

Department of Educational Studies
Faculty of Education

**LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE:
THE ROLE OF PLACEMENT IN BECOMING A
REFLECTIVE PRIMARY TEACHER**

A longitudinal study of students' experiences on the
Bachelor of Education (Primary) Degree at the University
of Strathclyde

Volume 1

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ABSTRACT

A longitudinal study followed a cohort of students through the Bachelor of Education (Honours) degree course, the main route to primary teaching at the University of Strathclyde. The main purpose was to determine the extent to which the school experience element met the expressed aims of the course, in particular, the aim of developing reflective practitioners, which is the model of the teacher that underpins the four-year course. In the first year of the study, baseline data was gathered from students in all four years of the course, their faculty tutors, supervising teachers and those members of staff in school holding the remit for students. First year students formed the basis of the longitudinal study, with data gathered through questionnaires and interviews over the subsequent three years. This data was supplemented by an analysis of students' self-evaluation reports and 'good practice' interviews with a sub-sample of supervising teachers.

The findings indicate that the majority of students experienced a primarily apprenticeship form of preparation for the teaching profession, rather than a reflective practitioner model. While considerable opportunities were provided within the structure of the course for the acquisition and exercise of skills of reflection and critical analysis, other factors influenced the extent to which these were realised. These included resources, and the ways in which teachers and tutors interpreted their roles and responsibilities as supervisors. Consideration is given as to how these might be addressed in order to provide a professional workforce of reflective practitioners might be realised within the current framework of pre-service primary education.

More fundamentally, issues of professionalism, government policy changes and the changing context of professional education generally, support the argument that the Scottish BEd, in its present form, is unlikely to support the development of the reflective primary teacher, despite the professed aims of its designers.

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CHAPTER 1 PRIMARY INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

The preservice training of teachers has been subject to considerable policy reform by the government of the United Kingdom over the last decade. In particular, there has been an increased emphasis on the role of the school in ensuring that beginning teachers enter the profession with what the policy-makers identify as the requisite skills and knowledge, defined as 'competences'.

In England and Wales, this emphasis on the school was reflected most clearly in the moves towards 'school-based' training, exemplified by the Licensed Teacher Scheme (DES, 1988) and the Articled Teacher Scheme (DES, 1989). While primarily for postgraduate training, these schemes were designed such that trainees spent the greater proportion of the training period in schools, with little or no input from teacher education institutions. In the case of the Articled Teacher Scheme (ATS) the supervising teachers in the schools were referred to as 'mentors' and were responsible for specific aspects of the training of students.

Although the ATS was subsequently scaled down and restricted to primary initial training and local authorities were encouraged to enlist higher education institutions into the Licensed Teacher Scheme (LTS), a number of alternative routes to qualified teacher status have been established, all of which are competency-driven and school-based (Maguire, 1995). Students on the more traditional programmes have also been required to spend more time in school and less in the teacher education institution (TEI) and schools receive payment for their involvement in the training process (Wilkin, 1992).

The general picture is one where political changes have forced a reduction in training and encouraged an intensively school-based apprenticeship model of learning to teach. While still working in partnership with the TEIs, supervising teachers have taken on the role of school-based mentors, with responsibility for supporting the student's learning in a more direct and systematic way (following a curriculum) and for the assessment of the student's classroom competence.

In Scotland, initial teacher education did not experience the same radical shift from the TEI to the school, although the desire to see that schools played a more significant and explicit part in initial teacher education was reflected in government policy statements. In 1993, the

Scottish Office Education Department¹ (SOED) published a revised set of guidelines for teacher training which, amongst other requirements, set out the proportions of time to be spent in school and in the TEI (SOED, 1993a). Only in the one year Postgraduate Certificate of Education course (PGCE) for teaching in secondary schools did this mean a significant departure from existing practice. For this course it was proposed that the period in school be increased from 18 to 22 weeks of the 36 week course and a form of mentoring introduced, not unlike that developed in England and Wales.

Before implementing the guidelines however, the SOED commissioned a number of studies designed to evaluate aspects of the proposed changes. The most significant of these was a pilot study of mentoring on the PGCE (Secondary) course at the Moray House Institute of Education in Edinburgh (Cameron-Jones and O'Hara, 1993; Powney, Edward, Holroyd and Martin, 1993). While the students, TEI tutors and supervising teachers involved in the study reported a number of positive outcomes, only one of these reached statistical significance. In addition, the researchers expressed concern over whether the changes in student performance and attitudes adequately reflected the high resource investment involved (SOED, 1993b).

Subsequently, in 1993-94, the SOED introduced an extended period of time in schools for PGCE(Secondary) courses. Schools and professional bodies expressed considerable concern over the issues of teacher workload, funding and timing which this involved. As a result of the united opposition to both the extended placement period and the concept of teachers as mentors, the change to school experience patterns was abandoned after one year and the established partnerships between TEIs and local authorities reinstated (McCall, 1995).

Thus in Scotland initial teacher education did not go down the school-based route, but instead retained the principle of developing (non-contractual) partnership arrangements between schools and TEIs. In such partnerships, schools are not paid for their participation in teacher training and supervising teachers tend to perceive their contribution to the process as a gift from one generation to the next. In addition, the locus of power in the partnership has remained quite explicitly with the TEI (Brown, 1996).

¹ Subsequently the Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID) and now the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED)

1.1 Training Primary Teachers in Scotland

The Scottish Guidelines for Initial Teacher Training (SOED, 1993a) set out the generic requirements and mandatory conditions for all primary teacher training courses, as well as those for teachers in the secondary and further education sectors. For example, all courses should contain an element of 'professional studies'. This included what might be loosely termed the 'theory' of teacher education which 'should be closely and continuously related to the other components of the course and to school experience' (p.2). In addition, the guidelines identified the specific requirements which differentiate one form of teacher training course from the others within and across the sectors.

All-graduate entry to primary teaching in Scotland was established in 1984, with two principal routes to qualification. These are the four year Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree and the one year Postgraduate Certificate of Education (Primary), both of which are designed to prepare students to teach in all areas of the primary curriculum across the age range 2½ to 12 years.

The Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree, which leads to a primary teaching qualification, is a full-time four year course which can be offered by TEIs at Ordinary and Honours levels. School experience is an essential component of each year of study, with a minimum of 30 weeks in school across the four years, of which more than half should be in the second half of the course, including a substantial block of time in school in the final year. The curriculum should include all primary school subjects, with an emphasis on the core areas of mathematics and English, and a range of options, including modern languages.

The PGCE (Primary) is a one year, full-time course which lasts for 36 weeks, 50% of which should be devoted to school experience with, again, a substantial block towards the end of the course. The TEI curriculum is similar to that of the BEd degree although somewhat condensed and compressed as a result of the shorter time scale.

A set of competences detail the government's expectations of the knowledge and skills which all beginning teachers should have acquired on completion of initial teacher training (SOED, 1993a; SOEID, 1998). In order to meet these expectations, the Scottish Office guidelines emphasise the need for partnership between the TEIs and schools, with a shared responsibility for the development of students into competent beginning teachers. This

partnership should extend beyond the school experience component of the course into course design and the assessment of students.

1.2 Partnership in Initial Teacher Education

A number of bodies are involved in the preservice education of teachers, including government departments, TEIs, local authorities and individual schools, and partnerships of various forms have been established to facilitate the process. The notion of partnership implies a relationship wherein one of the partners does not hold ultimate power in the decision-making but rather that decisions are negotiated between the parties involved.

At national level, the partnership between the Scottish Office and the General Teaching Council (GTC) is a highly significant one. The prime function of the GTC, established in 1965, is to maintain a register of those qualified to teach in Scottish primary and secondary schools. It is financially independent of the government and is supported by subscription from its members.

One argument given for such a partnership is that of preventing a concentration of power in the hands of any one party but the notion of shared power (or equal partners) in teacher education may well be an illusory one as the ultimate power over teacher education in Scotland belongs to the Secretary of State. Kirk (1994) identifies four arenas in which the GTC has a significant advisory role to play in policy formation. Firstly, it is involved in the accreditation of courses for teacher education, influencing the content and delivery of the training. Secondly, and following on from this, the GTC has a statutory entitlement to scrutinise and report on initial training courses within the TEIs.

The GTC has also been concerned with the qualifications of those who deliver these courses, setting in place in 1987 the requirement that all of those employed in the teaching of preservice students should also be registered teachers; a response, in part, to a growing concern over the relationship between theory and practice in teacher training (Kirk, 1994). In this third area of influence, the GTC has had a particular concern that those responsible for teacher training should have recent and relevant experience of the classroom, although this has not been established as a formal requirement.

Fourthly, the GTC has been concerned with the development of beginning teachers during

their two year probationary period following qualification. It monitors probationers' progress through reports from the schools in which they are employed and provides materials to support their continuing professional development.

Yet another form of partnership exists at school level between the traditional triad of supervising teacher, TEI tutor and student teacher. This partnership is much more concerned with the day-to-day learning activities which the student undertakes on school experience placement and through which she or he will develop into the competent beginning teacher.

1.3 School Experience in Initial Teacher Education

Schools are most directly involved in the school experience components of teacher training courses. Students on placement are supervised by two persons - a tutor from the TEI and the classroom teacher. They have a common goal in that they are both concerned to ensure that the student gains the kinds of practical experiences that will support the development of the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes. In addition, a senior member of staff holds the remit for overseeing students on placement within the school and managing the school's involvement with the TEI.

In the view of the Scottish Office, the purpose of the school experience component of teacher training is *'to provide the practical context to illustrate and develop the skills, understanding and content being taught in the (teacher training) institution and the particular skills in dealing with class management and curriculum which are best developed in the partner schools'* (SOED, 1993a, p.2). However, the precise nature of the skills and understanding, how their development can best be facilitated and the requisite levels of competence are not made clear. The degree of responsibility which each partner holds in the process is also somewhat sketchy. In that the arrangement is essentially one of 'gift-giving' on the part of teachers and schools (Kleinberg & Stark, 1998), TEIs are reluctant to make specific demands of teachers in terms of roles and responsibilities, including that they be trained or provided with structured staff development activities related to supporting students on placement.

1.4 The Competent Beginning Teacher

The 1993 Scottish guidelines list a total of forty competences, grouped into four domains: competences relating to the subject and content of teaching; to the classroom; to the school; and to professionalism (SOED, 1993a).

The model of the teacher which is promoted in the Scottish guidelines and which, it is claimed, underpins the competences, is one which emphasises critical thinking and draws on the concept of 'professionalism':

... in addition, teachers must have a knowledge and understanding both of the content of their teaching and of the relationship between their methods and children's learning, and must be able to evaluate and justify their procedures to others. They must also display certain professional attitudes to their job, to pupils, to the school, to parents, to school boards and to the community in general.

(SOED, 1993a, p.1)

1.5 Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education (SOEID, 1998)

In October 1998, following consultation with the TEIs, teaching unions, local authorities and various bodies involved in or with a concern for teacher education, the Scottish Office issued revised guidelines (SOEID, 1998). While these guidelines are described as for Initial Teacher Education rather than Training, as it was expressed in 1993, there is no indication as to the reasoning behind this change or the messages to be drawn.

While the layout and sequencing of the document has been revised, the more significant changes lie within the competences. There are more competence statements in 1998; 48 in total as opposed to the earlier 40. In terms of substance there is an increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the BEd (Primary) course, reflecting the government's concern with standards in schools. It is proposed that these students should study English and mathematics to an advanced level, as opposed to English or mathematics in the 1993 guidelines.

There is a greater emphasis on information and communications technology (ICT) for the student's personal professional development, as a resource in facilitating pupil learning and as an area of the curriculum which she or he should be competent in teaching. In addition, there is more specific reference to 'gender' as an issue in education. A few of the

categories of competence have been re-organised and re-labelled, with some increased specificity in the wording of the competence statements. In particular, the section on 'Competences related to professionalism' in 1993 has been re-titled 'The values, attributes and abilities integral to the professional role of the teacher' and slightly extended (SOEID, 1998, p.13).

The model of the beginning teacher is one of a 'competent and thoughtful practitioner', committed to high academic standards and with an ability to reflect upon her or his practice. Initial teacher education is only the first step in professional education; further development and refinement through 'successive years of classroom experience' will result in 'proficient and advanced levels of professionalism' (SOEID, 1998, p.2).

1.6 Assessment

Scottish Office guidance (1993a) on the assessment of students during ITE is limited to raising a number of questions which TEIs should consider in constructing their courses. Implicit in these questions are the expectations that TEIs should

- use a variety of assessment procedures;
- consider the role of self assessment in the process of training;
- ensure a secure relationship between assessment and the competences;
- consider the weighting of assessments;
- ensure assessment procedures take account of the validating bodies;
- clarify the roles of the Board of Examiners, external examiners, lecturers and teachers in the assessment process; and
- develop procedures which recognise instances of particular merit, allow for compensation of poor performance in one area with good in another and for re-sitting in the case of failure.

Teacher education institutions are therefore given broad guidelines within which to develop assessment strategies particular to individual courses and institutions.

The 1998 Guidelines (SOEID, 1998) say only a little more about assessment. While the scheme of assessment should be drawn up by the TEI, it must ensure a thorough assessment of the competences while taking care that the burden on students is reasonable. The specific details of the assessment procedures and criteria will be in the course

documents produced by individual TEIs. The SOEID insists that all TEIs produce an assessment profile which clearly identifies students' strengths and weaknesses in relation to the competences required of beginning teachers and presents them in a way which permits potential employers to compare the achievements of individuals from different training institutions.

1.7 Summary

Schools and the teacher education institutions are in partnership to ensure that student teachers are equipped to enter the profession as competent beginning teachers. A critical element of this developmental process is the school experience placement, managed and supervised by staff from both school and TEI. This element of ITE forms the focus for the research presented in this thesis. How those involved in the partnership perceive what the student should be learning and how that learning can best be achieved will fundamentally influence the ways in which partners define and undertake their roles and responsibilities. This implies that there is a model of the beginning teacher, explicit or implicit, guiding the actions of the supervising teacher, the TEI tutor and the student which influences the ways in which they interact.

These two themes, the nature of the partnership between teacher, tutor and student and the model of the beginning teacher (and student teacher) which each holds, form the two main themes of this study. The review of the literature considers each of these themes in turn in the following two chapters. The first, Chapter 2, focuses on the surface features of what happens on school experience while the second, Chapter 3, attempts to explore the alternative models of teaching, the teacher and learning to teach, and the attitudes, beliefs and values that they embody.

CHAPTER 2 SCHOOL EXPERIENCE IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

The increasing emphasis by policy-makers on the role of the school and the importance of school-based experience in the initial education of teachers, reflects, implicitly and/or explicitly, a particular perspective on a range of issues in ITE, most notably: the relationship between theory and practice; the roles and responsibilities of the school and supervising teacher as well as the faculty and TEI tutor; the nature of the knowledge bases required; the ways in which these can be acquired and assessed; and, fundamentally, the model of the beginning teacher which is the intended goal of the ITE process. This chapter considers each of these issues in turn.

2.1 Theory and Practice

It has been argued that the stress put on the role of the school by government reflects a concern over a possible lack of continuity between the different forms of knowledge which the school and the TEI contribute to the training of students (Wilkin, 1992). These contributions tend to be referred to as 'practice' and 'theory' respectively although McIntyre (1992) argues that any clear dividing line between the two is, in reality, difficult to determine. Similarly, Eraut (1994) argues that while students should be introduced to the idea that there are many theories in education and that they have various practical applications, theories can also be derived from practice. Stones (1994) views the distinction as evidence of an underestimation of the complexity of the teaching process and a simplistic belief in a technicist model of being a teacher.

While it is accepted that direct classroom practice is essential in learning to teach, there are those who argue that 'theory' is unnecessary and may indeed be undesirable (Whitty, 1993) and there appears to have been, most notably in political circles, a rejection of the notion that theory has a role to play in the training of teachers, and a growing belief in practical, on-the-job training as more relevant and effective. In England and Wales, for example, the government set out its expectation that the schools' role would be to ensure the development of an understanding of pedagogy as practice while universities would provide the content knowledge (Circular 9:92: DFE, 1992). Guidance on the ITE curriculum thus focused on the practical application of theory, while the theoretical bases of pedagogical skills were marginalised if not discarded.

While some doubt any role for theory, others are more concerned as to the appropriateness of particular kinds of theory which the teacher education institutions have included in the ITE curriculum. Whitty's analysis (1993) of the New Right's attack in the late 1980s and early 1990s on TEIs in general and ITE in particular, indicated that it had an ideological basis and was concerned that there was too much emphasis on theory, much of which was of the 'wrong type', coming as it did 'from a liberal or left educational establishment' (p. 267). He regarded these views as underpinning the New Right's advocacy of an apprenticeship model of ITE along the lines of the LTS and, to a lesser extent, the ATS. Stones (1994) also saw political intent behind the recent reforms, with government preferring the learning of facts and practical skills to the development of critical thinking and enquiry.

A separate funding council, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), was established in England and Wales specifically to encourage and support school involvement in teacher education. Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) argue that this reflected 'a determined attempt of central government to wrest control of teacher education from higher education institutions and introduce what is perceived to be a more practical and apprentice-like form of training' (p.3-4). Subsequently, proposals for a national curriculum for initial teacher education in England and Wales were made (DfEE, 1996,) with the first set of requirements published in 1997 (DfEE, Circular 10/97).

In 1998, the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) issued a revised national curriculum for initial teacher training (ITT) in England and Wales, setting out the criteria for all courses to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and the standards (rather than the 'competences' of earlier circulars) which trainees are expected to have achieved on entering the profession. These requirements apply to all courses, whether managed through partnerships between higher education institutions and schools or by schools who are members of school-centred initial teacher training schemes (SCITTS). A clear timetable has been set out for compliance to the requirements by trainers and existing courses were to have been modified by September 1999.

The national curriculum statements emphasise knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the subjects of the National Curriculum for pupils although the DfEE does stress that 'a curriculum is not a course model' (Annex 3, p.3), and leaves individual

institutions/training schemes to develop the means by which the requirements and the QTS standards will be achieved. There is no specific mention of foundation disciplines such as sociology or psychology for trainees, with only 'subject pedagogy' given a specific place i.e. an understanding of how best to teach particular subjects such that children's attainment will be enhanced. The government's justification for an ITT national curriculum focuses on the need to raise the standards of literacy and numeracy in schools and to meet government targets for pupil and school attainment.

The factors driving educational reforms tend to be economic, political and ideological, in various combinations and, following Whitty (1993), Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) identified two of the main lines of argument used to support the reforms of the last decade. The first is the criticism of what is perceived to be an over-emphasis on theory (with left wing origins) while the second views teaching as a practical activity to be learned through doing. In similar vein, Hogbin, Cockett and Hustler (1996) highlight the tension between the liberal intellectual approach of the university and the vocational or craft model of learning for work which emphasises practical relevance rather than 'woolly theorising'.

This polarisation of theory and practice is also reflected in the separation of the roles of the TEI and the school. Taken to extremes, this can result in a caricature of professional practice where *'in school there is impeccable practice and in the TEI there is arid theory'* (Maclellan, 1994, p. 67). Some might add 'and dangerous' alongside 'arid'. Stones (1994) however considers that there is already an inadequate amount of theory taught in the TEIs, and that many teacher educators themselves are lacking a sufficient grounding in the principles of human learning to support the development of effective teachers who are critical and enquiring. As a result, the gradual erosion of the role of theory in the TEI over recent years has impoverished the knowledge bases of those who teach the student teachers.

Some distancing of theory from practice in a different sense can also be observed in some of the activities of the TEIs, the vast majority of whom have become integrated with the universities, albeit in response, primarily, to pressure from economic sources. It has been argued that recent Research Assessment Exercises in the United Kingdom, which determine significant elements of university funding, have led university staff to focus on the more theoretical aspects of their professional practice and less on the practical

application (Edwards and Collison, 1995). While this might improve the knowledge bases of those teacher educators criticised by Stones (1994), it is the role of theory in ITE and its relationship to practice which is of crucial importance.

The role of theory and theorising

Bengtsson (1995) points to a distinction which, he argues, is often made by academics, between academic knowledge and professional knowledge where the former is gained through scientific research and the latter through proven experience. Here academic knowledge is perceived to have greater status and validity than professional knowledge, which is judged to be too subjective, personalised and lacking in distance from 'self' and immediate experiences.

In initial teacher education, the kinds of theory (or academic knowledge) which have tended to be included have been drawn from a range of disciplines, including psychology, sociology and philosophy. The inclusion of classes in child development, learning and motivational theories, social deprivation, discrimination and exclusion in ITE courses indicate the range of theoretical concerns deemed appropriate by TEIs for the trainee teacher. Stones (1994) argues for a body of theory which makes explicit the principles which are believed to underlie good teaching. He focuses particularly on the psychology of human learning and concepts such as the role of feedback, concept acquisition and problem solving. While these are academic in nature, the fundamental aim is to help student teachers in solving their pedagogical problems from a more generalised understanding than a course in 'subject pedagogy' would seem to imply.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) argue for four dimensions (if not levels) of knowledge and understanding which student teachers must acquire. The first two focus on the acquisition of an understanding of classroom practice as an activity, directly within the school or indirectly within the TEIs. The third dimension (practical principles) involves understanding why things work, a knowledge of situations and the factors which might hinder or facilitate pupil learning. Fourthly, students require a knowledge of disciplinary theory, a foundation of knowledge which allows them to move beyond the immediate situation and to subject both their own emerging theories of practice and those of others to critical enquiry. These dimensions, Maynard and Furlong maintain, are not intended to

represent a hierarchy of knowledge with abstract theory at the pinnacle but rather to reflect the varying needs of students as they develop from novices to qualified beginning teachers.

However, students enter the teacher education institution with a considerable store of theories about schools and the educational process acquired through their own experiences as pupils (Eraut, 1994). They have read and heard media reports on educational issues and they have shared experiences of schooling with friends and relatives. Although such theories are likely to be partial, constrained by their own particular life experiences and, as a result, idiosyncratic in parts, they are also likely to be fairly well embedded and resistant to change (Calderhead, 1988). As they progress through the ITE programme, the students will be exposed to a range of academic and professional theorising and their responses to these experiences are likely to be shaped, at least in part, by their personal theories of education and teaching.

In order to distinguish between the different kinds of theory which individuals possess, Eraut (1994) argues for two senses of the concept of theory, one public and the other private. The former category includes those theories available from books and academic courses and which are up for public discussion and critique. In addition, however, individual people interpret and explain their experiences through their personal and private theories of the world and how it works. These may bear little or no resemblance to publicly available theories.

In addition, Eraut's definition of how theories are put into practice (theorising) holds that they are never translated or operationalised unchanged but that individuals transform them, re-interpret or reorganise them, in line with the particular situation encountered and various personal variables. He argues that 'theory' is not to be regarded as something apart from practice and the term 'theoretical' should not be applied such that it indicates that an idea, or system of thought, is not capable of being used.

In considering teachers in the classroom, Bengtsson (1995) similarly argues that their professional practical knowledge is not atheoretical but rather is based on tacit theories which are manifest in the experienced teacher's routinised behaviours and practices. These are likely to be blends of public and private theories, and individual in that each will have had different personal and professional experiences contributing to their understanding,

explicit or implicit, of what it is to be a teacher. Bengtsson's professional practical knowledge is akin to the 'professional craft knowledge' of Brown and McIntyre (1988) where 'good practice' is characterised by quick action, extrovert self confidence and the automatic use of routine procedures. When such teachers are asked to explain or justify their practice, few can provide explanations which match the sophistication of their performance (McIntyre, 1993).

Similarly Eraut (1994) refers to 'action' knowledge where the contents of various knowledge bases, theoretical, practical and personal, are combined or inter-related such that they are brought into use automatically in professional practice. This action knowledge, or professional craft knowledge, is generally regarded as tacit and, in the main, inaccessible to the practitioner. While Brown and McIntyre (1988) consider that it could (and should) be brought to the surface and subjected to critical enquiry, Eraut (1994) is not convinced. His argument is that much teaching is 'hot' action, reactive rather than planned and considered. Decisions and actions tend to be largely intuitive, in contexts which demand immediate responses to changing situations. In addition, they are likely to be idiosyncratic in that individual teachers will respond in different ways to similar events and situations. Self knowledge is difficult and much 'reflection on action' is after-the-event justification of decisions made in the heat of the moment.

If understanding what happens in teaching is difficult for experienced practitioners, student teachers must find it almost impossible without support and guidance. Making sense out of what happens on placement and checking out individual realities with those of other students can help to develop new understandings (theories) without losing sight of the specific characteristics which made the particular events or situations memorable (Maclellan, 1994).

McIntyre (1993) offers a range of strategies aimed at allowing student teachers to access the professional craft knowledge of the classroom teacher (mentor). Primarily, it is necessary for the student and the mentor to enter into a dialogue that probes and makes explicit the underlying reasoning for specific actions and decisions, both where teaching events were successful and less than satisfactory. This however requires time for such reflective conversations but also, and perhaps more fundamentally, that both are suitably disposed to such interrogation of what the mentor might regard as routine or everyday

practice. Exposing one's theories or professional craft knowledge to such scrutiny also exposes the fundamental values and beliefs on which they are based, often implicitly and unconsciously.

Much of what students learn on school experience is 'situated' knowledge (Edwards, 1997), acquired and understood within the context of a particular situation. Such knowledge may not be readily transferred by the student to other situations where the characteristics are not easily identifiable as similar or related. Students must be encouraged and supported to make generalisations from the immediate situation i.e. to develop theories of teaching that are grounded in the evidence of their own experience. These should be used, in turn, to interrogate publicly available theories.

Stones (1994) and McIntyre (1993) argue for viewing the relationship as a dialectical process, with theory informing and challenging practice, and vice versa, and for alerting students to this early in their development. (Public) theory has a role in initial teacher education but one where theory is used to interrogate practice and, in turn, where practice is used to illuminate and evaluate theory. As a result, students will engage in theorising, developing their own theories of learning and teaching, theories which are constantly reviewed and challenged. In order to do this, however, students need to acquire skills of critical analysis and reflection and this requires that the TEIs ensure that they have suitable opportunities for their acquisition.

It is not only the forms of theoretical input from the TEI that is to be considered but also the timing (Stones, 1994; Maclellan, 1994). In order to make sense of a given situation, students require a bank of theoretical explanations on which to draw and so some input is required before exposure to the complexities of the typical classroom. On the other hand, too much theory without sufficient experience of how it 'looks' in action can simply confuse and overwhelm. If it is accepted that theory does have a place, then which theories, when, where and how become important considerations for course development teams.

While doubts over the relevance of theory in the development of effective practitioners appear to underpin the policy-makers' concern to extend the periods spent in school, part of the argument for an increased role for schools is that the profession has something more than a class of pupils to offer in the training of its own recruits (DES, 1991). Such an

argument underpins the move to greater school-based training and the introduction of school-based mentors with increased responsibility for the students' learning to teach.

Recent developments have attempted to specify the significant contribution of the school supervisor or mentor and to define more clearly the articulation between the teacher's role and that of the TEI tutor. This has been done under the banner of 'partnership'.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The various lines of partnership between the Scottish Office, the GTC and the TEIs focus on the structural elements of initial teacher education at a national level. At a local level, the training institution, school and local authority are required to plan jointly for school experience placements, the main aim of which is *'to provide a practical context for the acquisition and development of the competences'* (SOED, 1993a, p.2). This requires that the roles of the various members of the partnership be defined and that *'the school in which the school experience is undertaken will have a clear role in the assessment of students'* (p.2). While broadly in line with previous practice (McCall, 1988), the increased emphasis on the role of the school is quite explicit :

They (the guidelines) lay particular stress on the role to be played in training by the schools in which the students are placed to gain practical experience, referred to as the 'partner' schools' (SOED, 1993a, p.1).

Many of the partnerships which exist to support ITE are concerned with the 'enabling' structures where the focus tends to be on the management and organisation of the school experience component of the programme and well-defined arrangements are required to ensure that preservice teachers experience and develop their skills in relevant, practical contexts (Alexander, 1990). The partnership which exists between the traditional triad of student teacher, supervising teacher and HEI tutor is primarily concerned with issues at Alexander's 'action' level - the day-to-day interactions, classroom relationships and activities through which the student develops into a competent beginning teacher (Alexander, 1990). The formal structures within which this triad operates influence and constrain the kinds of 'action' which are considered possible. Consequently, the degree of freedom which individuals have in determining their own roles and responsibilities can be limited.

The supervising teacher

Traditionally, the role of the teacher has been to support students directly in developing their practical knowledge and skills in real contexts while the tutors from the TEI were concerned to challenge their interpretations, to encourage them to make generalisations from their observations and experiences and to critique their progress, performance and understanding. The teacher's priority remained with the children rather than the student (Edwards, 1997; Collison and Edwards, 1994; Stark, 1993).

McIntyre's review of several studies into teachers as supervisors (1984) indicated that when class teachers were evaluating or assessing students, they were reluctant to review the work critically and tended to avoid making negative remarks. In general, interactions between student teachers and their supervising class teachers indicated a deliberate avoidance of conflict and, in consequence, often lacked substantive discussion of the issues involved (McIntyre, 1984).

Similarly, Collison and Edwards (1994) found that the dominant role for the teacher was the creation of a caring, supportive atmosphere with positive feedback. Supervising teachers were concerned to be liked and trusted by the students and worked to protect the students from failure, where it could be avoided. Beginning teachers sought certainty in a complex environment and teachers and students colluded to reduce the risk involved, setting closed tasks and avoiding 'puzzlement' in the practice situation. Their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities had not altered with the move towards school-based training.

However, research into the 'craft of the teacher' has demonstrated that teachers do have specialist knowledge of classroom practice which they can, and should be encouraged to contribute to the initial training process (Brown and McIntyre, 1988). Much of this knowledge will have been internalised and be difficult to access and explain to others; the teacher's repertoire of knowledge about teaching is not drawn upon consciously. If the supervising teacher is going to access and use this knowledge, whether for improving her or his own practice or for aiding students, they must learn to bring it to the surface.

Moving from 'supervisor' to 'mentor' involves a significant re-casting of the teacher's role. Maynard and Furlong (1993) identify three elements to the mentor role - model,

instructor, and co-enquirer - where the last of these depends upon the teacher being prepared and able to enquire into her or his own practice and learn alongside the student. Essentially, mentoring implies a curriculum for school experience in which the classroom teacher has an active part to play rather than a supervisory or watching brief.

Collison and Edwards (1994) found evidence that teachers were fulfilling, to a greater or lesser degree, the first two roles in Maynard and Furlong's model of the mentor. Where the teacher acted as a model, they found considerable variations in the amount and nature of teacher-student interaction, with limited direct involvement in specific learning activities in many instances. Where teachers acted as instructors, the focus tended to be on the procedural elements of the task, drawing on their own practical theories and preferences, rather than encouraging students to make generalisations or challenging their interpretations of events and situations.

One of the dominant themes which emerged in Edwards and Collison's research into learning on placement however was the belief by classroom teachers that the TEI was the place where students should find the time to reflect on the experiences in school and to develop their own theories and philosophies of teaching and being a teacher (Edwards and Collison, 1995). School was the source of the experiences which formed the raw material of such reflection. Thus perceptions of roles and responsibilities appeared to mirror the traditional theory-practice distinction. A second TEI responsibility was the development of appropriate frameworks for organising teaching events. There was little evidence of co-enquiry into the teaching process or shared teaching which might encourage reflection.

The distinction made between theory and practice might be interpreted as distinguishing between Maynard and Furlong's 'practical principles' and 'disciplinary theory' (1993) with teachers being prepared to discuss, within the context of the specific practical situation, the reasons why things did or did not work. The teacher/school is therefore in position to ensure that the student teacher develops an understanding of the principles underpinning effective practice (in a procedural sense).

While success in student teaching experience appears to be highly dependent on the nature of the relationship between the student and the class teacher (one of personal support and role development rather than the acquisition and development of skills) this influence may

be relatively short-lived and related to the specific demands of the placement (McIntyre, 1984; Zerr, 1988).

Within this study, an important aim has been the need to identify what 'good practice' in school experience provision means to supervising teachers. The ways in which they define their own role and responsibilities and the expectations which they hold of students will be influenced by the values implicit in their interpretation of 'good practice'. Similarly there has been a need to establish what a 'good' placement means to the student. Is current 'good practice' sufficiently good to allow student teachers to develop into competent beginning teachers as set out in government guidelines?

While the primary school today is subject to significant external political, economic and social forces, it is also an organisation in its own right, with a history and set of internal relationships which can pose a potential micropolitical minefield for the unwary student. How do students respond to the social and political forces at work in the school?

The tutor

The position of the TEI tutor in the supervisory process has received less attention from researchers in the past and the strong role accorded to the class teacher has led some to the view that the tutor role could be modified significantly if not eliminated. Indeed some aspects of recent policy reforms in ITE reflect just such an stance.

In his 1984 review of research on supervision, McIntyre concluded that the university tutor was a motivating presence for students. An important part of his or her role was to act as a 'coach' by providing, for example, ideas and suggestions regarding particular teaching problems. In addition, TEI tutors conveyed the expectations and requirements of the programme to both students and teachers and controlled the pacing to the student's workload, particularly early in the placement and as the student assumed greater responsibility for classroom activities. An important element of the tutor's role was the evaluation of the student's performance and the provision of constructive criticism (McIntyre, 1984).

Rex (1989) viewed the TEI tutor's role as a highly political one in that a considerable amount of time was spent in negotiating placements and manoeuvring through the other

demands which are made of teachers in their day-to-day work in schools. Hayes and Corden (1994) similarly viewed the tutor as a go-between, reconciling the expectations of the TEI with the priorities of the school and the class teacher, negotiating the student's curriculum on placement and acting as a buffer between student and supervising teacher, as necessary. The tutor's prime responsibility is the student and she or he has a more comprehensive view of the student's achievements and needs, drawing on knowledge of performance and progress from outwith the placement school. In such a model, the tutor visits the school, usually in an assessor role, rather than the student bringing the school experience into the TEI.

Increased interest in the role of the TEI and the faculty tutor, perhaps defensive in part, has been in evidence since the introduction of school-centred and school-based partnerships. The move towards longer periods in school brings with it a change of role for the supervising classroom teacher and his or her relationship with the student. One consequence is likely to be an increase in the tension between the teacher's prime responsibility to the children and that of supporting the student's development.

Hayes and Corden (1994) point out that, previously, the TEI tutor was more concerned with the student than the pupils, redressing the imbalance in the teacher's priorities. As the tutor becomes less central to the process however this responsibility diminishes. As a result, where there is a conflict between children and student in the teacher's priorities, the student is likely to lose out, with little or no input from the TEI tutor to compensate. Eventually the role could become a somewhat distant one, literally and figuratively, and increasingly perceived as of little direct relevance.

The tutor has a role beyond the school placement however, fundamentally in providing the continuity between the school and TEI components of the course. Students need to be helped to make these links and this would seem to be the tutor's responsibility. There are two opportunities for this to be built into the system. Firstly, when tutors visit schools to observe and, usually to assess, the student and tutor (and possibly the teacher) meet afterwards to provide feedback and share understandings of the effectiveness of the session. This may be a tense time however, particularly for the student if s/he is being assessed, and perspectives may be clouded. A second, less fraught opportunity occurs at the end of placement, once the student has returned to the TEI. Debriefing tutorials where

a group of students, each with her or his own particular experiences to recount, can provide a forum for attempting to elicit principles from the subjective evidence brought to the discussion.

If the post-placement debriefing in the TEI is intended to help students to make sense of their teaching experience, then Eraut (1994) argues that it is often inadequate. TEIs normally invest considerable time and effort in preparing students for placement but spend relatively little time sorting out, making explicit and reflecting upon the experiences and knowledge gained. The TEI support for learning on placement thus tends to be 'front loaded' while, he argues, more could be gained from greater attention to the impact of time spent in school. While the responsibility for preparation for teaching lies with the TEI, both school and institution would appear to have a role to play in supporting students to unpack the action of the classroom and identify important principles of learning and teaching.

Working together

Reforms in ITE have therefore led to a re-assessment of the roles and responsibilities of the supervising teacher in school and the TEI tutor. Whereas there was a tendency to see each as making a distinct contribution to the initial training process (Furlong, 1993), the notion of partnership and the increased role of the school, particularly in school-based or school-centred systems, are blurring the boundaries and leaving both partners a little insecure (Collison and Edwards, 1994).

McCulloch (1993) exemplifies the 'partnership' approach by putting the emphasis on integration, alliances, shared models of supervision and student learning and mutual commitment to shared professional principles. This takes time and is demanding on both parties, she argues, but the potential is great. Kauffman (1992) identified three barriers to establishing effective partnerships at teacher-tutor level. Firstly, problems arose where the class teacher and TEI tutor held differing expectations of their own and each other's roles. In many instances this occurred because the roles had not been clearly defined at the outset and, in consequence, each had construed their own notions of the roles in the partnership.

A second problem can be a lack of real, substantive communication between the two supervisors. It takes time to establish a system of effective communication that can ensure

shared understandings in the aims of placement and the theories and values that underpin the particular approaches taken by the TEI. Time is always in scarce supply.

Thirdly, if the supervisory roles of tutor and teacher are to be complementary, as an effective partnership would imply, the collaboration of teacher and tutor should reflect the need to integrate theory and practice in the learning process. Kauffman found little evidence of genuine collaboration in student supervision, resulting in frequent misunderstandings and a lack of unity in front of the student teacher.

In an earlier study of roles and responsibilities on the BEd course at Jordanhill (Stark, 1994), faculty tutors and supervising teachers viewed the development of classroom skills, knowledge and understanding, and professional development as, in the main, a shared responsibility. Where the burden of responsibility fell on one partner, the more theoretical elements (e.g. child development, research methodology) were viewed as the province of the faculty, while more practical aspects (e.g. primary-secondary liaison, skills of discipline) were identified as more appropriately school-based. This is supported by Edwards and Collison (1995) who found that while teachers valued theory, they did not feel that it was part of their role. They were more concerned with the day-to-day activities and tasks which the student undertook and her or his performance in the classroom.

In the Jordanhill study, the balance of responsibility for the counselling and guidance of the students, the development of 'reflective practitioners' and the final grading of students on placement lay with the faculty (Stark, 1994). Overall, tutors and teachers were working from a common, albeit tacit, agenda although a lack of real open communication between the partners frequently led to a mismatch in expectations and perceptions.

2.3 Learning to be a Teacher on Placement

Maynard and Furlong (1994) argue that learning to teach involves more than acquiring a practical knowledge base; changes in cognition, the development of interpersonal skills and an affective component also feature. Similarly, Calderhead and Elliot (1994) identify a number of different forms of learning, in a range of contexts, which are necessary for professional growth, both cognitive and affective. In particular, learning *to* teach and learning *about* teaching are two separate, although inter-related, strands in the student's development.

Calderhead and Shorrock (1994) point out that, traditionally, attention has focused on the technical aspects, learning to teach, to the neglect of those factors which influence personal development (images of teaching, self as teacher) and the social-cultural (the school as a social system, and the wider context).

For students, being on placement in school is being part of the 'real world' of teaching, what it is all about (Maclellan, 1994; Stark, 1994). Lortie (1975) found that teachers rated practice teaching in the school higher than they did the college-based elements of their course. Students seemed to feel that the goal of teacher-training, to become a teacher working in a school, seemed more attainable and closer during school placement which had a 'a texture of reality'. In addition, they viewed the college staff as holding a utopian view of the classroom, setting unrealistic aims and remaining remote from the day-to-day exigencies.

Learning to be a teacher is also a process of socialisation into the profession, of learning the norms and cultural values involved. Lortie (1975) considers this process begins for many while they are still pupils in school where experiences of the system and specific teachers can shape decisions to enter teaching – or not. This 'apprenticeship of observation' results in a partial learning or distorted view of what it is to be a teacher. The formal socialisation processes are evident, he argues, in the specialised study in preservice training and, more significantly, on placement when working alongside the experienced teacher and learning through doing.

Learning over time

The focus of student learning and the concerns they have about their ability to teach change over time (Fuller, 1970). Calderhead (1988) identified three phases of student learning during a single term placement within a one year ITE course. Students learned a great deal during the early part of the placement but quickly reached a plateau where the work had become routinised and generally predictable. While demanding in terms of workload, students were not challenged to develop their professional understanding. Teachers were not concerned to drive the student's learning and any further development was gradual, if it took place at all.

Maynard and Furlong (1993) hold that three of the most frequently advocated models of mentoring, apprenticeship, competency and the reflective teacher, should be used to respond to the students' changing needs during the ITE course. Apprenticeship, where the focus is on skill development, classroom strategies and subject knowledge, involves learning by working alongside an experienced practitioner who acts as a model, or master craftsman. But it is not enough to copy what appears effective, Maynard and Furlong argue. The student has to 'learn to see' the significant features of the situation and collaborative teaching, where the supervisor is concerned to help students make sense of the complexity of the classroom, is advocated.

As students acquire the basic skills which allow them to stand back from the moment-to-moment concerns of surviving in the classrooms, a programme of systematic training in an agreed set of skills and strategies is deemed appropriate. This draws on a competency model of teaching and in mentoring, and establishes that part of the school-based 'curriculum' for which the mentor is responsible. Tasks are structured to minimise failure and to encourage incremental development of skills but in order to move the student off Calderhead's plateau (1988), any scaffolding should be dismantled judiciously as the student progresses.

A third form of mentoring, the reflective model, is based on the view of the teacher as a reflective practitioner. For the student teacher, reflective practice means acquiring a deeper understanding of how children learn, an appreciation of the ways and means of achieving effective learning, an understanding of how to put them into practice and the ability to justify and defend decisions and actions from a principled stance.

The three models, aligned to phases of development, depict a shift in student concerns from: How do experienced teachers do it? to How do I teach effectively? and, in turn, to How do I teach so that children are learning effectively? If this is the aim of the ITE course, it will take more than the school and mentor to achieve it and both institutions, school and TEI, should be working towards the same model of being a teacher if the student is not going to experience dissonance.

At the end of the course, regardless of the models of training, the student teacher, or the experienced practitioner held by the school and/or the TEI, the government has clear

expectations as to the knowledge, skills and attitudes which beginning teachers should have. In Scotland, these expectations are still expressed in competences (SOEID, 1998) rather than the standards of the DfEE (1998).

2.4 Competences and Initial Teacher Education

In 1993 the Scottish Office issued Guidelines for Initial Teacher Training which contained a list of forty competences, grouped into four categories (SOED, 1993a). Students were expected to have satisfactorily demonstrated all of these by the end of their initial training course. Draft guidelines were issued for consultation early in 1998 with the final version published later that year. This document extended the number of competences to forty-eight, modifying and amending many of the existing ones, ostensibly with the intention of clarifying ambiguities (SOEID, 1998).

The use of sets of competences as a basis for determining whether an individual has met the standards expected of a beginning teacher can be traced back to the competency based training (CBT) movement which has its origins in North America in the period following the Second World War. The notion that members of a profession should be 'competent' in some way goes back much further and was a significant factor in the introduction of entry examinations for many professions. Entry qualifications served as a means of protecting the status and livelihoods of their members as well as a form of assurance to the public (Eraut, 1994).

Implicit in this assurance was the notion that professional qualifications conferred competence, an assumption wherein the relationship between being qualified as a member of a profession and being able to effectively carry out the various tasks which might be expected of such a professional went unquestioned. The emphasis was on competence as intellectual achievement rather than technical expertise (Eraut, 1994). In the competency based training movement, the focus was firmly on technical expertise. Thus competences have their origins in the craft or vocational traditions rather than the liberal intellectualism of higher education and the universities (Hogbin, Cockett and Hustler, 1996).

The term 'competent' has multiple meanings and usage has been influenced by social, political and historical contexts. Carr (1993) argues that there are two uses of competence and many, including the Scottish Office, confuse the two. Competence is normative in that

individuals can be judged as possessing it, or not, in relation to a specific activity, and against agreed standards. It is also used to define specific attributes or abilities which are expected of qualified individuals i.e. discrete skills. 'Competence, so defined, can also set ceilings on expectations. In practice, while competent teachers demonstrate proficiency on the routine elements of day-to-day practice, excellent teachers demonstrate their skills in their handling of the non-routine. Their ability to deal with the unanticipated, the unique event, sets them above competent (Eraut, 1994). With such an interpretation, while it may be sufficient to exit as 'competent', it is unlikely that it will be adequate in the longer term. It would seem important then that students acknowledge that they might have more to learn once qualified.

Further ambiguity surrounds the term in that its interpretation may be influenced by the particular frame of reference being used. In professions where individuals can specialise in particular aspects, such as becoming a paediatrician in medicine or a commercial lawyer, being generally competent as a doctor or a lawyer is unlikely to be regarded as adequate. The public requires that specialists demonstrate advanced or special skills and knowledge and therefore the competences which define the work must reflect the complexities and specialisms of the professional role as well as the more mundane or typical activities. On the other hand, a series of generic competences may be adequate where all in the profession are likely to be fulfilling a similar role, as in the generalist primary teacher which ITE in Scotland aims to develop. Whether it is reasonable and realistic to expect that all primary teachers should be competent generalists across the 2¹/₂ - 12 year age range and in all areas of the curriculum, is another question.

The nature of competences

Eraut (1994) identifies three main approaches to defining occupational competences: the behaviourist, the generic and the cognitive constructs approach. The first of these, represented by the American CBT tradition, focuses on task analysis and the identification of the component technical skills or observable behaviours required for successful completion of the task. In teacher education in America, this took the form of an emphasis on mastery learning, individualised programmes and resource based learning, designed around behaviourist principles. Criticised as atomistic and simplistic, such approaches produced long lists of specific behavioural objectives that paid little or no attention to personal characteristics, values or beliefs (Apple, 1988). It was considered that the strong

central control which the state held over the teacher education system was a significant influence in the strong CBT line taken (Eraut, 1994).

In contrast, generic approaches focused less upon the behaviours required and more upon knowledge and skills, as well as personal qualities, attitudes and values. In addition, while CBT approaches drew a line between competent and non-competent individuals, generic approaches could be used to differentiate between individuals along the continuum of 'weak' to 'superior'. Such approaches have tended to be most frequently used within the management structures of large organisations.

One criticism levelled at generic competency approaches is that they tend to be based on a single model of the 'good manager' which is perpetuated throughout the organisation and over time, bringing a degree of conservatism to the operation. In addition, given that the criteria used tend to be generalised traits or abilities (e.g. initiative or creativity) which require interpretation, they can be open to multiple interpretations, where *'using the same word does not mean making the same judgement'* (Eraut, 1994, p. 176).

The third approach attempts to differentiate between competence and performance. Performance is limited by specific circumstances, physical, social and personal, and competence may not be accurately reflected in a single performance, implying a potential gap between the two. From this perspective, competence is viewed as drawing upon a range of skill and knowledge bases not all of which may be required in a single 'performance'. Such bases guide the integration and co-ordination of possible actions, drawn from the individual's repertoire in response to specific contexts and situations. In teacher education, for example, the more competent students display deep level approaches to learning, with more integrated conceptual frameworks. The less competent tend to adopt surface-level learning strategies, leading to fragmented and less flexible frameworks for interpreting and acting (Eraut, 1994). An apparently competent student may be basing her or his performance on someone else's knowledge and understanding, such as the classroom teacher, mimicking rather than creating a performance. Competence therefore is not to be equated with performance but rather to be inferred from it. Where an individual does not have the opportunity to perform and thus demonstrate the range of skills etc. which she or he possesses, any judgement of competence will be flawed.

Whatever the final set of competences looks like, assessment of the student at the point of qualification is against a set of expectations or a model of the beginning teacher. McIntyre et al (1994) argue that this emphasis on the end product shifts the debate away from the real issue of what the trainee teacher needs during preservice education, the individual student's strengths and weaknesses on entry to the TEI and how she or he can best be supported to develop further. They also argue that support should be directed at the development of a personal theory of teaching, not the acquisition of a set of technical competences.

In a different vein, a competence approach assumes that there is a consensus on what 'good teaching' looks like (Stones, 1994). Alexander (1992) identified five factors which shaped the individual's understanding of 'good practice'. They were: the political (the practices others most/least approve of); the conceptual (what educational practice is, and its constituent parts); the pragmatic (that which works best for the individual); the empirical (those practices which have been demonstrated to be effective); and the individual's value position (the practices which s/he most values and believes in). Given the personal nature of some of these and the transient nature of others, definitions are unlikely to remain constant across individuals or over time.

Written lists of what is to be expected of a beginning professional can do little on their own; they must be interpreted and applied. The ease with which this is done depends on the way in which they are presented. Without some thought to coherence, such statements can present a fragmented view of what it is to work within a particular profession. This is particularly so where they attempt to be highly specific and exhaustive, resulting in an unwieldy and potentially unrealisable 'wish-list'. Eraut warns that *'Trying too hard to produce a foolproof system will only make intelligent people feel that they are being treated like fools'* (1994, p. 212).

On the other hand, generalised lists can result in a lack of clarity, with readers and users construing their meanings variously. If they are too generalised, there is a loss of understanding of what precisely the strengths and duties of the profession are. In addition, lists of competences tend to be presented as if all were of equal importance and complexity when this is unlikely to be the case in practice. Furthermore, the differing contexts and

conditions under which individuals may carry out their professional duties are rarely represented accurately in such lists.

The competences which are included in and excluded from any list reflect, implicitly or explicitly, the model of the practitioner envisaged by its compilers. In initial teacher education, the emphasis given to each of the three main components (knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes) allows some insight into the underpinning philosophy and model of the beginning teacher held by the policy-makers. Whatever that might be, all would-be teachers must be assessed against the list of competences at various points throughout their training and, most critically, to have been judged as satisfactory before being admitted to the profession.

2.5 Assessing Competence

Pre-service students are typically assessed at the end of the course on two main components: the curriculum of the TEI or 'academic' elements and, secondly, performance on school experience practice. While assessment of the institution-based elements of the course is typically made through examinations and assignments of various kinds, the second, performance on placement, has traditionally been the responsibility of the TEI tutor who visits the student and observes him or her in action. Depending on the nature of the partnership between school and TEI, the supervising teacher may have a significant input to the assessment process. Such tutor visits are fundamentally summative assessment events which generally involve some form of grading, be it a simple pass/fail or some more elaborate system which contributes to, for example, honours classification. A formative element is also included in the sometimes lengthy discussion between tutor and student (and occasionally teacher) following the student's demonstration of her/his classroom skills.

In any assessment procedure issues of reliability and validity are significant and they assume particular significance in assessment on placement. Assessment of performance/competence is typically made against a checklist or profile which identifies the skills, etc., which the student is expected to demonstrate. Depending on the timing of the placement during the course, the age of the pupils and the content of the lesson(s), this is likely to vary in terms of specificity and/or emphasis. The criteria are unlikely to be set out

as specific behavioural objectives but rather as more generalised statements of expectation (Stones, 1994).

While being a 'competent' professional carries connotations of being able to meet the demands of the job, it can also be interpreted less generously as 'adequate but not excellent'. Thus competence is not a fixed entity which an individual does or does not possess but rather a position on a continuum which ranges from novice to expert, along two dimensions. The first of these refers to the ability to do something well (quality), while the second refers to the ability to do something in a range of situations (scope) (Eraut, 1994).

In ITE the aim would be to ensure that students gain experience of a range of situations in order that they have opportunities to develop the scope of their competence, while having sufficient experience within situations to develop the quality of that competence. In practice, there are likely to be resource and practical constraints on the amount of workplace-based experience which can be afforded. However, where the professional role is one that expects individuals to work with little or no supervision following qualification, as in teaching, significant periods of practical experience would seem essential.

In assessing competence, the assessor is essentially making inferences from observations, a process which involves a significant element of subjective judgement. In addition, what is observed can only be a small sample of the universe of possible behaviours of the student within the classroom context, introducing an additional potential element of unreliability. Given the non-consensual nature of the components of 'good teaching', both the validity and the reliability of the assessment process may well be compromised.

In assessing (professional) competence in initial teacher education, samples of performance are frequently taken across a range of situations and activities. While 'products' (planning documents, reflective logs) may form the evidential basis for some elements of competence, direct observation is regarded as the most valid, particularly when accompanied by some form of informal questioning. Establishing reliability and validity in assessment requires a consensus in interpretation of both the criteria and their relationship to the various forms of evidence amongst assessors.

Direct observation has direct costs, primarily in terms of practicality, staff and travel resources and time. Alternative strategies such as video recordings might be used as supplementary evidence but cannot entirely replace direct observation (Eraut, 1994; Stones, 1994). Other forms of evidence include reports by other witnesses (such as members of staff in placement schools) and reflective diaries and logs.

The purpose of assessment is only in part to measure competence at that point in time. It is also intended to fulfil a predictive purpose in that it will suggest how an individual may perform post-qualification and give some indication of her or his potential for further development and achievement. Assessment must therefore address more than current performance and so Eraut (1994) distinguishes between performance and capability. Thus competence, i.e. how well an individual measures up to the list of prescribed competences, cannot be directly equated with either performance or capability.

2.6 Beyond Competence

While some evidence of capability can be inferred from performance, evidence gleaned from other sources including assessments of knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities such as analytical and reasoning skills (higher order cognitive processes) can also contribute. Evidence of capability, Eraut argues, can result in a fuller picture of an individual's competence than performance alone. In a similar vein, MacIntyre *et al* (1994) argue that teaching is more than a series of technical skills and involves value and belief systems as well as personal dispositions.

The specific purposes of capability assessment might therefore include: determining the quality of cognitive processes; the extent of the knowledge bases on which the individual can draw (propositional and procedural); understanding of the professional role and its relationship to the wider society (legal, political, contractual and moral).

The last of these, the moral or ethical dimension, lends itself least well to codification and assessment. Codes of conduct set out the parameters within which professionals will operate throughout their career. Evidence of ethical behaviour during initial training can be used to determine whether an individual gains the qualification or not but it will have limited predictive validity for professional conduct beyond qualification. During training, such evidence is usually gathered from events where the demands are limited and the

setting is carefully controlled. As pre-service students are unlikely to be placed in complex or demanding situations, evidence from such settings is unlikely to provide reliable evidence of how they might respond in less restricted or managed contexts. Evidence of commitment to the ethical dimensions of their role is a lifelong requirement of professionals and cannot be assumed to be fixed at the end of initial training.

2.7 The Scottish Competences

Competences frame the initial training experiences of Scottish students and underpin the criteria by which they are assessed. It is therefore necessary to consider their nature in more detail. Following the usual pattern of policy making in Scottish education, draft training guidelines, with competences, were issued for consultation in 1992 with a final version issued in 1993 (SOEID, 1993a). As the 1993 Guidelines were those which influenced the shape of the BEd course and the procedures for student learning and assessment over the period of this study, they form the basis for much of the discussion.

The debate which was instigated by the initial draft, and further fuelled by the final version of 1993, was highly polarised with, on one hand, calls for increased specification and rigour in the expression of the statements and, on the other, concern over the ways in which they (the competences) appeared to threaten the autonomy of the teaching profession, bringing de-skilling and proletarianisation (Stronach, Cope, Inglis and McNally, 1994).

Stronach *et al* (1994) in their analysis of the Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education (SOEID, 1993a) argued that the document had a somewhat schizophrenic character in that it was possible to justify both stances, technicist and reflective, by reference to particular statements or terms. While it implicitly and occasionally explicitly seemed to hold to the model of the reflective practitioner, the emphasis was on technical performance, with a marginalised role for theory. The use of 'critical thinking', professionalism' and references to values and commitments support the former interpretation, while the technical nature of other categories, disembodied from the social or cultural context of the community, school or pupil, support the latter.

In order to understand this polarisation, it is necessary to consider both the nature of the document, both as a whole and in terms of its constituent parts, as well as social and political forces at play in the policy making process. Eraut points out that '*Questions*

about the competence profiles of professions and their members are political as well as technical. (1994, p. 166). Carr (1993) certainly viewed the document as politically motivated and a thinly disguised attempt to manage and reduce the threat which a critical and professional teaching force might pose to government intentions. His is a conceptual analysis of the document which resonates with the views of Stones (1994), Eraut (1994) and others who maintain that competency based systems of training and assessment are at odds with the notion of an autonomous profession of educators.

In addition, the document is, Carr argues, internally inconsistent. It begins by focusing on 'craft skills' but the competence statements which are intended to identify what these might be do not refer to observable classroom skills which might be considered to be free of subjective interpretation. He gives as an example, one statement from the list of *Competences relating to the Classroom*: 'create contexts in which children can learn' (p.4) but other statements could serve equally well to show that they often do not refer to discrete technical skills but draw on a range of knowledge bases as well as personal dispositions and attitudes.

His main argument however is with the separation of classroom skills and strategies from the values and beliefs (the 'commitments'), which are placed at the end of the list, and the implication that they have little to do with each other in the day to day practice of the classroom. On the contrary, he argues that they both contribute in complex ways to the responses that teachers make to children, their selection of resources and activities and the monitoring processes they apply to their own performances as well as those of the children.

Maynard and Furlong (1994) identified three models of mentoring: apprenticeship, competency and reflective teaching. The different kinds of learning listed in the SOEID document do not belong to one of these but rather include some which might readily be fostered through each of the models. There are examples of statements from each of Eraut's categories of competences: behaviourist, generic and cognitive constructs (Eraut, 1994). The document seems to lack a clear philosophy of learning to teach and attempts to be all things to all people. Regardless of this lack of clarity, the TEIs are required to develop courses which will ensure the development of the competences and to compile an assessment profile based on them against which students will be measured.

It should be noted that there are a number of significant differences in the guidelines when compared with their counterpart in England and Wales. Hogbin, Cockett and Hustler (1996) consider that the competences (England and Wales) omit a number of significant elements of learning to be a teacher including the ability to reflect critically upon one's practice. In addition, the separation of theory and practice, the neglect of initial training as the first stage in professional development and the failure to recognise the importance of context are cited as deficits in the document. The Scottish guidelines are less deficient in this regard, albeit a little confused.

Specified professional competences and codes of conduct can serve a number of functions in addition to public assurance. They can also provide frameworks for curriculum development in higher education and in the design of initial training courses and set out the profession's expectations of new entrants. One benefit of the competence framework, Hogbin *et al* (1996) argue, is the way it has provided a focus for discussion amongst teacher educators and forced them to argue for their view of what a beginning teacher should know and be able to do.

2.8 Summary

The partnership between TEI and schools in Scotland is non-contractual and there is, as a result, some difficulty in determining clear lines of responsibility or in making specific demands of teachers and schools in the roles they take on with students on school experience. The expectations which each of the two supervisors has of the other are generally unspoken and this can mean that the student's experience on placement is not as effective as it might be in developing the necessary skills and, more particularly, understanding. One consequence of this is an uneasy if not negative relationship between 'theory' seen as the province of the TEI and the 'practice' of the school and classroom.

Historically, professional as well as craft knowledge and skills, have been acquired through an 'apprenticeship' approach to learning to teach, based on the novice modelling the behaviour and actions of the expert or master. The end of the apprenticeship was characterised by growing autonomy and self-determination on the part of the novice, albeit within trade traditions (Collison and Edwards, 1994). Such a model is generally regarded as outdated and inappropriate for the development of professional teachers, as much as any

other profession (Maclellan, 1994; Collison and Edwards, 1994; Stones, 1994). And while McIntyre, Hagger and Wilkin (1994) argue for an interpretation of learning to teach which includes qualities and attributes such as patience, integrity, enjoyment of people and a love of the subject(s), there is evidence that it is fundamentally an apprenticeship model of supervision (or even mentoring) that students experience.

The question is whether an apprenticeship model could, or indeed should, be used to develop the qualities, attributes, knowledge and competences required of professional teachers. The arguments on the role of theory and theorising in teacher education indicate that learning to teach is a complex and intellectually demanding endeavour. Such perceptions of what it is to learn to be a teacher lead to a rejection of the traditional apprenticeship model of the learner.

The advent of ITE competences, albeit including concepts of professionalism and critical reflection, has been interpreted as a return to a technicist view of learning to teach (and teaching), with an apprentice model of the student teacher. The emphasis given to assessing performance in determining competence to teach neglects the lack of correspondence between 'competence', 'performance' and 'capability', and takes a narrow view of what it means to be able to teach. In addition, the inclusion of competences related to professionalism, with attendant value and belief systems, and the acknowledgement of a role for theory (although marginal), go beyond a strictly competency-based model of learning to teach. The model which underpins much of the recent literature on initial teacher education and which is used to counter technicist arguments is that of Schon's reflective practitioner (Schon, 1984) and this is where the discussion moves next.

CHAPTER 3 MODELS OF THE TEACHER AND THE STUDENT TEACHER

The dominant model of the competent beginning teacher portrayed in the Scottish Office guidelines (SOED, 1983a; SOEID, 1998) appears to be that of the reflective practitioner, incorporating the concepts of professionalism, critical thinking and reflectivity.

The emergence of the notion of the reflective practitioner in teaching, where the emphasis is on critical reflection and enquiry, is a particular feature of recent educational writing. The 'reflective practitioner' movement extends well beyond the teaching profession and has been fuelled by an increasing dissatisfaction with traditional technical-rationalist approaches to professional practice and related research (Schön, 1983 & 1987). However, the concept of reflection, like many educational concepts, has multiple meanings although most share in valuing conscious, deliberative and wise thought about professional practices and the willingness to engage in such thought (Grimmett, MacKinnon, Erikson and Riecken, 1990).

This chapter includes a consideration of teaching from the technical-rationalist perspective, the concept of the reflective practitioner and how it might apply to teaching, and several related concepts, including critical reflection and action research. It concludes by discussing the relevance of the reflective practitioner as a model in the development of beginning teachers. Richardson (1990) has suggested that the prevailing stance of teacher educators may be linked to the dominant research perspective of the time and, one might add, to the socio-political climate facing professionals at a given time. Therefore an attempt is made to set the discussion within the current educational context and to link the debate to the prevailing stance of the policy-makers.

3.1 A Technical-rational Philosophy of Teaching

The success of science and the scientific method in establishing universal laws and principles in the natural world led to its adoption by industry, business and, in turn, education (Schön, 1983). As a result, approaches to educational research have been traditionally characterised by quantitative strategies which aim to determine generalisable findings, emphasising and focusing on the similarities within and across systems and situations rather than the differences.

Parker (1997) argues that this emphasis on a technical-rationalist approach to problem-solving, with its underlying philosophy of positivism, continues to dominate much of

educational research. From this perspective, the vocabulary of education is management-oriented, with senior staff in schools and other educational establishments under pressure to obtain additional qualifications in resource- and personnel-management in order that they become more efficient and effective in their roles.

The introduction of government policies on the curriculum, with their expectations of achievement for pupils at key stages in their development and with inspectors to monitor compliance, have been cited as indicative of central control, a desire for uniformity, evidence of a belief in a 'right' answer, and a certainty of purpose in what education is trying to achieve, at government level. One example from the Scottish national guidelines for the primary school curriculum will suffice to show the continuance of this philosophy. In 1989, the Scottish Office Education Department stated that one of the central tasks of the curriculum review groups was to: '*identify best practice and make sure it is applied everywhere*' (SOED, undated, p.2). This criticism of the concept of a single model of 'best practice' has also been made against the Scottish Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education (Carr, 1993; Stronach, Cope, Inglis & McNally, 1994).

Within this political context, many teachers feel they have been de-skilled, reduced to operating as technicians within the classroom, performing tasks in ways pre-determined by others which are designed to meet targets which they have had no part in determining. This has been referred to as a proletarianisation of teachers' work or de-skilling of a profession (Lawn and Ozga, 1988).

From a technical-rationalist perspective, critical thinking is demonstrated through a proficiency in finding efficient ways of realising pre-determined goals e.g. meeting the demands of national policy statements. In this, however, there is the implication that such goals will be clearly specified, unambiguous, comprehensive and consensual. Schön (1987) has argued that this is not the case in education where the goals are imprecise, ambiguous and subject to alteration over time as governments change and dominant value systems shift; there is no consensus amongst members of the educational system as to what, precisely, education is trying to achieve (Hartley, 1993; Stones, 1994). In particular, confusion and perplexity exists in the area of teacher education, Hartley (1993) argues, where there is no clear theoretical basis from which to defend, justify or challenge individual models of learning to teach.

Theories of teaching have been embraced and then rejected with alarming regularity and

a technician model of the teacher would put the practitioner in a position where he or she is at the mercy of the theory of the day. The leading alternative model is that of the reflective practitioner.

3.2 The Reflective Practitioner

Schön's exploration of the reflective practitioner (1983) was one of the most significant responses to technical rationalism, a philosophy which was, and continues to be, the dominant model of professional knowledge and practice. Schön's arguments reflected and drew upon a wide-spread dissatisfaction with the inadequacies of technical-rationalist approaches to educating professionals, both in initial training and in continuing professional development following qualification. It drew support widely (Eraut, 1994) and offered an alternative perspective on the concept of professionalism, dismissing the positivistic, scientific method approach which emphasised the establishment of generalisable principles, approaches and theories.

Carr's support for the model of the reflective practitioner, rather than the competency/skills based model, rests on his argument that the work of the teacher is fundamentally value-laden and that the moral and ethical dimension of teaching should be regarded as of primary importance (Carr, 1993). In arguing for such a model, he distinguishes between *'training in repertoires of uncontroversial skills and dispositions'* and the *'education of professional capacities to address rationally issues which, on any correct view of the logic of educational discourse are deeply controversial and problematic'* (p.24). He sees the former as resulting in a 'restricted professional' who follows, unquestioningly, the policies and instructions of others, while the latter results in an 'extended professional' who *'reserves the basic right to be critical of current political and social policies and initiatives'* (p.25).

Parker (1997) compares these models of the teacher in his recounting of two stories of teaching, teacher education and educational research. The first is set within the philosophy of technical-rationalism while the second charts the development of the 'reflective teacher' movement. In the first, the technical rationalist approach depicts educational research as concerned with the establishment of universal principles of 'good practice', and teaching as primarily concerned with the application of the most efficient means (as determined by the researchers) to achieve given ends. The policy-makers determine these 'ends' and the whole is embedded within a bureaucratic system of administration and management. This results in a hierarchical organisational structure wherein the individual teacher is at, or towards, the bottom of a uni-directional

chain of command.

The second, more recent tale describes the teacher as a member of a reflexive community where the guiding principles are autonomy, emancipation, uniqueness and democracy. There is concern within the community for the ends of education as well as the means by which these might be achieved. The reflective teacher is characterised by a commitment to critical enquiry into her or his own practice and, more systematically, a willingness to engage in an action research approach to continuing professional development. While these may be regarded as 'ideal type' descriptions of the model of the teacher, within each perspective, and neither is likely to be realised in full, they have proven to be potent images in the debate on initial teacher education.

While Parker argues that neither of these positions can withstand the scrutiny of the post-modern philosopher in that both are underpinned by the philosophy of realism i.e. that there is an objective 'truth' which is being sought, independent of social and cultural practices. This is the foundation of technical rationalism and its faith in, for example, science and the scientific method to discover the 'truth' about the world. Parker rejects technical rationalism, as does Carr, because it neglects to take account of the social or cultural influence on practice but he also rejects the reflective practitioner model as embodying an 'ethical realism', with principles such as justice, equality and respect for others, which are regarded, again, as existing independently of specific social or cultural contexts.

Parker offers the alternative of a postmodern approach to teacher education but it is not the aim of this discussion to evaluate his thesis. The concept of the reflective teacher is a sufficiently powerful one in a society of national, outcome-driven curricula and achievement-driven policy-making, through the concept of school effectiveness and measurement (via 'performance indicators'), to warrant further examination.

3.3 The Reflective Teacher

If national policy guidelines promote the model of the reflective practitioner ITE courses should reflect this by ensuring that the experiences of students will support them in acquiring and developing the ability to reflect as they develop the other requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes, but first it is necessary to determine what is involved in reflection and how it relates to teaching and, in turn, learning to teach.

Calderhead (1989) explored some of the ways in which the term reflection has been

used in descriptions and analyses of professional practice. The first of these draws on the work of Dewey where the emphasis is on resolving problematic situations through the conscious application of rational thought. The original impetus for reflection is a puzzling or problematic situation and the reflective process is guided by the practitioner's notion of the desired outcome or end-point. This may be regarded as a relatively weak form of reflection within the context of professional practice.

Secondly, Calderhead discussed Schön's view (1983; 1987) of reflection as the on-going interrogation of a situation and its features by the practitioner where subsequent questions are developed from the responses to earlier ones. As a result, new understandings of practice are developed. Components of reflection therefore include critical thinking and theorising, at the level of practice at least, and their inclusion strengthens the concept of the reflective teacher.

The third stance identified sees reflection as self-determination, where the practitioner becomes aware of the wider influences which impinge upon practice, including political and societal values and beliefs. In becoming aware of and addressing these, the practitioner gains control over the ways in which practice may be constrained and directed by these factors. Concepts such as autonomy and emancipation are evoked and this form of reflective practice is advocated by proponents of action research and teacher-as-researcher approaches to teacher development (Kemmis and Carr, 1986). This is a strong form of reflective practice.

Action research, it has been argued, is the means by which reflective teaching can become properly critical. The imperative is to change and improve, to transform education, rather than to explain and understand as in more traditional, academic research from a positivist perspective (Parker, 1997). Where traditional approaches were concerned with developing generalisable theories, action research is concerned with the uniqueness of the individual situation or case i.e. context dependent rather than context-independent and particular rather than universal. The kind of data, or evidence which the action researcher is concerned with has generally been regarded as too subjective, individualistic and 'soft' from traditional research perspectives (Goodson, 1993). Reflective diaries and logs are generally regarded as evidence and Parker (1997) also cites narrative writing and autobiographies. These contribute what Goodson (1993) refers to as 'the teacher's voice'.

Through action research, a systemised critique of practice, the practitioner will develop

new theories of teaching and learning. The process involves a cycle of activity where the systematic monitoring of and critical reflection on practice leads to further planning and acting:

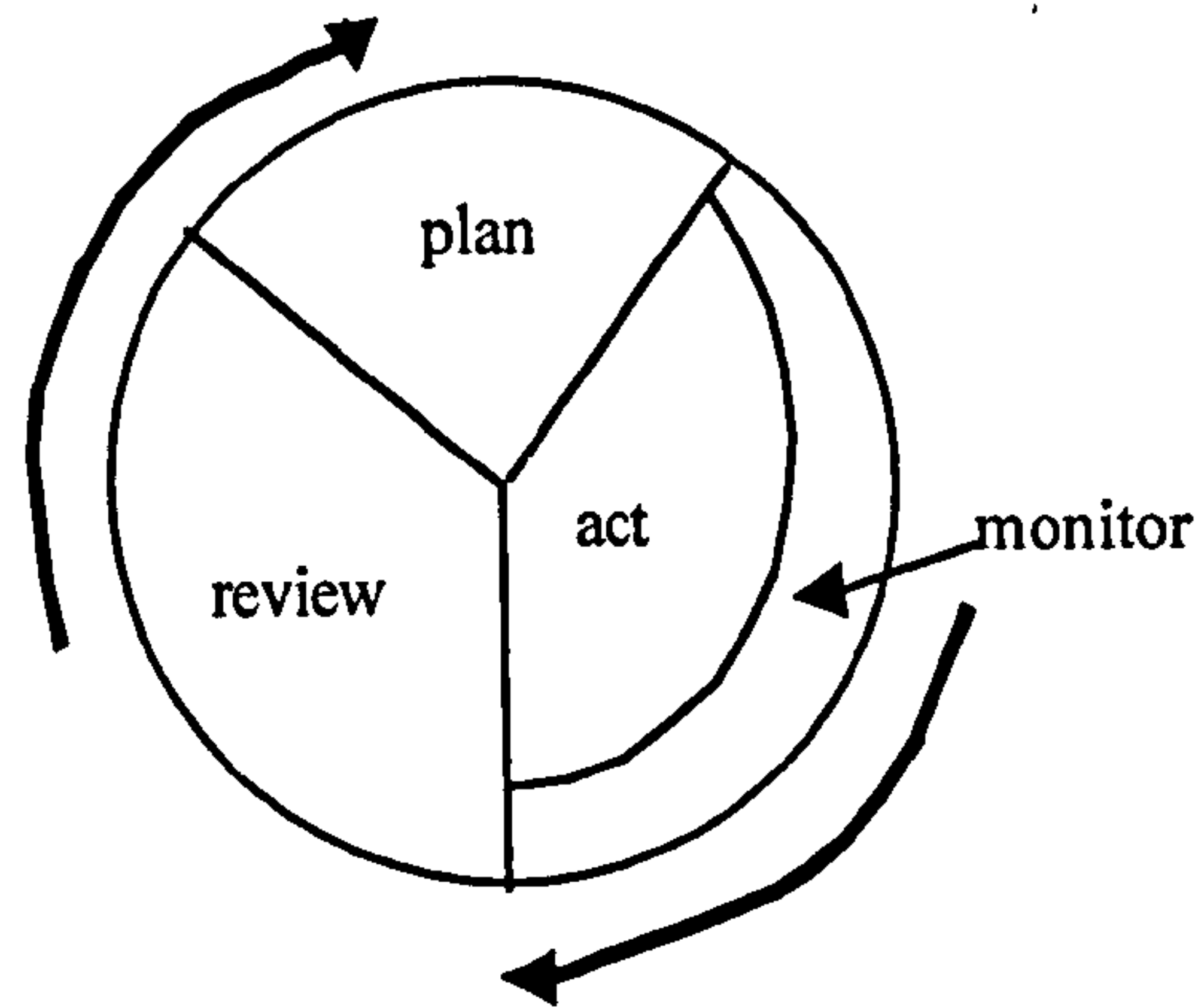


Figure 3.1 : An action research cycle (adapted from Edwards & Talbot, 1994)

Goodson (1993), in referring to the policies of the New Right, advocates action research as a means by which *'the teacher as researcher of practice ... will seek to critique and transcend such externally imposed definitions'* (of teaching). He looks for a broader focus than practice, arguing that the teacher's life and work influence practice to such an extent that to ignore them would be to deny the value bases of much of what happens in practice. In addition, he argues for a collaborative partnership with academic researchers in such endeavours. Goodson identifies several foci for research including 'critical incidents' which may crucially affect their perceptions and practice (p. 227). Such incidents provide a valuable stimulus for reflection.

As the concept of reflection varies, so too do views on what is meant by *'the process of reflection ... the content of reflection ... the preconditions of reflections ... and the product of reflection'* (Calderhead, 1989, p.44). As a result, he argues, there is no clear concept of what reflection is or how it might contribute to teachers' development although there does seem to be some agreement that reflective teaching tends to have *'(a) general emphasis on the cognitive, and to some extent, moral or affective, aspects of learning to teach'* (p.45).

Thus there are competing concepts which range from the Deweyian emphasis on the quality of thought and serious attitude, on to the positivist stance in which the teacher consciously works to apply public knowledge/theory to their practice. This latter interpretation gives reflection a technical focus and tends to limit thought and subsequent action to 'what works' for the individual teacher. A broader focus would encompass concepts which emphasise personal understanding and/or moral

considerations although, again, these may be individualistic or limited to the immediate context. A more radical stance can be seen in conceptualisations which seek to integrate individual reflection and a critique of the wider societal context and its structures, with the intentions of transforming understandings of practice and of changing the nature of the system, its practices and value bases.

Differences in the conceptualisation of reflection seem strongly tied to conceptions of the nature of education, the purpose of schooling and the role of the individual professional. They draw on the implicit and/or explicit values and beliefs of these aspects of education, and the structures and processes which have been established around them. It would seem logical to suppose that these too should feature in a strong form of reflection by practitioners and that what forms the basis for such reflection should be influenced by the prevailing agenda for teaching and teacher education, at both individual and societal levels.

Gilroy (1993) holds that what Schön means by reflection is unambiguous and consistent but that it is the operationalisation of the concept that has caused problems. This has frequently resulted in its adoption as a slogan, as Calderhead (1989) reports, rather than a set of principles to guide both experienced teachers as well as those involved in pre-service education of student teachers.

