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Learning in institutional contexts

A case study of recently qualified in-service teachers in English further education

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the learning of recently qualified teachers in Further Education (FE). It seeks to establish what former in-service trainees (FTs) learn in their first year after qualifying through the everyday practices of their work, and how this learning is shaped by institutional and policy contexts. The study is situated within existing research into workplace learning, conceptualised with reference to Lave and Wenger as a situated activity, involving the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice. A materialist ontology is adopted, rooted in Dorothy Smith's Institutional Ethnography (IE), which seeks to explicate social relations through people's lived experience. The bridge between the FTs' learning and their institutional and policy contexts is formed through the concept of reification, which connects Wenger's social theory of learning with Smith's IE: texts are scrutinised for the regulatory role they play in co-ordinating practice across contexts.

A qualitative case study design enables an in-depth exploration of the learning of eight FTs within six organisational settings. The participants all achieved a higher-level initial teacher education (ITE) qualification through the distributed provision of one university. Semi-structured interviews were carried out near the start and towards the end of their first year after qualifying. These incorporated the use of the Pictor technique, a Visual Elicitation Method which was found to contribute strongly to the quality and extent of the data generated. Documents relating to the settings were also analysed, and managers responsible for the learning of staff in three of the organisations were interviewed. Critical Discourse Analysis was applied to the analysis of documents, and thematic analysis to the interview data.

The study finds that the learning of the FTs is powerfully shaped by their institutional contexts, through which policy is also enacted. Texts produced at a national level, most notably Ofsted's *Common Inspection Framework*, generate institutional texts which co-ordinate the practices of the FTs across local settings. The FTs' learning is contingent on the practices in which they participate, and the degree to which these practices prompt meaning-making. The monitoring of student attendance and progress forms a primary area of activity for the majority of the FTs, involving mediation between the complex needs of the students and the requirements of a performative workplace; teaching, and the development of subject-specialist pedagogy, are mostly side-lined. Development activities which allow FTs to make sense of their experiences and to integrate new ideas within their own subject and context are most highly valued as learning opportunities, although individual barriers to such development exist.

The study contributes to new knowledge in providing detailed insights into what and how individual FTs learn within contrasting institutional contexts. These insights may be of relevance to practitioners, employers and policy makers, as they obtain wider relevance through the generalising power of the institution. The study also makes methodological contributions in developing a theoretical framework that could be applied to the investigation of learning within other institutional contexts, and in showing how visual and graphic techniques may be productively employed.

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Finally, special thanks to my daughter and partner, who have been there for me throughout.

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Abbreviations

ABR	Area Based Review
ACM	Assistant Curriculum Manager
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CertEd	Certificate in Education
CHAT	Cultural Historical Activity Theory
CIF	Common Inspection Framework
CM	Curriculum Manager
CoP	Community of Practice
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfE	Department for Education
EdD	Doctor of Education
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EIF	Education Inspection Framework
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETF	Education and Training Foundation
EV	External Verifier
FE	Further Education
FT	Former Trainee
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HE	Higher Education
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
IE	Institutional Ethnography
IEB	Interim Executive Board
IfL	Institute for Learning
ILP	Independent Learning Provider
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
IV	Internal Verification
LA	Local Authority
LPP	Legitimate Peripheral Participation
NLS	New Literacy Studies
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PGCE	Professional/Postgraduate Certificate in Education

PGDipE	Postgraduate Diploma in Education
PP	Pupil Premium
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
QTLS	Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills
RQ	Research Question
SEN(D)	Special Educational Needs (and Disabilities)
SET	Society for Education and Training
TLA	Teaching, Learning and Assessment
TLC	Transforming Learning Cultures
VEM	Visual Elicitation Method
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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Chapter One: Situating the study

1.1 Chapter introduction

This study seeks to understand what recently qualified teachers learn through the everyday practice of their employment in institutional settings. It brings together theoretical understandings of learning as a situated practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and of institutions as complexes of 'ruling relations' (Smith, 2005) in order to investigate *what* and *how* teachers learn in their first year after qualifying, and how this process is shaped by wider policy contexts. It thus addresses the methodological challenge of making learning visible, even when unintended or unrecognised by the learner (Eraut, 2004; Terry, 2019).

This introductory chapter establishes the focus of the study, situating it within the macro context of further education in England and the micro contexts of the study's participants. It also commences the analysis of these contexts. Furthermore, it introduces the epistemological and ontological perspectives that underpin the study's methodology, highlighting the personal experiences and commitments from which they stem. Finally, it introduces the research questions and outlines the structure of the thesis.

