwards, an individual's actions are halted or disrupted due to a phenomenon not occurring. Situational Reflective Practice is a suitable vehicle for considering that phenomenon.

Discussion

Reflecting

Within the model, when relating ends and reflection begins and where reflection ends and planning begins is a moot point and is arguably dependent upon the phenomenon and the nature of the individual experiencing that phenomenon. In fact arguably that question is immaterial, what is important is that the act of reflection is afforded the phenomenon. I contend that the five steps of Identify situation, Relate, Reflect, Plan and Act are representative of the process of Situational Reflective Practice, but it is not strictly necessary for each step to be present on each occasion.

Further considerations

The nature of an individual's considerations will be related to the nature of the phenomenon. For example a person's reactions to a situation could be purely cognitive. On the other hand they may be emotional. Alternatively their reactions may be physical. Probably they will be a combination of each. For example, a person may be threatened with redundancy. Their immediate reaction could be emotional as they experience shock. Next they may mull the situation over and over as they search for the various options available to them. Concurrent physical reactions could manifest themselves, for example feelings of nausea. If they are experiencing the effects of physical shock then their pulse could race, their rate of breathing could increase and they may

perspire. Alternatively in a different situation, they may seek safety by running away or they may seek to rescue others.

Diverse perspectives

Within each phenomenon it is possible to consider the situation from many perspectives. A person could relate the situation to their:

- self
- partner
- children
- parents
- friends
- colleagues
- organisation
- others

It is suggested that this model may be suitable for those conducting reflective practice as they embark on their teaching qualifications or having achieved this it may compliment their continuing professional development. The reason for this is that Situational Reflective Practice may facilitate considerations of the perspectives of others and as a result accommodate a greater understanding of a given situation.

Temporal considerations

A person's considerations is likely to include a temporal element where, as in variations 2 and 3 above they may identify that a situation relates to them but at that time they may feel that there is no likelihood that the situation will affect them. In fact many situations which are suitable for Situational Reflective Practice can occur relatively slowly. For example, if a person were to employ the use of Reflection-in-Action (Schon, 1983) then they could be thinking on their feet. It is considered reflective practice because they may well be comparing the situation to previous and similar incidents. Temporarily, this is in relatively quick time.

Next is Reflection-on-Action which is a slower process. An example could be where a person's lesson did not go very well and they are attempting to rationalise what happened and why in order to ensure the problem does not reoccur. They could reflect upon it on their way home and then later that evening. The time frame here is distinctly longer than the previous example.

Situational Reflective Practice (SRP) however, can be a much longer process due to the nature of the phenomenon. The process of SRP includes the act of Reflection-re-Action, in other words it considers the reaction to a phenomenon. Characteristically the situations often associated with SRP will occur in what I will call 'slow time' when compared against the other examples above. For example, the government has announced that cuts will have to be made in the budget, at first a person may wonder if this announcement will

affect them. A month later they read that as part of the governmental push to make monetary savings the Universities are having their budgets cut by 20%. Now the person begins to be concerned questioning whether this will have a direct effect upon them. It is not until another six weeks that they hear officially from the University principal that yes, jobs are to disappear but as yet it is not known which as it is anticipated that natural wastage will be a contributory factor. The temporal considerations in this example and those affecting SRP are by nature generally slow.

Five general themes suitable for Situational Reflective Practice.

There are five general areas a person could consider when directing their thinking which are listed under the mnemonic SCOPE in Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009:27)

- **S**ocial
- **C**ommunicational
- **O**rganisational
- **P**ersonal
- **E**conomic

Social

These are aspects of a person's professional practice involving their relationships with their students, peers, managers and other people with

whom they come into contact with inside and out of their organisation. However these can also include people who are represented in their social life as many situations suitable for SRP can have a knock on effect into a person's personal life. SRP considerations would identify perhaps a breakdown in relationships where the situation arose as a result of another person's attitude or behaviour.

Communicational

Communicational issues include, a person's inability to converse with others, their ability to write in various styles according to the task, how they are conveying their thoughts, ideas and emotions. It can include their observations of people talking to various groups, people exchanging ideas or speaking at an appropriate level, corresponding via emails and reports, how others instruct individuals and groups and most importantly their ability to listen.

Organisational

Here the emphasis of a person's thinking relates to the structure and characteristics of the organisation. These considerations can include the subject matter being delivered; the time afforded to a person or others for marking, tutorials and general support. Considerations can also consider the philosophy of the organisation, this is reflected in its general practices and the manner in which the organisation deals with its employees and students.

Personal

This considers how, in light of the changes or more likely the proposed changes, a person feels they fit into the general scheme of things: their values, beliefs, feelings and behaviour. Here they could consider their work-life balance for instance. Other considerations could include the time a person needs to be at their place of work in light of their work load following re-organisation. Further considerations could include, how long their journey takes them to get to work, their need for child-care or other parental-care arrangements. If a person's responsibilities have been rearranged to include more teaching in evening classes, leaving them with their head still buzzing when it's time for bed, considerations could be given to whether this is affecting their sleep? The questions that could be asked could include whether they feel confident and competent teaching the new subjects that they have been directed to teach? Alternatively, do they need to re-train?

Economic

Following the changes/proposed changes, this examines the effect that money has upon a person's professional practice. It includes their salary or hourly rate if they are a sessional teacher, overtime payments, expense claims or allowances and pension contributions. Furthermore, they could consider the resources now available to support their teaching. They may desire a classroom benefitting from an interactive whiteboard or other ICT

equipment, where in fact the financial restraints mean that they may be teaching with only a flipchart available. Does this situation have an impact on their students' learning experience? What are there implications for them? Whatever the affect of the resources available in the classroom, up-to-date or basic, they can reflect on what they require or would like and how it, in turn affects their teaching and their students' learning.

Conclusion

Situational Reflective Practice (SRP) offers a new and unique perspective upon a familiar theory. It builds on ideas from Schön (1983) Kolb (1984), Gibbs (1988). SRP seeks to add to the body of knowledge in a way that enables students to make sense of their world by observing the prevailing outside influences. There exist some situations where whether a person takes and interest or not, whether they care or not, they will still find themselves in a position that they cannot avoid.

Characteristically Situational Reflective Practice circumstances may occur whereby a person may not be interested in the situation; however the situation may be interested in the person.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study

The purpose of this research was to explore the perceptions of policing students on a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course. In particular it has attempted to identify those perceptions in terms of their study skills needs in relation to motivation levels, relevant support and reflective practice. My interest in this subject stemmed from the fact that I have been involved in teaching full time since 1997 and I recognised that for many students the first steps in the practice of study, can be the most difficult. This study has informed my professional practice in the following respects:

Interest as an FE lecturer

Firstly, as a lecturer in a number of FE colleges I teach PTLLS and DTLLS. This study has highlighted the fact that the students' concerns were not necessarily related to the subject being studied. Instead the concerns many students appear to have experienced can be described as peripheral topics. These included for example, guidance on the amount of study expected to achieve the award, the number of books to read, how to write and structure an assignment and the number of citations to include within an assignment. This study has served to highlight the issue that the lecturer may not always aware

of the underlying issues experienced by their students. However it is suggested that the lecturer should make a conscious effort to identify their possible existence.

Motivation as a training designer and performance needs analyst

The second reason for my interest in the subject of study skills, motivation and reflective practice was that as a trainer and training designer in the Metropolitan Police Service it was necessary for me to accurately judge the ability of both the learners and trainers who would benefit from the supporting material I have designed. My interest in design of training systems has prompted further interest in the students and their learning preferences. Knowledge of the process of learning and teaching has been an important factor and represented an underlying principle which in turn informed my choice of the intended teaching strategies.

Interest as a consultant for the Institute for Learning

Thirdly working closely with the Institute for Learning has enabled me to observe the ways in which teachers throughout the UK engaged in reflective practice. In my capacity as Reviewer of both those engage in Continuing Professional Development and those applying for Professional Formation, I realised that many approached reflective practice at a relatively superficial level. The portfolio entries submitted to the IfL took the form of descriptions of situations but did not benefit from reflection in relation to their own teaching

practice. I felt that this situation may have been the result of a lack of awareness of what was expected of them exactly. This study has enabled me to revisit the topic of reflective practice and offer a new perspective to the existing body of knowledge which took the form of the proposed model, Situational Reflective Practice, which included the models relating to Reflection-re-Action and Reflection-re-Inaction. It was hoped that the model will be embraced by the practitioners within the Lifelong Learning Sector.

Interest as an author

Following the publication of my first co-authored book 'Reflective Practice in the Lifelong Learning Sector' (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse 2009), I co-authored a further 5 books; the last of which was 'Study Skills for Policing Officers' (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010). Much of the reading and research of this study informed the contents of this publication. Through the publication of this series of books I have been able to share the benefits of my study and research, which are intended to be of use other students as they approached the task of study. This research study has informed the pitch and style of the publication and enabled me to produce a learning resource which was suitable for my policing students engaged in study relating to PTLLS, CTLLS, DTLLS, Foundation Degrees and full degrees.

Opportunistic study

While this study has been very timely, it has to an extent been opportunistic in nature and resulted in a phenomenological study. The reason for this was that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) were piloting a PTLLS course with an external provider. This external provider took the form of a Further Education college in central London. Within the MPS, particularly amongst those responsible for delivering the training for trainers courses, there appeared to exist some reluctance to embrace the proposal of outsourcing the training of trainers. This was understandable not least of all because they stood to lose their role. Following the PTLLS course, I was given the opportunity to research the perceptions of the PTLLS students in relation to their study skills needs and the adoption of reflective practice, motivational issues and the extent to which they felt these had been supported. My interest also included their ability to use reflective practice, as I was aware that this concept had been introduced to them on the course; many for the first time.

The MPS's interest was that of the students' perceptions of their teaching practice following the course and was not intended for inclusion within this research. As a result I compiled a number of reports which were shared with the MPS. The questions asked for the purpose of the MPS were:

- 9 *How well do you feel you are progressing in your teaching practice?*
- 9a *What do you wish to achieve in your teaching?*

10 *How will you go about developing your teaching?*

10a *Who will you approach for advice?*

The study was concerned with the perceptions of the students. As a result it was intended that I would reflect these needs by offering appropriate support within the MPS. As mentioned, it further informed my book 'Study Skills for Policing Students' (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010).

Previous research

Very little research had been undertaken in relation to police officers entering further education and no research exists that considers policing students embarking on a PTLLS course. For this reason, this study represents a unique contribution to the body of knowledge. However this study goes further by offering a new model in relation to reflective practice which came about as a direct result of this study, namely Situational Reflective Practice (SRP).

The most significant feature of SRP is that it enables the student to distinguish between two significant influencing factors, namely those which they can change and those which they cannot. The potential of this model is to add to the existing reflective practice models. As a result, students will be able engage in reflective practice in ways that go beyond considerations contained within their teaching practice. This model enables the student to consider aspects of their professional practice over which they have little or no control.

It is pertinent in this present environment of governmental interference and the subsequent demand for change and reorganisation on the part of the beleaguered public sector.

The Research Outcomes

The research outcomes will be discussed in two parts which mirror chapters 4 and 5.

Part 1 Considerations from Chapter 4

Topic 1 Support

1. What support was provided by the organisation? (MPS)

Summary:

- In general it was considered that little or no support had been received from the MPS.
- The pre-reading could have assisted them by being more comprehensive.
- The use of emails produced various responses, some found them useful and others not.
- Direct contact from the MPS representative was valued in terms of support.
- The availability of books was poor, rather than being available from the MPS library, the students were required to purchase them themselves.

- In general the students experienced uncertainty in relation to their expectations of the course.

Discussion:

Insufficient Support from MPS

This appears to reflect Knowles, Holton and Swanson, (2005:117) that amongst a group of adults with whom they worked, the majority were 'dependent on teachers to teach them' and 'often experienced a form of shock when first exposed to truly adult educational programs.' This dependency is typical of the pedagogical approach to learning espoused by Knowles (1999). As a result, it will be appropriate for the MPS to consider the nature of further support that is offered to the PTLLS students in order to prepare them for academic study.

Recommendation 1

That policing PTLLS students to be provided with joining instructions which identify their responsibilities in relation to learning.

Managing expectations (pre reads)

It would appear that managing expectations has not been achieved in this instance; the pre-read that was offered by the MPS appears not well received by the students. Light, Cox and Calkins (2009) suggest that support is about

helping students to learn to make decisions rather than simply transferring knowledge and deciding for them. In this instance it appears the pre-read did not help the students to learn. Some respondents referred to the support that was offered via the use of emails, but a number of the opinions offered appear contradictory. For example, it appears whereas one student felt that being asked to complete a portfolio came as a bit of a shock, another appeared to appreciate the amount of work the portfolio would entail. However it appears that emails are a medium suitable for distributing pre-read instructions, what is required is for the instructions to be reconsidered in light of the students' observations.

Recommendation 2

That the pre-read instructions should be made available both in paper form and electronically.

Further to the above, introducing the students to the principles of reflective practice within the pre-read maybe beneficial, this is because it would familiarise the students with the concept of reflective practice at the outset. It is possible that an element of the pre-read could walk the students through the reflective practice cycle. A suitable topic may be that of their learning needs. As a result the students may be more overtly involved with any diagnostic assessments prior to the PTLLS course.

Recommendation 3

That the students partake of reflective practice within the pre-reads to form a part of the diagnostic assessment of their study skills needs

Responsibility for learning (The availability of books)

As was discussed in chapter 2 the essential quality of the terms pedagogy and andragogy are that whereas a pedagogical approach assumes responsibility for learning rests with the teacher, the andragogical approach assumes that the responsibility for learning is on the part of the learner. It is proposed that the early adoption of reflective practice may assist in adapting the students' attitude towards a more andragogical approach to learning. This could include tasks such as requesting the students to reflect on their own responsibilities as learners. The issues first came to light in relation of the responsibility of purchasing the learning resources e.g. a book. It appears that most students purchased the publication by Gravells (2008). This situation is analogous with the bipolar positions of pedagogy and andragogy offered by Knowles, (Knowles, 1999, Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005, Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, Reece and Walker: 2007). This fact is indicative of the pedagogical approach to learning adopted by many students. However, it would be appropriate for the library at Hendon or Bramshill to stock this item, the availability could then be indicated within the pre-read.