While Gilroy supports Schön's rejection of positivism to account for professional practice knowledge, he challenges the claim that in his analysis of professional behaviours Schön has established an 'alternative epistemology of practice' (Schön, 1987, p.35). Gilroy argues that descriptivism can readily accommodate Schön's analysis and observations and draws parallels between language learning and language 'games' with learning to teach. In descriptivism, the rules which govern language acquisition and refinement tend to be given by the social context, to be acquired in social situations, tacitly through practice and through the responses which experimentation produces. As a result, the learner develops an understanding of the criteria which govern the ways in which language is used. While it may be possible to make some of this understanding explicit, and to learn some the rules through explicit training, much of it is likely to remain tacit albeit shared and subject to the influence of context. It is the social context which determines the appropriateness of specific usage and this argues for learning (in substantial part, at least) to take place within the context in which the learner will eventually practice, i.e. situated learning. While the role of the classroom and school is uncontested in initial teacher education as a place to learn, the

issue lies more with what it is that the student learns there, the formal as well as the hidden curriculum.

Similarly Eraut (1994), while also supportive of much that Schön argues, considers his view of reflection to be more akin to recognition of situations and the identification of appropriate action, than a new theory of 'reflection'. The argument for a view of professional craft knowledge to incorporate an element of situated understanding (Edwards, 1997) and practical principles (Maynard & Furlong, 1993) has already been made. The issue is: how far beyond this it is necessary to go in establishing teaching as a profession and the teacher as a professional practitioner? A significant part of the debate on teaching and the model of the teacher draws on the notion of professionalism and the extent to which teaching can be regarded as a profession.

3.4 Professionalism and Reflective Teaching

A basic, functional definition of professionalism would include the attributes of a body of systematic knowledge, a high degree of commitment to the community and society in general, a code of practice by which behaviour is regulated and a system of monetary and honorary awards which mark progress through the particular career structure (Bergen, 1988). These attributes constitute the 'ideal type' of profession and are based on an analysis of the more traditional professions of law and medicine. 'The 'health' of the profession is monitored by a committee, usually composed of members of the occupational group who are elected by their peers. Professionalism is generally considered to include a measure of autonomy in the day-to-day work and some influence in the policy-making process, including consultation by the government when changes are proposed (Lawn and Ozga, 1988).

Teachers' claims for professionalism go some way to meeting the 'ideal type' requirements. In the first instance, there appears to be a body of knowledge, both technical and indeterminate (Apple, 1988), assessed through a system of formal examinations to ensure the required level of achievement. In addition, some measure of increased professional competence is required through the prescribed probationary period after initial training. The governing bodies of law and medicine have similar requirements.

Secondly, the majority of teachers see a moral, personal dimension to the job which relates to wider community - they see themselves as involved in instilling values and encouraging the development of moral citizens (Shipman, 1988). Lortie (1975) found

that issues of 'service' and working with people/children were more frequently given as influencing decisions to become teachers than were monetary rewards or status.

The further requirement of a professional body, elected by the members, which monitors the training and behaviour of teachers and controls entry to the workforce, does exist in Scotland in the form of the General Teaching Council (GTC). Thus teaching in Scotland, if not (yet) in the rest of the United Kingdom, appears to meet another of the criteria for professionalism.

There is some debate however as to the nature of the relationship between the GTC and the SOEID and doubts over the degree of autonomy and the level of self-determination afforded to the former by the latter. While Kirk (1994) saw the relationship between the GTC and the government as non-confrontational, Humes (1994) argued that he was unduly complacent in doing so and that the partnership was not an equal one, with the Secretary of State holding the whip hand in any disagreement. In consequence, he maintained, the GTC has little real autonomy. Humes regards the GTC as an essentially bureaucratic organisation which acts as the gatekeeper to the teaching profession in Scotland and serves as an instrument of legitimation for the actions of the government in the area of teacher education; it is the Scottish Office which is ultimately responsible for the regulations on initial teacher training and disciplinary procedures.

In considering the degree to which occupations such as teaching and nursing are likely to achieve professional status, Dreeben (1988) notes that it is pertinent that they lie within the public sector and are subject to far greater bureaucratic control than are the more independent occupations of law and medicine. The relationship between teachers and the state appears to lie at the heart of the debate on teacher professionalism. Bone (1993), in charting what he perceived to be a decline in the autonomy of teachers since the early 1980s, noted that while autonomy was under attack in many 'professional and privileged groups', the situation was more acute for those professions working for the state.

Professionalisation, as a process, refers to the events, strategies and actions by which an occupation moves towards achieving public recognition as a profession. Success is determined in considerable part by the responses of the political, societal and economic forces at work in society and whether they constrain, frustrate or support this process. In essence the state's behaviour has been directed by the economic (and political) climate. When the economic sector is strong and demand for the educational 'product'

is high, teachers have more scope for influencing policy and achieving concessions and improved conditions.

Grace (1987) identified four main phases in the relationship between teachers and the state since the beginning of the century. Each phase has been characterised by a swing in the balance of power from one group to the other, with the concept of 'professionalism' used by each to gain advantage, whether this was to achieve an increased, more educated cadre of teachers (the state), or gains in conditions such as superannuation schemes and national salary scales (the teachers). The belief remained however that, at classroom level at least, teachers still possessed a degree of autonomy and that they were regarded as 'professionals' with expertise and integrity in pedagogy and curriculum matters (Bergen, 1988).

In the 1980s and 90s, the relationship between the state and the teaching workforce appears to have entered a fifth phase. Recent developments in accountability, appraisal and the introduction of performance indicators reflect a growing public concern that 'education is too important to be left to teachers' (Bone, 1993) While teachers have their jobs to do, they have to be more accountable to the public and to their elected representatives i.e. the government. This is not confined to the United Kingdom - teachers in the USA, in Australia and in Europe have been subject to similar shifts in government policy.

At the 1993 conference, *Teaching: Changing Relations and Teacher Autonomy* (SCRE Forum, Edinburgh, 1993) practitioners debated the contention that the autonomy of the teacher was being eroded by government policy decisions and that this was a real threat to the professionalism of the teacher, in all sectors of education. However, both perspectives outlined above appeared in various guises: some saw the proposals as an opportunity for 'enhancement' of professionalism while the concepts of de-skilling and 'teachers as technicians' were also debated.

In Spring 1999, the newsletter of the General Teaching Council in Scotland carried an article by the then Education Minister at the Scottish Office, Helen Liddell, with the title *Professionalism is the key to Raising Standards* (GTC, 1999). The article set out the government's intention to introduce a framework for continuing professional development, beginning with qualifications for aspiring headteachers. These initiatives are intended to support teachers in meeting the government's goal of raising standards i.e. increasing the expectations and achievements of every Scottish pupil, all under the

guise of professionalism. While this might be regarded by some as a form of 'up-skilling' and that is certainly the tenor of the writing, others would question the degree of control over the framework and the accreditation process by government and governmental bodies which this national framework implies.

For some time, the attack on teacher autonomy has been essentially on two fronts. Firstly, direct pressure has been exerted by the centre on several aspects of the education process - detailed specification of the curriculum, educational developments steered by government, tighter requirements for the pre-service training and the probationary experiences of new teachers and quality control mechanisms for all educational institutions. The introduction of a national framework for continuing teacher education beyond pre-service provision is one further example.

A second, less direct but nonetheless significant, pressure comes from the government's emphasis on 'market forces'. The education process is being opened up to the consumers (parents, students and pupils) through the provision of greater parental choice, the establishment of school boards, and the delegation of financial control.

These two movements, the first for increased centralised control and the second for control by market forces appear somewhat contradictory. In discussing the effects of these two movements on initial teacher education, identified as neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism respectively, Whitty (1993) interprets this as an 'enemies within' approach by government. Essentially, the government wishes to open up a wider range of social activity, including education, to market forces but as it is unhappy with what it perceives to be an ideological bias in ITE courses, it establishes greater control over the curriculum and procedures of TEIs while attempting to set in place ways of, eventually, doing without them.

One interpretation of this fifth phase draws heavily on the concept of proletarianisation i.e. the removal of the 'skill' element from the work; the separation of conceptualisation from the execution of the task and intensification of the labour process (Apple 1988). Pre-packaged curriculum materials, central control of the curriculum and pedagogy and increases in routine administrative tasks (paperwork) are all cited as evidence of such de-skilling in teaching. Additional duties and tasks are required of teachers within the same basic framework, based on the Taylor approach to time management and efficiency in industry. More recently, researchers in the tradition of industrial sociology and, in particular, industrial relations, have turned their attention to teaching,

viewing their work as an employer-employee relationship and analysed the structures and procedures accordingly (Tipton, 1988).

It could be argued that some of the duties which teachers have been asked to take on could be seen as 'up-skilling' (rather than de-skilling) and hence contributing to the professionalisation process through increasing the technical knowledge base required of teachers (Shipman, 1988). The introduction of computers to the classroom and the acquisition of additional skills and knowledge, for example, in assessment techniques, accountability procedures and appraisal can be interpreted as setting higher, ostensibly more objective standards of professionalisation.

Bergen (1988) argues that teaching, along with nursing and social work, are occupations which are viewed as pursuing the 'ideal type' characteristics but are only some way along the road to professionalisation. The lack of a consensus on the aims of education poses a particular hurdle for teaching and is one of the reasons why Schön argues that teaching should be regarded as a 'proto' or 'candidate' profession, in contrast with 'true' professions of law and medicine where there are clearly defined ends and techniques for their realisation (Schön, 1987).

Murray (1999) notes that while teaching has several of the characteristics of a profession it is perhaps somewhat premature to regard it as such. New entrants to teaching have been required to undergo significant periods of study and to demonstrate a range of skills and competences before being licensed or certificated. However, in times of shortage, the state appears unconcerned about allowing unlicensed or minimally trained adults to work with children in schools.

Parker (1997) points out that the technical-rationalist focus on technique is also underpinned by claims to 'professionalism' which, from a positivist perspective, depends in part upon a foundation of knowledge and techniques in the application of that knowledge, such that professionals can apply specific problem-solving techniques to situations i.e. are instrumental in achieving pre-determined ends. Thus induction into the teaching profession can be viewed as 'training' rather than education in that the emphasis is on the acquisition of techniques and strategies. This emphasis on objectivity, with a focus on skills and observable, measurable behaviours rather than on knowledge and understanding, values and beliefs, lies at the heart of much of the competency movement in training.

Essentially, professionalism, in the absence of a clear consensus 'checklist' definition, is whatever a particular group construes it to be and over time, this will be modified and re-worked according to the particular economic, political and social context. The social construction of professionalism gives rise to conflict between groups and allows professionalism to be used as both a carrot and a stick as conditions change. Eraut (1994) argues that, for teaching, the debate should be concerned with investigating the ideology of teaching as a profession i.e. the professionalisation of practice, rather than attempting to make it fit a list of ideal characteristics.

Professionalism has rights and obligations; autonomy likewise. The debate continues as to where the boundaries lie and how it should be controlled and by whom. *Autonomy 'unbridled, (it) becomes licence; excessively controlled it becomes standardised; and somewhere in between, it provides the freedom needed by teachers to function professionally and effectively.'* (Anderson, 1987)

3.5 Reflection and Learning to Teach

While the common aim may be to encourage pre-service students to develop into reflective practitioners, operationalising the different interpretations of 'reflection' identified by Calderhead (1989), with their attendant attributes and characteristics, is likely to result in a range of potentially widely different approaches to initial teacher education. Lucas (1992), for example, found that TEI staff tended to interpret 'reflection' in one of four ways: to be almost destructively self-critical; as a process of critical self-evaluation; as a means to develop a set of guiding principles for teaching; and as a 'tough mode of action learning'.

Calderhead (1989) cites research which indicates that many students try to avoid analysis and evaluation of their own practice and, where it cannot be avoided, any reflection tends to be superficial and to neglect the wider contextual features. He offers several possible explanations for this. One explanation is that all their energy is focused on 'doing' and 'surviving' the placement, that there is little time for thinking about the impact they are having. In addition, students may be reluctant to be self-critical at a time when they are already feeling insecure and lacking in confidence.

More basically, in order to talk about one's practice with a tutor, for example, it is also necessary to have a shared language and the necessary technical vocabulary; many students appear to lack such a language (Tann, 1993). In order to compare what was done with what might have been done, or may be done differently in future, it is

necessary to have knowledge of alternative strategies with which to compare present practice. It is unlikely that students have such a knowledge base upon which to draw in the early stages of their ITE course. Attitudinal variables, such as individuals' approaches to learning e.g. finding out for oneself or modelling others, also appeared to influence the reflective capacity of some students.

In addition, the content of reflection may be influenced by students' beliefs, values and images of the profession of teaching, teachers and the teaching act (Calderhead, 1989; Tann, 1993). The model of the teacher they want to be can become the standard by which they measure themselves and others.

Evidence of students' reflective capacities and development may be found in the records of their experiences of learning to teach on placement in schools. Tann's (1993) analysis of the lesson plans and evaluations in the school experience files of first year BEd students gave evidence of changes in the perspective and focus of their reflections over a four week period of school placement which fell into two main categories of change.

The first of these, a shift in the 'reflective perspective', occurred where students typically moved through three stages of development, moving from description to explanation and on to exploration, where cause and effect relationships were postulated and hypotheses developed. The focus of the students' writings also moved from self-as-person, where their feeling and responses were of prime concern, to self-as-teacher ('peer-oriented') where the comments were concerned with the day-to-day management of the children. Some students moved on to a third stage, where public texts and theories were used to support their ideas, viewpoints and emerging personal theories of teaching ('public-oriented').

Tann also discerned a second category of change which she referred to as 'shifts in the reasoning processes' (p.61) and which was characterised by an increase in both the quantity and quality of reflective statements. An increase in the number of reflective comments was accompanied by a growing open-mindedness and a willingness to contemplate sources of information other than personal experience. Tann noted that students concerns shifted from survival in the classroom to the development of procedural strategies and, for some, a move to a more critical stance with regard to approaches and situations. Early evaluations tended to focus on when things went wrong and to put the blame with the pupils (child-oriented), but this moved to blaming

themselves (a teacher orientation) and developed into a concern with concepts such as differentiation, motivation and individual needs (a learner orientation). Successful teaching events were more frequently cited with students indicating that they were learning from both good and bad experiences. Not all students made the move from egocentric analysis of the classroom situation to a critical appraisal of their professional practice and nor was it a linear and secure progression through the stages.

The study focused on a four week period at the beginning of an ITE course. It seems remarkable that the students demonstrated such progress in such a short period and at a point in their course where they are unlikely to have accumulated a store of (public) theory on which the stronger forms of reflection draw. It is unclear whether specific training (or education) in reflection was undertaken although students were encouraged to use and question the concepts of being reflective and personal theories of teaching. Nor were the long term consequences of such early exposure to these demanding notions reported.

As the analysis of their reflective capacities was on the basis of samples of lesson plans and evaluations, there is also the question of whether, knowing that they were expected to be 'reflective', they made particular efforts to be so. The ecological validity of the analysis i.e. whether they demonstrated such skills in other contexts such as in discussion with teachers or tutors, is not established. In addition, the relationship between reflection-before-action (planning), in-action and after action (evaluations) is not established. Where the pressure is on performing and surviving, reflection-in-action would seem to be unlikely, fleeting or passes unrecognised as such.

Both Calderhead (1989) and Tann (1993) point out that reflection-on-action, in the form of post-action analysis and evaluation may be impoverished through the lack of a language to express it, to share their experiences with others and subject them to critical review. In addition, a lack of alternatives against which to compare experiences and a reluctance to expose oneself to critical review for fear of being found wanting were also seen as hindering the development of critical reflection on practice.

What does seem important however is that students develop metacognitive processes which allow them to compare and evaluate practices, identifying those which are more or less successful in their own (personal) professional context.

3.6 Reflection and the Scottish Guidelines for ITE

Differences in the conceptualisation of reflection seem importantly tied to conceptions of the nature of education, the purpose of schooling and the role of the individual professional. Different conceptual frameworks tend to be underpinned by different values and beliefs, implicitly or explicitly and these are reflected in the structures and processes they generate. The foci for reflection before, during and after action, reflect the agenda for teacher education.

What then is the reflection agenda contained in the Scottish national competences? The model is one which emphasises critical thinking:

In order to teach satisfactorily, certain craft skills have undoubtedly to be mastered. But in addition teachers must have a knowledge and understanding both of the content of their teaching and of the relationship between their methods and children's learning, and must be able to evaluate and justify their procedures to others. They must also display certain professional attitudes to their job, to pupils, to the school, to parents, to school boards and to the community in general.

(SOED, 1993a, p.1)

However, it is clearly stated that such critical thinking,

Should be seen in the context of the beginning teacher responsible for a class ... such a teacher will go through a great deal of development ... over several years to proficient and expert levels of professionalism. (p.1)

Furthermore it seems that the Scottish model seeks to avoid the worst elements of competency based teacher education for the guidelines state that:

... professionalism implies more than a mere series of competences. It also implies a set of attitudes, which have particular power in that they are communicated to those being taught. (p.6)

The inclusion of identified professional attitudes, expressed as commitments such as views of fairness and equality of opportunity, self-monitoring and continuing professional development, does take into consideration the moral approaches outlined by Valli (1990) and the possibility of radical critiques involving issues of social justice as advocated by Carr and Kemmis (1983). Whether these relate to the work site or faculty-based studies is not made clear.

Three points can be made about the Scottish national competences. Firstly, it is clearly

implied that the beginning teacher is not to be seen as proficient or expert on completion of the course. However, despite echoing the Dreyfus terminology (1981), it is not clear if students are to be seen as an advanced beginner or as competent on completion of their pre-service course. Having a view on what can be achieved in initial training is important as it will inform the contents and expectations of a course.

The distinction between the advanced beginner and the competent teacher is described by Elliot (1993) in terms of being able to recognise attributes which are salient to the choice of a course of action. The advanced beginner is able to recognise situation-dependent and non-situation dependent attributes of a particular learning context an example of the former being 'laziness' and the latter, 'unable to read'. However, an advanced beginner is less able to recognise attributes which are salient to the choice of a course of action.

This situational understanding of the competent phase, is, in Elliot's view, dependent on having a repertoire of analysed experiences which enable the learner to choose '*a course of action (a goal) and discriminate all those aspects of a situation which have to be taken into account in reaching a decision about how to implement that course of action*'. The distinction between the competent and the proficient is largely defined by the shift from rational to intuitive recognition of situations. The distinction between the proficient and the expert rests on the substitution of intuitive decisions for conscious deliberation.

Secondly, what is the object of reflection, or critical inquiry, in the guidelines? Louden (1992) suggest that reflection has four interests or goals. The technical interest focuses on specific techniques or strategies needed to reach stated objectives, asking the question, 'What works?' This is a search for rule-like regularities in teaching and learning situations/events and can be applied both to publicly available knowledge about teaching, in the form of empirical studies and conceptual knowledge, and thinking about one's own practice which might be termed knowledge of teaching.

Louden's second interest is the personal, which involves the search for meaning in situations and their links to understanding the self. This interest is probably inescapable at the level of emotional reaction to the placement experience and its tensions, but the term is more usually reserved for the practitioner's reflection, analysis and interpretation of their relationships, achievements and values in the light of their biography, images of teaching, personal theories and experience.

The third interest is that of the problematic – the surprising. This is reflection on an event or interpretation which is contrary to previous expectations. Reflection in this sense requires experience of ‘what is usually the case’ and whilst such expectations may be part of images of teaching, the tendency is to reserve the problematic for some point during the training course.

The fourth interest is that of the critical, in which the focus is on considering how professional actions might be enhanced by the rearrangement of the socio-political-economic-value conditions within which they occur. As implied previously, different contexts can be the setting: the school, the region, the nation. There is some evidence to suggest that such reflection on teaching is unlikely to occur during placement given the low status and power position of the student, and given the concerns of many teachers. However, such a critical, emancipatory concept is usually accepted as part of in-faculty studies via issues of, for example, social justice, educability and policy studies.

How then are these interests expressed in the Guidelines, if at all? The technical is certainly present and evidenced in the first quotation from the document. The same can be inferred for the problematic with the outcome ‘range’ of the advanced beginner to the competent. The critical and the personal are less clear. As suggested earlier, the critical may well be implied by the inclusion of the attitudes and commitments implied in the statements about professionalism, but the extent to which the concept of professionalism goes beyond the consensus view of ‘how to behave’ or ‘views to have’ is not clear.

Thirdly, there is a debate about whether reflection in any other form than a concern for technical competence is attainable on pre-service courses. McIntyre’s (1993) view of reflection as a goal of pre-service education, albeit made for shorter post-graduate courses, might mirror both the Scottish perspective and be better aligned to what is feasible and genuinely realisable. As he indicates, in the early stages of professional development the level of routinisation of skills and strategies needed for identification of the problematic has rarely been achieved. The extent of a student’s experience on placement, the duration of those placements, the size of the system and associated problems may well influence the extent to which genuine reflection is achievable.

In essence the national guidelines on competences and reflection leave many decisions to course designers. They are wider in the sense of the contexts covered in that they do

make reference to 'beyond the classroom'. By the inclusion of the professional, they required the student to know more than the technical. Indeed they fit well with four of Calderhead's (1993) five broad agendas for reflection and with the model of the practitioner as a reflective professional which, as Kirk and Glaister (1990) suggest, is the dominant model in Scottish documentation regarding the aims of teacher education. However, albeit the dominant model, it is probably a relatively unarticulated one, as indeed Houston and Clift (1990) suggest is the case in the North American context.

3.8 Summary

The model of the reflective practitioner is one which dominates much of current thinking about initial teacher education and, despite some ambiguity, is the one which underpins recent policy statements from the Scottish Office. What precisely is involved in reflection and how it is demonstrated are less clear. For the purpose of this study, it is postulated that there are forms of reflection which range along a continuum from weak to strong, where the weak version is characterised by a relatively unquestioning acceptance or rejection of practices which either 'work' or 'don't work', respectively and the stronger forms characterised by a commitment to the development of a personal theory of teaching (and learning) which draws on public knowledge bases and is formed through the critical scrutiny of practice, possibly systematically through an action research or teacher-as-researcher approach. In addition, there is a need for an ethical and moral awareness to guide this development.

This is a sophisticated model of the reflective teacher which is highly unlikely to be realised in full in the course of a one or even four year initial teaching course. If this is the model the course pursues however, it must make efforts to provide the student teacher with the knowledge bases, skills and strategies which form the foundation of such a commitment and the opportunities to practise them in simulated and, more crucially, real contexts. This takes the discussion back to the role of the school and the place of the classroom supervisor in the initial education of teachers.

The question then becomes: if, initial teacher education holds the model of the reflective practitioner as its touchstone, to what extent do the structures and components of ITE support the development of reflective practice and, in particular, what role does the school experience element play in this?

CHAPTER 4 SCHOOL EXPERIENCE IN THE BEd (HONS) COURSE

In 1991, the SOED reported on a survey carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) into a number of aspects of the School Experience component of the BEd degree programmes in Scotland (SOED, 1991). A series of inspections of teacher training establishments by HMI had indicated a number of issues related to school experience which were common to some or all of them. At that time there were five Colleges of Education providing BEd preservice primary training, all of which have since merged or are in the process of merging with the university sector. The survey looked at aspects of school experience in all five and involved staff in both schools and colleges as well as students. Overall, HMI commended the organisation of school experience and the amount of effort which went into preparing schools, students and university tutors, but they also highlighted a number of concerns and made several recommendations.

4.1 HMI Concerns and Issues

One concern related to ways in which placement schools were selected by the TEIs, noting that the colleges were not always aware of what was available within each school and what students would, as a result, experience. Within schools, headteachers tended to use one of three approaches for identifying teachers to supervise students: as examples of good practice; on a systematic rota system; or, where teachers were weak, to provide their classes with the benefits of a student. As a result, students' experience of teacher support on placement was very varied.

TEIs were advised to address both their strategies used in selecting schools and the advice they gave headteachers regarding the selection of supervising teachers. However, HMI acknowledged that the sheer size of the exercise meant that these problems were likely to persist. (In 1988-89, 4700 placements were required for 2400 students from a national total of approximately 2500 primary schools.)

Variations across college tutors with regard to the level and kind of support offered and their expectations of student performance were also identified, in spite of the efforts that institutions made to standardise tutor input by providing tutor handbooks and specific criteria for assessment as well as organising staff development activities related to placement support.

Other significant issues included the variation in the contributions of class teachers who were unclear as to the extent of the assistance they should/could provide and worried about their role in the assessment of students. They were unsure of the standards expected and were reluctant to express criticisms of students' performance, either to the tutors or the students themselves. Some teachers were also operating with a model of the student teacher which was at odds with that of the college and, as a result, some students experienced a degree of conflict and inconsistency in the expectations of tutor and supervising teacher. (The report did not indicate what these different models were, however.)

While students received copies of the teachers' evaluations of their performance and the tutors' assessment schedules, it was considered that they were still excluded from much of the discussion and decision-making surrounding assessment and the allocation of grades. It was recommended that teachers be advised on how to manage discussions with students on aspects of their performance and encouraged them to meet with students and tutors for tripartite evaluations of progress.

The issues raised here echo many of those raised in the literature and it is against this background that the version of the BEd degree course which formed the focus of this study was developed.

4.2 The BEd (Hons) Course at the University of Strathclyde

Teacher training at the University of Strathclyde is based in the Faculty of Education which is situated on the Jordanhill Campus in the west of the city of Glasgow. Previously Jordanhill College of Education, the Faculty of Education came into existence as a result of a merger with the University in 1993, forming the University's fifth faculty.

As Jordanhill College, the institution had a considerable history of pre-service primary teacher training in Scotland. In the years immediately prior to the merger, the BEd course had been validated and the degree awarded by the University of Glasgow. Following the merger, the course was transferred to the University of Strathclyde and the first cohort of Strathclyde graduates received their degrees in 1996.

Undergraduate courses at Strathclyde are re-validated on a five yearly cycle, with the current version of the BEd degree course approved in 1995. The re-validation document for the period indicates that, as there had been a major review in 1990 with significant changes to the structure and curriculum, the 1995 review was relatively minor, with some modifications, primarily to take account of the SOED (1993a) guidelines, and a re-focusing of certain elements (BEd Course Team, 1995).

As a result the course has remained fairly stable since 1990, albeit with some modifications in response to internal evaluations and external changes and pressures. Designed, since 1995, to be broadly congruent with aspects of the national guidelines, including the specified competences (SOED, 1993), it is a four year concurrent degree, with a minimum of thirty weeks of school experience, arranged in blocks of increasing duration with a final ten week placement in Year 4. (A further major review took place in 1998-99 as part of major faculty-wide developments in response to changes in education policy and resourcing nationally.) The description of the course presented here draws heavily on the contents of the Course Revision document of 1995 (BEd Course Team, 1995).

4.3 Rationale

In the rationale of the 1995 BEd review document, the Course Team set out three core concepts which, they considered, had informed the development of the course. These included the reflective practitioner, the competent professional and the independent learner. In addition, the concepts of 'reflection' and 'deep learning' were identified as *'significant ideas which are very influential in higher education'* (p.18). These concepts, it was argued, *'emphasised the development of a personal theory of teaching and the ability to realise that theory in a variety of contexts'* (p.19).

The document sets out how it interprets these two concepts of reflection and deep learning, and the section *Principles for Implementation* indicates how they have influenced the learning opportunities provided for students. In defining the main purposes of the course, the Course Team recognised a need to encourage doubt, inquiry and reflection as well as establishing a number of knowledge bases, including addressing the practice-theory dimension. In particular, knowledge of theory and knowledge of practice were to be accompanied by a growing ability in students to theorise for themselves and to reflect and act upon their own theories.

There was also a clear recognition by the Course Team however that, as a result of a number of constraints including time and the limited number of opportunities for experience in schools, not all students may have had the opportunity to experience fully the aims of the course. The TEI expected that, by the end of the course, the students would be able to demonstrate more than a minimal level of competence across the statements in the national guidelines while acknowledging the likelihood of some variation in the types of schools and stages of pupils which students would encounter over the four years of the course. It was anticipated that all students would have sufficient opportunities however to achieve a level of knowledge, competence and awareness of the wider aspects of the educational system which would meet the demands placed upon the beginning teacher.

4.4 The BEd Curriculum

The curriculum for the course at the time of the study was as in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 : The BEd course curriculum

Core Programmes	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y3
School Experience/Preparation For Teaching	√	√	√	√
Professional Studies	√	√	√	√
* Environment	√	√	√	
* Expressive Arts	√	√	√	
* Language	√	√	√	
* Mathematics	√	√	√	
* Religious and Moral Education	√	√		
Audio-Visual	√			
Educational Computing	√	√	√	√
Major Project				√

In addition to the main curricular areas (*), which reflect the national guidelines for learning and teaching in the primary school, students undertake a programme of *Professional Studies* and, in fourth year, complete a major project (8000 words) on a topic of their own choosing which has relevance to themselves as beginning teachers and to the wider profession. The *Professional Studies* programme forms a significant component of the course throughout and provides much of the 'theory' of education such as child development, historical and comparative contexts for education and fairness and equality. The development of skills in the preparation of audio-visual materials and the use of equipment are provided for in Year 1, with classes on information communication and technology (Educational Computing) throughout the course.

Placements for *School Experience* (SE) are arranged in blocks of increasing duration with a final ten week placement in Year 4 with the specific length of the placement varying slightly from year to year depending on statutory holiday dates and other time-tabling considerations. During the study, the total time spent on school experience exceeded the national minimum of thirty weeks. The *Preparation for Teaching* component (PFT) is a campus based element which runs alongside SE and which is designed to provide ‘an opportunity to use the skills and knowledge you have learned in all programmes when planning for specific placements’ (BEd Course Handbook, 1995). PFT takes the form of small group sessions, typically 10 - 12 students, and work focuses on the skills and strategies of the classroom. In addition, issues of personal and professional values and co-operative working are addressed.

The tutor who delivers PFT to a group of students also supervises these students on school experience. This is in line with the HMI recommendation that a degree of continuity in tutor support should be maintained as far as possible within each year of the course if not throughout. The distribution of placement periods across the four years is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 : Features of the Four Years of Placement (1996)

	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41					
Y 1						x		x		x		x		x	x	x	x	x							x												
	Plt. 1 School 1													Plt. 2 School 1										P4/5 Plt. 3 School 2													
Y 2											x		x	P6/7 Plt. 4 School 3										x													
																						x		x	Choice Plt 7 School 4												
Y 3						x		x																Choice Plt 8 School 5													
												x		x	Choice Plt 8 School 5																						
Y 4																																					

Key : Plt. - Placement; x - day visit to school

Note : There are seven stages in the Scottish primary school, Primary 1 - Primary 7(P1 - P7). These correspond to ages thus : P1 - 5/6 years; P2 - 6/7 years; P3 - 7/8 years; P4 - 8/9 years; P5 - 9/10 years; P6 - 10/11 years; P7 - 11/12 years.

The principles involved are that students build up knowledge of cases i.e. the ways in which schools are similar and yet vary (e.g. catchment area, size and ethos) and of the different stages. Therefore:

- students have an opportunity to revisit stages first met at an earlier point, providing an opportunity to consider the variation across schools (increasing scope);
- there is a progression in the requirements, in terms of the time spent teaching, the students' responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating aspects of the curriculum and for taking responsibility for their own learning (increasing depth/quality of experience); and
- placements are in a range of schools and across the school year.

This is further developed in each placement by the inclusion of preliminary visits and an orientation week in the programme. There are three cycles in the placement design, each of which includes classes from the main stages of the primary school. In the first cycle, placement 1, the student visits pre-five, infant, and upper stages. In the second cycle, placements 2 through 6, the student revisits these stages at greater length. In the third cycle, the student chooses two of the three stages for further and extended school experience (placements 7 and 8 respectively).

The model of the reflective practitioner which underpins the BEd course at the University of Strathclyde is one which, while including the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes, emphasises deliberate, systematic enquiry into one's own practice. One of the aims of school experience is to provide a source of immediate practical experience on which to reflect but it is acknowledged that the nature and quality of that experience will vary for individual students as the schools involved change both in kind and quantity from year to year. Within such a context it is not possible to provide a uniform experience for students, even it were considered desirable.

4.5 Assessment

For Years 2 to 4, assessment for the core programmes is on a 10-point scale (0 to 9) and all assignments are criterion-referenced. Students are provided with details of the criteria and how these convert to grades prior to submission of the assignment. In Year 1 performance

is not ascribed a numerical grade and does not contribute to the final classification of the degree.

School experience is similarly graded with students receiving satisfactory/weak grades for Placements 1 - 6 in Years 1 to 3, and numerical grades in the final two placements, Placement 7 (Year 3) and Placement 8 (Year 4). Detailed rules for aggregation and weighting across programmes determine students' honours classification. A profile schedule, which reflects the national competences, is compiled for each assessment visit and a final profile of attainment on exit from the course is produced for students to present to potential employers.

The procedure for assessment is based on visits from faculty tutors where tutors observe the student teaching a lesson or series of lessons ('crits') and assesses her or his performance against a set of criteria. The requirements for each 'crit' lesson are set out in advance and made known to the school as well as the student. On each visit the tutor talks with the supervising teacher, gathering additional evidence of the student's performance and progress. The two final placements (7 and 8) include a 'cross visit' from a tutor other than the PFT tutor and these also contribute to the overall grading.

On completion of the placement, the school produces a report on the student which is drawn up by the headteacher, in conjunction with the supervising teacher. The final grade for a placement draws on the judgements of both supervisors, with the faculty tutor retaining the right to make the final decision. All of the tutors involved in visiting students within a cohort meet and discuss the grades awarded in a process designed to maximise consistency across tutor gradings. The final grade for each student is decided at this meeting and conveyed to the student thereafter.

4.6 Summary and Research Questions

The historical context in which this research was undertaken was one of significant change both within the institution as well as externally. Institutionally, Jordanhill College of Education was merged with the University of Strathclyde and became the Faculty of Education of the University of Strathclyde. During the study, initial teacher education was also affected by external factors, including changes in government policy for initial teacher education and reduced employment opportunities for graduates. The impact of these

changes and the implications for the future of preservice teacher training were important considerations in the conduct of the research.

The main aim of the study was to gain an insight into the role of the school experience component in the BEd course at Jordanhill and to determine the ways in which it contributed to the development of emergent primary school teachers. In particular, it focused on the kinds of learning which occurred and how this element of the course facilitated or constrained the extent to which the underpinning model of the reflective practitioner was realised.

The main aim of the study therefore was:

- **To determine how the school experience component of the BEd degree course at Jordanhill contributes to the development of reflective practitioners.**

This led to a number of sub-questions:

- What are the views of the traditional triad of teacher, tutor and student on the role of school experience and the respective responsibilities of faculty and school in the process?
- Who supports the student in learning to become a teacher on school experience and how?
- What is the model of the teacher and the student teacher which pertains?
- What kinds of learning occur on school experience and how?
- What is 'good practice' on school experience according to students and teachers?
- To what extent does school experience contribute to the development of reflective practitioners?
- What internal and/or external factors constrain or facilitate the development of reflective practitioners?

CHAPTER 5 METHODOLOGY

The focus of this thesis is on the student's experience of being on placement in school as part of the Bachelor of Education (Honours) degree at the Faculty of Education, University of Strathclyde, and the kinds of learning which might and do occur in school. The study followed a single cohort of students through the four years of the BEd course, seeking information on a range of issues relating to the school experience component of the degree and was essentially a longitudinal case study within a single institution. In addition to the students, information was sought from a number of other stakeholders in preservice primary teacher education - the faculty tutors, the supervising teachers and senior management in the placement schools. This chapter discusses the research strategy and tactics adopted, piloting procedures and the approaches to data analysis used in the various phases of the study.

5.1 Research Strategy

The research strategy should be determined by the purpose of the study. Constraints in terms of time and resources may result in some modification of the ideal but should not compromise the original aims.

i The Purpose

Robson (1993) identifies three main purposes for undertaking research: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Exploratory studies set out to ask questions of and shed light on events, phenomena or situations: they tend to be qualitative. Descriptive studies usually combine quantitative with qualitative data gathering and aim to 'portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations' (Robson, 1993, p.42). In general, the researcher needs a secure grasp of the subject of the study such that effort is concentrated on the most salient features.

Explanatory studies go beyond description in that they attempt to establish causal relationships and provide explanations of the events studied. The research strategy in such instances may be quantitative or qualitative, or employ some combination of these.

In discussing qualitative approaches, Miles and Huberman (1994) distinguish between exploratory and confirmatory studies. The former refers to occasions where the social setting being investigated is not clearly defined, either in terms of boundaries or interpersonal dynamics. Where the research questions are more firmly focused, the aim is to gather evidence which will confirm (or disconfirm) existing or proposed explanations or theories.

The purpose of the study described here was originally exploratory in both Robson's (1993) and Miles and Huberman's (1994) terms in that it set out to uncover aspects of the student's experience about which little was known, other than from informal feedback and the ubiquitous evaluation forms, although much was speculated. In the first phase, a broad sweep of potential areas of concern was undertaken and specific issues identified.

Subsequently, the research focused on specific issues concerned with student learning and became more descriptive in an attempt to depict what it was like to be a student on school experience, learning to become a teacher. The main purpose then became one of illuminating some of these issues, including the micropolitics of the student-teacher-tutor relationship during placement, and developing an insight into those issues that students perceived to be important. It was not originally designed to be explanatory (or confirmatory) although some tentative conclusions are drawn which have, in turn, generated further research questions and projects. In addition, some of the findings have already been fed back into course design and development processes within the faculty.

ii The strategy

Robson (1993) identifies three main traditions of research in the social sciences : case studies, surveys and experiments. Typically, case studies have been used in exploratory research, with surveys more frequently used in descriptive studies and experimental approaches employed in determining cause and effect explanations of phenomena.

Just as a particular piece of research may have more than one purpose, so research strategies should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Case studies can incorporate elements of survey and experimental strategies and Robson (1993) takes this further in arguing that virtually every research project can be considered a case study in that it focuses on a particular phenomenon within a specific time and place.

Other authors use different category labels. Cresswell (1998), for example, uses the term 'intrinsic case study' to describe instances where, because the event or situation is unique, it warrants particular attention. While this is similar in many respects to the exploratory study, Robson (1993) does not cite 'uniqueness' as the defining feature of a particular category of case study research, but rather argues that every case is unique

in some respect. Stake (1995) uses 'instrumental case study' to refer to research in which a particular event or situation is used to illustrate a specific issue (or issues), closer to Robson's definition of a descriptive case study.

The research strategy selected was that of a case study with two phases. The 'case' studied was one course (the BEd degree) within a single institution (the Faculty of Education) at a specific period of time (1993 - 1997). It was therefore bounded in space and time. It might be argued that, as the students were on placement in a number of different schools in the west of Scotland, this would bring a multi-site element into the study. In response, it is argued that school experience is an integral part of the course structure and that those schools in which students are placed are all bound by the same partnership agreements and subject to the same course regulations and requirements. Therefore they can be considered as an integral part of the case, the unit of analysis, as defined here.

For the first phase, the initial sweep, a survey of the views of the traditional triad of student, tutor and supervising teacher, was undertaken and extended to encompass representatives of the school management team. While this survey was designed to generate considerable quantitative data on the supervision process itself, it was an interest in the micro-politics of being on placement and the nature of the inter-personal relationships in supporting student learning in school which lay at the heart of the impetus for the research. A number of additional, mainly qualitative, data gathering strategies were therefore built into the design, forming the second phase.

While case studies have considerable advantages in that they allow the extensive exploration of a particular instance in considerable depth, enabling understanding and insight of complex situations, they can be weak on generalisability (Cresswell, 1998). Consequently, care must be taken in drawing parallels with what appear to be similar courses in other institutions.

In any research, there is also a danger of disturbing the situation by the very act of attempting to study it. This can reduce the validity of the data gathered (Edwards and Talbot, 1994). Issues of validity and generalisability are addressed in Sections 5.5 and 5.6 respectively.

iii A longitudinal case study

A longitudinal case study design was selected in order to investigate change across the years of the course as well as to gain a picture of school experience within any year. The study might have been designed using a cross sectional approach where a group of students within each of the year of the course was identified, within a single academic session. In such a design, the evidence gathered from the four groups of students would have formed the basis of comparisons across year groups. While this would have reduced significantly the data gathering period, cross-sectional studies have disadvantages in that the subjects are different in each sample and therefore not directly comparable (Robson, 1993).

Longitudinal studies overcome this by ensuring that the subjects are matched at different points in time (i.e. the same people), although the disadvantage of an increased time scale can be considerable. A further disadvantage of longitudinal studies is the likelihood of attrition over time. In this case, this would mean students exiting from the course before the end of fourth year, for any one of a number of reasons. However, it was judged that the need to ensure continuous 'stories' of the experience of being on placement outweighed these disadvantages.

A sub-sample of students was identified to participate in a series of interviews, one at the end of each academic session. As a result, the 'case' has a number of sub-cases embedded within it each reflecting the individual experiences of the student. This is a strategy which, if successful, can provide 'very vivid and illuminating data' (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 26).

5.2 Research Tactics

There were essentially two phases to the study. The first comprised a survey of those directly involved in school experience within the academic year 1993-94. Using a series of questionnaires, this phase produced broad descriptive data from which semi-structured interviews were developed for use in this and subsequent academic sessions. Table 5.1 sets out the details of the strategy adopted with the BEd students.

Table 5.1 : Data collection from students 1993-97.

Year of course	Phase 1	Phase 2		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
B.Ed 1	Questionnaires Interviews			
B.Ed 2	Questionnaires	Questionnaires Interviews		
B.Ed 3	Questionnaires		Questionnaires Interviews Self-evaluations	
B.Ed 4	Questionnaires			Questionnaires Interviews Self-evaluations

 target group of students

In Phase 1, data was also gathered from the other stakeholders in the school experience component of the course: faculty tutors, supervising teachers and senior management in schools who held the responsibility for students on placement within their remit. In addition, a small qualitative study, using interviews, was undertaken into the concepts of 'good practice' in student supervision with experienced teachers. At the end of the course, an additional questionnaire that focused solely on the SOEID competences was administered to students. These elements of the study are summarised in Table 5.2

Table 5.2 : Other sources of evidence investigated directly

	Phase 1	Phase 2		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Additional studies i as intrinsic part of the research	Questionnaires to: • faculty tutors • supervising teachers • senior school management			
ii directly related	'good' practice study (teachers)			Competences survey (students)

 target group of students

During this period of time, other members of staff at Jordanhill were involved in research involving the same cohorts of students. While the evidence and findings from these are not an integral part of this study, they have been included in the discussion to provide additional perspectives on some of the issues raised. These are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 : Additional sources of evidence from other studies within the Faculty

	Phase 1	Phase 2		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Research by other members of staff	PCP study D. Christie			'Concerns on placement' study R Mackay/J Allan

 target group of students

In Phase 1, therefore, four separate groups of students (Years 1 - 4), four groups of supervising teachers (one group for each year group of students), school management staff in placement schools and faculty tutors provided evidence through questionnaires. A sub-sample of Year 1 students was also interviewed. In each of the three years of Phase 2, questionnaires were issued to the whole target cohort. In addition, the sub-sample of students interviewed in Phase 1 was re-interviewed where possible and, in Years 3 and 4, self-evaluation material sought from students. (Not all students were willing or able to provide such material.)

In addition to sampling of people, it is also necessary to sample from the universe of potential behaviours, events and processes in which they engage (Miles and Huberman, 1994). A summary table, using Miles and Huberman's categories of settings, actors, events and processes, is presented at the end of sub-sections i, iv and v.

i The Students (Phases 1 and 2)

Questionnaires were issued to all students within the cohort in each year of the survey (comprehensive sampling). Table 5.4 shows the number of students to whom questionnaires were issued, the number of returns and the percentage of each cohort that this represents.

Table 5.4 : The BEd student sample 1993 - 1997

Cohort	1993-94			1994-95			1995-96			1996-97		
	N	n	%	N	n	%	N	n	%	N	n	%
BEd 1	165	110	66.7									
BEd 2	168	127	79.4	152	121	79.6						
BEd 3	186	117	62.0				139	92	66.2			
BEd 4	168	92	53.5							128	37	28.9

 target group of students

The percentages of questionnaires returned by students in Year 4 (in both phases) were lower than those for other year groups. The placement in Year 4 falls between January and Easter and therefore there should be sufficient time to complete a questionnaire. However, they do not tend to be on campus other than intermittently as they are writing up final assignments, most particularly their Major Project (a research enquiry). It was difficult to track them down and to organise the distribution and collection of forms. The particularly low figure for 1996-97 is disappointing and while this explanation may go some of the way to accounting for the missing respondents, it is also possible that 'questionnaire fatigue' had set in by that time.

A breakdown by gender for each entire cohort, including non-respondents, in 1993-94 is shown in Table 5.5. The figure nationally for males in employment as primary classroom teachers in Scotland in 1994 was 8% (Scottish Office, 1996). In the academic year 1993-94, just under 10% of entrants to primary teacher training courses were male. Proportionally more were registered for PGCE(P) than BEd qualifications however, with males forming 7.9% of those entering first year BEd courses in Scottish TEIs (Scottish Office, 1995). Table 5.5 indicates that the proportion entering the BEd course at Jordanhill in that year was slightly above the national figure at 10.3%.

Table 5.5 : Numbers of female and male students in each year group (1993-94)

Cohort	female	male	total	% male
BEd 1	148	17	165	10.3%
BEd 2	144	15	160	9.4%
BEd 3	173	14	187	8.1%
BEd 4	165	7	172	4.1%

A sub-sample of students (n = 17) was identified for in-depth interviewing which took place at the end of each (academic) year of the course. This sub-sample was based on a sampling fraction of one-tenth and selected from a single alphabetical list of all students (male and female) by identifying those students at positions 5, 15, 25 ... and so on. Three reserves were identified in a similar manner. Two of the original sample declined to participate and were replaced by reserves. The final sample was checked to ensure that the balance of male and female students reflected the proportion of males within the cohort, rounded up to the nearest whole figure i.e. 2 out of 17.

Those interviewed were therefore a random sample of students within the year group. Miles and Huberman (1994) identify a number of sampling strategies where specific

individuals are selected as sources of information. They give examples of such purposive sampling including quota, comprehensive and reputational selection. These strategies depend on being able to identify those individuals who are most likely to contribute to the research, as key players or examples of similar and contrasting subcases.

In the BEd study, it was impossible to determine at the outset the students who might generate the most interesting and useful evidence over the four years so a random sample was selected. There was, in this decision, the hope that over the years of the study, sufficient similarities and differences in individual cases would emerge to ensure rich and productive evidence.

Miles and Huberman (1994) also advise that, where the situation is complex (and this one appeared fairly complex) ‘more than 15 cases or so can become unwieldy’ (p. 30). The final figure of 17 that was fixed upon was judged as sufficiently close to this advice, while still allowing for some attrition. Table 5.6 shows the numbers interviewed in each year of the study.

Table 5.6 : Interview samples 1993 - 1997

BEd cohort	1993-94 (Y1)	1994-95 (Y2)	1995-96 (Y3)	1996-97 (Y4)
female	15	14	12	11
male	2	2	2	2
total	17	16	14	13

There was a small decline in numbers of female students over the period of the research that in all but one instance was due to the student leaving course as a result of failing elements of the course, including school experience. Attempts were made to interview these students shortly after their official withdrawal and this was possible in two instances. Furthermore, one female student declined to be interviewed at the end of fourth year. (She had failed the extended placement in Year 4 and it can only be surmised that this may have influenced her decision.) No males withdrew from the interview sample in the course of the study.

The themes pursued in the questionnaires and the interviews are shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2. A number of the themes were common across year groups while others were specific to one year group.

Figure 5.1 : Content of questionnaires to students 1993 - 1997

Students	1993-94 Years 1, 2, 3, 4	1994-95 Year 2	1995-96 Year 3	1996-97 Year 4
Themes	Information SE Y1 Preparation Gathering plt. info. Support on plt.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutors • school staff • teachers Learning to teach Attitude to plt. School's role Assessment	Information SE Y2 Preparation Gathering plt. info. Support on plt.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutors • school staff • teachers Learning to teach Attitude to plt. School's role Assessment Specific questions on Plt. 4 and 5	Information SE Y3 Preparation Gathering plt. info. Support on plt.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutors • school staff • teachers Learning to teach Attitude to plt. School's role Assessment	Information SE Y4 Preparation Gathering plt. info. Support on plt.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tutors • school staff • teachers Learning to teach Attitude to plt. School's role Assessment Triadic meetings

Key: plt./Plt. = placement

The interviews attempted to elicit in-depth information from specific themes raised in the questionnaires.

Figure 5.2 : Themes pursued in interviews with students 1993 - 97

Students	1993-94 Year 1	1994-95 Year 2	1995-96 Year 3	1996-97 Year 4
Themes	Attitude to plt. (Y1) Partnership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'good' supervisors • a successful placement Learning on plt. The school's role Contribution of school and TEI Assessment Advice to others	Attitude to plt. (Y2) Concerns about plt. Comparison with Y1 Learning on Plt. Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'good' teacher • 'good' tutor • 'good' school Assessment Being a teacher	Attitude to plt. (Y3) Concerns about plt. The 'good' supporting teacher Tutor support Learning : Y2 v Y3 Successful & unsuccessful events Making progress Self- evaluation Assessment	Attitude to plt. (Y4) Concerns about plt. Attitude to plt. Tutor support Learning : Y4 v rest Learning to teach Being a teacher Reflective practitioner Assessment

ii The Faculty Tutors (Phase 1)

Questionnaires were issued to all faculty staff responsible for the supervision of students on school experience in 1993-94 (a comprehensive sample). A total of 26 tutors were originally approached with 24 responding (92%).

iii The Supervising Teachers (Phase 1)

Questionnaires were issued to 100 of the teachers involved in the supervision of each year group of students within the classroom in the first year of the study. A total of 314 teachers returned completed questionnaires. Table 5.7 shows how they were distributed across the four year groups of students.

Table 5.7 : Number of supervising teachers for each of the cohorts of students

Cohort	1993-94		
	N	n	%
BEd 1	100	75	75%
BEd 2	100	80	80%
BEd 3	100	79	79%
BEd 4	100	80	80%
Total	400	314	78%

Youngman (1987) questions the validity of response rates less than 50%, although he does add that each study should be considered on its merits. As all of these figures exceed 50%, the responses have been taken to be accurate reflections of teachers' views.

iv The School Management (Phase 1)

For this group, schools were identified from a master list used for school experience during 1993-94 using a system of selecting every second school, which generated 126, and a random sampling of the remainder to give an additional 24, bringing the total to 150. These formed the basis of the Phase 1 survey. Questionnaires were distributed to those senior members of staff in schools who held the remit for students on school experience. In primary schools, a member of senior staff (headteacher, depute or assistant headteacher or senior teacher) has the responsibility for matters relating to students on placement within the school. A total of 123 schools returned completed questionnaires (82%).

The themes pursued in the questionnaires distributed to teachers, school management and faculty tutors are shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: Areas explored in the questionnaires to supervisors and supervising schools

Students	1993-94 School management	1993-94 Supervising teachers	1993-94 Supervising tutors
Themes	Background information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • position • school • local authority • past S.E. experience TEI involvement : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-placement • during placement • towards end of placement Learning to teach Y1-Y4 Partnership issues Assessment	Background information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school • local authority • past S.E. experience Learning to teach Y1-Y4 Partnership issues Assessment Attitude to taking students Supporting students	Background information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school • local authority • past S.E. experience Support by teachers Support by tutors Partnership issues Role for school Assessment

v The 'Good Practice' Study (Phase 1)

In 1994, ten schools were identified by the BEd Programme Co-ordinator for School Experience as representing 'good practice' in supervising students on school experience. The definition of 'good practice' was a very broad one that essentially meant that good faculty - school relationships had been established and sustained over a number of years and feedback from students had been positive.

Each school was asked to identify two experienced, supervising teachers who would be willing to participate in interviews on the supervision process. A total of 19 teachers were interviewed; in one school only one teacher was prepared to contribute.

This was regarded as a supplementary study designed to elicit views on specific aspects of the school experience process from experienced practitioners (a reputational sample; Miles and Huberman, 1994). While it helped illuminate aspects of the main study, the findings cannot be regarded as representative of supervising teachers per se, but rather as coming from a selected sample for a particular purpose.

Figure 5.4 : Themes pursued through the interviews

Students	1993-94 'Good practice' interviews
Themes	Reasons for taking students Differences across years Handling/working with the student A 'good' relationship A 'good' student The teaching competences Improvement to provision

5.3 The Techniques

The kinds of techniques used and the degree of structure which each should possess should be determined by the purpose(s) of the research. Too much structure can prevent the researcher from gaining a clear view of what is being studied while too little can lead to a lack of direction and the gathering of extraneous data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Generally, exploratory studies require open-ended approaches so that the area of study is not closed down prematurely; confirmatory studies, where the parameters are more clearly defined, are best tackled with fairly structured instruments developed prior to the field work. This study contained elements of both structured and relatively unstructured instruments.

Three main data gathering techniques were used in the study - questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. The last of these drew on the self-evaluations which students had undertaken of their teaching on placement in Years 3 and 4, one of the course requirements for placements in these years. Each technique is considered in turn.

i Questionnaires : Phase 1

In 1992-93, a preliminary study was undertaken of the school experience component of the BEd course for evaluation purposes (Stark, 1993). The focus was on the final year placement (BEd 4, Placement 8) which had just been extended from eight to ten weeks. The questionnaire addressed issues such as learning on placement, supervision and the roles and responsibilities of school and TEI as well as background information on the schools involved.

Four questionnaires for students, one for each cohort, were modified versions of

those used in the 1992-93 study. Each had a common core of questions supplemented with additional sections designed to reflect the course aims for each student year group (Appendix 1). Similar questionnaires were compiled for teachers, tutors and school management (Appendices 2, 3 and 4 respectively).

Questionnaires are traditionally associated with survey methods and can provide a reliable picture of the surface elements of the event or situation being investigated if well designed (Edwards and Talbot, 1994). In addition, they can be administered to a large number of individuals in a standardised format. On the negative side, the data gathered tend to be mainly descriptive and can appear somewhat superficial. As a result, while statistical analysis can generate correlations between elements of the study, it cannot normally establish cause and effect relationships. In addition, potential respondents often do not like them and may need to be prompted to complete and return them (Edwards and Talbot, 1994).

The overall design of the questionnaire is as important as the kinds of questions asked and the formats used to ask them (Youngman, 1987). Care was taken to ensure that the presentation was of high quality, with clear instructions and sub-headings to guide respondents. Each questionnaire began with an explanatory statement, encouraging them to respond and assuring them that their comments would be invaluable in the study. It concluded by thanking them for participating and asking them to return the forms directly to Jordanhill. Schools were supplied with reply-paid labels to encourage returns. As students were on-campus at the time, they were asked to return them directly.

Content

The issues addressed in each of the questionnaires are listed in Figures 5.1 - 5.4. The initial questionnaire was lengthy in that it attempted to cover a range of aspects of supervision, including views on the roles and responsibilities of tutors and teachers in the process. The types of questions used included:

- yes/no boxes to be ticked for basic information;
- rating scales to indicate frequencies of particular events on placement;
- ranking of elements of the programme; and
- open-ended responses.

The intention was to maintain a degree of commonality in response formats so

that some familiarity with the procedure could be established while including enough difference to discourage the establishment of response patterns across items. Only a few open-ended questions were included, in part due to a concern for the practicalities of analysing the data and using computer-based packages, as well as an attempt to reduce the time required to complete the questionnaire and hence increase the likelihood of a high response.

Students were asked to provide matriculation numbers although they could omit them if they so wished. A substantial proportion omitted them, some deliberately while others did not remember them. Had sufficient numbers provided this data, it might have been possible to match responses to different elements of the study at the analysis stage. Any insistence on matriculation numbers would have alienated a substantial proportion of students and it was decided that a higher response rate without numbers was preferable to a lower one with them.

Piloting

Constructing reliable questionnaires is demanding and piloting is an important process in establishing reliability. As the questionnaires drew heavily upon the experiences of the 1992-93 study, several lessons had already been learned. The use of open-ended questions tended to produce large numbers of responses which were difficult to code as did inviting 'additional comments' following longer sections of tick lists, etc.. Much of this was unrelated to the topic/issue and appeared more as if, having been given the opportunity, they felt they had to say something, or they used it to get other, unrelated grievances off their chests. The numbers of these (and the spaces to write in) were reduced in the 1993-94 versions. Secondly, the questionnaires were somewhat long in terms of time to complete and attempts were made to reduce this. For example, numbering or labelling alphabetically lists of statements and asking respondents to use these as codes in subsequent questions was a more efficient use of their time than re-writing longer words or phrases.

Administration

Questionnaires were issued to students during Preparation For Teaching tutorials by their tutors towards the end of the academic session. This tended to be in late May/early June, depending on the timing of placements. They were asked to take them away, complete them and return them to the office in the Educational Studies Department by a specific date, two weeks later. Tutors encouraged them

to respond, impressing upon them the opportunity to record their views on this important element of the course. Copies were mailed to those students who were absent on the day of distribution.

Students were assured that their responses would remain confidential and be analysed by a member of staff outwith the Department of Primary Education. (A substantial number of students were not convinced by this assurance and returned questionnaires without matriculation numbers; some specifically commented that they had deliberately withheld this information.)

As the purpose of the questionnaires used in Phase 2 was primarily to compare the target group against the Phase 1 data for each year of the course, the content and the procedures were kept essentially the same.

The questionnaires for tutors, supervising teachers and senior management in schools were similar in content and format to those issued to students. The main difference was in the background information requested at the beginning of the form. Tutors were not asked to supply names, nor were school staff who were asked to indicate the school only. Senior management staff indicated the school and the post held.

ii The Interviews: Students

The interviews were semi-structured and designed to last between 30 minutes and one hour. In the first year of the study, the interview schedule focused on specific aspects of school experience while attempting to gain a fuller understanding of broad issues such as support on placement and the assessment of performance and progress. In subsequent years, interview schedules were based on the one used in Year 1, with modifications to take account of the specific features of the target placement and the analysis of interviews from the previous year (Appendix 5).

Over the four years, the interviews focussed progressively upon issues relating to support, reflection and critical thinking. Aspects that might have been perceived as interfering with the development of critical reflective practice were explored. This tactic produced cross-sectional interview data for each year of the course as well as individual students' 'stories' across the four years.

Procedure

Each interview was conducted in private on a one-to-one basis and typically took approximately 40 minutes. The dialogue was taped, where students were in agreement, and later transcribed for analysis.

iii Interviews : 'Good Practice' teachers

The interview schedule drew upon issues raised in the 1993-94 questionnaire data that required further exploration (Appendix 6). These were: the 'good' student; supporting students on placement; and, expectations of the students' learning on placement. In addition, questions relating to the 1993 government guidelines for initial teacher training were included.

The interview schedule was piloted with two members of staff in schools who were not included in the final sample. Minor modifications were made to the questions to reduce ambiguity and improve comprehensibility. In addition, questions were slightly re-focused to improve the elicitation of views on the issues concerned. The teachers used in the pilot were unaware of the SOEID guidelines and the procedure had to be altered to allow them to look at a copy before responding to the relevant questions.

Procedure

Headteachers were contacted by letter and invited to participate in the study by nominating two members of staff with experience of supervising students on placement. When agreement was received, the teachers were then contacted directly and a visit to the school arranged to conduct the interviews. All schools who were approached agreed to participate.

Where teachers were willing, interviews were taped and transcribed. Teachers were offered the opportunity to read the transcripts and comment. Only two teachers subsequently requested copies and neither asked that any change be made.

All interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis except for one school where the two teachers insisted on being interviewed together. Despite reservations, this turned out to be a very productive approach as they tended to prompt and question each other's contributions, reducing the involvement of the interviewer.

iii Questionnaires: Phase 2

The questionnaires administered at the end of Years 2, 3 and 4 of the study (Appendix 7) were essentially those issued in 1993-94, matched for the year of the course. There was an opportunity to make them slightly more focused so some excision of content was undertaken but as they were also used to provide evaluation data to the School Experience Co-ordinator, opportunities for pruning were limited.

iv Students' Self-evaluations at ends of years 3 and 4.

As part of the requirements for Years 3 and 4, students are required to complete evaluations of their own performance and learning on a regular basis. These form part of the assessment procedure. While compiled for another audience, these evaluations contain evidence of students' attempts to analyse and reflect upon their experiences of learning to teach. Each evaluation was analysed within the context set by the Course Director for completion of the task.

v Questionnaire: Students' views on competences at the end of Y4

A one-page questionnaire was administered to all students at the end of the final year of the course (Appendix 8). Students were asked to indicate how competent they felt themselves to be on each of the Scottish Office competences for teaching, using a rating scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicated that they were very confident, while 5 meant little or no competence on that aspect.

5.4 Analysis

Edwards and Talbot (1994) identify two different perspectives on (or purposes for) doing research. The first is concerned with testing out an idea which is rooted in existing theory (i.e. theory-driven) while the second is more interested in trying to make sense of apparent patterns and themes within a situation such that it has implications for existing explanations (data-driven).

This study has elements of both. The original survey was driven by theories of what should have been happening in the supervision process and the types of learning occurring. Subsequent data gathering was intended to illuminate and begin to explain the ways in which the development of reflective practitioners might be encouraged i.e. a grounded theory approach (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

As the data gathered falls into both quantitative and qualitative categories, a number of

forms of analysis were employed.

i Statistical analysis : Questionnaires

For each batch of questionnaires, the responses were entered onto computer files (SPSS-X) by technical staff in the Department of Business and Computer Education, Faculty of Education, University of Strathclyde and frequency counts produced. Extended responses to open-ended questions were collated and subjected to content analysis by the researcher. Very few respondents provided additional information of this type and it was summarised for each batch of questionnaires.

As the majority of the questionnaire data was intended to be used as contextual information, most of it was used to produce descriptive statistics, presented in tables and charts in the following chapters. Where specific clusters of data were related to a more substantive issue, these were subjected to statistical tests of significance, principally the chi-square test.

ii Content analysis : Interviews and Documents

Content analysis is performed on text, in this case this includes interview transcripts and the self-evaluation reports. Wragg (1987) identifies three phases of analysis : preliminary reading, followed by major analysis and then a final re-reading to ensure nothing has been missed. Robson (1993) emphasises the need to construct categories for analysis, working from major categories to sub-themes, in an iterative fashion.

Interviews : Students

Interviews with students were analysed in two ways. Firstly, the responses from all students within a year group were combined to provide a picture of aspects of the school experience within each year of the course. This provided four 'pictures', one for each year of the study. Secondly, each student's set of four interviews were combined to 'tell the story' of their individual experience on school placement across the four years. Thus cross-sectional data for each year was gathered as well as 'narratives' from each of the students in the sample.

Only a few questions in the interview schedules were amenable to any form of quantitative reporting. As these tended to describe background features, stage of primary school involved, and grade achieved, they have been used

descriptively rather than subjected to tests of statistical significance. The transcripts of the interviews were analysed using a form of content analysis within broad themes or areas of concern reflecting the themes set out in Figure 5.2

Documents: from Students

Students in the interview sample provided copies of the evaluations of their own teaching that they had completed as a requirement of the third and fourth years of the course. These were analysed, principally for evidence of reflection, using a form of content analysis.

5.5 Reliability and Validity

Issues of reliability and validity must be addressed at each stage of the research design and, in deciding on a case study approach, a number of factors were considered. Reliability is primarily concerned with the ways in which the procedures are carried out i.e. quality control issues (Robson, 1993). Such a complex study demanded good record keeping, organisation and attention to detail. The timing of the data gathering periods, once a year in summer term, allowed adequate preparation and logging of procedures between rounds.

Validity is more complex. In any study, there is a danger that the picture may be distorted by the act of investigating it. In order to reflect the scene studied more accurately, it is recommended that data gathering should be as unobtrusive as possible and where this cannot be unobtrusive it should disturb potential respondents as little as possible, both emotionally and physically (Open University, 1994).

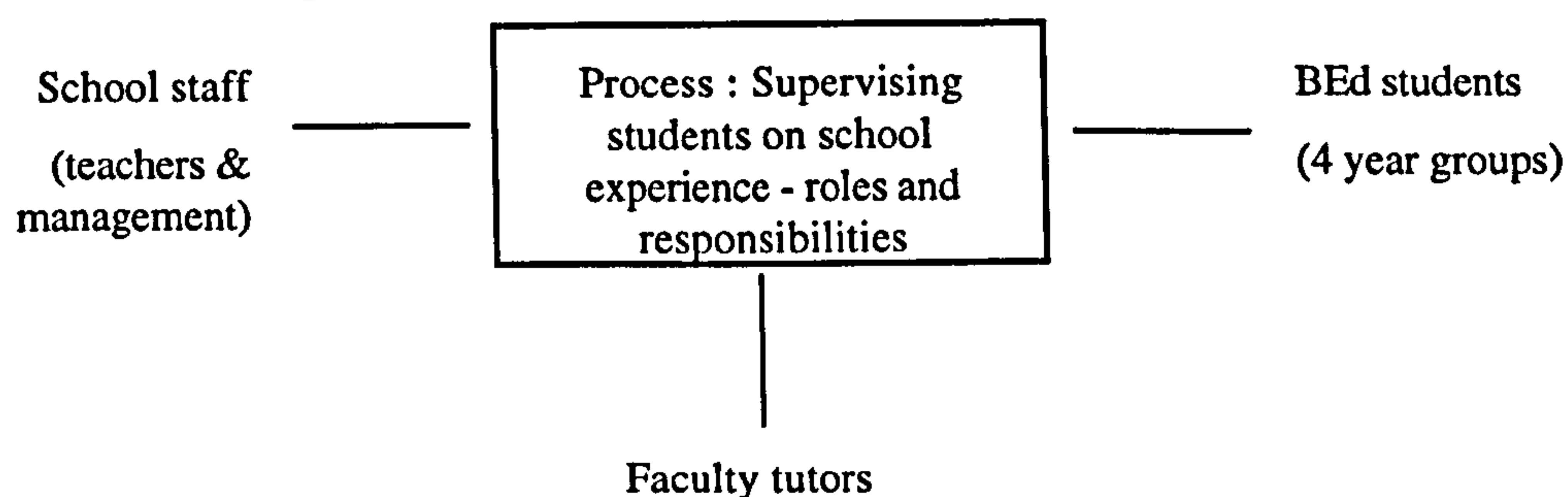
In practitioner research, which this essentially is, validity may be compromised through an inability to establish an analytical distance between the practitioner and the event being studied. In the extreme, the researcher can develop such an empathy for the subjects that it distorts both the kinds of evidence sought and the ways in which this is tackled.

This has been addressed in two ways. Firstly, school experience preparation and visiting are not amongst my professional duties and I am some distance removed from those aspects of the course. Secondly, I used a 'critical friend' who is a member of the school experience team as a means of ensuring that I was not accepting the views presented by the students uncritically.

Another method of checking validity is ‘respondent validation’ where those who provided the information are presented with the final version and asked to comment on the interpretations made. This could have been used with the interview data. It was impractical within the time scale however to analyse the data and prepare such a summary account. Students could become quite emotional during the interview, particularly where things had gone badly and there was concern that some of the more revealing and occasionally infelicitous comments might have been deleted had they been given time to consider their words more coolly. Therefore, respondent validation as described here was not used.

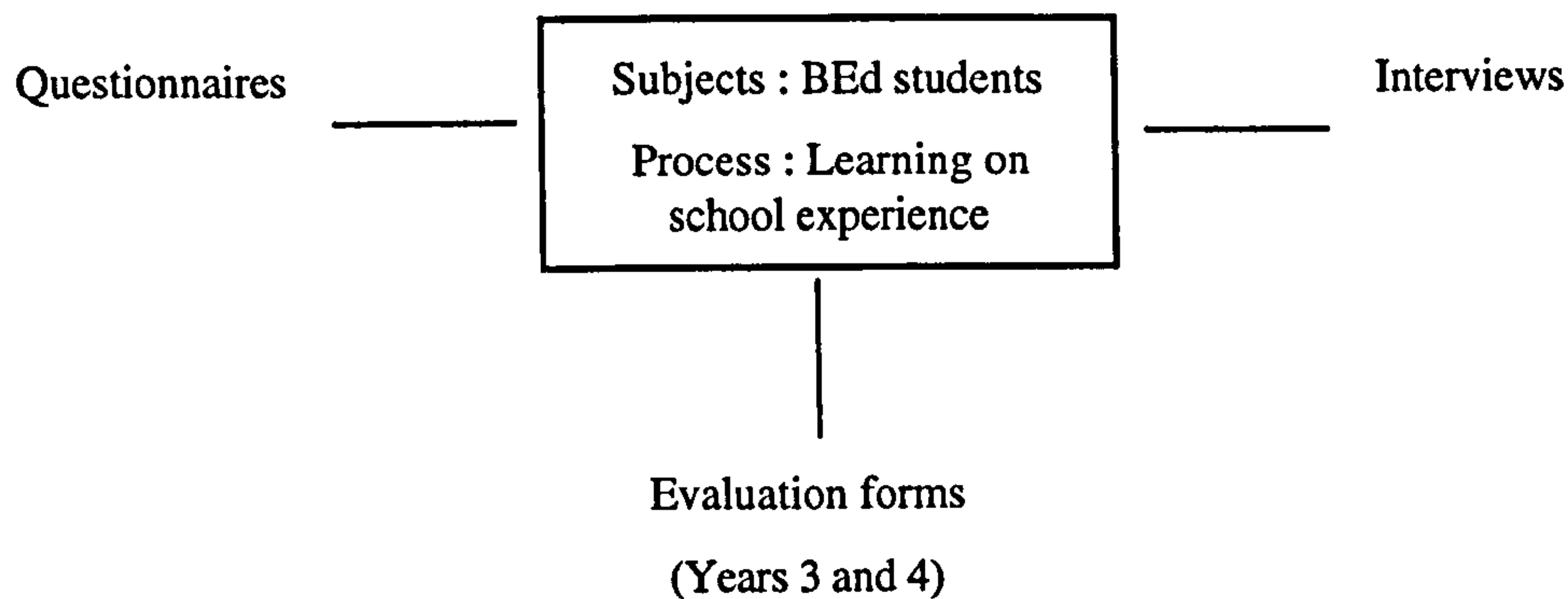
The most common way in which validity is provided for in the planning phase is through triangulation of one form or another. Edwards and Talbot (1994) list three forms of triangulation - methodological, participant and researcher triangulation. In addition, it is possible to mix these approaches. The point of triangulation is to come at the same issue from a number of perspectives, where the data generated can be analysed to show supporting or contradictory views. This study used two forms of triangulation: participant and methodological.

Figure 5.5 : Participant triangulation in Phase 1



All three groups received questionnaires that contained a number of identical questions that sought views on the roles and responsibilities of each member of the triad. An additional set of interviews with students was then undertaken to probe the issues raised and to indicate which might most usefully be pursued in Phase 2.

Figure 5.6 : Methodological triangulation in Phase 2



In the two final years of the study, three forms of evidence were gathered from the target group of BEd students. Additional strategies were undertaken to identify the typicality of the target group.

Figure 5.7 : Checking strategy through questionnaire data

Phase 2	1996-97				BEd 4
	1995-96			BEd 3	
	1994-95		BEd 2		
Phase 1	1993-94 baseline questionnaires	BEd 1	BEd 2	BEd 3	BEd 4

A number of the same questions were asked in each set of questionnaires, allowing some comparison of the target group with students who were at the same stage of the course in 1993-94.

Threats to validity in qualitative research come from the influence of the researcher on the events and the nature of the reporting process. The interviews were held after the event, sometimes several weeks afterwards and so responses may have been subject to memory failure or distortion in some aspects. However, this delay was deliberate in order that the critical incidents, the dominant feelings and perceptions about the whole experience would be drawn upon rather than the incidental detail of day-to-day activity. (The detail produced by many of the students in talking about some of the highs and lows of placement indicates that much of it was deeply etched.)

While the students may have considered that they were giving a fair account of the experience, it is possible that some were unconsciously distorting aspects of the placement. In particular, where students had received particularly high or low grades, this may have coloured their perceptions. This is borne in mind in the analysis and the

interpretations made thereof.

5.6 Generalisability

As both qualitative and quantitative data was gathered, these are considered separately in discussing generalisability, or external validity as Robson (1993) prefers.

i Quantitative data

Where data has been collected from a sub-sample of cases, designed to be representative of the population as a whole, generalisability can be established in quantitative data through statistical inference. Through empirical generalisation the findings from specific cases can be regarded as pertaining universally, where statistics justify this. There can be a danger in according too much importance to statistical significance in that what is statistically significant is not always educationally or theoretically significant. For example, some factors that prove statistically to have a significant effect on pupil performance, such as parental education or income, while important, are not amenable to intervention, certainly in the short term. Such findings are therefore of less direct relevance to those wishing to address issues of raising standards in schools.

ii Qualitative data

Qualitative data cannot normally be tested through statistical inference although attempts can be made to establish generalisability through theoretical inference i.e. inductive reasoning from the data (Robson, 1993). Moving from the specific cases studied to a larger, finite number or the universe of cases, cannot be conclusive although it should be possible to distinguish between those theories which have greater or lesser claims.

Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that, in qualitative studies, analytic generalisations are the most useful in that they 'put the flesh on the bones of general constructs and their relationships' (p. 27). With qualitative data it is necessary to 'make a case', to persuade the reader of the validity and legitimacy of the argument by demonstrating the essential characteristics which the cases studied share with others (Robson, 1993). This is the strategy used with the interview and self-evaluation data.

5.7 Ethics

Attempts were made in all elements of the study to ensure that participants were informed of the purposes of the study and the extent of their involvement. Letters

explaining the nature of the study accompanied the questionnaires to schools and to tutors within the faculty. Tutors issued questionnaires to students during PFT tutorials in the final weeks of the summer term each year.

The students selected for interview were initially contacted by letter with a request to make contact and arrange a time for the interview session, if willing to become involved. Any questions which they had were answered when they made contact and the extent of the commitment (one interview each year for the four years) was made clear. All who made contact agreed to this commitment. Where students did not make contact, a second letter was issued, this time by hand. Where the student still failed to arrange an appointment after two weeks, a reserve was sought. Students had the freedom not to participate if they so chose.

The names of the students selected for interview were not communicated to other members of staff and they were assured that this would be so throughout. In addition, it was promised that any information provided would remain confidential and that their anonymity would be protected in any publications. In addition they were offered the opportunity to read the transcripts of interviews (where the sessions were taped) if they so wished. In the event, no student did ask to see transcripts and all seemed relatively unperturbed by the process. A similar procedure was adopted with the 'good practice' case study where 2 teachers read the transcripts but asked for no changes, (One teacher commented on to her tendency to leave sentences uncompleted, which she had been aware of but not to the extent demonstrated in the transcript.)

The questionnaires to tutors were returned anonymously. Those from schools required a number of background details such as the school name, post held by the respondent, stage responsibility and previous experience with students, but did not request teachers' names. Therefore a degree of anonymity was maintained. Confidentiality of data was assured to all participants.

I was not a member of the Department of Primary Education and therefore not a tutor on the Preparation for Teaching/School Experience components of the course although I did teach on the Professional Studies component. As a result, it was anticipated that students would not perceive my involvement as prejudicial to their progress or achievement on the course. I believe that this was the case and that many of them were remarkably free in their comments although a few remained a little tense and tight-lipped throughout. In general, a relationship of trust developed over the four years with

students becoming more vocal and open.

There was a degree of role conflict in that students occasionally made complaints against colleagues (their supervising tutors within the faculty) although they were discouraged from identifying them by name. Due to the nature of some of the information from students, reporting of the findings has had to be handled with some sensitivity. There is an ethical dilemma here in that, while sensitivities may be aroused in some staff, there do seem to be some issues which ought to be out in the open and discussed.

5.8 Reflection on the Methodology

This study was a large and, initially, relatively unfocused attempt to explore the student's experience of learning to be a teacher on school placement within the four years of the BEd degree at the University of Strathclyde. While the study was permitted by the Course Team and access to the students granted, I had little real control over where and when the questionnaires were issued and, as a result, some difficulty in obtaining sufficient returns. All requests for information had to be channelled through the School Experience Co-ordinator and confidentiality issues meant that obtaining details of students' names and addresses was problematic if not impossible. I had more control over the interview and evaluation elements of the study as, having established a rapport with the sub-sample of students, I communicated directly with them. This was certainly the most interesting and rewarding element of the whole research endeavour.