1.2 The 'problematic'

This study has its roots in personal experience. Working as a teacher educator from 2006 to 2017 within a college of Further Education (FE) in the North of England, I taught trainees who were seeking to gain a higher level qualification in teaching in the 'Lifelong Learning' sector as part of the distributed provision of one university (the terms used in relation to this sector will be addressed later in the chapter). This was an in-service qualification, meaning that the trainees were already employed in a teaching capacity, some on a full-time basis within an FE college, others in part-time or voluntary roles in a wide range of organisations, from private training providers to special schools. The taught element of the course involved a weekly seminar addressing aspects of vocational pedagogy, as well as clarifying the many assessment requirements of the course. As is common across teacher education programmes, trainees were also observed teaching in their own settings and this was used as an opportunity for feedback and reflection, as well as summative assessment.

While the curriculum was designed to draw on the practical experience of teaching gained in the workplace, the trainees' access to relevant and valuable workplace experiences, such as designing a unit of study or contributing to the work of a team, was highly dependent on the type (whether full- or part-time, permanent or temporary) and context of their employment. In my role as class teacher and, from 2014, as the designated manager of the provision in my college (the 'Centre Manager'), I was uncomfortably aware of how many factors contributing to the trainees' achievement appeared outside my control. Frameworks provided by the

College and University, and regulated by external bodies such as the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), served on one level to ensure that the college provision met expected quality standards; but, at the same time, they ignored or led to the suppression of issues that could not easily be addressed by the individual practitioner. The tension arising from this contradiction is characteristic of a culture of performativity (Ball, 2003), where the individual feels judged against an extensive and indeterminate array of accountability measures, designed to control and shape their behaviour (p. 216). For me, this culture led to feelings of anxiety and even 'terror' (Lyotard, 1984).

Such personal feelings intensified with the shift in 2014 to a two-stage inspection model for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England (Ofsted, 2015a), where an institution's provision is inspected once towards the end of one academic year and then revisited near the start of the next one, in order to judge how successfully former trainees have progressed and are supported in their next stage of employment (p.8). In the dominant pre-service, school-based model of ITE, which has itself been subject to significant reform (Whiting et al., 2018), this involves following former trainees into their first paid role, where they have the status and associated benefits of 'Newly Qualified Teacher' (NQT) (DfE, 2018a). Schools' long-standing experience of working with NQTs helps to ensure that Ofsted's expectations of a supported transition into a full teaching role are met. The period following completion of an in-service qualification in FE, however, is much more problematic. First, the diverse range of settings in which former trainees (FTs) may be employed means that their continuing development is highly context-dependent. Secondly, many FTs will have been working in the sector for some time before they started their two-year qualification, making the employer, rather than the ITE provider, the chief influence on their development. Thirdly, there is no recognised newly-qualified status attached to ITE qualifications in the sector, and it is rare for employers to make any concessions in terms of workload or additional mentoring on this basis. This means that the provision of support falls to the ITE provider, despite the absence of associated funding.

Beyond personal feelings of anxiety at being held accountable for processes I felt unable to control, this experience drew my attention to a broader 'problematic' (Smith, 2005, p.38): that of the relationship between the continuing development (theorised in this study as the learning) of recently qualified in-service trainees and their institutional and policy context. The term 'problematic' is used here in the sense adopted by Dorothy Smith (from Louis Althusser) and which forms the point of entry for the research approach she labels 'institutional ethnography' (IE). The 'problematic' is more than the 'specific question or problem' that motivates the researcher (Smith, 2005, p. 38). It starts from the experiences of

people in their daily lives but crucially approaches the everyday world as 'an unfinished arena of discovery in which the lines of social relations are present to be explored beyond it' (p. 39). It thus connects 'the stuff of people's lives', such as the lived experience of the FT in the workplace, with the 'terrain of a sociological discourse, the business of which is to examine how that stuff is hooked into a larger fabric not directly observable from within the everyday' (p. 39). This problematic informs the central aim of this study: to investigate the relationship between the learning of FTs and their institutional and policy contexts. While the study does not constitute an 'institutional ethnography', the object of study being the learning of the individual former trainee rather than the institutional context itself, it adopts a similarly materialist ontology, locating learning 'in the actual sites of people's living' (Smith, 2002, p.19). It also draws on IE for aspects of its methodology, combining a focus on the significance of texts (p. 34) with understandings of learning as a social practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). It thus offers a possible template for the investigation of the learning of employees in similar institutional contexts.