Recommendation 4

Appropriate and sufficient literature should be available for the policing students at Hendon and Bramshill libraries.

Informative intranet site

It appears that in some instances the learners were not equipped with the necessary knowledge to enable them to begin to construct an idea of how they may learn within the course. As a result the students in this particular situation may not have been supported sufficiently to match the needs of adult learners. This finding supports Illeris (2007) who offered an alternative list of the characteristics of the late societal adults. In light of this it appears appropriate for MPS to consider the appropriate support for the students prior to them attending the PTLLS course, possible in the form of tuition or an informative intranet site. Again, a form of guided reflective practice would be appropriate. This could take the form of some of the more approachable learning style questionnaires referred to in chapter 2. The benefit to the students would be an informed view of the way in which they learn best.

Recommendation 5

That the MPS consider relevant reflective support for students prior to attending the PTLLS courses which includes learning style questionnaires

2. What support was provided by the college?

Summary:

All students considered the support offered by the college to be good. This included:

- accessibility of staff
- appropriate teaching strategies
- access to Intranet site
- providing a safe learning environment
- motivational support
- timely feedback

Discussion:

Without fail the respondents considered the support offered by the college was good. The respondents appeared to accept that they would require assistance with their study. This is analogous to the second step found within the 'Steps of Competence' (Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, 2010:16). Step two is that of 'Conscious Incompetence' where the student becomes aware of their shortcomings. It is further postulated that the introduction of Situation Reflective Practice (SRP) at this stage of a student's progress would be advantageous to that learner. At the stage of reaching 'Conscious Incompetence' the student typically exhibit an awareness of many influencing factors in relation to their learning. SRP will enable them to differentiate

those influences which can be controlled and those over which they have no or very little control.

What appears to be the case here is that the support offered by the college, was suitable to support the students at a time that is arguably potentially vulnerable for the adult learner.

Recommendation 6

That the MPS adopt the model of Situational Reflective Practice within the PTLLS pre-course material

Feedback

This study indicates that the timeliness of the feedback offered to the students may be a contributory factor towards creating, what Ormrod (1999: 456) observes as, people who are "...more likely to pursue a task on their own initiative, keep their attention focussed on it, learn meaningfully and persist in the face of failure.' In this instance the speedy feedback was considered to be a good thing from the perspective of the students. There may exist a causal link between the efficiency of the college and the motivation of the students. It appears that the perception of the students in relation to the support they experienced from the college was positive. This situation is contrary to the suggestion by Light, Cox and Calkins (2009: 48) that teachers, '...frequently have very a limited idea of why students are failing to achieve.'

On this occasion it appears the teaching staff were particularly aware of the needs of these students.

No recommendations are thought necessary in this instance.

2a What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?

Summary

- It was felt by some that the pre-joining packs could have been improved.
- Time was an issue for all students.
- They were provided 30 hours protected study time but not all were in a position to take advantage of this, as a result, they can be supported by their line managers being made aware of the need for the protected study time.
- Some students subjected themselves to pressure by attempting to complete the assignments during the course; they could be supported by being made aware of a more appropriate time scale for completion of the assignments.
- They could be further supported by being made aware of the intensity of the course.
- There is a need to manage expectations in relation to the demands of a PTLLS course.
- Advice in relation to writing an assignment was pertinent for many.

- Many of the students expected a pedagogical approach to teaching as opposed an andragogical approach.

Discussion:

Pre-joining pack

Many considered the information in relation to the course, which took the form of the pre-joining packs, could have been improved. The needs of learners returning to study appear to have an influence upon their expectations. In this instance, not knowing exactly what to expect appears to engender feelings of the existence of 'a problem.' The return to learning (Rogers, 2007), may engender feelings of the inability to manage change where in this instance they were faced with delivering a 20 minute lesson; some had not realised the presentation was a part of the course prior to attending. The inclusion of suitable pre-course material may ensure that such important aspects of the course will not be a surprise to the students and further they will have been given the opportunity to reflect on the 20 minute lesson. This links to Recommendation 1.

The pressure of time

Time was a theme upon which all students commented. The time issues consisted of travelling time, time to study and protected study time. Although it was suggested that the students be provided 30 hours protected study time,

this was not always a viable option. Some had not realised how much time they would need to allocate to study and consequently it came as a shock; for some it appeared to make quite an impact. Again, adopting an element of reflective practice within the pre-joining pack will enable prospective attendees to consider their availability of time prior to engaging the PTLLS course. It would be appropriate for students to be provided protected study time and for this to be negotiated with the students' line managers in advance of attending the course.

Recommendation 7

That the line managers of the attending PTLLS students are made aware of the availability of protected study time.

Managing expectations

It is clear that a gulf exists between the PTLLS course and the students' expectations of the PTLLS course. The question that exists is what effect would a greater understanding of the process have upon the student's study skills prior to attending the course? Providing sufficient information to the students, prior to the course combined with engagement in reflective practice prior to attending the course would have a beneficial affect on the student. This is because it would enable the students to orient themselves mentally to the process of learning in a more academic arena. Therein lays a difficulty where by explaining the fact that the students were expected to write assignments may have increased the stress of those who had no knowledge

of what writing an assignment entailed. In order to combat this situation, perhaps examples of assignments and an explanation of how to structure an assignment should feature within the pre-course material. However, it appears that the general perceptions of the students were that they would have preferred more information prior to attending the course. Again this issue can be reflected within Recommendation 1.

Writing in an academic style

Writing in an academic style was a concern for many students, it appears that the students recognised they would be required to adapt their writing style but in some cases they were unaware of how to go about this. Some of the students had not studied since school and so were anxious, describing their inability to write academically. This is analogous to what Illeris, (2006: 38) regards as one of the three learning types between, 'cumulation, assimilation and accommodation'. It would be appropriate for the MPS to offer some guidance in relation to study skills and writing academically.

A pedagogical approach

A recurring issue was that of the andragogical / pedagogical approach to learning. Some of the students appeared to favour a more pedagogical approach which was exhibited by wanting to be told what to do. When comparing this statement against the characteristics of social adults offered by Illeris (2007: 208), he suggests that, 'Adults take as much responsibility for

their learning as they want to take (if they are allowed to).’ It would appear that little responsibility for learning was being taken by many in this study, which is representative of a pedagogical approach to learning. What appears to be occurring is that on one hand the college are encouraging an andragogical approach to learning whereas, culturally Met (MPS) students are used to and have come to expect a pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. Again, it appears appropriate to make the students aware of this situation prior to them attending the course. This can be achieved within the pre read in Recommendation 1. Further, it is suggested that the adoption of reflective practice will engender some degree of learner independence towards that of an andragogic learner.

Topic 2 Study skills Support

3. What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?

Summary:

- Engaging in study was considered a learning need and closely related to this was the perception that the act of study within a more academic learning environment was a problem for some

- The assignments are an issue for many students who require guidance in writing assignments in an academic style

Discussion:

Engaging in study

Overwhelmingly the students considered engaging in academic study to represent a learning need. It appears the first step into writing in an academic style can be a particularly difficult one. The ability to construct a coherent, well structured assignment represents a skill necessary to enable an individual to function at an academic level. This represents a learning need on behalf of the learner. Variations in the needs of learners occur as a result of the school they attended (or not), differences in class, ethnicity, opportunity, culture, gender, personality, cognitive style, learning style, attitude, ability, self efficacy and motivation (Bedford and Wilson: 2006). Not all students experienced difficulty writing assignment, these included those who had recently studied at an academic level, but these represented few within the group as there were a total of only 4 who had worked at level 5.

Again students observed issues in relation to a pedagogic approach to learning. The activity of study appeared to be problematic for some who were unused to finding their way in the academic environment. There existed an issue in relation to wanting to be told what to include within the students' notes. This again is representative of the pedagogical approach to learning (Knowles, 1999, Knowles, Holton and Swanson, 2005, Merriam and Caffarella, 1999, Reece and Walker: 2007) where the responsibility for learning is considered to be the responsibility of the teacher.

Recommendations 5 and 6 apply equally here.

The relevance of theory and learning to learn

There appeared some confusion between the need to relate phenomena to theory. Whereas some students felt that their own experiences alone were suitable for inclusion within an assignment, it was not always appreciated that it was necessary to support this with the relevant theory; again, this is an essential skill necessary to write academically (McGee (2010), Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, (2010)). Arguably with the lack of some essential skills some students may benefit from tuition in learning how to learn, as the data indicates a lack of some of the essential skills necessary to facilitate study. Recommendations 3, 5 and 6 apply equally here.

Writing assignments

It was the assignments that the students commented upon most frequently. In particular one appeared to exhibit an element of insecurity in respect of writing essays. Essay writing represents one of the essential skills necessary for academic study (McGee (2010), Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen,(2010). There appeared to exist very little knowledge in how to write an assignment, this could be representative of what Illeris (2006: 38) refers to as 'cumulation. Cumulative learning takes place in a form of tabula rasa, where the individual is first introduced to a subject and where no mental scheme has been constructed and is associated with that of a child making sense of the world.

For some it appeared that guidance in relation to preparing and structuring an assignment would be appropriate. Again this points to the need to incorporate a base level of essential skills (McGee (2010), Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, (2010)) perhaps prior to engaging in the academic study. Recommendations 3, 5 and 6 apply equally here.

4. What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?

Summary:

- The mentor was valued by the majority due to their availability either responding to e-mails or via the telephone.
- The need for a didactic, pedagogical approach was mooted identifying a mismatch in expectations.
- Some found the first steps difficult and required assistance to actually get started in relation to the assignments.

Discussion:

Support from the mentor

The support from the mentor was valued considerably by most of the students. The tutors were available on the telephone or via emails until 8pm each evening; this support was appreciated by the majority of the students.

Guidance in relation to writing

It appeared that some students required guidance in relation to the pitch of their work. This need is analogous to the transition between conscious incompetence and conscious competence (Moore (2007), Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen, (2010)). In one instance a student made a conscious effort to gather feedback which could influence their motivation to continue to improve. A similar condition is offered by Fredenburg et al., (2001:3) in chapter 2, who suggest an important factor pertaining to motivation is the, 'learner's interpretation of his or her ability that has been linked to concrete achievements.' They relate this in terms of 'perceived competence, self-efficacy, perceived ability and self-perception of ability. Again, it is suggested that prior to attending the PTTLS course MPS students are offered some form of guidance in relation to their academic writing skills. Further, the adoption of reflective practice will further support the writing process. Recommendations 3 and 6 apply equally here.

Guidance in relation to citing

There existed a need for guidance in relation to the number of citations to include within an assignment. This is similar to the observation by Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005:117) that amongst a group of adults with whom they worked, the majority were 'dependent on teachers to teach them' and '... often experienced a form of shock when first exposed to truly adult educational programs.' As a result it was felt necessary to offer later entrants a form of learning how to learn activity. This lends itself to my assertion (as referred to above and previously) that before embarking on the PTLLS course, some students may benefit from learning the essential skills; further an element of this would be learning how to learn. Recommendations 3 and 6 apply here.

Difficulty in taking the first step

In relation to beginning the learning process some students appeared to find it difficult to take the first step and a few shared how they relied upon a relative or friend for guidance. This is supported by Malthouse and Roffey-Barentsen (2010) who identify an analogy between motivation to study and a journey, observing that the first step in a journey can be the most difficult. They suggest an obstruction to study on the part of students is an inclination to procrastinate but observing the reason for not starting a task may differ from person to person. Recommendations 3, 5 and 6 apply equally here as the

adoption reflective practice may offer the student direction or the confidence to start the learning process.

Taking responsibility for one's own learning

Taking responsibility for one's own learning appeared to be a persisting issue and further some students appeared to lack the confidence to actually engage in the assignment. This is synonymous to attribution theory which pertains to 'causal perception' (Child, 1997). This relates to what an individual believes are the reasons for their success or failure and the effect this then has on their future expectations. Any previous experiences may have an influence on an individual's perception of their ability or willingness to engage in a task. Any study skills support may not be in a position to identify the underlying reasons for a student's belief in their ability, in fact the student may not be aware of these factors themselves. Reflective practice may assist to identify any underlying assumptions in relation to the students' ability. This can though be discussed in the pre-read. Recommendation 1 applies here.

5. Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course?

Summary:

- The support was considered sufficient by the majority of students
- Although the majority of students considered the feedback to be very good, one observed the college to be slow

- Another considered the course to be too intense

Discussion:

The majority of students considered the support sufficient to help them complete the course. Within those positive replies a number of themes emerged. The other responses were more disparate including the structure of the course, the ability to apply for an extension and the use of tutorials. Of those who did not consider the support to be sufficient cited the time in which feedback was received, another felt that the course was too intense; the existence of pressure was a common theme. The underlying issue here appears to be that some students' expectations had been poorly managed. Guidance in relation to, for example, the extent of study necessary to complete the course and the process of requesting an extension can be inserted into the handbook and the pre-joining pack. The adoption of reflective practice will assist student to be self supporting. To this end Recommendations 1, 2, 5 and 6 apply in this instance.

5a What additional support would you have liked?

Summary:

- Varied responses included:
 - being valued by the MPS

- support returning to study by being provided an overview of the course
- further guidance in relation to writing as assignment
- Time and the availability of protected time was again an issue

Discussion:

A varied response

Some of the responses were quite varied, for example, they included being valued by the MPS for their achievements, support with returning to study and the college providing an overview of the course. Many observed the intensity of the course but did not state what support they would have liked in response to this. Some felt that they would have liked further guidance in relation to writing an assignment. Support was interpreted in some instances in terms of teaching styles in one case the style of teaching did not always match the student's expectations. Again there appeared a mismatch in relation to some of the students' wishes to be taught via a pedagogical approach when instead they received an andragogical approach. Recommendation 1 is appropriate again here.