On reflection, the initial questionnaires were perhaps too unfocused. In undertaking a longitudinal study, there was the fear that some important piece of evidence should have been gathered at the start in order to make sense of later data. As a result, there was a concern to gather all that might possibly be relevant (within certain limits of time and resources) during Phase 1. In addition, the questionnaires were used to provide evaluation data for the Course Team and as a result the instruments asked for more information than was needed for the study alone, resulting in fairly lengthy forms. This may have reduced the response rates. Generally, the questionnaires could have been leaner and tighter in their focus.

The interviews were placed at the end of each year of the course. However, placements were not spaced regularly throughout each year and in Years 1-3, there was some difficulty in fitting in all of the interviews before the summer break. As a result, each

year a small number were picked up at the beginning of the next session. Some interviews went very smoothly but all had some difficulty in expressing their thoughts and views on teaching; partly because of what seemed like a lack of experience in discussing their own learning and partly because they were reluctant initially to speak on a one-to-one basis with a member of staff on such a personal topic. My own skills of interviewing improved significantly over the study although I found that, on occasion, I became really interested in the student's views to the point that it became more a discussion than an interview. I do not believe that this influenced the validity of the data, and it certainly helped to establish genuine interaction, but probably breached traditional expectations of interview procedures.

If it had been possible to return to the teachers and schools in the final year of the study, the data would have provided a comparison with attitudes in 1993-94. Unfortunately, at that time, teachers were under considerable pressure of workload generally and had been approached by others within the Faculty for feedback on issues relating to this and other courses. It was felt that a further set of questionnaires might just push their goodwill too far.

In summary, this was a fairly extensive study and not all of the data that emerged have been analysed and written up in this report. Through progressive focusing, the original broad sweep of data gathering gave way to a more strategic approach of investigating a number of critical themes in the initial education of primary teachers. While stating that it might have been more focused from the start, I do not believe that sufficient was known about what happened on placement to allow the study to begin somewhere else; exploring and trying to map out the context was necessary and, personally, very valuable.

The following chapters on the findings from the study begin by presenting the descriptive data from the first phase of the study while subsequent ones consider individual themes and topics.

CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRES (1993)

This chapter begins by presenting the sample data for the three groups of respondents other than the BEd students. The sample sizes, their characteristics and response rates are all detailed with the aim of establishing the extent to which the findings that follow can be considered reliable and a sound basis for subsequent discussion. It then presents the details for the student groups in a similar way; firstly for Phase 1 and then for Phase 2. The main findings from the questionnaires in Phase 1 are then presented by theme, drawing on sample data from the various respondents as appropriate. (Phase 2 findings are presented in subsequent chapters.)

- 6.1 Background: The Teachers, Remit-holders and TEI tutors
- 6.2 Background: The Students 1993-94
- 6.3 Background: The Students 1993-97
- 6.4 Phase 1: Preparing for Placement
- 6.5 Phase 1: Attitude to Placement
- 6.6 Phase 1: Sharing the Responsibility
- 6.7 Phase 1: Learning on Placement
- 6.8 Phase 1: Supporting the Student
- 6.9 Phase 1: Students' Views on Learning
- 6.10 Phase 1: Students' Views on the Role of the School
- 6.11 Discussion of Findings

6.1 Background : The Teachers, Remit-holders and TEI Tutors

In 1993-94, a total of 689 students were registered on the BEd course at Jordanhill: BEd 1 – 168; BEd 2 – 167; BEd 3 – 186; and BEd 4 – 168. Placements for students were found in 252 schools, with each school taking between 1 and 6 students depending on its size and the year of the course. (BEd 1 students tended to be allocated to schools in larger groups.) This section considers the three non-student groups of respondents who were involved in the 1993-94 questionnaires which provide the baseline data for the study. Each group is considered individually initially, followed by a presentation of findings by theme.

6.1.1 The Teachers (1993-94)

At the end of the 1993-94 academic year questionnaires were distributed to a sample of the schools that had been involved in supervising students in at least one of the four years of the BEd course during that period. One hundred and fifty schools and a total of 400 teachers (100 for each year of the course) were sent questionnaires (see Chapter

5 for discussion of how schools and teachers were identified). Three hundred and fourteen teachers completed and returned them (a return rate of 78%), with the distribution of respondents supervising students across the four years of the course very similar (Table 6.1). Four of the five divisions of Strathclyde Region were represented by the respondents (Table 6.2).

Table 6.1: Teachers responding to questionnaires (n = 314; 78%)

Year of course	No. of respondents in group	Response rate (%)	% of total no. of teachers (314)
Year 1	75	75	24
Year 2	80	80	26
Year 3	79	79	25
Year 4	80	80	26

Table 6.2: Distribution by the Divisions of Strathclyde (n = 310; 4 non-responses)

Division of Strathclyde	n	% of sample (314)
Argyll & Bute	0	0
Dumbarton	85	27
Glasgow	57	18
Lanark	86	27
Renfrew	82	26

In the BEd course during the time of the study the procedure was to place all BEd students in schools within the Strathclyde Region which comprised the divisions of Argyll & Bute, Dumbarton, Glasgow, Lanark and Renfrew, although the first of these was rarely used due to its distance from Jordanhill. (Very exceptionally a student might be granted permission to undertake practice outwith this area if, for example, her/his home was remote from Glasgow and s/he had compelling personal reasons for such a request.)

6.1.2 The Remit-holder in the Placement School

In each primary school, a senior member of staff is normally identified as having the responsibility within his or her remit for students on placement. Questionnaires were sent to 150 of the 252 schools involved in supervision during 1993-94 for completion by these individuals and 123 responded (82%). Table 6.3 shows the breakdown of senior posts held by 121 of the 123 who completed the questionnaires (2 failed to

respond to this specific question although they completed others).

Table 6.3: Posts held by respondents to Remit-holders' questionnaire

Position in school	n	% of respondents
Senior Teacher	29	24
Assistant or Depute Headteacher	30	24
Headteacher	62	50

As with the teachers, remit-holders were asked to indicate the Division of Strathclyde Region to which their school belonged (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Distribution of schools through the Strathclyde Region

Division	n	% of respondents
Argyll and Bute	1	1
Dumbarton	35	29
Glasgow	22	18
Lanark	30	24
Renfrew	33	27

Remit-holders were asked to indicate the BEd year groups with whom they had been involved during 1993-94. Questionnaires had been issued on the basis that they had had at least one year group on placement within their school during the year, although a considerable number would have had more than one group, at different times of the year. As a result the total number of responses regarding involvement with particular year groups is greater than the number of respondents.

Table 6.5: Remit holders' involvement with students in 1993-94

Year groups (1993-94)	no. involved	% (n = 123)
Year 1	33	27
Year 2	43	35
Year 3	44	36
Year 4	38	31

The percentages recorded in Table 6.5 are somewhat higher than those recorded in Table 6.1 which shows the involvement of classroom teachers with each of the year groups of the BEd course during 1993-94. In any one year however, a teacher is likely

to be involved with one student, while a remit-holder may be responsible for two, or more, different year groups.

6.1.3 The Tutors from the Teacher Education Institution

Questionnaires were issued to all 26 tutors involved in the supervision of students on placement in 1993-94 and 24 responded (92%). In order to determine the experience of supervising students on school experience across the four cohorts, BEd 1 to BEd 4, tutors were asked to indicate the year groups with which they had been involved during their time at Jordanhill.

Table 6.6: School experience tutors across the four year groups (n = 24)

Year group	n	% of respondents
B Ed 1	16	67
B Ed 2	16	67
B Ed 3	16	67
B Ed 4	12	50

The fourth year placement is regarded as of particular importance and, in order to improve reliability of assessment and consistency of supervision, a smaller cohort of tutors is usually involved in its supervision. This is reflected in the figures.

In summary, the numbers of teachers, remit-holders and tutors who responded are sufficient to provide a reliable picture of school experience on the BEd course from each of the three perspectives. This holds for both the course as a whole and for each of the years within it. It is also heartening that so many took the time to complete what were fairly lengthy questionnaire schedules.

6.2 Background: The Students 1993-94

The first few tables set out the response rates to the questionnaires in the first year of the study for all four year groups of students, with details of the characteristics of the placements which formed the focus of the questions in both the questionnaires and the interviews.

6.2.1 The Students and their Placement Schools

Questionnaires were issued to every student in each year of the course. Table 6.7 shows the number in each year group, the number of completed questionnaires returned and the percentage of the original number which this represents. All response rates

exceed 50% and lie within an acceptable range.

Table 6.7 : Response rates for Student Questionnaires (1993-94)

Year Group	No. in sample	No. of respondents	% of total sample
BEd 1	167	110	66
BEd 2	168	127	76
BEd 3	186	117	63
BEd 4	168	92	55
<i>Total</i>	<i>689</i>	<i>446</i>	<i>65</i>

Table 6.8: Placements for respondents across Divisions of Strathclyde Region (n = 446)

Division	BEd 1 (%)	BEd 2 (%)	BEd 3 (%)	BEd 4 (%)	Mean
Dumbarton	16	16	21	24	19
Glasgow	33	35	47	37	38
Lanark	35	28	15	17	24
Renfrew	13	17	14	17	15

Within Divisions, distributions of students were fairly similar from year group to year group, although the proportions of first and second year students in Lanark were greater than for those in third and fourth years. Differences across divisions reflect the different sizes of the school populations within each and the availability of schools.

Table 6.9 : Comparison of distribution across Divisions of Strathclyde Region (1993-94)

Division	Remit holders % (n = 123)	Teachers % (n = 314)	Students % (n = 446)
Argyll & Bute	1	0	0
Dumbarton	29	27	19
Glasgow	18	18	38
Lanark	24	27	24
Renfrew	27	26	15

Although students might be placed in different divisions, they were subject to common regional policies for both students and pupils. Across the four years of the course, students were likely to gain experience of more than one division. Towards the end of the study, in 1997, Strathclyde Region was sub-divided into 11 local authorities, breaking up the five main divisions, but the structural context for students on placement

remained similar across the divisions as the partnership arrangements between the TEI and the authorities remained virtually unchanged. It is considered that the variations in distributions across divisions for the three groups of respondents in Table 6.9 was unlikely to have had a significant influence on the ways in which supervision of students was undertaken or experienced.

6.2.2 The Students and their Placement Classes

For each questionnaire to students, the focus was on the final placement of the year as shown in Table 6.10. Reflecting the course policy for placement across the four years of the BEd course (Chapter 4), these placements should have been with the specific stages shown in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10 : BEd Course Policy for Placement at Stages in the Primary School (93-4)

Year Group	Focus Placement	Stage intended
BEd 1	Placement 3	P3 – P5
BEd 2	Placement 5	P1 – P3
BEd 3	Placement 7	Choice
BEd 2	Placement 8	Choice

Table 6.11 shows how students were actually placed for the placements investigated. The figures indicate that those students who responded had been allocated to stages in schools as intended, although significant proportions of some year groups were in composite classes.

Table 6.11: Placements by Stage in 1993-94 (% of respondents)

Stages in the Primary School	BEd 1 (n = 110)	BEd 2 (n = 127)	BEd 3 (n = 117)	BEd 4 (n = 92)
P1	0	32	12	16
P2	0	25	15	20
P3	3	17	11	11
P4	41	0	15	3
P5	28	0	11	8
P6	0	0	11	11
P7	0	0	6	10
Composite classes				
P1/2	0	9	3	4
P2/3	0	9	2	5
P3/4	4	3	0	0
P4/5	15	0	3	1
P5/6	9	0	3	2
P6/7	0	0	4	2
Totals	100	95	96	94

Overall, the response rates for the students are within acceptable limits and their responses can be regarded as reflecting the views of the majority of students within each year group, bearing in mind that it may have been the more motivated (perhaps with stronger views, either negative or positive) who completed and returned the forms. Similar proportions responded from each year group and within these, the students had experienced a range of the divisions within Strathclyde and of ages/stages within schools.

6.3 Background: The Students 1993-97

This section sets out the background data relating to the cohort of students that formed the focus of the longitudinal element of the study. These students were in BEd 1 in 1993-94 and the data from the tables in Section 6.2, where they were compared to the other cohorts in the Phase 1 study, is re-presented to show variations in the response rates and background variables across the four years of the study. Table 6.12 sets out, horizontally, the details for the longitudinal element of the study (shaded) and, vertically, the numbers of students in each cohort during the first year of the study (Phase 1).

Table 6.12 : Response rates for Student Questionnaires in both phases (1993-97)

Phase 1: 1993-94	Phase 2: Longitudinal cohort							
	1993-94 BEd 1		1994-95 BEd 2		1995-96 BEd 3		1996-97 BEd 4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
BEd 1	110	67%	-		-			-
BEd 2	127	79%	121	79%	-			-
BEd 3	117	62%	-		92	66%		-
BEd 4	92	54%	-		-		37	29%

Over the four years of the study, the total number of students in the longitudinal cohort decreased from 168 to 128 as a result of students failing or withdrawing from the course. Comparing the percentages of respondents in the target group across the years with those in Years 2 – 4 in the first year of the study, the figures are very similar if not identical except in the final year of the course. The data from these questionnaires (1996-97) are held to be the least representative and this has been taken into account in subsequent discussion.

6.4 Phase 1: Preparing for Placement

A number of activities and events involving the various 'partners' are built into preparing for the placement process with individual schools. These are not compulsory for schools nor teachers however and one part of the questionnaire focused on attendance at these and how important in ensuring a 'successful placement' teachers and remit-holders in schools perceived such preparation.

6.4.1 Preparation events and activities

Teachers and remit-holders were asked to indicate in which of the various preparation events they had participated and how important they felt each to be in ensuring a 'successful' placement.

Table 6.13: Attendance at and importance of pre-placement activities for teachers (n=314)

	Attending	very imp.		imp.		not imp.	
	n (%)	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>I attended meetings involving Jordanhill staff</i>	44 (14%)	80	26	60	19	46	15
<i>I attended meetings with school staff (only)</i>	70 (22%)	54	17	87	28	30	10
<i>I was involved in staff development activities re student supervision</i>	27 (9%)	47	15	80	26	27	9
<i>I was directly involved in negotiating the placement</i>	32 (10%)	50	16	64	20	49	16
<i>I met with the tutor from Jordanhill</i>	181 (58%)	183	58	67	21	10	3

The percentages of teachers involved in pre-placement events were small, ranging from 9% to 22% on four of the five listed. Fifty-eight percent of teachers met with the supervising tutor from the TEI before the student began the placement. This figure matches the percentage of teachers who viewed meeting the student's tutor as a very important aspect of preparing for the placement although a further 32% viewed it as 'important'. Less crucial but still important were the meetings with Jordanhill staff, usually held in the TEI (45%). A total of 36% thought it was important or very important to be involved in negotiating the placement.

Apart from 'meeting with the tutor', the percentages of teachers involved in the activities listed were low, never exceeding 25%; far more teachers considered these as important or very important activities. The gap between the teachers' views of the importance of pre-placement events and their actual involvement is of concern. One partial explanation may be that, as classroom teachers, there were almost certain to have full-time class commitments and release would have been difficult, if not impossible.

Furthermore, while teachers may have placed importance on these events, the day-to-day demands on them may have resulted in these being given a very low priority. It may be that many had been involved in earlier placements and, having done it once, now viewed participation as less essential.

The non-response rates to the first four items in this question were relatively high, ranging from 40% - 51%. Whether this reflects a lack of interest generally or a feeling that there is nothing to be gained from such involvement, is unclear.

Table 6.14: Attendance at & importance of pre-placement activities for remit-holders
(n=123)

	Attending n (%)	very imp.		imp.		not imp.	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>I attended meetings involving Jordanhill staff</i>	62 (67%)	49	40	46	37	8	7
<i>I attended meetings with school staff (only)</i>	48 (52%)	38	31	30	24	2	2
<i>I was involved in staff development activities re student supervision</i>	28 (30%)	23	19	31	25	8	7
<i>I was directly involved in negotiating the placement</i>	58 (63%)	51	42	33	27	7	6
<i>I met with the tutor from Jordanhill</i>	86 (93%)	86	70	26	21	2	2

While most viewed the various activities as 'important' or 'very important', fewer than 50% were involved in staff development activities related to the supervision of students, whether for their own benefit or for that of other teachers in the school who might be supervising students on placement. A greater percentage of remit holders than teachers viewed these as 'very important', possibly reflecting their role of liaison with the TEI and their more direct responsibility for students on placement.

6.4.2 Pre-placement information

A second strand of preparing teachers involves the provision of information of various kinds. Teachers and remit-holders were asked if they had received sufficient information on eight key aspects (Table 6.15).

Table 6.15: Views on the adequacy of the information received pre-placement (%)

Did you receive enough information on:	Teachers (n = 314)		Remit-holders (n = 123)	
	yes (%)	no (%)	yes (%)	no (%)
<i>The background of student being placed with you</i>	48	47	61	35
<i>The duration of placement</i>	97	1	98	2
<i>The pacing of student's teaching load on placement</i>	73	23	86	11
<i>How the student would be assessed on placement</i>	65	32	76	22
<i>The amount of assistance the teacher can offer</i>	37	57	63	33
<i>The kind of assistance the teacher can offer</i>	39	56	68	29
<i>The timing of tutor visits</i>	90	8	95	3
<i>The requirements for tutor visits</i>	61	35	77	20

The majority of teachers were satisfied with the information supplied on the duration of the placement (97%), the timing of the tutor visits (90%), the pacing of the students teaching load (73%), the requirements of the placement (61%) and the assessment procedures (65%). They were less satisfied with the background information on the student provided by the TEI (47% reporting it as insufficient) and with the amount and kind of assistance which could be given to the student (57% and 56% respectively). On all aspects, the majority of remit-holders reported receiving sufficient information prior to placement, expressing higher levels of satisfaction than did the teachers.

Remit holders are expected to support the students by providing them with information about the school which will help them to settle into the placement. They were asked specifically if they used prepared materials, a 'welcome pack' and/or induction meetings to introduce students to the school. Forty-nine percent of schools had developed a welcome pack which contained background information on the school, including the school handbook, and 64% held induction meetings for new students.

6.4.3 Information During Placement

During placement, TEI tutors are expected to keep supervising teachers informed of any relevant changes to the original arrangements including, for example, times for tutor visits and assessments. Eighty-five percent of teachers reported that they had received enough information during placement although 11% felt it was insufficient. The perceived omissions or shortcomings are unknown however as no-one indicated how this could be improved, despite being asked to do so.

Teachers and remit-holders were also asked about various meetings which might have

happened during the placement and which, it was considered, might help them in supporting the students. For supervising teachers, meeting and talking with other supervising tutors was more frequent and more important than other meetings with the TEI tutors or remit-holders (Table 6.16).

Table 6.16: Teachers' involvement in and views on meetings during placement (n = 314)

<i>During the placement</i>	n (%)	very imp (%)	imp. (%)	not imp. (%)
<i>I met with the tutor and the student together</i>	77 (25%)	31	23	9
<i>I met with the member of staff with responsibility for students in the school.</i>	100 (32%)	26	30	7
<i>I met with other members of staff who were also supervising students.</i>	184 (59%)	40	40	2

Remit-holders were asked similar questions, modified to reflect their role in the partnership between school and TEI. In particular, they were asked about events towards the end of the placement (Table 6.17). The majority of remit-holders viewed meetings with the students and meetings with the supervising teachers (independently) as very important.

Table 6.17: Remit-holders' views on involvement during and towards end of placement (n = 123)

<i>During the placement</i>	n (%)	very imp. (%)	imp. (%)	not imp. (%)
<i>I met with the students to discuss progress</i>	77 (84%)	64	21	2
<i>I met with the teachers who were supervising students</i>	89 (97%)	78	15	1

<i>After/towards end of the placement</i>	n (%)	very imp. (%)	imp. (%)	not imp. (%)
<i>I was involved in evaluations of the placements</i>	66 (72%)	39	35	1
<i>I gave feedback to the school on future placements</i>	34 (37%)	20	33	2
<i>I gave feedback to Jordanhill on future placements</i>	37 (40%)	24	33	2

There is a closer match between participation rates in and views of the importance of the activities listed. One explanation may be that, as these did not involve leaving the classroom and/or school, the teacher or the remit-holder was much better placed to undertake them, without having to depend on cover being supplied while s/he did so. Similarly, the time at which they could be undertaken was much more with the control of the teacher to determine.

6.4.4 Preparing the students for placement

Students in all four year groups were asked if they had received enough information prior to the start of placement. The specific aspects asked about were identical to those asked of the teachers and the remit-holders in the placement schools. Table 6.18 presents the percentages of students in each year group who responded that they had received enough of each of the forms of information listed.

Table 6.18: Percentages of each year group who responded 'yes' (%).

Did you receive enough information on:	BEd 1 (n = 110)	BEd 2 (n = 127)	BEd 3 (n = 117)	BEd 4 (n = 92)
<i>The school in which you were to be placed</i>	87	n/a	85	85
<i>The duration of the placement</i>	100	98	100	100
<i>The pacing of your teaching load on placement</i>	76	84	80	70
<i>How you were to be assessed on placement</i>	91	89	75	84
<i>The amount of assistance the teacher could offer</i>	66	41	51	60
<i>The kind of assistance the teacher could offer</i>	69	35	51	62
<i>The timing of tutor visits</i>	95	91	92	94
<i>The requirements for visits</i>	88	80	68	80

Students were asked to indicate if any other form of information might have been useful. Although ten BEd 1 students responded, generating 11 suggestions, there was no pattern discernible other than 4 of them were requests for more pre-placement in-faculty instruction.

BEd 2 students had been placed in the same school for both school experience placements during the session and as the questionnaire focused on the second of these, the first question (information on the placement school) did not apply (n/a). Forty-one of them made additional comments although many were not strictly related to basic information and almost all of the suggestions were made by single students. However, eleven requested more preparation for infant teaching and four would have liked to be more aware of the teacher's expectations of them.

Fifteen BEd 3 students asked for clarification of the arrangements for their own assessment, focusing on how grades were allocated; four of these specifically referred to the cross-tutor visit and how it contributed to the assessment procedures. Nine students requested more information on specific aspects of the requirements e.g. number of groups to be managed, assessment of pupils. The remainder of the

comments (5) indicated some students felt generally unprepared and just wanted 'more'.

In BEd 4, 15 students gave additional comments with some making more than one. Five of the students asked for more precision in how the amount of time to be spent on different aspects of the placement, with specific mention of preparation time, the proportion of time where they should take sole responsibility for the class, and time spent team teaching. Two requested more on 'pacing' and the amount and forms of support they could expect from the teacher; both had ticked 'no' for the three corresponding statements in the table. Five BEd 4 students were concerned that they were not sure exactly what the TEI tutor was looking for and would have liked to have had a better opportunity to establish this. Reference was made to finding out tutors' personal likes and dislikes both in teaching and in their interactions with students e.g. *'tutor's personal view of assessment e.g. no negotiation, don't ask questions'*.

6.4.5 Main findings

- The majority of teachers and remit holders considered pre-placement meetings, etc., important but substantial numbers were not involved directly in these; more so for teachers than remit holders.
- Almost half of the teachers considered they had inadequate information on the background of the student before placement began.
- The majority of the teachers felt inadequately prepared with regard to the amount and kind of assistance they could offer students during placement.
- Approximately one third of teachers were unsure of what was required of them and the student in connection with visits from the TEI tutor.
- Only one third of remit holders provided feedback to the TEI which might inform future planning of placements.
- Between 31% - 65% of students were unsure of the kind and amount of assistance the teacher could offer, with Year 2 students least confident.

6.5 Phase 1: Attitude to Placement

Given that the supervision of students on placement is non-contractual and depends on the goodwill of the schools and teachers to undertake such duties, one of the questions for supervising teachers asked for their views on having students in their classrooms (Table 6.19). The majority of teachers (90%) always or sometimes looked forward to having a student placed with them, with almost all (98%) enjoying working alongside student teachers.

Table 6.19: Views of teachers on having students on placement in their classes

(n = 314)

Attitude to having students	always		sometimes		never	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>I look forward to having students on placement</i>	118	38	165	53	17	5
<i>I feel apprehensive about having students on placement in my class</i>	17	5	162	52	118	38
<i>I enjoy working with a student</i>	152	48	156	50	0	0
<i>Having a student keeps me on my toes</i>	130	41	137	44	23	7
<i>I see having a student as part of my role as teacher</i>	211	67	81	26	12	4
<i>I learn a lot when I have a student</i>	55	17	222	71	21	7

Most teachers (93%) accepted this as an element of their professional role, wherein they also learned from the experience (18% - always; 71% - sometimes). Some teachers admitted to being apprehensive of this role sometimes (52%) or always (5%), and a good proportion thought that having a student kept them 'on their toes', always (41%) or some of the time (44%). While the majority were fairly positive about supervising students on placement, a small percentage reported that they never looked forward to having a student (5%), did not see it as part of the professional role (4%) and/or never learned much from the experience (7%).

A similar set of questions was put to the students in the four years of the course during 1993-94. The findings are set out in Table 6.20. Students, like teachers, were asked to rate their views on a 3 point scale using 'often', 'sometimes' and 'never'; only the 'often' and 'sometimes' responses have been included in the table as 'never' responses did not exceed 13% on any aspect.

Table 6.20: Students' views on going on placement (n = 446)

Going on Placement	BEd 1 (n = 110)		BEd 2 (n = 127)		BEd 3 (n = 117)		BEd 4 (n = 92)	
	often	some times	often	some times	often	some times	often	some times
<i>I look forward to placement</i>	81	18	65	27	49	42	50	38
<i>I feel apprehensive</i>	17	69	21	65	33	61	30	54
<i>I enjoy placement</i>	88	11	74	24	66	33	58	38
<i>I would like to work with students</i>	64	33	58	39	64	35	50	45
<i>Supervision is part of teacher's role</i>	45	54	40	51	60	37	62	34
<i>The teacher appeared to enjoy the placement</i>	77	19	73	21	70	18	65	24

Overall, the majority of students reported that they enjoyed placement, at least some of the time, looked forward to it and thought that the teacher seemed to enjoy having a student in her/his class. Some were apprehensive prior to the placement particularly in Years 3 and 4, where students were less enthusiastic generally and less sure that the teacher enjoyed their presence.

In summary, both teachers and student enjoyed the placement experience and saw it as an integral part of the teacher's role. For students, the enthusiasm for school experience tended to diminish somewhat over time.

6.6 Phase 1: Sharing the Responsibility

The responsibility for ensuring that students acquire a satisfactory level of competence in the requisite knowledge and skills and that they acquire a professional attitude to teaching lies with both the TEI and the placement school (and the authority). Exactly who does what is not set out explicitly in the arrangements for school experience and so an attempt was made in this study to determine where each of the partners (teachers, school management/remit holders and faculty tutors) viewed responsibility for specific aspects of development to lie within the existing partnership. Each group was given the same list of aspects of development and asked to indicate whether responsibility lay with the TEI, the school or somewhere in between. Their responses are considered in turn.

6.6.1 The Views of the Teachers

Table 6.21 shows the percentages of responses for each of the five categories: *all with the TEI; mainly TEI; evenly shared; mainly school; and all with the school.*

Figure 6.1: Teachers' views on where responsibility lies for the development of Classroom skills (n = 314)

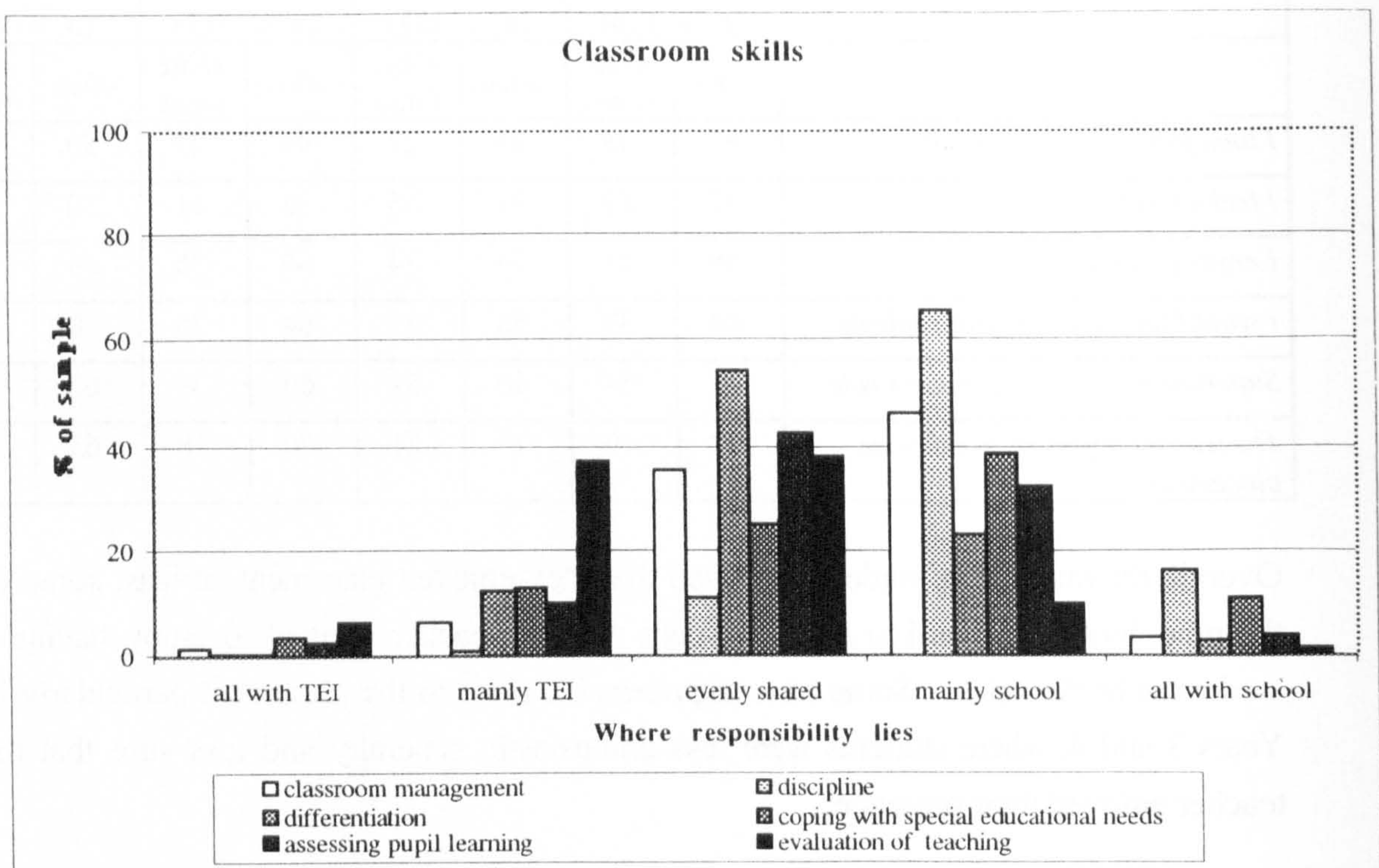
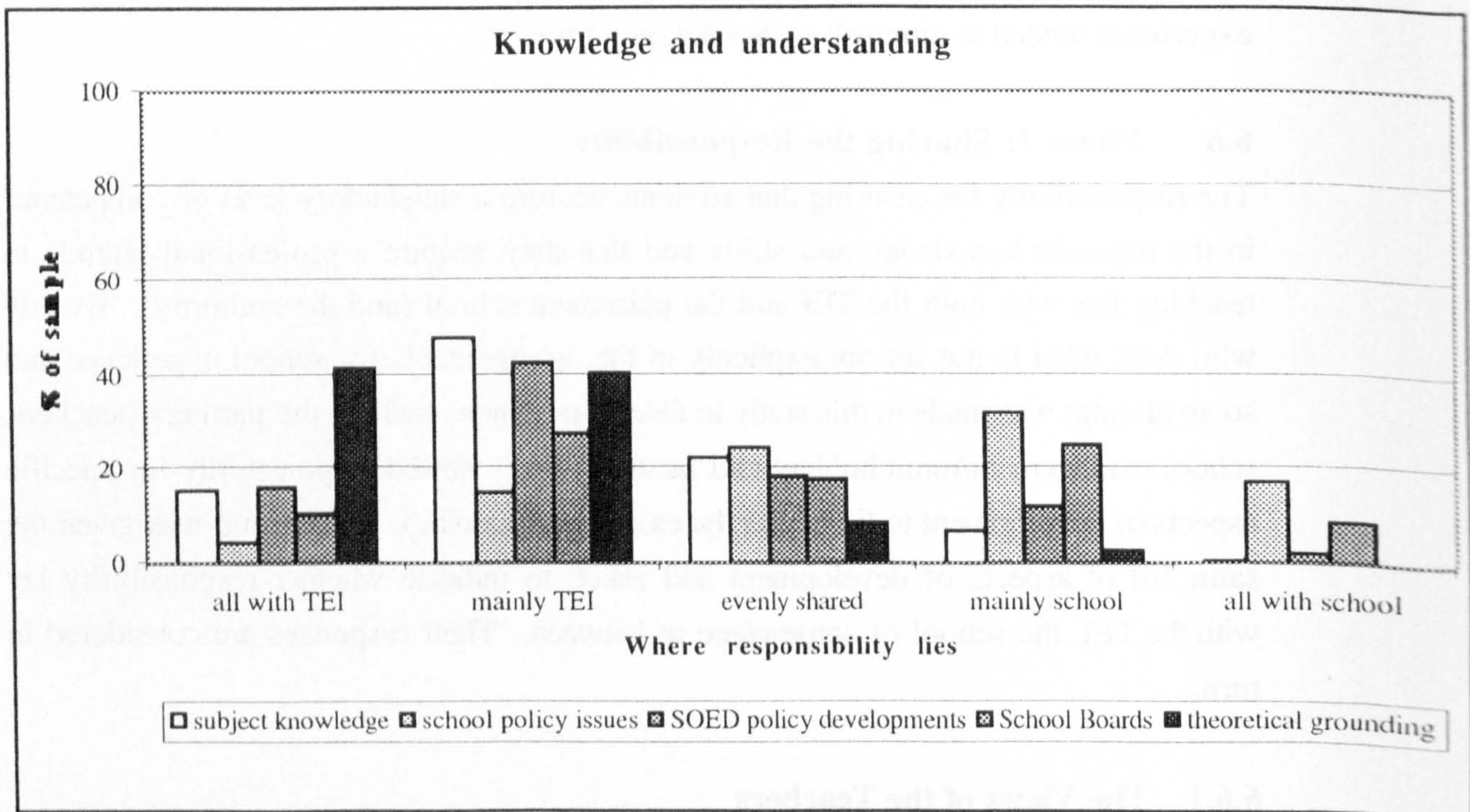


Figure 6.2: Teachers' views on the responsibility for the development of Knowledge and understanding (n = 314)



A small percentage of respondents did not complete some of the individual aspects listed although total responses exceeded 90% in each instance. Figures 6.1 - 6.3 (facing pages) show these findings in barchart format, grouped in categories of *Classroom skills, Knowledge and understanding* and *Personal Development*.

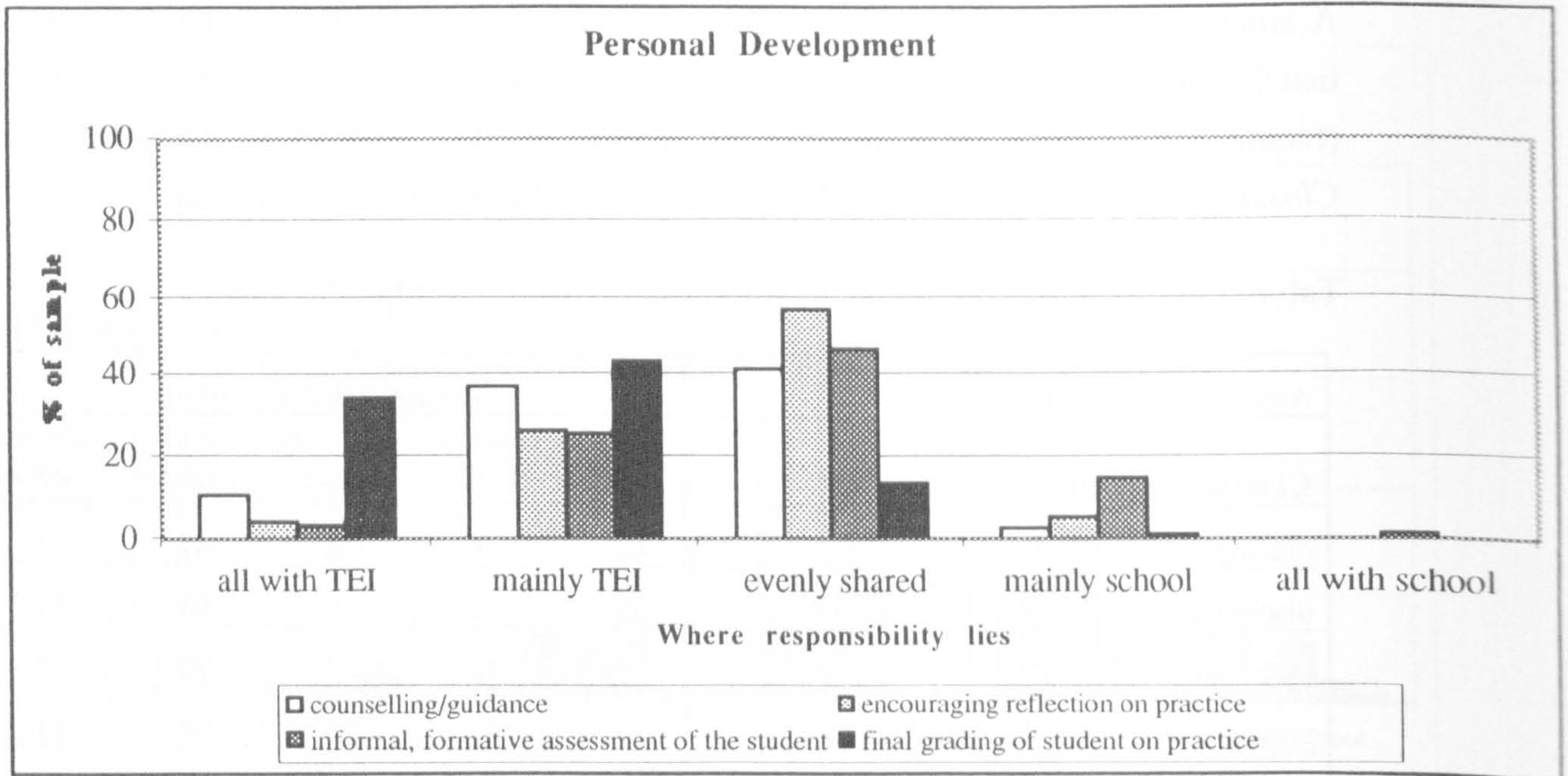
Table 6.21 : Teachers' views on the responsibility for supporting the student
(% : n = 314)

Aspect of development	Responsibility lies:				
	all with TEI	mainly TEI	evenly shared	mainly school	all with school
<u>Classroom skills</u>					
classroom management	1	6	36	47	4
discipline	0	1	11	66	17
differentiation	0	12	54	23	3
coping with special educational needs	4	13	25	39	11
assessing pupil learning	3	10	43	33	4
evaluation of teaching	7	37	39	10	2
<u>Knowledge and understanding</u>					
subject knowledge	15	48	22	7	0
school policy issues e.g. multi-cultural education, primary/secondary liaison	5	15	24	32	17
SOED policy developments	16	42	18	12	2
School Boards	10	27	18	25	9
theoretical grounding for learning and teaching e.g. child development, research	41	40	8	3	0
<u>Personal Development</u>					
counselling/guidance	11	38	42	3	0
encouraging reflection on practice	5	26	57	6	0
informal, formative assessment of the student	4	26	47	15	2
final grading of student on practice	34	44	14	1	0

Classrooms skills (Figure 6.1)

In general, the teachers held that the skills listed under this heading were either a shared responsibility or more the province of the school. In particular, discipline and classroom management were skewed towards the school while the student's evaluation of her/his own teaching was viewed as more the responsibility of the TEI than the school.

Figure 6.3 : Teachers' views on the responsibility for Personal Development (n = 314)



Knowledge and Understanding (Figure 6.2)

The pattern of responses within this category of development lies more towards the TEI than the school. Very little responsibility for the student's development lay with the school in the areas of theoretical grounding, policy development and subject knowledge.

Personal Development (Figure 6.3)

In the category of Personal Development, responsibility was viewed as shared by just under half of the respondents, with the majority of the remainder tending to allocate it to the TEI. The final grading of the student on placement was seen as very much the role of the TEI while informal, formative assessment of her or his progress was one area where the school appears to have greater responsibility.

A follow-up question asked teachers if they thought that the teacher/school should have greater responsibility for any aspects of development (the ones listed and any others) and, if so, to identify what these might be. Sixty-three percent saw no need for greater responsibility in the student's development although 12% did think that schools should have a greater role.

6.6.2 The Remit-holders/Management

Table 6.21 shows the percentages of respondents within this group who allocated each aspect of development to one of the five categories: *all with TEI*; *mainly TEI*; *evenly shared*; *mainly school*; and, *all with school*. (In general, the member of staff with responsibility for students on placement tended to be a member of the management team within the school.) The patterns of responses for each of the categories are presented in Figures 6.4–6 (facing pages).

Figure 6.4: Remit holders' views of responsibility for the development of Classroom skills (n = 123)

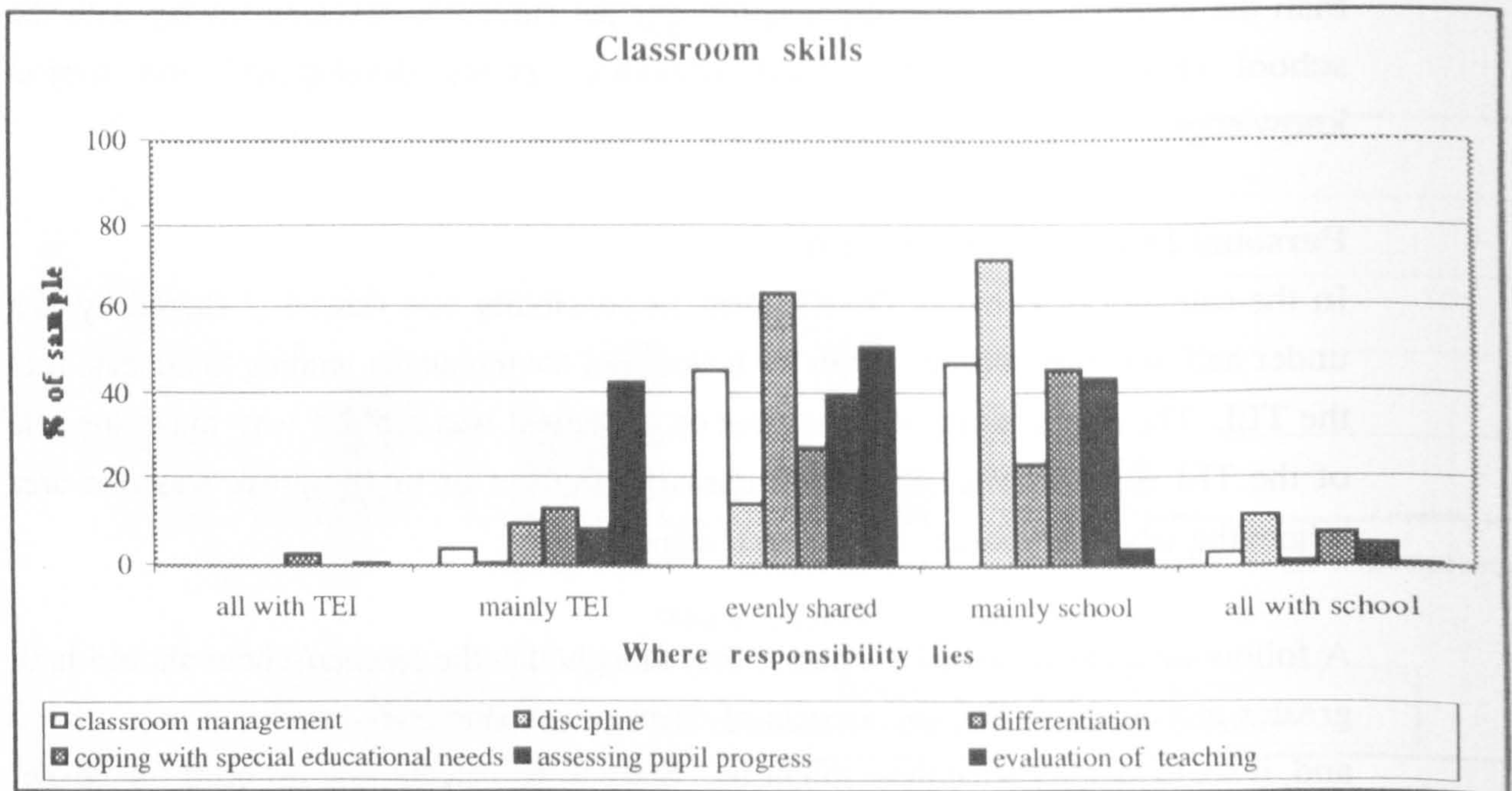


Figure 6.5: Remit holders' views for the development of Knowledge & Understanding (n = 123)

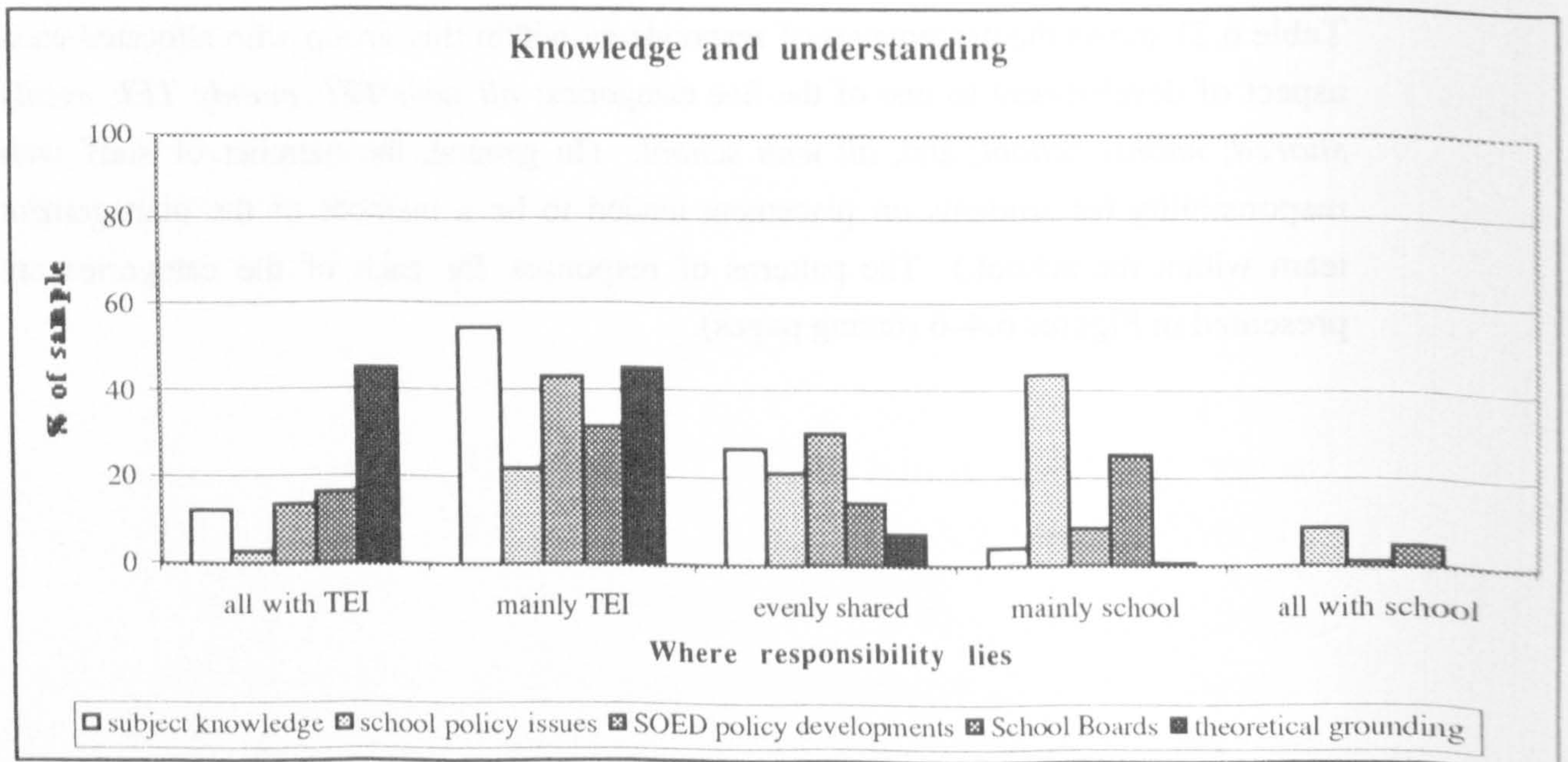


Table 6.22: Remit-holders' views on the responsibility for supporting the student
(%: n = 123)

Aspect of development	Responsibility lies:				
	all with TEI	mainly TEI	evenly shared	mainly school	all with school
Classroom skills					
classroom management	0	4	46	46	3
discipline	0	1	15	72	12
differentiation	0	10	63	24	2
coping with special educational needs	2	14	28	46	8
assessing pupil learning	0	9	40	43	6
evaluation of teaching	1	42	50	4	1
Knowledge and understanding					
subject knowledge	12	55	27	4	0
school policy issues e.g. multi-cultural education, primary/secondary liaison	2	22	21	44	9
SOED policy developments	14	43	30	9	2
School Boards	16	32	15	25	5
theoretical grounding for learning and teaching e.g. child development, research	46	46	7	1	0
Personal Development					
counselling/guidance	3	40	52	3	0
encouraging reflection on practice	2	34	56	7	0
informal, formative assessment of the student	2	22	60	14	2
final grading of student on practice	24	55	20	1	0

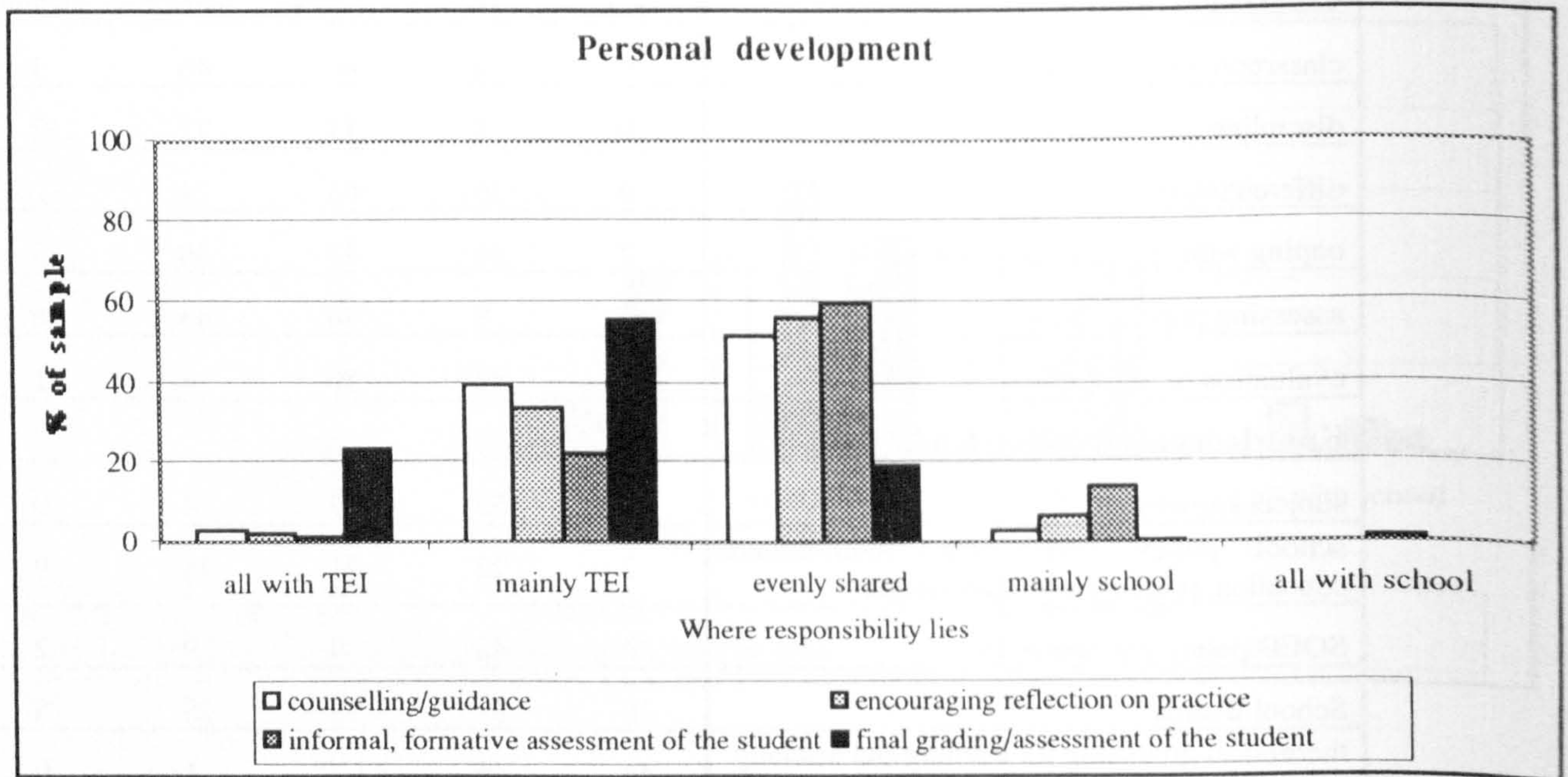
Classroom skills (Figure 6.4)

Those holding the remit for students on placement within the school viewed the responsibility for supporting the student's development as either a 'shared' or a 'mainly school' one. As with the teachers, the evaluation of teaching stands out as being more properly the responsibility of the TEI, where it is not evenly shared.

Knowledge and understanding (Figure 6.5)

For Knowledge and understanding, the responses were skewed towards the TEI, with school policy issues and School Boards as the only areas where significant numbers saw a strong role for the school. An important responsibility for the TEI was the provision of a theoretical grounding in learning and teaching.

Figure 6.6: Remit holders' views on responsibility for Personal Development of the student (n = 123)



Personal Development (Figure 6.6)

The personal development of the student, in terms of becoming a teacher, was viewed as a shared responsibility primarily, with the TEI assuming the greater burden overall. Again, while schools saw a role for themselves in the informal, formative assessment of the student, final grading for placement was viewed as a responsibility of the TEI, in the main. Asked whether schools should have a greater role in the support of student's learning, 11% of the remit-holders who responded did want more responsibility while 51% did not (the remainder did not respond).

6.6.3 The Views of the TEI Tutors

The same question was included in the questionnaires to the tutors from the TEI. Table 6.23 shows the distribution of responses across the categories of responsibility. The patterns of responses across the categories for each aspect are more readily seen in Figures 6.7 – 6.10 (facing).

Table 6.23: TEI Tutors' views on the responsibility for supporting the student

(n = 24)

Aspect of development	Responsibility lies:				
	all with TEI	mainly TEI	evenly shared	mainly school	all with school
Classroom skills					
classroom management	0	33	52	14	0
discipline	0	14	52	33	0
differentiation	5	52	38	5	0
coping with special educational needs	5	24	33	38	0
assessing pupil learning	10	38	33	14	0
evaluation of teaching	10	86	5	0	0
Knowledge and understanding					
subject knowledge	24	67	0	5	0
school policy issues e.g. multi-cultural education, primary/secondary liaison	0	19	24	48	10
SOED policy developments	10	57	19	10	5
School Boards	5	29	10	38	14
theoretical grounding for learning and teaching e.g. child development, research	76	19	5	0	0
Personal development					
counselling/guidance	10	52	33	5	0
encouraging reflection on practice	10	76	14	0	0
informal, formative assessment of the student	0	29	57	14	0
final grading of student on practice	24	67	10	0	0

Figure 6.7: Tutors' views on the responsibility for the development of Classroom skills (n = 24)

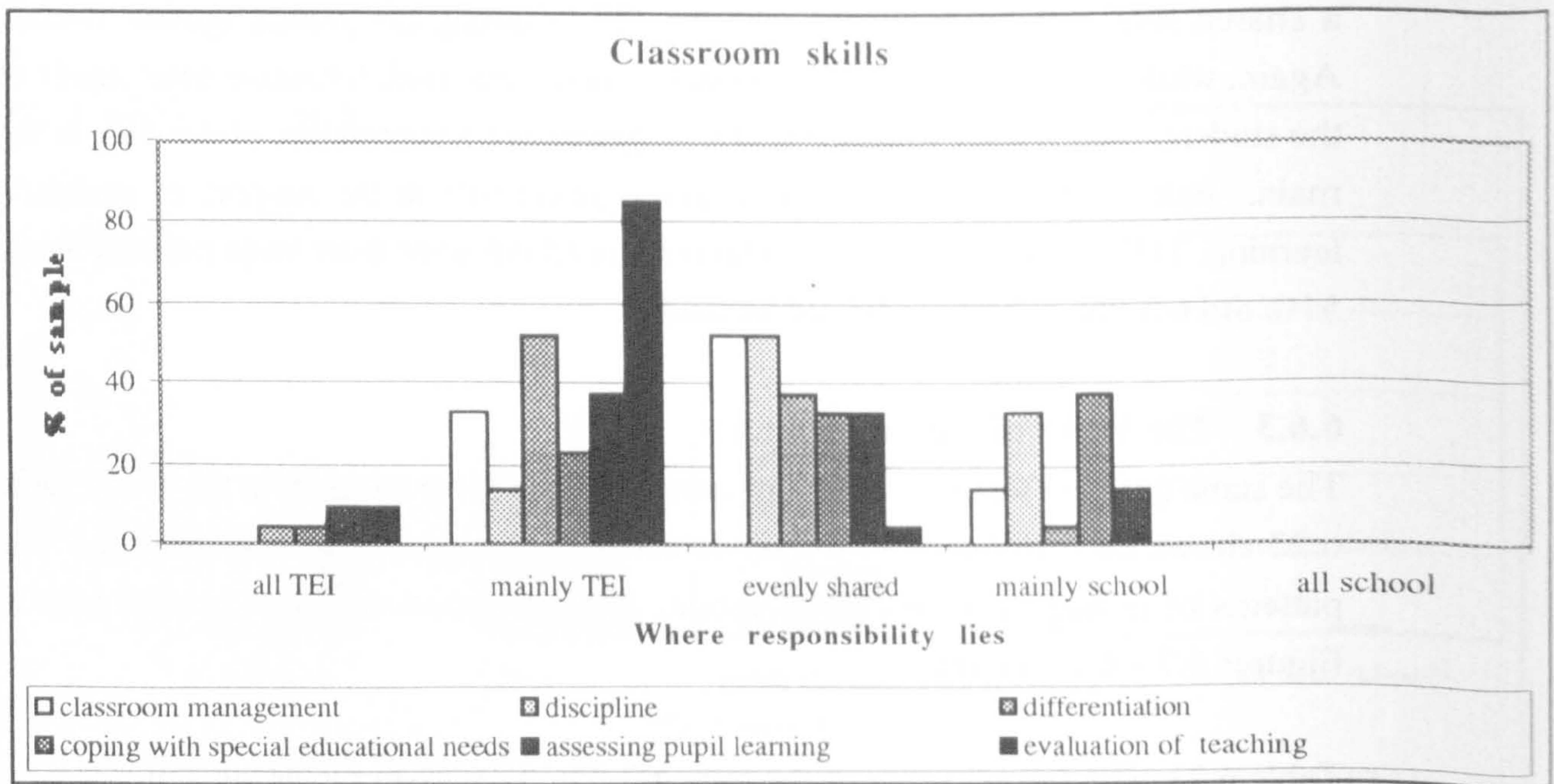
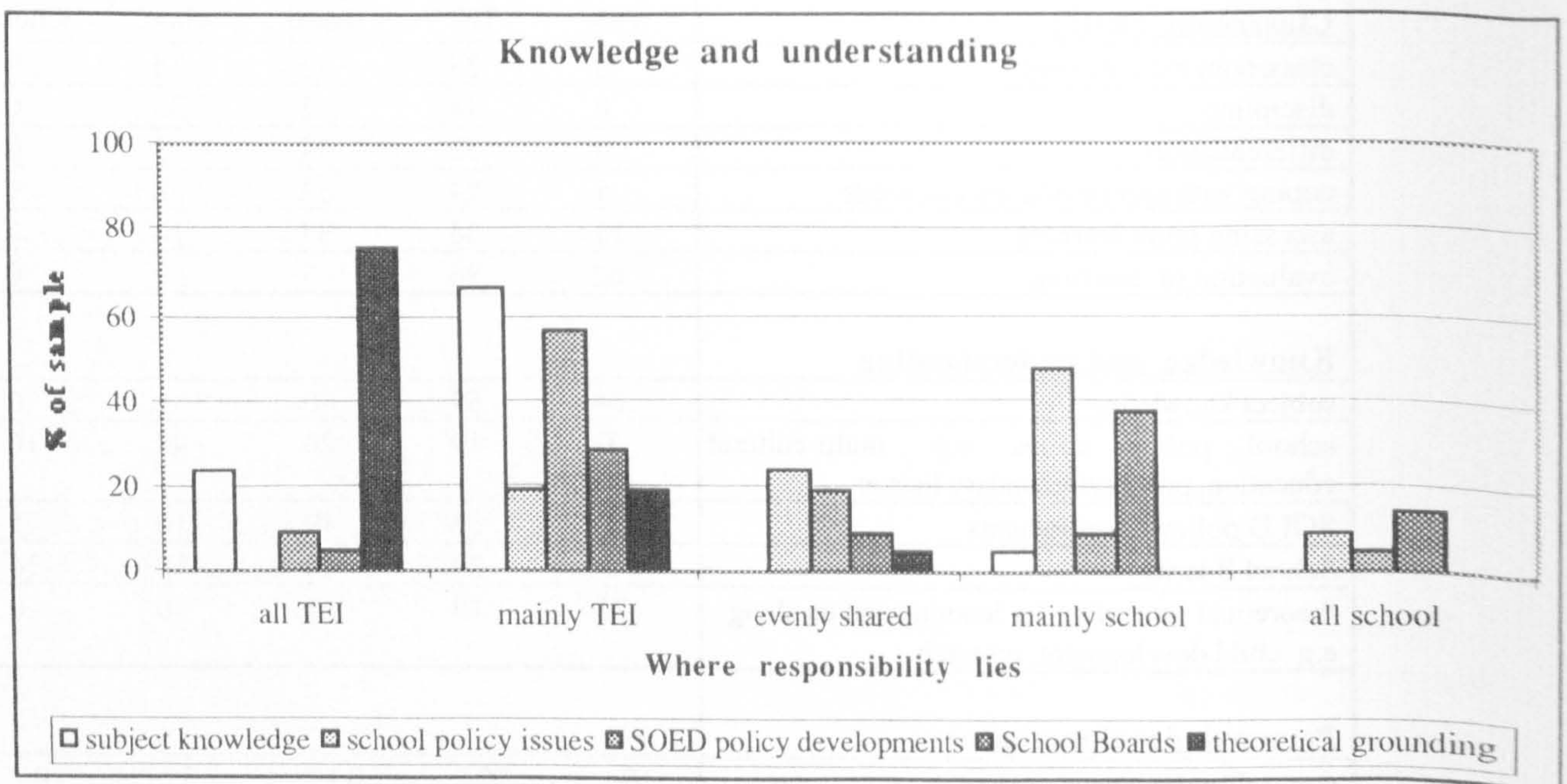


Figure 6.8: Tutors' views on where responsibility for Knowledge & Understanding lies (n = 24)



Classroom skills (Figure 6.7)

The most obvious feature is the absence of any responses at all in the 'all school' category for any of the aspects of development within the category of Classroom skills. Tutors did not view schools as having sole responsibility for any aspect of the student's learning. Evaluation of teaching was very strongly considered the province of the TEI as was, albeit to a lesser extent, learning how to cope with special educational needs. Schools had the main responsibility, where it was not viewed as evenly shared, for discipline and differentiation. A considerable degree of shared responsibility was acknowledged.

Knowledge and understanding (Figure 6.8)

Much of the development in this category, other than school policy issues and School Boards, was viewed as the responsibility of the TEI. The theoretical grounding for learning and teaching was seen as very much the province of the institution with a very small, shared role for the school.

Personal development (Figure 6.9)

Tutors viewed the majority of the aspects within this category as more the responsibility of the TEI, although it was acknowledged that the school had some responsibility for the informal, formative assessment of the student, albeit in partnership with the TEI.

6.6.4 Comparison of the views of teachers, remit-holders and tutors

In order to compare the emphases given by each of the three sets of respondents to these questions, the 'all' and 'mainly' categories were collapsed and composite charts compiled. Each category of learning (classroom skills, knowledge and understanding and personal development) is considered separately.

Figure 6.9: Tutors' views on responsibility for the Personal development of the student (n = 24)

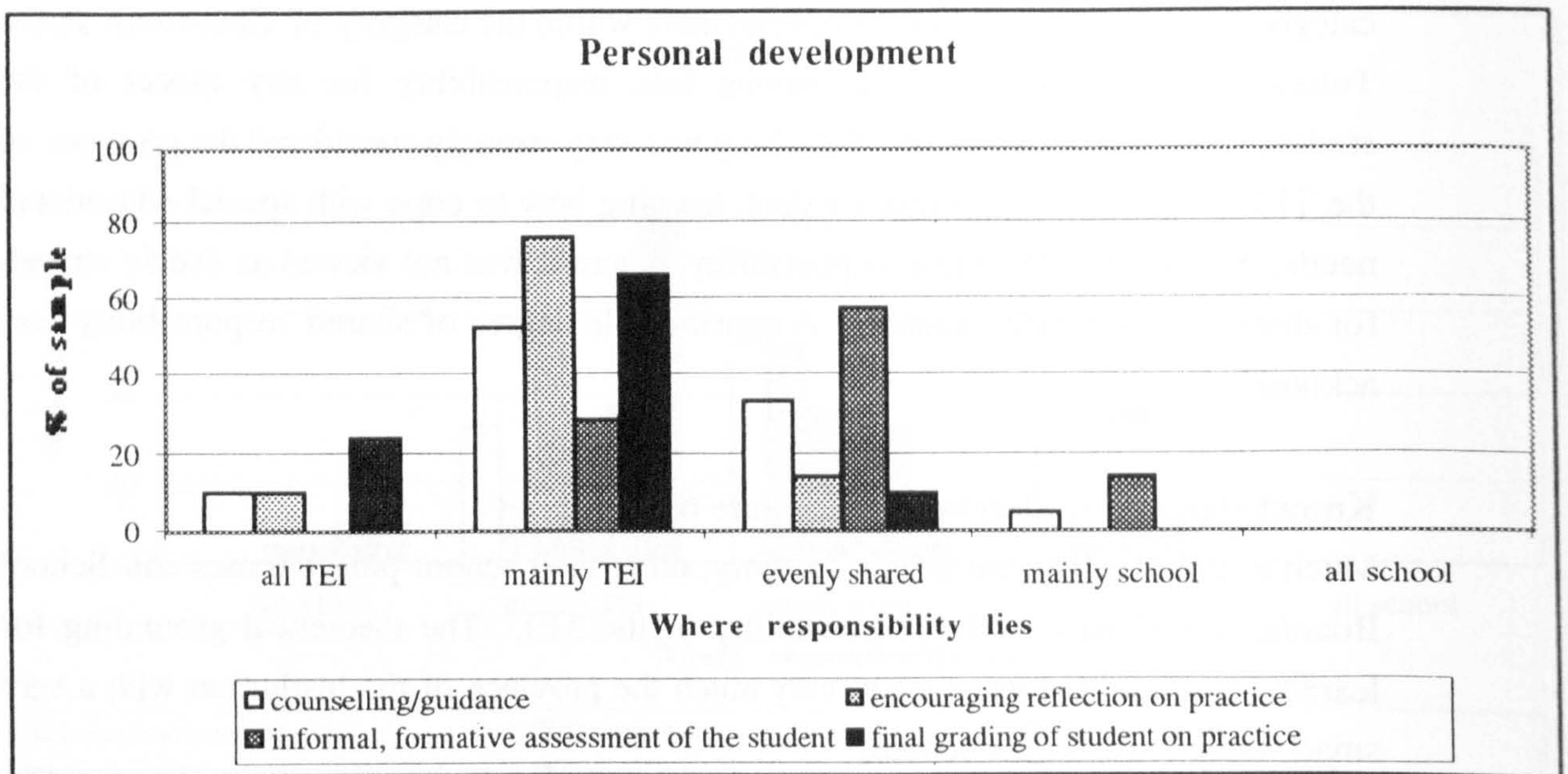
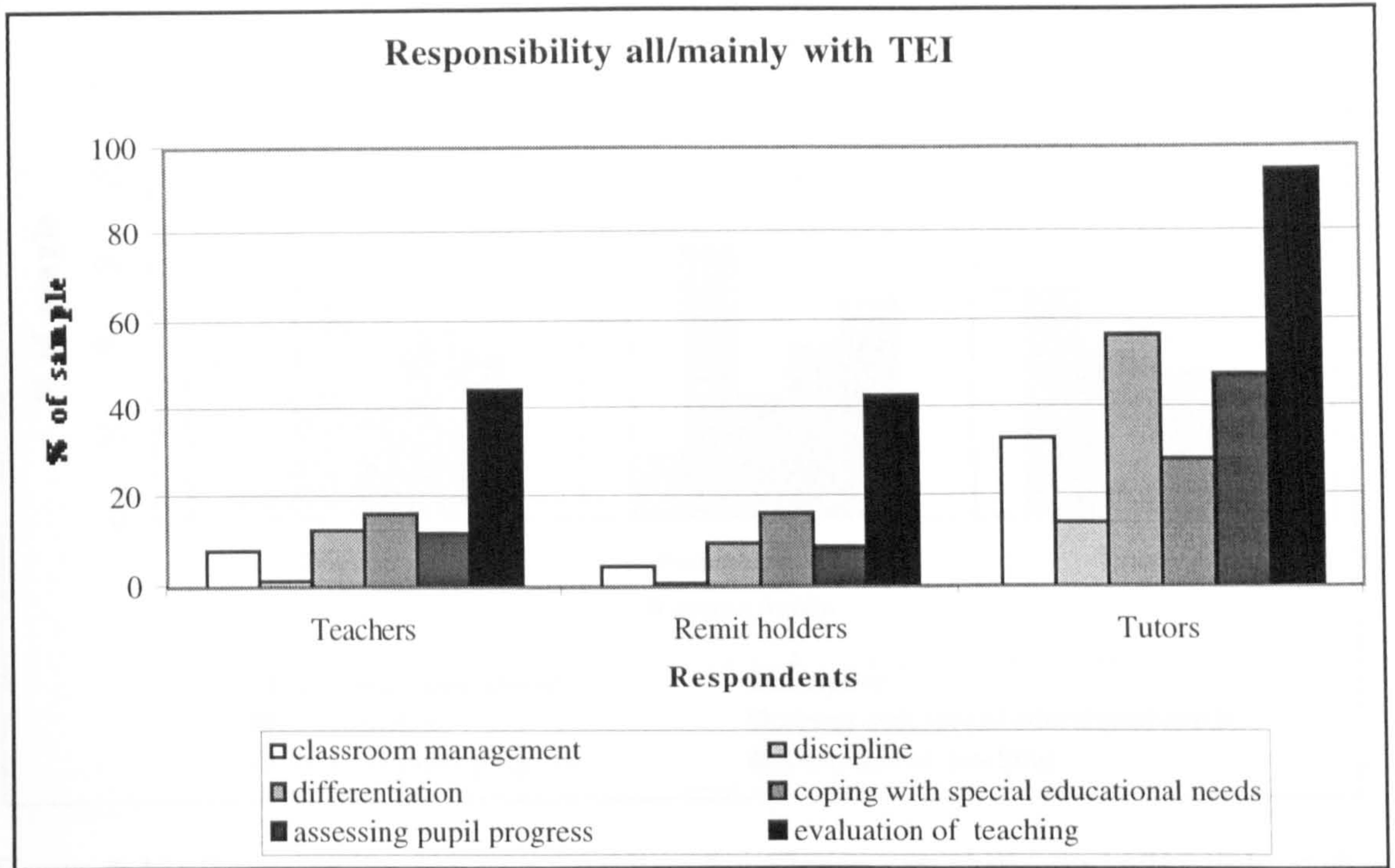


Figure 6.10: %ages indicating responsibility for Classroom skills lies all/mainly with TEI



While the three sets of respondents give the TEI some role in all aspects listed, the tutors were more inclined to see the responsibility lying with the faculty. The figures for the teachers and the remit-holders were fairly similar, with over 40% of each group indicating that the ‘evaluation of teaching’ in particular is a TEI responsibility. Tutors were almost unanimous in their agreement on this aspect of development. Patterns for those aspects that should be evenly shared (Fig. 6.11) varied somewhat, with similar proportions of each group indicating shared responsibility, but with little real agreement as to the area in which this should be.