1.3 Macro contexts: competitive control and deregulation

1.3.1 What is FE?

FE in England is labelled by Hodgson, Bailey and Lucas (2015) as 'an important but invisible sector' (p. 1). The writers attribute its invisibility to four significant factors: it has a lower political profile than schools or universities because the majority of those in positions of political power have not had direct, or even indirect, experience of FE; it is 'complex, amorphous, and ever-changing' (p. 1) in comparison with other sectors, contributing to a lack of knowledge about what it does; its role has often been connected with the needs of the labour market, making it subject to shifts in 'identity and purpose' (p. 1); finally, it has experienced 'the constant bombardment of national policy' (p. 2), preventing clear understandings from developing.

The complexity of the sector raises issues of definition. The most recent Ofsted annual report (Ofsted, 2020) states that 'the Further Education and Skills sector is mainly made up of colleges, independent learning providers (ILPs) and community learning and skills providers' (p. 93) but it goes on to list nine different types of provider (p. 95), with prison and armed forces education beyond these. Labels attached to this diverse landscape have shifted with political priorities, from 'Lifelong Learning' (LLUK, 2007) to 'Education and Training' (ETF, 2014), and more recently to 'Technical Education' (DfE & DBIS, 2016). Even broad references to the 'post-compulsory sector' have become problematic since the raising of the school leaving age to 18 in 2015 (HMG, 2008) and the increasing presence of 14 to 16-year olds in FE colleges (Orr, 2010). For the purpose of this study, further education will

be defined, somewhat negatively, as the full range of educational provision for young people and adults that 'does not happen in schools or universities' (Kennedy, 1997, p. 1).

While the immediate context of the study is English FE, the multifaceted role commonly accorded to FE in raising skills levels, boosting productivity and addressing social exclusion (Fleckenstein & Lee, 2018) is reflected internationally in policies that posit vocational education and training (VET) as a key instrument of social and economic reform (Avis, 2014). In the English context this has led, as Hanley and Orr observe, to striking levels of 'instability' (2019, p. 104), with 28 significant pieces of legislation introduced since the early 1980s (Norris & Adam, 2017, p. 5). Frustration at this level of 'policy churn' (p. 5) is evident in each iteration of the review of FE policy produced by the Awarding Organisation City and Guilds since 2014. The latest report states: 'policy continues to be developed with little or no supporting evidence and […] rarely, if ever, is there any attempt to weave impact evaluation into new initiatives. […] Consequently little is learned' (C&G, 2019, p. 3).

Beyond its significant exposure to policy reform, English FE has also experienced greater levels of marketisation than other sectors (O'Leary & Wood, 2017) following the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, which removed FE colleges from local government control and created statutory FE corporations (Fletcher, Gravatt & Sherlock, 2015). Since 'Incorporation', colleges have been 'steered' (Hodgson & Spours, 2019, p. 226) instead through the combined pressure of policy levers applied by central government, primarily those of funding, inspection and performance management (Fletcher, Gravatt & Sherlock, 2015). While the recent Area Based Reviews (ABRs) (HMG, 2015a) of FE providers (excluding sixth-form colleges) could be viewed as an admission of the need for greater regional collaboration (Spours, Hodgson, Grainger & Smith, 2019, p. 2), in opposition to the dominant 'liberal training regime' (Fleckenstein & Lee, 2018, p. 110) which prioritises competition, ABRs have not resulted in a shift towards the forms of regional co-operation seen in the other three countries of the UK (Hodgson & Spours, 2019). This means that the main factor unifying the General FE Colleges in which the majority of the FTs in this study work is their exposure to the same levers of competitive control, a term coined here for its paradoxical combination of the supposed freedoms of market competition and a centralised mode of governance, a contradiction which characterises the sector.

A more recent policy development is the implementation through the government's *Post-16 Skills Plan* (DBIS & DfE, 2016) of Lord Sainsbury's recommendations for the future of 'technical education' (DfE & DBIS, 2016). This calls for the increased involvement of employers in determining the shape and content of vocational qualifications, and a reduction in the number of available 'routes' to qualification through the introduction of new technical

qualifications or 'T-levels'. The role of teachers is subordinated in the *Sainsbury Report* to that of 'industry experts', who are established as key drivers in the development of a 'labour-market orientated system of technical education' (p. 6). The review recognises that 'good technical education requires expert teachers and lecturers' (p.16) but they are viewed as part of the 'educational infrastructure' (p. 66), alongside suitable equipment and facilities, rather than called upon as potential agents in the process of change. This is indicative of the marginalised position of FE teachers in a sector that is expected to be responsive to policy drivers but where the role of teaching in contributing to change is persistently 'downplayed' (Coffield, 2008, p. 7).