Time and protected study

The amount of additional support considered necessary was linked to the perceived ability of the lecturer, but not all students considered that they

required additional support. However the majority of students highlighted time as being an issue, the problem appeared to be the fact they were given a five day course delivered within one week, which included the micro teaches on the last day and then being asked to complete the reflective practice journal and prepare for the micro teaches concurrently. Following the contact learning hours, the students were given 30 hours protected study time in which to complete the assignments. Consideration could be given to the students attending the PTLLS course over a number of weeks. Recommendation 5 is appropriate here.

6. What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?

Summary:

- Securing protected study time was again an issue
- Likewise an issue of time was again cited as a concern
- It was considered that the MPS should prepare them for the course
- A mismatch in expectations existed in terms of andragogical and pedagogical approaches to education
- Issues existed in relation to IT but these were minor relating to the possession of a computer and the use of the MPS intranet site
- The issue of embarking on written work was considered

Discussion:

Securing protected study time

Securing the protected study time and ensuring the MPS line managers were aware of this benefit was a consideration for some. Time was again an issue; generally the students recognised that they had to work hard to keep to the imposed deadline for completion of the assignment. Recommendation 7 applies here.

Recommendation 8

That the MPS consider the possibility of the PTLLS course to be delivered over a period of two weeks or alternatively one day over ten weeks.

Preparation on the part of the MPS

One popular consideration was that of the MPS adequately preparing the students for the course. The request for the students to be adequately prepared for the course may stem from the characteristics of late social adults identified by Illeris, (2007). It appears necessary for the students to receive some form of instruction before attending the PTLLS course.

Recommendations 1, 3, 5 and 6 are appropriate here.

Use of the internet

The use of the internet by the MPS was also considered a useful idea and again linked into the issue of preparing the students adequately prior to the course. It appears a sensible proposal to create an intranet web site within the MPS system dedicated to the PTLLS course.

Recommendation 9

That the MPS consider creating a dedicated intranet site for PTLLS students

The first steps

Again it appears that the first step in writing can be the most difficult for some. Perhaps seeing an example of another's work or a set example may enable imitation, this at least would provide some structure upon which later writing and ideas may flourish. Recommendation 8 is applicable here also

Topic 3 Reflective Practice

7. Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?

Summary:

- Three groups were identified,
 - those who regularly used Reflective Practice (RP)
 - those who used it on occasion
 - one who did not
- Many appeared to have engaged in RP had not been aware of the term
- No one recorded their reflections following the course
- During the course all students engaged in some form of RP but perceptions of its value were varied
- A clear link to RP and practice was evident in one instance, however in general students were willing to think about their teaching, but whether this actually amounted to RP as identified by Kolb (1984) is debatable

Discussion:

Three groups

Three distinct groups were evident, those who considered that they were able to use Reflective Practice (RP) on a regular basis, those who thought they did on certain occasions and one who did not. Some were unaware of the terminology prior to the PTLLS course, but without fail, following the PTLLS course no one recorded their thoughts. The phenomenon appears to be that the students were willing to conduct a form of what they thought was RP but only to a point. What they were doing in fact represents what was referred to

in chapter 2 as a “common sense view” of reflection offered by Moon (2004:82). This is indicative of employing the everyday meaning of the verb to reflect. Within the course the students appear to have engaged in the notion of reflective practice postulated by Kolb (1984) who introduced the four-stage model of learning. This model can be very useful for people who are new to teaching. The reason for this is that it is clear, unambiguous and follows a logical progression. Perhaps the process of completing the learning journal would benefit from a more prescriptive approach; this would after all benefit those students who preferred a pedagogical approach to learning. To this end the Gibbs reflective cycle is relatively self-explanatory and it encourages reflective practice by asking questions at six stages.

Recommendation 10

That the Gibbs model of reflective practice to be employed for students new to reflective practice

7a. Have you learned from experience?

Summary:

- The perceptions of about half of the students are that they learned from the use of Reflective Practice

- Some did not find the concept a new experience and exhibited a positive attitude towards the subject and relating it to their everyday activity of thinking about situations
- It appeared that some records of RP took the form of an account of the content of the lesson

Discussion:

The perceptions of roughly half of the students are that they learned from the use of Reflective Practice. Some did not find the concept a new experience and exhibited a positive attitude towards the subject and relating it to their everyday activity of thinking about situations. The PTLLS course did offer many experiences on which to reflect. For some during the course record keeping appeared useful, however this took the form of notes during the lesson to inform subsequent reflective practice. In general there existed a positive attitude towards the concept of RP although none of the students kept a record of their subsequent RP following the PTLLS course.

8. How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your teaching?

Summary:

- A correlation was made by some between Reflective Practice (RP) and students' teaching practice

- In some instances students have changed their approach to training as a result of RP
- RP was evident in the re-design of lessons where change was deemed necessary
- A matrix indicated that without exception no students employed the use of the reflective practice cycle (Kolb, 1984)
- Conversely there was a general desire to improve teaching practice
- Reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) was evident
- Reflective practice was introduced by some into their own courses.

Discussion

Some of the students appear to have reflected upon their teaching practice, bringing about a change in the way in which they delivered a lesson. Alternative perspectives were considered. It appears that this may be synonymous with Brookfield's (1995) theory where he identified the importance of researching critically what teachers do.

Brookfield's Lenses

It would appear from the account of the student in chapter 4 in relation to Brookfield's lenses (1988), all the lenses have been considered, on some occasions. Further, there appear to exist a number of qualities of reflection that distinguish reflective practice from common sense reflecting.

Use of reflective practice

There exist a number of qualities of reflection that distinguish reflective practice from common sense reflecting (Van Manen (1991), Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, (2009), these include:

- The use of the reflective practice cycle
- Analytical writing
- Links to previous considerations
- It may be recorded formally
- It is generally a solitary process but ideas may be shared with others
- It is developmental mainly personal development
- It is often aspirational in nature
- It makes clear links to professional practice
- It employs the use of an action plan

What was observed with the matrix at Table 14 was that none of the selected examples stated they employed the use of the reflective practice cycle (Kolb 1984). It appears that a part of the cycle has been utilised namely, Concrete Experience, (Doing it), followed by Reflective Observation (Reflecting on it), the following stage of 'Abstract Conceptualisation' (Reading up on it) appears to have been missed completely and lastly 'Active Experimentation' (Planning the next stage) is engaged upon. However what is missing from the Reflective Observation is any attempt to record the reflections; this is further ignored at the stage of Active Experimentation where apparently there exists

no action plan for most students; a few though (3 in total) did suggest they planned within their reflective practice.

Links to previous considerations

Consideration of the selected data in the above matrix suggests that the majority of the students included in this instance appeared to make links to previous considerations, which would be expected if they were attempting to improve their own practice. All shared their ideas but this could be due to the fact that some of these ideas occurred as a result of the PTLLS course attended. Most considered their personal development as a part of the reflective practice. All aspired to improve their teaching practice and made clear links to their professional practice.

Reflection-in-Action

There existed practices during which reflection in action appeared to be evident, (Schön, 1983). Schön referred to two forms of reflective practice, “Reflection-in-action and “Reflection-on-action.” Reflection-in-action” refers to a person who is required to think on their feet as they perhaps discover what they are doing is not working as well as they had hoped. Whereas reflection-on-action relates to the organised thoughts experienced after an event. Some students valued reflective practice as a learning tool and were able to introduce it into their own lessons and another appeared to be motivated to do better by incorporating the use of reflective practice at a personal level.

8a What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?

Summary

- Some students perceived that they were unable to make changes to their lessons as these were mandatory or corporate courses
- Students perceived that an appropriate occasion to make change occurred at the planning stage of their sessions, as they revisited the design of sessions

Discussion

Although five respondents suggested they had experienced no difficulties, there was a mixed response to this question. Some courses delivered within the MPS were described as being mandatory, where all members of the MPS were expected to experience the training. These mandatory courses and others were also described as being corporate, where the training package was designed by the MPS specifically for certain groups. Neither was considered suitable for change in any way. It appeared that elements of mandatory training can cause problems for the trainer this appears due to the fact that the material is prescriptive.

For many it was at the stage of planning the delivery of lessons in light of previous lessons that offered an opportunity for change

Recommendation 11

That the MPS consider adopting reflective practice in various forms of training.

Topic 5 Developmental issues

11. Have you identified your individual needs for further development?

Summary

A diverse array of responses was offered:

- Rather than needing to develop, two students identified a need for staking stock
- Another perceived that Reflective Practice (RP) should be included as part of his development
- One student considered RP would be used to improve her ability to write and improve her IT skills

Discussion

The responses to this question were quite diverse and many of the responses to this question included responses in relation to the practice of teaching which is out of the remit for this research. However of those responses that included an allusion to study skills the offered which included an opportunity for two to take stock before continuing with their development. One student identified reflective practice as being included in their development. An issue emerged in relation to skills fade and it was suggested that if a skill was not used it was lost. This is supported by Howe (1998) who suggests that if a person does not have an opportunity to use the skill, and get into the habit of using it the chances are that it will indeed fade.

11a. How are you going to meet those needs?

Summary

- One student considered collaborative reflective practice with other trainers would meet his needs
- The importance of adequate preparation was considered vital by another
- Visiting educational and Home Office websites as a source of information was suggested as was sharing best practice with other managers in order to achieve best practice

Discussion

One student suggested a form of collaborative reflective practice involving continuing professional development. The characteristic nature of collaborative reflective practice is akin to Professional Reflective Practice (Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse, 2009). In chapter 2 it was argued that within teacher education, reflective practice appears to have become stuck within the confines of the classroom, where the locus of attention is restricted to considerations of the interactions between the new teacher and their students.

Another suggested looking at Home Office websites educational websites and another sought professional guidance. There is no reason why this could not be developed within the MPS by using the intranet site. This could also include links to other, relevant educational web sites. Recommendation 10 applies here also.

12. What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?

Summary

- One student perceived support to take the form of being valued by the organisation
- Another valued refresher training

- IT was also mooted as a suitable medium for continuing support

Discussion

It appears that in general the students cannot see very far into the future.

This may be that they are uninformed in relation to the options available to them. A student spoke of support in terms of acknowledgement or of being valued. Refresher training was also considered by one and the use of IT was again considered appropriate. Recommendation 10 applies here also.

13. Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?

Summary:

- Roughly half the students considered they experienced no barriers to their personal development
- For some the perception of being undervalued was again discussed.
- Senior management within the MPS was perceived by another to represent a barrier to personal development
- Issues of motivation related to a general lack of training from the organisation were offered by another
- A comparison was made between training provided by the MPS and the college, with the MPS perceived as being re-active and the college pro-active

Discussion:

No barriers

Roughly half of the respondents considered they had not experienced any barriers to their personal development. However of those who did not it appear that the obstacle in relation to their personal development is that of an intense busy work-load.

Feelings of being undervalued by the MPS

A student expressed feelings of being undervalued by the MPS. At present this student appears motivated to employ her skills and appears pleased with her achievements. This is comparable to Fredenburg et al., (2001:3), who suggest an important factor pertaining to motivation is the, 'learner's interpretation of his or her ability that has been linked to concrete achievements.'

Knee jerk reaction

A student was highly critical of the MPS observing a knee jerk reaction on the part of senior management. The concerns this individual has in relation to the MPS appear to reflect the external factors acting upon the causal perception of an individual, which affects the way an individual interprets daily events and consequences. This is an example of a persons 'explanatory style' (Ormrod, 1999:453).

Use of outside agency

Another student observed that where previously the in-house training was considered lacking in some ways, he was pleased that an outside agency was being employed to train the MPS staff. In general, the students were very positive about the use of the college to teach the MPS trainers. The perceptions of one student are that the advantages of employing the outside agency appear very positive. They contrast this to the MPS who, it is suggested, are re-active as opposed to pro-active.

Another example of the positive sentiment in relation to the use of outside agencies took the form of a student who appreciated being taught by the outside agency and not being bogged down in political correctness experienced from the trainers within the MPS. The perceptions of this individual suggests that in comparison the MPS training experiences, their experiences of the college were very favourable and could contribute to the individual's motivation. This links well to Ormrod (2008:407) who identifies motivation to be, 'an internal state that arouses us to action, pushes us in particular directions, and keeps us engaged in certain activities.' In this study the experience of MPS training by the individual could indicate a certain frustration with the style and content of the training being offered by the MPS which may have a negative impact on the student's motivation to participate and therefore learn.

Transformational comments

Some comments appear to be transformational in nature in relation to an awareness of the nature of teaching. Cranton (1996:113) suggests that, 'If the process of reflection leads to an awareness of an invalid, undeveloped, or distorted meaning scheme or perspective; if that scheme or perspective is then revised; and if the individual acts on the revised belief, the development has been transformative.' The transformative aspect related to an individual's beliefs, or constructs. Construct in this context is the assumption that knowing is '...an active process of constructing meaning or making sense of experience' Erickson (2007: 64). Whether transformative or not, it is clear that this student's experience of the course was a very positive one and one that has perhaps changed the individual's perspective on teaching in some way.

13a. What kinds of barriers to development have you met? (e.g. resources, use of ICT, access, time etc)

Summary

- Time and family commitments was perceived as an issue for one and again the issue of time was alluded to.
- Attending the course over a period of weeks was suggested and preparation time was an issue for another.
- A comparison was made between the learning culture of the MPS and the college, identifying how the MPS can improve its practice.

Time

The responsibility of children and time appears to have been a concern for some

Barriers

Four students considered they had no barriers to their development, however some issues were raised and in particular that of the availability of time. It appears that if the students are to prepare for a micro teach during the course on top of writing the learning journal and embarking on assignments, consideration could be given to how the time is managed within the course. Perhaps starting on a Wednesday and including the weekend for the purpose

of preparation for the micro-teach may assist time management or alternatively the course could be attended over a period of weeks.