Figure 6.11: %ages indicating responsibility for Classroom skills is evenly shared

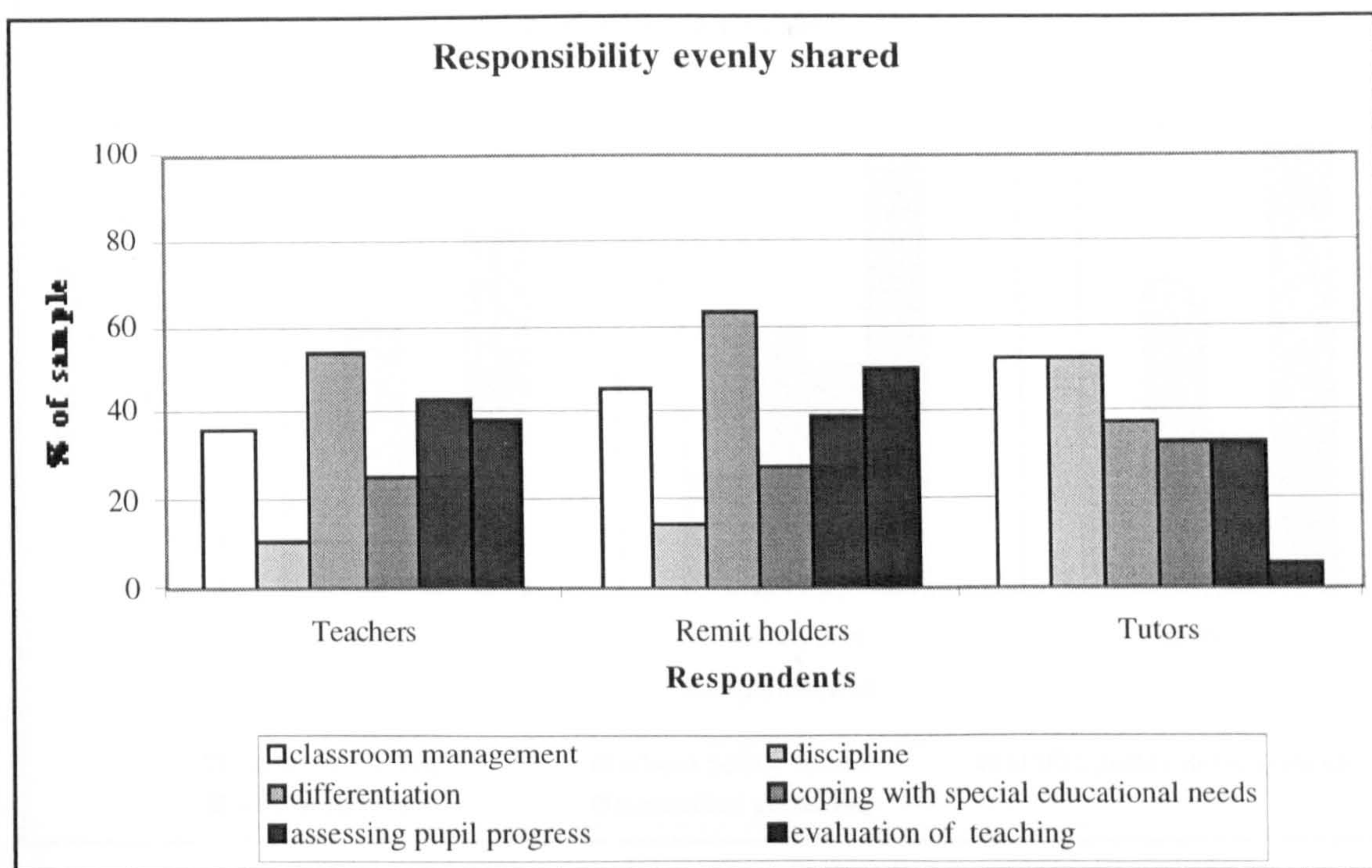
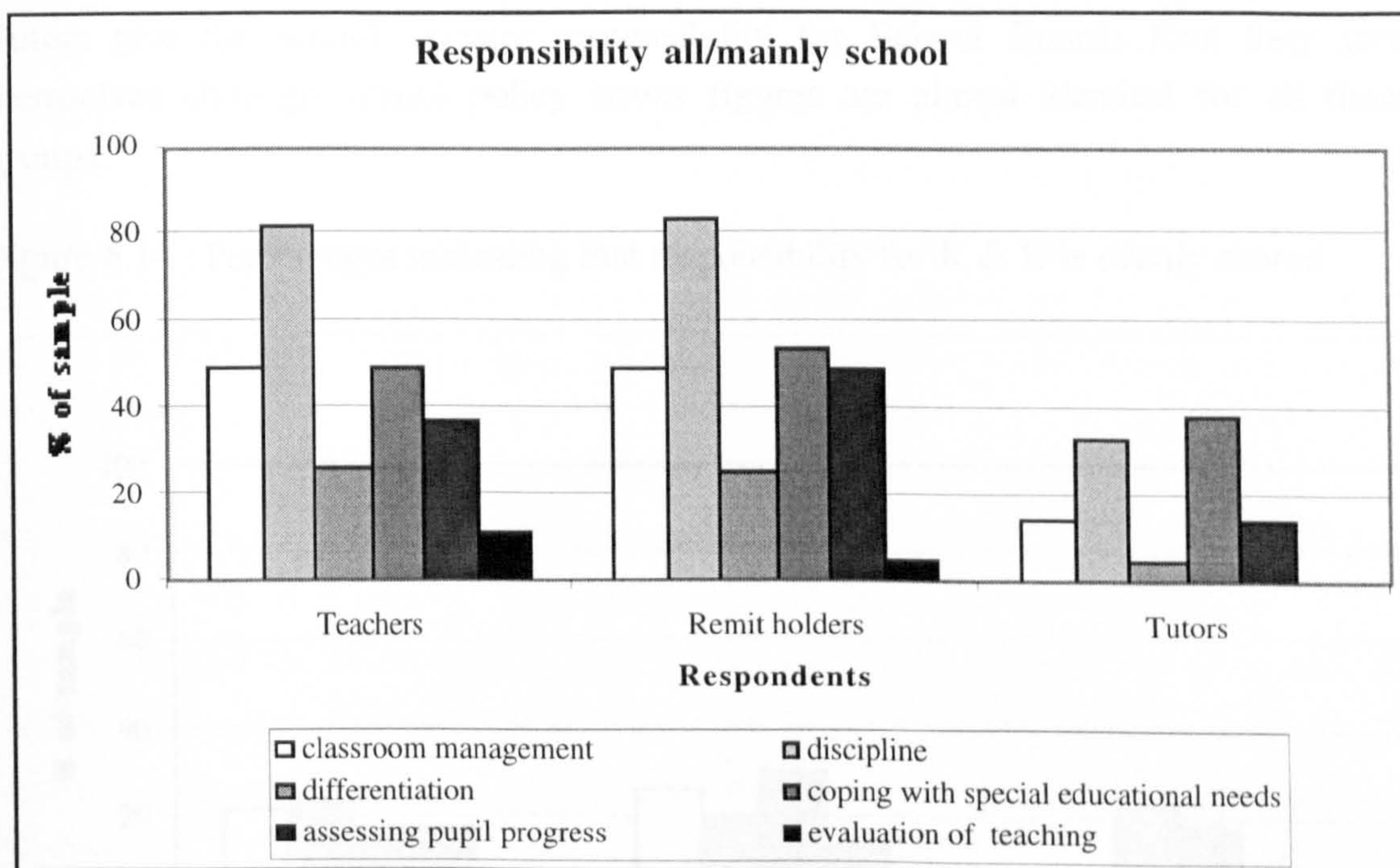
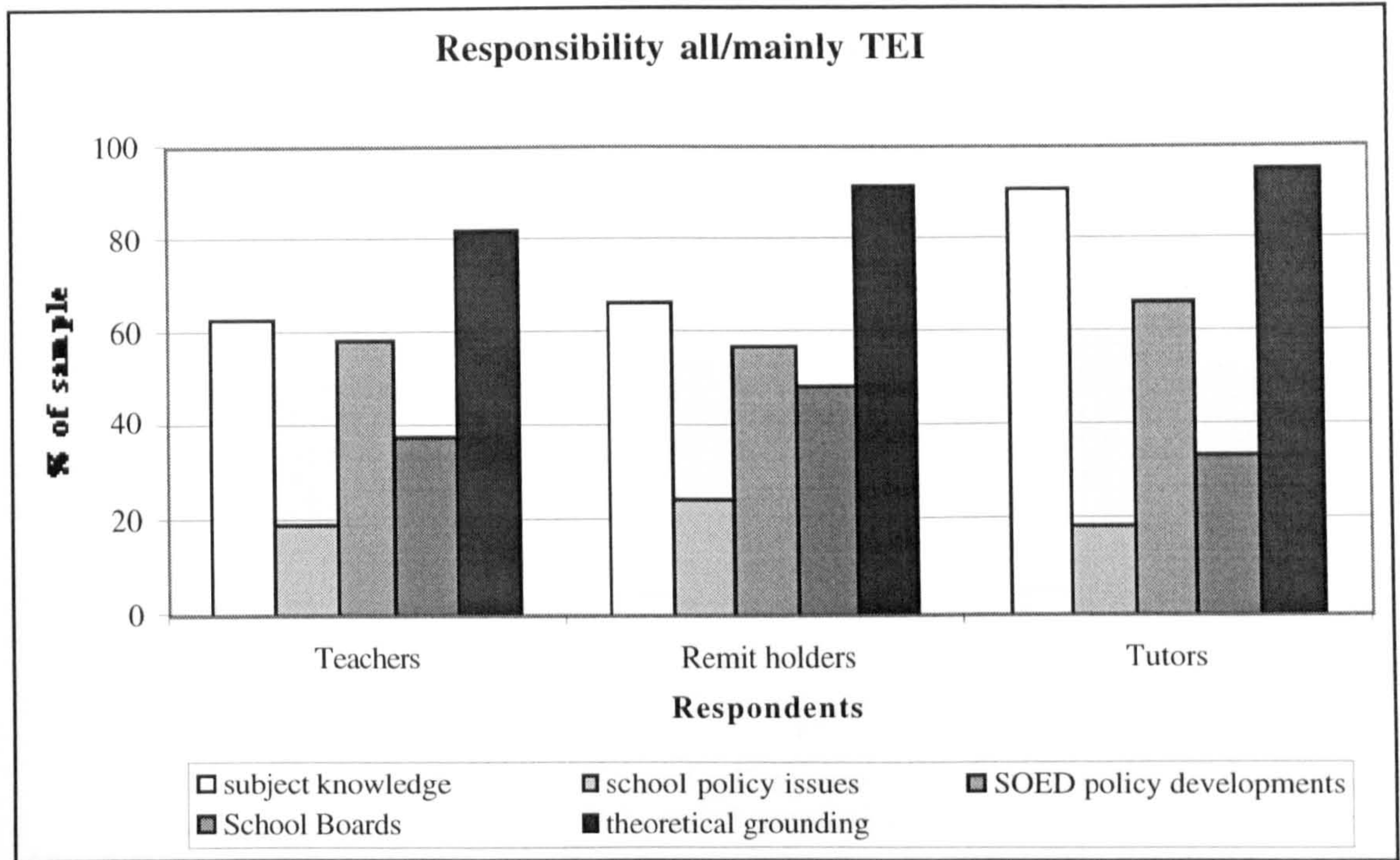


Figure 6.12: %ages indicating responsibility for Classroom skills lies all/mainly with school



Tutors gave less responsibility to the schools for all aspects listed, mirroring their views that much of this is a responsibility of the TEI.

Figure 6.13 : %ages indicating that responsibility for K & U lies all/mainly with TEI



The patterns of response for this set of aspects of development are more similar than for Classroom skills, with the TEI given particular responsibility for subject knowledge, Scottish Office policy issues, and the theoretical grounding for learning and teaching. Tutors give the schools greater responsibility for School Boards than they give themselves although school policy issues figures are almost identical for all three groups.

Figure 6.14 : Percentages indicating that responsibility for K & U is evenly shared

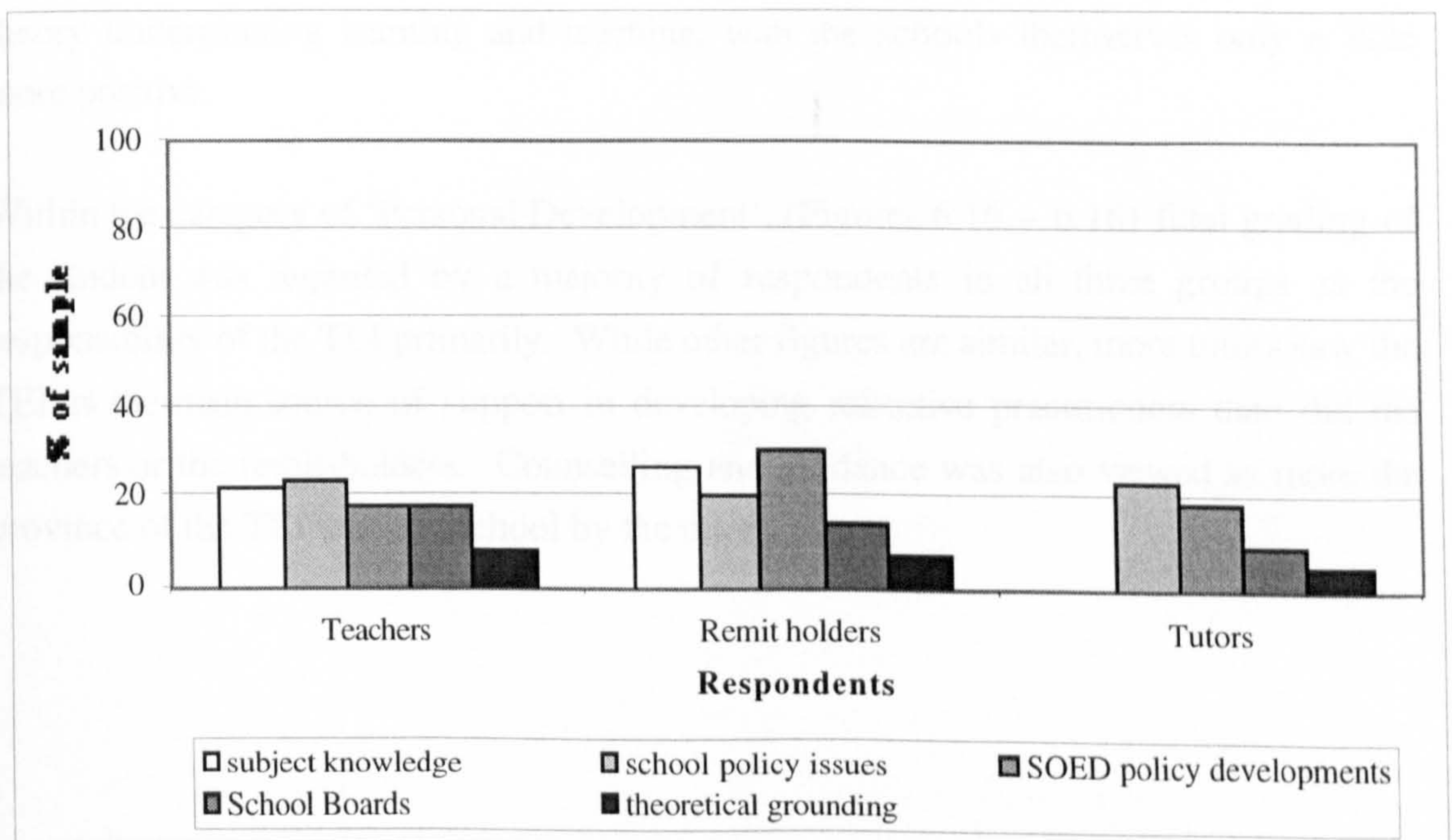
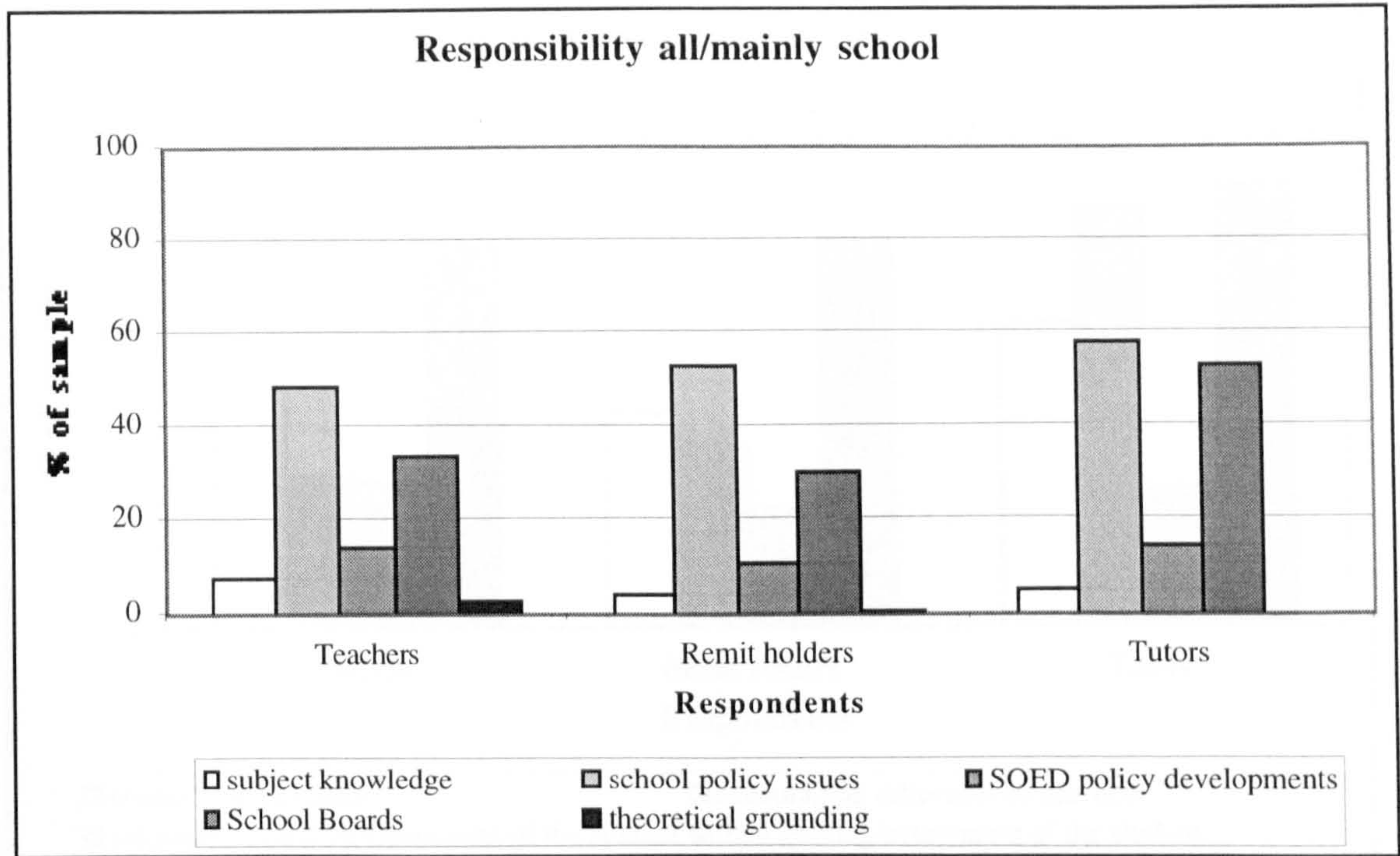


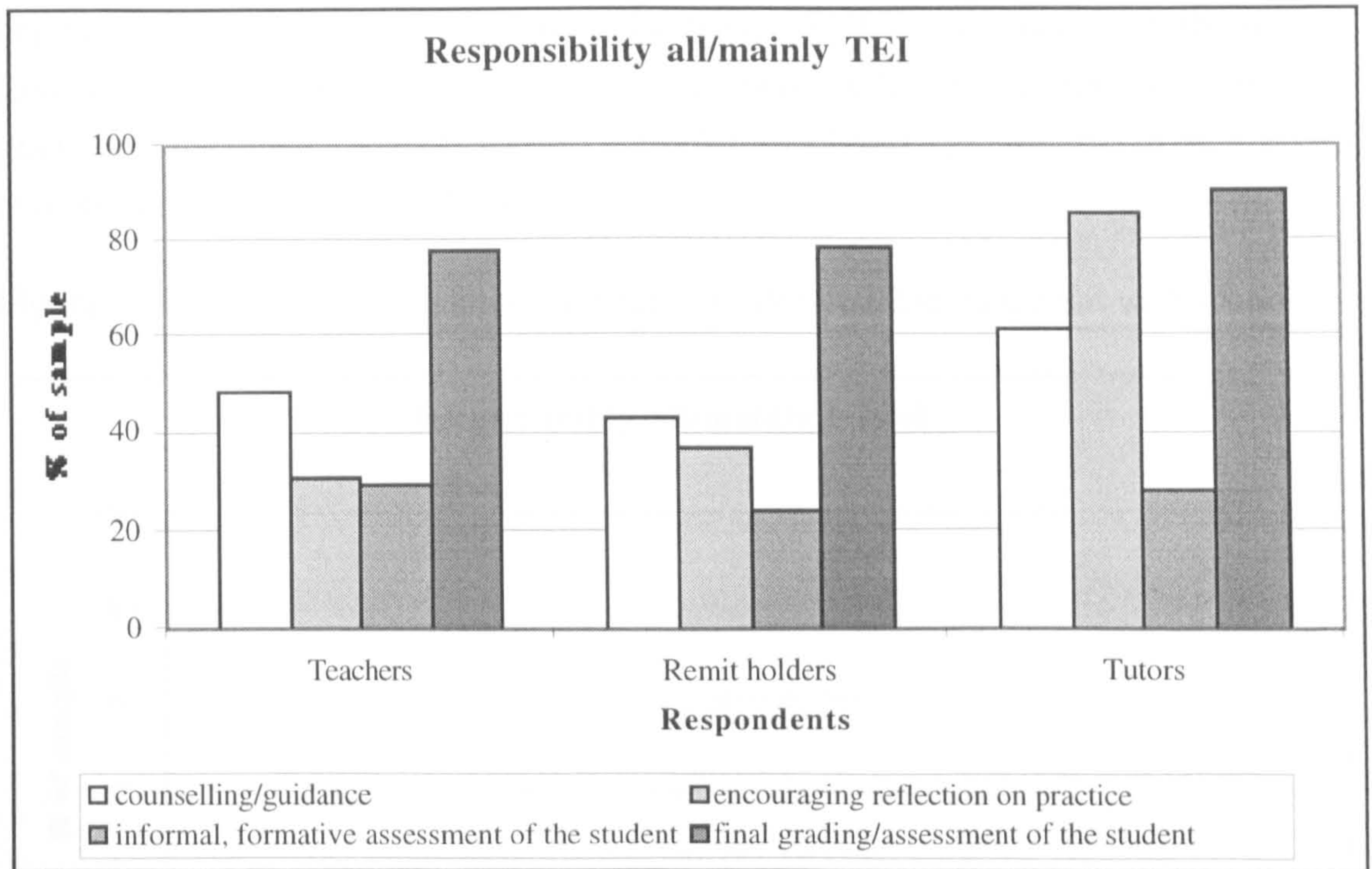
Figure 6.15 : %ages indicating responsibility for K&U lies all/mainly with school



The percentages of respondents from each group who saw the aspects listed in this category, Knowledge and Understanding, as a shared responsibility were low and at a similar level for all three groups. This set of aspects of development polarised views of those in the schools and the TEI more than the other two categories. None of the three groups saw responsibility for Knowledge and Understanding as being mainly or wholly the remit of the school, except that relating to school policy issues and School Boards. The TEI tutors gave no responsibility to the schools for the development of theory underpinning learning and teaching, with the schools themselves only a little more positive.

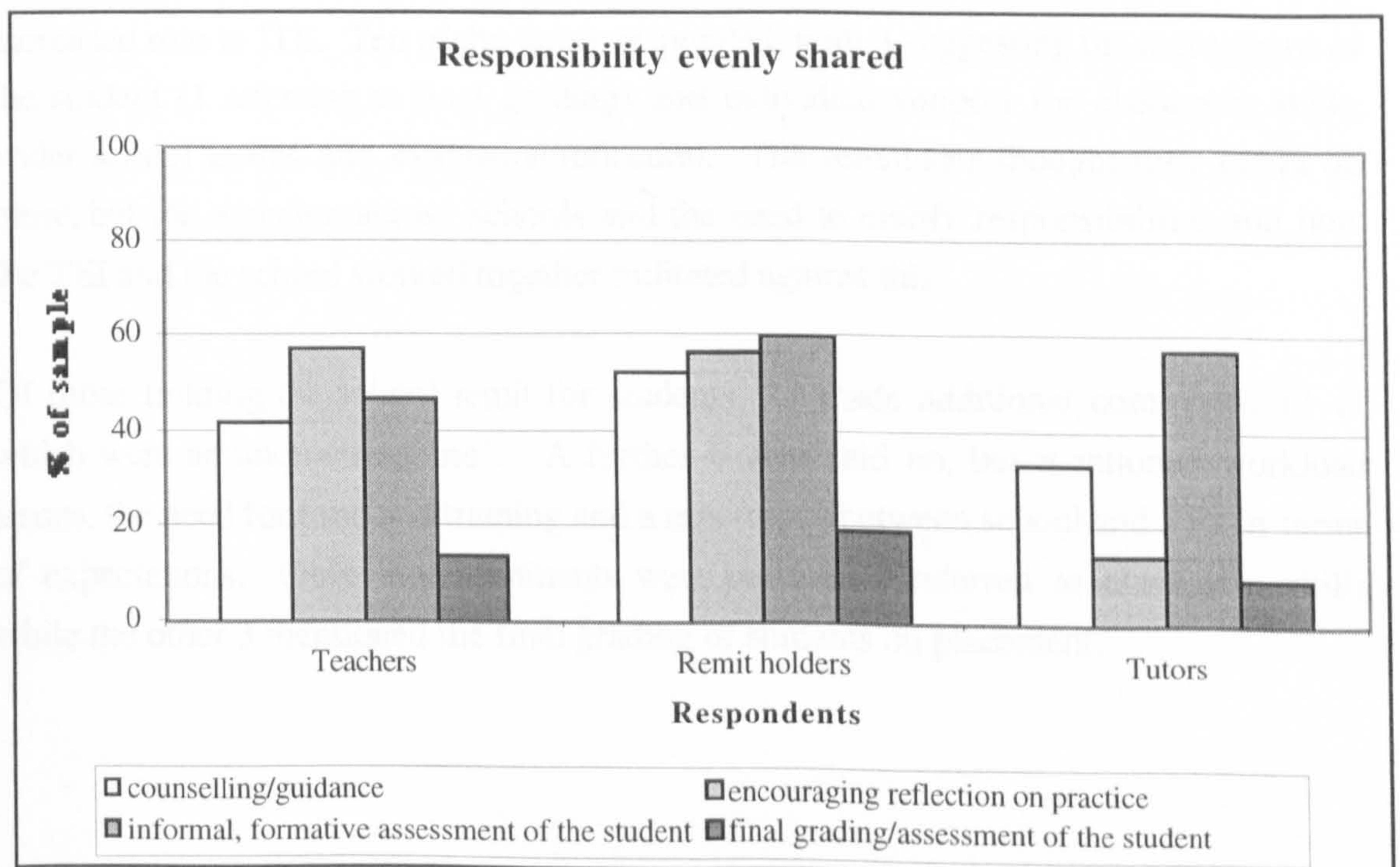
Within the category of 'Personal Development', (Figures 6.16 – 6.18) final grading of the student was regarded by a majority of respondents in all three groups as the responsibility of the TEI primarily. While other figures are similar, more tutors saw the TEI as the main source of support in developing reflective practitioners than did the teachers or the remit-holders. Counselling and guidance was also viewed as more the province of the TEI than the school by the tutors.

Figure 6.16: %ages indicating responsibility for Personal Development with TEI



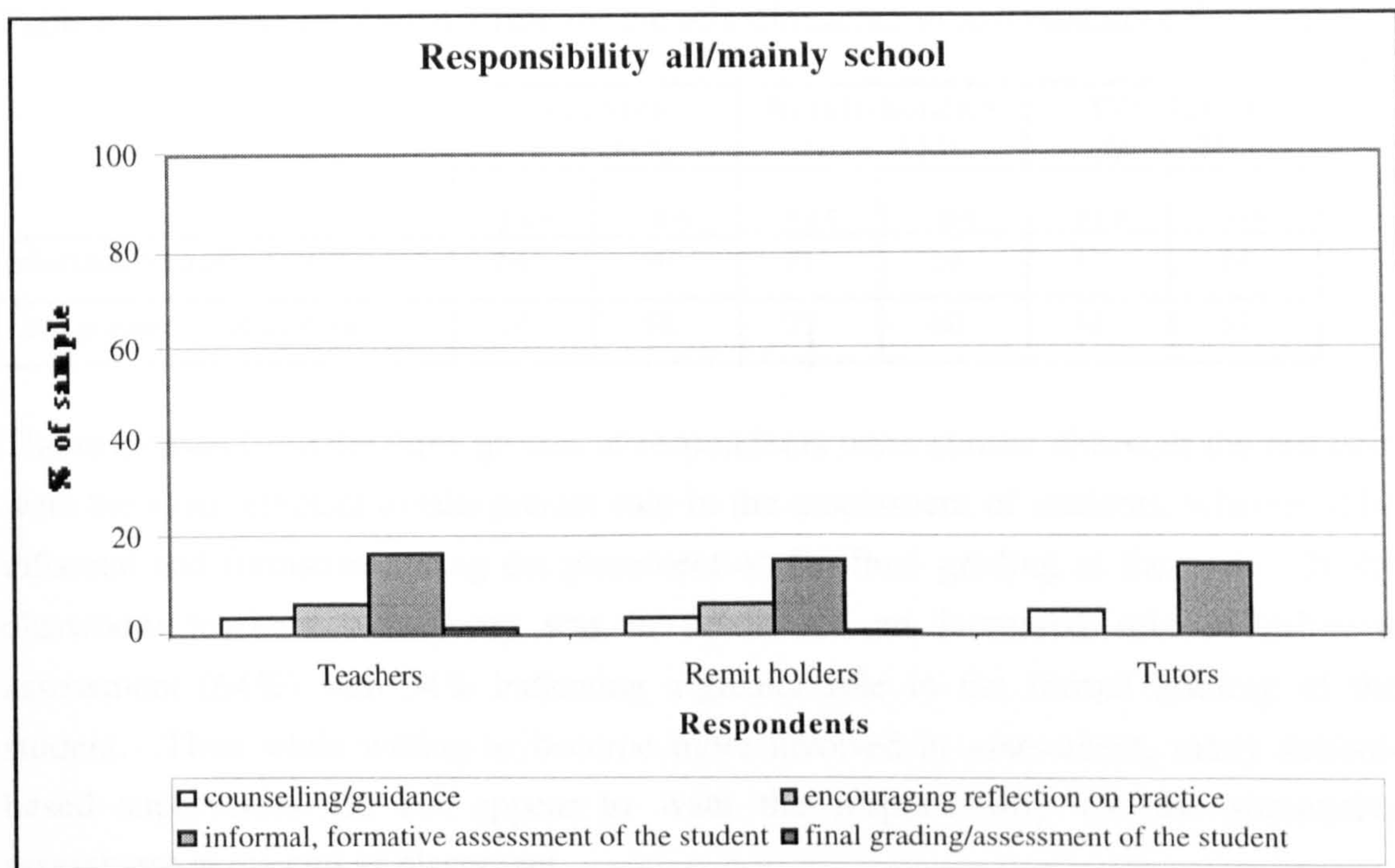
The views of tutors on who supports reflection on practice is also evident in Figure 6.17, where the percentage who saw it as a shared responsibility was considerably lower than the corresponding figures from teachers and remit-holders. Both teachers and remit holders reported more sharing of responsibility on all other aspects than did the tutors.

Figure 6.17: %ages indicating that responsibility for Personal Development is evenly shared



Very little of the responsibility for the personal development of the student into a beginning teacher was viewed by any of the groups as belonging mainly to the school. Little or no responsibility for the school was given for reflection on practice or the final grading by the tutors. Schools seemed to think they played a greater role in each aspect than the TEI tutors afforded them.

Figure 6.18 : %ages indicating responsibility for Personal Development with school



Tutors and schools were asked to indicate where they thought schools might play an increased role in ITE. Ten of the tutors responded, with 3 suggesting the assessment of the student (1 referring to final grading) and individual support for classroom skills, wider school issues and evaluation/reflection. The remainder thought they could do more, but the variation across schools and the need to clarify responsibilities and how the TEI and the school worked together militated against this.

Of those holding the school remit for students, 23 made additional comments, 11 of which were an unqualified 'no'. A further 6 also said no, but mentioned workload issues, the need for time and training and a mis-match between school and TEI in terms of expectations. Only four comments were positive: 1 referred to classroom skills while the other 3 mentioned the final grading of students on placement.

6.6.5 Phase 1: Assessing the Student's Progress

The issue of assessing the student's performance and progress on placement was revisited quite explicitly at the end of the questionnaire where the final question focused on assessment and whether schools should have a greater role in assessing the student on placement, in either the informal, formative sense or in determining the final grading on placement. The figures are given in Table 6.24.

Table 6.24: Views on a greater role for the school/teacher in assessment of the student (%)

	Teachers (n = 314)		Remit-holders (n = 123)		TEI tutors (n = 24)	
	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
informal, formative assessment	64	30	71	29	71	24
final grading on placement	34	58	37	60	38	57

The responses from the three groups of respondents were similar although the teachers were the most reluctant to take greater role in the assessment of students, whether it be informal and formative during the placement or the final grading at the end. Of the classroom teachers, a majority was in favour of an increased role in informal assessment (64%) with 34% indicating a greater role in the formal grading of the student. Thus while willing to become more involved in assessment, many school-based supervisors did not appear to want the responsibility for the summative assessment at the end of placement.

When respondents were given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses, 19 of the tutors did so. While acknowledging that schools saw more of the student, the majority saw this as the source of the information e.g. on professionalism, passed to the tutors in order that they were better placed to determine the final grade. If teachers were to take over a greater assessment role, they would require considerable training and there might be a conflict in the advisor-assessor roles. One tutor focused on the assessment process however: *'If final grading is criteria-based and if someone can work out a way of ensuring all interpret criteria similarly, it shouldn't matter who does it.'*

Of the 7 remit holders who responded, 4 supported existing practice and the others only thought it feasible if time and training were to be provided for teachers to enable them to take a greater role.

6.6.6 Main Findings

The main findings for 'sharing the responsibility' have been summarised into broad statements which, inevitably, mask variations in views within groups and categories of analysis.

- Patterns of views on who does what in terms of the students' development were broadly similar across the three groups of teachers, remit holders and TEI tutors.
- Differences were observed on several aspects where tutors emphasised the TEI and the school-based respondents indicated that they held more responsibility i.e. views were polarised in favour of the respondents' own institution.
- Remit holders indicated a stronger role for the school than did the classroom teachers.
- Classroom skills were viewed by teachers and remit holders as either a shared responsibility or more the role of the school. Tutors saw less of a role for the school and more of one for the TEI in this area, while acknowledging a considerable amount of shared responsibility.
- Knowledge and understanding was viewed by all three groups, albeit to different degrees, as mainly the responsibility of the TEI.
- Personal development was considered by both teachers and remit holders as either a shared responsibility or one for the TEI. Tutors were more strongly of the view that this was a TEI responsibility.
- The formative assessment of the student was seen as a responsibility of the school by considerable numbers of respondents in all three groups (around two thirds) and one where the school and/or teacher should have a greater role.
- Summative grading was viewed as the responsibility of the TEI with approximately one third of each group feeling that this was something in which schools/teachers should take a greater role.

6.7 Phase 1: Learning on Placement

Students are expected to develop a range of knowledge, skills and processes during the four years of the course and one section of the questionnaire was concerned with determining when students should be developing the specific skills and competences required of a beginning teacher.

6.7.1 Learning across the four years of the BEd course

For the purpose of the questionnaire, twenty-six aspects of development were identified from the course documentation. Teachers were asked to make two responses to this list:

- i to allocate each aspect of development to the most appropriate year (or years) of the course considering the four years of training; and
- ii to consider the year group (BEd 1, 2, 3 or 4) for which they had had responsibility during 1993-94 and to indicate which of the aspects listed were best developed during that year of the course.

The aim of these questions was to determine whether teachers were working with a model of progression for student learning across the years of the course and, if so, what the model looked like and how consistent it was across teachers, both in terms of their specific responsibilities for students in 1993-94 and across the course as a whole. Table 6.24 sets out the views of all teachers who responded to the questionnaires on the aspects of development 'best' tackled during each year of the course. For example, for the aspect 'developing planning skills', 57% of teachers through this was best tackled in Year 1. The figures across the rows add up to more than 100% as teachers were permitted to select more than one year as 'best' for each aspect of development.

Table 6.25: Supervising teachers' views on development across 4 years of BEd
(n = 314)

Aspects of Development	Year of the BEd course			
	Year 1 % of total respondents	Year 2 % of total respondents	Year 3 % of total respondents	Year 4 % of total respondents
A develop planning skills	57	60	49	39
B develop classroom practice skills	73	58	66	54
C learn from their successes and failures	64	64	57	51
D meet the requirements of the placement	75	63	61	60
E know why something they do works	31	54	57	51
F recognise the range of ways things can be done	13	44	63	53
G take responsibility for their learning	55	53	58	58
H test out alternative ways of doing things	8	35	64	56
I realise their own preconceptions	31	44	43	45
J ask questions about my work	75	60	54	54
K see what is satisfactory in their work	60	60	58	52
L realise the range of non-classroom work to be done	36	36	53	57
M construct their own agenda for development	4	25	54	66
N see how the whole school issues are done	7	13	53	70
O be able to evaluate their learning	50	57	58	55
P be able to assess children's work	23	50	66	57
Q feel good about themselves as a teacher	47	41	59	60
R question their views of how to teach	28	40	57	56
S see the effects of their actions	49	54	56	56
T recognise my expertise	63	50	56	54
U work alongside me as a colleague	34	42	59	61
V realise the values and social implications of work	37	42	52	60
W work my work programme	33	43	53	46
X realise how a school works	36	41	50	53
Y accept what they need to learn	69	56	49	45
Z develop their own style.	13	22	60	70

The data were analysed for views on progression across Years 1-4. Choices for each aspect were ranked to show which year was selected most frequently as 'best', 'next best', etc.. In Table 6.26, the most frequently selected is ranked '1', the least '4'.

Table 6.26: The teachers' rankings of 'best' years for developing into a teacher
(n = 314)

Aspects of Development		Year of the BEd course			
		Year 1 Rank	Year 2 Rank	Year 3 Rank	Year 4 Rank
A	develop planning skills	2	1	3	4
B	develop classroom practice skills	1	3	2	4
C	learn from their successes and failures	2	1	3	4
D	meet the requirements of the placement	1	2	3	4
E	know why something they do works	4	2	1	3
F	recognise the range of ways things can be done	4	3	1	2
G	take responsibility for their learning	3	4	1	2
H	test out alternative ways of doing things	4	3	1	2
I	realise their own preconceptions	4	2	3	1
J	ask questions about my work	1	2	3=	3=
K	see what is satisfactory in their work	1	2	3	4
L	realise the range of non-classroom work to be done	4	3	2	1
M	construct their own agenda for development	4	3	2	1
N	see how the whole school issues are done	4	3	2	1
O	be able to evaluate their learning	4	2	1	3
P	be able to assess children's work	4	3	1	2
Q	feel good about themselves as a teacher	3	4	2	1
R	question their views of how to teach	4	3	1	2
S	see the effects of their actions	4	3	1=	1=
T	recognise my expertise	1	4	2	3
U	work alongside me as a colleague	4	3	2	1
V	realise the values and social implications of work	4	3	2	1
W	work my work programme	4	3	1	2
X	realise how a school works	4	3	2	1
Y	accept what they need to learn	1	2	3	4
Z	develop their own style.	4	3	2	1

In the following tables, the aspects of development are clustered to show what teachers considered the most appropriate (i.e. those ranked 1) for each year of the course. In addition, the second choice of year has been included for each aspect while third and fourth 'best' years have been omitted.

Table 6.27: The aspects identified as 'best undertaken' in Year 1 (n = 314)

Aspects of Development for Year 1		2nd imp. year
B	Develop classroom practice skills	3
D	Meet the requirements of the placement	2
J	Ask questions about my work	2
K	See what is satisfactory in their work	2
T	Recognise my expertise	3
Y	Accept what they need to learn	2

In year 1, the focus was on immediate classroom skills and satisfying the requirements of the placement. In addition, the recognition of self as a learner and the teacher as an 'expert' was highlighted.

Table 6.28: The aspects identified as 'best undertaken' in Year 2 (n = 314)

Aspects of Development for Year 2		2nd imp. year
A	Develop planning skills	1
C	Learn from their successes and failures	1

In Year 2, the emphasis was on learning basic skills (planning) for their work with the pupils as well as developing the ability to learn from their successes and failures. The second most frequently selected year for these aspects was Year 1.

Eight of the aspects listed were identified as most significant in the third year of the course (Table 6.29). Assessing children's work was the most specific of these; the remainder were more abstract, drawing on the student's ability to appreciate the wider complexities of the work and to reflect critically upon her or his role, both as a learner and as a beginning teacher. For all but two aspects, Year 4 was ranked as the second most relevant year for this development.

Table 6.29: The aspects identified as 'best undertaken' in Year 3

Aspects of Development for Year 3		2nd imp. year
E	Know why something they do works	2
G	Take responsibility for their learning	4
H	Test out alternative ways of doing things	4
O	Be able to evaluate their learning	2
P	Be able to assess children's work	4
R	Question their views of how to teach	3/4 =
S	See the effects of their actions	4
W	Work my work programme	4

For all but one of the 10 aspects allocated to Year 4, Year 3 was considered the second most appropriate time to address them (Table 6.30). A number of the items selected were concerned with moving from learner to beginning teacher: 'feel good about themselves as a teacher'; 'work alongside me as a colleague'; and 'develop their own style'.

Table 6.30: The aspects identified as 'best undertaken' in Year 4

Aspects of Development for Year 4		2nd imp. year
I	realise their own preconceptions	2
L	realise the range of non-classroom work to be done	3
M	construct their own agenda for development	3
N	see how the whole school issues are done	3
R	feel good about themselves as a teacher	3
S	See the effects of their actions	3/4 =
U	work alongside me as a colleague	3
V	realise the values and social implications of work	3
X	realise how a school works	3
Z	develop their own style.	3

Others were concerned with the wider aspects of the teaching role: 'realise the range of non-classroom work to be done'; 'see how the whole school issues are done'; realise the values and social implications'; and 'realise how a school works'. In addition, the theme of being a learner continued: 'realise their own preconceptions'; 'ask questions about my work'; and 'construct their own agenda for development'.

In the first two years, the emphasis was on accepting the role of learner and gaining sufficient classroom skills to meet the demands of the placement. Years 3 and 4 placed a greater burden on the student in terms of both number and kinds of learning emphasised. While still a learner, there was clear evidence of the recognition of the student moving into the 'almost a teacher' category and the need for personal responsibility for the professional role and future professional development. Teachers appeared to see the four year course as containing at least two main phases : Years 1 & 2 and Years 3 & 4. The second 'choices' for the aspects of learning reinforce this, with an implicit message that 'if it isn't important in Year 1 then it should be in Year 2 and vice versa' and similarly for Years 3 and 4.

Learning within the Four Years of the BEd course

Teachers were also asked to indicate what the focus should be for the specific year group to which the students they had recently supervised belonged (i.e. during 1993-94). Table 6.31 sets out separately the responses of each group of supervisors (Years 1-4). For example, 72% of those teachers who had supervised a BEd 1 student considered that 'planning skills' was an important aspect of learning in first year while 84% of those teachers supervising BEd 2 student, thought it was 'best developed' during Year 2.

Table 6.31: Teachers' views on aspects of development 'best' tackled during the year for which they had responsibility during 1993-94 (n = 314)

Aspects of Development		Super- visors of BEd 1 (75)	Super- visors of BEd 2 (80)	Super- visors of BEd 3 (79)	Super- visors of BEd 4 (80)
		%	%	%	%
A	develop planning skills	72	84	71	65
B	develop classroom practice skills	75	86	71	66
C	learn from their successes and failures	74	83	71	68
D	meet the requirements of the placement	80	83	74	67
E	know why something they do works	29	78	69	65
F	recognise the range of ways things can be done	26	64	69	66
G	take responsibility for their learning	53	79	65	65
H	test out alternative ways of doing things	20	54	60	63
I	realise their own preconceptions	48	44	55	61
J	ask questions about my work	73	81	62	65
K	see what is satisfactory in their work	68	80	66	69
L	realise range of non-classroom work to be done	57	51	61	66
M	construct their own agenda for development	18	27	46	61
N	see how the whole school issues are done	14	23	39	58
O	be able to evaluate their learning	67	76	67	63
P	be able to assess children's work	32	67	68	67
Q	feel good about themselves as a teacher	49	62	68	70
R	question their views of how to teach	49	55	59	60
S	see the effects of their actions	61	71	64	62
T	recognise my expertise	72	62	51	64
U	work alongside me as a colleague	41	64	65	71
V	realise the values & social implications of work	45	53	53	62
W	work my work programme	44	57	51	58
X	realise how a school works	38	51	39	60
Y	accept what they need to learn	70	69	52	60
Z	develop their own style.	26	34	53	70

The responses of teachers who had supervised BEd 1 and BEd 2 students showed greater variation across the aspects of development listed than those supervising BEd 3 and, more particularly, BEd 4. The percentages of supervisors selecting each aspect ranges from 14% - 80% in BEd 1; 23% - 86% in BEd 2; 39% - 74% in BEd 3; and

58% - 71% in BEd 4. In the first two years of the course, supervising teachers appear to have differentiated between the aspects of development and viewed some as more important than while, in the later years, teachers viewed development across all aspects as important.

As in Table 6.26, rankings were established across the years of the course although in this instance they were based on the responses of the four discrete groups of supervisors rather than the total teacher sample. The figures obtained are shown in Table 6.32 alongside those from Table 6.26. Therefore, the first figure refers to the responses by supervisors for their own specific year group, the second (in bold) to the responses when supervisors (collectively) were considering development across the four years.

Of the 26 aspects identified, 8 were ranked in exactly the same order in both parts of the question (A, C, F, M, N, P, U and Z). Where there is agreement between the teachers as groups and as a whole, these have been shaded. Virtually all of these are for the first and last years of the course, while greater variation in opinion appears across the middle years of the course. There seems to be a consensus regarding what is important at the start and at the end of the course but less agreement about the middle years. However differences in emphasis tended to be of the magnitude of only one year in either direction.

Table 6.32: Comparison of teachers' rankings by specific year groups (SGs) and across the course as a whole (all)

Aspects of Development		Rankings – 'best' year for development							
		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4	
		SGs	All	SGs	All	SGs	All	SGs	All
A	develop planning skills	2	2	1	1	3	3	4	4
B	develop classroom practice skills	2	1	1	3	3	2	4	4
C	learn from their successes and failures	2	2	1	1	3	3	4	4
D	meet the requirements of the placement	2	1	1	2	3	3	4	4
E	know why something they do works	2	4	3	2	4	1	1	3
F	recognise the range of ways things can be done	4	4	3	3	1	1	2	2
G	take responsibility for their learning	4	3	1	4	2	1	3	2
H	test out alternative ways of doing things	4	4	3	3	2	1	1	2
I	realise their own preconceptions	3	4	4	2	2	3	1	1
J	ask questions about my work	2	1	1	2	4	3=	3	3=
K	see what is satisfactory in their work	3	1	1	2	4	3	2	4
L	realise the range of non-classroom work to be done	3	4	4	3	2	2	1	1
M	construct their own agenda for development	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1
N	see how the whole school issues are done	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1
O	be able to evaluate their learning	3	4	1	2	2	1	4	3
P	be able to assess children's work	4	4	2=	3	1	1	2=	2
Q	feel good about themselves as a teacher	4	3	3	4	2	2	1	1
R	question their views of how to teach	4	4	3	3	2	1	1	2
S	see the effects of their actions	4	4	1	3	2	1=	3	1=
T	recognise my expertise	1	1	3	4	4	2	2	3
U	work alongside me as a colleague	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1
V	realise the values and social implications of work	4	4	2	3	3	2	1	1
W	work my work programme	4	4	2	3	3	1	1	2
X	realise how a school works	4	4	2	3	3	2	1	1
Y	accept what they need to learn	1	1	2	2	4	3	3	4
Z	develop their own style.	4	4	3	3	2	2	1	1

Table 6.33 demonstrates the degree of consensus, based on the total number of points of comparison (i.e. the 208 cells in Table 6.32). The table shows the number of these where the rankings were the same in both analyses, where they varied by one year and where the difference in ranking was over more than one year. In addition, it shows the

number of instances for each pair of adjacent years.

Table 6.33: Agreements and disagreements between teachers on 'best' years

Comparison of responses	No.
In agreement	55
Difference involving Years 1 and 2	15
Difference involving Years 2 and 3	11
Difference involving Years 3 and 4	12
Disagreement > 1 year	11
Total	104

6.7.3 Main findings

- Teachers were remarkably consistent in their views on when various components of learning to be a teacher should occur within the 4 years of the course, particularly in the first and final years.
- The patterns of what learning should happen, and when, show two clear main phases, Years 1 & 2 and Years 3 & 4, with some separation of expectations within these two phases.

6.8 Phase 1: Supporting the student

Teachers and TEI tutors are expected to support BEd students to develop into competent beginning teachers in a number of ways during the blocks of school experience. Fourteen possible ways of supporting students were identified for inclusion in the questionnaire through consultation with the School Experience Co-ordinator for the BEd course. While the wording varied slightly from questionnaire to questionnaire in order to take account of the role of the respondent, the forms of support used were:

- 1 The tutor/teacher demonstrated teaching and the student observed.
- 2 The tutor/teacher discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with the student.
- 3 The tutor/teacher observed the student teaching and gave her/him feedback.
- 4 The tutor/teacher made notes on the student's progress as feedback to tutor.
- 5 The tutor/teacher met with the student to discuss her/his progress.
- 6 The tutor/teacher helped in planning for the student's teaching.
- 7 The tutor/teacher worked collaboratively with the student.

- 8 The tutor/teacher read and commented on the student's School Experience (SE) file.
- 9 The tutor/teacher gave advice on her/his lesson plans before s/he taught.
- 10 The tutor/teacher listened to the student's concerns about her/his teaching.
- 11 The tutor/teacher discussed my practice, concerns and view of teaching with her/him.
- 12 The tutor/teacher knew the requirements of the placement.
- 13 The tutor/teacher had a good personal relationship with the student.
- 14 The tutor/teacher gave the student information about the class/children.

Some of these are procedural (e.g. 12 and 1) and help the student to meet the expectations of the TEI, while others might be seen as providing situational knowledge (e.g. 14). Some forms support the development of classroom skills (e.g. 1 and 3) and a number foster reflection on the nature of teaching and the student's development into a reflective practitioner (e.g. 10 and 11). Depending on the specific content of such discussions, the reflection involved may range from fairly superficial to quite penetrating and demanding but this cannot be determined from the responses. While feedback and discussion on performance and progress (e.g. 3 and 5) might go beyond technical issues and encourage theorising and reflection, this again cannot be determined from the data. Establishing a good relationship (13) might be regarded as providing the kind of ethos where a student would feel positively towards her/his supervisor and have confidence in his/her judgement.

This list of supportive behaviours was not formally set down anywhere in the guidance to teachers, tutors or students but rather expresses the course's implicit expectations of 'good practice' across the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes which students require to develop and ways in which supervisors (tutors and teachers) can support this development. Thus respondents are being asked to 'read into' the interactions of student, supervising teacher and tutor for evidence of each of these forms of support and to make an estimate of how frequently they occurred.

Teachers and tutors may not always make explicit the intentions behind their actions and behaviour and may not even be conscious of what they are doing and why in terms of student development. It is therefore incumbent upon the others to interpret their actions and intentions. This section of the questionnaire was therefore concerned with the **perceptions** of each member of the triad as to the kinds of support given and received and how well these perceptions match.

6.8.1 Support from the teacher

In the questionnaires, teachers were asked to indicate how often they engaged in each of the forms of support listed. The responses from the supervising teachers, as a single group, are shown in Table 6.34. Four categories of response were possible: 'often', 'sometimes', 'never' and 'don't know'. The numbers in the last category were so low they were omitted from the table, but there were a few entries within this 'don't know' category, mainly for the statements: 'I knew the requirements of the placement' (8); 'I read and commented on the student's SE file' (7); and, 'I made notes on the student's progress as feedback to the tutor' (4).

Table 6.34: Teachers' reports on how they supported students (1993-94; n= 314)

Ways of supporting students	often		sometimes		never	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>I demonstrated teaching and the student observed.</i>	220	70	86	27	1	0
<i>I discussed my teaching of a lesson with the student</i>	135	43	163	52	9	3
<i>I observed the student teaching and gave her/him feedback.</i>	139	44	165	53	2	1
<i>I made notes on the student's progress as feedback to tutor.</i>	43	14	119	38	134	43
<i>I met with the student to discuss her/his progress.</i>	225	72	73	23	7	2
<i>I helped in planning for the student's teaching.</i>	185	59	120	38	2	1
<i>I worked collaboratively with the student.</i>	194	62	111	35	3	1
<i>I read and commented on the student's SE file.</i>	67	21	169	54	61	20
<i>I gave advice on her/his lesson plans before s/he taught.</i>	147	47	157	50	3	1
<i>I listened to the student's concerns about her/his teaching.</i>	219	70	81	26	3	1
<i>I discussed my practice, concerns and view of teaching with her/him.</i>	163	52	134	43	8	3
<i>I knew the requirements of the placement.</i>	151	48	129	41	2	1
<i>I had a good personal relationship with the student.</i>	250	80	48	15	3	1
<i>I gave the student information about the class/children</i>	281	90	22	7	2	1

The four most frequently provided forms of support included: giving the student information about the class/children (90%); meeting with the student to discuss progress (72%); demonstrating teaching while the student observed (70%); and listening to the student's concerns about teaching (70%). Forty-three percent of teachers reported that they never made notes on the student's progress as feedback to the tutor while 19% never read or commented upon the student's School Experience file (which included the student's lesson plans, evaluations of teaching, etc.). Eighty percent of teachers considered that they 'often' established a good relationship with the

student placed in their classrooms (although three teachers reported that this never happened and one did not know).

6.8.2 Support by the teacher in each year

In order to determine whether some forms of support were more prevalent during specific years of the course, data for responses in the 'often' category were broken down by the four groups of supervising teachers (BEd1 to 4). The findings are shown in Table 6.35.

Table 6.35: Percentage of each group of supervising teachers reporting 'often' to each form of support.

Ways of supporting students	Teachers supervising each year group				
	BEd 1	BEd 2	BEd 3	BEd 4	Mean
<i>I demonstrated teaching and the student observed.</i>	83	63	73	66	71
<i>I discussed my teaching of a lesson with the student</i>	40	32	54	52	45
<i>I observed the student teaching and gave her/him feedback.</i>	66	35	37	41	45
<i>I made notes on the student's progress as feedback to tutor.</i>	14	10	13	14	13
<i>I met with the student to discuss her/his progress.</i>	69	63	71	82	71
<i>I helped in planning for the student's teaching.</i>	60	59	54	60	58
<i>I worked collaboratively with the student.</i>	59	60	56	71	62
<i>I read and commented on the student's SE file.</i>	16	16	29	29	23
<i>I gave advice on her/his lesson plans before s/he taught.</i>	56	45	44	43	47
<i>I listened to the student's concerns about her/his teaching.</i>	71	59	79	73	71
<i>I discussed my practice, concerns and view of teaching with her/him.</i>	46	39	70	58	53
<i>I knew the requirements of the placement.</i>	46	28	62	56	48
<i>I had a good personal relationship with the student.</i>	77	83	81	81	81
<i>I gave the student information about the class/children</i>	87	90	94	88	90

For several of the forms of support listed, the figures lie $\pm 10\%$ of the mean reflecting similar levels of support reported as given across the year groups. A greater proportion of teachers supervising first year students reported that they demonstrated teaching to students, observed and commented on the student's performance and advised on lesson plans. Teachers who supervised final year students reported a greater incidence of

working collaboratively with the student and meeting with the student to discuss progress.

6.8.3 Support from the TEI tutor

The same set of support statements was given to TEI tutors and Table 6.36 shows their responses within the categories 'often', 'sometimes', 'never' and 'don't know'.

Table 6.36: Tutors' reports on how they supported students on placement
(1993-94; n = 24)

Ways of supporting students	often		sometimes		never		don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>I demonstrated teaching and the student observed.</i>	1	4	7	29	9	38	7	29
<i>I discussed my teaching of a lesson with the student</i>	3	13	8	33	8	33	4	17
<i>I observed the student teaching and gave her/him feedback.</i>	24	100						
<i>I made notes on the student's progress as feedback to tutor.</i>	24	100						
<i>I met with the student to discuss her/his progress.</i>	24	100						
<i>I helped in planning for the student's teaching.</i>	16	67	7	29	1	4		
<i>I worked collaboratively with the student.</i>	9	38	6	25	8	33		
<i>I read and commented on the student's SE file.</i>	24	100						
<i>I gave advice on her/his lesson plans before s/he taught.</i>	8	33	14	58	2	8		
<i>I listened to the student's concerns about her/his teaching.</i>	21	88	3	13				
<i>I discussed my practice, concerns and view of teaching with her/him.</i>	14	58	9	38	1	4		
<i>I knew the requirements of the placement.</i>	24	100						
<i>I had a good personal relationship with the student.</i>	23	96	1	4				
<i>I gave the student information about the class/children</i>	5	21	5	21	7	29	7	29

Some of these statements are 'mandatory' aspects of the tutor's role and, unsurprisingly, all tutors (100%) responded that these happened 'often'. The majority of tutors reported good personal relationships with students (96%) as did teachers, and that they listened to students' concerns about their own teaching (88%). The majority helped in planning for teaching (67%) and discussed their views of teaching with the students (58%). Only one third of tutors ever demonstrated teaching to students (33%)

although a greater proportion discussed how they would teach or had taught a lesson (46%). Tutors were also asked to indicate how frequently they considered that teachers supported students in the ways listed. The findings are presented in Table 6.37.

Table 6.37: Tutors' views on the support given by teachers to students (n = 24)

Ways of supporting students	often		sometimes		never		don't know	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>The teacher demonstrates teaching and the observes</i>	13	54	9	38	2	8		
<i>S/he discusses her/his teaching of a lesson the student.</i>	7	29	9	38	14	58		
<i>S/he observes the student teaching and give her/him feedback.</i>	1	4	7	29			15	63
<i>S/he makes notes on the student's progress feedback to me.</i>	9	38	11	46	4	17		
<i>S/he meets with the student to discuss her progress.</i>	9	38	11	46	4	17		
<i>S/he helps in planning for the student's teaching.</i>	15	63	9	38				
<i>S/he works collaboratively with the student.</i>	15	63	7	29			2	8
<i>S/he reads and comments on the student's lesson plans.</i>	1	4	13	54	10	42		
<i>S/he gives advice on the lesson plans before student teaches.</i>	12	50	9	38	3	13		
<i>S/he listens to the student's concerns about teaching.</i>	11	46	10	42	2	8	1	4
<i>S/he discusses own practice, concerns and teaching with student.</i>	5	21	11	46	6	25	2	8
<i>The teacher knows the requirements of the placement.</i>	18	75	5	21	1	4		
<i>The teacher establishes a good personal relationship with the student.</i>	20	83	4	17				
<i>The teacher gives the student information about the class/children.</i>	23	96	1	4				

Tutors' perceptions were that the most frequently used forms of teacher support which were offered to students by teachers were: the provision of information about the pupils; assistance in planning for teaching; and collaborative working. In addition, the majority of tutors considered that teachers had established a good relationship with the students under their supervision and that the majority of them knew the requirements of the placement. Sixty-two percent did not know if the teacher ever observed the student, giving feedback to the student afterwards.

Table 6.39: Students' views on the frequency of various forms of support by teachers (n = 446)

Kind of support from teacher	BEd 1 (%)				BEd 2 (%)				BEd 3 (%)				BEd 4 (%)			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
The teacher demonstrated and I observed	50.0	47.3	1.8	0.9	44.9	49.6	5.5		30.2	62.1	6.9		41.3	50.0	7.6	
S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me	29.1	51.8	18.2		15.7	54.3	29.1		15.5	48.3	36.2		13	57.6	27.2	2.2
S/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback	45.5	44.5	9.1	0.9	19.7	62.2	17.3		19.8	58.6	21.6		22.8	67.4	9.8	
S/he made notes on my progress as feedback to tutor	10.9	27.3	14.5	45.5	6.3	16.7	29.9	46.5	9.5	21.6	31.9	35.3	6.5	20.7	31.5	37.0
S/he met with me to discuss my progress	33.6	45.5	19.1	0.9	20.5	52.0	26.8		27.6	48.3	22.4	1.7	33.7	47.8	16.3	1.1
S/he helped in planning for my teaching	39.1	49.1	10.9	0.9	29.9	55.9	12.6	0.8	25.9	49.1	24.1	0.9	30.4	51.1	17.4	
I worked collaboratively with the teacher	59.1	33.6	4.5	1.8	52.8	39.4	7.9		34.5	58.6	6.9		53.3	42.4	2.2	
S/he read and commented on my SE file	12.7	51.8	34.5	0.9	15.7	32.3	48.8	3.1	13.8	48.3	35.3	1.7	9.8	55.4	33.7	
S/he gave advice on my lesson plans before I taught	26.4	52.7	20.9		18.1	52.8	28.3	0.8	12.1	56	31.9		12	58.7	28.3	
S/he listened to my concerns about my teaching	49.1	41.8	6.4		44.1	44.1	11	0.8	50.9	41.4	7.8		46.7	42.4	9.8	1.1
The teacher discussed her/his practice, concerns etc..	40.0	42.7	16.4	0.9	33.1	49.6	16.5	0.8	34.5	41.4	23.3	0.9	37	48.9	13	
The teacher knew the requirements of the placement	41.8	38.2	11.8	8.2	34.6	52.8	7.1	4.7	30.2	52.6	11.2	6.0	28.3	47.8	10.9	10.9
I had a good personal relationship with the teacher	86.4	11.8	0.9		80.3	15.0	2.4	1.6	83.6	8.6	6	1.7	78.3	14.1	5.4	
The teacher gave me information about the class/children	85.5	11.8	2.7		81.1	16.5	2.4		76.7	18.1	5.2		79.3	19.6		

Codes : 1 = often
 2 = sometimes
 3 = never
 4 = don't know

6.8.3 Support received: the students

A number of people in addition to the teacher and the tutor are in a position to support and advise students on placement although all might not see it as an explicit element of their role/relationship. Table 6.38 indicates the pattern of experience for the four year groups. Students were asked to indicate which of these people did actually give support/advice during the placement, on a scale of 'often', 'sometimes' or 'never' (coded 1, 2 and 3 respectively).

Table 6.38 : Students' reports of support in academic year 1993-94 (%ages)

Source of support	BEd 1			BEd 2			BEd 3			BEd 4		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
TEI tutor	42	54	2	37	58	4	52	60	3	45	50	3
class teacher	76	21	3	66	30	3	80	24	9	71	23	5
AHT/DHT/HT	18	56	25	4	56	35	21	69	25	19	55	22
ST in charge of students	22	37	34	10	31	52	22	36	43	22	44	24
other teachers	20	55	26	12	64	23	18	69	24	20	64	12
other students	36	47	16	26	46	24	38	47	21	45	38	13

The most significant people for students in all years, other than the teacher and the tutor, were other students on the BEd course. Students were asked to identify any other sources of support they experienced on placement. The main ones given were family and friends (by up to 15 students in any one year) and ancillary staff in the school (4/5 in each year group).

As with the teachers and the tutors, students were asked about the forms of support which occurred on placement. Their responses to the support given (in percentage forms) by their two supervisors are considered in turn in Tables 6.39 and 6.40. The responses (original frequencies) to the questions on forms of support received 'often', 'sometimes' and 'never', by students in each of the year groups were subjected to statistical analysis (chi-squared test); Table 6.41 shows the outcomes for support from the teacher.

Table 6.40: Students' views on the frequency of support by tutors (n = 446)

Kind of support from tutor	BEd 1				BEd 2				BEd 3				BEd 4			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
The tutor demonstrated and I observed	11.8	66.4	20.0	0.9	2.4	8.7	82.7	0.8	2.6	8.6	87.6	0.9	1.1	3.3	88	2.2
S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me	21.8	50.0	25.5	1.8	6.3	23.6	63	0.8	4.3	23.3	68.1	1.7	2.2	16.3	71.1	4.3
S/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback	81.8	16.4	0.9		44.9	53.5			56.0	42.2	1.7		52.2	41.3	1.1	
S/he made notes on my progress as feedback to tutor	80.9	15.5	1.8	0.9	52.0	44.9	2.4		52.6	43.1	1.7	2.6	52.2	42.4		1.1
S/he met with me to discuss my progress	72.7	24.5	1.8		46.5	48	4.7		52.6	40.5	5.2		51.1	42.4	1.1	1.1
S/he helped in planning for my teaching	32.7	58.2	7.3		24.4	48	24.4	0.8	19.8	50.0	27.6	1.7	17.4	50	25	1.1
I worked collaboratively with the tutor	31.8	51.8	13.6	1.8	15.7	43.3	36.2	1.6	7.8	34.5	47.4	6.9	5.4	27.2	51.1	8.7
S/he read and commented on my SE file	80.0	17.3	0.9		59.1	38.6	0.8		55.2	43.1	0.9		57.6	38.0		
S/he gave advice on my lesson plans before I taught	31.8	50.9	12.7	3.6	7.9	26	63.8		4.3	25.9	63.8	2.6	7.6	20.7	64.1	2.2
S/he listened to my concerns about my teaching	55.5	39.1	3.6		40.9	48.8	7.9	1.6	48.3	48.3	2.6		30.4	46.7	17.4	1.1
The tutor discussed her/his practice, concerns etc..	34.5	40.0	17.3	6.4	23.6	51.2	22.0	1.6	28.4	44.8	24.1	1.7	17.4	40.2	34.8	3.3
The tutor knew the requirements of the placement	89.1	9.1	0.9		85.0	13.4		0.8	87.1	8.6	0.9	2.6	85.9	9.8		1.1
I had a good personal relationship with the tutor	80.0	16.4		2.7	62.2	31.5	3.1	1.6	70.7	20.7	2.6	4.3	62	21.7	5.4	6.5
The tutor gave me information about the class/children	15.5	45.5	28.2	7.3	2.4	22.8	72.4	1.6	4.3	27.6	62.9	2.6	3.3	23.9	62.0	4.3

Codes :
 1 = often
 2 = sometimes
 3 = never
 4 = don't know

Table 6.41: Statistical analysis of students' perceptions of support received by year group

Kind of support from teacher		Statistical significance
1	The teacher demonstrated and I observed	n.s.
2	S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me	$p \leq 0.001$
3	S/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback	$p \leq 0.001$
4	S/he made notes on my progress as feedback to tutor	$p \leq 0.05$
5	S/he met with me to discuss my progress	n.s.
6	S/he helped in planning for my teaching	n.s.
7	I worked collaboratively with the teacher	$p \leq 0.01$
8	S/he read and commented on my SE file	$p \leq 0.05$
9	S/he gave advice on my lesson plans before I taught	n.s.
10	S/he listened to my concerns about my teaching	n.s.
11	The teacher discussed her/his practice, concerns etc..	n.s.
12	The teacher knew the requirements of the placement	n.s.
13	I had a good personal relationship with the teacher	n.s.
14	The teacher gave me information about the class/children	n.s.

n.s. - not significant

Closer examination of the data indicates where specific year groups differed in their reports of teacher support when compared to the overall figures. The main points are:

- The patterns for items 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 show consistency across the year groups in terms of the forms of support perceived as happening 'often', 'sometimes' and 'never';
- Reports of item 2, *s/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me*, were fairly consistent for Years 1, 2 and 4, the majority reporting that this happened at least some of the time. One third of Year 3 students thought it never happened;
- On item 3, *s/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback*, Years 1 and 3 showed variations from the other two year groups, particularly Year 1 whose reports of 'often' exceeded those of any other cohort. Years 1 and 4 showed significantly low 'never' figures.
- The figures for item 4, *s/he made notes on my progress as feedback to tutor*, reached significance, albeit at a lower level than the other instances. The proportions of students in Year 1 reporting 'sometimes' and 'never' were,

respectively, lower and higher than those in most other year groups. Between one half and one third of students did not know whether this occurred or not;

- Item 7, *I worked collaboratively with the teacher*, produced similar findings when 'often' and 'sometimes' are combined (>90%). Within this, Year 3 students were least likely to say this happened 'often'. The 'never' figures were lowest in Years 1 and 4.
- In item 8, *s/he read and commented on my SE file*, between one third and a half of students in each group reported this 'never' happened; this was most acute in Year 2.

Students were asked to comment if they had experienced other forms of support from teachers and twenty-seven BEd 1 students responded. Their comments tended to fall into two very general categories. The first focused on the personal style of the teacher and/or the general ethos of the placement e.g. friendly, supportive and encouraging (fewer than 15 students in any one year) while the second referred to support from ancillary staff in the school (4/5 in each year group). Twenty-nine BEd 2 students also responded, 21 of whom reported friendly, supportive and encouraging supervising teachers. Fifteen of their comments related to specific help on e.g. resources or discipline. Only two comments were at all negative, indicating that they felt they were just 'an extra pair of hands'. Nineteen third year students responded similarly, and again 2 felt that the teacher did not support them at all during the placement. Fifteen BEd 4 students also made additional, general comments on the supportive, friendly attitude of the supervising teacher, although 3 felt that they got little or no support and 2 described the relationship with the teacher as 'problematic'.

6.8.5 Support from teachers: comparing perceptions

In order to compare the reports of the three sets of respondents, it was decided to focus on the figures for support 'often' received or given. The reasoning behind selecting the 'often' data was that, given that these were seen as valuable forms of support, it would be hoped that they formed a significant element of the interaction between the students and their supervisors. Table 6.42 sets out the percentages of each set of respondents who reported that teachers 'often' provided each of the forms of support listed in the questionnaire. (The shaded boxes indicate where the students' reports exceeded those of the teachers.)

Table 6.42: Tutors', teachers' & students' reports on support 'often' given by teachers (%)

Ways in which teachers support students	TEI tutor n = 24	teacher n = 314	Students (n = 446)				
			mean	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
<i>The teacher demonstrates teaching and the student observes</i>	54	70	42	50	45	30	41
<i>S/he discusses her/his teaching of a lesson with the student.</i>	29	43	18	29	16	16	13
<i>S/he observes the student teaching and gives her/him feedback.</i>	4	44	27	46	20	20	23
<i>S/he makes notes on the student's progress as feedback to me.</i>	38	14	8	11	6	10	7
<i>S/he meets with the student to discuss her/his progress.</i>	38	72	29	34	21	28	34
<i>S/he helps in planning for the student's teaching.</i>	63	59	31	39	30	26	30
<i>S/he works collaboratively with the student.</i>	63	62	50	59	53	35	53
<i>S/he reads and comments on the student's SE file.</i>	4	21	13	13	16	14	10
<i>S/he gives advice on the lesson plans before the student teaches.</i>	50	47	17	26	18	12	12
<i>S/he listens to the student's concerns about her/his teaching.</i>	46	70	48	49	44	51	47
<i>S/he discusses own practice, concerns and view of teaching with student.</i>	21	52	36	40	33	35	37
<i>The teacher knows the requirements of the placement.</i>	75	48	34	42	35	30	28
<i>The teacher establishes a good personal relationship with the student.</i>	83	80	82	86	80	84	78
<i>The teacher gives the student information about the class/children</i>	96	90	81	86	81	77	79

Comparing tutors and teachers

Tutors' and teachers' reports of support 'often' given by teachers show a large number of mismatches, with tutors' responses exceeding the teachers' on 7 items, where differences range from 1% (collaborative teaching) to 27% (teacher knew requirements). On the remaining 7 items, tutors gave lower ratings than did the teachers, with differences ranging from 4% (helps in student's planning) to 40% (observes the student and gives feedback).

Comparing teachers and students

The responses from teachers and students also show a considerable number of discrepancies. On all but one of the forms of support listed, teachers' perceptions of support given exceeded the students' mean perceptions of support received. The differences on these ranged from 6% (making notes on the student's progress) to 43%

(meeting with the student to discuss progress). Only on two aspects did students' ratings exceed those of the teachers: 'teacher established a good personal relationship with student' (for Years 1 and 3, and the overall mean); and 'teacher observes student and gives him feedback' (Year 1 students); these figures were very similar across the groups however and the differences were marginal.

Comparing students and tutors

The comparison of students' and tutors' responses also indicates a number of differences in perceptions of the frequency of each form of support. Eight of the forms listed were reported more frequently by tutors than by students while on the remaining 6, students' response rates were higher, although on two this was marginal (1-2%). Where tutors' perceptions exceeded those of the students, the differences ranged from 11% (s/he discusses her/his teaching of a lesson) to 41% (the teacher knows the requirements of the placement). Where tutors' views were lower than the students', the maximum difference was 23% (s/he observes the student teaching and gives feedback).

Assuming that the forms of support listed are important in student development and should be regarded as forming a significant part of student-supervising teacher interaction, the views of the three groups of respondents differ to an alarming extent. One part of the explanation may be that each has interpreted 'often' in a different way and the distinction between 'often' and 'sometimes' has been somewhat blurred. While they recognise instances of each form of support, their frequency is disputed.

Some of the behaviours listed are more visible and readily identifiable than others and this visibility is likely to vary across participants. Aspects such as giving help or advice on planning will have been directly experienced, or not, by students. The tutor however is unlikely to have such direct experience and may be basing her/his report of frequency on more limited evidence. Similarly, support such as 'the teacher makes notes on student's progress for tutor' should produce tangible evidence allowing the tutor to respond accurately but this may not have been shared with the student. The student's perceptions would therefore underestimate the instances of this occurring.

Furthermore, where a supervising teacher provides one of the forms of support, it is unlikely that s/he makes it explicit that this is what is happening and these are her/his intentions. Indeed, s/he may not be aware of the implications of the various activities in which s/he engages, seeing them as simply 'good practice'. Therefore some part of the difference in reporting levels is likely to be concerned with a lack of a shared

understanding of the purposes of the teachers' or tutors' actions and behaviours towards students and, as a result, may not be perceived as intended or recognised as forms of support.

What is evident is that a lack of communication, of an explicit code of supervisory practice, and of a shared understanding of how students might best be supported to develop the skills, understanding and dispositions required of the competent beginning teacher, is resulting in significant differences in the perceptions of teachers and tutors as to the forms of support given and their frequency. And, overall, students disagree with both supervisors as to the forms and frequency of support received. Many of the differences in the reports from respondents are sufficiently large to warrant further investigation and Table 6.43 sets out the figures for each group, in order of size from highest to lowest for each form of support listed.

Table 6.43: Comparisons of reports of support 'often' given or received

	Forms of support	%ages responding 'often' across groups highest -----lowest		
		Teachers	Tutors	Students
1	<i>The teacher demonstrates teaching and the student observes</i>	Teachers 70%	Tutors 54%	Students 42%
2	<i>S/he discusses her/his teaching of a lesson with the student.</i>	Teachers 43%	Tutors 29%	Students 18%
3	<i>S/he observes the student teaching and gives her/him feedback.</i>	Teachers 44%	Students 27%	Tutors 4%
4	<i>S/he makes notes on the student's progress as feedback to me.</i>	Tutors 38%	Teachers 14%	Students 8%
5	<i>S/he meets with the student to discuss her/his progress.</i>	Teachers 72%	Tutors 38%	Students 29%
6	<i>S/he helps in planning for the student's teaching.</i>	Tutors 63%	Teachers 59%	Students 31%
7	<i>S/he works collaboratively with the student.</i>	Tutors 63%	Teachers 62%	Students 50%
8	<i>S/he reads and comments on the student's SE file.</i>	Teachers 21%	Students 13%	Tutors 4%
9	<i>S/he gives advice on the lesson plans before the student teaches.</i>	Tutors 50%	Teachers 47%	Students 17%
10	<i>S/he listens to the student's concerns about her/his teaching.</i>	Teachers 70%	Students 48%	Teachers 46%
11	<i>S/he discusses own practice, concerns and view of teaching with student.</i>	Teachers 52%	Tutors 36%	Students 21%
12	<i>The teacher knows the requirements of the placement.</i>	Tutors 75%	Teachers 48%	Students 34%
13	<i>The teacher establishes a good personal relationship with the student.</i>	Tutors 83%	Students 82%	Teachers 80%
14	<i>The teacher gives the student information about the class/children</i>	Tutors 96%	Teachers 90%	Students 81%

The highest response rates to 'often' came from teachers and tutors, never the students.

Figure 6.19: Perceptions of teachers, tutors and students re forms of support frequently given/received

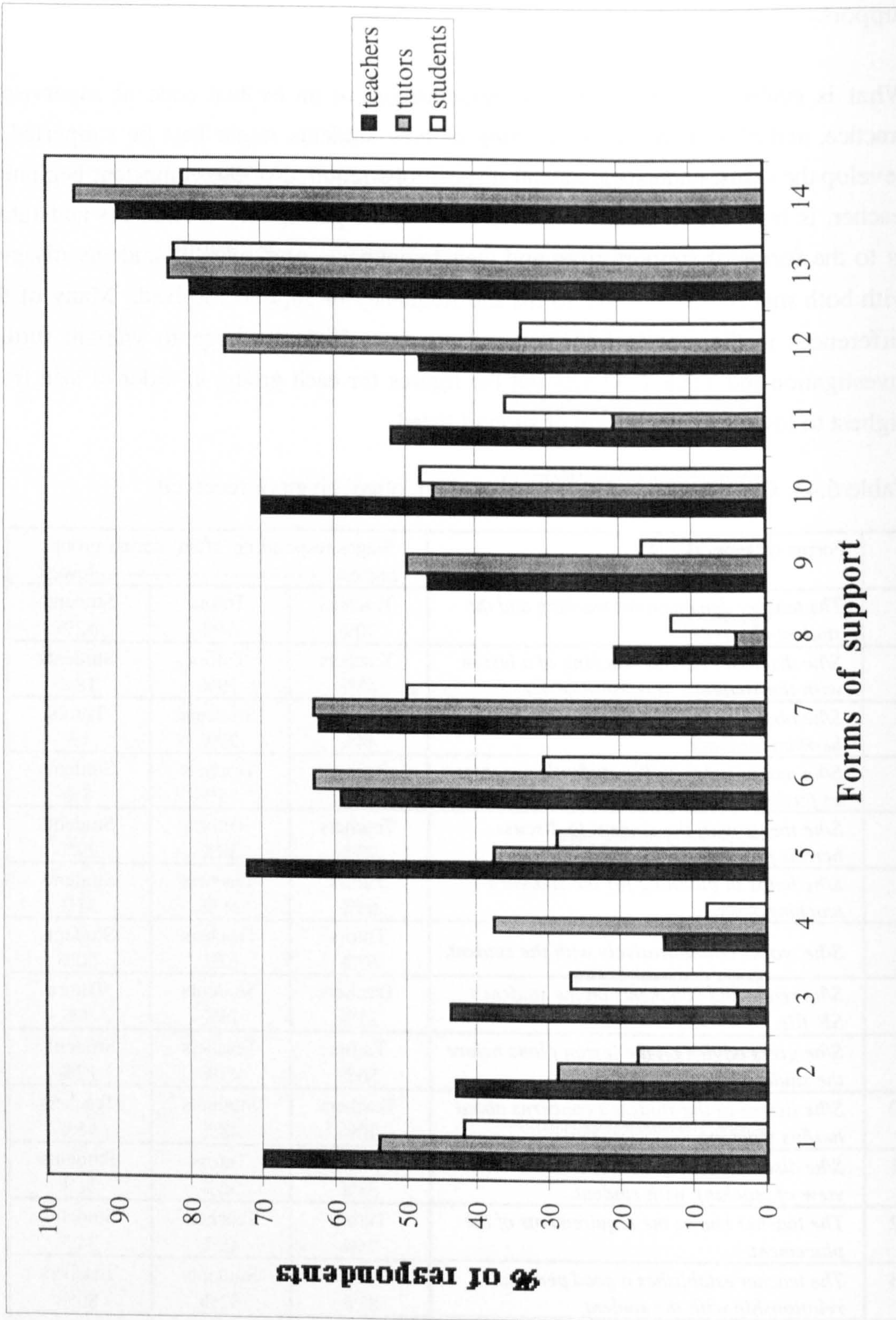


Figure 6.19 (facing) shows the reports from each group graphically. On all but two items, fewer than 50% of students reported that they often received the support listed. Although the differences are small and unlikely to be significant, the responses to item 13 are interesting in that both students and tutors rated the frequency of a good relationship between the student and the teacher higher than did the teachers themselves.