Recommendation 9 applies here also.

Learning culture

It appears that the experience of the PTLLS course for some has had the effect of highlighting the differences in the learning culture between the college and the MPS in some cases. As a result, some students' have been made aware of how their own teaching practice can be improved.

14. Is there anything further you would like to add about your learning experience on the PTTL course?

15. If there is one thing you would change about your training course that would help you in your role, what would that be?

Summary

- Although one person recognised the distinction between writing at level 3 and 4 this experience was not shared by all students who identified difficulty with writing assignments
- Prior experience as school had a direct bearing on one respondent's attitude to learning in a classroom

- Some felt they would have benefitted from further guidance in relation to the writing, pitch and structure of assignments
- In general the attitude of the PTLLS students towards their learning appeared positive

Level 3 and 4

One student explained a greater understanding of what was expected between a level 3 and 4. The college were able to guide the individual, providing an understanding of how to write at level 4. Not all students were so clear and perhaps some guidance in respect to the difference between the two may be useful for the students prior to attending the course.

Recommendation 1 applies here.

Previous experience of school

Previous experience of school influenced one student's motivation. This is synonymous with Rogers (2007) who identifies the various influences for the adult learner returning to learning. In this instance, it is possible that the difficulties this student faced during their school years could include elements of the above list.

Assignments

Many were new to writing assignments and some had not written academically for a considerable time. Recommendations 8 and 10 apply here

Part 2 Considerations from Chapter 5

The data which emerged from the four responses from the first set of data and the five further interviews revealed over 20 situations where outside influences affected the students. This in itself is not uncommon; the distinguishing feature here is that the person experiencing the phenomenon often had no control over the experience. This phenomenon is termed Situational Reflective Practice. The interpretation of the data contained within Chapter 5 suggests that there exist circumstances in which Situational Reflective Practice may be suitable as a means to reflect upon a situation, other than that found within the more traditional forms of reflective practice; namely Reflection-in-Action and Reflection-on-Action. Instead Situational Reflective Practice takes the form of Reflection-re-Action; the action representing an act, situation or behaviour external to the person experiencing it.

It is acknowledged that the population of 5 people is low and therefore difficult to generalise from. It is hoped that further research can be undertaken in relation to Situational Reflective Practice.

Recommendation 12

That further research should be afforded Situational Reflective Practice.

Issues of Equality

Questions in relation to Situational Reflective Practice highlighted two issues in relation to issues of diversity and equality. The first considered alleged discriminatory behaviour in relation to gender and the second discriminatory behaviour in relation to age. Both of these were deemed to contravene the Equalities Act, 2010. It is acknowledged that this study did not identify any counter arguments and accepted the accounts without question. The study was relatively small; however, the fact that two of the fifteen of the population alleged inappropriate behaviour may be a cause for concern. Moreover, both examples involved women, which meant 2 women out of the total 6 experienced alleged discrimination.

It appears appropriate that further research is conducted in respect of issues of diversity, in particular issues of gender and ageism. The Equality Act, 2010 applies to the MPS; however no training has been offered in relation to this to date. The introduction of the relatively new act offers an appropriate time to consider suitable training interventions. Further questions that arise are questions in relation to gender. Both examples involved women, further research may be appropriate to identify if this is significant.

Recommendation 13

Appropriate training to be offered to all members of the MPS in relation to the Equality Act, 2010.

Methodology

This research has been qualitative in nature and to compliment this, a phenomenological study was chosen. This has been considered an apposite approach to examine and seek to understand the meaning the participants of groups attribute to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2009). A phenomenological study is the most appropriate vehicle for this study as I was attempting to identify the individual's perceptions. The need here is that I consider the affect of my own assumptions which may include causal consequences or levels of significance (King and Jiggins, 2002). The problem with this lies in the possibility of my assumptions existing sub-consciously: I may well exhibit assumptions about which I was totally unaware and therefore unable to change consciously. As a coping strategy I kept a diary of how I felt about the issues that were being discussed following the interviews. This enabled me to distinguish between my issues and those referred to by the respondents in interview.

Phenomenological study

As discussed in chapter 1, in broad terms a study attempts to understand the nature of a lived experience. What characterises this style of research is the researcher's search for a constant, or 'essence' found within an account.

Creswell (1998: 52) describes how the researcher having searched for the essential meaning of the experience, '... emphasises the intentionality of consciousness where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness based on memory, image and meaning.' An understanding on the part of the researcher of the philosophical perspectives behind the approach in relation to the concept of how individuals experience a phenomenon was considered important (Creswell, 1998). To this end I studied the work of Kelly (1955) in relation to personal constructs in an attempt to identify the various ways in which a person can experience a phenomenon.

Research questions

I was mindful for the need of the researcher to compose research questions that would investigate the significance of the individuals' experience, which should take the form of a description of their everyday lived experiences (Creswell, 1998). When considering the responses to the questions, it appears that they were written in such a way as to enable the respondents to relate these to their own model of the world. The aim was to enter that model of the world where possible and where permitted. Not all of the subjects

studied were asked about specifically, this was because it was anticipated that any such references would occur naturally as a result of dialogue.

Data collection

Data were then collected from the individuals who had encountered the phenomenon being researched. There were 15 respondents. The data collection took the form of interviews. Next the original protocols were divided into statements; also referred to as horizontalisation. At this stage I attempted to afford these equal status. The data were then colour coded and removed from the original accounts. Following this the data were transferred into clusters of meanings and were placed in relation to the topic being discussed, e.g. time, the ability to reflect, etc. This data were discussed with a critical friend, who confirmed agreement that the clusters appeared appropriate.

The clusters, now in the form of what are described as transformations, were then joined together to make a broad description of the phenomena. The data were then reconsidered and discussed in relation to the emerging themes. This was then shared with one of the students who had taken part in the interviews, who fed back to me.

Protocols

I must acknowledge though that there were many occasions when I could have influenced the data subconsciously, not least of all when constructing the interview questions. The data could have been further influenced by me during the interviews and at the time of transferring to the clusters of meanings; these were the times when I may have subconsciously interpreted the data to suit my own likes and dislikes. As it was me that noted the patterns within the data, then arguably this could well have been a construct created by me to compliment my own likes and dislikes. It is hoped though that by conforming to the protocols in relation to phenomenological research I can make a claim to validity.

Validation

Validity asks whether the research does what it sets out to do. What is distinct about phenomenological research is the act of collection and interpretation of the data as opposed to the collection and measurement of the data. The purpose of this study was not to measure. Cohen, Lawrence and Manion (2000) suggest that within the constructivist paradigm validity can be problematic. I attempted to counteract the threats to the credibility and trustworthiness of this qualitative research by engendering an awareness of my biases. Padgett (1998) offered three possible threats to the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research namely reactivity, researcher bias and respondent biases. It is acknowledged that I may not have been aware of

issues of reactivity, as these would have taken the form of an internal set of reactions on the part of the participant. However, I did have control of the environment and wherever possible ensured that the interviews took place at a location with which the participants were familiar. Further, had I noticed the participant exhibiting anxiety or stress, then I would have intervened in some way; this was made possible by use of an informal and friendly discussion. In a way, the reaction of the participant was partly out of my control, for example a transference response. It is acknowledged that it is not possible to remove the actual influence of the researcher but that is not an issue as according to Bickman and Rog, (1998: 92) who suggest '... the goal a qualitative study is not to eliminate this influence but to understand it and use it productively.'

Reactivity - My own experience

I had a distinct point of view having worked in the police service for 27 years and in training in various forms for 13 of those. As a result, researcher bias was a distinct possibility. I recognised my issues in relation to the subject and because of this was able to differentiate the conscious aspects of this from those offered by the respondent. Further a diary was kept in which I identified my feeling in relation to what had been discussed in order to separate these from the respondents.

The predisposition for the interviewer to view the interviewee as being similar to them was an issue for me because some of the respondents were of a similar age and appear to have a similar outlook upon the organisation. I was

mindful of the tendency for the interviewer to seek out answers that support the views of themselves, which would have been so easy to promote a response for which I was seeking. As a result I was careful in all cases to adopt a stance being what I would refer to as interested but not overly enthusiastic.

Misinterpretation

One question was interpreted incorrectly, namely question 7a, "*Have you learned from experience?*" This question was interpreted in various ways and mostly it appears the question was understood as, 'Did you learn from the experience of this course?' What I meant to identify was any learning from an experience in relation to reflective practice. In fact this misinterpretation did not present a problem as the course can be considered an experience. I was disappointed that this had not occurred during the pilot as I could have changed the wording. I would change this question if further research is to be conducted.

Bias

I was aware of the existence of potential bias in many forms and was mindful of the advice given by Maxwell (2005:108), 'Validity in qualitative research is not the result of indifference but of integrity'. I feel sure that I displayed integrity to the best of my ability.

Respondent Bias

The issue of respondent biases could have included the respondent withholding information to suit their own argument or to hide unpleasant events or where they may provide information in the belief that they are being helpful. There were occasions when I felt as if the interviewee was either struggling to identify issues with a view to assist me, or was using the interview as an opportunity to publicise their own views via me. What was apparent was that there appeared no one objective reality, what I was presented with was multiple subjective realities (Rubin and Babbie, 2010). I felt that my role was not to act as judge and jury, that if a respondent offered an opinion or view, then my role was to record this. Within chapters 4 and 5, the voice of the respondents is offered with the intention of displaying this issue. Some of the views I disagreed with and others I felt very uneasy to hear, however it was not my role to identify what I felt were issues of respondent bias and withdraw them from the data. I would argue that all the respondents were biased to a greater or lesser degree; that was what made their perceptions interesting.

Respondent reliability

In order to achieve integrity it was obvious that I would be unable to make any claim for validity by relying solely upon my own interpretations of the data. As a result I employed the use of respondent reliability (Maxwell 2005) or to coin another term, member checks (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) which in turn I

anticipated would add weight to a claim of inter-rater reliability (Lichtman, 2010). Obtaining feedback in relation to my data from those I studied was the most important way of preventing misinterpretation of the meaning the participant's words and actions (Maxwell, 2005). It further ensured an accurate understanding of their perspectives as well as identifying my own biases and misunderstandings of what I observed. I cannot discount the fact that an individual was willing to spend time to talk and value their contributions may have influenced the data; I will not know.

Critical friend

My biases may have the affect of filtering out information as their preconceptions affect my observations. It is acknowledged that it may be impossible to differentiate the knowledge of a phenomenon in such a way as to negate its effect on what I heard, interpreted and chose to record or identified as a pertinent issue. However, to guard against this I utilised a number of people to assist me with respondent reliability. Firstly, during the data manipulation, I shared my thoughts with a critical friend and explained my reasons for the coding. Having analysed the data the results were then shared by one of the respondents, who confirmed they agreed in general with what I had written. However they did question the fact that I had not afforded sufficient emphasis on one aspect of their account. The reason for this was because only they had identified a certain point of view which had later been diluted in light of the other responses. This identifies the downside of

respondent reliability, where an individual has no knowledge of the responses from the other participants.

In relation to the Situational Reflective Practice model, I required feedback from people who were familiar with the works of Kolb, Schon, Moon etc. In this instance I approached my peers with whom I worked in the Institute for Learning (IfL). I recognised that their specialist knowledge of reflective practice would be best employed to critically evaluate the proposed model. I contacted a total of 5 people within the IfL who offered feedback. This consisted mainly of changing the appearance of the model to make it appear less complicated. This was achieved by removing the majority of the arrows that had originally been placed within the pentagon.

Consequential validity

As has been described, some aspects of this research were undertaken solely for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and as a result these have been reported to them. It is hoped that this enabled them to take an informed position when deciding upon the adoption of the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector. Other issues that have emerged have, as yet, not been shared with them. These issues take the form of allegations of sexism, ageism and bullying. It is recognised that once the research is published I will have no control over this work. In an attempt to control the consequential validity of this research, I intend to draw the MPS's attention to my findings in the hope that appropriate changes can be made: either in the form of training

or of a change of practice. I have though brought these accounts to the attention of my line manager and Brunel University who have offered sound and sensible advice upon which I have acted.

This phenomenological study has not sought to measure but to interpret. In so doing creates opportunities for bias. It is my contention that I have reduced these opportunities as far as I was able.

My unique contribution to the body of knowledge

This research sits between two books co-authored by myself, *Reflective Practice in the Lifelong Sector* (2009) and *Study Skills for Policing Students* (2010). As a result I have been afforded the opportunity to be immersed in these topics and it is hoped to offer some unique contributions to the body of knowledge. For example, I have introduced the concept of Professional Reflective Practice (2009: 9) with my co-author Jodi Roffey-Barensten. This reflects my work with the IfL where the concept of reflective practice was augmented. As a result I observe:

‘Reflective practice is restricted to your personal development within the classroom. Professional Reflective Practice, however, extends this concept as it captures the various aspects that influence your role as a teacher upon which you can reflect’

Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2009:10)

It is suggested that when teachers in the Lifelong Learning Sector embark upon their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) they consider the various other factors that affect their teaching practice rather than limiting their reflections to just the classroom environment. This can include their peers, employers, environment, government etc. This concept of Professional Reflective Practice occurred as a result of writing the book combined with considerations of the theory in relation to this study. It is hoped that this and other ideas contained within the book will assist people as they prepare to become professional teachers.