One set of figures in particular give cause for concern and highlight the mismatch in the perceptions of the three partners. Seventy-five percent of TEI tutors reported that teachers frequently supported students through their knowledge of the TEI's requirements for the placement but only 48% of teachers and 34% of students agreed with this view.

6.8.6 Support from tutors: comparing perceptions

Tutors and students were also asked to indicate the forms of support 'often' given by the tutors and received by the students. (See Table 6.44.) While there were variations observed in the reports from the year groups of students, when the tutors' figures are compared with the mean figures from the students, the two groups differed in their assessment of support 'often' given/received on 13 of the 14 forms listed.

In all instances, tutors selected 'often' more than did the students, with differences in responses ranging from 4% (tutor discussed her/his own teaching with student) to 44% (2 items: 'the tutor met with the student to discuss progress' and 's/he listened to the students' concerns about teaching'). The fourteenth item, 'tutor demonstrated and student observed', received equal but virtually negligible responses from both groups (4%).

It seems that, while tutors believe they are frequently providing the forms of support listed, the students do not perceive this as happening. It could be argued that four of the forms of support that received 100% responses from tutors (3, 4, 5 and 8) are standard elements of tutor visits. Either they did not happen or, more likely, happening in the context of an assessment event, the students did not recognise them as supportive acts.

Table 6.44: Tutors' and students' reports on the support 'often' given by tutors (%)

Ways in which tutors support students	TEI tutor	students n = 446				
	n = 24	mean	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
<i>The tutor demonstrated and I observed</i>	4	4	12	2	3	1
<i>S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me</i>	13	9	22	6	4	2
<i>S/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback</i>	100	59	82	45	56	52
<i>S/he made notes on my progress as feedback</i>	100	59	81	52	53	52
<i>S/he met with me to discuss my progress</i>	100	56	73	47	53	51
<i>S/he helped in planning for my teaching</i>	67	24	33	24	20	17
<i>I worked collaboratively with the tutor</i>	38	15	32	16	8	5
<i>S/he read and commented on my SE file</i>	100	63	80	59	55	58
<i>S/he gave advice on my lesson plans before I taught</i>	33	13	32	8	4	8
<i>S/he listened to my concerns about my teaching</i>	88	44	56	41	48	30
<i>The tutor discussed her/his practice, concerns etc..</i>	58	26	35	24	28	17
<i>The tutor knew the requirements of the placement</i>	100	87	89	85	87	86
<i>I had a good personal relationship with the tutor</i>	96	69	80	62	71	62
<i>The tutor gave me information about the class/children</i>	21	6	16	2	4	3

Of the 25 BEd 1 respondents who made additional comments, no real pattern was discernible other than a feeling that tutors were 'generally helpful and supportive'. Thirty-one second year students also added comments, all but three of whom made positive comments on the amount of support, guidance and advice given. Two of the other three felt they had had little contact with the tutor, while the third thought her tutor had been most unhelpful, even when asked.

The majority of the twenty-six BEd 3 students who commented similarly emphasised the sympathetic, caring, friendly and supportive attitude of their tutor. In BEd 4, 5 of the 20 students reported little or no support, or problematic relationships. Of the other 15, the most common form was moral support, general encouragement and confidence building (9).

6.8.7 Main findings

- Overall, teachers established a good personal relationship with their students and supported them by providing information on the children, demonstrating teaching, discussing their progress and listening to their (professional) concerns.
- A minority of teachers read the student's teaching file or made notes on his/her progress for the TEI tutor.
- The kinds of support offered were similar from year to year, with some minor variations.
- Teachers with Year 1 students were more likely to demonstrate teaching and to observe the student teaching, giving feedback afterwards. Those with Year 4 students were more likely to work collaboratively with the student and to meet with her/him to discuss progress.
- Tutors from the TEI varied in the extent to which they demonstrated teaching, worked collaboratively with students and gave advice on lesson plans. Some of this variation is likely to be related to the year of the course in which the tutor was operating. The four items which all tutors reported that they did 'often' are standard elements of the tutor visit to observe and assess.
- Students' perceptions of support given indicate that in Year 1, teachers were more likely to demonstrate teaching, observe the student teaching and give feedback, and work collaboratively with the student, than in the other years of the course. (Working collaboratively was also a feature of Year 4 where it was a specific requirement of the placement.)
- Perceptions of the frequency of the forms of support listed varied considerably across the three groups of students, teachers and tutors, with students reporting lower incidences than the other groups, in the main.

6.9 Phase 1: Students' Views on Learning

Students' views on their own learning were elicited through several questions which used the learning outcomes and requirements of the course as a framework. In this way, the terminology should have been meaningful to them and based on shared expectations, at least of tutors and students.

6.9.1 Support from Faculty-based Programmes

Students were asked to indicate which of the Faculty based programmes within the course had helped them during the placement. Table 6.45 details the views of students in each cohort as to which programmes helped 'a lot' (coded 1), 'some' (coded 2) and 'not a lot' (coded 3).

Students' responses to each element of the course listed were subjected to statistical analysis (chi-square). The figures for Preparation for Teaching, Professional Studies, Language, Environment and Audio-visual were significant at $p \leq 0.01$ (indicated ***); the figures for Mathematics were significant at $p \leq 0.01$ (**); those for Religious and Moral Education were significant at the $p \leq 0.05$; while the remaining 2, Expressive Arts and Educational Computing, did not reach significance.

Table 6.45: Students' perceptions of the contribution of faculty-based programmes (%)

Part of programme	BEd 1			BEd 2			BEd 3			BEd 4			
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	
Preparation for Teaching	82	10	5	54	37	9	60	32	9	46	44	9	***
Professional Studies	6	24	63	13	42	39	15	57	26	26	44	29	***
Language	42	48	6	45	46	9	22	41	32	15	40	37	***
Mathematics	44	43	11	50	38	11	30	53	15	26	48	21	**
Expressive Arts	36	51	9	35	46	17	36	55	8	30	48	16	NS
Environment	31	51	13	15	52	32	25	41	31	15	51	25	***
Religious & Moral Educ.	4	26	64	10	37	47	4	22	65	27	37	30	*
Educational Computing	6	21	66	3	28	64	3	29	60	23	41	28	NS
Audio-visual	20	39	36	9	32	57	3	19	67	23	38	34	***

Codes : 1 = a lot; 2 = some; 3 = not a lot

The pattern of data across the years for each of the parts of the course indicates that some were useful in all four years, some were useful within specific years while others were regarded as not particularly helpful during school experience in any of the four years. In summary:

- Preparation for Teaching - significantly helpful in all four years, particularly in First Year;
- Professional Studies - perceived as not very helpful in Year 1 but increasingly regarded as helpful across the years of the course;
- Language - perceived as most helpful in Years 1 and 2, less so in Years 3 - 4.
- Mathematics - regarded as 'a lot' or of 'some' help' in Years 1 and 2 but less so by students in Years 3 and 4;
- Expressive Arts - fairly consistent across the year groups, with the highest figures for 'some' help, followed by 'a lot' and then 'not a lot', although the patterns did not reach significance;
- Religious and Moral Education - this was not perceived as very helpful during school experience by a number of students, particularly in Year 2;
- Educational Computing (not significant) - distribution of responses was fairly consistent across the year group, with only Year 4 showing a shift from 'not a lot' of help to 'some'/'a lot';
- Audio-visual - the patterns across the year groups indicate that only in Years 1 and 4 were students more positive towards the contribution that this element of the course made towards their success on school experience.

The usefulness, or otherwise, of specific programmes will inevitably be linked to the requirements on students to 'teach' particular subject areas during school experience. Not all subjects will be covered during each placement, other than during the 10-11 week placement in Year 4 where students have virtually sole responsibility for the teaching programme for a school term. Mathematics and Language, the core subjects of the Scottish curriculum, were taught during each placement but even here, the relevance of the on-campus programmes was reported less during the final two years.

When asked to suggest changes to make the programmes more useful, 36 BEd 1, 85 BEd 2 students, 41 BEd 3 and 37 BEd 4 students made suggestions for changes to the programme. Overall, the responses tended to reflect individual preferences and

problems rather than any general pattern of deficiency. In BEd 1, 19 students requested more 'Preparation for Teaching' (PFT) classes. In BEd 2, the most frequently requested changes were: more preparation for school experience, either through PFT sessions and tutor contact (18), or just more time free from assignments etc., to plan (9). In years 3 and 4, few suggestions were made by more than one or two respondents and the responses were often contradictory e.g. in BEd 3, there were calls for both more audio-visual classes and for fewer such classes.

6.9.2 Learning on Placement

Students were aware of the areas of teaching on which the school experience blocks were intended to focus in each year. These were used as the basis for a series of questions across the year groups which attempted to identify the key learning areas for each cohort during the final placement of the year.

Learning in BEd 1

The areas of teaching which first year students were expected to develop in each year were listed and students asked to identify the three key areas only. They were then asked to identify who they thought had contributed most to that development – the tutor(s) at Jordanhill (J), the teacher(s) in the school (T) or both (B) – expressed as percentages of those selecting each area of learning.

Table 6.46: Key Learning Areas for BEd 1 students (n = 110)

Areas of teaching	% selecting each area	J (%)	T (%)	B (%)
forward planning	39	63	12	16
short term planning	33	39	8	39
presentation skills	25	14	43	32
responsiveness	24	8	65	19
relationships with children	31	3	44	29
classroom management	46	2	59	35
evaluation and assessment	24	19	35	31
self evaluation	18	40	5	40
personal qualities	8	0	11	67
commitment to development	5	17	17	33

For BEd 1 students, the three key learning areas were: classroom management, forward planning and short-term planning although only one of these was selected by more than

50% of respondents. The teacher assisted more with the first of these and Jordanhill with the last two. Where Jordanhill and the teacher were directly compared, planning and evaluation were supported more by Jordanhill with the practical classroom skills perceived as being supported by the teacher.

This reflects the division of responsibilities set out by teachers and tutors in 6.6. However, although both teachers and tutors saw a strong role for Jordanhill in the development of personal qualities and commitment, this was not a key area for this cohort.

Learning in BEd 2

In second year the same areas of teaching were addressed on school experience but students also had a list of specific requirements which they were expected to work on. Table 6.44 shows the key learning areas for BEd 2 students during 1993-94 (they were again asked to select the **three** key ones).

Table 6.47: Key Learning Areas for BEd 2 students (n = 127)

Areas of teaching	%	Areas of teaching	%
forward planning	43	classroom management	67
short term planning	28	evaluation and assessment	42
presentation skills	43	self evaluation	17
responsiveness	29	personal qualities	9
relationships with children	32	commitment to development	13

The key areas for BEd 2 were classroom management (the first choice for BEd 1) forward planning and presentation skills. Personal qualities and commitment to development were least frequently selected. In a follow-up question, students were asked simply to indicate if they had or had not made progress on each of the specific requirements and, if so, who had supported them in that (with no limit on the number of areas which could be selected). Table 6.48 presents the responses.

The five areas in which BEd 2 students reported most progress were: operating a simple work programme (83%); taking responsibility for two consecutive days (83%); teaching a reading group (79%); differentiation (79%); and using an integrated framework in forward planning (78%). Jordanhill was of particular support in planning (3 aspects) while the teacher supported their progress in the other aspects.

Table 6.48: Students' reports of progress and who had helped in Year 2

Area of teaching progressed most in?	% (n=127)	J (%)	T (%)	B (%)
Using a curriculum framework in forward planning	59	89	5	7
Using an integrated framework in forward planning	77	82	6	11
Planning a series or sequence of lessons	68	51	16	23
Resource-based learning/teaching	65	40	16	40
Operating a simple work programme	83	18	51	33
Moving from one curricular area to another	57	18	51	26
Moving from one mode of learning to another	50	17	55	27
Differentiation	79	34	28	36
Group work	69	32	35	33
Teaching a reading group	79	14	58	25
Working in all curricular areas	54	29	25	43
Practical activities	73	18	44	34
Studying the transition from home to school	52	2	92	3
Taking responsibility for two consecutive days.	82	8	61	25

Over 50% of students reported making progress in each aspect listed. Where progress is not reported it may be that none was made or, alternatively, that there was no room for improvement, by the student's assessment.

Learning in BEd 3 and BEd 4

The areas of teaching for the final two years of the course were the same and therefore the data from the two year groups are presented together. Responses to the question on progress on the specific requirements are presented in two separate tables.

Table 6.49: Students' views of three key areas of learning in Years 3 (n=117) & 4 (n=92)

Areas of teaching	BEd 3 %	BEd 4 %
aims and objectives	29	25
preparation	28	55
content/skills	13	50
elicitation	22	33
responsiveness	30	47
resources	8	24
organisation, etc.	48	78
supervision	32	40
assessment of pupil learning	59	75
commitment to development	11	25

Both groups identified assessment of pupil learning, organisation and 'responsiveness' as key areas of development, with preparation an important aspect in 4th year. All figures bar one (aims and objectives) were higher in BEd 4 than BEd 3. As in Years 2 and 3, students were then asked to indicate all areas of progress during the year and who had helped - Jordanhill (J), the Teacher (T) or both (B).

Table 6.50: Students' reports of progress and who had helped in Year 3 (n = 117)

Area of teaching progressed most in?	%	J (%)	T (%)	B (%)
Using 5-14 Strands & Outcomes in programme	72	65	4	24
Curricular forward planning	50	73	5	15
Forward planning using integrated frameworks	51	70	7	22
Collaborative working with teacher	61	14	70	21
Providing for collaborative group work	76	52	18	30
Experiencing all aspects of Teacher's role	42	8	94	6
Reviewing progress daily	62	60	22	19
Reviewing progress fortnightly	61	75	8	13
Assessment & evaluation of pupils	83	45	12	36

In Year 3, most progress was reported in items 9, 5 and 1 with over 50% of students reporting progress on all individual aspects other than 'experiencing all aspects of the teacher's role. In the different forms of planning, the support of Jordanhill was clearly acknowledged, with review and evaluation viewed as part of the TEI's contribution.

Teachers helped students in succeeding in 'collaborative working with the teacher' and in gaining 'experience of the wider role of the teacher'.

Table 6.51: Students' reports of progress and who had helped in Year 4 (n = 92)

Area of teaching progressed most in?	%	J (%)	T (%)	B (%)
Using 5-14 Strands & Outcomes in programme	76	64	10	19
Applying Specify-Plan-Implement-Evaluate model	49	82	7	13
Planning using different curricular frameworks	53	39	20	35
Taking increased responsibility in each curricular area	79	18	52	25
Increasing your day-to-day teaching skills	91	13	67	13
Working within a school's teaching programme	82	1	81	9
Being involved in the wider activities of a school	65	0	90	5
Working collaboratively with the teacher	73	3	75	21
Working as a member of team	70	5	75	11
Reflecting on your own development	83	26	42	13

Students in BEd 4 reported a high incidence of progress across all aspects of the school experience requirements. Particular areas of progress included: improved day-to-day teaching skills (92%); reflecting on own development (84%); and increased responsibility (80%).

The teacher was accorded a stronger role in helping progress in the majority of aspects, indicating a far greater input to student development than in any of the other three years. This may well be a consequence of the ten week placement and the experience of being placed with one teacher for such a long period of time.

The main findings arising from the data presented in this section are:

- in the first two years, more students reported progress on classroom skills and planning than other aspects of development;
- the supervising teacher tended to support the former while the TEI tutor supported planning;
- in the third and fourth years, assessment, organisation and interacting with children were areas of progress;
- teachers contributed to the development of their grasp of the teacher's role;
- the TEI supported the more technical aspects of planning, curricular

frameworks and, for some, encouraging reflection; and

- in general, the emphasis shifted from the TEI as a source of support, to the school as the students progressed through the four years of the course.

6.10 The Role of the School

Students were asked to indicate if they thought that the school should have a greater role to play in the training of student teachers and, in particular, in the final grading of students on placement.

Table 6.52: Schools should have a greater role in training students (n = 446)

Year group	Yes (%)
BEd 1 (110)	74
BEd 2 (127)	62
BEd 3 (117)	65
BEd 4 (92)	53

Fifty-five BEd 1 students made additional comments, 42 of whom had said 'yes' and 13 had said 'no'. Only a small number of students considered that 'more' might mean a qualitatively different experience rather than a quantitative one. Most read 'more' as simply more time to e.g. do more teaching practice to observe, talk to and learn from more experienced teachers. In consequence, the majority of the 'yes' group were concerned with more time in school which would allow them to gain more practical experience and an increased opportunity to learn from teachers (who know what it is 'really' like). A few (3) simply said it was an important part of the course and 6 were of the view that the school is where the learning really happens e.g. *'Everything about teaching is learned in school'*. Only one acknowledged that there might be practical difficulties in schools taking on 'more'.

In BEd 2, 89 students added comments. Of these, 8 came from those who were 'unsure' and their comments showed no real pattern other than a feeling they did not know enough about the process to judge. Of the 24 'no' respondents, 7 interpreted it in terms of their own placement school, defending them as very welcoming and supportive (*'could not do more'*). Six felt that the teacher/school had enough to do and 8 felt that students needed both theory and practice and that the balance was fine as it was, acknowledging a difference in the roles of school and TEI. Far more comments were in favour of an increased role for schools (57). Eight interpreted this as more time in

school, however, while 7 argued for the 'reality' of school experience over the TEI component and another 7 considered they learned more on placement. Six specifically mentioned assessment and an increased role/weighting for the school/teacher.

Eight second year students felt that the schools had been less than committed to their learning and felt that a more structured role for the school might help in this respect. No student explicitly or implicitly mentioned shifting the responsibility entirely to the school and 9 appeared to consider that the TEI still had an important role in training the teachers and/or identifying appropriate schools.

Sixty-nine BEd 3 students added to their responses, 48 who had responded 'yes', 18 'no' and 3 who had opted for the status quo. Twenty-four of the 'yes' group responded in terms of more time in school rather than more responsibility, given the view that more was learned from practical experience in schools than in the TEI. Twelve thought schools should be more involved generally: improved liaison, assessment and evaluation practices, and support for the student were all identified as potential benefits. Two students felt that if schools played a greater role, they would not treat students as 'an extra pair of hands' (particularly if they were paid for it). Potential problems included: lack of training (2), resources (1) and personality clashes (3). Four students said that schools should be screened to ensure they actually wanted to have students.

Of the 18 in the BEd 3 'no' group who provided additional comments, 6 felt that the balance between school and TEI was about right – each was important. Four felt schools had enough to do as it was and 6 were concerned about the differences in standards and expectations which might be encountered between schools.

Fifty-six BEd 4 students added comments, 26 of whom had said 'yes', 26 had said 'no' and 4 had selected neither. Several of the 'yes' group qualified their agreement with comments such as 'the role needs to be defined', 'the teachers need training' and 'only if they want to'. Other comments in support of a greater role referred to the school being the most important/beneficial part of their training (8). Of the 'no' respondents, 7 considered it fine as it was (as did the 'neither' group). Others commented on the lack of standardisation and consistency across schools and teachers (6) and the attitudes of teachers and schools (5).

The second question in this section asked if schools/teachers should have a greater role

in determining their final grade for placement.

Table 6.53: Schools should have greater role in the final grading of students
(n = 446)

Year group	Yes (%)
BEd 1	72
BEd 2	70
BEd 3	60
BEd 4	63
Mean	66

The mean figure in Table 6.53 is similar to those from supervisors and remit holders when asked whether schools should have a greater role in formative assessment but much higher than those for final grading (Table 6.24). The figures from the tutors, teachers and remit-holders for an increased role in the final grading were much lower at 34%, 37% and 38% respectively.

Additional comments were received from 59 BEd 1 students, 46 of those from the 'yes', 7 from the 'no' and 6 from the 'don't know' groups. The majority of the 'yes' responses were based on the argument that *'the teacher sees more of the student's work than the tutor'* although 2 acknowledged that there could be personality clashes. One student felt that while the teacher could provide a better overall evaluation of the placement, close tutor and class teacher links were vital in determining the final grade. Of the 'no' group, two students felt that teachers/schools were not always sure of the requirements of the placement while another 2 thought personal relationships might be problematic. One thought teachers had enough to do while another was concerned about consistency across schools. Overall, students in the first year of the course were most in favour of an increased role for schools in both the training and the assessment of students.

Eighty seven BEd 2 students added further comment. Of the 9 from the 'unsure' group who made an extended response, most said they just did not know although 5 did add that the nature of the student-teacher relationship could have a significant effect on a student's assessment. Of the 'no' group, 16 added comments: 6 thought personalities and relationships could get in the way of a fair assessment and 7 thought teachers lacked the up to date expertise and experience needed. The majority of students did feel that the teacher/school should play a greater role with 62 expressing further views.

Forty-three justified a greater role for the teacher because *'the teacher/school sees you on a day-to-day basis'*, with 10 arguing that that the tutor assessment situation (crit) was an unreal or atypical performance. Six students were concerned about the effect of the student-teacher relationship on the reliability of the assessment process, with 3 suggesting that other members of staff should also have a role in this.

Seventy-four BEd 3 students made additional comments, 46 from the 'yes' category, 18 from the 'no' and 10 'other' responses. For 37 'yes' students, their decision was based on the view that the teacher/school sees more of the student and his/her teaching and so is in a better position to assess the student's performance. Some perceived problems including the school where the student is not wanted (3) and personality clashes (2).

Of the 'no' respondents, 8 were concerned that there was lack of commitment to the training of students by the teacher/school. Seven were concerned that a lack of awareness of the requirements, the criteria for assessment and up to date knowledge might be detrimental to the grading process. The 'other' group were unsure if this was a good idea or not, citing problems of personality clashes and a lack of standardisation across teachers.

Thirty four of the BEd 4 students who completed the questionnaires added comments on the issue of final grading, many making more than one comment. Thirty-four individual comments came from the 'yes' group, 22 from the 'no' and 4 from the 'don't know's. Of the 'yes' group, 14 said that teachers know you better/see more of you while 10 said they saw you in a 'natural' setting (crits being 'false' and not typical). Caution was also expressed over personality clashes and the need for training. Of the 'no' respondents, 7 were concerned about consistency/standardisation and 7 about relationships and potential problems of bias and objectivity.

A final word from the students

At the end of the questionnaire, space was provided for any additional comments or issues not already addressed. Only 10 comments were received from the BEd 1 students which tended to repeat previous points e.g. 4 requests for more PFT, or were very idiosyncratic.

Thirty-two second year students used the space provided for additional comments, but there was no real pattern to their responses. The majority were individual complaints

across all aspects of school experience and echoed much of what had been raised in response to earlier questions. There were thirty-four responses from third year students, the majority of which were negative in tone. Several were points which had been made earlier in the questionnaires and which were returned to at length at the end. The major concern, raised by 8 students, focused on perceived inconsistency across tutors in their expectations and support during placement. Six students expressed the view that some schools did not want students and that this could result in an unhappy placement.

Sixty-nine fourth year students used the space provided to raise specific concerns, the majority of which were related to the recently completed 10 week placement which finished the course; 19 praising the teacher and/or school for the support received and 14 similarly praising the tutors. One theme seemed to be that the long placement had meant an increased responsibility and had allowed them to feel part of the school and a number reported individual achievements in specific areas e.g. discipline or team teaching. A few found the placement too long (4), found their tutor or teacher unsupportive (5) or considered the assessment unfair (3).

Throughout the questionnaires, many students repeatedly stressed the need for supportive, encouraging and friendly supervisors and the majority of those who commented were very grateful when this was their experience. A recurrent but relatively minor theme was that of the school that did not appear to want students and where they were very much at the mercy of the individual teacher.

It appears that the personal aspects of the student-teacher and, to a lesser extent, the student-tutor relationships were significant features of school experience which, students believed, could virtually determine the success or failure of the student. In line with this, issues of consistency and standardisation were raised by students at each year although more frequently by those in the later years who had gained experience over a number of placements.

The views were remarkably similar from year to year and the findings raise questions as to whether or not these views are based in reality or have an element of sub-cultural myth attached to them. This is returned to in Chapter 8, following consideration of the questionnaires from the second phase of the study. The following chapter continues the themes raised in this one, looking at the responses of those students in the first year of their course during 1993-94 to the questionnaires as they progress through the four

years of the course. The discussion at the end of Chapter 7 considers the evidence from both chapters.

CHAPTER 7 PHASE 2 : THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY 1993-97

The longitudinal element of the study (Phase 2) followed the students who registered for the BEd in 1993 through the four years of the course by means of questionnaires and interviews administered at the end of each academic session i.e. four times in total. This chapter sets out the findings from this part of the study and looks for changes in perceptions, attitudes and perceived competence across the four years. It concludes by discussing the findings from this and the previous chapter, i.e. the questionnaires.

7.1 The Questionnaires

The questionnaires used in years 2, 3 and 4 of the study were based on those issued in 1993-94 albeit modified slightly each year to reflect the particular placement and the concerns of the School Experience Co-ordinator. They did however retain a considerable degree of commonality, using several of the same questions each year. This section sets out the findings from these questionnaires and some of the Phase 1 data are repeated in order to compare responses across 1993-97 within the same group of students. (Some of the BEd 1 figures were used in Chapter 6 to identify similarities and differences across the four cohorts of 1993-94.)

7.1.1 Attitude to Being on Placement

For all but the second year of the study, the same series of questions was asked of students in an attempt to determine their attitudes to being on placement in school. (Unfortunately this question was omitted from the BEd 2 questionnaire, in error.) The corresponding figures from the BEd 3 and 4 cohorts in 1993-94 are included in brackets in the table.

Table 7.1: Percentages of students each year who responded 'often' to each item

Attitudes to placement	BEd 1	BEd 3	BEd 4
	n = 110	n = 92	n = 37
	%	%	%
<i>I looking forward to placement</i>	81	47 (49)	54 (50)
<i>I feel apprehensive</i>	17	42 (33)	30 (30)
<i>I enjoy placement</i>	88	58 (66)	68 (58)
<i>I would like to work with students</i>	64	64 (64)	68 (50)
<i>Supervision is part of a teacher's role</i>	45	62 (67)	68 (62)
<i>The teacher appeared to enjoy the placement</i>	76	63 (70)	65 (65)

Students in the final two years were less enthusiastic about going on school experience placement and enjoyed it less than in first year. Responses at the end of third year show greater levels of apprehension than at any other stage. One possible explanation for this might be that this was the first time that performance on placement had been graded, rather than a straight pass/fail, with this grade contributing to the classification of the degree awarded at the end of the course. Students seemed to think that the teacher enjoyed 'having a student' less in the later years although they became increasingly of the opinion that supervising was a part of the teacher's professional role. The figures from 1993-94 are, in most instances, very similar.

7.1.2 Preparing for Placement

Students can be helped in their preparation for placement by being given some basic information on aspects of the placement. The questionnaires asked each year group to indicate if they had received sufficient information on each aspect listed in Table 7.2. (Again, the figures from 1993-94 have been included for comparison.)

Table 7.2: Students who considered information sufficient each year (%)

Information on:	BEd 1 n = 110	BEd 2 n = 121	BEd 3 n = 92	BEd 4 n = 37
<i>the school in which you were to be placed</i>	87	*N/A	86 (85)	89 (85)
<i>the duration of the placement</i>	100	98 (98)	99 (100)	100 (100)
<i>the week by week pacing of your teaching load on placement</i>	76	77 (84)	80 (80)	89 (70)
<i>how you were to be assessed on placement</i>	91	83 (89)	65 (75)	84 (84)
<i>the amount of assistance the teacher could offer</i>	66	45 (41)	49 (51)	62 (60)
<i>the kind of assistance the teacher could offer</i>	69	46 (35)	46 (51)	65 (62)
<i>the timing of tutor visits</i>	95	83 (91)	84 (92)	95 (94)
<i>the requirements of tutor visits</i>	88	81 (80)	62 (68)	95 (80)

* the students had previously been on placement within the same school

As in the analysis of the 1993-94 questionnaires, the amount and kind of support which they could expect from teachers was the least well understood. The pacing of teaching was not clear to around one quarter of students in Years 1 and 2 of the course. The views of the students as they progressed through the four years of the course are very similar to those of 1993-94.

Table 7.4 : Forms and frequency of teacher support experienced by students, 1993-97

	BEd 1 n = 110				BEd 2 n = 121				BEd 3 n = 92				BEd 4 n = 37				χ^2
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
A	50	47	2	1	48	42	5	0	36	53	9	2	27	57	11	3	0.1
B	29	52	18	0	26	45	19	2	14	49	36	1	11	68	22	0	0.01
C	46	45	9	1	34	46	16	0	23	65	9	3	24	51	19	5	0.01
D	11	27	15	46	8	17	22	49	7	16	25	52	5	24	32	38	0.1
E	34	46	19	1	34	33	24	2	28	38	32	0	27	51	22	0	n.s.
F	39	49	11	1	31	52	12	0	25	48	26	1	22	57	22	0	0.1
G	59	34	5	2	50	36	9	0	30	60	8	2	43	51	5	0	0.01
H	13	52	35	1	21	30	39	6	13	37	47	3	16	51	30	3	0.1
I	27	53	21	0	21	44	28	1	18	39	42	0	8	65	27	0	n.s.
J	49	42	6	0	47	36	11	0	37	47	14	2	49	43	8	0	n.s.
K	40	43	16	1	44	36	15	0	30	41	25	3	38	43	19	0	n.s.
L	42	38	12	8	45	33	8	9	24	49	18	9	46	32	5	16	0.1
M	86	12	1	0	74	13	5	5	71	25	3	1	84	14	0	3	0.001
N	86	12	3	0	75	18	2	0	65	30	4	0	70	27	0	3	0.001

Code: 1 - often
 2 - sometimes
 3 - never
 4 - don't know

7.1.3 Support on Placement

A number of people provide support on placement. Students were asked to indicate which people had supported them during the most recent placement, on a scale ranging from 'often' to 'sometimes' and 'never'. Table 7.3 presents the figures for those students who selected 'often' for each category of potential support.

Table 7.3: %ages of students 'often' receiving support from each person listed
(93-97)

	BEd 1 n = 110	BEd 2 n = 121	BEd 3 n = 92	BEd 4 n = 37
the PFT tutor from Jordanhill	42	37	52	46
the class teacher	76	66	80	62
the AHT/DHT/HT in the school	18	4	21	30
the senior teacher in charge of students	22	10	22	22
other teachers in the school	20	12	18	19
other students in the school	36	26	38	32

The class teacher remained the dominant source of support across the four years of the course followed by the TEI tutor who was identified as a frequent source of support by approximately 50% of students during each year other than Year 2. Other students were also a significant source of support for many of them.

7.1.4 Support on Placement: The Teacher

Students are supported by teachers during the placement and in the pre-placement visits which they make to the school in order to gather information on the school and class as well as the programme of work into which she/he is expected to fit. Pre-placement visits should include a negotiation of the way in which the TEI requirements will be met while ensuring the teacher's own forward plans are not compromised. In responding to questions on the most frequently experienced forms of support from teachers, it was anticipated that students would draw on both pre-placement days and the actual placement itself.

Table 7.4 (facing page) shows some of the key forms of support which might be expected from the supervising teacher during placement and the perceived frequency with which

each form of support was given, according to the reports of the students as they progressed from Years 1 to 4. The numbers of students selecting each category (often/sometimes/never) in each year were tested for statistical significance using a chi square test and the outcomes are shown in the final column. The main findings are presented by form of support.

A The teacher demonstrated teaching and I observed

The majority of students in each year experienced this form of support 'often' or 'sometimes'. The student was less likely to observe the teacher demonstrating a lesson in Years 3 and 4 than in the earlier years. Given the anticipated growing independence of and increased responsibility given to the student teacher as she/he progresses through the course, this is understandable.

B She/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me

Similarly, while this was not regular feature of student-teacher interaction in the majority of reports, it happened less in years 3 and 4. Students in Year 3 were more likely to report that it 'never' happened.

C She/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback

The frequency of this happening as a regular feature decreased over the years, although intermittent feedback was reported in all years. (However, evidence from the open-ended responses indicates that if it happened even once, students selected the 'some' category.)

D She/he made notes on my progress as feedback

Substantial numbers of students each year did not know if teachers made notes on their progress for TEI tutors. The reported frequency of this decreased over the years and students were more inclined to believe this never happened as they progressed.

E She/he met with me to discuss my progress

The frequency of this form of support was reported by similar proportions of students in each of the years surveyed. Only one third or fewer in each year experienced this regularly.

F She/he helped in planning for my teaching

This happened less frequently as students progressed through the course although it did seem to happen 'sometimes' for the majority of students throughout.

G I worked collaboratively with the teacher

This became less frequent with progress through the course, although a small increase was reported in Year 4 (most likely as a result of the specific requirements for the final placement).

H She/he read and commented on my SE file

For one third or more of students, the teacher did not give feedback on their School Experience File. Students in third year appeared to feel most neglected in this respect.

I She/he gave advice on lesson plans before I taught

Patterns of support were fairly similar in each year, other than Year 4 where 'sometimes' was the most reported category. Teachers did not 'often' help with planning for the majority of students in any year, either at a general or specific lesson level, it would seem.

J She/he listened to my concerns about my teaching

The majority of students reported that teachers 'often' or 'sometimes' listened to their concerns about teaching, throughout the course. A small number in each year however reported that this 'never' happened.

K The teacher discussed her/his practice, concerns & view of teaching

The majority of students reported that teachers often or sometimes discussed the practice of teaching with them. This was less frequently reported in Year 3.

L The teacher knew the requirements of the placement

Fewer than half of the students in any year considered that the teacher had a secure knowledge of the requirements of the placement. This knowledge appeared partial and some students in each year, most notably Year 3, considered that teachers had little or no understanding of the requirements.

M I had a good personal relationship with the teacher

The majority of students in each year established (they believed) a good relationship with their supervising teacher for most of the placement. A few in each year reported an unsuccessful relationship or were unsure about it.

N The teacher gave me information about the class/children

The majority of students in each year thought the teacher supported them by providing information about the children and/or class. A small number in each year did not receive this support. Again, a small number of students in each year were less likely to report that this happened frequently.

Overall, individual students experienced very different degrees of support both within and across the forms listed in Table 7.4. Students in Year 3 of the course were the least likely to express high levels of support from their supervising teachers. (They also produced the greatest number of open-ended comments for almost all questions within the questionnaires.)

In first year (1993-94), 27 of the students made additional comments on the support received from teachers. These fell into two broad categories the first of which focused on the personal style of the teacher and/or the general ethos of the placement e.g. friendly, supportive and encouraging (fewer than 15 students in any one year) while the second referred to support from ancillary staff in the school (4/5 in each year group).

Only a small number of students commented on additional support in second year (6) and these tended to be student-specific advice and guidance. In third year, 11 students made comments. Of these, 8 were positive, referring to friendship, support, encouragement and advice on resources, while 3 were negative indicating a low level of support from the teacher generally.

Only 37 students completed the questionnaire in fourth year and of these, two said that they had what they regarded as highly supportive supervisors while another two reported that the teacher simply was not present for much of the placement, leaving them to manage on their own.

Table 7.5: Forms and frequency of tutor support experienced by students, 1993-97

	BEd 1				BEd 2				BEd 3				BEd 4				χ^2	p \leq
	1	2	3	4	p \leq	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3		
A She/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback	82	16	1	0	60	39	1	0	0	34	63	1	2	62	38	0	0	0.001
B She/he made notes on my progress as feedback	81	16	2	1	61	34	2	0	0	42	54	1	1	54	43	0	3	0.001
C She/he met with me to discuss my progress	73	25	2	0	55	39	4	2	2	35	60	4	1	54	46	0	0	0.001
D She/he helped in planning for my teaching	33	58	7	0	28	53	18	1	1	11	50	36	2	16	65	16	3	0.001
E I worked collaboratively with the tutor	32	52	14	2	27	50	28	2	2	5	25	60	7	76	19	5	0	0.001
F She/he read and commented on my SE file	80	17	1	0	60	37	2	0	0	0	44	55	1	65	35	0	0	0.001
G She/he gave advice on lesson plans before I taught	32	51	13	4	15	30	44	5	5	2	15	80	1	16	51	32	0	0.001
H She/he listened to my concerns about my teaching	56	39	4	0	40	45	9	0	0	32	52	14	1	43	43	11	3	0.01
I The tutor discussed her/his practice, concerns and view of teaching	35	40	17	6	35	45	16	2	2	17	38	40	3	27	49	19	0	0.001
J The tutor know the requirements of the placement	89	9	1	0	85	13	1	0	0	74	21	1	3	87	11	3	0	n.s.
K I had a good personal relationship with the tutor	80	16	0	3	68	22	1	4	4	53	38	5	2	70	24	3	3	0.001
L The tutor gave me information about the class/children	16	45	28	7	10	26	55	4	4	1	14	82	1	5	35	57	3	0.001

Code: 1 - often
 2 - sometimes
 3 - never
 4 - don't know

7.1.5 Support on Placement: The TEI Tutor

Table 7.5 (facing) shows some of the main forms of support which might be expected from the TEI tutor during placement and the perceived frequency of the support received, according to the reports of the students as they progressed from Years 1 to 4. The numbers of students selecting each category (often/sometimes/never) in each year were tested for statistical significance using a chi square test and the outcomes are shown in the final column. (The numbers in some of the cells were very low and so the focus is on patterns rather than absolute differences.)

The main findings are presented by form of support. It should be noted that the most likely opportunity for the giving and receiving of most of the forms of support listed was during the tutor visits to the school, the prime purpose of which was the assessment of performance and progress. It is within this context that most of the students' comments have been interpreted.

A She/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback

This was a significant feature of each year for most students, although decreasing from a relatively high figure in first year. It is likely that the majority of students took this as referring to the tutor visit for assessment purposes (the 'crit') and, indeed, a small number of students inserted 'crit' or similar alongside the number circled. Students in Year 3 of the course seemed to feel they received less of this than in other years although most still reported that it happened 'sometimes'. (This would have been an essential element of any assessment visit.)

B She/he made notes on my progress as feedback

The pattern of responses mirrors those for (A). There may be some differentiation here between the written report and assessment of the performance and more formative 'notes on my progress'. The tutor may include a description of strengths and weaknesses and points for action in addition to a summative judgement on the observed teaching; this might be interpreted as feedback by the student. If so, many students in the later years did not recognise this as a regular feature of tutor support.

C She/he met with me to discuss my progress

Assuming that this was within the context of the tutor visit, many students did not see

this as providing feedback for their further development. Only in first year, did significant numbers of students feel this was happening. (Again, several students across the years inserted a reference to the 'crit' alongside this statement.)

D She/he helped in planning for my teaching

This was not a frequently encountered form of support although the majority of students received some guidance in this way. This should have occurred prior to placement, as well as during, as the student prepared for the school and class with which she/he would be working. The situation was most positive in Year 1, growing less frequent in subsequent years where reports of it 'never' happening were observed; BEd 3 students were most likely to respond negatively.

E I worked collaboratively with the tutor

In years 1, 2 and 4, significant numbers of students indicated that this was a feature of the support they received from tutors, although only in Year 4 was it a frequently reported phenomenon. (It is likely that this is again a result of the placement requirements which emphasised collaborative teaching.) Some students in each year never received support through collaborative working with the tutor and this reached a peak in the third year reports.

F She/he read and commented on my SE file

Tutors appeared to have done this most frequently in Years 1, 2 and 4; with first year significantly more frequent than the other two. More than half of the Year 3 students said this never happened, with under half reporting 'sometimes'.

G She/he gave advice on lesson plans before I taught

This was not a frequent experience for the majority of students during any year of the course and, again, students in Year 3 were most negative in their reports (80% saying it never happened).

H She/he listened to my concerns about my teaching

The tutor did listen to them often or sometimes when they had concerns about their teaching. A small number in each year (and most often in Years 3 and 4) felt this did not happen. This was one aspect where views differed less across the years of the course.

I The tutor discussed her/his practice, concerns and view of teaching

For most students this was a feature of tutor support, albeit more 'sometimes' than 'often'. A small but significant number of students reported that this 'never' happened to them; in Year 3 this figure reached 40%.

J The tutor knew the requirements of the placement

The differences in patterns of responses did not reach significance on this item, reflecting similar views across and within years of the tutor's grasp of the requirements. Most students felt the tutor did know what was expected of the student in terms of the particular placement although the figure dipped again in Year 3.

K I had a good personal relationship with the tutor

First year students reported that their relationship with their tutor was more frequently satisfactory than did students in their later years of the course. While the figures in Years 2 and 4 were similar, students in Year 3 were more ambivalent about it. Small numbers in all years did not consider they had a good student-tutor relationship or were unsure about it.

L The tutor gave me information about the class/children

Other than in Year 1, the majority of students did not receive any information about the class/children from their TEI tutors. This may be because tutors are rarely in a position to give specific information about the children in a class, particularly when compared to the kind of information which teachers can supply. However, substantial numbers of students did feel that the tutor provided some information during placement.

Within the structure of the course, the tutor has a considerable role to play before placement begins in preparing the students for the particular age/stage with which they will be working and in focusing on individual concerns during the Preparation for Teaching sessions. The highest figures recorded were those concerned with the formal requirements of the placement including the School Experience File. As with the reports of teacher support, students were most negative about the extent of support received during Year 3 of the course. Both sets of data show a clear dip in the perceived frequency of support during

this year.

Twenty-five students in first year made additional comments but these showed no real pattern other than a feeling that tutors were 'generally helpful and supportive'. The 7 students who responded in second year followed a similar pattern as did the 8 who responded in third year. Seven of the 37 fourth year respondents wrote additional comments, 2 of whom reported that they did not find the tutor supportive nor her/his advice constructive. The remaining 5 found the tutor generally supportive and encouraging.

7.1.6 Learning on Placement

Within the structure of the BEd course, the first two years are considered to form two phases with the student gaining experience across all of the stages of the nursery and primary years (BEd Course Team, 1994). One set of learning aims covers these two years and, at the end of each, students were asked to indicate which three had been the key learning areas for them during the most recent placement.

Table 7.6: Key aspects of learning in Years 1 and 2 of the course (93-94; 94-95).

Aspects of learning	BEd 1 (%) n = 110	BEd 2 (%) n = 121
Forward planning	50	78
Short Term planning	45	23
Presentation	37	25
Responsiveness	32	18
Relationships	41	27
Management	62	69
Evaluation & assessment of pupil learning	31	32
Self evaluation	26	15
Personal qualities	16	6
Commitment to development	13	12

In Year 1, most progress was reported on planning (forward and short term) and classroom management. In Year 2, forward planing and management were also key learning areas. Commitment to development and personal qualities were selected least by students in both years.

Years 3 and 4 together form a third cycle of development and the aspects of learning set out for the two years of the course are listed in Table 7.7 and 7.8, with the percentages of students who identified these as important aspects of their learning in these years. In Table 7.7, Year 3 students identified the 3 aspects of learning from the 10 listed which had been key areas during the year. These self reports of progress were fairly well spread over the aspects listed although assessment of pupil learning and organisational skills were most frequently reported.

Table 7.7: The key areas of learning for students in Year 3

Aspects of learning	BEd 3 (%) n = 92
Aims and objectives	34
Preparation	38
Content/skills	19
Elicitation	22
Responsiveness	27
Resources	5
Organisation	41
Supervision	17
Assessment of pupil learning	72
Commitment to development	14

The Year 4 students were given 12 aspects of development and asked to select the 5 that had been key learning areas during their final year. The most frequently selected in Year 4 were: assessment of pupil learning, organisational skills and greater knowledge of the content and skills of the primary curriculum.

Table 7.8: The key areas of learning for students in Year 4

Aspects of learning	BEd 4 (%) n = 37
Aims and objectives	32
Preparation	35
Content/skills	60
Elicitation	35
Responsiveness	43
Resources	6
Organisation	62
Supervision	41
Assessment of pupil learning	87
Commitment to development	30
Evaluation	54
Personal qualities	22

7.1.5 Making progress

The specific requirements for each year of the course were listed in the questionnaires and students were asked to indicate those areas where they thought they had made progress. In Year 1, students were asked to identify the **three** key areas where progress had been made while in subsequent years they were asked to identify **all** areas of progress. (It was felt that asking for ‘all’ from first year students might result in a relatively unsophisticated, blanket response.) In addition, they were asked to indicate where they had received help in developing each aspect – from Jordanhill (J), from the supervising teacher (T) or from both (B).

The contents of the tables vary from year to year, reflecting the specific demands of the programme for each year. As a result, they are not directly comparable. The data presented for each year group should be interpreted as independent findings and any comparisons

across year groups regarded as tentative. The figures under 'progress' refer to the percentages of the total number of respondents in each year reporting progress on each aspect. The figures under 'J', 'T' and 'B' reflect the percentages of those who reported progress and attributed help with this progress to one of the three categories given. (The numbers do not always add up to 100% (J + T + B) as not all students attributed their progress to help from either the TEI tutor, the teacher or any combination of these.)

Table 7.9: First year reports of progress and help (1993-94; n = 110)

		BEd 1 (%)			
		progress	J (%)	T (%)	B (%)
A	Forward planning	39	63	12	16
B	Short term planning	33	39	8	39
C	Presentation skills	25	14	43	32
D	Responsiveness	24	8	65	19
E	Relationships with children	31	3	44	29
F	Classroom management	46	2	59	35
G	Evaluation and assessment	24	19	35	31
H	Self evaluation	18	40	5	40
I	Personal qualities	8	0	11	67
J	Commitment to development	5	17	17	33

The most frequently reported areas of progress were classroom management (46%) and forward and short-term planning (39% and 31% respectively). Two areas of development, personal qualities and commitment to development showed little progress at 8% and 5% respectively. Not all students attributed any part of their progress to help from the tutor or teacher. Of those who did, help was seen as coming from both supervisors by substantial numbers of students.

Where opinion was divided between teacher and tutor, the supervising teacher was seen as contributing to: presentation skills; responsiveness; relationships with children; classroom management; and evaluation and assessment. TEI tutors helped in the development of : planning, forward and short-term; and self-evaluation.

These last two are components of the School Experience File (planning and evaluation) and

procedural in terms of successful placement completion. The remainder are concerned primarily with the developing skills of the student within the classroom and her or his personal professional development into a teacher.

In Year 2, students were asked to report all aspects of development where they considered that they had made progress and to indicate where they felt they had received support in this progress; their responses are presented in table 7.10. Unfortunately, while the data for progress can be relied upon the figures in the subsequent columns are less reliable. This question was included in all seven questionnaires issued to students during the study and in each instance, some students identified sources of support where they had not reported progress and, unfortunately, these were entered on the computer databases unnoticed.

In 6 of the 7 sets of questionnaires, it was possible to go back and re-calculate the figures for each part of the question. It was not possible to do this for the Year 2 data of the second phase as the questionnaires were destroyed before the anomaly was identified. The analysis of the other 6 questionnaires indicates that these entries have resulted in minor fluctuations in the data rather than any significant effects but, for this particular data set, any conclusions made should be treated with caution.

Table 7.10: Reports of progress and help from BEd 2 students (1994-95; n = 121)

		BEd 2 (%)			
		progress	J	T	B
A	Using a curricular framework for Forward Planning	90	69	24	21
B	Using an integrated framework for Forward Planning	93	72	10	15
C	Planning as series or sequence of lessons	88	56	20	13
D	Resource-based learning – teaching	66	35	21	18
E	Taking responsibility for one full day	85	13	61	17
F	Moving from one curricular area to another	78	13	37	19
G	Moving from one mode of learning to another	60	16	37	19
H	Differentiation	88	34	31	36
I	Group-work	76	23	36	24
J	Studying the transition from primary to secondary	64	4	54	2

The majority of BEd 2 students reported making some progress in each of the aspects listed. Planning, in its various forms, was most highly rated with differentiation reported at a similar level. An important milestone in the course of second year was successfully taking responsibility for a whole day's teaching and 85% reported progress on this.

Where students were supported in making progress, the source of that support depended on the nature of the learning. Progress in planning was again down to the TEI, as was resource-based learning and teaching. The remainder were primarily attributed to the supervising teacher, although for differentiation and group work substantial numbers of students also selected 'both'. In Year 3, the questionnaire again asked for all areas of progress and 50% or more reported making progress on each aspect of development.

Table 7.11: Reports of progress and help from BEd 3 students (1995-96; n = 92)

		BEd 3 (%)			
		progress	J	T	B
A	Using 5 - 14 Strands and Outcomes in your programme	65	68	18	7
B	Curricular Forward Planning	51	64	21	9
C	Forward planning using Integrated Frameworks	51	79	11	6
D	Working collaboratively with the teacher	64	5	20	78
E	Providing for collaborative group work	74	47	27	21
F	Experiencing all aspects of teacher's role e.g. staff development, PTA	40	7	3	91
G	Reviewing your progress daily	60	46	18	26
H	Reviewing your progress fortnightly	50	63	17	11
I	Assessment and evaluation of pupil learning	80	49	34	7

Overall reports of progress were lower than in Year 2, where all exceeded 60%. Progress in the assessment of pupil learning (80%) was most frequently reported, followed by collaborative group work (74%). Help in developing their knowledge of the curriculum, ability to plan using different frameworks and programme review procedures were attributed mainly to the TEI. Where the TEI tutor was not identified as the main source of support, this was most frequently attributed to 'both', particularly so in developing

understanding of the wider aspects of the teacher's role.

Table 7.12: Reports of progress and help from BEd 4 students (1996-97; n = 37)

		BEd 4 (%)			
		progress	J	T	B
A	Using 5-14 Strands and Outcomes in your programme	65	67	8	21
B	Applying the SPIE (specify, plan, implement, evaluate) model	32	42	8	33
C	Planning using different curricular frameworks	46	47	12	29
D	Taking increased responsibility in each curricular area	76	18	43	29
E	Increasing your day-to-day teaching skills	84	10	55	32
F	Working within a school's teaching programme	84	10	65	16
G	Being involved in the wider activities of a school	57	0	76	10
H	Working collaboratively with the teacher	54	5	80	10
I	Working as a member of a team	68	0	72	24
J	Reflecting on your development	87	28	16	53

In Year 4, progress was reported in all aspects bar two by more than 50% of the students (using SPIE (32%) and planning using curricular frameworks (46%)). Reflecting on development, day-to-day teaching skills and teaching the school's programme, rather than their own 'lessons', were all areas where considerable numbers of student reported making progress. Planning and knowledge of the curriculum continued to be supported by the TEI while teachers assisted on the day-to-day skills, the wider school responsibilities and working as a member of a team. This set of skills and knowledge refer to the teacher as part of an organisation, moving away from the tight teacher-learner context of the early days of learning to teach. Working collaboratively with the teacher, which had been attributed to 'both' in Year 3, now came to be supported by the teacher alone for the majority of those reporting progress.

7.1.8 The contribution of on-campus programmes

The various elements of the course are intended to be complementary to school experience, with the work undertaken during the on-campus elements supporting learning in the classroom. Students were asked to indicate the extent to which the various on-campus

programmes had helped during placement. They were asked to indicate if they had helped 'a lot' (3); 'some' (2); or 'not a lot' (1). Table 7.13 presents the percentages of each year who selected 'a lot' or 'not a lot' in response to this question.

Table 7.13: Students' views on the contribution of on-campus programmes (93-7)(%)

		BEd 1 (n = 110)		BEd 2 (n = 121)		BEd 3 (n = 92)		BEd 4 (n = 37)	
		3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
A	Preparation for Teaching	82	5	41	10	52	4	65	3
B	Professional studies	6	63	15	21	18	24	19	27
C	Language	42	6	20	19	25	12	27	19
D	Mathematics	44	11	24	17	40	7	22	11
E	Expressive arts	36	9	39	13	39	11	46	14
F	Environment	31	13	23	16	28	17	22	16
G	General Elective	3	83	19	47	23	64	5	41
H	Religious & Moral Education	4	64	7	68	9	46	8	35
I	Educational Computing	6	66	5	78	5	55	49	14
J	Audio Visual	20	36	7	58	9	45	38	14

Codes: 3 – a lot; 1 – not a lot

Forty-five suggestions for changes to the on-campus programmes were made by Year 1 students. There was no real pattern other than 19 requests for more PFT; the remainder tended to be small numbers of students requesting more of a specific curricular area or teaching skill e.g. mathematics (3) or discipline (4). Sixty-eight suggestions were made by students in their second year of the course. The majority were individual comments on specific aspects of the course e.g. 'more language', although 37 requested more PFT classes.

Sixty Year 3 students made suggestions for changes, most making more than one. Again the largest category was 'more PFT', cited by 17 students but the second most frequent response was a plea for greater consistency amongst tutors in terms of expectations and standards (11 students). Clearer guidance on expectations and requirements was also requested (9). Ten students asked for more practical help (e.g. resources and/or materials) and more of some specific subject areas (6). These were somewhat contradictory however, with requests for both more and less of some subjects (e.g. professional studies and audio-

visual). A wide range of individual concerns was observed, ranging from greater continuity across years of the course to requests for smaller tutorial groups.

In Year 4, 12 students made additional comments on the in-faculty programmes. No-one mentioned specific curricular areas but rather they took an overview of aspects of the course. Specific references were made to a lack of consistency across departments within and across the years of the course (3), closer match between lectures/tutorials and school experience requirements (2). Two students suggested a 'guidance' or 'mentor' tutor for each student, someone who could give general support and advice: *'a mentor tutor who you have for 4 years who knows your results and developments in all areas of the course, not just isolated subjects'*. This would help to *'organise learning and help self evaluation'*. Other comments by individuals included: time management, writing report cards, dealing with parents and stress management.

7.1.9 The role of the school

Each year students were asked if the school should play a greater part in the training of students than it had done, in their experience. A second question asked if the school should play a greater role in the final grading of the student. The corresponding figures for 1993-94 are included for comparison (in brackets) in the tables which follow.

Table 7.14: Students' views on an increased role for schools (93-97)

Year group	Yes (%)
BEd 1 (110)	74
BEd 2 (127)	66 (62)
BEd 3 (117)	71 (65)
BEd 4 (92)	68 (53)

Each year, the majority of students responded positively to the suggestion that schools should take a greater part in the training of students. Fifteen of the 121 BEd 2 students commented on an increased role for the school in teacher training. As in Phase 1, most (10) interpreted this as more time in school. Two students qualified their agreement with the need to ensure that schools and teachers were providing a quality experience for the student by, for example, monitoring the placement schools. The 3 BEd 2 students from the 'no' group who provided additional comments had differing reasons for rejecting the

notion; 2 mentioned the need for 'theory' and the role of the TEI in that aspect, while the third stated that the schools did enough already and that more might be imposing upon their goodwill.

In third year, 69 students provided additional comments. Of these 50 had selected 'yes', 18 said 'no' and 1 was 'unsure'. Of the 'yes' group the most common justifications given were: the need for practical experience (16); placement is where you learn more (6); and the 'reality' of school experience (6). Six also argued for a greater role for the school because they were concerned that the schools did not appear committed to the training of students and considered that an increased responsibility might alter this.

Those in Year 3 who argued for no change felt that the schools did enough already (5), the status quo was satisfactory (3) or the potential for problematic student-supervisor relationships was too great (3). The single unsure respondent was concerned about the mis-match between the views and practices of the TEI and the school, with the latter often being outmoded and 'bad' practice.

In fourth year, 18 additional comments were made, with 11 giving support to an increased role, albeit with some reservations. More time, more weighting in assessment and the relevance of practical experience were all cited by one or two students. Reservations focused upon the need to ensure teachers knew what they were doing, with clear guidelines to reduce the variation experienced across schools. The 'no' group (7) showed no real pattern, variously mentioning inconsistency across schools, schools already doing enough and having other priorities, or that the status quo was fine.

Table 7.15: Students' views on the role of the school in final grading (93-97)

(corresponding 93-94 figures in brackets)

Year group	Yes (%)
BEd 1	72
BEd 2	73 (70)
BEd 3	75 (60)
BEd 4	68 (63)

In Year 2 students, the overall percentage who considered that schools should have a

greater role in the final grading for placement was similar to that of the 1993-94 BEd 2 cohort. Fifteen of them made additional comments, with 7 of those who said 'yes' arguing that the teacher sees more of the student's work, the tutor visit is artificial and atypical, and/or that the tutor only sees 2 sessions out of a five week placement. Three who rejected the idea thought that the nature of the student-teacher relationship could be a source of difficulty; 2 thought the school had a greater responsibility to the children; 3 simply did not know.

In Year 3, 78 made additional comments, 57 in support of an increased role, 16 against it and 5 were unsure. As in the other years, the main justification for an increased role was based on the day-to-day nature of the teacher's involvement in and observation of the student's teaching (33) as opposed to the tutor's 2 or 3 visits during the placement. Eleven students specifically mentioned the 'reality' of the day-to-day practice as compared to the artificial or false nature of the tutor visit. Qualified agreement was given by 11 students, with the nature of the student-teacher/school relationship the most frequently cited factor.

Of those in Year 3 who disagreed with an increased role, 10 referred to the student-supervisor relationship, with 3 questioning whether the teacher knew the requirements of placement well enough to make such a judgement. The teacher's ability to make a reliable assessment was questioned by 5 students and a need for inservice was raised. The 'unsure' group were primarily concerned with the student's relationship with her/his supervising teacher.

Twenty-one of the students in Year 4 added to their responses; 11 in favour of an increased role, 8 against and 2 for the status quo. The main reason given for supporting change was based on the argument that the teacher/school sees more of the student, in a day-to-day teaching situation (10). Qualifications included the need for training and understanding of the requirements. Those against an increase argued that the variation in experience and commitment across schools was too great (3) and that personality/relationship conflict could be detrimental to a student's grading (5).

7.1.10 Summary

The main findings from this section are:

- The majority of students maintained a positive attitude to placement throughout the course although some were less enthusiastic and more apprehensive in later years.
- Many students seemed unsure of how the assessment of their performance on placement was carried out.
- The supervising teacher was the main source of support for many students; a wide range of sources was identified by some students.
- Key aspects of learning in the first two years included management and planning; the former supported by the teacher/school, the latter by the TEI tutor.
- In the later years, progress was more frequently reported on assessment of pupil learning, evaluation, organisation and aims and objectives.
- Students reported that they received support from the school in developing the day-to-day classroom skills; the TEI helped with the procedural aspects, paperwork and self evaluation.
- As students progressed through the years of the course, the emphasis moved from the acquisition of classroom skills to progress on the wider role and responsibilities of becoming a teacher.
- Students in Year 3 of the course were most negative and generally made the greatest number of additional comments, many of them critical of their experience on placement.
- Between two-thirds and three-quarters of students thought that schools should have a greater role in their training and the final grading of their performance on placement.
- Support for an increased role for schools in both training and grading frequently referred to the reality of the day-to-day experience in the classroom, and the artificiality of the tutor visit.
- Those who rejected an increased role focused on the nature of the student-teacher relationship and the potential for bias, conflict and unfair assessment.

7.2 Discussion

The main aim of the study was to determine how the school experience component of the BEd degree course at Jordanhill contributed to the development of reflective practitioners. A number of sub-questions were posited in Chapter 4 (p.94) and the evidence presented in Chapters 6 and 7.1 was gathered with the intention of beginning to answer, and to understand, the responses to the first four of these:

- What are the views of the traditional triad of teacher, tutor and student on the roles and the respective responsibilities of faculty and school?
- Who supports the student in learning to become a teacher on school experience and how?
- What is the model of the teacher and the student teacher that pertains?
- What kinds of learning occur on school experience and how?

Throughout, the emphasis has been on the students' view of the process and their experiences on placement.

7.2.1 Initial Teacher Education as Partnership

The banner under which initial teacher education takes place is that of 'partnership' and involves various 'partners' depending on the level of the process involved. This study has focused on partnership at two levels – the school-faculty partnership and, more centrally, the classroom teacher-TEI tutor partnership, while acknowledging that these are interlinked in complex ways. Within this study, there is evidence of considerable commitment to and satisfaction gained from participation in initial teacher education at both the school and the individual teacher level but this does not necessarily signify the existence of an appropriate form of partnership underpinning the process.

In general, the concept of partnership in ITE brings with it the notion that those involved play complementary but inter-related roles in the development of the next generation of Scottish primary school teachers; this has been traditionally referred to as the 'theory' and 'practice' of learning to teach. Roles and responsibilities within the partnership may be shared in various ways. At one extreme, teacher and tutor are responsible for separate components and the onus is on the student to make the connections. At the other, the

division of labour is virtually indistinguishable, with both teacher and tutor supporting students in making sense of teaching and the symbiotic relationship between pedagogical principles and classroom practice.

In this study, the absence of contractual definitions of the roles and responsibilities for each supervisor at either the institutional or, more pertinently for the student, the personal level, means that these have been construed through practice and tradition and are implicit rather than explicit. As a result, the models of ITE and the student as a learner have been inferred from the attitudes and behaviours that the partners adopted in fulfilling their roles. The periods spent in school on placement were the times when the nature of the partnership became visible and was put to the test.

The school experience component of the BEd degree comprises a series of placements, with children at a range of ages and stages, supervised by different teachers in a variety of schools across the four years of the course. Placements grow in intensity from one day a week for 3 or 4 weeks in first year through to a full time, 10-11 week placement in the final year. In the Faculty, Preparation for Teaching (PFT) classes focus on the forthcoming placement and the requirements of the specific placement as well as providing general advice and guidance on being a student within a school. For the individual student, PFT and school experience (SE) are supervised by the same tutor within each year although, normally, they are allocated different tutors in each year of study. Part of the preparation for the student involves visiting the school on 'preparatory' days, gathering information on the school, the class and the teacher's own planning and teaching programme, and negotiating the extent of the student's involvement with and responsibility for the children.

Once the student is in the school, the TEI has little or no direct control over her or his day-to-day supervision; this becomes the responsibility of the school and the teacher with whom she/he is placed. The tutor from the TEI visits periodically to monitor progress and assess performance on specified aspects of teaching. In order that the student benefits from school placement, it is essential that there is a match between the preparations made in the TEI and what she/he eventually experiences. This can only be ensured if the partners share expectations of student teachers and how they learn, understand the purposes and requirements of the placement and work together to support the student. Those involved most directly, the teachers, TEI tutors and students themselves, will be effective if they are

working to a common agenda with well-defined roles and responsibilities, underpinned by a common understanding of the nature of ITE and shared beliefs in the characteristics, qualities and abilities of the competent beginning primary teacher (i.e. if together they constitute a 'community of practice'; Edwards & Collison, 1996, p.25). The evidence is that these conditions were only partially met in this study, with considerable variation within and across the hundreds of triadic partnerships sampled.

7.2.2 Roles and responsibilities: School or TEI?

Supporting the student to develop into a competent beginning teacher means both ensuring that he or she acquires the necessary knowledge and understanding (Stones, 1994), and is given advice and guidance on the professional craft of teaching (Brown & McIntyre, 1988). Those questioned, the supervising teachers, senior school staff and TEI tutors, were not asked for their opinion on the relevance or importance of the various aspects of learning used in the study and it is acknowledged that this might over-estimate the actual degree of consensus that exists amongst the partners.

The list used was based on the statutory requirements for ITE and has been taken to reflect a general consensus on the essential components. Much of the debate on competence-based ITE has focussed on whether, in their totality, lists of competences can embody an adequate model of the professional teacher and, in turn, provide an appropriate framework for developing effective practitioners, rather than arguing for an outright rejection of the individual components. (It is noted that criticism has been levied at perceived omissions such as an explicit place for the foundation disciplines e.g. psychology and sociology (see Stones, 1994).)

Respondents were asked to indicate where they considered the burden of the responsibility lay - with the TEI or the school and as at least 95% of those asked did give a view on each aspect listed, it seems reasonable to assume that few objected to the inclusion of the individual items, and no significant omissions were identified. Opportunities were provided for additional comments but school-based respondents were, on the whole, more concerned with the process of school experience than its content.

Opinion on 'who does what' was fairly consistent across the groups of supervisors questioned in the study, with the TEI holding responsibility for the academic input and

theoretical underpinning (the 'theory') while the school was the context for the development of classroom skills, learning about the practice of teaching in its widest sense and developing an understanding of the social and cultural aspects of being a teacher. The remit holders (representatives of school management) saw a similar separation of expertise, albeit less polarised than in the teachers' responses and with a greater tendency to see the school as an important contributor to initial teacher education.

While views were broadly consistent and many areas were regarded as, at least in part, a shared responsibility, there were a number of mis-matches in respondents' perceptions of which partner was the more appropriate source of support and guidance on specific aspects of student development. Where this happened, individuals tended to give greater responsibility to their own institution, the school or TEI, than to the partner institution. Partnerships are enhanced and more effective when the partners have an informed awareness of each other, their strengths and weaknesses, values and priorities. When that is lacking or limited, it is unsurprising that each retreats behind the safety of professional boundaries.

Where aspects were viewed as a 'shared' responsibility, it is worth considering what each might be seen to be contributing. Differentiation, for example, from the category 'classroom skills' was considered by 54% of teachers, and 63% of management as a shared responsibility; 33% of tutors considered it shared, with 57% viewing it as all or mainly a TEI responsibility. The ability to operate a differentiated curriculum demands both knowledge bases and an ability to use these effectively within the classroom context. If a split-role model were operating, sharing the responsibility might be interpreted as the TEI providing the underpinning theory and the school showing how it was 'applied in practice'. For the majority of school staff this aspect of student learning was seen as a shared responsibility (though whether a split- or integrated-role model was intended is unclear), while the tutors saw a greater role for the TEI.

The TEI may traditionally be associated with the 'theory' and the school with the 'practice' but, if they are truly as inter-related and interdependent as has been argued, then someone has to help students to make the connections between the two; research into situated learning and the effects of context indicate that the majority will be unlikely to see that interdependence for themselves (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Furthermore, if theory

informs practice and practice influences theory, this interdependency must be illustrated and observed in both contexts, the tutorial and the classroom. Theories of 'good practice' should not be regarded as fixed entities but rather as guiding principles that will be influenced by a range of contextual variables, as well as personal values and beliefs. They are transformed through experience and understanding into working theories of professional practice (Eraut, 1994).

Edwards and Collison (1996) identify two versions of how concepts of theory and practice are developed into a theory of practice during initial teacher training. Both are based on a four-phase model of student learning:

- introduction to new ideas;
- trying them out or discussing them in safe situations;
- trying them out in less safe situations, incorporating other ideas/skills;
- and finally a demonstration (assessed) of understanding in practice.

(pp.21-22)

In the first version, there is a clear separation of theory and practice with the former, which includes an understanding of educational principles, taking place in the university/with the faculty tutor (phases 1, 2 and 4), while the classroom provides the practical context for trying out new ideas (phase 3). But trying to relate theoretical understanding to practice can be more difficult than it seems in the relative calm of the tutorial room and, as a result, many students reject theory, seeing it as irrelevant, and they fall back on surviving through modelling the teacher's practice. In this study of the BEd at the University of Strathclyde, such a view was held by the many students (and teachers) who associated 'reality' with the school and viewed the relatively abstract or idealistic content of in-faculty programmes as having limited practical relevance in the classroom. Edwards and Collison reject this as a model of effective partnership.

In the second version, the students' experiences are less fragmented, with stronger links between theory and practice and the learning of one sprinkled and interspersed with learning about the other. From the start the emphasis is on putting knowledge into action, bringing about a fusion of knowing about and knowing how. Experiences need to be examined and evaluated, publicly discussed and related to other experiences, fitting them

into a wider network of understandings about teaching. Genuine partnership means that this takes place in both school and university in a planned way.

Edwards and Collison caution the reader that the first depiction of student development is a 'parody' or extreme caricature of a situation which has not pertained in England and Wales for around 15 years. The advent of formal partnership arrangements between schools and universities has led to a framework for training which emphasises the inter-relationship of 'knowledge about teaching' and the 'knowledge how of teaching' (p.25) and sees a role for both school/teacher and university/tutor in establishing and demonstrating this inter-relationship. As a result, a 'curriculum' is established for the in-school component, with the classroom teacher taking on the role of mentor, rather than supervisor, and acquiring a much more active and clearly specified role in guiding and supporting the student through this curriculum. This is not the case in Scotland where attempts at establishing 'mentoring' partnerships did not get past the pilot stage.

In 1992-93, the SOED funded a pilot project which looked at the impact of introducing teacher mentoring accompanied by an increased time in schools for students on the PGCE(Secondary) course at one TEI. The findings (Powney *et al*, 1993) showed that, while some students appeared to benefit, the evidence was not persuasive and the teaching profession remained unenthusiastic (Brown, 1996). As a result, the initiative was shelved and the time spent in school returned to the previous level, and the concept of mentor was abandoned as a formal role for teachers. The majority of classroom teachers in Scottish schools remain predominantly 'light touch' supervisors rather than mentors.

Classroom teachers therefore rejected the idea of teacher as mentor, and so too did the TEI tutors in this study. In this study, when asked directly whether schools should have a greater role in initial teacher education, the tutors were the least likely to support such a view. There are at least two possible interpretations of the tutors' responses. Firstly, it may simply be that they believed that they were the best placed to provide ITE and that, in terms of training teachers, that was their professional role, not the teacher's; the teacher's priority was supporting the learning of the children in her/his class. Thus in order to ensure that students' needs were adequately met, the TEI and its tutors should retain overall control of the process, while acknowledging that the school is an essential part of that process. The

teacher/school provides the context for the application of knowledge and skills initially acquired/introduced within the TEI, but little more.

Teachers too saw the children's learning as their professional priority. Most acknowledged that involvement in teacher education was part of their professional role, and while it was important that appropriate preparation be made for placement, this tended to hold a low priority when compared with the other duties and responsibilities they had. Many teachers did not attend pre-placement meetings of any kind and, perhaps as a result, were likely to be less well-informed of the formal requirements which students were expected to meet; significant numbers of students in all years reported that teachers did not appear to know the relevant requirements and just under half of the teachers were confident that they normally knew what these were. Where teachers did not attend updates or read the documentation, it seems plausible that they were likely to have been operating on the model of ITE that pertained during their own training and which they themselves experienced as student teachers. The commitment they expressed to student teachers' training remained very much at the level of rhetoric and was not often followed through with action.

While students' views coincided with those of the teachers, tutors showed a much higher level of confidence in teachers' grasp of the requirements. There is a difference in being aware of the requirements and taking action to support students in achieving them: teachers reported that they did not always know them and students reported that they did not behave as if they knew them. Teachers who are aware of the learning that is supposed to happen are more likely to act to facilitate it. Where they do not, it becomes more a matter of luck than design if students receive the appropriate support. Although tutors believed the teachers knew the requirements, they were unlikely to have direct evidence of how secure that knowledge was or how it affected the ways in which they interacted with the student. In consequence, tutors appeared to be making assumptions about levels of teacher support that were not substantiated. While they did not want the teachers to do more, they did appear to believe that the supervising teachers understood what the university expected of the student during the placement.

A second interpretation might involve the acknowledgement of complementarity in theory but reject it in practice, at least within the existing conditions. In other words, while they

acknowledged that schools and teachers should be in a position to contribute more to the pre-service process, many tutors (and students) were concerned about their ability to ensure a consistently effective and appropriate experience for students i.e. be models of 'good practice'. The situation at present is essentially one of 'gift-giving'; teachers are not involved in any systematic professional development that would ensure consistency of standards and input across schools and supervisors within schools. Similarly schools do not all prepare for nor welcome students, nor provide support systems once they have arrived. Fewer than half of the schools surveyed provided 'welcome packs' which gave basic information on the school and its neighbourhood and one third did not hold induction meetings for students.

The present arrangement is non-contractual and the climate is one where workload issues dominate, the establishment of an agreed curriculum for school experience and a move towards a mentoring rather than a supervisory role (Kleinberg, 1993) is an unlikely option. The TEI is reluctant to make greater demands on schools and teachers who have been hard pressed to keep up with one of the most active periods of policy publication and implementation this century; keeping the goodwill of the schools is paramount. On a few occasions, students felt this took precedence over ensuring that they received a quality learning experience.

The implication is that, in order to provide an effective experience for student teachers and make an efficient use of the expertise and experience of the partner institutions, the existing notions of partnership, as 'gift-giving' from one generation of teachers to the next and dependent on goodwill and essentially acting as hosts to students on placement (Edwards & Collison, 1996) cannot be sustained. At present the system lacks a clear role for the school, a well-defined curriculum for the student during placement and a recognition that, if the school is to play a greater role in ITE, it has to demonstrate a commitment to working with students, not just providing a class of children and viewing students as 'an extra pair of hands with a brain', as one teacher commented.

7.2.3 A model of the student teacher as learner

Teachers and tutors indicated that they, independently and collectively, contributed substantially to the student's development through a range of activities and forms of support. While many students did receive considerable support from their supervisors, overall, they were less likely to accord either of them the strong role that they themselves described.

In the summaries of the findings in Chapters 6.8 and 7.1, the focus was on the differences in support given/received across the years. In the teachers' own reports of support given in Phase 1 of the study, they appeared to vary the forms of support with the year of the course (Table 6.34). In first year, they demonstrated teaching more, observed the student teaching and advised on lesson planning. In second year, the reported frequency of most of these forms of support dropped. In third year, levels of support picked up again, particularly talking about concerns and issues in teaching; demonstration and discussion of the teacher's own practice also increased. Teachers of fourth year students reported increases in progress meetings with the student and in the frequency of collaborative working.

The teachers' reports of support are in line with their views of the 'best' years for specific aspects of learning to be a teacher where the model that emerged appeared to be one of apprenticeship in the first two years, followed by what might be construed as a reflective practitioner model (Schön, 1983) in the final two years. This two-phase model emerges from the data on how teachers believe it ought to be, i.e. is defined by those aspects of learning they deemed important as students progressed through the years of the course. But it is the ways in which the various forms of support are operationalised by teachers, e.g. what 'discussing issues and concerns' involves, and the dispositions and attitudes that are engendered, that are more revealing in determining the models of ITE that shaped the students' day-to-day experiences. The discussion therefore turns to the students' reports of support received on placement.

In 1993-94, students' reports of support often received were substantially lower than those of the teachers on all but two instances where the difference was marginal. The differences in the views of teachers and students (by year and overall) were greatest on those aspects where teachers felt they did most. Whether this is due to a difference in perception of frequency or a lack of awareness of what was actually occurring during teacher-student

interaction, is difficult to determine from the data gathered. Whichever it is, differences in perception can only be addressed through a clear definition of what constitutes appropriate support and explicit communication between teacher and student so that intended acts of support are recognised as such.