The concept of Situational Reflective Practice occurred as a result of preparing national master classes in relation to the topic of Conducting Reflective Practice, discussions with Jodi Roffey-Barentsen and my tutor Professor Mike Watts and the close analysis of the data. It could very easily been overlooked had the circumstances of research and my professional practice not been running concurrently. The characteristics of Situational reflective practice appear to be that it is:

- passive observation of an action
- experienced by proxy
- found in social/organisational situations
- can occur at the time or after
- locus of power separate from the person experiencing it

The process of Situational Reflective Practice is generally represented by five stages, indicated below:

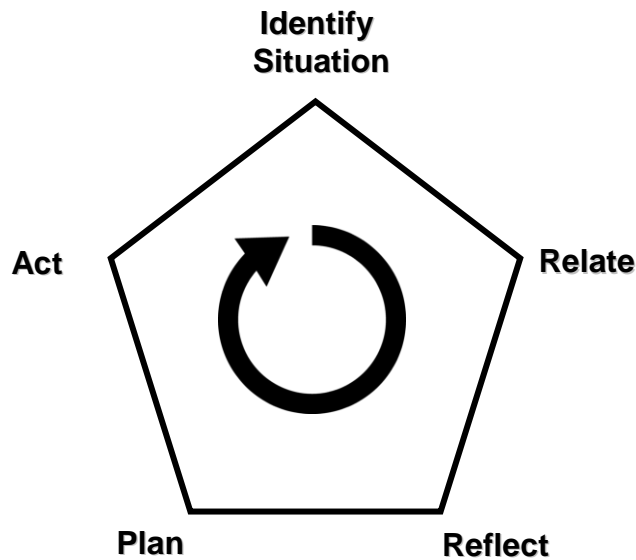


Figure 17 (above) The Situational Reflective Practice model

1. Identify Action

In the first instance the person will have become aware of an emerging phenomenon. This can be situated socially or organisationally. In fact it could be found anywhere, in any situation, what is important is that that person has become aware of it.

2. Relate

Having identified the action the person then relates the phenomenon to their own situation. In other words they see the possibility of the situation affecting them.

3. Reflect

The person thinks about the situation and weighs up the likelihood of their own involvement in the situation they are observing

4. Plan

Depending on the previous stage they decide upon the most relevant reaction to the situation

5. Act

They either take appropriate action or inaction according to their plan.

The situation can be reviewed at any stage.

It is hoped that this model will be used by teachers and students alike as they attempt to make sense of a world in constant flux.

I referred earlier to two of my publications, these I consider act as a form of book-ends within this study; one was written at the start of my doctoral studies the other very near the end. The publication *Study Skills for Policing Students* (2010) was written and informed as a direct consequence of this study. The book was written to assist police officers who were entering or returning to academic study from PTTLS to a Degree Course. It is acknowledged that the

concepts contained within the book are not in themselves new, however, many of these may be new to the policing student. It includes advice on many of the issues contained within this study and relates the concepts to the police environment.

The generalisability of the outcomes

As this is a phenomenological study, an argument towards generalisability is, I admit, limited. This study considered one group of people, in an FE college in London and has afforded me a snap shot of five days constructed by the perceptions of those experiencing the course. Bassey (1999) observes that situations in teaching are so varied that certainty in relation to causal relationships are unlikely. In other words because the variations within certain phenomena are so diverse just because X led to Y in one set of circumstances this may not be true of all circumstances. As a result he advocates the use of what he terms 'fuzzy generalisations.' Here the language employed is less precise, for example because of X the Y may follow. He suggests the small change in language offers a 'very great change in emphasis (1999: 51). The implication here is that the fuzzy generalisation facilitates the possibility of generalisation 'but not certainty.' (ibid.). As a result, this research represents a consequential level of consciousness which exists as a result of discussing a phenomenon with those who experienced the phenomenon and comparing the literature to those accounts. This study is unique and may or may not apply to other situations. It is however hoped

that if Bassay's fuzzy generalisation is employed then others may be able to relate to this research.

Research questions resulting from this work

The research questions that follow naturally from this work are considerations of reflective practice to support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on the part of police officers, similar to that experienced by teachers within the Lifelong Learning Sector, may follow from this work. At present there is no system in place within the police service that considers CPD. If the police wish to be considered professionals then the onus is on them to behave as such; CPD will support this claim.

If this study were to continue, the next steps would take the form of further research in relation to the proposed model 'Situational Reflective Practice'. The population involved in the research was relatively small, but arguably conclusive. A larger scale project appears appropriate. The research that I would recommend as an extension to this study would be to consider the question of the most appropriate way to adopt of reflective practice within the Metropolitan Police Service and further research in relation to outsourcing police training are arguably natural extensions of this study. I feel that in relation to this study my research questions have been answered, it is the extent to which they have been answered that is the issue here. I contend that there is further scope to revisit these questions perhaps employing other research methods.

Implications for other groups

There are implications from this study to other groups, for example the Situational Reflective Practice model is I believe suitable for use in the teaching profession and other organisations which employ the use of reflective practice; for example the National Health Service.

Within the MPS consideration could be given to introducing the concept of Situational Reflective Practice (SRP) to future PTLLS students. Although examples of reflective practice are rarely seen within the organisation, many police officers and police staff are conversant with what is known as dynamic risk assessment (considering a situation in relation in terms of risk as it develops) because this is akin to reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983). Further, it is anticipated that many will be able to relate to the concept of SRP due to culture of management, where decisions are taken with no regard to the wishes of individuals; the needs of the organisation are paramount.

A willingness to succeed

Observing this research from a distance, I observe that all of the participants appeared to want to do well, to do a good job and excel in their teaching and training. The enthusiasm was fantastic to observe and they appeared to appreciate the efforts of the outside agency. However what appeared to have tempered their enthusiasm was the lack of support from the Metropolitan Police Service, some clearly did not feel valued. The affective issues within

the training arena are the ones that are possibly not considered and I would argue from a personal point of view, that this is because affective issues are not easily measured. But just because you can't measure something does not negate its relevance or value.

Challenge for the MPS

Being introduced to the world of Further Education was not easy for many of the students. The students who attended this PTLLS course benefitted in many and various ways, it would be a shame for the enthusiasm exhibited by many on this course and hopefully others, to be ignored by the MPS and as a result be extinguished over time. The challenge for the MPS is to match the endeavours of the college by way of continuing support and guidance.

The impression made by the college is summed up by John who observed:

“But when you get something like education, people who have been in it a long, long time and who have worked with confidence you certainly feel part of something and you think how refreshing is that? I dunno you think, core, wow, wonderful. And doing this and then going home and speaking to my wife and saying we are doing this and she said I have been talking about this for years and you never listened, you know and I hadn't.

But in reality you suddenly now realise that, ah yea that's right.”

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Appendix 1

Research questions contained within Chapter 4 and 5

The research question considered in this study was, 'What were the perceptions of policing students attending the Preparing to Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Course in relation to their study needs?'

In support of this question it has considered the perceptions of students in terms of their study skills by considering their motivation levels, the study skills support offered and reflective practice.

Topic 1 Support

This considered the study support available to the students from the FE college and the MPS

Question	How and where they are answered
1. What support was provided by the organisation? (MPS)	Located on page 163 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• insufficient support from the MPS• students expectations had not been managed• students exhibited a pedagogical approach to

Question	How and where they are answered
	<p>learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not all learners were satisfied with the joining instructions
<p>2. What support was provided by the college?</p>	<p>Located on page 171</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations of support offered by the college was thought to be good • Feedback was considered timely
<p>2a What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?</p>	<p>Located on page 174</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerations of information in relation to the course, e.g. pre-joining packs, could have been improved • The pressure of time an issue • A gulf between the PTLLS course and the students' expectations • Writing formally a concern for some • Some favoured a pedagogical approach

Topic 2 Study Skills Support

Next, the topic of 'study skills' support considered the perceptions of the students' learning needs in relation to study and the support that was received and which was directly relevant to their study needs.

<p>3. What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?</p>	<p>Located on page 182</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging in a more formal study to represent a learning need• Study being problematic for some who were unused to finding their way in the college environment• Some considered their own experiences alone were suitable for inclusion within an assignment and not the relevant theory• Guidance in relation to preparing and structuring an assignment was felt appropriate
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<p>4. What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?</p>	<p>Located on page 189</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value given to support from the mentor • Guidance in relation to the pitch of their work • Difficulty to taking the first step of engaging in learning • A lack the confidence to engage in the assignment
<p>5. Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course?</p>	<p>Located on page 194</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient support to enable completion of the course • Structure of the course, • the ability to apply for an extension and • the use of tutorials

Topic 2 Study Skills Support continued

Next, they were asked if they considered this to be sufficient and, if not, what they would have liked

<p>5a What additional support would you have liked?</p>	<p>Located on page 195</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being valued by the MPS • Support with returning to study and • The college providing an overview of the course • Where support was interpreted in terms of teaching styles in one case the style of teaching did not always match the student's expectations • Time as an issue
<p>6. What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?</p>	<p>Located on page 199</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing the protected study time and ensuring the MPS line managers were aware this • Time; working to a deadline • The MPS adequately preparing the students for the course • Use of the internet by the MPS • The first step in writing

Topic 3 Reflective Practice

Next, the topic of reflective practice was considered where the students were asked if, following the PTLLS course, they continued to use reflective practice and whether they had learned from experience. The associated questions considered whether they were able to use reflective practice in the development of their teaching and the difficulties they may have experienced in acting on their reflections.

7. Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?	Located on page 204 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three distinct groups were evident:• students willing to conduct a form of what they thought was RP
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7a. Have you learned from experience?	Located on page 210 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A positive attitude towards the concept of RP• No records kept
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<p>8. How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your teaching?</p>	<p>Located on page 214</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective practice and teaching practice • Making links to previous considerations • Personal development as a part of the reflective practice • Aspiration to improve teaching practice and clear links to professional practice • Evidence of reflection in action
<p>8a What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?</p>	<p>Located on page 224</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five respondents suggested they had experienced no difficulties • Unable to make changes to the lesson they taught • Previous lessons offered an opportunity for change

Questions 9, 9a, 10 and 10a are not included within this study

Topic 5 Developmental issues

Then developmental considerations were discussed, in order to identify any shortcomings or perceived gaps in learning or skills. The questions employed

at this stage asked for the identification of any need for further development and, if there were, how they would meet these needs.

<p>11. Have you identified your individual needs for further development?</p>	<p>Located on page 230</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective practice included in their development • Skills fade
<p>11a. How are you going to meet those needs?</p>	<p>Located on page 233</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative reflective practice involving continuing professional development. • Home Office websites and educational websites
<p>12. What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?</p>	<p>Located on page 236</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement or of being valued. • Refresher training • Use of IT

Further support and perceived barriers to personal development were considered

<p>13. Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?</p>	<p>Located on page 238</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No barriers to personal development • Feelings of being undervalued by the MPS • Knee jerk reaction on the part of senior management • Outside agency employed to train the MPS staff • Transformational comments
<p>13a. What kinds of barriers to development have you met? (e.g. resources, use of ICT, access, time etc)</p>	<p>Located on page 246</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No barriers to their development • Availability of time • Highlighting the differences in the learning cultures.

Finally, additional comments were requested to ensure all possible data were collected

<p>14. Is there anything further you would like to add about your learning experience on the PTTLS course?</p>	<p>Located on page 249</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A greater understanding of what was expected between a level 3 and 4 • Previous experience of school and motivation • Writing assignments
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Research questions contained within Chapter 5

Question	How and where they are answered
<p>Have you ever found yourself in a situation that has impacted upon you, about which you had no say or control?</p>	<p>Located on page 264</p> <p>The data which emerged from the four responses from the first set of data and the five further interviews revealed over 20 situations where outside influences affected the students. The interpretation of the data contained within chapter 5 suggests that there exist circumstances in which Situational Reflective Practice may be suitable as a means to reflect upon a situation, other than that found within the more traditional forms of reflective practice; namely Reflection-in-Action and Reflection-on-Action. Instead Situational Reflective Practice takes the form of Reflection-re-Action; the action representing an act, situation or behaviour external to the person experiencing it. An explanation of this phenomenon is discussed below.</p>

Situational Reflective Practice

Situational reflective practice (Reflection re-Action) offers a different perspective to that of reflective practice. It is concerned with the way in which a social group or an organisation is behaving and the impact this has upon an individual. The distinction between Reflection re Action and the more familiar Reflection in Action or Reflection on Action is that the focus of attention may have nothing to do with the person experiencing it. The individual may have no control over the situation they have become aware of. In fact, the perceived situation may not be affecting them; at least not at that moment.

Appendix 2

Record of Management of Themes

Question 1 Analysis Phase 2

1. What support was provided by the organisation? (Met)

1	Turquoise	None	5	Pink	Direct Contact
5A	Blue	Email	4	Green	Pre Read
2	Teal	A Little	6	Yellow	Books
3	Grey	Sufficient	9	Dk Yellow	Uncertainty
7	Red	Time	8	Violet	Expectations
4A	Dk Green	Web site			

Question 2 Analysis Phase 2

What support was provided by the college?

0	Turquoise	None	4	Pink	Direct Contact
6	Blue	Email	0	Green	Pre Read
0	Teal	Sufficient	10	Yellow	Books
1	Grey 25%	Good	3	Dk Yellow	Uncertainty Confused
12	Red	Time	9	Violet	Expectations
2	Dk Green	IT & Web sites	5	Dk Red	Telephone
8	Grey 50%	Written Work	11	Black	Intensity
	Boxed	Other	7	Dk Blue	Academic Study
	Box 1	Too much information		Box 2	Not specific

Question 2a Analysis Phase 2

What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?

1	Turquoise	Preparation	9	Pink	Direct Contact
8	Blue	Email	10	Green	Recognition
13	Teal	Response times	11	Yellow	Books
14	Grey 25%	More input from MPS	5	Dk Yellow	Uncertainty Confused
2	Red	Time	3	Violet	Expectations
12	Dk Green	IT & Web sites	6	Dk Red	Modular
0	Grey 50%	Written Work	7	Black	Intensity
			4	Dk Blue	Academic Study / Environment
	Box 1	Non MPS environment		Box 2	Standard of teaching
	Box 3	MPS Involvement		Box 4 and 5	Domestic considerations
	Box 6	Childcare issues			

Question 3 Analysis Phase 2

What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?

1	Turquoise	Engaging in study	13	Pink	Reassurance
4	Blue	Support	11	Green	Use of protected time
0	Teal	No Support	12	Yellow	Professional responsibilities
10	Grey 25%	Learning by example	7	Dk Yellow	Uncertainty, Apprehensive, Confusion

5	Red	Time	2	Violet	Study Practices
14	Dk Green	IT and Web sites	8	Dk Red	Assistance from friends and relatives
9	Grey 50%	Written Work	6	Black	Pressure
	Boxed		3	Dk Blue	Academic Study / Environment
	Box 1	Length and timing of course		Box 2, 3	Request for teaching skills

Question 4 Analysis Phase 2

What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?

1	Turquoise	Mentor / tutor	7	Pink	Telephone
3	Blue	Matching learning needs	12	Green	Reference books
9	Teal	Tutorial	11	Yellow	Support from relatives
14	Grey 25%	Resources	15	Dk Yellow	Equipment
2	Red	Feedback	4	Violet	Getting started
10	Dk Green	E mails and internet	13	Dk Red	Handouts
6	Grey 50%	Teaching strategies	5	Black	Allocation of time to subjects
	Boxed		8	Dk Blue	Previous academic experience

Question 5 Analysis 2 Phase 2

Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course? If

no:

	Turquoise		1	Pink	Yes
8	Blue	Tutorials	2	Green	No
9	Teal	Level 3 and 4	13	Yellow	Structuring an assignment
4	Grey 25%	Extension	10	Dk Yellow	Uncertainty, Apprehensive, Confusion
7	Red	Time	12	Violet	Examples of work
5	Dk Green	Structure of course	11	Dk Red	Assistance from friends and relatives
3	Grey 50%	Feedback	6	Black	Pressure
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 5a Analysis 2 Phase 2

What additional support would you have liked?

1	Turquoise	Recognition	8	Pink	Providing examples of written work
2	Blue	Support from MPS	9	Green	Variation in standards of teaching
3	Teal	Family commitments		Yellow	
4	Grey 25%	Returning to education	10	Dk Yellow	Clearer explanation desired
5	Red	Time	11	Violet	Assistance from Peers
6	Dk Green	It was adequate	12	Dk Red	Assistance from friends and relatives

7	Grey 50%	Feedback	13	Black	Intensity of work
	Boxed		14	Dk Blue	Guidance on written work

Question 6 Phase 2

What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?

1	Turquoise	Secure protected study time		Pink	
2	Blue	Support and acknowledgment from MPS	8	Green	Assistance via the Intranet site
3	Teal	Resources	9	Yellow	Selection
4	Grey 25%	Managing expectations	10	Dk Yellow	Clearer explanation desired
5	Red	Time	11	Violet	Lengthening the course
6	Dk Green	IT	12	Dk Red	Assistance with writing
7	Grey 50%	Feedback	13	Black	Intensity of work
	Boxed		14	Dk Blue	Inform the line managers re the course

Question 7 Phase 2

Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?

1	Turquoise	Those who used RP	7	Pink	RP leading to change in practice
2	Blue	Those who did not use RP	8	Green	Not recording thoughts and ideas
3	Teal	Those who do in certain circumstance	9	Yellow	Recording in some way
4	Grey 25%	Using the journal during the	10	Dk	No RP as yet

		course		Yellow	
5	Red	Insight	6	Violet	Feedback informing RP
	Dk Green		11	Dk Red	Stating no and then yes
	Grey 50%			Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 8 Phase 2

How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your teaching?

1	Turquoise	Able to employ RP in teaching	5	Pink	Impact on own practice
2	Blue	Impact on students	6	Green	I don't know
3	Teal	Reflection in action	7	Yellow	Unable to make changes
4	Grey 25%	Reflection – planning stage	9	Dk Yellow	Not pattern noticed
	Red	Reflection - discussion	10	Violet	Not recording RP
	Dk Green	Impact on course design	8	Dk Red	Forced to make changes
	Grey 50%	Use of emails for feedback		Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 8a Phase 2

What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?

1	Turquoise	None	8	Pink	Impact of PTLLS on course
2	Blue	Reflection in action	9	Green	Enhanced awareness
3	Teal	Planning	10	Yellow	Unable to make changes
4	Grey 25%	Opposition to change	11	Dk Yellow	Opportunity
5	Red	Impact on training delivery	12	Violet	Impact on students
6	Dk Green	Availability of time	13	Dk Red	Ability to make changes
7	Grey 50%	The advantages of reflection	14	Black	Time constraints
	Boxed			Dk Blue	Difficulty

Question 9 and 10 not part of this research

Question 11 Phase 2 Have you identified your individual needs for further development?

1	Turquoise	Confident in own teaching ability	8	Pink	Practice teaching
2	Blue	Promotion	9	Green	Student involvement
3	Teal	Educationally	10	Yellow	Need to develop everything

4	Grey 25%	Delivering ELS	11	Dk Yellow	Element of confusion
5	Red	Observing other trainers	12	Violet	Improving writing and IT skills
6	Dk Green	Reflective practice	13	Dk Red	DTLLS
7	Grey 50%	Dealing with conflict		Black	
	Boxed		14	Dk Blue	Become more involved in training

Question 11a Phase 2

How are you going to meet those needs?

1	Turquoise	Practice training	5	Pink	Websites
2	Blue	Observing others	9	Green	IT
3	Teal	Issues of confidence	10	Yellow	Further courses
4	Grey 25%	Communicating with other trainers	11	Dk Yellow	Peers
6	Red	Preparation	12	Violet	External assessors
7	Dk Green	Overcoming nerves		Dk Red	
8	Grey 50%	DTLLS		Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 12 Phase 2

What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?

1	Turquoise	IT	7	Pink	Web site
2	Blue	General observation on	8	Green	Being kept up to date

		present performance			with developments
3	Teal	Nothing	9	Yellow	More teaching on course
4	Grey 25%	Feelings of being left alone / valued	10	Dk Yellow	Information re the next step
5	Red	Assessed lessons	11	Violet	Refreshers / CPD
6	Dk Green	Support from within own department		Dk Red	
	Grey 50%			Black	
	Boxed		12	Dk Blue	Provided a qualification / recognition

Question 13 Phase 2

Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?

1	Turquoise	No	7	Pink	Opportunities
2	Blue	Feelings of being undervalued, undertrained	8	Green	Networking
3	Teal	Poor within MPS	9	Yellow	Time
4	Grey 25%	Advantage of outside agencies	10	Dk Yellow	IT
5	Red	Political correctness	11	Violet	Lack of opportunities
6	Dk Green	Floored training	12	Dk Red	Study in own time
1A	Grey 50%	Yes		Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 13a Phase 2

What kinds of barriers to development have you met? (e.g. resources, use of ICT, access, time etc)

1	Turquoise	Training culture within MPS	8	Pink	Opportunity and awareness
2	Blue	Time		Green	
3	Teal	None		Yellow	
4	Grey 25%	Training a low priority		Dk Yellow	
5	Red	ICT		Violet	
6	Dk Green	Resources		Dk Red	
7	Grey 50%	Actually getting on the course		Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 14 Phase 2

Is there anything further you would like to add about your learning experience on the PTLLS course?

1	Turquoise	Praise for the course	8	Pink	Manage expectations
2	Blue	The affect of PTLLS on own teaching	9	Green	More teaching practise
3	Teal	Essays	10	Yellow	Valued by MPS
4	Grey 25%	Pressure	11	Dk Yellow	Organising time
5	Red	Recognition	12	Violet	More opportunities to

					teach
6	Dk Green	Being away from a police environment	13	Dk Red	Reflective practice
7	Grey 50%	Teaching strategy		Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Question 15 Phase 2

If there is one thing you would change about your training course that would help you in your role, what would that be?

1	Turquoise	Nothing	8	Pink	An academic approach to teaching
2	Blue	The duration of the course	9	Green	
3	Teal	Selection	10	Yellow	
4	Grey 25%	PTLLS assisted teaching	11	Dk Yellow	
5	Red	Increased micro teaches and feedback	12	Violet	
6	Dk Green	Pressure	13	Dk Red	
7	Grey 50%	Buying into the course		Black	
	Boxed			Dk Blue	

Appendix 3

Participant Information Sheet

Title of project / investigation: The study needs of trainers undertaking the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification within the Metropolitan Police Service

Brief outline of project including an outline of the procedures to be used: The purpose of this research is to identify the study skills needs of the MPS PTLLS students. The MPS is looking to move away from the traditional in house, NVQ based course with a view to out-sourcing the training of trainers to local FE colleges. The course chosen is “Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector” (PTLLS). The trainers will benefit from an externally recognised qualification representing a total of 6 points towards the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector; if they choose to pursue further training. However the move from the present NVQ style qualification to a more academic based style of learning may mean that some prospective trainers, may benefit from instruction in how to study in an academic arena.

To gain this information I will be interviewing those who have experienced the course with a view to identifying their experiences. Please be assured that all the views I will be collecting will be used in such a way that they cannot be attributed to anyone specifically. In analysing the data I will be looking for patterns and themes across the responses that I collect.

Your involvement in this research project is entirely voluntary and at any stage during the project you may withdraw from participation or withdraw the responses you have given. Your future employment as a trainer will not be influenced, whether you agree to participate or would rather not. On completion of the project I will ensure you are able to share the outcomes. Thank you very much for you co-operation.

Richard Malthouse

Appendix 4

Interview Schedule

Overarching Research Purpose:

To identify the CPD needs of the PTTLS students within the MPS

Student M / F 20 – 29 30 – 39 40 – 49 50 - 59 60+

Started Teaching:

PTLLS status:

Previous qualifications:

Reasons for training:

Topic 1 Support

I would like to focus on the subject of support during the PTTLS course

- 1 What support was provided by the organisation?

- 2 What support was provided by the college?

- 2a What additional support do you feel you require from either the organisation or the college?

Topic 2 Study skills Support

In relation to study skills, that is your ability to study in a more academic way and the support you were offered:

3. What were your learning needs in relation to your return to studying?
4. What support did you receive that was directly relevant to your study needs?
5. Was that support sufficient to help you complete the course? If
no:

5a What additional support would you have liked?

6. What could the MPS do to support future students in this respect?

Topic 3 Reflective Practice

During the course of your PTLLS course you were introduced to the notion of reflective practice.

7. Following your PTLLS course to what extent do you continue to use reflection?
 - 7a. Have you learned from experience?

8. How well are you able to use Reflective Practice in the development of your teaching?
 - 8a. What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?

Topic 4 Teaching practice

I would like to consider your teaching practice:

9. How well do you feel you are progressing in your teaching practice?
 - 9a. What do you wish to achieve in your teaching?
10. How will you go about developing your teaching?
 - 10a. Who will you approach for advice?

Topic 5 Developmental issues

Moving on to considerations of your own development:

11. Have you identified your individual needs for further development?

11a. How are you going to meet those needs?

12. What support do you feel you require now that you have completed your course?

13. Have you experienced any barriers to your personal development?

13a. What kinds of barriers to development have you met? (e.g. resources, use of ICT, access, time etc)

Topic 6 Additional Comments

1. Is there anything further you would like to add about your learning experience on the PTTLS course?

15 If there is one thing you would change about your training course that would help you in your role, what would that be?

Appendix 5

Consent form

Title of project / investigation: The study needs of trainers undertaking the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector qualification within the Metropolitan Police Service

Name and address of researcher:

Richard Malthouse

Sunbury Training Unit, Green Street, Sunbury Upon Thames. TW16 6RJ

Please initial box

- 1 I confirm that I have read the information sheet and understand the purpose of the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and had these answered to my satisfaction

- 2 I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason

- 3 I agree to take part in the above study

Please tick box

	Yes	No
4 I agree to the interview being audio recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant

Signature

Date

Name of researcher

Signature

Date

Appendix 6

Account 1

During the first interview David was asked was asked, 'What kinds of difficulties have you experienced in acting on your reflections?' He identified an inability to change a corporate package. He explained:

"I will eventually be doing ELS too, so in relation to reflective practice in relation to ELS, there is not a lot I will be able to change to be honest with you, it's a corporate package and it has to be dealt with that way. But maybe the way I pitch that eventually might be different..."

Account 2

During the first interview the students were asked, "What kinds of barriers to development have you met?" Three responses were identified as relating to Situational Reflective Practice, the first being the lack of time, for example Mita observed:

"You know when I finished the course and I wanted to come back and I wanted to do everything from scratch and I wanted to do the training and do the lesson plan, there was certainly not time to do that. It's balancing priorities"

Account 3

A second response to the same question highlighted a respondent's perception in relation to the trainer not being a high priority. Robert observed:

"Certainly our borough, training is not at the top of the agenda so it is not given the importance that it perhaps should. Training seems to be, it goes from crisis to crisis so if there is something in the news we have to training it. ... So they are barriers that people don't understand and some of the subjects that we are asked to deliver just aren't either relevant or it is not a problem and you will have a day of about 15 different that don't hand together and you can't do a day's training on 15 bits of legislation, you don't have a proper flowing day."

Account 4

This response considered the participant's budget representing a barrier to the development of staff, Mita observed:

"Resources is probably the big one, budgets, can we afford to send all these people on courses that is always the question. Does it fall inside your training budget that you have bid for? Resources are going to be the big one and that's pounds, shillings and pence."

Account 5

This account from Patrick relates to budget cuts which have come about as a direct consequence of the new coalition government's demand to save money:

"We have been seriously impacted upon by budget cuts now which is a Met wide, Nation wide thing but at a stroke my work load effectively has doubled because now I will be having to deliver twice as much training effectively because we are being cut in half as a training unit. Possibly with further cuts to come because they are talking about that horrible word that they seem to like now, brigading the training units between us and [two other groups], which will require more training still but with fewer numbers, even fewer numbers. So that has a huge impact, we have lost 50% we will, by the end of June, have lost 50% of our trainers."

Q *"How will this impact upon you?"*

A *"I will be required to run the first aid training, which is the next cycle of training but, I am also in charge of the mandatory training, which means I will have to plan the mandatory training for the next cycle as well as training the mandatory training but we'll now because the officer safety instructors have been cut down, we now have to, as well the first and first aid at work training, now have to go*

to Officer Safety Training and assess the ballistic first aid that is happening there so basically our work has suddenly grown hugely because our numbers have reduced significantly.”