The relative levels of support across year groups are one aspect of the analysis; the baseline figures for each group and for students as a whole raise other issues. The number of teachers who never looked at students' files, met to discuss their progress or discussed their views of teaching with the students is disconcerting. The file is the backbone of the placement and contains the student's planning, copies of worksheets, evidence of pupil assessment and the evaluation of all of these. It should constitute a rich source of evidence of progress and development, particularly of their ability to reflect on and learn from the day-to-day experience of the classroom. The tutor sees it only infrequently when it is taken into account in the assessment of the crit visit and at the end of the placement when it is submitted for consideration in the final grading process.

Teachers expressed a desire to be more involved in informal, formative, assessment. The school experience file would provide a stimulus for this and more effective and meaningful discussions on progress and concerns about teaching might well result. It will not be sufficient for supervising teachers to be examples of 'good practice' in facilitating children's learning, they will also need to demonstrate skills in supporting adult learning. Being a good teacher does not necessarily transfer to being a good supervisor (or mentor).

Tutors' views of support given over-estimated those of the teachers, sometimes substantially, on half of the items listed. Specifically, they considered teachers did far more in terms of making notes on the student's progress and knowing the requirements of the placement than did the teachers themselves. On the other hand they did feel that most teachers rarely discussed their own practice, concerns and views of teaching with students and infrequently meet to discuss progress. The corresponding figures from the students tended to be lower than those of either of their supervisors on most items. The quality of teachers, beginning and established, is a highly political issue at this time and the TEI tutors, as the prime educator of teachers, will inevitably feel somewhat threatened by recent criticisms. It would not be surprising if, in such a climate, tutors felt defensive and over-

stated their confidence in the system and the level of support received by students in schools.

7.2.4 Operationalising the Model

The model that emerged from the teacher data had two phases: two years of apprenticeship followed by two years as a developing reflective practitioner. The model that emerged from the student data indicated four years of apprenticeship.

An apprenticeship approach to learning relies upon modelling the expert or master's practice, accepting it as correct and appropriate and developing the technical knowledge and skills to achieve the pre-determined end product (the 'how' rather than the 'why'). A reflective practitioner model of the beginning teacher would encourage students to compare expert practices, to explore the similarities and differences and to come to some understanding of the reasons for these. The reflective practitioner model holds that the range of personal and situational variables in teaching demands flexibility and adaptability and an armoury of possible techniques and strategies and an ability to choose to the best effect within each situation, on principled and defensible grounds (the 'why' as well as the 'how').

While both models, when applied to teaching, will demand most if not all of the forms of support listed in the questionnaires, it is in the understanding of why they are appropriate and how they are operationalised that the differences become apparent. Four examples are taken from the list and considered.

A The teacher/tutor demonstrated and I observed

Why did the teacher/tutor demonstrate and what did the student observe? In an apprenticeship model, the purpose of the demonstration would be to show the 'best' way of facilitating learning in the children and the purpose of the observation would be to identify the main features and characteristics of this performance such that the student might repeat it. The appropriateness of the teacher's performance would be self-evident and the concerns would focus on how the student might develop a similar level of expertise.

In a reflective practitioner model, the purpose of the demonstration would be to show one way of approaching a particular learning and teaching situation, while acknowledging that

there might be others. The practice would still be considered exemplary, but the particular choice of method, etc., would have to be considered in the light of specific situational variables and alongside possible alternative strategies.

In science, observation is the principal means by which evidence is gathered. That evidence can be used to generate theory or to test existing theories or hypotheses. Effective observation requires a framework of understanding which helps the observer focus in on the salient features, discard the distractors and identify the ways in which the whole process emerges from the parts. Many novices lack this framework and find it difficult to sort the foreground from the background noise (Maclellan, 1994). In either model, many students will have difficulty learning effectively without a clear observational/conceptual framework that allows them to make sense of what they experience. This form of support, 'demonstration', was most prevalent in the first year of the course, where an apprenticeship model prevailed and theoretical input had been fairly limited. It is doubtful that many students had acquired a conceptual framework of teaching which would allow them to make a great deal of sense from their observations unaided.

It is also doubtful that they had much opportunity to observe. Edwards and Collison (1996) argue that it is very difficult for students to become 'peripheral participants' (p.27) in the primary classroom. They are keen to establish themselves as 'teachers', to demonstrate competence and to be recognised as such by pupils and by other teachers, including their supervisor or mentor. This means being active, working with children, not standing back and watching. Teachers often wish to accord them such status, for the student's own self-esteem and confidence and also to establish her or his authority in the eyes of the children. Establishing the authority of the student as a teacher serves at least two main purposes. Firstly, being 'a teacher' rather than 'a student' increases the likelihood that the children will respond positively to the student teacher's attempts to control and discipline them. Secondly, it may reduce the teacher's reluctance to hand over responsibility for the children's learning and general well-being to an outsider and relative novice.

B S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me

Since in the data, teachers demonstrated teaching much more frequently than they discussed their teaching, students must have been assumed to learn from observation alone

in many instances. Arguably, this is unlikely unless the student knew what to look for (in which case it could hardly be regarded as 'new' learning). Where discussion did follow demonstration, the model of the learner held by the supervisor would influence the nature of the discussion. An apprenticeship approach would focus on identifying the key features that contributed to the effective performance with the intention that the student try them out on a future occasion i.e. modelled the teacher's performance.

A reflective student might challenge and ask questions of the teacher, probing for an explanation of why that particular intervention or this choice of resource. In such a way, the teacher would be encouraged to make explicit her or his theory of teaching and justify it with reference to beliefs in, for example, the nature of the learning and the subject area. However it is argued that teachers have difficulty in making such personal theories of teaching explicit (Brown & McIntyre, 1988; Eraut, 1994) while other researchers show that students rarely challenge or ask questions of teachers (McIntyre, 1984; Edwards & Collison, 1996). The evidence from the questionnaires indicates that the students in this study were no different and tended to listen but not question: *'I did what the teacher asked me to do without question'* (BEd 3, Phase 2).

C She observed me teaching and gave me feedback

This was most frequently reported by Year 1 students (as received from both teachers and tutors) during the first (apprenticeship) phase of learning. It seems likely, therefore, that the focus of any feedback would be at a technical level rather than a more in-depth probing of the complexities of teaching.

In the later years, ostensibly framed by a reflective practitioner model, this form of support became less frequent with between one tenth and one fifth of students reporting that it never happened. Even if it happened only infrequently, the quality of student-teacher (or student-tutor) interaction might have compensated for a lack of quantity. It is the quality of the interaction with the supervisor (the social construction of contextual understanding) that is more likely to bring about analysis and critical reflection. Evidence on the nature of the feedback given during the study is scant and gathered primarily through the interviews (Chapters 8 and 9) although the additional comments from the questionnaires give some insight. These indicate that supervisors were generally supportive, encouraging and friendly, and helped with resources in various ways, but few were challenging and thought

provoking. While various interpretations of this data might be inferred, there is an absence of a real exploration of the student-supervisor dialogue and the nature of the interaction. Where this has been undertaken by others (Collison & Edwards, 1994) the evidence indicates that little of the discussion between student and supervisor is directed at the development of 'critical reflection' but remains at a primarily technical level.

D I worked collaboratively with my supervisor(s)

While this happened at least some of the time, for nearly all of the students, the nature of that collaboration is unclear. In the first two years, it would be likely to take a more expert-novice form, with the student being directed and monitored by the teacher and this is supported by the data. The evidence indicates that, in later years, 'collaboration' was more akin to working as colleagues, being treated as another teacher. What this meant in terms of student learning is difficult to determine. The tendency in many primary schools is for the individual teacher to be regarded as an autonomous professional within the classroom; working collaboratively may mean working alongside but independently, sharing the burden but no more. But even in the final year, the student is still a 'learner', requiring support and direction in skill and knowledge development. Teachers' views on the competences indicated that learning to be a teacher, in its fullest sense, continued well into professional life and throughout. Edwards & Collison (1996) have demonstrated that collaborative or team teaching can be powerful in helping students make sense of teaching but takes skill and experience. It depends on acknowledging the student's learner status and providing appropriate support (scaffolding) to allow them to focus on the specific aims of the activities in which they are engaged.

Support 'never' received

While there may be some debate as to how respondents differentiated between 'often' and 'sometimes', the figures in the 'never' and the 'don't know' categories are also indicative of the extent of a shared understanding of the nature of the supervision process and what it involves. This begins with at the preparation stage. The information that teachers and students received prior to placement left many of them unsure of the amount and kind of support that might be given or received.

In both phases of the study, some students 'never' experienced some of the forms of support listed, while others 'didn't know'. In Phase 1, the highest figures for 'never' and 'don't know' combined were reported for:

- S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me (ranging from 18% to 36% across cohorts);
- S/he made notes on my progress as feedback (61-77%);
- S/he met with me to discuss my progress (17-27%);
- S/he helped in planning for my teaching (12-27%);
- S/he read and commented on my SE file (34-52%);
- S/he gave advice on lesson plans before I taught (21-32%);
- The teacher discussed her/his practice, concerns and view of teaching (13-24%);
- The teacher knew the requirements of the placement (12-33%).

In Phase 2, the highest 'never/don't know' figures were recorded on the same 8 items, and at similar levels:

- S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me (18-37%);
- S/he made notes on my progress as feedback (61-77%);
- S/he met with me to discuss my progress (20-32%);
- S/he helped in planning for my teaching (12-25%);
- S/he read and commented on my SE file (33-50%);
- S/he gave advice on lesson plans before I taught (21-42%);
- The teacher discussed her/his practice, concerns and view of teaching (15-28%);
- The teacher knew the requirements of the placement (17-27%).

The statements indicating greatest non-involvement were the same in the cross-sectional and longitudinal surveys. Some of these appear, on the surface at least, procedural e.g. making notes on progress, reading and commenting on the SE file, while others relate to the quality and substance of teacher-student interchange. While it might be relatively easy to establish greater consistency in the procedural items, the real contribution to the development of reflective practitioners will be through the quality of the discussion and this will demand much more than setting aside time to meet. The figures indicate a wide variation in practice.

In the absence of clear guidelines, teachers and students appear to have been reluctant to establish explicit rules of engagement but rather have manoeuvred around each other throughout. Edwards & Collison (1996) advise that ground rules must be established, that the rights of each must be made explicit. They provide two examples: the right of the mentor to intervene in potentially problematic situations (for the benefit of the student and/or the children); and the right of student to observe, to ask questions and to comment. However, with rights come conditions wherein courtesy and mutual respect should guide the ways in which these rights are exercised. (This theme is continued in Chapter 8.)

The learning that teachers believed should occur in first and final years was more clearly defined than that of the middle two years, and this was reflected in the support that teachers gave over the years of the course. In addition, students in years 1 and 4 were the most positive about their experiences on placement. Years 2 and 3 were less well defined and students at the end of year 3 were the most negative about their experiences and made the greatest number of suggestions for change and improvement.

Where the level of support was inadequate, the students did not complain - at least not during the placement and not to the teacher. Many depended upon other students in their year group, though not necessarily at the same placement school, to provide support and advice. The nature of this advice and support was fairly limited. In the interviews, other students were the first source of solace when things went wrong but they tended to provide comfort (which was all that several students said they were looking for - not analysis and reflection).

A number of teachers appeared to be providing excellent support but this appeared relatively idiosyncratic. Those students who received such support were very grateful and considered themselves fortunate.

Students' ratings of the frequency of tutor support also contained 'never' and 'don't know' data. The highest combined figures for these in Phase 1 were for the statements:

- I worked collaboratively with the tutor (ranging from 16%-60% across cohorts);
- S/he gave me advice on my lesson plans before I taught (17-60%);
- The tutor discussed her/his practice, concerns, etc. (23-38%):

- The tutor gave me information about the class/children (35-66%).

As with the teachers, the reports of 'never/don't know' in Phase 2 focused on the same items:

- I worked collaboratively with the tutor (16-37% in Y1-3; 5% in Y4);
- S/he gave me advice on my lesson plans before I taught (17-81%):
- The tutor discussed her/his practice, concerns, etc. (18-43%):
- The tutor gave me information about the class/children (35-83%).

Giving advice on lesson plans and information on children may not have been feasible actions for the tutor. Similarly pressures of time and resources would militate against working collaboratively with students. However, discussing practices and concerns about teaching appears fundamental to the development of reflection and skills of critical analysis. An awareness of alternative ways of approaching teaching situations can only be enhanced through exposure to a greater number and variety of teachers and teaching styles and an explicit consideration of their difference. Over the four years of the course, students have the opportunity to observe not only the teachers with whom they are placed, but the practices of their tutors, all of whom are qualified and experienced primary teachers. In addition, while there may be some reluctance amongst teachers to hold their practice up for scrutiny by students (particularly under prevailing conditions), this could legitimately be regarded as part of the role of TEI tutor, particularly if s/he lays claim to being a reflective practitioner within her/his professional role and wishes to encourage the same in the student teacher.

7.2.5 Learning to be a teacher

There are ways of categorising the kinds of learning with which students engage during their training. In one version, there is the formal curriculum, set down in the course handbook and expressed in the programmes of study through learning outcomes, the ways in which opportunities for learning will be made and how student progress and performance towards these goals will be assessed. Alongside this there is the informal curriculum, the optional, non-assessed involvement in education-related activities that they engage in which are not related directly to their course of study e.g. attendance at conferences or seminars given by visiting educationists, or field trips. And there is the 'hidden' curriculum, the beliefs, values and attitudes that are conveyed indirectly and, on

occasion, unintentionally in the day-to-day process of learning to be a teacher. TEIs and schools have greatest control over the first of these and least over the last.

The lack of a formal curriculum for school experience, other than that reflected in the BEd Student Handbook with its sets of requirements, leads to a focus on tasks and activities rather than learning and weakens its ability to deliver what is asked. The findings of this study are supported by Edwards & Collison (1996) who found that a focus on tasks dominated. This was detrimental to the development of pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) and diverted the student's attention away from their own learning; being busy is not the same as learning.

Aspects of knowledge and understanding, practical teaching skills and personal professional development will be acquired in each of these arenas (faculty, school, classroom and staffroom), albeit to different degrees. The experiences of the student are unlikely to add up to a consistent view of teaching and what it is to be a teacher. Faced with apparently contradictory positions, the student can refuse to acknowledge the contradictions or can make decisions based on emotional and/or intellectual reasoning. This can be regarded positively where students are using this accumulation of knowledge of 'cases' to provide the data through which their theories of teaching can be tested and developed. This requires skills of analysis and reflection that can assist them in discerning between evidence and theory and identifying underlying assumptions and preconditions. But it has already been shown that this level of analysis was rarely encouraged.

Distinguishing between evidence and theory is a skill that needs fostered. In order to make sense of her/his experience the student must test it against her/his emerging theories of learning and teaching. These will inevitably be an amalgam of personal experience as a pupil, initial exposure to the theorists and their ideas within the TEI and the personal practical theories of teaching held by teachers in the schools, and TEI tutors (Eraut, 1994; Calderhead, 1988).

This demands metacognitive skills - the ability to think about one's own thinking and learning, to make explicit, examine and reflect upon ideas and experiences that challenge existing thinking. This can be extremely uncomfortable and demanding; some will shy

away from these demands. The desire for a safe, 'correct' theory of teaching may prove too strong (Edwards & Collison, 1996).

An apprenticeship model of learning to teach provides an easier route through the process. The evidence gathered contributes to a better understanding of the technical aspects of teaching, in a cumulative sense. A view of teaching is built up piece by piece, like a jigsaw with no picture to follow, where observations and experiences which do not readily fit alongside already accepted pieces are discarded rather than seen as an indication that the original placement of pieces was not necessarily sound.

But even for the apprentice, learning to teach is more than acquiring technical skills and factual knowledge. Teaching is also a social process (as is learning to teach); it is a profession with a cultural heritage, social mores, values and beliefs (Edwards & Collison, 1996) into which students are inducted, most frequently through the hidden curriculum they experience in school and in the faculty. Calderhead and Shorrock (1994) argue that procedural, socio-political and personal knowledge bases are the substance of ITE and that learning about teaching is as important as learning to teach.

In this study, the teachers' focus has been very firmly on the procedural (learning to teach), leaving the personal (formally) to the TEI and the socio-political to be acquired through experience and the informal and hidden curricula. This way students learn, but not always in positive and pain-free ways. The personal and socio-cultural learning of the students involved in this study were explored primarily through the interviews, and the findings from these form the basis of Chapters 8 and 9.

7.2.6 Assessing the student

Two forms of assessment were identified in the study: formative and summative. Formative assessment, the day-to-day evaluation of strengths and weaknesses and identification of 'next steps', is a fundamental part of teachers' interactions with children. It is a familiar and relatively low risk form of assessment in that it is generally unrecorded, never made public nor used to determine overall success or failure on a programme of study. In the study, all respondents regarded it as an appropriate responsibility of the supervising teacher.

Summative assessment i.e. the awarding of a grade or mark at the end of a period of study or learning, is a more public act and for the student, of much greater import. In the BEd degree, the placement grades in Years 3 and 4 contribute significantly to the classification of the final degree. In the study, tutors were reluctant to accord teachers a greater role in the final grading of students at the end of placement and teachers were reluctant to accept one. Students and, to a lesser extent, remit holders were more positive on final grading although many acknowledged that reliability and validity could only be ensured through staff development and training. For the students, issues of reliability in particular crystallised at the end of the third year when the implications of grades on degree classification became apparent.

Reliability was questioned on two grounds. Firstly, respondents in all groups acknowledged the need to reduce the potential for inter-marker unreliability through establishing shared understandings, common expectations and providing clear guidance on the criteria against which students were being assessed, as well as how competence could be demonstrated.

The criteria for assessment are based on the competences for initial teacher education set down by the government (SOED, 1993a; SOEID, 1998) and are presented as general statements rather than specific learning objectives. General statements, by their very nature, allow for inter-assessor subjectivity, contributing to the potential for unreliability in the assessment of students (Stones, 1994). However, given the number of variables within each assessment event, it would be impossible to construct a series of specific learning objectives that would have relevance and applicability in the majority of instances, far less universally. Thus there is a built-in tendency for unreliable assessment that must be addressed directly by the TEIs and the schools.

Where technical skills are involved, it should be possible to reach a consensus on what a competent performance looks like. But the list of competences includes skills of critical analysis and reflection and students are expected to demonstrate professionalism and commitment to the teaching profession. These are much more difficult to define and as they are underpinned by values and beliefs are also open to subjectivity and personal bias. Edwards & Collison (1996) concluded that the development of a community of practice,

which was based on a genuine partnership between school and faculty, was required if the potential for unreliability and inter-assessor subjectivity was to be reduced.

Determining, or even contributing to, the final grade created a tension within the carefully nurtured personal relationship between supervising teacher and student. This was evident in the open-ended comments from teachers and students. The personal relationship and, with it, the potential for assessor bias, coloured the views of students in particular; arguments for and against an increased role for teachers were clouded by personal experience, with reference made to instances of very good or very bad relationships.

Any form of assessment requires that progress and/or performance is measured against something. In the case of ITE, this is ultimately the national competences published by the government for all beginning teachers. Throughout the course, performance is measured against criteria that are derived from these and reflect the particular contribution that each programme makes towards meeting the competences. In order for the assessment to be reliable, the criteria must be readily understood and the student given the opportunity to demonstrate that s/he can meet them. The criteria are developed by the TEI and applied by the tutors in summative assessment events.

Students were not convinced that the criteria were being applied fairly and consistently by tutors; the perceived variation across tutors was considered a major hazard during school experience.

7.2.7 Implications for Initial Teacher Education through the BEd

This section highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the procedures and processes in place on the BEd degree course at the University of Strathclyde, during the period of the study. Two main themes emerge from the findings: firstly, an impoverished concept of partnership, with considerable variation in the ways this is acted out in practice; and, secondly, inconsistent models of the student teacher as learner and, by implication, the newly qualified teacher.

A commitment to initial teacher education, in partnership with the teacher education institutions, is held to be a part of the professional role of the teacher. In practice, participation in initial teacher education is left to individual schools and, occasionally,

teachers; it is voluntary, sometimes regarded as an additional burden and met more in the word than the deed. The lack of formal partnership arrangements, clearly defined roles and responsibilities for schools and teachers and staff development to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge mean that, for many students, a good placement is serendipitous rather than planned. While teachers are well placed to assess students in more valid contexts and more reliably than one-off tutor visits can do, the variation and inconsistencies in the levels and kinds of support provided by schools and teachers indicate that this should be placed further down the list of priorities for extending the school-TEI partnership.

Issues of workload, professional boundaries (schools and TEIs) and confidence were all raised as reasons for retaining the status quo, with little support for extending the role of the school and classroom teacher. Some of these e.g workload, must be addressed at the national rather than the local level. If teaching is to be recognised as a profession, an apprenticeship model of the learner is inadequate, especially given the complexity of the task facing the teachers in primary schools today and in the future. This is an issue for the teaching profession in Scotland and its gatekeeper, the General Teaching Council, in discussion with the Scottish Executive.

At the local level, there are a number of specific actions that might be taken, some of which might be more or less feasible than others, given the constraints identified in the previous paragraph.

The partnership at the school-faculty level would be strengthened by:

- i. Making explicit the purposes of school experience to all involved;
- ii. Developing an informed awareness of the contributions of each partner and working more closely to ensure that they form a coherent whole in the student's experience;
- iii. Clarifying the role of the school and the remit holder within the school, which may involve specifying a curriculum for students on school experience with a role for the school in its delivery;
- iv. Developing lines of communication that go beyond the systems level and include those most closely involved in the day-to-day supervision of students; and

- v. Developing policies which reflect concerns with quality assurance, such as issuing guidance on how potential supervising teachers should be identified within schools.

The partnership between the classroom teacher and the TEI tutor would be enhanced if:

- i. The role and responsibilities of supervising teacher were clarified and expectations made explicit e.g. the amount and kind of support that s/he can offer;
- ii. Specific activities for both supervisors e.g. demonstrations or progress meetings, were built into these expectations;
- iii. Teachers were adequately prepared for what is a complex and demanding role;
- iv. The fundamental concept of the student teacher as a learner throughout the four years of the course was openly acknowledged and the support given was directed at facilitating that learning;
- v. A consistent model (or series of models) of how students learn to be teachers was adopted and evident in both word and deed. If it is accepted that an apprenticeship model is appropriate in the early stages of the course, and a reflective practitioner model in the later stages, then those charged with responsibility for students in years 1 and 2 should approach supervision differently, in the main, than those in years 3 and 4 (explicitly acknowledging Elliot's phases of development from novice to expert (Elliot,1993)).

School experience would be a more effective learning experience for students if:

- i. Clear ground rules for engagement with the school and the classroom teacher were established;
- ii. Students understood more fully the purpose of the in-faculty elements of the course and their relationship to both their own development and their experiences on placement;
- iii. Students were less driven by completing tasks and activities, including paperwork, and more by an awareness of their own learning needs and how these might be met;
- iv. Students did not feel that they were guests who had to behave politely and be grateful for the invitation to enter the classroom, but learners who were expected to make mistakes and could express their fears and concerns openly; and
- v. Assessment was an integral part of the school experience, with reduced stress and anxiety surrounding the high risk, one-off, crit visits.

Discussion so far has focused on the responses to the core questionnaires issued to students, teachers, tutors and remit-holders in schools. The data have been essentially quantitative and the implications listed here aim at making better what already exists through, in the main, improving systems and procedures. It may be that, in responding to the demands on teachers and the educational system, this is not enough. Subsequent chapters explore the data from other elements of the study, notably the interviews, further developing understanding of the experience of learning to become a beginning teacher and considering whether the professional education provided to date will meet the needs of society in the future.

CHAPTER 8 REFLECTION AND THE STUDENT TEACHER

Schön (1987) distinguished between reflection **on** action, where the practitioner critically reviewed her or his practice at a time and place distant from the specific context, and reflection **in** action, where practice was evaluated and adjusted in the heat of the action. One strand of the study reported here was concerned with the opportunities for developing skills of reflection while another attempted to identify whether the students in the target cohort did engage in reflective thinking, whether it be **on** or **in** action.

The first of these, opportunities for skill development, was explored in the initial questionnaires to tutors, teachers and students in the first phase of the study. Most of the data has been reported in Chapter 6 within the larger description of student learning. Some of that data has been re-presented in the first section of this chapter with a view to focusing more specifically on opportunities for reflection.

The second strand, looking for evidence of reflective capabilities in the students, was undertaken in the second phase of the study. Reflection **on** action was studied primarily through the students' own evaluations of their performance on placement during these final two years, supplemented by additional questions in the interviews, while aspects of reflection **in** action were investigated through questions in the interviews with students in Years 3 and 4.

8.1 Promoting Reflection

The BEd course at Jordanhill was designed to be broadly congruent with aspects of the national guidelines model of the beginning teacher as a competent and reflective practitioner and is structured to provide a number of opportunities for the development of reflective thinking. The BEd course document states that in-faculty programmes agreed that, wherever possible, they would relate issues and themes to the forthcoming placement stage: assignments had been reviewed to look at the thinking skills they demanded and to include self-evaluation of progress and the establishment of personal agendas for professional development; the inclusion of a major project on practice has shown a growth in inquiry skills as measured by student self-report (BEd Course Team, 1990; 1995).

On school experience, the structural supports for potential reflection included:

- Year 1 workbook for observation in schools;
- Tutor modelling during school visits;
- Revisiting the same school for both placements in year 2;
- Decreasing the use of structured formats over the years;
- Clinical supervision by school and faculty staff;
- Structure of the SE file, with evaluation at regular points;
- Community placement/analysis;
- Triadic meetings in final year of teacher/tutor/student;
- Pre-placement meetings in the faculty;
- Preliminary visits to the school by the tutor; and
- Broadsheets of feedback on the previous placement evaluation (which also links the data to 'ways in which the student can be helped to learn').

The data from the questionnaires has been interrogated in an attempt to answer three broad questions. Firstly, whose job is it to foster reflection? Secondly, what forms of support that might be conducive to reflection do students themselves think they receive? Thirdly, where in the placement cycle do school staff expect development that involves reflection?

8.1.1 Whose job is it?

The first phase of the study showed that approximately half of the school-based staff viewed developing reflective practitioners as a shared responsibility, with most of the remainder seeing it as a Faculty responsibility. Figure 8.1 shows the data on this issue and Figure 8.2 shows a similar pattern for the development in the skills of evaluating teaching.

Figure 8.1: Views on the responsibility for encouraging reflection on practice

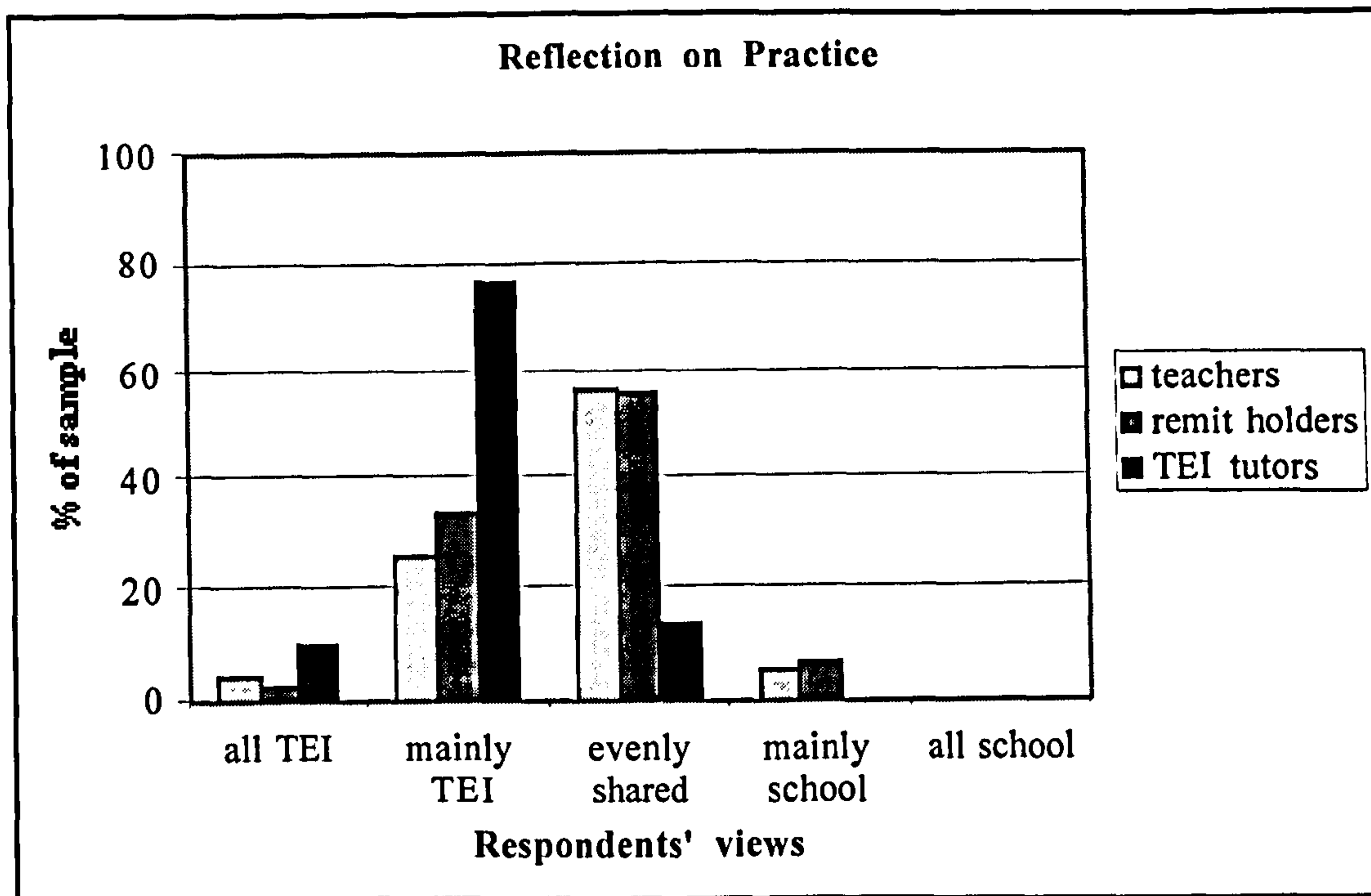
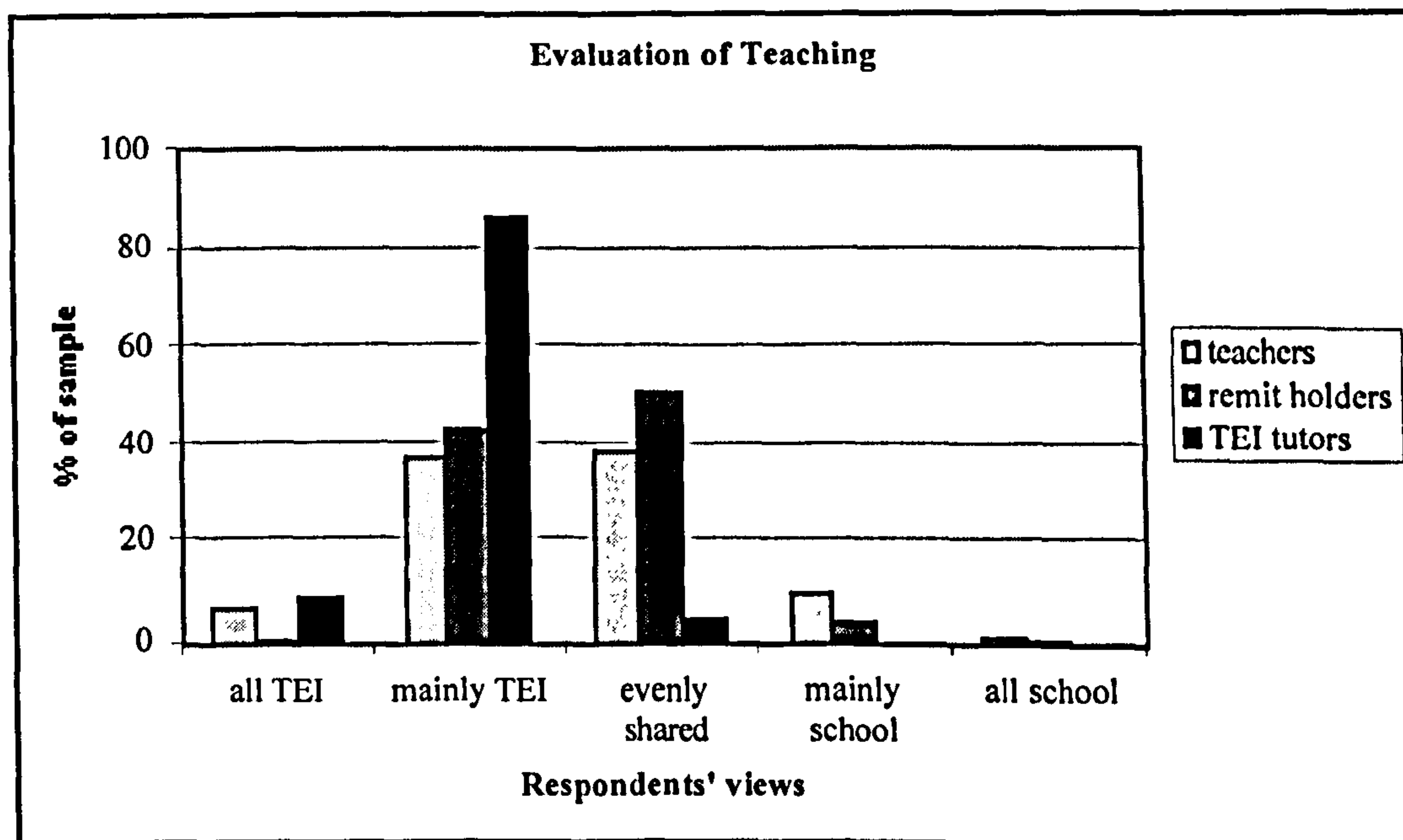


Figure 8.2: Views on the responsibility for developing evaluation of practice



Responsibility for encouraging reflection on practice and for developing skills in evaluating practice was therefore viewed as either a shared responsibility or more the province of the

TEI. The faculty tutors in particular were more likely to view it as part of the TEI role.

8.1.2 What support is given?

In Chapter 6, Table 6.39 details the responses from students by year group in four categories – 'often', 'sometimes', 'never' and 'don't know'. This data is shown in summary form in Table 8.1 where the figures for the two categories, 'often' and 'sometimes' have been combined and a single figure calculated for all four year groups.

Table 8.1: Student perceptions of the teacher support received (often/sometimes)

	Kind of support from teacher	% (n=446)
1	The teacher demonstrated and I observed	97
2	S/he discussed her/his teaching of a lesson with me	66
3	S/he observed me teaching and gave me feedback	88
4	S/he made notes on my progress as feedback to tutor	19
5	S/he met with me to discuss my progress	77
6	S/he helped in planning for my teaching	77
7	I worked collaboratively with the teacher	95
8	S/he read and commented on my SE file	66
9	S/he gave advice on my lesson plans before I taught	76
10	S/he listened to my concerns about my teaching	90
11	The teacher discussed her/his practice, concerns, views of teaching	83
12	The teacher knew the requirements of the placement	80
13	I had a good personal relationship with the teacher	97
14	The teacher gave me information about the class/children	100

For 13 of the 14 items listed, two-thirds or more of the students indicated that they had received support. Some of the forms of support may not directly help the students to think about their own teaching or teaching per se. They may, however, be important in creating a climate in which the student feels able to risk analysis and to question practice; item 13, for example, seems likely to be such.

When students were asked to indicate which of these were most important at different points in the placements (start, middle, end and/or throughout), the five most valued across the placement were 13, 10, 7, 2 and 5 (in order of decreasing frequency). The last of these

(5) appears to be a climate creator and its absence may well stop the exchange of views and possible challenge of ideas involved in the other four. The value of support seems however to be linked to the stage of the placement and this is shown in Figure 8.3.

Figure 8.3: Respondents' views on the most valuable types of support in each stage of the placement

Start of placement	1, 14, 3, 6, 7.
Middle	7, 5, 3, 10, 6
End	10, 7, 5, 11, 12

One interpretation of the data is that, in the early phase, students seem to need contextual and technical information that enables them to plan and to have an insight into how the teacher works the class. They acquire this from preliminary visits, from data on the class and from watching the teacher. Working alongside the teacher, discussing and receiving feedback on their early teaching sessions provides more information on the appropriateness of their work and on progress.

In the middle phase, students still gain from feedback and collaborative work, but are more secure and ready to gain more from discussion of practice – their own and the teacher's. Perhaps they now have the experience of working with a class which makes such discussion more meaningful and relevant to interactive planning. Meeting to discuss progress – reviewing time – becomes ranked higher, perhaps because there is more to discuss and clearer views on what needs development.

In the end phase, student still value support which addresses their concerns, and time to meet. They are giving more value to discussion of the teacher's concerns and views of teaching – a wider perspective than before. The new item here is the one of the teacher knowing the requirements of the placement. This may well be because, as the placement draws to a close, the teacher's influence on the final assessment of performance and grade is becoming more pertinent and the student will wish to know that the teacher will be clear about her/his role and the case to be made to the faculty tutor.

8.1.3 What learning when?

The response to this question draws on the data presented in Table 6.25 where teachers were asked to indicate the year(s) in which certain skills and knowledge were best developed. Some of the items listed can be regarded as powerful indicators of reflection in that they go beyond the acquisition of skills to active use of knowledge in making judgements and taking decisions. Those items in Table 6.25 most closely related to reflection are listed in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: Teachers' Views on the Best Year in which to locate those Aspects of Learning related to Reflection (n = 314)

Aspects of Development		% of all teachers indicating year where best located			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
E	know why something they do works	31	54	57	51
F	recognise the range of ways things can be done	13	44	63	53
H	test out alternative ways of doing things	8	35	64	56
M	construct their own agenda for development	4	25	54	66
R	question their views of how to teach	28	40	57	56
V	realise the values and social implications of work	37	42	52	60
Z	develop their own style.	13	22	60	70

Whilst respondents were asked for the best year, the responses indicate that some teachers selected more than one year. Table 8.3 uses the same data set but ranks findings for the 'best year' by the year of the course the teacher supervised. For example, most teachers with students in year 1 thought that year 2 was the best for developing knowledge of 'why something they do works' while those teachers who had students in years 3-4, thought this was best located in year 3.

Table 8.3 : Teachers' modal views on 'best' year for aspect of development by the year of teacher involvement

Aspects of Development		'Best' year by teachers supervising each year			
		Supervising Y1	Supervising Y2	Supervising Y3	Supervising Y4
E	know why something they do works	2	2,3	3	3
F	recognise the range of ways things can be done	3	3	3	3
H	test out alternative ways of doing things	3	3	3	4
M	construct their own agenda for development	4	4	4	4
R	question their views of how to teach	3	3	3	4
V	realise the values and social implications of work	4	4	4	4
Z	develop their own style.	4	4	4	4

Some relatively clear patterns relating to the cycle of placement emerge and are significant statistically (χ^2 tests all at $p \geq 0.001$ and above). The course is planned around three cycles. The first cycle mainly involves year 1 of the course while the second cycle involves year 2, and years 3 and 4 form the third cycle.

It is in the third cycle that teachers consistently locate those items which might be regarded as strong indicators of reflection occurring: recognising the range of ways in which things can be done; testing out alternative ways of doing things; questioning their views of how to teach; developing their own style; constructing their own agenda for development; and realising the values and social implications of the job.

Four other items were also allocated to the third cycle: assessing children's work; working alongside the teacher as a colleague; and seeing how whole-school issues are done. In interpreting their inclusion in this phase, it seems that the first of these, assessment, requires that complex judgements be made while 'working as a colleague' requires maturity, understanding and greater equality in decisions. Similarly, the context of whole school knowledge may well be linked with the teacher's view of the primacy of the classroom for novices. A final item included here - 'feeling good about themselves as a teacher' - is less clear although it may well be that this is associated with expectations about when confidence and competence should be apparent. Alternatively, it could be tied to the idea that if students do not feel good in the third cycle, it does not bode well for a career in teaching.

8.1.4 Discussion

While the course has been designed in terms of three cycles, it appears that the teachers did not distinguish clearly between the first two although they did seem to distinguish between the first two years of the course and the second two. This was characterised by evidence that the supervising teachers seemed to move from a broad apprenticeship model in the first part of the course to a collegial model of the student role in the latter period. The tendency was to see the early years as concerned with mastering the technical aspects of the craft and with having the ability and willingness to learn from the teacher in the context of the classroom.

In the final phase, increased knowledge, independence and ownership of practice by the student and a widening perspective opening up to the whole school and societal concerns was expected. The data suggest that it is here that teachers saw students as best able to demonstrate competence and some indeed may well be becoming proficient. It is here that the data mirrors the Dreyfus-Elliot model of progression (Dreyfus, 1981; Elliot, 1993) with teachers seeing students as best able to achieve and use situational understanding and reflection.

It is always arguable that teachers may be 'giving back' the structure that they have been told about. However, the nature of the variation in the data suggest this not to be the case. Some teachers saw aspects as best placed in more than one year while others did not. There is variation in the year indicated as best both for the whole group of teachers and for within year groups. Similarly, whilst the majority of school staff view the development of reflective practitioners as a shared responsibility, some see it otherwise. Furthermore, not all students want (or need) the same forms of support at the same phases of a placement.

There are several possible sources contributing to this variation each of which should be addressed further. Firstly, how is the concept of reflection understood by all involved? This would involve probing their view of the nature of the teacher (and how you learn to be one) and the role of reflection therein. While the technical interests seem to be well represented, more direct discussion of the personal, the problematic and the critical (Elliot, 1993) is required if a knowledge of what is probably a complex profile of reflective behaviours and intents is to be understood.

Secondly some of the differences are likely to be related to the experience, confidence and capabilities of the people involved and the view they hold of their role in the process of supporting the development of reflective practice. Students, for example, enter their final placement with a wide range of competences, some teachers will have little if any experience of working with students, and tutors differ in experience, outlook, etc., as well.

In addition the impact of differences in stage placement and the particular cycle need examined further. An intriguing long-standing teacher education issue here is unravelling the interaction of the influence of the length of placement with other variables, such as student understanding of situation and clear expectations of reflection. Could increased reflection on practice be realised earlier if it was expected, and/or if earlier placements were longer? The evidence from Tann (1993) would indicate that an early introduction and specific training might reap benefits in the short term although whether this leads to a persistent long-term change in the students is not clear. Indeed the successes reported might reflect development in learning to write 'reflective' commentaries rather than genuine reflectivity.

The indications from the data are that there are opportunities for developing reflection and that both teachers and tutors see this as an important aspect of development, with a role for themselves, and each other, in supporting it. There is also indication of the most appropriate time for developing the skills required of a reflective practitioner. The next section looks for evidence of the development of reflection in the group of students interviewed as they progressed from Year 1 to Year 4 in the second phase of the study.

8.2 Reflection on Action: The School Experience File

During each period of school experience, all students were expected to keep a School Experience File on placement. This contained all their teaching plans, assessment of pupil learning and evaluations and was examined by the TEI tutor on each visit, and was taken into account in the assessment of the student. Each year students were provided with a detailed booklet which set out, for each placement during the year, the objectives for their own learning and development, the amount, pace and form of the teaching programme they were to undertake, the arrangements for TEI tutor visits and the final layout of the contents of the file.

Over the four years of the course, the expectations were that students should become increasingly independent of TEI and tutor direction and show evidence of development towards the reflective practitioner, the underpinning model of the beginning teacher. Therefore the amount of structure given in the guidelines for the composition of the School Experience File was gradually decreased over the four years of the course. In the first two years, for example, students were provided with clear indications of the kind of information they should gather on preliminary visits to the placement school and how to present it in the File. In Years 3 and 4 however, the students were expected to identify, gather and present relevant information without direction and to be able to provide a rationale for their selections.

Furthermore, they were expected increasingly to demonstrate an ability to assess and evaluate. In all but the first two placements in Year 1 of the course, students were expected to undertake daily evaluations of lessons as well as a final overall evaluation of the entire placement. (Some oral evaluation was expected however.) In Year 1, Placement 3, these overall evaluations concentrated on reflecting on the pupils' learning while in subsequent years students were expected to include references to their own development alongside that of the pupils.

As one aim of the study was to gain insight into the development of 'reflection' in the student teachers, those students who attended interviews were also asked to provide copies of their overall evaluations from the final two placements of the course: Placement 7, Year 3 and Placement 8, Year 4 were collected and analysed. For some students, the files had been kept by the Primary Education Department for assessment purposes and were therefore unavailable but a total of six students supplied the evaluations for both years; 2 additional Year 3 students and 3 Year 4 students also supplied evaluations. In each instance, the School Experience File was a substantial document, typically filling an A4 lever-arch file. The main sections of the File for Years 3 and 4 of the BEd course were as in Figure 8.4.

Figure 8.4 : The main sections of the School Experience File (Years 3 & 4)

	Year 3	Year 4
Section 1	The School and its Environment	The School and its Environment
Section 2	The Class	The Class
Section 3	Forward Planning	Timetables
Section 4	Daily Programme and Teaching Notes	Forward Planning
Section 5	Evaluation for the Placement.	Teaching Notes (including overall evaluation)

Section 4 (Year 3) and Section 5 (Year 4) also included evaluations of individual sessions with children as well as evaluations of daily programmes where students had responsibility for longer periods of time. The overall evaluations were extracted from each File and subjected to content analysis. The focus on these two years reflected the analysis of the teachers' data that indicated that these were the years when students should be ready and more able to focus on the development of skills of reflection. It is acknowledged that students in the first two years of the course may well have been reflective in the way they approach learning to become a teacher. This was however one of the themes that emerged during the study and was put into operation explicitly only in Years 3 and 4, the years in which both teachers and the course team expected such skills to be the focus of development and in evidence in students' work.

As the substance of this analysis was essentially after-the-event reflection on action, the students' reports were analysed for evidence of critical analysis and reflection along a continuum of strong to weak forms. Tann (1993) identifies three categories of reports produced by students: description, exploration and the use of public theories in understanding the events and situations experienced. Rather than distinct categories these have been taken to form a continuum, with fuzzy boundaries, along which students may range. Depending on a number of factors, including perceived purpose, individuals may move backwards and forwards along this continuum, both within and across events and situations.

Strong reflection was considered to be in evidence where students had attempted a new strategy or tried to change an existing practice or strategy, described the outcome and attempted to support their conclusions with evidence (albeit inevitably anecdotal). Other examples included an analysis of the teacher's practice, drawing on pedagogic principles or

'theory' of some kind. Similarly, the advice of tutors was considered critically rather than automatically accepted and followed. Weak reflection was evident in broad descriptive statements of what had worked and what had not, without any real attempt to analyse the contributory factors or to draw implications for practice. A reflective stance tended to appear tentative and provisional (e.g. 'I think/feel') rather than closed or unwaveringly conclusive. Use of the terms reflect/reflection were only taken as evidence if the remainder of the text was in line with these criteria.

The analysis aims to identify whether or not reflection was in evidence in the reports made by students. The accuracy of the observations they made and the inferences drawn go uncorroborated and unchallenged; the validity and reliability of their reports are not considered. (The names of the students, and tutors where appropriate, have been changed in the interests of confidentiality.)

8.2.1 Overall Evaluations: Year 3, Placement 7

The guidance for Section 5 of the SE file which was given to third year students suggested that the overall evaluation for the placement should be approximately 600 words and gave the advice that:

At the end of the block you should evaluate and review progress to date from your own observations, the data available from sources such as the School Experience Schedule, teacher comment and children's work.

You should analyse what you have learnt about being a teacher and how you have contributed to the children's learning.

(BEd Year 3 SE and PFT Handbook, 1995-96, p.33)

Of the eight reports analysed, the average number of words written by each student was approximately 780 and ranged from 490 to 1070. (The student who wrote the longest report talked at greatest length during the interviews.) However the focus was on the quality of their writing and the evidence of reflection rather than a quantitative measurement.

Each report appeared to be written with an audience in mind, often the TEI tutor who had visited her/him in school, and all students wrote in the first person. While the majority

referred to the various TEI tutors in the third person, a few students specifically wrote to the tutor even going as far as mentioning his/her first name (e.g. *you're quite right, Christine!*). A few used the categories in the schedule to structure the report but most tended to produce continuous prose without sub-headings.

1. Sarah

(1040 words)

S. raised several themes which she considered significant over the period of the placement. Some of these were broad, general themes such as preparation and organisation, while others were more specific e.g. a session on problem-solving. She reported that two aspects of her teaching had been influenced by her two supervisors: her organisational skills had been developed by the class teacher, whose own organisation was 'excellent'; and the TEI tutor had directed her towards a better balance of written, oral and practical activities. She reasoned that these changes had been necessary and gave evidence to support her reported improvement in these areas.

The remainder of the improvements she identified tended to draw on her observations of the children and their responses to her teaching. She tended to use 'I found' and 'I feel/felt' when she reported any advance in her learning and supported these statements with brief anecdotal evidence. For example, as part of the programme of work with the class (6/7 year olds), she had set up a 'café' in the classroom. She wrote:

I had hoped to encourage ownership by ... taking on board the pupils' ideas for the café I feel that they had a sense of pride and ownership over the café as the children always ensure that the café was neat and tidy when they had completed their tasks, without me prompting them to do so.

Some of the problem-solving tasks I set the children were too difficult ... I feel that some of this may have been due to the fact that the children had very little previous experience of problem-solving, and so they were ill equipped to deal with the task .. the children very quickly became frustrated ... I responded to this by making problem solving tasks collaborative ... the children shared their ideas and careful pairing ensured that most of the children gained success.

As well as identifying a difficulty, she indicated how she had recognised the problem and what she did to try to retrieve the situation, bringing about a satisfactory outcome. She also

discussed her initial apprehension at being placed with a class teacher who had 'a very traditional style'. She felt the teacher was unsure about how much a student should do and how she could assist in the class and described how she tried to deal with it 'sensitively':

.... by respecting Miss M's wishes in the classroom and in time, when she realised that I could take over the running of the class, I seemed to gain her respect.

In looking towards the final year placement, S. identified three aims for her own development, all of which were related to pupil achievement and motivation: determining pupils' existing knowledge to help pitch tasks at appropriate levels; identifying failing children (and the contributory factors) early so that they might be taken into account in planning; and 'researching the latest interests of pupils in upper primary' in order to better interest and stimulate them.

Overall, this was a mature, thoughtful and reflective report with evidence to support her observations and feelings as well as attempts at tentative explanations for these which seemed to draw on 'theory' albeit implicitly. It demonstrated skills of reflection and the ability to use these to increase the effectiveness of day-to-day practice.

2. Lynsey

(975 words)

L. began by stating that she had 'really enjoyed herself', supporting this by describing the staff as welcoming and supportive. She had been given advice from the TEI tutors on planning, which she had taken on board and which had proved effective. However, the report was a very superficial, technical one which tended to 'tick off' the requirements of the placement:

My long term Aims and objectives were met by the children ...

I feel I responded well to both groups' needs ...

During the five weeks I was responsible for Drama, the aims and objectives were once again met and the lessons were all carried out.

Only in two instances did she provide evidence to support these statements. For example, in discussing her aims and objectives for language, L. identified a number of skills and concepts which she felt had been developed (e.g. structure and characterisation). Much of the report was made up of statements of assertion, both of her development and the children's learning:

I feel the children have learned from me and me from them.

I built up a super relationship with these children ... I had respect for them and them for me - it worked well.

Throughout my placement, I feel the lessons I taught on the whole went well and I had no real disasters ...

With L., the use of 'I feel' seemed to mean 'I believe' rather more than tentative theorising of what had occurred. There was no reference to the class teacher, either in terms of their relationship or her contribution to L's development. In looking to the next placement in Year 4, she indicated that she would continue to work on her objectives and evaluations and on developing 'my own style and strategies as a teacher' suggesting that she was developing her own theories of what teaching ought to be, but without indicating the evidence base upon which she might draw; reflection with the aim of increasing understanding was limited and predominantly instrumental.

3. Jackie

(1074 words)

J. used the categories of the schedule to organise her report and tended to focus on her own development rather than an assessment of the children's learning (as the TEI tutor also noted at the end of the report). She frequently used 'I feel/felt' in reporting her experiences. She talked of developing her understanding of aspects of teaching and described her actions, based on this. She recorded her achievements, as she saw them, and tried to give explanations for them:

On reflection I feel I am more able to prepare a variety of sessions, in most curricular areas in a shorter space of time. This is due to being responsible for all groups of up to 4 consecutive days.

She was one of the few students to use the words 'reflection/reflect' in her evaluation and the majority of her reports of achievement or development were supported with evidence from the classroom:

I have learned that a major role for any teacher is that of Assessor. There is no point in planning and implementing lessons if no learning is taking place. All teachers must be able to assess each child's learning and in turn identify areas of strength and weakness. The daily evaluations enable this assessment to take place. Asking questions such as 'Did the children achieve the objective set?' ... should be

asked by the teacher in order to make changes in planning and implementation.

She took advice from the teacher, recognising her as an experienced professional, while acknowledging that she herself had ultimate responsibility for what happened in the classroom. She also tried out some strategies:

During placement I tried to use some of my Professional Studies knowledge to modify certain children's behaviour. I feel I succeeded in some areas, yet in other areas merely touched the 'tip of the iceberg'. I now realise that modification such as this requires much time and careful planning for it to be effective.

At another point, she reports on how once her tutor directed her to move from writing detailed plans, including the questions she should ask of children, for each session to summary programmes for each day, she found that she had a few problems with her questioning of children. To deal with this, she wrote down a list of questions:

... which I felt necessary to advance their learning. I stopped this when I felt more confident and now feel I have improved in this area of implementation.

She identified a problem, took action, evaluated progress and, once confident, changed her practice. This would appear to be an example of a form of action research albeit informal, unsystematic and unidentified as such by the student, which placed her towards the strong reflection end of the continuum.

4 Fran

(1070 words)

F.'s TEI tutor was clearly the main audience for this report as she frequently made remarks, in parenthesis, which implied familiarity and hinted at earlier conversations:

You know that I am horrendously pernickety and this is definitely an area I will work on for next year. (To which the tutor replied 'Not really'.)

This was a very personal evaluation, with every sentence self-referenced in some way, using either 'I' or 'my' in each. She reported that she had '*enormous opportunities to develop my teaching skills and further my understanding of learning*' which made her much more aware of her strengths and weaknesses, and she argued that '*recognising your own strengths allows you to harness them to benefit the children*'.

Unlike the others, she did not use 'I feel/felt' at all in her report but was much more definite, using 'I have' or 'I am' most frequently. The report talked less about developing or learning but more of 'the way I am' and its impact on her performance as a teacher. She discusses her 'ability to respond sensitively to pupils' needs' and provided examples of this, going on to say:

... this sensitivity I have towards individuals has implications for assessment. Here is an area in which I hope to develop my own confidence. I am aware that by responding differently to meet individual needs, I am continually making value judgements however informal; it is formalising these judgements that concerns me. I am very aware of the effects of labelling children and find that this perception makes me slightly uncomfortable with formal assessment.

She listened to her tutor's suggestions and acted upon them but said nothing of her supervising teacher, either in terms of inter-personal relationships or learning to be a teacher. She identified some aspects which would need work during Year 4, including her aims and objectives (arguing for a need to establish a balance between flexibility and precision) and assessment. At the end she commented:

...As the terms progress and yet more assignments are submitted, I sometimes lose sight of what this is all about. Placement 7 has reminded me of the enormous satisfaction and sense of achievement you experience when even little goals are achieved; teaching and learning are what it is all about!

For this student, becoming a teacher was almost a personal journey where her self-perception, values and beliefs were constantly questioned and challenged. Very little of her substantial evaluation was about the day-to-day business of teaching but rather about her worries and concerns about herself as a teacher. Reflection is present, but directed at understanding herself as a teacher and its implications, rather than an understanding of the nature of teaching, and affective rather than conceptual.

5. Evelyn

(490 words)

E. had planned for nineteen sessions prior to the placement but, as she got to know the children, she selected those which were the most appropriate for implementation. While acknowledging that not all were successful, she felt that the aims and objectives she had set had been met. She identified eight key areas in her own development, ranging from

technical aspects such as being specific when writing objectives to broader concerns such as learning to being realistic in her expectations of the children. All of these required further development.

E. reported a number of successful activities with some indication of how she had assessed this success. She used somewhat woolly phrases however, such as *'the children enjoyed ...'* and that the sessions *'provided opportunities for ...'* and *'allowed them to experience ...'*

On a personal level, prior to placement, she had been apprehensive to take on the level of responsibility for the children's learning but had *'relaxed and really enjoyed the placement'* as it progressed. She found the staff enthusiastic and motivated and reported that all were good role models. Overall, the report was somewhat superficial and showed little real reflection on what had happened, on the children's learning, or on her own development towards becoming a teacher.

6. Rory

(985 words)

R. was *'delighted by my own progress made during placement'*. His report had no headings but tended to follow the pattern of the schedule given in the handbook. His claims of progress were supported with references to the children's responses to his teaching and, in some instances, these were quite specific.

... (following teaching and assessment) all but two children (had) achieved the specified learning. These two I targeted for additional teaching which proved successful in (re)establishing the relevant concepts and language. The fact that they had not effectively picked these up previously, showed me that my ongoing monitoring of learning was perhaps not as it could be and also how easy it is to take for granted that learning is actually taking place.

R. referred to a highly structured classroom situation which constrained some aspects of his planned programme but did not refer to the reasons for this structure. He did say that the class teacher offered him advice on, for example, pacing and the use of voice, which he *'made a conscious effort to work on, with good effect'*. He learned from his first tutor visit, making progress subsequently on the weaknesses that the s/he had identified. On a personal level, he commented:

I accept that I tend to be over-critical of myself and that too much of this is negative and time wasting. This realisation actually offers me a great sense of relief; perhaps I'm not that bad at teaching after all, and that I am really developing the skills and techniques to be a 'real' teacher.

to which the tutor added: 'You're getting very close!!'.

This was a reflective report, towards the strong end of the continuum, which contained evidence of learning on the personal, social and technical aspects of being a teacher.

7. Jane

(570 words)

J. focused on her own learning while omitting the children's. However, she clearly identified aspects of becoming a teacher in which she felt she had made progress, identifying how she knew that this was so.

One thing that I am conscious about is that I speak too much. Often I am inclined to tell the children the answer instead of encouraging them to question possibilities for themselves. I did try to work on this by teasing an answer out through better questioning.

She worked on her management of and relationship with the children:

I discovered that a happy, quiet and relaxed approach seemed to work with this class. The children knew from the tone of my voice when something was not acceptable.

She did not mention the school or her supervising teacher and she did not identify the aspects of her development which she would wish to tackle in Year 4. While this was slightly longer than average in terms of number of words, it lacked sufficient content to make a real judgement of her reflective capabilities.

8. Linda

(950 words)

L. found herself in a fairly rigid and highly structured situation, with two job-sharing supervising teachers. She constructed her evaluation around the four categories of the schedule.

The school was in an area of social deprivation and one teacher argued that the children

benefited from a structured environment and clear, regular routines. L. accepted this with some difficulty (seeing the structure as constraining and rigid) and tried to introduce what she considered to be more meaningful tasks.

The working structure of the class was very rigid, and did not allow for a lot of flexibility. The diary for example was done every morning ... giving her (the teacher) the opportunity to hear the reading groups ... I tried to extend the diary to more than copying from the board, by encouraging all of the children to use the class wordbank to make sentences of their own ... I also began using some of the more able children to assist the less able.

She tried applying the principles of positive reinforcement which she had encountered in the TEI with some degree of success, and the class teacher had noticed this and commented positively. L. tended to support her claims for development with examples from the classroom and tried to explain why some things worked and others did not. She reported a positive working relationship with both class teachers but felt that this had '*perhaps caused a lack of continuity in planning*', something she had commented upon early in the evaluation.

Overall, she tried to get beyond the surface features of the placement and her experiences in the classroom, looking for cause and effect relationships and identifying significant factors in the various situations described. There was evidence of reflection and attempts at understanding beyond the technical.

8.2.2 Year 4: Placement 8

At the end of the placement, which lasted for 11 weeks, students were required to:

Look back at the placement experience and evaluate your programme and your teaching. Seek connections and identify what has been achieved and why and outline future professional development.

(BEd Year 4 SE and PFT Handbook, 1996-97, p.15)

In doing this, students were expected to draw on the weekly reviews they had undertaken and other evidence, such as assessment of pupils' learning activities, which they had gathered. The word length was not specified in the Year 4 Handbook. Over the 9 reports analysed, the number of words ranged from 700 to 4400, with a mean of approximately

1. Sarah

(2180 words)

S. structured her report around two main categories, the first being 'Teaching' and the second 'Pupil Learning'. The latter was broken into subject areas e.g. mathematics and Environmental Studies. In her analysis of her teaching, she indicated where she felt she had made progress, giving some indications of why she believed this to be so and trying to indicate what she had learned as a result. For example:

I feel my planning has become far more realistic and responsive with regards to the needs of the children. This is largely because the placement was far longer and this helped to create more room to redesign lessons and re-teach when necessary. I still feel there are aspects of my planning which still require improvement, particularly my short term planning, which did not always reflect all of the main teaching points that I intended within the day.

She highlighted the role of the staff in the school in supporting her and liked the open plan style of the school which provided:

... an excellent opportunity to gain access to a wide variety of teaching styles without intruding on teachers, as the nature of the building enables this to occur quite naturally.

Her analysis of the pupil learning was primarily task- or activity-driven with occasional insights into being a teacher:

I became increasingly aware of how frustrating teaching can be when you cannot be in ten places giving individual tuition at once.

In conclusion, S. considered that the placement had been a very successful one that had provided a number of new learning opportunities such as team teaching and an open plan environment. She was also aware however that some areas required further development, although she felt confident of taking on a class of her own and learning through '*time and experience*'. The ability to reflect upon her actions and their effects was evident in Year 3 and continued through into Year 4.

2. Lynsey

(1970 words)

L.'s forward plans, prepared before the start of the placement, had to be substantially revised once it was underway and this, she felt, had got her off to a bad start. However, as the weeks progressed, she found herself enjoying the class and the school and making progress in her own development. She took the advice of her supervising teachers and found it appropriate. (She had two supervisors as it was a job-sharing situation.) She was uncritical of this advice:

Throughout the placement I feel I have developed greatly in my planning skills. I have taken advice from other professionals which has been very beneficial.

The report was essentially descriptive, with little critical reflection on any aspect of either the pupils' or her own development. Her aims and objectives for the children's learning were either 'overtaken' without reference to evidence of how she knew this or, alternatively 'not overtaken' due to external factors e.g. the teacher changed the direction of the topic study.

She attended PTA and School Board meetings and helped with after-school netball activities, providing her with an increased understanding of the wider school. She concluded with a list of five points she felt she would take away from Jordanhill:

- i always be well planned and your implementation will be better - planning is the key.*
- ii incorporate a variety of teaching styles and strategies into my teaching*
- iii good group management is very important*
- iv use resources and work programme effectively and*
- v don't be afraid to seek help and advice from other professionals.*

These appear to be indicative of advice for technical competence, unjustified and simplistic, rather than evidence of a reflective practitioner. The Year 3 evaluation was similarly composed.

3. Jackie

(4400)

J. began by indicating that her self confidence as a (developing) teacher had suffered highs and lows during the placement:

I hit a rocky point where I had driven myself, and my confidence into the ground. I

am happy to say that I pulled myself out of it and can now reflect on probably the biggest learning experience of my whole life!

What followed was probably one of the most reflective of evaluations which were submitted. She used two main categories to structure her report: 'Pupil Learning' and 'My Programme and Teaching'. In both sections, she focused on specific incidents and children in illustrating points or arguments.

One of the biggest things in this class that I had to come to terms with was the great variation of abilities and personalities of the children. Initially I found this very difficult and very tiring , particularly with David It didn't take me long to discover that David really craved attention but the minute you turned that attention on him in front of the class, even if it was praise, he found it very difficult to deal with.

She continued to be surprised by the ways in which the children responded to her teaching:

What really did amaze me ... was the way in which overnight the penny seemed to drop for the children. What a child had difficulty with one day, s/he seemed to sail through the next. It was obvious to me that new concepts needed time to sink in; the children needed time to mull them over - not always consciously. This is something I found consistent to all areas of the curriculum - the children undoubtedly need time to formulate their ideas.

J. adopted some of the practices of her supervising teacher but only once she had tried them out and found them to work for her. She also sought reassurance about 'running out of time' from her supervising teacher and learned:

... I accepted the fact that everything cannot work like clockwork every time I was so hung up on control that I was making life difficult for myself and for the children. I noticed a difference in the way that the children responded to me once I relaxed a bit more in class. I have discovered that a happy quiet and relaxed approach seemed to work with the class.

Her learning was about things that worked for her, with that particular class, and she experimented with a number of strategies in, for example, dealing with discipline problems:

This did not always work in the same way for the same child each day, but again

this was partly due to what the child had encountered at home the previous night.

She acknowledged a number of areas which had been problematic at first and indicated progress and how that had been achieved. She still however saw room for improvement and further development in her teaching skills.

... although I feel I have made tremendous progress in the areas outlined above, I feel that there is still so much I can work on improving - even in the areas I notice have already improved. I am sure that I have learned a good deal more than I am aware of at the moment, and that in the future I will be able to draw on learning experiences without being aware of it.

Jackie's Year 3 evaluation demonstrated reflective capacities that were even stronger in the Year 4 report on placement.

4. Fran

(1140 words)

This was a very brief report from F. and, as in Year 3, it was a very personal statement. She expressed considerable doubts in her own ability to manage the placement and was concerned about the enormous responsibility it posed. She found herself compromising her principles from time to time through practical expediency e.g. using the board more frequently than she liked and using commercial resources rather than making all of them.

She talked of having her beliefs re-affirmed and her confidence in her ability to teach:

I have always felt concerned about being 'good enough' to manage this profession and its related responsibilities well, but I have recognised at last, over the length of this placement, that my confidence and belief in my own ability increase the more I am immersed in the process.

She did not mention a single child as an individual but talked of the school/class throughout. She referred to the class teacher at the end of the report, and positively. Firstly, she considered that the degree of collaboration which had been necessary over this long placement had been invaluable, learning from an experienced practitioner and drawing confidence from her reassurance. She also referred briefly to the *'helpful and perceptive advice offered by my tutor and school staff'* in the concluding sentence.

Fran tended to focus on 'big issues' rather than the nitty-gritty of day-to-day teaching. In discussing how teachers can decide what children might experience, she describes this as a 'luxurious and powerful position', adding:

I see better too though how individual teacher autonomy needs balancing with whole school plans if children are to continue to progress throughout their school career, not just through one term'.

She then goes on to apologise for 'rambling', arguing:

... this placement has afforded me the luxury of clarifying my own views on some aspects of teaching and learning in wider, general terms and I see the need to balance short term gains with long term aims.

This report could be described as reflective and was well-received as such by the TEI tutor. However, it tended to be more at the level of philosophical discourse than the development of a theory of effective practice at the day-to-day level. The overall tone of the report and the focus on the personal dimension of becoming a teacher were as in the Year 3 report.

5. Evelyn

(1350 words)

This was less a report than a series of brief statements on a range of aspects of the placement. These did not attempt to explore underlying factors, to relate experience to theory in any way and tended to draw a line under each event. For example, in discussing the success of the forward planning undertaken prior to the start of placement, she wrote:

... in the initial weeks areas of weakness became apparent and although I acted on advice given, I was still not clearly focussed and therefore not developing children's knowledge and understanding adequately.

Much of the report highlighted where aims and objectives were not met or planning was not adequate but little exploration of the reasons behind these undertaken. Occasionally some explanation was attempted:

With hindsight my planning was 'activity driven' rather than the activities being used to develop specific (knowledge and understanding) and concepts.

She did recognise that she did not evaluate either her teaching or the children's learning adequately:

... I now realise that I was not being analytical enough (in the evaluation of my own teaching). Identifying that something did not 'go well' is not sufficient, more careful analysis is required to find out why in order to address the problem properly. I am aware that I need to evaluate my own role more critically and to be more specific about areas which have caused difficulty when lessons did not go according to plan.

While she knew what she should be doing, she clearly lacked the skills to do so successfully. She had some difficulty in her relationship with her supervising teacher, to which she was oblivious until it was drawn to her attention by the TEI tutor on a visit. This improved thereafter, and she reported that the class teacher was an excellent role model from whom she had learned a great deal.

There was little evidence of strong reflection in this evaluation, indeed little evidence of substantial evaluation that would stand her in good stead in future, similar situations. The emphasis on the technical and a belief in skill acquisition as the main route to effective teaching, was also present in the Year 3 evaluation.

6. Rory

(1070 words)

Rory began by complimenting the school and the staff for the good experience he had had. He had found the length of the placement '*hard to bare (sic)*' but, on the other hand, it had '*allowed me to get the feel of being a "real" teacher*'. He felt he had the skills and confidence required, although he found it a challenge to maintain these consistently and to the standards he set himself. He thought this would continue to be so in the future.

He raised the issue of the relationship between theory and practice, seeing relevance for much of the learning of the previous years more clearly in this final year, and acknowledged that his own attitude had militated against realising this earlier:

A reassuring experience during placement was (...) the use and reliance on theory to generate new ideas of teaching, to give a clear direction on which to focus when I felt no inspiration for handy hints or novel finishing activities. This gives me great hope for the future and appreciation for all the learning that I have done over the years (the fact that this should come about in this way perhaps raises some questions about where my focus originally lay) ...

Implementing practice based on theoretical principles was not without its difficulties:

... the multitude of demands put upon teachers in the daily running of a class. Turning a theory into practice must incorporate a realistic view of what is possible within these many constraints. Part of my education in the past few weeks has been to tailor my intended teaching to fit in with the ongoing class programmes and the school community as a whole.

He went on to illustrate, in some detail, one instance of how this had been necessary and how he had modified his plans for project work in the light of different demands made on him and the children. The overall tone of the evaluation was confident although aware that further challenges awaited.

I know I tend to play myself down which is as tiresome as it is deconstructive, but I do allow some positive reflection to seep through (...) I will strive to remain confident in my abilities and recognising that I am and still will be learning for a while to come yet.

This was brief self-evaluation of progress over the placement but one where the reflection was on strengths and weaknesses as a teacher, now and in the future, rather than the more personal qualities of the previous year. The report, while focusing on the most recent placements, also drew his experiences as a student to an end ('*this final placement in my teacher training*') and looked forward to the next stage in his career.

7. Elsie

(700 words)

This was the briefest of the evaluations submitted for Placement 8. It was a very positive self-evaluation, indicating confidence in her own ability from the outset and a view of herself as conscientious and extremely hard working. She had identified implementation as her main focus for her own learning during the placement because:

I realised that I am responsible for pupil learning over practically a term and it is vitally important to take this role seriously and be responsible for the class as if it were your own.

She talked several times of the class teacher and the support she had had from her. She cited some of the teacher's practices and beliefs which she supported and described how she had tried to model these, but did not go on to discuss how successful this had been or

to indicate the lessons she had learned as a result. She did indicate a number of areas where she felt she had made improvements as a result of:

... being constantly reflective of my own teaching and responding well to constructive criticism by Mrs. R. (the supervising teacher).

She also talked of 'trial and error' learning whereby she had learned a number of management strategies which *'I will now have under my belt for my future teaching career'*. These appear to be fixed now:

...due to my experience of this P2 class, I feel I would be successful at managing classes up the school

E's underlying belief appears to be that learning to become a teacher is a matter of acquiring the right strategies, of gaining the appropriate knowledge and that, once established, you will be equipped for whatever comes your way. There appears to be no acknowledgement that teaching might be problematic and/or context-dependent or that strategies may work more or less successfully as a result of a range of background and personal factors. The link between good teaching and children learning was perceived as similarly unproblematic.

In conclusion, my main achievements for placement 8 are to be more aware of the importance of excellent planning, organisation and management skills to implement successful teaching and thus effective learning. Also I felt more like a teacher which helped me communicate more effectively and in a professional manner with the other staff.

8. Kirsten

(970 words)

K. began with a brief introduction which clearly identified that this overall evaluation would focus on a description of her own learning and how she would plan for children in the future. Establishing a good working relationship with the class teacher had not been easy, a situation which the tutor readily acknowledged. However, she had persevered and enjoyed working with the children and seeing their development over the eleven weeks.

She identified areas of weakness in her own competence which she had tried to work on, with more or less success. Little in the way of evidence was provided however to support these self-assessments.

I find it easy to identify quickly where children are having problems and if it were my own class would always be able to create time where children with difficulties can be given the necessary support.

There was evidence of the view that learning will be unproblematic if you get make sure the planning is thorough and appropriate:

When interesting contexts for learning can be created motivation and learning are the natural results.

There were one or two exceptions which indicated a thoughtful approach to specific problems:

It was surprising during the football block of lessons how many girls still feel they cannot play. To a degree this was overcome by spending the first two lessons purely on football skills, control, etc., instilling confidence in the less able children. The focus when team games were being played was skill and control and not brute force, as a result.

She was relieved when it was over:

I put too much pressure on myself but fortunately I will never need to go through the same experience again.

In the margin, the TEI tutor agreed that she did put herself under pressure but also noted that *'there will be other "trying" experiences for you as a teacher in the future'*. Overall, there was little evidence of a questioning reflective approach to learning to become a teacher.

9. Margaret

(980 words)

This report began with a quote which she felt was particularly apt:

When practicalities, personal ideals and wider educational concerns are considered together, the job of reconciling the numerous demands and possible conflicts often seem overwhelming.

(Pollard and Tann, 1978, p.3)

This was highly personal report on 'becoming a teacher' and how it affected her at the level

of self-knowledge and belief.

This extended placement has allowed me to confront many of my concerns about myself and whether I would be 'good enough' to be a teacher and to a great extent overcome them.

She identified specific parts of her programme and individual sessions which had been learning experiences for her, indicating learning points in her own development. Specific activities e.g. the use of concrete materials, were cited as contributing to her theories of effective teaching and learning. Broader principles were also identified:

... it quickly became clear to me that if your key teaching points were ambiguous or not properly explained this would show itself in the children's jotters and you knew immediately that you hadn't tackled it properly or it needed more teaching input than you first realised.

She had also come to appreciate the wider professional responsibilities beyond the pupil-teacher relationship, some of which interrupted plans but which had to be accommodated. She identified ways in which being a teacher might also mean compromising one's principles:

I feel I have a deeper insight into the fact that teaching is a very difficult job where one has to work within a range of restrictions ... which may not always reflect your own beliefs or values of what teaching should be. Yet much of teaching is adapting and working within a range of restrictions.

She did see teaching as problematic, with no easy solutions or ready remedies. She continued to feel overwhelmed at the complexity of the teaching process yet felt she overcame this satisfactorily, gaining in confidence as a result. She concluded:

... I feel teaching is a challenging yet interesting profession and feel very clear that teaching is what I want to pursue. This placement has confirmed this strongly for me, despite the fact that I know this is not a nine to five job. Frankly, I cannot think of anywhere that I would rather be and feel that I am very privileged to be in this position. I am looking forward to what the future holds for me and in some ways a little anxious, yet excited at the prospect of perhaps having a class of my own.

Overall, this was self-analytical and enquiring but, as with Fran, focused on the personal

and affective dimensions of becoming a teacher. There was evidence of reflection on teaching as practice and the development of theories of learning and teaching, placing this evaluation, on the surface, towards the strong end of the reflection continuum.

8.2.3 Tutor Feedback

Of the eight evaluations from Year 3, five bore evidence of tutor feedback. In most instances this took the form of ticks beside sections of the report, occasionally accompanied by single word statements such as 'good' or 'agreed'. On only three scripts did tutor comment extend to a question or a sentence that challenged the student to think further. For example:

... try to develop your thinking around assessment. Your points are interesting - read more about assessment and the move towards criterion referenced assessment.

Six of the nine Year 4 reports carried comments from the student's tutor. Five of the tutors had ticked particular sentences of statements made by the students in their reports, giving positive feedback that their thinking was appropriate. The majority of the comments were affirming or validating, and in support of the views or comments expressed by the student, e.g. 'good', 'fully agree here', 'very important', 'a common happening – good that you were responsive'.

Two tutors confined themselves to concluding statements, summing up the student's performance on placement, for example:

A very rewarding experience for you in many ways – your work, attitude and insights were much appreciated.