Q *“So you have got 50% more work?”*

A *“Yes I now take over another portfolio effectively.”*

Q *“Has this affected morale at all?”*

A *“Hugely. Initially it affected morale for everyone. Because there was this rumour that it was going to happen but no body knew how; it could be last in first out, last in last out. No one knew how it was going to happen, when it did come up, there was there was the initial relief of thank goodness I am still here, but with this new potential change we are up in the air again and they won’t make a decision until nearly October because no one knows what is happening.”*

Account 6

The following account from Tracey considers the difficulties experienced in the design and presentation of a course when communication is poor or actually being withheld. Further, decisions were made by the organisation which had a direct effect upon Tracey’s ability to run the course effectively:

“We delivered training out in Saudi Arabia last year. For the second stage of that course they decided to send students over from Saudi to over here. Everything was short notice, we were told with about a month’s notice that we had to design and deliver this course.”

Q. *“Was that long enough?”*

A *“ No, not when its’ not our full time job. But we do it. I don’t know if it is a good thing of a bad thing, on our team we do it. We were expected to design, prepare the course. I mean designing the course was probably the easiest bit. It was making all the arrangements such as hotels, the logistics of how they were going to get picked up. We adapted it; we did it to their week. So their weekends were Thursday and Friday. So Monday was Saturday.”*

Q. *“Which religion was that?”*

A. *“Muslim. We knew about the weekends because about going out to Saudi and so when they came over it was a question of, are we running it to theirs or ours? There were things like when we went over there, we adapted to their country and there needs so questions were asked why it wasn’t the same here. When I was over there I wore the long dress thing all the time. If you went to a shopping centre you were asked to cover your head, but we got armed escorts everywhere, it was a very weird place, you couldn’t just go out. In the*

hotel as a woman you couldn't use the swimming pool gym or sauna. And it was a completely dry country as well; the only place to get a drink was at the embassy. So they were coming over so we had to design a course for them and we had to get around all the logistics and it's always the communications that are awful between ... sometimes I think you just want to get on with the job yourself when you are relying on people further up to communicate and filter the information down. I don't think it was until a week before that we definitely knew that the dates and times of arrivals and when they were going back."

Q. "Were you still doing your other job at this time?"

A. "Yea. So and then there was the whole issue of translation as well. Well they sent a translator over with them, but we said we wanted two because we needed to split up for group work. But they were saying no and the MET wouldn't fund it, so we just had to make do and you had to rely on the fact that a couple of them spoke good English. But as I found from my experience in Saudi that is awful because they are then used as an interpreter and not a student. That massively shows outside factors about which you have no control over what so ever. I mean even down to course delivery, having to think of their priorities, having to fit their prayer times in and stuff like that. Which in fairness to them, we made more of a hoo-ha of this than they did. Not a hoo-ha but they are lovely and I

remember one of the guys pulling us to one side and saying, do you know it doesn't have to be, because we made sure there was a room for them in loads of different locations as well it wasn't just one classroom, we were at [various locations within London] so we had to make sure they had Hallal food. We had to make sure we had a prayer room which showed which way North was and that they had maps and all stuff like this. So the actual designing of the course was easy, it was the other things that surrounded it. ... But I think it is nothing unusual I think it is the same all over the Met to be honest, you know the lack of information being fed down, being given dates at the last minute. I mean we have just found out that we have another lot coming over in a couple of weeks and that apparently someone had the date for a while but it wasn't confirmed and you just think that why don't you pass the information on? Within our team we have a good few training commitments this month as well so."

Account 7

This account from Tracey relates to decisions made by people at a much higher level within an organisation upon those it affects:

"Often you will get word that instructions have come from above that will impact upon you. For example recently something came out about the dress code, it went around the office that the dress code was being implemented for men to wear shirt and ties and for women

a blouse and suitable attire including weekends ... and this applies if you are being called out at 3 or 4 in the morning. Everyone thought this was an absolute joke but if you are told you have to do something and your line managers come in and say right that's it, I have given you the promotion if you don't then you are on your own. Whereas before I would have just put on the nearest things to me, I am now thinking, there is some thought process that is going to go into it.

There are practicalities as well, if we do get called out to go to a scene or a police station is a shirt and suit or that sort of attire practical. But sometimes decisions come from higher up where you get told about that you think, they have no idea how this impacts upon team or what we do on a day to day basis.

We have had a few staff and managerial changes and our volume of work has increased as well. You often get people who take the work on saying yea well do that and well do that and you think well you don't know how much work we have got on at the moment. There are decisions that go on way above our heads and at really high levels making decisions nationally and internationally. You know a lot of the work will be done by our team and will impact upon us massively. Legislation, national legislation impacts upon the work we do as well. Even politically, we are all a bit blind sided to it as well and I think as a team we don't always recognise what we do and how we contribute to it nationally and internationally on a daily basis and

how the work we do and how it impacts. There are massive outside influences on us really.”

Account 8

This next account considers Patrick who designed a course for Special Constables and who was preparing to deliver it. He stated:

“I just found out last week that it has all changed. It is not going to happen now. It is now going to be Hendon still doing it. All we can do is offer our assistance in the interviews if you want to help. ... We could have seen people, noticed them, see them go through day one and day two and have had a personal impact on their lives. They would have had a point of call to where to phone. Whereas at recruitment there are more issues at recruitment of people being rude, not talking to people, not getting back to them and sending messages to people which are quite frankly awful. So I was trying to bring a friendlier process to the whole application stages. ... I will probably go to Hendon to do some of the interviews just to keep my hand in. I have done a course; it seems ridiculous to have done a course and not to put it into practice.”

Account 9

The perception of broken promises on the part of the organisation is pertinent here in Pryon’s account:

“In terms of my study I am keen to do CTLLS and to pursue that avenue, I have been told off the record to expect absolutely no help at all. In terms of PTLLS one of the suggestions was that if you did the level 4 which I did, the job would look at giving you level 5 or the CTLLS as an extension as a progression. But every request I make for information along those lines seems to lead me to towards, no chance. I am not specifically asking for finance per se I am asking for the job to do CTLLS as they did PTLLS in other words send me on a course to do CTLLS to progress my own personal development, so I am not asking them for £1, 500 to do it, I am asking them for a CTLLS course for a group of us who want to do CTLLS. And certainly looking at the work that has gone into the NVQ and my own Inspector in the training unit his that PTLLS is not the bear minimum and that CTLLS is the bear minimum and I can see that. Looking at the work the NVQ guys have done I can see that PTLLS does not achieve the same as the NVQ”

Q “Was it mooted or suggested that the MPS would support you with CTLLS?” A “At the start yes. Right at the start it was, and I appreciate I did the pilot project and perhaps when we did it we were promised things that when the pilot study has finished are not going to be realistic, but certainly it was discussed at the start, if you did the level 4 the Met would look at giving you the CTLLS course”

Account 10

The following account is that of Tracey who perceived that she has been treated less favourably than others on the grounds of disability or gender:

“On a personal level I passed the Inspectors’ exam so I went to my Chief Inspector and said could I have a development plan put in place ... he said yes I will keep you in mind. I heard nothing of it. Then I came back from the Christmas break in January to find that they had made up 5 male sergeants who had passed at the same time of me as acting inspectors on the response team, with no formal process followed, they were just picked. So I saw the Ch Inspector and said to him I understand they are operational and I can’t be operational, but the precedent has been set, if you are going to give out acting inspector roles for response teams are you considering doing acting inspector roles for complaints for example, or custody. He said no, no plans to do that.

Then I went to the Superintendent and said, I understand there is a project coming up about [details removed] and is it possible to have an acting inspector role on this project team? So he sent an email to the chief inspector and said please consider [name] for this project team. So I was invited to a meeting where I was the only woman in the meeting and I got offered the secretarial role of taking data off the [computer] and put it on a tactical planner, that was my development.

Well luckily two inspectors jumped up and said that's not development for [name], it's absolutely disgraceful, that is just not good. So consequently I left that meeting, was never called back to that meeting and they gave another inspector a [significant role within that project]. I should have had that role because no one else wanted it. I could have had as an acting inspector, but no I didn't have that.

Then I applied for another job, as a staff officer and whilst I got on really, really well with him I was not successful because a substantive inspector had applied, for the role and they felt that it was right that he should have, I agreed with that decision. So I am at a place now that my [inspector application] has failed, but I don't understand about the feedback, because the feedback was all positive and all the development areas were subjective comments on the evidence. So I am a bit bemused by the comments because there is no development there I don't know what to do. So I am now at the point where you know what I hate this job, it's crap. But there you go, that's one very personal aspect of the rug being pulled from under me; constantly."

Account 11

A situation can take many forms and can be represented by something lost as well as something undergoing a change. The following account from Patrick refers to the loss of the administration day for a trainer.

“We are already looking at a situation where at the moment we train Monday and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and Wednesday is an admin day. The way things are changing the Wednesday may disappear, the admin day where I could possibly disappear to college is likely to disappear as well.”

Q *“How are you going to cope with losing the admin day?”*

A *“With difficulty. We are then going to have to rely on each other on spare days, by helping each other by filling in. This day includes preparation for the next course is principally what you are doing or I am writing stuff at the moment, one of the guys is an NLP practitioner in my department and he wants to write a motivational book and this is all part of stuff that we are supposed to doing and I am assisting him with that and all that stuff will disappear because I won’t be able to help him.”*

Account 12

The following account from Mita concerns the introduction of a foundation degree and the difficulties experienced in terms of communication between groups of people.

“I suppose in terms of the foundation degree originally we had the module signoff things go out. I think where you are intrinsically involved in negotiating with the University and looking for how we can evidence for what we require, making sure that we are giving our staff the best opportunities for their learning. But then the line managers and the mentors are not in tune with that process and they are being asked to complete forms where they are signing off somebody’s competency and the evidence they are providing and they don’t even know how to complete the forms. There we had to run mini workshops for individual people so we explained, this is what we are looking for, we’ll have a meeting with you, we’ll look through their portfolio work, we will tell you if there are gaps here. Even having done that we had people where I think we got 10 in to sign off, I had already signed off a more advanced module for somebody already. These were the very bottom rung, the first two modules and I think we got 10 in and we were only able to sign off two of them.”

Q. *“So how did this first come to light?”*

A. *“I think it was really the fact that we then had to consider what we had asked them to produce and whether that had been*

communicated clearly or not. I think it was a communication issue. We were then left with questions about what we were supposed to be including in the instructions, we thought it should be this and then when they asked a question you doubt yourself then and feel it is not quite as it was. For example they had to do five examples of live case work for elimination and five for suspect checking, before they can do that they have to have done three levels of sample case work and include three from each level in that and this is where the confusion came from. E.g. Am I supposed to do three of that or five of that or am I supposed to do four of that or three of that? Somebody else told me five and then you are thinking oh I am sure it's just this but let me re check as I don't want them to be confused."

Q. "The wording?"

A. "I think the actual thing hadn't been prescriptively written down for people, it had just been, put in there 'You will include samples in each of these levels and then live case work covering suspect elimination. The five was in the heads of the people who originally negotiated with the university in their talks with the mentors, the mentors on the team do 50 and we said no we don't want 50 that's too many. But the translation between those people didn't get written down anywhere for anyone to definitively refer to. So where we had the criteria for the component parts of the module, the actual nitty gritty of it the actual numbers were not included. Dealing with those

initial people who were going through and then you speak to the line managers unfortunately with the MPS it is very much a word of mouth thing, before you even get any written document written to back any of it up, people just spread the word, 'Oh no you need to do this and this' and in some respects it is quite an effective network and you know that by the time you actually say there was an issue and the this is what you actually need, just to clarify this for everybody, by the time you do that everybody has already discussed it and know what to do, so when the next people are starting to come through with everything in there that needs to be in there."

Account 13

A change in practice is often associated with cost cutting. The following example from Tracey represents a consequence of cost cutting:

"I am the deputy for community engagement and it is all part of that process because we were doing motivation and first aid stuff for a mosque for example, outside the job. Well that's all going to go out of the window now because we can't do community engagement, because there is not the time, the money or the will."

Q *"So how much time is community engagement take?"*

A *"If we were to carry on with it and we were allowed to do it as much as you wanted to do it, you could use up an entire admin day,*

*every day, albeit actually going out there to do the training A*****
who I am deputy for, did three weekends worth of first aid training at
mosques which was so well received but will now stop, because it is
seen, I think short-sightedly it is not seen to be of benefit to the
[organisation] because it does not help us with [our purpose] well if
you look at Abu Hamser, for example, where did he do his recruiting,
it was in a mosque. Now I am not suggesting that Regents Park
Mosque is a hot bed of extremism but if there are police going in and
out all day every day or once a week doing training engaging with the
community, perhaps the police become quite not the enemy that we
once were. But this type of community engagement is going out of
the window.”*

Account 14

It appears that the trainers have little say in what is taught in light of the competing organisational demands. The following account from Patrick is included and relates to a training intervention.

*“There are times when you would like to teach a certain subject but it
is not always possible. Unfortunately the direction from centre takes
precedence. If we can negotiate a way around something that
central want, something like the Fraud Act is quite a good example.
For [one of our officers] the relevance of that is relatively minor as
you can imagine. So we were able to say do we really need to*

deliver six hours on the fraud act to officers who, if they do arrest somebody they can go into a police station and say, this bloke I have nicked for the fraud act but I don't know anything about it and get help. So we were able to negotiate a way around that where the six hour package was a two hour package and we were then able to include our own stuff and that what we will always try and do, but it depends on what is coming out from the centre.

There are times when I can't change things. I am involved in the pre planning of the first aid cycle that is about to come up, we haven't had any instructions from the centre as yet, about anything that needs to be done other than the first aid, but I am let to believe that it is not unusual for it to be left this late and we are due to start in July. The lesson plans are written. In this current cycle it would be something that I have asked to be introduced, that would have to go. On this occasions it is just something that I think would sit well with first aid. I want to introduce a package for an hour and a half to two hours at the beginning of the first aid that is dynamic risk assessment. Because it is not trained it has never been trained in this department, but most people would have seen it outside but it was never trained in conjunction with first aid which is I think one of the most important areas where it could be trained. I think having a package with dynamic risk assessment, is it safe for me to go and rescue that individual who has just been shot, prior to the first aid, fits nicely and the Cumbria thing proves my point to an extent that is

exactly what you would be faced with. I want to get people to think about the dynamic risk assessment in conjunction with first aid. You have an obligation to administer first aid, but you also need to think about can I do it because you could end up with two people needing first aid because you have been shot too because you haven't thought through the process. If we get presented with something else that has to be trained, it is the dynamic risk assessment then the Directions from the Centre at will go because it is me that has asked for it to be introduced."

Account 15

Values are considered in the following account from Pryon, where measuring a phenomenon in monetary terms is contemplated:

"I have a big issue with policing by cost. In which ever department in the police it happens to be you get the police service that you pay for and if you cut the costs you will cut the effectiveness of the police, you can not run an efficient police service by cutting costs and what we now have is a situation where the police is run purely financially and you can't do that because you cant quantify. It is not const effective to have police walking around the streets so we will put them in a car, how many robberies did that policeman walking down the street stop? And that is something you cannot quantify because they know up and down Bromley High Street, there are two police

men walking up and down, there won't be robberies and there won't be shoplifting, so you have got no crime.

Those people have not given a return if that makes sense. It is one of those things we have up here, I constantly say to the SMT here, if I haven't put pen to paper, I have done my job properly, because it means that nobody has [committed a crime] But they can't see it from that point of view, I am an expensive person [on patrol]."

Q *"What is their perspective would you say?"*

A *"Purely that because I haven't put pen to paper I haven't done anything [if anything were to occur I would have to make a report of some kind or other] That is quantifiable, because I have done something. However the fact that I am there puts people off [committing crime] so I don't write anything down and that means I have not done anything, it is not measured. The fact that I am there it means every time they drive past, they know there is a policeman there, they know they could get, stopped, challenged, or whatever, so they don't do it and that's a job wide thing. They look at, they have got to be able to look at performance indicators. If you are making paint you have got to put 57 lids on paint pots per hour and you are only achieving 50 you are not doing enough. It is not a preventative thing whereas policing can't be dealt with as a business, same with*

the NHS, Fire Brigade, you can't impose those targets because you can never quantify the things that you have stopped happening."

Q *"The cuts in your department that you mentioned earlier, are they going to be observable cuts?"*

A *"I think so. I think they will have to be because the amount things are being cut back by will make it difficult for everybody. They don't work to a large extent. It just irritates me, I appreciate that money is scarce but it irritates me when the job, albeit within small training departments or the Met or as a country force, puts everything back to money."*

Account 16

There are a number of issues contained within this next account from Mita, which combine to create a difficult situation. These include, time management issues, managing people and communication.

"My everyday work just in terms of time consumption because an awful lot of people are requesting to see me because they want to actually go through it [the procedure] before they do it. So what they are doing is instead of just using the electronic information that is there and saying these are the component parts of the module and these are what I need to have included before it gets to me, they are

actually coming to see me and asking "Have I got everything in here that I should have?" "Have you got a minute?" "Can I see you?" or dropping an email in asking to see me to talk it through and make sure we have all we need and so it is actually quite a shouldering of responsibility as well, rather than them [pause to think]. Which is fine as they are seeking advice which is reasonable and I have said in the meeting the other day that this is something that I had highlighted previously that it is fine to hand over personal responsibility development of staff directly to line managers, but if we don't tell them how we expect them to do that and how we actually offer that support, then we are going to have this come back and this is what is going to happen as we are bridging that gap now.

With those people as well who have been rejected initially their line managers have been quite defensive about it and we have included it and so I actually asked to see those line managers individually. (5 in total) So I ask to speak to them individually, they said I will bring my trainer with me and I said, no I just want to speak to you on your own, because if I were a line manager I would feel quite protective about myself quite protective, you know I am trying to advise this junior person and I am looking silly in front of them. So I actually called them in on their own, went through with them what they wanted to do, dealt with their animosity as some of them were quite long standing managers.

One of them I got a phone call from home a manager, who was overall in charge, to say a certain person was creating and they were not happy that their trainee got rejected, they felt that they had done everything that they should, they have shown me why it was returned, I can see why you returned it but they are not happy, they are really creating saying that, there was no support in place, that they had been given wrong advice; in fact this advice came from other people. It is the old age thing Richard of seeking advice from me, the person who they really needed to talk to.”

Account 17

The need to make cuts in the MPS’s budget requires a change in what were considered acceptable practices by the organisation. Some of these changes are being observed by Patrick:

“You have got police officers who have been told, as has happened twice this week, you have reached 30 years service you are only 52 but here is 28 days notice, we don’t want you any more. They are too expensive and they have introduced one of the pension regulations that says if the OCU has no where for you to go, regardless of your age, you can be got rid of.”

Q *“Normally we get to 30 years and then you can stay on up until the age of 55 is that correct?”*

A “Yes and then at 55 you would apply for extensions. Now if you can be told to go six years before your 55th birthday. It has always been a part of the pension regulations that were never used. But I know of two in the last week as I am a Federation rep. So people are being got rid of. It is likely to affect one of the members of my teaching team. He is moving as part of the cuts here, but now they are talking of him being forced to retire. I think what they have done is de-regulated the pension age, you used to have to be 55 before you could receive any pension. Now you can take it out at 49, so they have allowed regulation 19a to be implemented so you get your pension earlier which is cheaper than getting our pay. I think there will be some big changes ahead.”

Account 18

There are times when it appears that when nothing happens people are disadvantaged due to not being exposed to learning situations. The following account is offered by Tracey:

“Our team has grown massively. I think the problem that it brings is the lack of experience and the pressure that is put on the people that are capable in the team.”

Q. *“ So there you are you are working away and you have someone who comes in and they are going to need guidance and training.”*

A. *“Yea but they will need guidance and training but also you know when jobs come up, e.g. training and going to the lab, going somewhere else, the pool of people you can ask to do that is getting smaller. So there is that sort of pressure which will increase.”*

Q. *“If there is a new person on your team is there a lot for them to have to learn?”*

A. *“Oh yea massive and its one of those things that is like a lot of it is until you are exposed to it so you can tell someone the theory but a lot of it, I know it sounds awful but I learned my trade on the back of [named incident] so you know when stuff like that happens, you get thrown in at the deep end but it is the best learning curve ever sort of thing. So whereas there are people on the team who through no fault of their have had nothing like that.”*

Q *“And that would be considered to be a learning experience.”*

A. *“Yes. You know you can't beat them, going out there and the real thing sort of.”*

Q. *“And you say the talking is all very good but you want to actually link it to something ...”* A *“Yes because like so many things, saying this is how you do something rarely does it happen just like that without outside influences, changing and things like that.”*

Account 19

This account from Mita considers the position of responsibility in the individual's absence:

“I put into place a panel for members of staff completing their foundation degree a couple of months ago, these I co-ordinated, there were about five or six to be held in a day. But one of the people needed an extra day in order to produce the documentation for the panel. So I said that's fine but I am not here in the office tomorrow, I asked somebody else to take the session. I put my paperwork in a folder for them so the next day they could be distributed to the rest of the panel. I left a note with these saying if there are any problems, call me and gave my number.

What happened was the trainee came down and presented their documents for the panel. The person who was taking possession for those documents said “Why are you doing a panel” and the trainee said I was told I need to complete three panels. I had a meeting with the individual and their line manager where we discussed what was

the best way forward for them individually and I had written up the decisions on their personnel folder and had given access to the report on the computer if anyone had needed questions answered.

This particular person on the panel said, ah, I am going to check because I don't think you need another one, at which point the trainee said, "Well if I don't have to do it I won't do it, I would rather not do it if I don't have to do it."

So you are instantly in difficult territory there and basically she went away and said well she has already done two, should she really need to do another one? The others there said, well she should really do another one as it was agreed. She said well I have told her she doesn't need to do another one. So effectively she said, well at this stage then I won't do this one and then you can have a discussion and see if you do want me to do it or not. So I came in on the following morning, no note, no email, nothing. I looked through the paperwork and when I got to my fifth one the folder appeared to be pretty empty, where is this person's I thought. I phoned her line manager and said this person didn't come down, is there a problem yesterday, did anything happen yesterday? The line manager said, oh I don't know I will speak to her and find out why, so the line manager didn't even know that she wasn't going to do it. Then the line manager got back to me and said I don't think you are going to

like this, but apparently this happened yesterday and so I was angry understandably furious that no body had even let me know.”

Q *“Did it make you look stupid?”*

A *“It does but it also made the line manager look stupid and we were the people who discussed and agreed something and why would you interfere with that and I left a note that said any problems call me this particular person had gone to other people. She didn’t make contact with me what so ever, so what the hell was she thinking, what was here agenda there, was she trying to score some points somewhere along the line?”*

Account 20

The experience of Mita in this account was that of losing status, due to the fact that another person within the organisation had changed the criteria.

Paradoxically following the learning experience it was the student who was labelled the expert and not the teacher:

“We recently had a meeting, [before] it had been agreed that the new trainees that had joined had to enrol in the university and had to engage with the foundation degree; they had to as part of their contract. Whereas our existing experts, and I include myself, hadn’t had access to a foundation degree and had no requirement. I could

go to court tomorrow and it would not be a demand as an expert that I would have a foundation degree and that's something that they said yes that's fine, it just means that these people will have a foundation degree. It just accredits our training and the structure of our training. But at another meeting I was told that somebody who has just gone through the process, there is a delay in the university actually giving them an award, for us he is already an expert as he has already done all the training. But if he didn't have the foundation degree he would still be out there practicing as an expert giving evidence etc. The decision at the meeting was that he could practice as an expert but he could not go to court and give evidence. I said hang on when did we move that goal post when did we actually change that because for us as an expert, it is only the university recognising him and awarding him his foundation degree that is the difference. They are only effectively recognising our in house training anyway.

At which point the person running the meeting said no that is going to be the case they are going to have to have a foundation degree and I said what happens to all our experts who already are in place? What if they chose not to and they haven't even advised on an expert route for them to pick up and slot into that. What if they chose not to? What if they say I don't need a foundation degree and I am quite happy on this?

So there is all this thing around competency and recognition and I said have you spoken to evidence services because as far as I am aware this department doesn't need them to have a foundation degree to allow them to go to court and so why are we suddenly making that proviso, who has decided that? Where did that come from? I couldn't get an answer.

At the meeting that was the first time I heard that was going to be the case. So our expert will be under the ownership of our director, no matter what anyone else is doing nationally and that will be our recognition, we will no longer add staff to be registered.... I said I am one of those and there are an awful lot of experts who are one of those and I think ... I don't think they can see that the experts who are supporting the people going through the foundation degree are those people now being under valued?"

Q "Is that how you feel"

A " It does and I think if I were a practitioner I would feel that they were undervaluing my contribution as they are saying well actually we don't need you to do that now, we are going to clear that register, we are going to competency test you, which is fine. And they are asking those people to support and train and to pass on their knowledge and experience to these people but not actually, nothing is going back to them they are just being... What annoys me is the

fact that those people who have the foundation degree will actually be regarded as expert and we wouldn't".

Q *"Would you consider doing the foundation degree yourself?"*

A *"It is not accessible to me, because I am not a trainee I am an expert. No I can't do it and if I look at the minimum training they do over 3 years and the training I did over 5 years I did an awful lot, a huge amount in mine."*

Account 21

The following account describes how other people's attitudes and behaviour can affect an individual. This behaviour takes the form of alleged bullying and ageism. The following accounts took place not in an interview but via emails with Helen:

Email May 30, 2010

'Hi Richard, I guess the biggest thing that affects me and that I can't do anything about is my age. People tend to have very preconceived ideas about older people and there is still some prejudice. It is the only thing that it still appears to be acceptable to bully people about in the work place, now racism and sexism have been taken out of the equation. I personally don't find it a huge problem as I am very

capable of telling people where to go, in the nicest possible way and without using bad language but there a predictability about it which can be very tedious ...'

Email May 31, 2010

'Hi Richard, Typical every day situations - references to Tea Lady, the smell of lavender and stale piss (as it is delicately put) which may be done in front of groups of people, some of whom I don't know, as happened at a training day and in front of Housing Officers I have a professional relationship with! Posters put up in each room in the Safer Neighbourhood office made from an A4 photocopy of my warrant card stating "Help the Aged." The copy on my office door had a pocket stuck on the bottom stating Money Box, Help the Aged and an arrow pointing to it stating Donations.

On a previous occasion the heading on a similar poster was "Missing from Heston Grange - may be frail and confused." Heston Grange is an old people home or housing with a warden, I think. The posters were all over the police station and a copy was left on each of the vehicles in the yard. I was only in my forties then! Meals on Wheels written on the board indicating what my duties are for the next couple of weeks.

The truth is, I don't think my colleagues realise the implications of what they are doing. They know I'm unlikely to complain as I think of them as being thick but harmless idiots and actually they wouldn't do it if I was decrepit. Interestingly at the training day I was rebuked by a female Inspector for telling the female sergeant who had abused me by announcing to everyone that I smelt of lavender and stale piss, that I thought the fact that she was a bitch was our little secret and now she had let everyone else in on it! The Inspector said nothing when I was abused!!!

Generally I don't lose any sleep over it but I do feel for others who are subjected to this type of thing and can't defend themselves. You could say they shouldn't be in the job if they can't take it but many older officers have skills that young in age officers lack. It is interesting to note members of the public always seem to gravitate towards the older officer on scene! ...

Hope this doesn't make me sound a bit sad because actually I'm not!