There were no negative statements in any of the tutors' comments, although one or two qualified their praise e.g. 'yes, but the teacher has to plan how these can be maximised' (referring to the use of contexts in learning). Only one tutor continued to challenge the student's thinking throughout the report through asking questions and, while supporting the judgements made, raising further issues to be considered. Two examples of this:

Why do you think this was? How to deal with it?

Yes (that was) important learning – but does it say something about how you approach key learning?

This tutor wrote ten comments of this nature throughout the report and was the only one who encouraged the student to keep reflecting upon and questioning her/his practice.

The students' written evaluations of their performance and progress on placement serve a number of purposes. One of these is to encourage them to reflect upon their experiences and to learn from them i.e. a formative purpose. In order to meet this aim, the students will benefit from feedback that challenges them to go beyond the descriptive and unpack situational and contributory factors. In these overall evaluations, this was not given. A lack of such feedback might convey the implicit message that they have thought as far as is necessary, that they are on the right track and, particularly in the final year, that they have all but acquired what they need to become beginning teachers.

The evaluation reports also contribute to the final grade awarded for placements and therefore have a summative function. In this, tutors are looking for evidence of reflection, reflective skills and a willingness to look beyond the surface features of the situation, as students are advised in the course materials. The majority of tutors responded to students by summing up performance in general terms, and making concluding remarks, almost always positive and complimentary. While this may be comforting and reassuring to the students, it may also engender a sense of complacency and feeling of nearing the completion of the process of learning to become a teacher.

8.2.4 Discussion

The analysis was undertaken on the summary evaluations of placement rather than the daily or weekly reports that students produced. As a result, there will have been inevitably some loss of the detail and colour of the day-to-day activities within the classroom/school. On the other hand, summarising their experiences required them to stand back from the minutiae of the experience and pick out the broad themes of teaching and learning (their own as well as the children's) from the placement.

These evaluation reports appeared to be written for the TEI tutor and would have contributed to the assessment of the placement experience. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that students would have felt that they should select judiciously from that experience in evaluating their learning, and that of the children. The picture presented

would be expected to resonate with the school's report and be in line with the experiences of the TEI tutor when s/he visited the school. Students however would be expected to indicate weaknesses as well as strengths and not to suggest that all had been unproblematic and an uninterrupted tale of progress and growing competence.

It was also an opportunity to persuade the tutor that, while mistakes might have been made and plans not entirely fulfilled, the student knew these had occurred, had reflected upon them and learning had resulted, either during the placement or at least in time for the next foray into the classroom. Regardless of how obstructive, unsupportive and demanding the class teacher and/or TEI tutor had been, students might have felt obliged to acknowledge that both had helped their development and provided advice and guidance. And to record their thanks for being allowed into their classrooms (Edwards, 1997). All of these responses were in evidence to a greater or lesser degree.

The 'facts' of the placement are of little importance in this particular analysis - rather it is the manner of their telling. This would have been structured, in part, by the guidance provided by the School Experience Tutor Team, and some students stuck very closely to the structure. But in both years, the students' self-evaluations showed a wide variation in what was considered relevant for the overall evaluation of placement and in the level of discourse employed.

Tann (1993) identified 3 phases of development in becoming reflective: description, exploration (with tentative cause and effect theorising), and the use of public texts and theories to interrogate their experiences. The evaluations analysed here fell, predominantly but not exclusively, into the first two of these categories. Four students appeared to view the development of the requisite skills and the acquisition of teaching strategies as relatively unproblematic and, once established, they were equipped for whatever came next.

Eight of the evaluations across the two years showed evidence of attempts at establishing cause and effect links in both teacher-pupil and pupil-teacher behaviour, some of which were better articulated than others. (Two students each provided 2 such reports.)

The reference system against which the majority of students measured their own and the pupils' performances tended to be very subjective and personal. A few measured their

effectiveness against the practices of other teachers or the guidance of the TEI tutor (e.g. Sarah, Y3), while one or two referred obliquely to public theories of learning and teaching such as differentiation or pupil motivation. Only one (Linda, Y3) referred directly to public theory when she described how she had experimented with principles of positive reinforcement with some success. Rory (Y4) talked more generally of a role for theory in developing practice but gave no specific examples.

Margaret (Y4) began by quoting from a textbook but this was more of a scene-setter than an appeal to theory to support her learning on placement. She was one of the two students who viewed becoming a teacher as a process of personal discovery that had required them to make explicit their values and beliefs and had challenged them throughout. Both of these were mature students, with children of their own and, probably, well developed theories, implicit or explicit, on how children should be treated, the role of education and such like. Much of what they encountered forced them to examine these theories from a different perspective (an uncomfortable experience), and to acknowledge that there was not a simple answer: teaching was complex, difficult but ultimately very rewarding.

Although these appear on the surface to be deeply reflective, they border on the 'extravagant navel gazing' of Halliday (1998), with no clear frame of reference against which to test their emerging theories, other than their own personal values and beliefs systems – which they were still trying to uncover.

Eraut (1995) warns of the limitations of self-referenced reflection where practitioners can become 'trapped within their own theories of action'. In a similar vein, Halliday (1998) argues the need to supplement personal (professional) knowledge with the ideas of publicly recognised thinkers and researchers, acknowledging that they are part of a much broader community of practice. Bengtsson (1995b) similarly reminds us that the individual's professional practice is a small sub-set of a much wider concern with and involvement in education as professional knowledge.

Tann (1993) detected a 'shift in the reasoning process' from quantity to quality during her study of reflection. This was not detectable in the BEd reports analysed but the sample size was small and the number of reports per student insufficient to detect developmental shifts. An analysis of a series of more detailed evaluations over a placement (and/or series

of placements), for example, would provide a better basis for establishing any changes in the nature of the statements made. Where reports were available for the same students for both Years 3 and 4 (6 students), there was considerable similarity in the tone and scope of their reports. Students who showed reflective and analytical skills and an attitude of inquiry into becoming a teacher in Year 3 continued in this way in Year 4. Those who wrote of technical skills and saw learning to teach as a process of mastering these skills produced similar reports in Year 4.

The analysis of the students' own evaluations of their practice used documentary material originally produced for purposes other than this study, including the assessment of performance on school placement. That purpose may have skewed the nature of what was reported and how it was presented – if reflection is prized, sound reflective. In addition, each would have had their own tutor in mind and may have slanted what was written to meet their perceptions of their tutors' priorities. The very limited feedback on these evaluations from tutors do not provide any substantial information on how they responded to what they read or how they judged it, what features they looked for or valued, but they all appeared satisfied with what had been produced, or at least uncritical.

The interviews provided a second opportunity to probe students' reflective skills. Firstly, some questions in the interviews also required them to reflect upon their experiences on placement ('good' and 'bad' sessions) and to identify what they had learned from these. Secondly, they were asked about their own ability to think on their feet (reflection in action). In addition, at the end of the Year 4 interviews, they were asked about the concept of the reflective practitioner, if they thought they were reflective themselves and, if 'yes', what they thought had helped them to become so.

8.3 Reflection on Action: The Interviews

Three questions on 'good' and 'bad' lessons were included in the 3rd and 4th year interviews. The students were asked to recall a successful ('good') session and an unsuccessful ('bad') one from placement and to say what they thought they had learned from these two critical incidents. They were then asked if they felt that they learned more from successful or unsuccessful events, and why.

8.3.1 Reflecting on success

Eight of the fourteen 3rd year students who were interviewed identified a specific, single lesson that they felt had gone particularly well. In each of these, some particular skill or aspect of understanding had been developed e.g. working with groups or the benefits of careful preparation. Two spoke of broader curricular areas and the development they had observed in the children's attainment over the placement (mathematics and Gaelic). Four students focused on work they had undertaken with specific children who had behavioural or learning difficulties, where they had worked intensely and felt that they had helped the children make progress.

A common thread in their own learning as a result of these experiences was that of increased confidence, a sense of having mastered something or taken a significant step forward e.g. *'learned to be more confident, how to manage a class, I practised it'* (Linda). There was a move away from the focus on being in control towards having the confidence to let the children have more freedom: *'use their ideas and let them get on with it'* (Elsie); *'how much you get from them if you treat them like people'* (Rory). One student summed up the shift in focus from their own teaching to the children's learning thus:

... (you learn) that it's not all about you and being able to stand up and survive for an hour. In Year 3 you realise it's just so much more about the kids than you.

(Fran)

In Year 4, only one student referred to an individual lesson, the remainder spoke of a series of lessons linked to a specific aspect of the curriculum or a topic study, e.g. science or 'the River Clyde'. In these, some students were becoming more independent, diverting from or going beyond the set programme, and justifying their decisions:

... and the history topic, it was just dire ... but the science topic was fantastic... the children were really, really enthusiastic about it ... as it turned out, I did sway things round so that I could use the minibeast topic for the assembly ... we did a whole school assembly and it was just fan-dabby-dozy ...

(Fran).

They certainly were very motivated (investigating a town on the River Clyde) ... and that ended up involving the children writing to the tourist information, and writing to a primary school in that town, to the children ... and when they got letters back,

for them, they would be very please and chuffed ... just to see them in charge of their learning and in charge of what happened ... I was a little concerned with that age of child, maybe it was a bit young ... but no, it was brill, just great ...the children found out what they wanted to find out ...

(Alex)

There was little or no mention of the supervising teacher in these reports; the success was theirs and the children's. This included having the confidence to tackle quite demanding activities, and retain overall control:

..we were looking at the print, bleach and dye works that used to be in the town ... I decided to do tie-dyeing with the class .. and they loved it .. and it was great because you were in there and you shut the door and it didn't matter that there was a noise or that ... they were loving it ... but it wouldn't have gone down well in a crit lesson(but) I was in control, definitely.

(Jackie)

One student, who reported a difficult placement where she felt that she had been unsupported by the supervising teacher, brought examples of children's work to the interview, including their evaluation of the topic that she had worked on with them. (She was still upset about her final grading/assessment and wanted to show that at least the children had appreciated her input.)

8.3.2 Reflecting on unsuccessful teaching

All but three of the students at the end of 3rd year recalled individual specific lessons that had been unsuccessful. A number of factors were cited in explanation: eight misjudged the level at which to target the lesson; two lacked preparation; and one tried unsuccessfully to follow the teacher's planning. Of the remaining three students, one had '*no real disasters*' other than frequently losing the chalk, one over-estimated the time it would take for children to complete the task and '*ran out of work for the children to do .. and having to think on your feet*' (Linda), while the third felt a general dissatisfaction at her inability to keep the children 'on task' for any length of time.

In Year 4, very few students focused on specific lessons. One had, according to her tutor, failed to address cultural stereotypes in a story and another had become extremely frustrated when attempts to get collaborative group working underway failed:

That was bad in lots of ways, because it affected the relationship with the class, and it made me kind of angry .. angry with myself, frustrated with the kids, for not listening and not doing what I'd asked of them .. it was pretty awful.

These frustrations had not been included in his self-evaluations, which were in the main positive and confident. But he had learned from the experience:

I would do it different, in a very different way, but keep trying – oh, absolutely – but maybe again focus on,.. I would either just have one or maybe two groups working on a practical activity and the rest doing something completely different and just rotate that ...
(Rory)

Four were concerned that they had not managed the behaviour of some difficult children in the class as well as they would have liked although they had tried various strategies e.g. positive reinforcement or working closely with the children, building relationships. Other learning included management and organisation and about the preferences of their tutors:

Everything was wrong, my file wasn't right ... I was doing it the way I was doing it last year but that was wrong so I had to start doing it again, but one of the students had (that tutor) before and so she kind of helped me get it all the way she likes it.
(Lynsey)

8.3.3 Learning from 'good' or 'bad' lessons

No-one thought they learned more from successful teaching episodes than unsuccessful ones; both provided feedback and learning, although the overall verdict was marginally in favour of 'bad' sessions:

It probably sticks more when they go badly!
(Sarah)

When things went badly, almost all of them said that they tried to work out what went wrong:

Because you never know when you'll need to do something like that again.(Lynsey)

First off, it's a case of 'I'll never do that again' and then I think, well why wouldn't I? What went wrong?
(Flora)

Is it just the children that day, or is it something I've done, what have I done that I shouldn't do again? Or that I should try a different way?
(Jackie)

Fortunately, bad experiences only dented the confidence temporarily for most:

... that was just one mess today and hopefully tomorrow's different. (Alex)

Only one student linked the conversation to the formal evaluations that they were required to write on placement although she did not really feel they helped.

I don't think you go into it in enough depth (in the evaluations) and as a consequence a lot of the time, you repeat what you've done wrong the first time. There's a few times that I did the same mistakes because ... after I'd done it, I thought – oh, that happened the other day, this shouldn't have happened again because ... and I think it's just because you didn't go home and think – ok

(Jackie)

This may, in part, explain the paucity of the analytical thinking in the evaluations and reinforces the argument that writing evaluations was perceived as a technical requirement rather than an opportunity for development through reflection – as had been hoped/intended by the course documentation. In the interviews, the majority of students demonstrated an ability to reflect critically on the events of the placement with an honesty and sense of humour that was missing from the written reports.

8.3.4 Discussion

In their responses, the majority of students shifted from a focus on individual lessons that went well, or badly, and the specific reasons for this in 3rd year to larger pieces of teaching in 4th year. This may have been, at least in part, an artefact of the longer placement in Year 4 where teaching took place in longer sessions and over extended periods of time. In recollecting events, they had more to choose from and more extended involvement in various areas.

There was an emphasis on themselves as responsible for the way things turned out in the majority of cases, particularly when things went wrong, although the children often got some of the credit when it went well. Students' responses to success/failure varied from 'will'/'will not do it again' to, less frequently, an appreciation that context and situational factors were involved. Those who looked for ways things might have been done differently tended to seek alternatives for their own actions, as McIntyre (1993) suggests, rather than

identifying contextual variables that might have had an influence. There were some who did acknowledge that the particular circumstances might have been in part responsible and who identified a need to sort out these factors to maximise the chances of success the next time around.

Tann (1993) distinguished a developmental progression from blaming the children when things went wrong (child-oriented explanations) to teacher-oriented and finally to learner-oriented ones. In her study, she found that only a few arrived at the last of these. Here, there was evidence of all three forms of explanations:

i. Child-oriented

*Children hadn't done it before and had always been very controlled and directed
... too noisy, not able to work as a team or in groups* (Colette, Y3)

ii Teacher-oriented

Not as well prepared as I should have been (Elsie, Y3)

iii Learner-oriented

*Learned the value of each child in the class – different teaching approaches are
essential for different children (sounds like Jordanhill!)* (Alex, Y3)

And sometimes more than one from the same student:

*(describing a drama lesson) awful... kids high, I didn't know what I
wanted, resources poor – sat down with them and said that we needed to sort out
some rules about what makes a good classroom ... I found myself getting agitated
with the kids, they were getting nothing, and they were just being kids.* (Rory, Y3)

All three forms of explanation may be valid depending on the specific incident recalled and each reflects the reality of the classroom: sometimes it may well be that some children are not sufficiently motivated for reasons beyond the teacher's influence; the teacher is unprepared; or the needs of the learner are not being met.

It would be of concern however if the student habitually attributed success or failure to the child or a personal lack of skill or knowledge rather than seeing learning and teaching as a

dynamic, interactive process with multiple variables, in which she or he is an active participant.

8.4 Reflection in Action: the Interviews

Reflection in action differs from reflection on action in that it occurs within the same time frame, rather than at a time, and possibly place, removed from the action. The latter tends to take the form of after-the-event re-constructions, often in the form of a justification (as in some students' reports).

Reflection in action is the application of knowledge in action (Eraut, 1995) and is evidenced by spontaneous and skilful practice in response to the specific situation and event(s). Schön (1987) differentiates between knowledge in action which maintains ongoing conditions and is the exercise of well-established patterns of practice (constancy) and that which generates new learning, understanding or practice (innovative). Reflection in action, for professional development, is that which results in innovation. Successful innovatory reflection in action depends upon a number of pre-requisites (Schön, 1983) that it is unlikely that student teachers, even towards the end of the course will have acquired these in any great amount. Examples include: the means by which to describe reality (including language), understandings of the ways practitioners discuss their practice, knowledge of overarching theories that help them make sense of their experiences and their knowledge of the institutional and role frames within which they operate.

In acknowledgement of this, the questions were limited to 'thinking on your feet' and explored students' awareness of how they had responded to situations/events where they had experienced discomfort or dissonance. Some of the descriptions of good/bad sessions generated data which might be integrated into this analysis in that the situations described, particularly when things went wrong, required on-the-spot action. Some students spontaneously spoke of thinking on their feet when talking about the successful/unsuccessful lessons that they had described. However, part of the intention behind the questions was to elicit understandings of what 'thinking on your feet' meant to them, through the examples they provided.

Therefore specific questions on 'thinking on your feet' were included in the Year 3 interview schedule only. Each student was asked, depending on how earlier questions had

been answered, if they thought they were good at thinking on their feet and to give examples. If they responded positively, they were also asked if they thought they had become better at it over the years.

The majority of responses interpreted 'thinking on your feet' as saving a situation that had gone in an unpredictable, usually problematic, way. Two versions of such events were given: firstly, the ability to think of activities to 'fill in' either at the end of a lesson where there was time remaining, or when asked to take over for a short period; and secondly, to recognise when a lesson was going wrong and having the confidence to stop the activity and switch to something else more appropriate.

Of the 14 students interviewed, 6 felt able to fill in time with games and supplementary activities while 7 (4 of them from the same 6 students) were prepared to call a halt to an unsuccessful session and re-group. Both responses came when a situation had reached the point where it was no longer possible to avoid taking action. One example:

So I just stopped it all and put everything away because it was just getting louder and louder, so I completely finished it in the room and they had to sit with their arms folded and I just read the story ... (Colette)

While there did seem to be an awareness that things were beginning to fall apart, no decisive action was taken until the situation had reached a crisis point:

... like the dinosaur research I thought – this is not working – but I just kept going.... (Flora)

... it wasn't that they couldn't all achieve it, but there were voices coming from different corners, saying – I can't do this! (Alice)

Similarly, there came a point when they had to do something because children had completed the planned work but there was still time remaining:

... and simple things, like if I was in the gym, being able to draw upon having a couple of games to finish up with, just in the back of the head (Rory)

... because you can ask them wee brain teasers and things, you know, in between times, if you're (filling in time) (Linda)

Looking to the future, the way out of such dilemmas was to be better organised and to have *'more things up your sleeve'*, rather than to avoid the situation arising in the first place. Learning was limited to identifying a need for better preparation and organisation, although precisely how this would be achieved was somewhat vague.

Six students described a more incremental, and positive, form of adjusting to a changing situation and making smaller changes in response to the children's reactions. .

Yes, I've enjoyed the opportunity to do a bit of lateral thinking and to be able to pick up, (to) respond to the children and to respond to what they are bringing.

(Evelyn)

... he (the tutor) saw me adapting because of time and even adapting the difficulty of the lesson because some children weren't coping with it.

(Alex)

Three students mentioned a need to feel secure, have a base plan to fall back on (not follow rigidly) and to feel confident of the situation:

.. it takes me till about the end of the placement (to be able to think on my feet) ... got to get used to the children and the teacher It's only when you're feeling comfortable that you can do that – well I can, anyway ..

(Linda)

Only one student mentioned all three examples of thinking on your feet – filling time, stopping an on-going but problematic activity and responding to smaller signals in more fluid ways. It might be argued that students failed to read the signals and spot problems as they developed but some responses indicated that they were aware, but didn't know how to respond or lacked the confidence to deviate from a planned sequence:

... I'm sure that sometimes I just ignore kids, but generally I do (respond)

(Colette)

.. I would carry on and then set the task that I had and then go to the ones that I felt weren't (understanding).

(Jane)

Several students substituted 'responsiveness' in responding, albeit with varying interpretations:

My responsiveness is pretty good (...) I mean if time is running out of some activity (...) I wouldn't try to squash it all in, I'd just let it go ... (Alex)

...to be able to pick up, to respond to the children and to respond to what they're bringing ... (Evelyn)

(I'm) more confident in responding to things.... blank faces don't faze me as much as they would have done last year (Sarah)

'Responsiveness' is a category in the school experience assessment schedule and the way the students interpreted and used the term might reflect the definitions used by tutors, explicitly or implicitly. If so, the students were not consistent. This has been one of the issues throughout this study; participants often used the same words and phrases but did not use them to refer to the same concepts or ideas.

Given the pre-requisites to reflection in action outlined by Schön (1983), it is unsurprising that students' reports of thinking on their feet were limited and, in the main, indicated low level responses to tricky situations, with avoidance learning predominating. The need expressed to feel confident, to know your class, teacher and tutor – to reduce the number of balls being juggled - has to be re-established with every placement.

This discussion has focussed on reflection in action as a reactive process but Eraut (1995) argues for consideration of it as a strategy for active learning on placement. Rather than responding to events, teachers, and students, might initiate changes in an on-going unproblematic situation and learn from the results. Again, this would require confidence in the maintenance skills of classroom management, which many students have not established.

This was a very limited and speculative foray into the concept of reflection in action that generated interesting but inconclusive findings regarding the ways in which students interpreted 'thinking on their feet'. It does provide a starting point for further investigation however which would require a much closer working with students on practice and an exploration of the processes at work – in collaboration with the students themselves.

8.5 The Concept of the Reflective Practitioner

In the Year 4 interviews, two key questions attempted to get at, firstly, the students' understanding of the concept of the reflective practitioner and, secondly, whether or not they considered themselves to be reflective practitioners. If they did, they were asked to indicate why they thought so and what elements of the course they thought had contributed to their development as such.

Of the thirteen students interviewed, two did not recognise the term 'reflective practitioner' nor were aware that it was a fundamental aim of the course. One of them did not understand what it meant but when it was explained briefly and in a very simplified form to her (the teacher who thinks about what s/he is doing and the effect it is having on the children; thinks about what went wrong/well and learns from it), she thought she did engage in at least some of these activities. The second student thought it might mean:

'a person who does what they are doing and comes out and thinks about what went well, what didn't work, what to do next and, to me, if you're being reflective, you are thinking through what you've done and looking for different ways ..'

(Jackie)

She also thought she was one.

While the other students did seem to be at least not unfamiliar with the concept, their awareness of what it meant varied considerably. One student, who gave an appropriate and fairly detailed interpretation of the concept, concluded by saying:

'Reflective practitioner ... I haven't really heard that phrase very often .. maybe it's just me.'

(Alex)

Two main interpretations emerged from the other interviews. The first, given by five students, was essentially procedural/technical and related specifically to individual lessons or sessions with children and echoed the format of the evaluations which they had undertaken on school experience.

.. looking at what I've done what I've achieved, as far as my goals or the goals I've set for the children ..

(Alice)

.. to try and find out and reflect on how you went as far as how the children responded and looking at the next steps you would take ..

(Linda)

The second category of interpretation looked beyond the immediate situation and the students in this group appeared to see it as a part of learning to be or being a teacher rather than something you did once the teaching session was over:

.. realising why you do certain things; more than that – being able to back up, to justify why you are doing certain things ... (Margaret)

.. thinking about what you have achieved and what you need to work on .. learning from experience and building up my experiences of situations .. I see that as the way I'm going to learn (when I'm out there) .. (Alex)

All the students considered that they were, to a greater or lesser extent, reflective (in terms of reflection on action) but very few were able to indicate exactly what that meant in practice or to give examples which supported their claims of being reflective practitioners. Two students referred to situations where things had gone awry during a lesson and where they had had the confidence to stop everything and re-group, moving on positively. They saw this as evidence of being reflective with one of them adding that she was far better at thinking on her feet that she had been earlier in the course; this was a skill that came through practice and experience.

One student realised that she took it very personally whenever a problem arose in the class and she was making deliberate efforts to 'step back a wee bit' and try to analyse the problem (later) rather than blaming herself each time.

The students were asked to identify aspects of the course which they considered had helped them to develop into reflective practitioners. The majority of students perceived the evaluations they were required to do on school experience as a major factor in developing skills of reflection. A small number were fairly disparaging about the evaluations however, with the feeling that it was another hoop to jump through rather than a real concern with their development. As a result, they tended to write what they thought was expected of them rather than being completely honest. Three comments from students who did show evidence of reflection both in their evaluations and the interviews, illustrate an underlying discomfort with the requirement:

'Evaluations encourage reflection .. but just by asking people 'write down in your evaluation what went on' - they (the students) come, almost like the children before you, they come to know what's expected ..' (Fran)

'.. but having to explain it, you know, in all this prose, so that it sounds really reflective, that you'd thought about it deeply, I just' (shrug of shoulders)
(Colette)

'I'm sure it's a common experience where folks don't think, they just write, write, write, write and its not really a very thoughtful kind of process' (Rory)

Talking with the supervising teacher and other school staff was also mentioned as helping reflection if the focus was on what had happened during a session. Other students could help too, but this tended to require a good friend and a one-to-one situation; when larger groups of students got together, they tended to be looking for emotional rather than intellectual support – *'moans ... more feelings about tutors and what's going on'*.

Only one student mentioned the faculty tutor as an influence in this area of development. She had experienced good questioning from a tutor in the earlier years of the course which had caused her to think more carefully about her practice. Unfortunately, this had not happened in later years and she felt that, as a result, her ability to reflect had not developed. In her view, the development of skills of reflection depended upon experience, and required practice (very reflective).

Another student felt she had always been 'like that' and that it was not necessarily as a result of her experience on the BEd course. She believed that, if an individual has ambition, thinking about what you are doing comes naturally; being reflective applied to all walks of life not just teaching.

One student, who demonstrated a deeper understanding of the concept than many, felt that it was *'easy to avoid being reflective on the course'*, arguing that time was a major factor. He added:

I think they (the course) should make it more explicit what they mean by the reflective practitioner and have .. I was thinking this last year, actually ... this notion that on an assignment you could have a section for some kind of evaluation

of the particular component, so that it would encourage people to be a bit reflective about it .. was it good? .. was it bad?.. what did it mean to you? ...

(Rory)

He thought that such a strategy would also allow staff to gauge how reflective students were actually being, if they were reflecting on it at all. There is a contradiction inherent in this suggestion however. The same student had earlier indicated that he felt that writing evaluations was *'not really a very thoughtful kind of process'*, in that students tended to be writing to meet the tutor's expectations rather than genuinely reflecting on their practice. It could be argued that simply requiring students to include a reflective statement within an assignment would formalise the process as part of the course requirements and leave it open to similar criticisms.

The on-campus components of the course (e.g. specific modules, assignments or seminars) were mentioned rarely. Two students thought that some of the assignments encouraged thinking about teaching and learning, but not all. Learning about the psychology of children and alternative approaches which might be employed (Professional Studies) had been useful according to a third student. She had not seen much point to theory in the early years of the course (and this was evident in the early interviews), but could see its value now:

' .. down to the fact that I've actually been thinking the things I've read and then I'm like, that is true (...) and I can see certain things happening and I'll try things and there's no prescription again, but it certainly comes with experience as well, throughout the years.'

(Linda)

One student singled out the subject studies components of the course as contributing nothing at all to developing reflection on teaching or the children's learning that resulted from their teaching.

8.5.2 Discussion

These few questions on the reflective practitioner were amongst the least well answered in the interviews with fourth year students. Many were struggling to come to terms with the concepts involved and, even after four years of the course, their responses gave an impoverished view of the reflective practitioner. The forms of reflection that they used to

support their (unanimous) claims to being reflective practitioners were, in the main, those that were in line with the contents of their placement evaluations. In addition, the evaluations were the main means by which they felt they had developed their reflective abilities.

If the materials, activities and support provided during the course were designed to encourage students to develop into at least embryonic reflective practitioners, there was limited evidence indicating that they were aware of this. The model of the reflective practitioner, as one pointed out, must be made explicit, complete with characteristics and ways of developing the requisite skills. The opportunities exist for practice and experience but the notion of the reflective practitioner is implicit rather than explicit in the majority of instances. Building the requirement to 'be reflective' into a formal assessment procedure seems self-defeating.

In the year before this research, a colleague completed a study of the use of the Repertory Grid with BEd students at Jordanhill that looked at changes in perceptions of teaching across the four years of the course (Christie, 1995). Students' systems of constructs were elicited in the first year of their course (1987-88) and again at the end of the fourth year (1991-92). It was predicted that, at the end of the course, students would have more sophisticated and differentiated ways of making sense of teaching and that this would be evident in the personal construct systems revealed by the repertory grid analysis.

Repertory grid (rep grid) analysis aims to identify the systems of constructs that individuals use to make sense of experiences and their environment. In using this technique with student teachers, Christie explored the ways in which the students made sense of relevant elements of their experience i.e. of the concept of the teacher. The study had the twin aims of exploring the use of the rep grid technique as a methodology and considering how it might be used to encourage students to reflect upon the ways in which they thought about teaching and becoming a teacher, either on its own or in combination with other techniques.

Firstly, Christie subjected the students' responses to semantic content analysis. The constructs they used fell, predominantly, into two main categories: personal and interpersonal qualities. In the grid analysis, these were shown to indicate a single

underlying affective response, along a positive-negative continuum. This was the dominant feature of the analysis: *'a single dimension showing a lack of sophistication and differentiation repeated across almost the entire sample of grids'* (p.7).

It had been predicted that the students at the end of the course would produce grids that were more complex and less affective than those at the start. This was not borne out and indeed the Year 4 grids were more strongly one-dimensional than they had been in Year 1. Christie concluded that *'their ability to differentiate meaningfully among elements of their experience in the form of teachers did not develop appreciably over their four years of study'* (p.8).

While acknowledging the possibility that the rep grid might have been insufficiently sensitive to any change, he cited previous research (Christie and St Paul, 1988) where cross-sectional research involving all four years of the BEd course had shown similar findings. In this study, students frequently perceived components of the course along a unitary theory-practice dimension. Christie and St Paul also identified *'a high degree of personal insecurity which appear to militate against a "deep" approach to studying, to undermine their level of academic confidence and which might be expected to impede any kind of serious reflection about their practice'* (p.8).

Christie (1995) discussed the ways in which the BEd programme had been revised, with the concepts of reflection and deep learning and central organising principles, with activities designed to foster these. The students who formed the sample for this longitudinal study began the year after Christie completed his data gathering and in the first year of the revised course.

His findings on students' reflective capacities resonate with those presented in this thesis. The systems used by novice students and by those who had completed the course were unsophisticated, affective and focused on teachers' personal and inter-personal qualities. While he found a narrowing of attitude when he compared first and final years, this was not evident in this study. Few students changed significantly over the period of the study however; their responses and behaviours remained very similar throughout. Further analysis could, and perhaps should, be undertaken into this aspect, possibly through analysing the interview data as narratives.

8.6 Learning to Become a Reflective Practitioner: Discussion

The concept of the teacher as reflective practitioner is integral to the course documentation and a major facet of its design. It is one that has gained hold in the face of increasingly positivist and technicist policies from government (Halliday, 1998; Parker, 1997), although some argue that it has been taken up more as a mantra or slogan (Calderhead, 1987) against the dominant philosophy of the time than a coherent, alternative view of the effective, professional teacher.

Positivism (which claims to be amoral and value-neutral) is deeply entrenched in teacher education and programmes that successfully realise reflective practice are few and far between (Halliday, 1998; McIntyre, 1993). The attraction of the reflective practitioner model lies in its claims to authenticity, emancipation and increased autonomy within the professional role (Parker, 1997). It encourages self-determination and recognises that values and beliefs underpin educational policies and practices. Teaching is a political and moral act; if it were not, students learning to become teachers would not experience the angst that is evident in their self-evaluations (although it is acknowledged that some did seem remarkably angst-free).

These characteristics have led to its adoption as the underpinning model of the BEd degree and the structure of the course provides opportunities for developing skills of reflection and analysis, for gaining personal, technical and theoretical knowledge bases and for experimenting and testing developing theories of what it is to teach, and to learn. The two research questions set at the start of the study relating to the development of reflective (beginning) practitioners were:

- To what extent does school experience contribute to the development of reflective practitioners?
- What internal and/or external factors constrain or facilitate the development of reflective practitioners?

These are considered in turn.

8.6.1 School Experience and Becoming Reflective: Opportunities

The evidence is that the concept of reflection and the model of the reflective practitioner were not promoted explicitly, systematically or effectively either on school experience or

during the in-faculty components of the course. Students at the end of fourth year varied greatly in their awareness of the reflective practitioner as the underpinning model of the course and held impoverished and unsophisticated notions of what that might mean in practice (though there was no direct relationship between their awareness of the term and their ability to give a satisfactory definition). What understanding they did have had been acquired incidentally and/or informally. They all considered themselves to be reflective practitioners and it was not disputed, explicitly or implicitly, that it was an appropriate goal for them.

The structure of the course provided opportunities for developing skills of reflection and analysis during the four years, with a particular emphasis in the later years. The supervising teachers indicated that these were the years in which they would expect students to be developing such skills and acquiring greater understandings of the wider role of the teacher. The substance of reflection would include wider contextual issues as well as the practicalities of the day-to-day activity within the school and/or classroom. These findings (the 'when' and 'what' of reflection) are in line with McIntyre's finding that mentors looked for mastery of technical skills before turning students' attention on less immediate and more abstract concepts (1993).

The next question is 'Who?'. Students interact professionally with a range of experienced and qualified staff in schools and the university and, as developing professionals, with other student teachers. There are also opportunities for interacting, with students whose professional goals are social work, community education and health-related professions such as speech therapy. Traditionally, the teacher and, more centrally, the faculty tutor have been seen as those most responsible for ensuring that students achieve a satisfactory level of skill and understanding.

Teachers, tutors and remit-holders questioned in the course of this study, varied in their views of who was responsible for the development of critical reflection and skills of analysis. The majority of TEI tutors held that 'encouraging reflection on practice' was the responsibility of the TEI although fewer than half of the teachers and remit-holders agreed. The majority of these saw it as a shared responsibility, with a very small proportion considering it as primarily the role of the school. Whoever was deemed to be responsible, there is little evidence that many of the supervisors, school-based or TEI, took an active role

in fostering skills of reflection or in establishing the concept of the reflective practitioner as a goal of pre-service teacher education in anything more than the technical sense.

The evidence from the questionnaires indicates that the majority of teachers, while acknowledging a place for the concepts of reflection, evaluation and critical analysis in the later years, did not engage directly with the students in ways that would be likely to facilitate their development. As with other forms of support on placement, the lack of a clearly defined role for the teacher supervisor and a curriculum for the school-based component of the degree virtually ensured that students received a varied and inconsistent experience in school. This was most apparent in those aspects of learning that went beyond technical skills or propositional knowledge of schools and classrooms.

With little agreement on who was responsible, it could be expected that there would be a similar lack of consensus on what 'encouraging reflection on practice' actually looked like in action. Reading between the lines, i.e. from the students' reports of their interactions with their supervisors and from the feedback given by tutors, both teachers and tutors were content with descriptive commentaries of what had happened, some assessment of whether the outcome was in line with the student's aims and a limited consideration of alternative approaches for future, similar occasions. There was no sense of 'self as agent' beyond the technical in the majority of reports by students, nor of any questioning of values and attitudes, nor of seeing teaching as being an imprecise science open to question, challenge and change (Eraut, 1994; Stones, 1994). The interviews were much more productive in these respects and this raises the question of whether the evaluations of practice, as conceived in the course documentation and realised in practice, are capable of supporting the development of reflective practitioners, or of providing reliable and valid evidence of their reflective capacities.

When asked which elements of the course, activities or tasks helped their development towards being reflective practitioner ('how'), the students universally mentioned the evaluations. The majority also pointed out, in their responses to a different question, that they tended to adopt a mechanical and task-oriented approach to completing them. Very few of the tutors challenged the content of the reports – the students appear to have developed a well-honed sense of what was good enough to get past that particular hurdle, and they said as much in the interviews.

Reflection was also fostered through discussions with teachers for a few students and talking to other students and friends was relevant for others, where the focus was on the events on placement. Placement provides the raw material for reflection but they need the support of others to help to make sense of the experiences. Some teachers and the occasional tutor did provide this support, but this was not a common experience amongst students, was idiosyncratic and not an integral part, in practice, of the course.

Fewer students mentioned the in-faculty elements of the course as supporting reflection although the evaluation reports and some of the interviews in the later years showed a growing awareness of the relevance of, in particular, 'professional studies' programmes. On the down side, such references as did exist tended almost exclusively to refer to more instrumental theories such as behaviour modification through positive reinforcement.

But what should 'encouraging reflection on practice' mean? McIntyre (1993) distinguishes between learning to be reflective and using reflection to achieve a change in practice, arguing that the first of these is a worthy goal of the pre-service education while the second is more appropriate for experienced practitioners. This is echoed in Eraut's concern that, while Schön discussed reflection 'on' and 'in' practice, he neglected reflection 'for' practice i.e. the purposes to which it should be put (Eraut, 1995).

Distinguishing between short and long term purposes, McIntyre (1993) highlights the differences in the concerns of novice teacher (understanding of her/his own learning needs and the problems encountered on a day-to-day basis) and those of the experienced practitioner (guiding practice at a strategic level and aiding theorising).

Reflecting on Carr and Kemmis (1986), McIntyre sees value in focusing on the technical, practical and, in turn critical or emancipatory aims of reflection in the cause of theorising as priorities shift and experience and expertise grow. Alexander (1992; 1997) points out that good practice is determined by more than the technical and the practical and that considerations of the wider political, social and educational issues are required to make the shift from a technicist or simple cause and effect understanding to a reflective, in its broadest sense, orientation to practice. An exclusive emphasis on the technical and immediately practical may generate an unwillingness to look beyond the surface features of practice (Eraut, 1995).

It seems self-evident that, in order to learn from reflection on practice, the practitioner needs well-honed critical skills and it is this development of skills of reflection that Tann (1993) has demonstrated can be achieved through structured coaching and practice. The evidence she presented did not require students to go beyond unpacking practice at that stage, with or without reference to theoretical understandings. Being reflective meant demonstrating skills of reflection, not constructing new theories of practice on the back of their analyses.

Skills and processes must operate on something; they are not content-free. While the broad expectation is that they are being acquired through and exercised upon the students' day-to-day experiences within the school, McIntyre (1993) argues that the practices of others provide more appropriate material for student teachers. Opportunities for this include the placement teacher and other members of the school's staff, the TEI tutor and other students.

McIntyre (1993) also questions whether it is possible to acquire sufficient understanding of the complexities of teaching within the confines of a pre-service course to be able to make much progress on the second dimension of being reflective, using it to change existing practices, before qualification. He is arguing from the standpoint of the one-year secondary postgraduate course; it might be possible to use one to support the other more effectively in a four year course. This however presupposes a model of progression in 'being reflective' and strategies for achieving progress. There is no explicit differentiation between these elements of becoming a reflective practitioner, developing the requisite skills and using them for change, in any of the evidence gathered in this study and no explicit or discernable framework of progression for reflection, just an exhortation to be reflective.

Placement in school provides the direct experience of working with children, alongside experienced practitioners with varied expertise. This can be the focus of reflection during placement or afterwards, on return to the faculty. The first has benefit in the immediacy of the experience while looking at a situation separated by time and distance can allow a cooler and more reasoned exploration of its elements. Structurally, there are non-teaching activities built in to the programme and partnership arrangements that should provide the support for exploring and gaining an understanding of practice. The students are enthusiastic and highly motivated. Why are they not displaying well-honed reflective skills

and drawing on public theories of learning and teaching in the later years of the course?

8.6.2 School Experience and Becoming Reflective: Constraints

The BEd is a four-year course, all four of which are concerned with learning to become a teacher. This focus on professional training may distract from the need for students to see themselves as learners in higher education and to recognise that teachers require more than basic practical skills and tips for practice in order to become effective practitioners in the primary school. Unfortunately, they are eager to prove themselves in the classroom, seen as the 'reality' of being a teacher for most if not all, and are impatient with suggestions that there are knowledge bases (theory) and skills, technical and process, that they must acquire.

The first two placements in the first year of this study involved students going to schools in groups, with their TEI tutor. They observed the tutor and the other students with the aim of identifying and critiquing features of practice. While four of those interviewed preferred this set up, which they perceived as more supportive, the remainder liked the third placement where they were placed on an individual basis with a teacher. Comments included:

(the last was) the best because you were out yourself and you had to see how you got on yourself; (Elsie)

I was more comfortable on my own or just with the teacher, rather than (...) another five adults there. (Kirsten)

(I preferred) the last one, 'cos that's when you're really out on your own.

(Colette)

The fact that there are multiple 'realities' of school and classroom practice and reasons for the variations, is not immediately evident. The student needs the supervising teacher to help her or him to make sense of that particular classroom and school; how it works and why. The student also needs the tutor in the TEI to help her or him to appreciate that the particular school, while similar in a number of features, may well differ in significant other ways, which may be understood through a consideration of, for example, Alexander's attribute of good practice (1992, 1997).

Students should be enabled to understand the dynamics of the classroom as a social and cultural construct as well as a context for cognitive development. One of the most

disconcerting aspects of going on placement for the students in this study was the inconsistency of practice in schools and, in turn, the unpredictability of what might happen on the next placement. These differences, across and within schools, did not seem to be explicitly addressed by the TEI and accepted as the 'luck of the draw' by students.

The use of self-evaluation to develop and display reflective capabilities was only partially successful. The formalisation of the need to be reflective resulted in relatively anodyne and self-congratulatory statements by the less confident (and lower achieving) students. The descriptions of good/bad sessions, the identification of relevant factors and lessons learned were much more real, honest and insightful than those described in the school experience files. This was particularly true of 'disasters' which had rarely, if ever, been revealed to the TEI tutors, and yet were the kinds of event where many felt they learned the most.

The students had a number of suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the self-evaluation element of the school experience file. These included:

- 0 ***Reduce the amount of written evaluation required.*** Having to evaluate daily and/or weekly, etc., quickly became repetitive and boring. Less of it, particularly for those who had demonstrated that they had acquired the requisite skills, might shift the focus from quantity to quality, i.e. the emphasis moves from skill acquisition to using reflection as a tool for understanding or theorising.
- 0 ***Stop evaluating routine tasks.*** Students were expected to evaluate virtually all lessons taken, at least in the initial stages of a placement, including routine ones such as hearing reading groups. Again, the issue was primarily one of trying to think of something novel to say and a feeling of going through the motions.
- 0 ***Let the student select what is to be evaluated.*** If the student could select the incidents or lessons to be evaluated/reflected upon (and this did not have to be their own teaching) then she/he would be more likely to select those which were worth exploring because they were new or where something unexpected but revealing had occurred, rather than the routine and mundane e.g. the first attempt at a drama lesson or insights from a collaborative teaching session.

Even with such modifications, concerns remain as to whether this is an appropriate way in

which to foster reflective practitioners. As a result of the nature of the procedure (a course requirement) and its role in the final grading process, it seems unlikely that many students will be willing to be genuinely critical of themselves, their placement school or teacher or of the TEI and its tutors. The evaluations are relatively public statements and open to scrutiny; students were careful in what they allowed to go forward for such scrutiny.

In addition, the equating of 'evaluating' with 'reflecting' seems somewhat dubious in that evaluation is generally regarded as a management instrument and carries means-end connotations. It might be more effective to introduce reflective logs or diaries, independent of the system of assessment, with genuine ownership of these by the students themselves. Students would need some initial training in what these are and how to use them but they could be used much more formatively, with supervisors or peers. They would have to be perceived as valued by the TEI and not turned into yet another requirement of the course to be 'managed' rather than engaged with.

Attempts to foster a reflective stance may be hampered by the power imbalance inherent in the student-teacher or -tutor relationship. Peer learning and support would remove the authority of the teacher or tutor as the source of the 'right' answer and allow the exploration of observations that might be considered inappropriate to raise with a supervisor (especially if that supervisor is also an assessor). While this is relatively easy to arrange in faculty, students cannot always be placed in a school with other students. (Although this is a GTC requirement, it may not always happen due to various factors such as a student falling ill or dropping out.) Further research is required on the role of fellow students in learning to be a student and the effect that being placed with or without other students has on development, socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Self-evaluation is an appropriate way in which to acquire and practise skills of reflection - to analyse, identify relevant variables and pose tentative explanations i.e. 'theorising' - but the students will always be limited by their knowledge bases

In the interviews, several struggled for ways to express themselves and lacked an ability to discuss the substance of their experience in anything other than everyday terms. In other words, they lacked a professional vocabulary and conceptual framework that allowed them to express their views and attitudes. The rejection of what is regarded as jargon (by

students and teachers alike) and the irrelevance of knowledge of the underpinning disciplines of effective teaching (Stones, 1994) needs to be addressed directly. The lack of a professional vocabulary was most obvious and most disconcerting, in the final year interviews in the discussions of the concept of the reflective practitioner. Understanding of reflection and its role in learning was, overall, ill-formed and appeared to have been acquired incidentally. Many students appeared to lack a basic tool kit of vocabulary, concepts and skills for learning beyond basic classroom practice and technical competence.

Elliot (1993) identified two factors which worked against the development of reflection. The first of these, time, has been a factor throughout this study and students, teachers and tutors have all expressed the view that this is in short supply. This course attempts to produce beginning teachers who are competent across all areas of the curriculum, including ones they never tackled at school themselves, for children across the age range 2½ to 12 years. This results in a very crowded curriculum for the students, with limited practical experience at each of the key stages within that age range. Perhaps it is time to reconsider whether the notion of the generalist primary teacher is an appropriate model for the primary (and nursery) teacher of the future. Reducing the quantity of what must be achieved would not necessarily increase the quality of what is achieved but it would certainly provide what must be a pre-condition to quality.

Elliot's second factor was the attitudes and dispositions of students and teachers to engage in reflection, particularly when their energies were focused upon the formal obligations of recording and assessing performance and progress, with all the paperwork and planning that involves.

On the one hand, I am still a student and I should have to justify what I'm doing and why I'm doing it, and I feel I should still have to do that when I am a teacher preparing for a class, but I would find that if I spent the time making sure my file was as was expected, the contents of the lesson would fall. (Fran, Y4)

The demands made on students were significant and a regular source of stress and anguish. On being asked what helped him to develop into the reflective practitioner he was, he replied:

Having time and space and a glass of whisky helps ...(laughter) ... but having the time (...) so many assignments throughout the years, it's really hard. I mean

there's times when you don't reflect on anything – you write one assignment, you throw it away and get on to the next one and you don't, you don't really get time to reflect ...

(Rory, Y4)

The development of reflective practitioners, as a goal of the BEd course, would be realised more effectively if the characteristics of the reflective practitioner were made explicit and brought to the attention of the students. The rationale for the adoption of the reflective practitioner as the preferred model of the teacher should be made explicit and set out the role for pre-service education.

The course should differentiate between reflection on, in and for action and develop a model of progression in learning to be reflective, with strategies and activities designed to support students in their acquisition and development. Notions of progression would need to consider context and focus: where the reflection takes place (in school or faculty; with teachers, tutors or peers); and the practices which form the focus of the critical reflection (the practices of teachers, tutors, students). In addition, consideration needs to be given to what theory, when and in relation to which aspects of practice. There should be opportunities to try out reflective skills which were not compromised by assessment and which allowed time and space for questioning and tentative theorising and theory testing.

Students need support in doing this and the most obvious source of this support is the faculty tutor and the teacher, although recruiting the latter under prevailing conditions, may be more problematic. An interesting question in relation to the role of the tutor is 'How do teacher educators develop their understanding of their practice?'. If the student is expected to take on the model of the reflective practitioner, she or he might expect that her or his supervisors should also be reflective practitioners and be able to demonstrate reflection in, on and for action. Their practice should be informed by research, their own and that of others, and public theories of how students learn, incomplete though these may be.

PAGINATION AS IN ORIGINAL

CHAPTER 9 A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

This thesis has considered a number of the issues in the pre-service education of beginning teachers and their preparation for the teaching profession within the BEd course in a single TEI. The model of the teacher that underpins the course is that of the reflective practitioner, with professional attributes and values. These are implicit in the existence of the professional body, the General Teaching Council (Scotland), and in the knowledge, skills and attitudes (competences) that are considered appropriate for the beginning teacher (SOED, 1993a; SOEID, 1998). This chapter draws together some of these strands and considers whether the preparation that the students receive sustains and promotes the notions of reflection, critical thinking and professionalism.

There is a considerable debate as to whether professional practice can be circumscribed by a series of competences, however well-meaning these might appear to be on the surface (Stronach *et al*, 1994). The first section of this chapter looks at whether not the students themselves considered that they were competent in the terms of the SOED's 1993 guidelines for Initial Teacher Education. It is expected that much of their competence is attained and demonstrated on placement in schools, under the supervision of experienced teachers.

The second section looks at notions of 'good practice' on placement and the messages conveyed to the student about her/his role. In addition, it indicates ways in which 'professionalism' is used to justify and rationalise behaviour. The third section presents briefly the findings from two small-scale studies conducted by colleagues at the University of Strathclyde, one of which involved the cohort of students who formed the basis of the longitudinal student reported in this thesis. In this, the focus is on how teachers construe their role and the concerns of students as they contemplate their final placement of the course. The final, fourth section, attempts to pull these together to consider the extent to which professional concerns and values are reflected in these various pieces of evidence from school experience.

9.1 The Competences

At the end of the final year an additional questionnaire, which specifically focused on the SOED Competences for ITE (SOED, 1993) was administered to students (Appendix 8). The Scottish Office's expectations of the competent beginning teacher were set out in seven main categories. An additional eighth section listed a series of 'commitments' to the profession of teaching that were also regarded as important. These were distributed to all final year students and 84 responded (66%). This contrasts with the 37 who returned the main questionnaire and may have been, in part at least, influenced by the brevity of the competence questionnaire and the limited demands it made on their time.

For the first seven categories, students were asked to indicate how competent they felt on each of the items listed using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 was 'very little or no competence' and 5 was 'very competent'. For the eighth category, students were asked to use the 1 to 5 scale, where 1 was 'no real commitment' and 5 was 'highly committed'. Mean scores were calculated for these ratings and these are presented as bar charts in Figures 9.1 – 9.8. A rating of '3' indicates an 'average', or middle of the range, measure of competence or commitment.

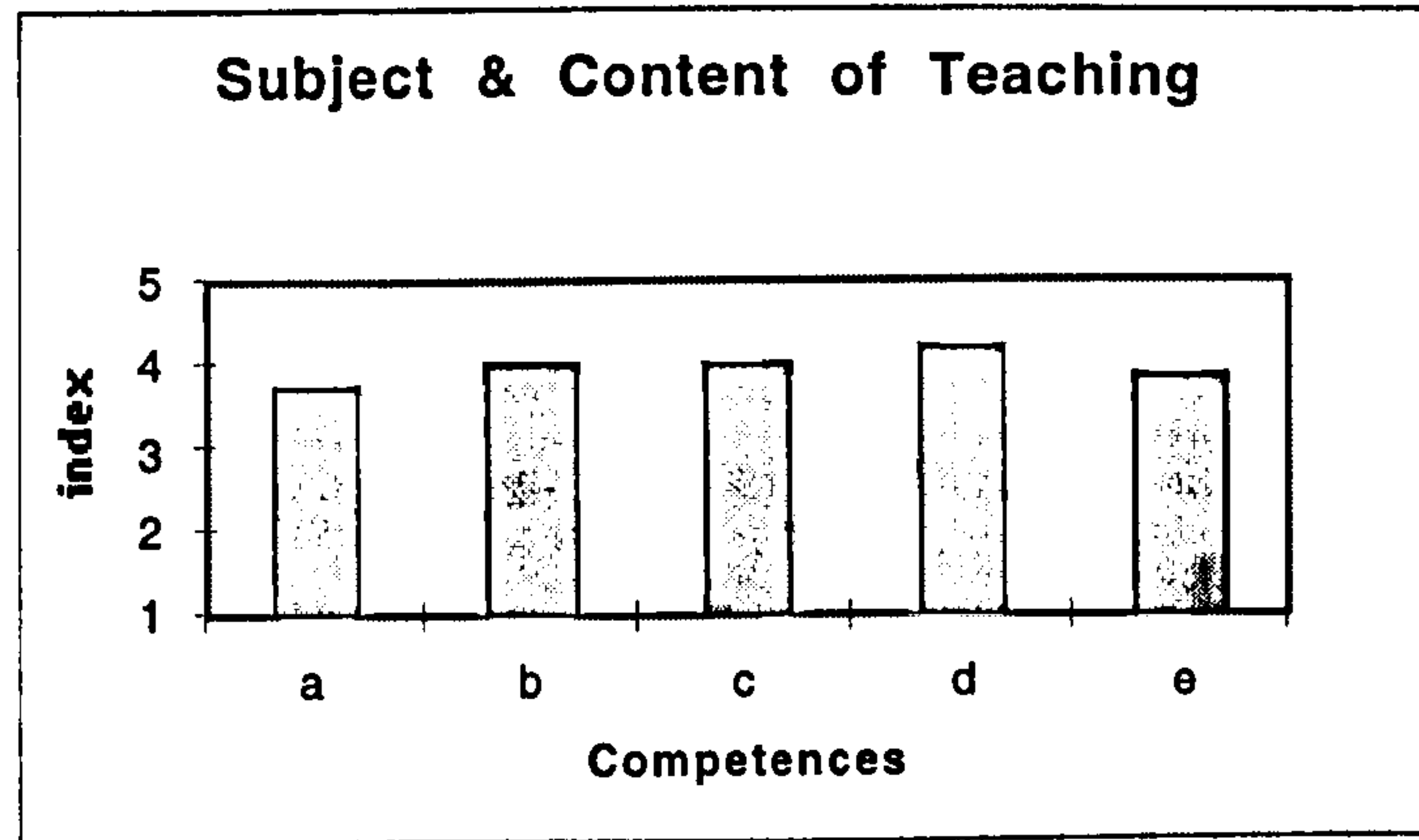
9.1.1 Competences relating to the Subject and Content of Teaching

There were five competences relating to the Subject and Content of Teaching:

- a demonstrate a knowledge of the subject(s) forming the content of your teaching which meets and goes beyond the immediate demands of the school curriculum
- b plan & prepare coherent teaching programmes ensuring continuity and progression, taking account of national, regional & school policies & plan lessons within these
- c select appropriate resources for learning, for example from radio and t.v. broadcasts
- d present the content of what is taught in appropriate fashion to pupils
- e justify what is taught from your knowledge & understanding of the learning process, curriculum issues, child development in general & the needs of your pupils in particular

Students rated themselves between 3.7 to 4.3 on these five competences, indicating that they felt quite competent on the skills/knowledge listed under this heading.

Figure 9.1: Students' assessment of competence on 'Subject & Content of Teaching' (n = 84)

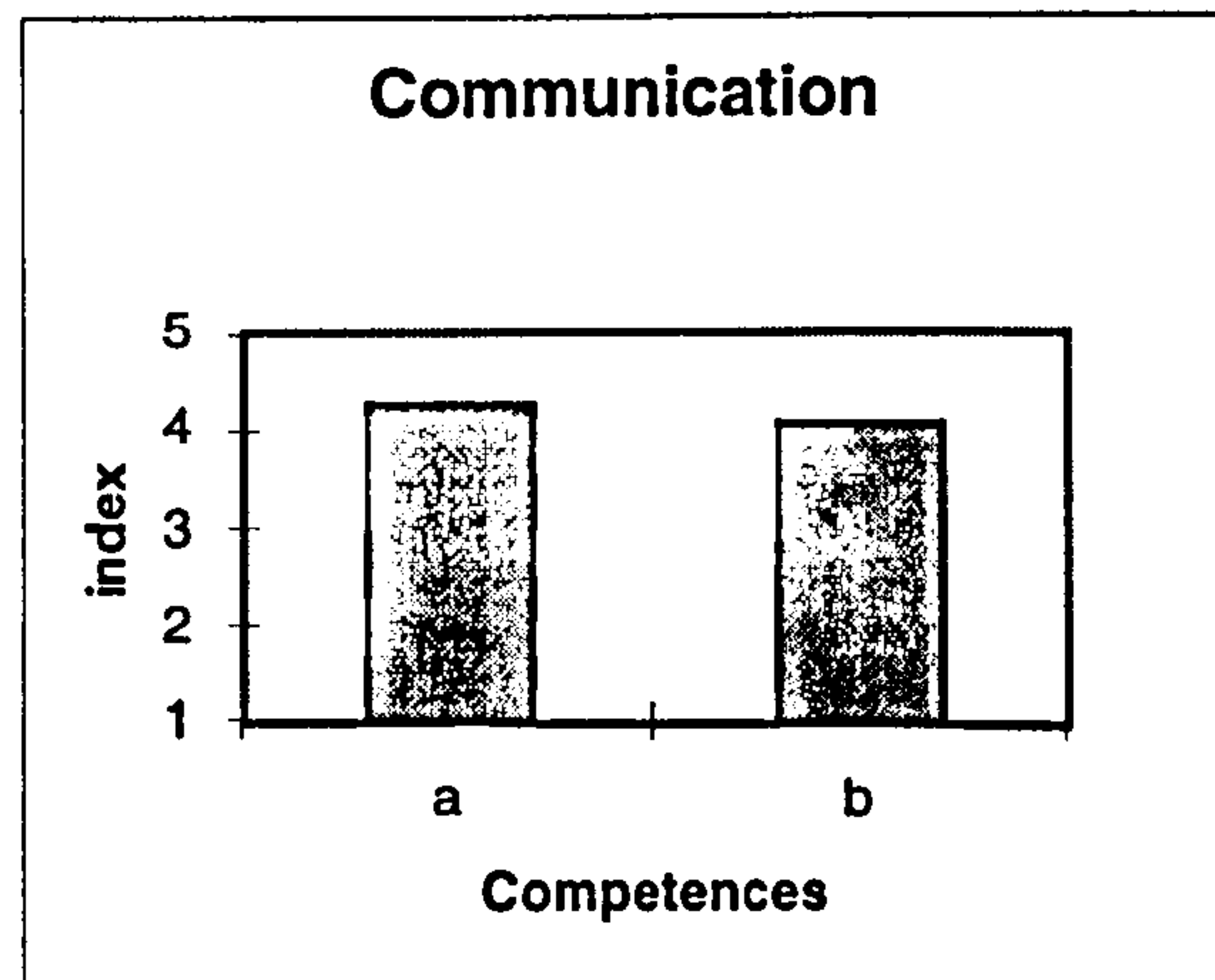


9.1.2 Competences relating to the Classroom : Communication

Two competences were listed under this heading:

- a present what you are teaching in clear language and a stimulating manner
- b question pupils effectively, respond to and support their discussion and questioning

Figure 9.2: Students' assessment of competence on 'Communication' (n = 84)



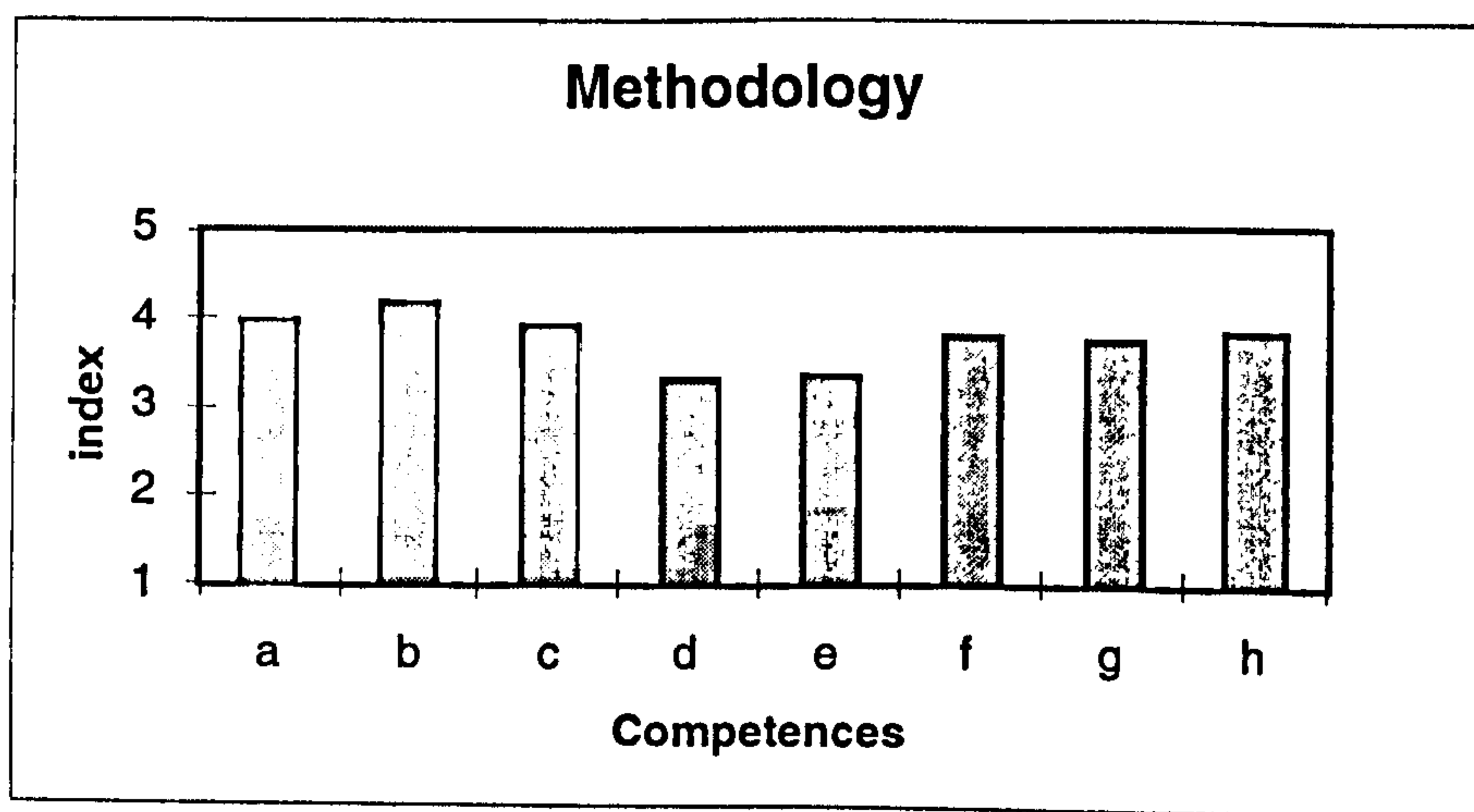
Again students were confident that they could meet these demands, rating their confidence above the mid-point rating.

9.1.3 Competences relating to the Classroom : Methodology

This set of expectations of the beginning teacher lists 8 competences which students were expected to overtake within the course:

- a employ a range of teaching strategies appropriate to the subject or topic and on the basis of careful assessment, to the pupils in your classes
- b create contexts in which pupils can learn
- c set expectation which make appropriate demands on pupils
- d identify and respond appropriately to pupils with special educational needs or with learning difficulties
- e take into account cultural differences among pupils
- f encourage pupils to take initiatives in and become responsible for their own learning
- g select and use in a considered way a wide variety of resources, including information technology
- h evaluate and justify the methodology being used

Figure 9.3: Students' assessment of competence on 'Methodology' (n = 84)



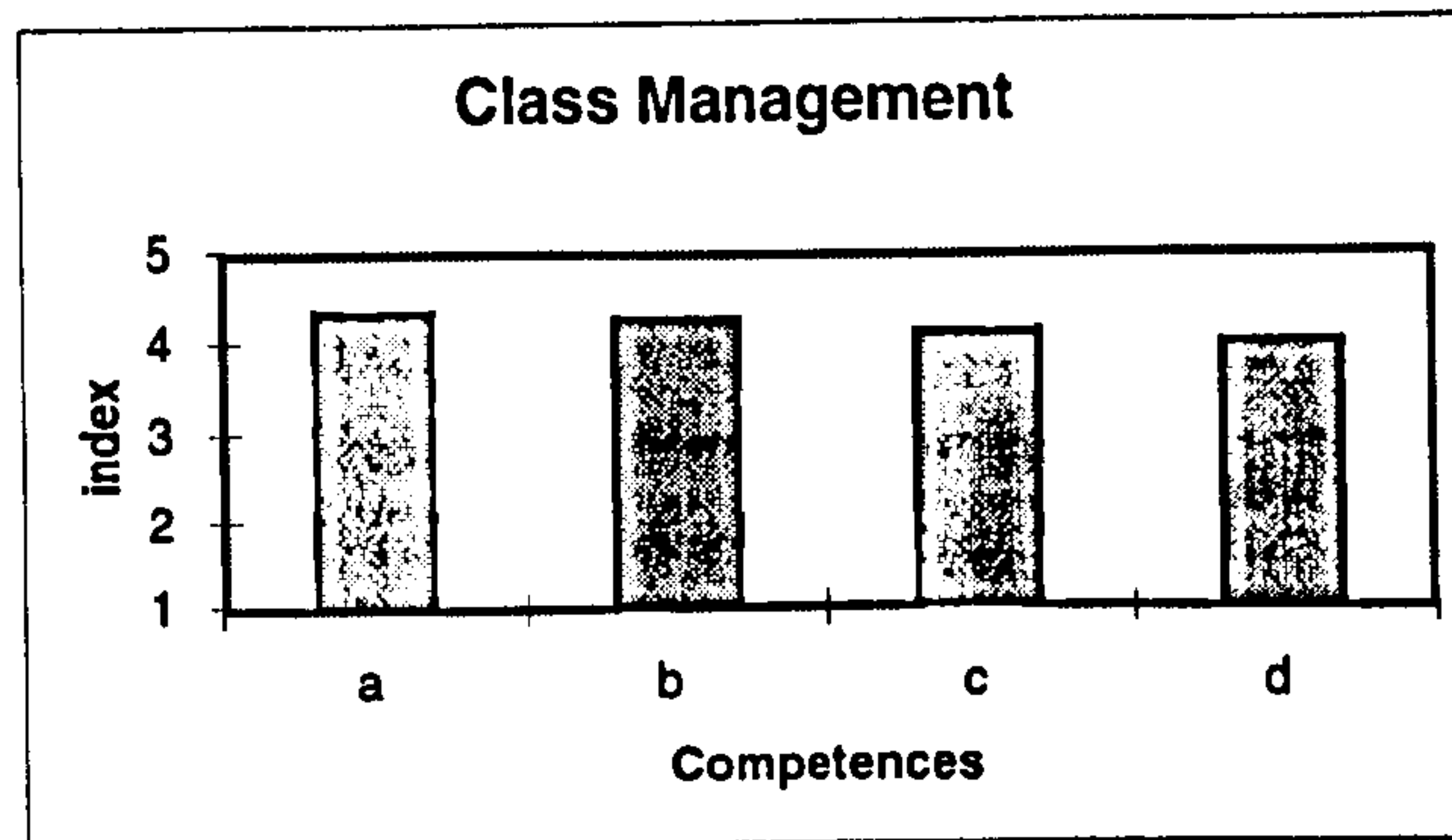
For this category, lowest ratings were recorded on 'respond appropriately to pupils with special educational needs' (3.3) and 'take into account cultural differences among pupils' (3.4). They considered themselves most competent in creating 'contexts in which pupils can learn' (4.2).

9.1.4 Competences relating to the Classroom : Class Management

Four competences appear under the heading of Class Management:

- a deploy a range of approaches to create and maintain a purposeful, orderly and safe environment for learning
- b manage pupil behaviour by the use of appropriate rewards and sanctions and be aware when it is necessary to seek advice
- c sustain the interest and motivation of pupils
- d evaluate and justify your own actions in managing pupils

Figure 9.4: Students' assessment of competence on 'Class management' (n = 84)



Most students rated their competence quite highly on these aspects of classroom management, with evaluation and the justification of actions in managing pupils rated lowest.

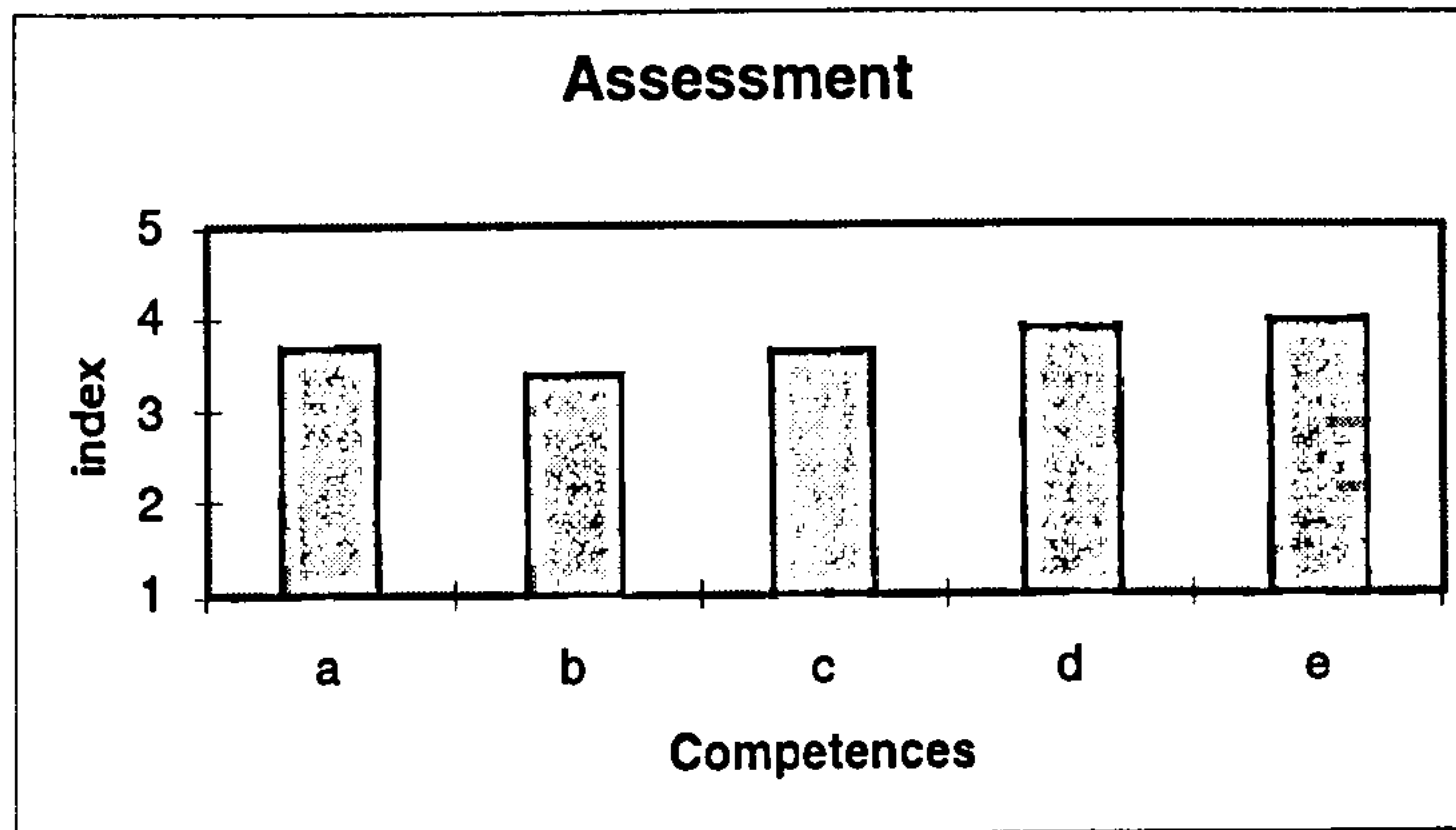
9.1.5 Competences relating to the Classroom : Assessment

Five competences were identified by the SOEID in this category:

- a have an understanding of the principles of assessment and the different kinds of assessment which may be used
- b be able to assess the quality of pupils' learning against national standards defined for that particular group of pupils
- c be able to assess and record systematically the progress of individual pupils
- d be able to provide regular feedback to pupils on their progress
- e be able to use assessment to evaluate and improve teaching

Overall, competence on aspects of assessment was rated lower than those in the earlier categories, with 'against national standards' the least secure.

Figure 9.5: Students' assessment of competence on 'Assessment' (n = 84)

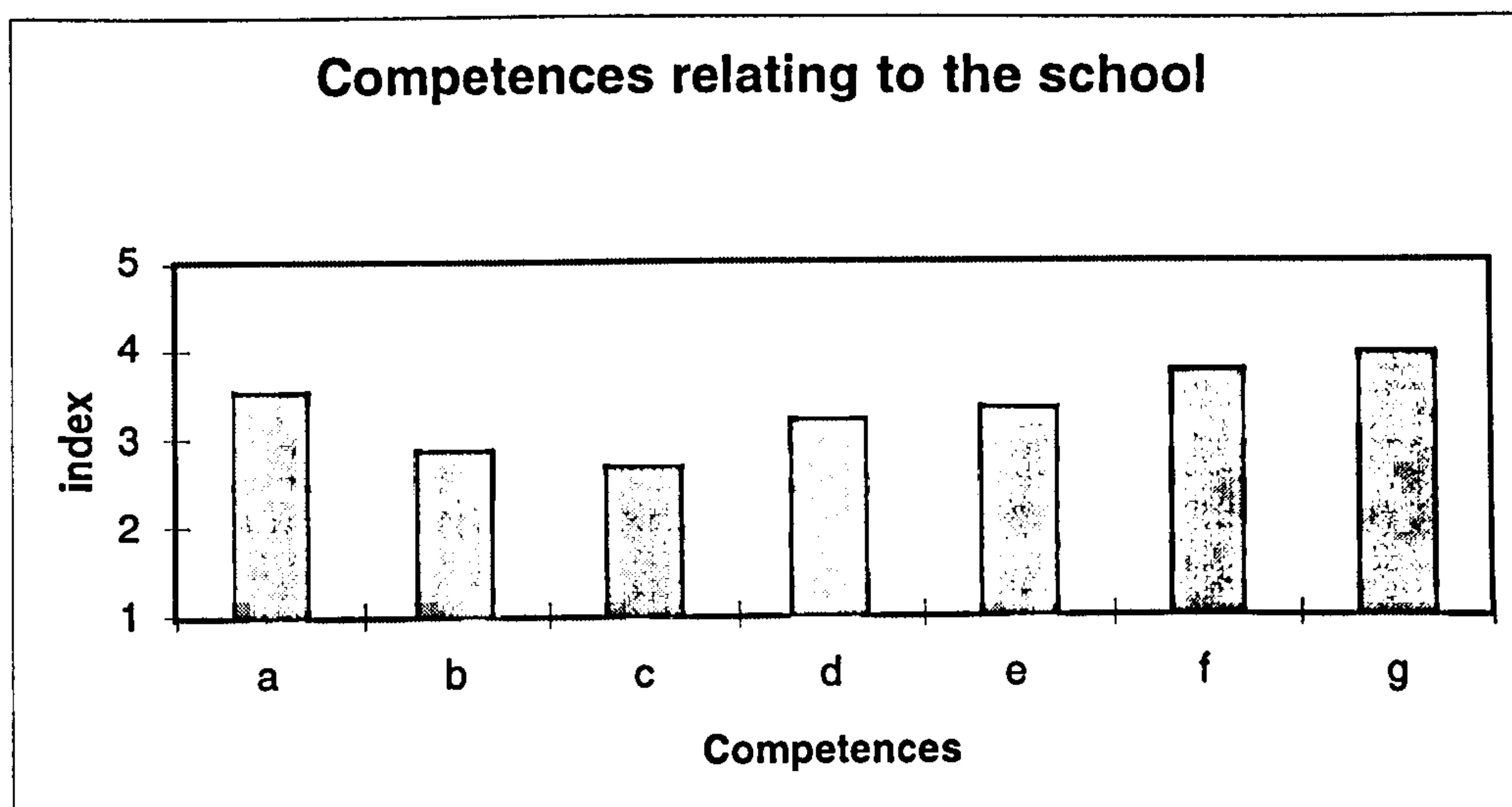


9.1.6 Competences relating to the School

The competences in this category pertain to the wider aspects of school life: parents and colleagues and the wider societal context of learning and teaching. Seven specific competences were identified in the 1993 Guidelines:

-
a have some knowledge of the educational system and in particular of the organisation & management systems of schools, of school policies & development plans
.....
- b know how to discuss with parents a range of issues relevant to their children
.....
- c be informed about school boards
.....
- d know how to communicate with members of other professions concerned with the welfare of the pupils & with others in the community served & colleagues within the school cluster
.....
- e be aware of sources of help and expertise within the school and how they can be used
.....
- f be aware of cross-curricular aspects of school work and be able to make an input into these
.....
- g have interests and skills which can contribute to activities with pupils outside the formal curriculum
.....

Figure 9.6: Students' assessment of competence on aspects of the wider school (n=84)



Generally, the ratings in this category were below those of the others, with knowledge about School Boards (2.7) and discussing with parents a range of issues relevant to their children (2.9) least secure.

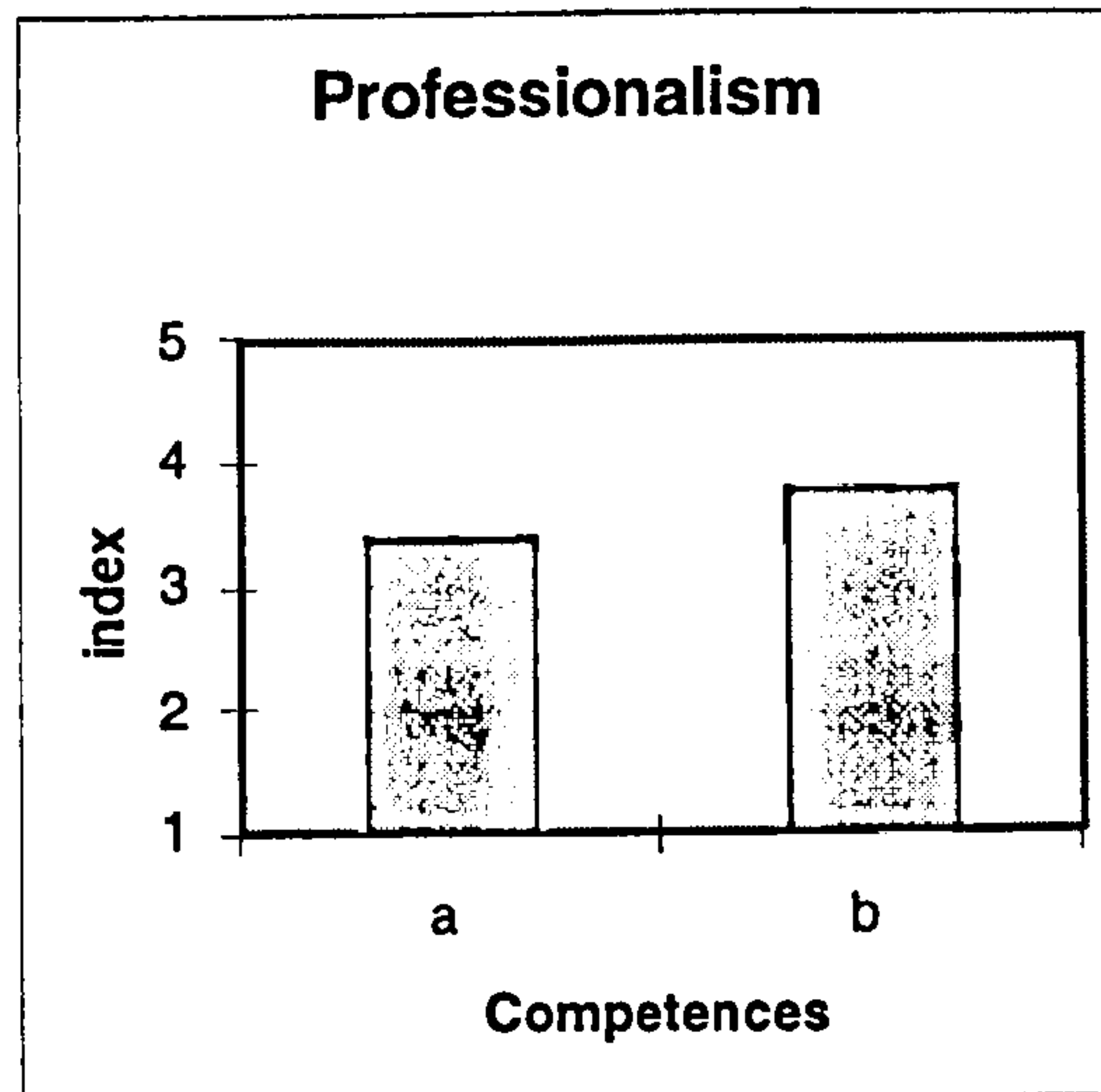
9.1.7 Competences related to Professionalism

The Scottish Guidelines for ITE (1993) set out two competences within the category of 'professionalism'. These are:

- a have a working knowledge of your pastoral, contractual, legal and administrative responsibilities
- b be able to make a preliminary evaluation of your own professional progress

The first of these - pastoral contractual, legal and administrative responsibilities - was rated just above the mid-point, with self-evaluation somewhat higher.

Figure 9.7: Students' assessment of their 'Professionalism' (n = 84)



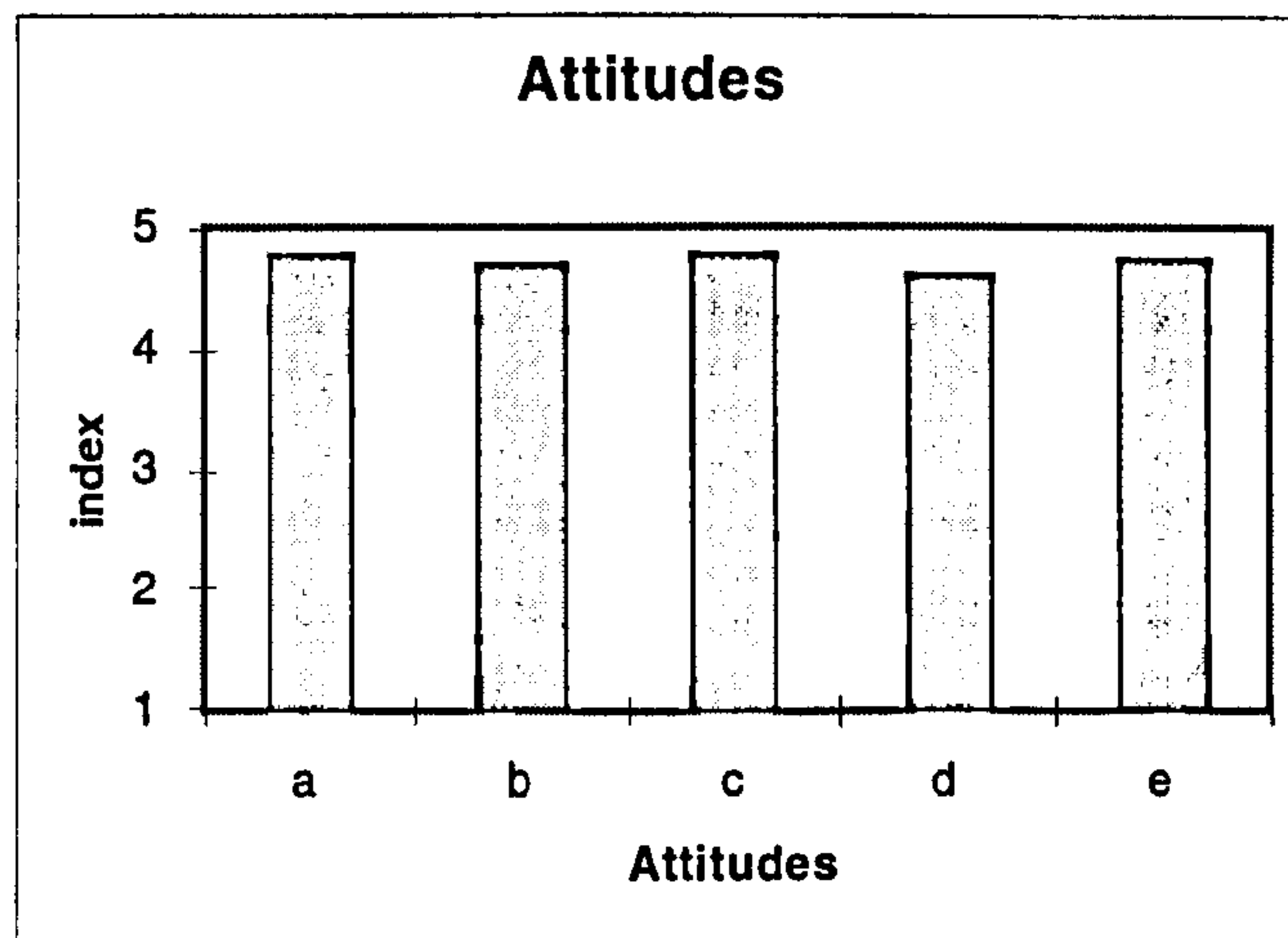
9.1.8 Attitudes to the Profession of Teaching

The eighth sections set out a set of attitudes to the profession of teaching considered by the 1993 SOED Guidelines as important. Students were asked to indicate how committed they were to each of the statements listed in the document. The five statements were:

-
- a a commitment to the job and to those affected by the job
-
- b a commitment to self-monitoring and continuing professional development
-
- c a commitment to collaborate with others to promote pupil achievement
-
- d a commitment to promoting the moral and spiritual well-being of pupils
-
- e a commitment to views of fairness and equality of opportunity as expressed in multi-cultural and other non-discriminatory policies
-

The students rated themselves as highly committed to all the attitudes to the profession of teaching listed. The lowest of these, 'promoting the moral and spiritual well-being' was the only one that brought a specific comment from any student: *Moral and spiritual – (I) see these as separate things – commitment to moral, but not to spiritual.*

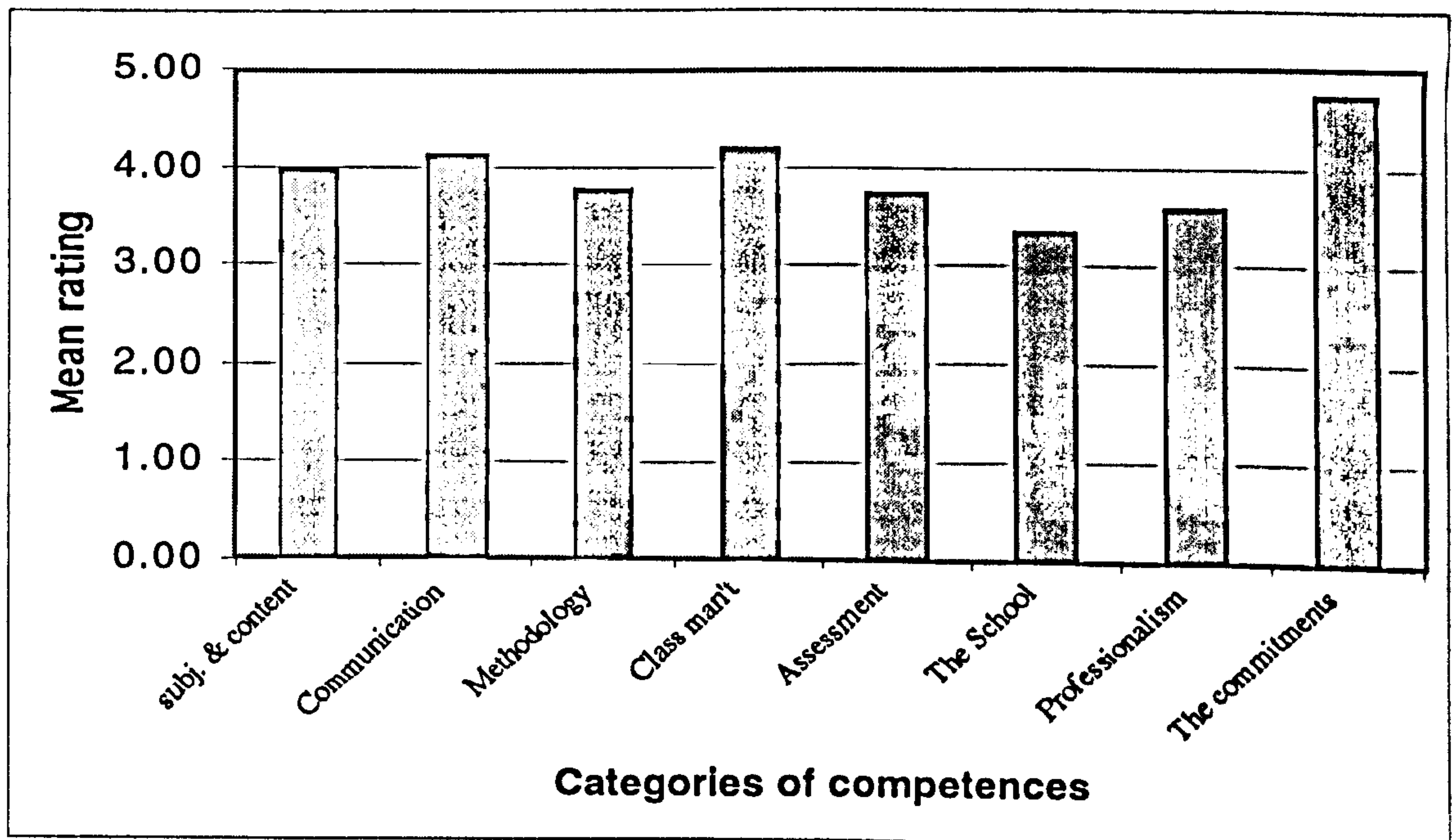
Figure 9.8: Students' assessment of their commitment to aspects of teaching (n = 84)



9.1.9 Across the categories of competence

Mean values for each of the eight categories of 'competence' listed in the questionnaire were calculated and are presented in Figure 9.9.

Figure 9.9: Mean ratings across items within each category



Looking across the categories, the most highly rated was that of 'commitment' which contained five items: commitment to the job; to professional development; to promoting pupil achievement; to the moral and spiritual well-being of pupils; and to fairness, equality and anti-discriminatory policies. Students indicated lowest levels of competence in the section relation to the wider school, with a mean rating above the mid-point value of 3.

There was concern that some students might not be able to respond to the questionnaire, failing to understand precisely what was being asked of them. In order to determine this, they were asked to indicate if they had experienced any difficulty in completing it and to add a comment if they wished. Only 6 students reported any difficulty in completing the questionnaire, and 2 added comments. One found it difficult to assess her/his own abilities and felt s/he was often too negative in this regard. The other, who expressed no difficulty in completing the form, rated all the 'commitments' as '1', adding:

I have no interest in teaching any more and will be pursuing a different career so question 8 (the commitments) might not be relevant.

9.1.10 Teachers' Views of the Competences

In the series of 'good practice' interviews with nineteen teachers conducted in 1994, a small number of questions focused on the recently issued Guidelines for ITE. The responses were analysed to provide the teachers' perspective on the government's expectations in relation to beginning teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes. (Only 18 teachers' responses are considered here as 'an emergency' occurred and the 19th interview terminated before reaching this question.)

Of the eighteen teachers only one had actually seen the guidelines although some had heard of them. Each teacher was given a copy of the competences and commitments and some time to look through the various categories before being asked whether they thought they described the job of teaching accurately.

Table 9.1: Teachers' views on how well the competences describe the job of teaching

Response	n	%
Yes	10	56%
Yes, but ...	6	33%
No	2	11%

Comments from the 12 who gave an unconditional 'yes' included: *'pretty fair'*; *'a pretty comprehensive piece of writing'*; *'shows there's a lot more to it than just standing in front of a class'*; and *'they've broken it down enough – seems reasonable'*. However, while accepting the picture of teaching they presented, some felt they were asking a lot of even experienced teachers: *'they're impossible!'*; *'you've really got to be a superwoman'*; and *'it's a big thing, though – all of these'*.

Qualifications from the 'yes, but ..' group included: *'it's all jargon'*; *'there are bits I would take out or put in'*; and *'a bit daunting'*. Two clearly stated that they did not think it reflected the teacher's job, with one considering that the guidelines were *'an insult and a condescension to teachers'* and one stating that *'some (of the competences) go beyond most newly qualified teachers and most experienced teachers'*.

Asked if they matched what would be expected of a first year probationer, all 12 who responded positively added qualifying statements such as:

- ... there would be things they would still have to work on in school*
- ... I don't think I'd wholly expect that at the end of 4th year*
- ... this is what they're aiming for .. I wouldn't say they'll necessarily have it.*

Five teachers identified 'assessment of pupils' as particularly problematic and an aspect that would only really be grasped once they were working with pupils after following qualification. Three considered that 'cultural differences' and 'multicultural' issues might be problematic as gaining practical experience would be dependent upon the specific schools in which they had been placed during their training. Two teachers thought they might have had little experience in dealing with parents and one remarked that she did not have a working knowledge of her own 'pastoral, contractual, legal and administrative duties'. In each case comments tended to reflect concerns over their own competence rather than perceptions of what graduating students could/could not do.

The section on commitments to the profession was the one which received the most comments:

...excuse me while I smile here ... but it's all true.

...I think most of us are committed to the job ... a bit idealistic I think.

...You can tell right away the students (who) don't have commitment, the minute they walk in the door.

A tutor couldn't assess these points ...

The commitments are for (assessment during) the probationary period.

9.1.11 Summary

Students, in general, rated themselves as above the mid-point of the scale used for all but two of the competences in the guidelines. The competences which fell below this were:

- knowledge of school boards; and
- dealing with parents.

Davies and Ferguson (1997) also identified dealing with parents as amongst the most frequently mentioned gaps in training by practising teachers. Commitment to the set of professional attitudes listed was highly rated by all but one student who had decided that teaching was not for her/him. These were self reports however, and therefore likely to contain an element of bias, most likely towards an over-estimation of competence as compared with how they might be rated by experienced professionals. Having reached (successfully) the end of the course, they might be forgiven for holding a high opinion of their own capabilities as beginning primary teachers.

The majority of teachers interviewed saw the list of competences as a fair reflection of the range of tasks asked of them and the wider aspects of being a teacher; others were opposed to the notion that teaching could be so defined. However, they were also viewed as idealistic and unlikely to be met fully in any one individual, regardless of the amount of experience gained. Several were of the view that these were something to aim for and would continue to develop during the probationary period, if not a teacher's whole career. Those areas where students indicated lower levels of competence, e.g. multicultural issues, were also those where teachers saw difficulty in ensuring opportunities for gaining relevant experience in each school.

9.2 'Good Practice'

During the first phase of the study, the term 'good practice' was used by various respondents. The concept of 'good practice' in the supervision of students was followed up through questions in the interviews with BEd 1 students (1993-94: n=17) and, in addition, semi-structured interviews with 19 experienced supervising teachers. The teacher interviews were supplementary to the original data gathering and designed to provide a teacher's perspective on the notions of 'good practice' and the 'good student'. Data from the 1993-94 questionnaires have been summarised to set the context for the interviews.

9.2.1 Setting the context : 'being a student'

The response rate from the 1993-94 BEd 1 students to the initial questionnaire was 75% (n = 110). Of these, 99% looked forward to going on placement (most of the time) and all reported that they actually enjoyed being there. Virtually all of them (99%) saw supervision as part of a teacher's role; 96% reported that the teacher with whom they had been placed appeared to enjoy having a student in the class, for at least some of the time; and 98% felt that they had had 'a good personal relationship with the teacher' on their most recent placement.

In the 1993-94 questionnaires, both students and teachers were presented with a list of ways in which supervisors might support students on placement. This included activities which emphasised the professional development of the student while others were more concerned with the pastoral. Students were asked to indicate which forms of support they had received during their most recent placement and to give some indication of frequency: often/sometimes/never. In the questionnaire for supervising teachers, respondents were asked to indicate the kind and frequency of support given using the same list.

From the student's point of view, at least 90% reported that the teacher had:

- demonstrated teaching (97%);
- observed the student teaching and given feedback (90%);
- worked collaboratively with the student (93%);
- listened to her/his concerns about teaching (91%); and/or
- given the her/him information about the class/children (97%).

On other forms of support, the teacher had:

- discussed their own teaching of a lesson with her/him (81%);
- met with her/him to discuss progress (79%);
- helped in her/his planning (88%);
- given advice on lesson plans before teaching (79%); and/or
- discussed their own practice, concerns and views of teaching (83%).

Only in 38% of cases did students report that the teacher had 'made notes on her/his progress as feedback to the tutor' with 65% reporting that the teacher had 'read and commented on my School Experience file'.

9.2.2 Setting the context : 'having a student'

Seventy-five of the Year 1 supervising teachers completed and returned the questionnaires (75% of the original sample). Responses to the questionnaires indicated considerable willingness and enthusiasm for having a student on school experience in the classroom. Ninety-two percent of respondents saw 'having a student' as part of their role as a teacher and 100% reported that they usually enjoyed working with a student. In addition, 81% said that they themselves learned from the experience.

In response to the list of ways in which they might have supported the Year 1 students, the teachers reported that they often or sometimes:

- demonstrated teaching (97%);
- discussed their own teaching of a lesson with the student (100%);
- observed the student teaching and gave feedback (96%);
- met the student to discuss progress (92%);
- helped in the student's planning (97%);
- worked collaboratively with the student (95%);
- gave advice on the student's lesson plans before teaching (95%);
- listened to the student's concerns about teaching (93%);
- discussed their own practice, concerns and views of teaching (92%); and/or
- gave the student information about the class/children (95%).

A smaller percentage 'made notes on the student's progress as feedback to the tutor' (53%) or 'read and commented on the student's School Experience file' (73%). Of particular

interest to this discussion is the finding that 92% reported that they 'had a good personal relationship with the student' on placement.

While the responses from both students and teachers indicate a high level of enthusiasm, goodwill and general satisfaction with the experience from both sides, the discrepancies in figures relating to support give cause for concern. Teachers frequently reported that they had given considerably higher levels of support than students felt they had received, with differences in reporting rates ranging from 0% to 16%. The greatest differences were in whether or not the supervising teacher had given advice on lesson plans (16%), made notes on the student's progress for the TEI tutor (15%) and had met with them (the student) to discuss progress (13%).

9.2.3 A 'good' placement: from the student

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 BEd 1 students (10% of the cohort). All of them reported that they actually enjoyed being on placement although three expressed some reservations about the pressures to get organised, plan and get to know the teacher and children at the start. The experience became much more enjoyable once these aspects were overtaken.

When asked what it was that they enjoyed, typical responses included: *'the experience of actually teaching'*; *'being in the classroom doing the job I want to do'*; *'being with the children'*. The least enjoyable aspect was the paperwork associated with planning and maintaining the School Experience File (mentioned by 7 students). Feelings of stress, pressure and tiredness were also mentioned.

There was very little consensus on what made a 'good' supervising teacher. Some of the characteristics valued related to personal qualities although the majority were concerned with the professional side of the relationship. Examples of the former included patience, approachability, a sense of humour and a sympathetic manner. Characteristics which had a more professional emphasis included giving advice on the children and the level at which activities should be pitched, giving constructive criticism/feedback, and understanding the student's position as a learner. The students who asked for help and advice only expected it at the start ('the first time round') and then preferred to be left to get on with it. For three students, being left alone with the children was mentioned as a significant event but

only if it reflected the teacher's faith in the student to cope and not just because s/he had something else to do.

One student finished his description of a 'good' supervising teacher with the comment that, although his last teacher had not been a particularly good supervisor, *'you can learn from a teacher anyway, whether they're good or bad'*.

Students go on placement with clear instructions from the TEI as to what is required of them, including the subject areas to be tackled, the time scale of 'lessons' and whether they have to work with individuals, groups or the whole class. Five students felt that teachers needed to be very familiar with the placement requirements set by the TEI. Each of them had experienced problems when the supervising teacher did not appear to have read the materials prepared by the TEI. In one instance, the faculty tutor arrived to assess a student 'teaching a group' but the student had experienced difficulty in gaining experience in this aspect as the teacher had directed her activities towards class teaching. As first year students, they seemed unsure of how to cope with such situations and lacked the confidence to raise issues with the teacher directly.

Students attempted to make a placement successful by adopting a 'good attitude'. They identified a range of characteristics of a 'good attitude', from what might be categorised as personal to those which reflected more professional concerns. Behaviours deliberately adopted by students included smiling, speaking to all the staff and being generally sociable. Being helpful and *'doing all you're told and more'* was mentioned by several. As a learner, being willing to listen to feedback and criticism was important, as was *'taking on board others' opinions'*.

Fitting into the school also involved dressing appropriately, being pleasant, respectful and talking to all the teachers. However in talking to teachers, whether the supervising teacher or not, do not *'step on toes'* or *'step out of line'*. When asked if they had behaved like themselves or how they thought a student teacher ought to behave, almost all of the students acknowledged that they had, to some degree, monitored and modified their own behaviour. Only with the children did some students think that they had behaved naturally.

Comments included:

The way I see it, the teacher doesn't have to have you there - they want to help you, so keep on the right side of the teacher rather than antagonise - she will be assessing you at the end. It's like walking on eggshells, in the staffroom and with the teacher.

I think I behaved like myself, I don't know how I could be any different, but I was keeping my own counsel. I wouldn't dare pass remark - she had to write a report.

The tension between the supervising teacher as a supportive, professional colleague and as an assessor in the final analysis came through clearly in the responses of the students. The desire to be accepted, to fit in with the school and the staff was a strong one which was constantly being checked against an unwritten code of student teacher behaviour. If in doubt say nothing, be seen but not heard:

I was guarding my tongue, especially in the staffroom. I wouldn't get involved in the politics of the school and so on. That's definitely not my place.

One or two students adopted the strategy of being both unseen and unheard where they felt that the school ethos was unsupportive:

I went for lunch and then (I would) make an excuse and I left, or sometimes the three of us (BEd 1 students) would go down to the shops and go for a walk.

9.2.4 A 'good' placement : 'a good student'

The findings in this section are drawn from the interviews conducted with teachers in the schools which were identified as examples of 'good practice'. From the questionnaires, a good relationship with the student emerged as an important element in a successful placement and 92% said that this had been achieved with the BEd 1 students, but it was unclear as to what precisely was 'good' about it. Therefore in the interview phase of the study, one question probed teachers' definitions of a 'good relationship' while a second asked them to describe the characteristics of a 'good student'.

In defining a 'good relationship', several teachers had difficulty responding - *'That's a cracker! Who thought that up?'* asked one mature depute head. All of them did attempt to respond, with most saying that both parties had a role to play. Three focused on the role of

the teacher in establishing and maintaining a good relationship while another three looked to the student to ensure all went well.

The emphasis in the responses from the teachers in the first group was firmly on the work aspect - working as a team, treating students more as colleagues, a professional relationship, a complementary way of working. The relationship should be an 'open' one where people are honest with each other, where the student feels able to approach the teacher with her/his concerns and the teacher offers advice and guidance. Teachers should criticise students, but it should be intended as constructive and should be construed as such by the student. In one school 'trust' was seen as a fundamental aspect - *'that the student trusts the teacher and that the teacher wins the trust of the student'*.

The role of the teacher was to be 'approachable', 'friendly', 'understanding', 'realistic', 'helpful', 'encouraging' and 'welcoming' - a tall order some might think. The student was to be 'willing', 'flexible' and 'enthusiastic', without being 'overpowering'.

While a few teachers mentioned that *'personalities might come into it'*, one teacher's view reflects several - *'if you don't socially get on really well, you've got to put that aside and work professionally together'*. An appeal to the professional nature of the relationship appeared in seven of the nineteen interviews. Only one teacher said that the personal element could be significant:

Your emphasis is on the professional because, at the end of the day, you have to give your assessment of them as a professional, so ... but the two of them are intertwined, you cannot separate the professional and the personal, because when you're working with them personalities do come into account as well.

Similarly when 'friendship' was mentioned it was always qualified by an appeal to professionalism.

I would want it to be on a kind of friendship basis, that she could come to me as a friend and ask me advice ... but at the same time I would want her to know that there were barriers she can't cross, professional barriers.

... but it's a friendship on a professional basis.

Indeed, being friendly can bring problems:

There's a danger of being too 'pals-y wals-y' which I've seen happen. I think there has to be friendliness, but they also have to realise that there's work to be done.

Teachers' descriptions of a 'good student' were very consistent. The most dominant characteristic was 'hard working'. Enthusiastic, well-prepared and organised students were highly prized. An important characteristic, mentioned by 11 of the teachers, was a liking for and rapport with children. A few teachers saw the student in terms of the whole school and thought she/he should talk to other members of staff and familiarise her/himself with the administration and organisation of, for example, procedures for getting photocopying done or obtaining resources. Individual teachers mentioned being flexible, willing to fit in, to listen and to help without being asked.

Teachers found a 'good student', like a 'good relationship', difficult to define. Individual responses usually identified only three or four characteristics, with approximately twenty-five listed in total. Running out of steam, several went on to describe 'bad' students. Some focused on the student's approach to work:

A bad student is easier to categorise! A bad student is someone who spends all their time putting up flashy wall displays, which are much encouraged (by the TEI) as the be-all and end-all of good teaching, and who directs the children's work in order to have pieces of work for their folder, do precious little work during the week and when their crit turns up, they do something fantastic!

This same teacher then went on to describe a good student as '*one who's nice to me and nice to my weans¹*'.

Other descriptions of 'bad' students focused on personality characteristics and drew on personal experience or second-hand reports of other teachers' experiences:

... very enthusiastic but overpowering at times, in here and in the staffroom ... she'll be a great teacher but very flamboyant ... once or twice that didn't go down very well ...

... some of them can be a wee bit pushy. I haven't had them personally but I've seen it in the school ...

¹ 'weans' - Scots dialect for 'children'.

A theme which was explicit in some descriptions and implicit in others was that of the student 'knowing her/his place'.

They should know their place - they are students, still learning and should have respect for others.

We had a wee girl (sic) once who was a wee bit, how shall I say, not disrespectful - she sort of didn't know her place as far as promoted staff were concerned ... kind of overstepping the professional mark if you know what I mean.

The same teacher had earlier identified the 'professional barriers' which students should not cross. These included making use of resources without informing the teacher, using the teacher's personal things and failing to bring back books that they had borrowed.

Thus while teachers defined a 'good relationship' as one of working together with mutual trust and respect, students were still expected to 'know their place' and behave in line with an unwritten and unspoken code which became visible through the teachers' descriptions of 'bad' students rather than their expectations of a 'good' student.

On the surface of it, both groups seemed satisfied with recent experience; a bad placement was a relatively rare event. This however did not prevent both teachers and students expressing fears of what might have been:

I'd heard a lot of bad things and (I was) waiting for it to happen to me.(student)

If you're having a problem, which thankfully I haven't up till now, ... (teacher)

This is not surprising given that many teachers and students had very poorly defined criteria by which to judge the success of the placement. Those that were expressed tended to focus on the socio-cultural aspect and in a way which appear to emphasise damage limitation rather than questioning and critical reflexivity, both within the classroom and in the broader context of the school.

9.2.5 Discussion

Calderhead and Shorrock (1994) identified three sets of factors with which students have to deal - socio-cultural, personal and technical. The last of these, concerned with the ideas

and strategies related to the practice of teaching, was discussed very little during the interviews by either teachers or students in relation to a 'good placement'. The emphasis was on the personal and inter-personal, and an ability to 'fit in'.

Even where attempts are made to support students in gaining the technical expertise, there is a conflict of perceptions with teachers and students in disagreement over the amount and kinds of support given and received. A number of interpretations are possible. Firstly, it may be that teachers 'over-reported' the support which they gave to the students on placement in that responses reflected intentions rather than deeds. A second, and possibly more likely, explanation is that the intentions behind a teacher's actions were not always made explicit to the student and consequently not recognised as intended by the student. These were first year students (though not all fresh from their own schooldays) and perhaps inexperienced at recognising and interpreting the teacher's actions.

It has been shown that inexperienced students, in observing teaching and learning in the classroom, lack awareness of what to look for and an ability to determine which contextual factors are or are not relevant (Maynard and Furlong, 1993). A similar effect is likely to be operating in the supervising teacher-student teacher interactions and consequently learning opportunities are less effective than they might be.

The main concerns of teacher and student lay with Calderhead and Shorrock's soci-cultural factors (the practices and expectations of the school and its community) and, to a lesser extent, with the personal dimension (the students' images of themselves as teachers and their beliefs of good teaching).

As the practices and expectations of a school have evolved over time and tend to be implicit and assumed in day-to-day activities, it is not surprising that students experienced problems in knowing where to tread. In addition, they received conflicting signals from teachers in that what teachers professed in terms of a good relationship with students ('team-work', 'more like colleagues', 'give and take') was contradicted by the assertion that the student should 'know her place'. An appeal to 'professionalism' was often used by teachers to justify a position which might appear to contradict a collegiate approach to supervision, such as in the use of 'professional barriers' to indicate where the boundaries lay.

Students were also expected to have a 'professional attitude' to the placement and although teachers had difficulty in specifying what this meant, they were certain that they knew what it was not.

Student teachers are unlikely to seek assistance or clarification if they do not understand what is happening. This finding is not confined to first year students however; many fourth year BEd students in an earlier study behaved similarly (Stark, 1993). There is evidence of a considerable reluctance to question or challenge the teacher; when in doubt, try to work it out for yourself. As one student advised:

Don't say anything that might be misinterpreted, that can be exaggerated upon ... be very quiet, I would say, speak when you are spoken to and only then.

For some a natural reluctance to cause offence had been reinforced by the tutor from the TEI prior to placement:

Your tutor tells you all the time that you have to .. get on with everyone because you're only there for a little time and you've got to thank them for having you, I suppose.

A few learned from the experience and did not intend to make the same mistakes again:

I intend to get to grips with the requirements of the (next) placement and the kind of questions I'll ask the teacher the next time is - how do you teach? what do you group teach? where are they on this? where are they on that?

Unfortunately, the evidence indicates that she will be unlikely to get help with anything other than the more procedural issues of the classroom (cf Edwards, 1997). The majority of teachers do not want students who ask questions and few are able to access and reflect consciously upon their own understanding of being a teacher (cf McIntyre, 1993). The task of negotiating the socio-cultural minefield that school experience presents demands considerable skills of the student.

The model of the student teacher as learner requires to be clarified in order that the learning opportunities afforded her/him are identified as such and used effectively. Similarly, the role of supervising teacher remains largely unspecified; neither the students nor teachers involved in the study possessed a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of

learner or supervisor. Each had expectations in a social sense and enculturation of the student into the profession was predominantly a socialisation rather than an intellectual or cognitive process.

It should be acknowledged within the course that the socio-cultural element of being on teaching practice is a strong influence and that there is more there than folklore and myth. The micropolitics of the school should be addressed directly rather than as something to tip-toe around. Where placements depend on good will, it is unsurprising that some TEI tutors have, to a degree, tended to collude with teachers in attempts to protect the partnership and ensure a supply of placements for students.

There is conflict between what teachers profess in terms of a working relationship and their underlying belief that students should 'know their place' - a conflict of which most seemed blissfully unaware. The teachers who take on the role of supervisor are usually identified as providing examples of good practice in teaching children. However, being a good supervisor requires a slightly different set of skills, although the degree of overlap should not be underestimated. Teachers must be able to identify and meet the needs of individual students, the differing levels of knowledge, skills and experience which they bring to placement, just as they do on a day-to-day basis with children. However, their own professional development has equipped them for dealing with children, few primary supervising teachers have undergone training in working with adults.

If supervising students is a part of the professional role of the teacher, then they should be supported in delivering a 'professional' experience to students. This requires an honest and explicit set of expectations of the roles of each of the partners, including the student, and an acknowledgement that professionalism implies a critical reflexivity and a sense of the values and beliefs underpinning different practices. Teachers could be more involved in setting the agenda for school experience; at the moment the TEI holds the balance of power in this respect, denying a real place for the school/teacher in the process.

The relationship between the theory of becoming a teacher and the reality of doing so is poorly understood, an inexact science where it is unlikely that one size will fit all. However a good student should be more than '*someone who's nice to me and nice to my weans*'.

9.3 Preparing for the Teaching Profession

In 1997, colleagues at Jordanhill undertook an independent study of final year students and their supervising teachers as part of a comparative study of ITE in Scotland and the Netherlands (Allan, Mackay and Swennen, 1997). The Scottish students involved (n = 17) were drawn from the same cohort as had contributed to the longitudinal study which forms the basis of this thesis. They were asked about their concerns prior to placement and the teachers completed schedules designed to elicit their perceptions of their roles in the supervision process.

Students were asked to rank 16 statements in order of priority and concern. These ranged across aspects of assessment, feeling competent, school ethos, team working and the salaries of newly qualified teachers. The students' clear priority was the assessment of their performance by the TEI tutor and the final grade for placement. Following on, in descending order, were responsiveness to children's needs, coping with disruptive pupils, and selecting and teaching content effectively. Where they had little influence e.g. the school ethos, salary levels and the (large) number of pupils in the class, these were ranked low. So too was 'whether pupils liked me or not' (15th out of 16), interestingly, given the importance accorded to close relationships with children in the interviews.

This may reflect confidence gained through experience that this was not a real issue because they had already established that, in the main, children did like them or, alternatively, that 'liking', on a personal level, was not essential to establishing a rapport (reflecting a separation of the personal from the professional role). In a similar exercise with Year 1 BEd students (Allan, Mackay and Swennen, 1996), being liked had been rated higher (8th out of 16), indicating that, for many, this is a concern in the early years but became less important over time and through experience.

Self-confidence in terms of 'feeling competent as a teacher' was ranked in the middle order, as was the 'teacher's assessment of my teaching'. (Students also thought that teachers were unsure of how to assess them.) The emphasis for these final year students was on getting a good grade, and the TEI tutor was the most important judge of that; neither the teacher's nor their own assessment of their performance mattered as much.

Supervising teachers' views of their role coincided with the students' priorities.

'Organiser' and 'planner' were the most frequently selected, with a low ranking for 'assessor' (9th out of 10). Organiser – providing the conditions for favourable implementation in the classroom and school – and planner – helping to plan the student's programme – are roles that take advantage of the teachers' knowledge and awareness of those aspects of the placement context which best support the student in their concerns. For both student and teachers, in this final year of the course, the emphasis was on technical competence and 'doing the job', driven by the focus on the final grade.

9.4 Discussion

In the literature review, professionalism was characterised by a body of knowledge, both technical and indeterminate (Apple, 1988), a moral and personal dimension that related to the wider community and society in general (Shipman, 1988), a measure of autonomy and involvement in the policy-making process (Lawn and Ozga, 1988) and membership of a professional body that monitors training and professional conduct (Bergen, 1988).

Whether or not teaching can lay claim to 'professionalism' against all of the criteria variously identified (Bottery, 1995), it does appear to meet sufficient of them to be accorded professional status, even by politicians (Liddell, 1999; Committee of Inquiry into Professional Conditions of Service for Teachers, 1999). A professional education i.e. the preparation for entering a field of practice with professional status, seeks to encourage and support the acquisition and development of these characteristics within the framework validated by the professional body. Elements of that framework and/or the wider social cultural and political context can facilitate or frustrate the aims of professional education.

Competences, it has been argued, are an inappropriate way of defining the knowledge and skills required in teaching and have the effect of reducing practice to technical expertise and little else (Stronach *et al*, 1994; Carr, 1993). The inclusion of professional values and beliefs in the Scottish competences (SOED, 1993; SOEID, 1998) is problematic in that, while they acknowledge that the teacher is more than a technician, they appear to imply that these other dimensions can be as readily and validly acquired and assessed prior to entering the profession as are practical skills. Alternatively, their inclusion might be interpreted as defining reflection as yet another technical skill to be mastered; instrumental in achieving given ends rather than meeting broader aims of increased autonomy and emancipation (Parker, 1998).

That the teachers interviewed accepted the composite picture of the teacher depicted in the competences as an accurate reflection of their practice is hardly surprising – they were unlikely to reject such a comprehensive and multi-faceted description. Indeed they were flattered and seduced by it – while still remarking on how demanding and unattainable some of these were, even for experienced practitioners.

A significant feature is their argument that all of the competences are unlikely to be overtaken during training and some will continue to develop into probation and beyond; the beginning teacher remains a learner in several key aspects of the role. Students who completed the questionnaires rated themselves highly against the profile presented by the competences with, apparently, relatively little to learn in many of them. Where competence was less highly rated, teachers also recognised the limited opportunities which some might have in gaining relevant experience during the pre-service period.

The real issue is how the competences are perceived and operationalised by the students, teachers and faculty tutors. While they might be perceived as providing a framework for developing courses and providing learning experiences for students, the list of competences has been turned into an assessment device through the construction of a national profile (Stronach *et al.*, 1994) recording the level of competence demonstrated at the end of the period of study. Assessment-driven, the operationalisation of the competences has been fundamentally technical although the course documents would indicate that this was not the original intention (BEd Course Team, 1995). This becomes evident through the analysis of the experiences of the students on placement and the requirements which framed them, such as the self-evaluation tasks required for completion of the school experience file.

In the placement schools, 'good practice' cast students very much as learners, as apprentices to the experience craftsmen and women with whom they were placed. The power differential was clearly felt and accepted by both the majority of students and teachers. The student's concern was to survive the placement and receive a good report from the school which, in turn, would contribute to the grade for placement. School experience was seen as a series of hurdles to be overcome and attention was on ticking them off.

In this study, there was evidence of a high degree of consensus on the technical knowledge base required and how it might be acquired (primarily through hands-on experience and an apprenticeship mode of learning). There was also a clear expectation from teachers that a moral commitment was required, with personal and interpersonal skills highly rated. Students too placed considerable importance on their ability to establish relationships with pupils and members of staff in the school and they were concerned for and took pleasure in pupils' progress, both academic and behavioural.

Although based on a relatively small sample of students and teachers, the findings from Allan *et al* (1996, 1997) resonate with those of this study. Their concerns on school experience were assessment-driven, in the main, and teachers' priorities were directed at supporting them in this. Repeatedly, the evidence indicates that the opportunities offered by school experience were not realised:

Clinical settings and field experiences, coupled with the knowledge and expertise of school-based practitioners offers a rich context for professional preparation.

(Roth, 1999, p.192)

This 'rich context' of school experience has not been exploited to provide the kinds of experience that might help meet the expectations of the profession – knowledge and skills, values and dispositions, and a degree of autonomy and self-determination. The final chapter considers some of the more salient reasons for this and goes on to speculate what a professional education for the teachers of the future might look like and how it might be realised.

CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study began with the aim of identifying the contribution of school experience in the development of reflective practitioners in the pre-service education of primary teachers. The literature and the evidence gathered support the view that a strongly technicist approach does a disservice to the teaching profession, the children they are responsible for educating, and the wider society. A school-based apprenticeship, aimed at the acquisition and development of rules, practical skills and a repertoire of learned strategies, provides a very limited basis for a lifetime of teaching.

Although the role of practical experience in the field is recognised as a fundamental necessity for the development of professional practice (Ehrlich, 1998), providing opportunities for practice within the course structure and endorsing the model of the reflective practitioner are not sufficient conditions for its realisation.

This chapter pulls together the discussions of previous chapters with the aim of identifying some of the factors within the school experience process that facilitate or militate against the provision of a professional education for reflective practice. It is not possible to separate school experience from the remainder of the pre-service preparation i.e. the in-faculty components or the framework in which it takes place. Therefore issues of theory and practice, partnership and communication are also relevant.

This research is fundamentally a case study and as a result the findings cannot be generalised readily to other teacher education courses, or institutions. However, various parts of the findings will have relevance for others involved in initial teacher education and consideration is given as to whether a more radical approach is needed in determining the what and how of professional education for primary teachers. In doing so, it is recognised that:

A case resides in the territory between theory and practice, between idea and experience, between normative ideal and achievable real. (Shulman, 1998)

- particularly the last of these.

10.1 Partnership and School Experience

In Scotland the demand for high quality, effective and competent teachers is increasing and, in response, the government has raised the intake targets for teacher education institutions in 1999-2000, and is likely to continue to do so for a number of years to come. While this makes considerable demands on the TEIs, it also makes demands on the partner authorities and schools in that each student teacher is required to spend approximately one quarter of her/his time on placement in the field.

Recent revisions to the primary curriculum (greater prescription linked to achievement measures) and the inclusion of new subject areas such as Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Personal and Social Development (PSD) have been represented, respectively, as both de-skilling and up-skilling of teachers. The pace of change has been such that an initial teacher education can no longer be seen to provide the subject knowledge and classroom skills that will serve throughout a career, if it ever truly was, but requires that beginning teachers acquire the skills to manage change, to adapt and to learn in response to external demands.

Changes in what a teacher is required to be and do must in turn influence the ITE curriculum and the model of the student as a learner. The reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983 and 1987) has become established as the model that embodies the skills and attributes required of effective teachers today and is the one that underpins the aims of the BEd (Primary) course at the University of Strathclyde.

The changed notion of what it is to be a primary teacher is also manifest in the growing industry that is continuing professional development (CPD) and in the government's proposals to establish a national framework for CPD in teacher education (The Scottish Office, 1998). Many programmes are already being offered by TEIs. Whereas once, on qualifying as a teacher, an individual could put study behind him or her, this will no longer be possible and many local authorities are entering into various forms of partnership with TEIs to provide the CPD their teachers need and employers consider necessary.

Consequently, teachers will be expected to display a positive disposition towards life long learning and to recognise that pre-service education is only the beginning of the process. Both negative and positive responses to this have already been displayed. The former has

resulted in early retirements and an exodus from the profession while the latter has produced an upsurge in the uptake of part-time postgraduate study.

As local authorities, schools and TEIs are drawn into partnerships, formal and informal, to improve the effectiveness of the education they individually and collectively provide, the long-standing partnership arrangements for initial teacher education cannot remain unaltered.

Ideally, a student should be well prepared for placement, confident that s/he understands what is expected of her/him and that s/he will be supported in meeting these expectations by the class teacher and the TEI tutor. What the student experiences on placement should be examples of 'good practice', both in terms of how the school and teacher operate and in the supervision process. Assessment of progress and performance should be shared by the supervisors and be reliable, valid and consistent, both within and across supervising teachers and tutors.

Given the uniqueness of each teaching situation and the lack of a clear consensus on the constituent parts of 'good practice' it is highly unlikely that all students will experience such an 'ideal' situation in each placement. Indeed some might argue that an ideal situation would be an inadequate preparation for the reality of the teaching, which can be stressful, difficult and very demanding.

This study was concerned to establish how close existing practice came to this ideal situation and whether it was good enough, in whole or part. Within the existing system, a number of weaknesses were detected in the partnership arrangements of schools and TEIs, the origins of which lay primarily in the non-contractual, goodwill nature of the partnership, where roles and responsibilities tended to be tacit and taken for granted. While this has served in good stead in the past, recent and proposed changes in public sector policy require a more structured and integrated form of partnership. A number of limiting factors have been identified, the main ones being resources, variation in practice and the dispositions of the supervisors.

a Resources

The main resource in short supply was time: time to meet, to talk, to observe and to reflect. Teachers have been involved in a workload campaign (as one or two were concerned to point out in the questionnaires) for some years. Revisions to the curriculum (5-14 Development Programme), the advent of new curricular areas (e.g. Environmental Education) and demands for new and upgraded skills (e.g. in ICT) have had a detrimental effect on the teachers' willingness to be involved in those aspects of their role that they regard as more peripheral to the central one of teaching children (Bottery, 1999).

In addition, the drive for achievement and excellence is concentrating teachers' efforts on the children and their attainment. In order that children's progress is not compromised, students are increasingly being required to teach the teacher's programme rather than one determined by their own learning needs. Where the expectations of the TEI do not readily map onto the teacher's programme, this can cause conflict within the student-teacher-tutor triad. One such example is where the student is required to work with groups during placement but the school has made a deliberate policy move to more directed class teaching and/or setting.

Time can always be bought however. If finance was invested to provide supply or extra teaching cover that would allow for preparation before and genuine, in-depth teacher-student consultation during placement, this would ensure that there was provision for the student to access the teacher's professional knowledge and practice in a more structured way. (What students and teachers actually do with this time is the really important issue but if there is little or no time put aside for it, it is much less likely that it will happen.)

The only precedent in Scotland for such an investment was the pilot study of mentoring in Scottish secondary schools. This initiative was discontinued at the end of the pilot study for several reasons, the most significant of which were resourcing (primarily the amount of money available to schools to support mentoring), teachers' workload issues and a feeling from the profession that mentoring diverted energies from their real business of teaching children (Powney *et al*, 1993).

Increasing demands have also been made on TEI lecturers too. With the merging of the former colleges of education into the universities, they have become subject to Research

Assessment Exercises and under pressure to do research and to publish (Edwards and Collison, 1995). As this carries funding implications, this pressure is substantial and issues of workload have become significant.

b Variation in Practice

A persistent concern from students was the variation in practice, both in teaching observed and supervision experienced, across the placements and years of the course. While the majority of students enjoyed placement, established good relationships with children and staff and felt that they developed considerably as a result, a worrying number also felt neglected, unsupported and left to 'sink or swim'. Several tutors also felt that some teachers lacked the necessary expertise and/or that the need to find sufficient places in schools meant that not all students would be seeing best practice; some teachers felt inadequately prepared for their role.

Teachers (and senior management) could not support the students if they were unaware of or mistaken in their understanding of the TEI's expectations of what students should do and achieve during a placement; many did not have a secure grasp of the requirements. This raises questions about the effectiveness of communication between the TEI and the school at one level and the tutor, student and teacher at another. If teachers were aware of the requirements (or, preferably, more involved in determining them) and of how students might be helped in achieving them, they would be better placed to support them.

Students' concerns crystallised in the comments regarding the final grading of placement. Reliable and valid assessment depends upon a knowledge of the intended learning within a programme, an awareness of how that learning might be demonstrated once acquired and an understanding of the criteria that underpin the different judgements that might be made (e.g. satisfactory/unsatisfactory or a grade within a predetermined range). In addition, the assessment event itself should be designed such that it allows the student the opportunity to demonstrate the intended learning. Given that no two students are likely to be assessed within exactly the same context (variables include, for example, school ethos, age/stage of pupils, curriculum area and personal qualities) assessment expertise will also depend on experiencing a range of such events in order to construct a (working) theory of the assessment process.

Where a number of assessors are responsible for different sub-groups of students, inter-assessor reliability demands a shared understanding of these elements of assessment and a common 'working' theory. Many students believed that such a shared understanding did not exist amongst the tutors they had and reported that they experienced inconsistencies in both what was asked of them and the judgements subsequently made. This necessitated re-learning, for example, how to write aims and objectives for various aspects of planning in the style required by the new tutor, as students progressed through the years of the course. The students perceived these as irritations, low level but time-consuming demands that diverted them from the real business of teaching.

c Dispositions

The view that the teacher is responsible for the children and the tutor for the student was expressed by respondents in all groups questioned. In addition, teachers and students have highlighted the juxtaposition of practice and theory, of the 'reality' of the classroom and the 'airy-fairy' irrelevance of the faculty. There is an apparent contradiction in the argument that ITE is the responsibility of the university but it is really in school where they learn to be teachers, and evidence of an undertone of 'them' and 'us'. The student teacher is caught in the middle. She/he develops a close relationship with the classroom teacher, personal and professional, and is socialised into the school and teaching as a culture (rather than a 'profession') while, at the same time s/he must look to the TEI and the tutor for reassurance that s/he is on track, meeting the demands of the course and achieving the grades s/he needs to enter the profession. It is hardly surprising that the students who were interviewed listed diplomacy and interpersonal skills among the abilities developed on placement.

At the end of Chapter 7, a number of implications for partnership were identified with the intention of indicating how existing practices might be improved to provide a more satisfactory experience for students, one more in line with the aims of the course and its underpinning model. Steps have already been taken to implement some of these. Within the last year, the Faculty has re-established a series of partnership meetings with local authorities, aimed at improving the effectiveness of placement element of all TEI courses offered at Jordanhill. The Local Authority-Faculty of Education Partnership Group involves ITE course directors and representatives from geographically associated local authorities. While it is intended to encourage a more coherent and satisfactory experience

for students, it will also provide a vehicle for addressing concerns of quality in partnership that are likely to be raised by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) when it begins its review of ITE within the next two years.

The implications for this group are therefore:

- To make explicit the roles and responsibilities of the school and the TEI;
- To support schools as they develop their contribution to ITE and to support teachers in taking on the role of supervisor;
- To maximise consistency of experience across and within teaching establishments;
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of the supervising teacher and, in particular the kinds and amount of support s/he can offer; and
- To determine how the teacher/school's role can be extended to contribute more usefully to the summative assessment of students on placement.

The particular issue of teachers' involvement in the (final) grading of students is also being addressed. The Course team has begun a pilot study to determine how best this can be developed, enhancing the role of the teacher in the assessment process and bringing her/his experience of and involvement with the student to bear. The project acknowledges concerns over reliability and consistency of grading and the need to encourage genuine partnership with schools. Preliminary work is already underway.

Thus a number of initiatives have been taken to address some of the issues raised that have direct bearing on the BEd course at Jordanhill. But there are issues that go beyond the single case studied that need to be considered in the broader context of the future of primary teacher education. One of these is the continuing polarisation of theory and practice along the traditional lines of theory in the TEI and practice in the schools.

10.2 Theory and Practice

A recurring (political) debate in pre-service teacher education has been that of the role of theory (Whitty, 1993). While recent reforms have downplayed or rejected a need for theory and teacher education institutions, many of the teachers, tutors, and even the students, acknowledged a place for 'theory' within the course investigated. While gaps

and shortcomings were identified, considerable support was shown for the role of the TEI and 'theory' in the education of teachers. This is supported by other studies (Davies and Ferguson, 1997 (qualified teachers); Hannan, 1995 (headteachers); Chadbourne, 1995 (student teachers). There has been no similar debate on the necessity for 'practice', which appears to go unquestioned, although not all professions attempt to embed practice to the same extent within the preparation phase (Shulman, 1998).

Seeing 'theory' and 'practice' as distinct entities is neither accurate nor helpful (Eraut, 1994; Stones, 1994) and can result in destructive caricatures of views of teacher education (Maclellan, 1994). Carr and Kemmis (1983) depict the various configurations of 'theory' that have emerged over the years. Chronologically, these have ranged from philosophical studies, aimed primarily at the academic education of the student, to foundation disciplines (e.g. psychology and sociology) and on to viewing teaching as 'applied science', with a technical emphasis and practical outcomes. More recently, teaching has been viewed as the exercise of skills by reasoning individuals and, latterly, the teacher as researcher, accompanied by emancipation and professional autonomy (both variants of the reflective practitioner).

Bengtsson's distinction (1995a) between theory (academic study) and professional knowledge (the result of experience) appears to draw a line between learning from books/academics and learning from experience. Shulman (1998) argues that professional knowledge is the product of academic and experiential learning. In practice, the professional is required to make judgements virtually continuously and the basis for these judgments should be theoretical understandings rather than knowledge of rules, protocols and procedures learned through a technical apprenticeship. Judgements can only be regarded as professional if they are based on principles that have been validated through research or scholarship and are supported by a system of values and beliefs accepted as appropriate to the particular profession. This view is akin to Eraut's theorising (1994) where an interaction of theory and practice leads to situational understanding, the basis of professional knowledge.

In attempting to learn from practice on school experience, a consideration of the judgements made and the situational factors that may have influenced those judgments could focus upon the practice of the teacher and/or the student. McIntyre (1993) presents

a number of strategies for exploring the teacher's practice although Eraut (1994) considers that it might not be possible for many teachers to bring their actions to the surface, given that much classroom action is 'hot' and reactive and knowledge tacit, unlike the cooler problem-solving practice illustrated by Schön's reflective practitioners (1983, 1987). There is irony here in that we appear to be asking student teachers to consider their practice in ways that experienced teachers find difficult.

In requiring students to maintain records of self-evaluation, reflective logs or journals of their experiences, teacher educators are encouraging students to learn from experience. The purpose of maintaining these, particularly in the early days, should be twofold: to develop skills of analysis and reflection and to learn about the practices of more experienced practitioners.

The content of the files or journals should reflect these aims. If as one student suggested, the focus was on some incident for analysis that stood out from the routine and everyday, where something went spectacularly well or badly, the learning would be more meaningful and the contributory factors perhaps more pertinent. If the student were also to select the incident, it could provide insight into her or his concerns and levels of understanding. For the sake of meeting requirements, some routine evaluation of success/failure and what to do (or not) the next time might be necessary but it should be accepted as just that, monitoring of the technical. The stuff of reflection should be intrinsically interesting and worth the effort and discomfort that critical analysis involves. Such effort deserves feedback that turns the monologue into a dialogue, challenging and prompting further thought and action.

The evidence is that many of the BEd students could describe the judgements made and the reasoning behind them when asked to do so in a non-threatening situation and where the purpose, i.e. talking about their learning from experience, was clear. This is not the reflective practice of experienced practitioners aimed at changing practice, but rather learners constructing an understanding of their own developing practice and of the building blocks they are using. In addition, the observation that the interviews were far more revealing and vital than the written evaluations makes a case for reflecting on practice as a shared activity, with peers and/or teachers and/or tutors.

Working with students and sharing views on and concerns about practice should not be perceived as threatening by teachers, although this may reflect a reluctance to be held to account by the TEI tutor, rather than the student, for what is said (Shulman, 1998). Here efforts to change behaviour come up against cultural obstacles that can only be overcome by encouraging teachers and faculty tutors to be reflective practitioners themselves and to acknowledge that they are still developing their own understandings of practice, within a community of practice (Edwards and Collison, 1996).

Teacher behaviour lies along a continuum of *before*, *in* and *on* action, in smaller or larger time frames e.g. on a daily, individual lesson or incident basis. If it could be assumed that the principles that guide practice under the 'hot and dirty' conditions are the same as those that guide cooler, more deliberate action, then unpacking teachers' judgements under a range of conditions should provide some indication of their professional knowledge. (This line of thought generates several research questions into primary teachers' professional knowledge and the constancy of its application across situations.) Reflecting on practice with students in ways that aim to develop professional knowledge should lead to mutual understandings and shared learning.

No test of human understanding was more demanding than the test of whether you could take something you knew and teach it to someone else.

(Shulman, 1990, in Ehrlich, 1998)

If the case for theory is made, then the issue becomes one of 'what theory?', 'when?' and 'how?'. Answering these questions is outwith the scope of this thesis, given its focus on school experience, but in constructing a curriculum, the main aim should be to assist students in making sense of their own experiences, to provide a bank of explanations on which to draw and to provide opportunities and strategies by which this can be achieved. There is evidence, here and elsewhere, that it may be difficult to persuade students and their supervising teachers of the value of theory; they 'ought' to have it, but many teachers doubted its relevance in the 'real world' of the classroom.

Shulman (1998) warns of tensions between the field of practice and the higher education institution, the latter being the originator of much of the theory. By its very nature, a theory is a generalised statement of principles that does not allow for situational variables and personal variations. This means it is not a good fit with the experiences of teachers and

students on a day-to-day basis – the events of the day have to be stripped of their extraneous features and the principles underpinning them laid bare. The extraneous features are the very aspect that give them colour and life and, as a result, theory appears to be unrelated to their immediate existence, artificial and of little relevance.

In addition, theory is often presented as a series of disciplines e.g. psychology and sociology (Stones, 1994). Practice, and problems of practice tend to be multi-dimensional where pieces of the solution may be contributed by a number of disciplines. There may be no simple answer and this can lead to a rejection of theory. Making connections between theories, like theories of situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and skill transfer across contexts, needs to be supported by the more experienced in the field. Shulman (1998) sees judgement, or decision-making, as the process that *'bridges between the universal terms of theory and the gritty particularities of situated practice'* (p. 519), but not neglecting the moral dimensions of the process.

If teaching's claim to professional status is to be accepted, then it is necessary to address issues of theory and knowledge bases directly, including accepting the need for a professional language rather than dismissing much of educational terminology as jargon and unrelated to the reality of the classroom. Qualification as a primary teacher, in Scotland at least, requires students to be graduates of a university. In registering for the BEd, prospective teachers should be prepared for an education that demands academic rigour as well as a positive disposition to working with children. In a professional education, learning from experience means more than modelling the behaviour of experienced and expert practitioners.

It may have been, however, that the concept of apprenticeship as a preparation for primary teaching has been too readily dismissed. It has been discredited quite thoroughly in the literature, in that it has been interpreted as a simplistic learning of procedures, recipes and rules that, if applied appropriately, will produce the desired outcome. This may have been over-simplistic. Claxton (1993) argues for a broader concept of apprenticeship, one that sees family of 'apprenticeships' that differ in complexity and demand. Shulman (1998) echoes this in his support for a 'cognitive apprenticeship' into teaching that incorporates the practical decision-making and situated learning of the more limited apprenticeship model alongside reflection, analysis and higher order intellectual reasoning. The social

context in which experiential learning takes place is also subjected to critical reflection and analysis, providing the raw material for building up a knowledge of cases. This, in turn, contributes to a theory of practice within a community of practice. However, such an approach would still demand a partnership of schools and universities.

10.3 Learning from Experience

While teachers recognised two cycles within the BEd course – two years of apprenticeship followed by two years developing those characteristics associated with reflective practitioners - an apprenticeship training was what most students experienced across all four years. At its worst, the student experience was characterised by an emphasis on survival, negotiating a safe passage through the placement, coping with stress and rarely voicing any personal opinions or concerns. Self-reports of student learning emphasised the procedural elements of teaching, meeting the requirements and managing the class teacher (and the tutor). Where the objective is to survive, any learning is likely to be superficial and instrumental with regard to passing the high-risk 'crit' visits (cf Calderhead, 1994). Tutors, teachers and students described these visits as atypical, staged performances, unlike day-to-day classroom practice.

While teachers (and tutors) might have recognised that a different model is more appropriate for students as they develop, it was not operationalised in the experience of the majority of students questioned. A particular crisis in confidence and motivation was evident in students at the end of third year. Many students had been in sole charge of the class for lengthy periods and some were less sure that they really wanted to teach at the end of the course, an event that suddenly seemed quite near. This was heightened by the experience of being graded on school experience rather than the binary judgement (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) of earlier years. The grade awarded had implications for their final degree classification and suddenly the prospect of graduation (or not) became very real.

While an essentially apprenticeship model continued in Years 3-4, students reported less direct supervision and more freedom to make decisions. Teachers appear to take the view that the student, having achieved an adequate level of technical competence during the first two years, could be left to learn directly from working with the class and needed monitoring rather than supervision. This was evident in the interviews where students

reported that *'once s/he saw I could cope, s/he pretty much left me on my own with the class'*.

Learn from experience they undoubtedly did, but without the mediation of an experienced practitioner, it is unlikely that it was efficient or deep learning. Shulman (1998) argues that it is difficult for novices or experts to learn from experience in isolation; sustained development requires the support of others and membership of a community of practice.

Perhaps, if an apprenticeship model is what most teachers appear best able to operate it should be adopted explicitly throughout the course. Research has indicated that an apprenticeship model that emphasises technical skills and adopts a craft approach, is unlikely to be effective in meeting the needs of either the trainees or the children they are expected to teach. Looking beyond the classroom, four years of technical apprenticeship cannot deliver the extended professional required by today's schools and communities (Bottery, 1999; Schon, 1987). (In any event, political rhetoric indicates that four years would be perceived as an excessive period of apprenticeship.) Claxton (1993) maintains that a rigid definition of apprenticeship is impossible to sustain, given the extent to which values and beliefs impact upon practice.

An alternative response would be to acknowledge the two phases openly (apprenticeship and reflective practitioner). While the first of these is well supported by tutors and teachers, there is a need to make the second of these a reality in the experience of the students. The explicit adoption of the reflective practitioner model during the final two years would require a curriculum and learning strategies designed to support it and, in turn, a radical shift in the ways in which students were supervised on school experience. Greater responsibility in helping students make sense of their experiences, direct and indirect, would fall to the schools and the supervising teachers.

Progression would be characterised by a qualitative shift from the acquisition of a wider subject knowledge base and increased technical competence in the first phase to a deeper understanding of the nature of teaching, the role of the teacher and the social, political and economic context in which teachers operate. Such a course retains the notion of the final product being a competent technician through an early focus on 'how' to teach, and a reflective practitioner, through a later emphasis on critical analysis, situational

understanding, and evaluation of practice. The students' learning needs would drive this shift in emphasis (cf Maynard and Furlong, 1993).

Learning about the surface features of a practice without an understanding of the underpinning principles goes against constructivist learning theory and ideas of metacognition. Any learning will be less than secure and limited in its applicability. In addition, if a course focuses on technical skills and a tool kit of strategies in the early days, students will be led to believe that this is fundamentally all that is required. As a result, students' initial preconceptions that teaching comes naturally and preparation requires only the acquisition of rules, protocols and procedures are reinforced (cf Calderhead and Elliot, 1994).

The 'hard' bits of becoming a teacher - deep learning, critical analysis and professional values and beliefs - are too intertwined with the practical skills to support such a stance. On a related tack, Eraut (1994) argues for skills of reflection and analysis to be introduced early to counteract the socialisation process in schools and preclude the unquestioned adoption of established patterns of practice by students who want to fit in, or who are seduced by the 'real world' theories encountered in the schools. This was in evidence in the interview data from students on 'good practice'.

If a course aims to produce reflective practitioners then it must address these from the start and confront simplistic notions of what it is to be, and to become, a teacher. This requires a clear definition of reflective practice, its pre-requisites and conditions, a rationale for the adoption of this model and a course design, complete with strategies and approaches that stand a chance of achieving the aims. Often, students are placed in environments and situations that are carefully managed, by the teacher or the TEI, to avoid the puzzling or the problematic. While scaffolding of tasks is necessary in the early days, students also need to develop the ability to anticipate the unexpected and to live with the unpredictability of the primary classroom. It was the unexpected that caught the students' attention and imagination and caused them to reflect, bringing learning to the fore. Opportunities to investigate, to experiment and to get things wrong in low risk contexts should be provided.

Both approaches tinker with what already exists rather than radically changing the ways in which teacher are prepared for the profession. They continue to see the class teacher as

single-handedly responsible for the day-to-day education of children within a traditional classroom and school. Perhaps it is time to take a fresh look at the professional education provided in undergraduate courses for primary teachers.

The introduction of the National Grid for Learning and other ICT initiatives open up possibilities for significant changes in the way schools are organised and learning and teaching is undertaken (Stark, Simpson, Gray and Payne, 2000). Other changes such as the introduction of New Community Schools where a range of social, educational and health-related services will be available, mean that teachers will increasingly become part of a wider network of professionals working towards similar ends – literate, healthy, productive and responsible citizens (The Scottish Office, 1999).

10.4 A Professional Education

Many BEd students come directly from school, aged 17-19 years old. They frequently have little experience of work other than part-time employment and have chosen to become teachers for various emotional or affective reasons rather than rational, intellectual reasoning (Christie, 1995; Calderhead, 1988). Some experience difficulty in making the shift from school pupil to university student and this is recognised in the range of support services provided by higher education institutions.

Difficulties arise in accepting personal responsibility for learning and time-management. Similarly, students are expected to submit assignments, to attend lectures and tutorials and to engage in systematic, independent study. No one will chase up their homework or issue punishments for failure to comply with such expectations. While many first year students entering the university are likely to experience some dissonance in taking on the new role of student, would-be teachers have the additional trauma of being sent out on placement to schools to learn to become teachers, when many have so recently been pupils themselves.

The move towards New Community Schools ('full service' schools) heralds a changing role for many professions, not just teachers, as educational, social and health professionals are brought together to support the development of children into healthy, productive and fulfilled citizens with a respect and desire for lifelong learning. In an alternative approach to educating new teachers, would-be teachers would study alongside students who have chosen to study for these other professions, sharing classes with those on social work,

community education and health-related professional courses such as speech therapy. The first year could provide an insight into the work of other professionals, drawing links and identifying common elements of practice such as values and beliefs and attitudes to professionalism (Bottery, 1999). Some tentative steps have already been taken in this direction.

Within the BEd degree course at the University of Strathclyde, there have been attempts to bring together those training to be primary teachers, social workers and community educators for many years. These have typically been of one or two days duration only during the course, with specific tasks and activities designed to foster collaboration and increased understanding of how roles inter-relate in practice through case studies. Otherwise, students tended to remain fairly isolated both academically and socially, within their chosen professional groups – as did the lecturers. (The majority of the undergraduate courses within the Faculty of Education have professional relevance and meet professional entry requirements.)

More recently, four modules were designed to reflect a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all undergraduate students within the Faculty of Education should acquire, regardless of their specific choice of course. These were: *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*, *Research Methods*, *Social Justice* and *Personal Development in a Professional Context*. All undergraduate courses were expected to incorporate these 'faculty modules' into their curriculum, unless they could argue convincingly that these were not appropriate for their students. In addition, course teams were required to ensure that timetables were designed to allow students from different courses to participate in the modules together i.e. in mixed professional groups.

These changes were phased in during 1999-2000 for first year students, with evaluation procedures built into the process. While most course teams supported the principles behind the faculty modules, a small number argued successfully against one or two of them, normally those without professional accreditation. There have also been a number of practical difficulties in timetabling and providing suitable accommodation. While this goes some way towards breaking down professional boundaries, it may not be sufficiently radical.

It should be possible to extend this development by introducing a common first year for those students pursuing professional qualifications in cognate areas within the Faculty. Students would have the opportunity to ensure that they choose their profession wisely, only making up their minds which profession to enter (if any) towards the end. (This may also help eliminate early on, the considerable wastage through drop-out/failure observed in the BEd cohort studied.)

Their experiences would allow them to become students, to find their feet and themselves within the university, while reducing the personal performance element of placement during first year. Removing practical experience from first year entirely would be problematic in that students want to become 'teachers' as soon as possible, to establish emotional ties to the schools and pupils and to be validated as teachers by them (Calderhead, 1988; McNally, 1993). Brief placements, in a range of settings, with the opportunity to meet with practitioners from related fields should allow them a grasp of the (wider) reality of the profession they are contemplating entering. These should be undertaken with the aim of fleshing out the theoretical understandings developed through academic study, rather than skill development.

Learning during the first year would concentrate on being a student and developing an understanding of the theoretical disciplines that underpin effective learning and teaching, to study teaching as a professional practice in a social context, and to ensure their own subject knowledge bases are secure. Unless carefully designed, this can be reduced to instruction in the systems and structures, the legal obligations and the political framework rather than more philosophical questioning of practices and contexts.

Pedagogical subject knowledge is a synthesis of sound pedagogical knowledge and skills with secure understanding of the subject area in question (Shulman, 1987). Primary teachers are required to teach across the full range of subjects, including some subjects that are relatively recent newcomers to the school curriculum. Students entering the faculty will have areas of strength and weakness in their own understanding and some of the latter may be such that they pose an additional hurdle to becoming a competent beginning teacher. Part of their professional education should aim to ensure that their own subject knowledge is sufficiently secure in order that they can teach it to someone else.

Perhaps it is also time to consider whether the expectation that the primary teacher should be able to teach effectively across all aspects of the curriculum to children aged from 2½ to 12 years. Students might elect to study for the early or later years of the primary school and, while retaining considerable cross-curricular responsibilities, also undertake specialist study in, say, two subject areas. The staff within a school can then be seen as a team with complementary skills and expertise rather than all having to reside in every teacher. While this is a recognised approach in England (Cornish, Hamer and Reed, 1994) it would be likely to meet with considerable opposition given the considerable ideological commitment to the generalist primary teacher in Scottish education (Darling, 1994).

Two arguments support the need to consider change however, one practical while the other is more ideological. The increasing demands on primary teachers as new subjects appear (e.g. Environmental Education) and skills are required (e.g. ICT) combined with the drive for achievement and accountability are having a detrimental effect on morale and raising issues of workload. Other professions such as medicine and law involve a level of understanding of general practice, followed by specialisation within particular areas of practice, depending on ability, preference and disposition; professionalism is characterised by specialist knowledge within as well as across professions.

The recent consultation on the Schools Scotland Code (SEED, 2000a) is an attempt to review the guidelines for the management of schools, nationally, that have been in place since 1956. In it, the Scottish Executive raises issues of class size, staffing regulations and promotion structures in schools. It also introduces the question of whether primary teachers might teach in secondary schools, suggesting the breaking down or at least blurring of the boundaries between primary and secondary teaching, in terms of the qualifications required.

In another government document, *Improving Our Schools: A Consultation paper on national priorities for school education in Scotland* (SEED, 2000) the Scottish Executive outlines a number of a number of initiatives aimed at improving standards, including the need to develop 'a professional, well-motivated teaching force' (p.10). It cites the McCrone Committee (Committee of Inquiry into Professional Conditions of Service for Teachers, 1999) and the development of a framework for Continuous Professional Development for teachers, both of which aim to 'improve and develop the professional

skills of teachers' (p.10). It seems unlikely that initial teacher education will be allowed to continue in its present form in the midst of all these initiatives and the teaching profession should be prepared to be in the vanguard of any developments, with a clear vision of how the TEI can contribute to 'a professional and well-motivated teaching force' (bearing in mind that there may well be fundamental differences in the interpretation of this concept).

10.5 The Teacher Educators

The inescapable conclusion is that the teacher educators are all of those who contribute to the professional education of the pre-service student, formally and/or informally: the supervising teachers, other staff in schools and faculty staff. The prime educators are the faculty tutors and supervising teachers, but the influence of significant others should not be underestimated (McNally, 1994). The variations in support provided, intellectually, practically and emotionally varied within and across placements and supervisors. Most of the evidence on the effectiveness of tutors and teachers in meeting the needs of the students was provided by the students themselves and therefore, as they point out, may be biased as a result of personality differences and clashes in learning/teaching styles.

Some of this is inevitable given the ways in which personal values and beliefs permeate practice in teaching but the evidence also shows significant differences in the ways in which teacher educators, particularly in the faculty, interpret and carry out their roles. Advice and guidance for tutors, teachers and students are provided in standardised ways, with regular meetings and updates. These tend to focus on procedures, protocols and proformas rather than a shared vision of the kind of primary teacher that will meet the needs of the children and schools, and how that might be achieved.

As with schools, it may be that this is in part the result of the increasing governmental emphasis on performance indicators, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. All of this has increased the demands from external bodies. Internally, tutors are being pressed to combine research, teaching (pre-service and in-service) and to generate new business, responding to the market.

If there is a community of practice (Edwards & Collison, 1996; Shulman, 1998) it seems, in the main, to be operating at a technical level rather than one with a clear set of values and beliefs about the nature of primary teaching and primary teacher education. Roth (1999) in

his analysis of the role of higher education in the preparation of teachers in the USA, came to the conclusion that the schools of education had lost their way in their attempts to respond to all of the external and internal demands made on them.

Perhaps Scottish (primary) education has too, and it is time to re-claim the moral high ground that Brown suggested that Scottish education had forfeited (1996). It should be the teachers and teacher educators, and not the politicians, who define what it is to be a member of a professional workforce charged with preparing the citizens of tomorrow. The pace of change, including that brought about by the information revolution that is upon us means that it is difficult to predict, literally and figuratively, the shape of schools and education in 20 years time – when the present student teachers will be in the middle of their careers and in a position to influence policy and its implementation.

A professional education has to prepare them to meet these challenges on a principled basis, an education that embodies notions of service, scholarly or theoretical understanding, skilled performance, judgement, learning from experience and a professional community to monitor quality and aggregate knowledge (Shulman, 1998).

10.6 Further Research

Each of the sub-sections in this chapter generates further research questions, some relatively localised and evaluative while others investigate broader, underpinning principles of learning to become a primary teacher. Several lines of inquiry into partnership and school experience have already been identified within this thesis. The other sections generate a number of big and small questions, with some overlap between sections, as would be expected if teaching is seen to be an integrated practice of knowledge bases, skills, dispositions and values.

10.6.1 Theory and Practice

- What disciplines and 'theories' do students find interesting and/or applicable at various points throughout the course?
- How can they be brought to bear on practice (their own and others) to help them make sense of what they experience?
- What disciplines and theories do students retain/see value in beyond the pre-service period?

10.6.2 Learning from Experience

- What activities e.g. logs, journals, and events e.g. 'good/bad' lessons, allow Shulman's rich context of experience to be made visible?
- How can supervisors (in school and faculty) assist students in making sense of these experiences?
- What contribution does studying and working alongside students of social work, community education, etc., make to an understanding of (professional) practice?
- What can be learned from experience post-qualification, and how?

10.6.3 A Professional Education

- How do students interpret notions of professionalism in teaching?
- What do they and their teachers believe are the necessary foundations in the preparation of teachers for the schools of tomorrow?
- To what extent is the view of the generalist primary teacher compatible with the notion of a professional workforce?

10.6.4 The Teacher Educators

- To what extent are the teacher educators reflective practitioners?
- What activities, events, experiences have helped them to develop skills of reflection and analysis in their own practice?

In the faculty:

- What is 'good practice' in working with students?
- How does the faculty measure up to the concept of a 'community of practice'?
- How are new members inducted into this community?

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