For Hanley & Orr (2019), the failure to consider the capacity of the existing FE workforce to enact the current reforms is likely to contribute to the failure of the reforms themselves (p. 104). Without sufficient staff capable of teaching the designated T-level subjects, the qualifications cannot be introduced successfully. This highlights the importance of gaining more detailed understandings of how the shifting policy context interplays with the development of teachers in the sector.

1.3.2 ITE in FE

In parallel with the wider FE context, ITE in FE has been the focus of repeated policy reform in recent years, marked first by moves to professionalise then to deregulate teacher education within this sector (Tummons, 2016). Until 1999, there was no requirement for FE teachers to hold a teaching qualification, their vocational expertise considered a sufficient foundation for successful teaching. Under the New Labour government, however, a set of professional standards was introduced (FENTO, 1999) and subsequently given legislative force (DfEE, 2001). Criticism of the effectiveness of these standards as the basis for the development of new teachers (Ofsted, 2003; Atkins & Tummons, 2017) contributed to the introduction of revised standards in 2006 (LLUK, 2007) and further wide-reaching attempts to professionalise the FE workforce. These included the creation of a suite of teaching qualifications from Level 3 (equivalent to 'A' level) to Level 5 (equivalent to an ordinary degree), and a new professional status, Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS), with legal equivalence to QTS in schools, which remains in operation today.

Unlike QTS, however, achieving QTLS requires a period of 'professional formation' (SET, 2020a) following completion of an initial teaching qualification, as well as continuing membership of the professional body for the sector. Initially, this body was the newly created Institute for Learning (IfL), conceived as a member-led organisation, working 'for a future where teachers and trainers are qualified, confident, expert, empowered dual professionals in a sector that itself bears the hallmarks of professionalism' (IfL, 2013). This statement

points to the ideological impetus behind the development of teachers in the sector, conjuring an idealised vision of the future in opposition to a flawed, presumably 'unprofessional' present. The statement is also indicative of the ideological nature of professionalism as a concept (Eraut, 1994), embodying beliefs about knowledge and society conveyed through contrasting discourses, which may co-exist and overlap (Atkins & Tummons, 2017, p. 356). Here, the 'managerialist paradigm' (p. 356), which employs professional standards and associated audit tools to 'impose a model of professionalism from above or outside the profession' (p. 356) is combined through the reference to 'empowerment' with a more 'emancipatory' (p. 356) model, where members of the profession take charge of their own development. The tension between these paradigms was evident in the controversy over the requirement for FE teachers to pay to remain members of the IfL once government funding was removed in 2011 (Rouxel, 2015). It remains to some degree in the relationship of staff to the current employer-led body, the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), which, shortly followed by its membership arm, the Society for Education and Training (SET), replaced the IfL in 2014 (Petrie, 2018). In the same year, the extensive and heavily criticised LLUK standards (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012) were replaced by the revised Professional Standards (ETF, 2014), which continue to provide a framework for teacher development in the sector. Although such discourses of professionalism form part of the context for the FTs in this study, the study explores the FTs' learning from the starting point of their everyday experience, seeking to 'substruct' such ideological concepts (Smith, 2001, p. 168; see Chapter Two).

Furthermore, the process of incremental professionalisation suggested by the narrative above is undermined by three significant factors: first, the power of standards and regulatory frameworks to transform teachers' practice has been strongly challenged (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012; Tummons, 2016). As Tummons highlights, it is important to recognise how standards function as texts: to make a difference they must first be read, and their interpretation used to prompt action (2016, p. 355). They do not produce change just by virtue of their existence. Secondly, when standards and frameworks are subject to rapid reform, the focus of ITE providers tends to be on compliance, rather than on addressing recognised weaknesses in the system (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012, p. 693; Aubrey & Bell, 2017). Finally, and most significantly, the review of professionalism in FE carried out by Lord Lingfield in 2011-12 under the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition led to the revocation of the 2007 regulations, with employers once again responsible for determining the level of qualification required of their staff (DBIS, 2012b). Ironically, one of the reasons cited for adopting this deregulated approach was the small number of FE teachers who had achieved 'fully qualified' status (that is, QTLS) since the label was introduced (p. 5).

Since deregulation in 2012, there has been an overall decline in the number of trainees completing teaching qualifications in the sector, but it is not a uniform picture. The number of 'learners' (pre- and in-service teachers) taking Diploma level (Level 5) ITE qualifications dropped significantly from 2011-12 to 2012-13, but the decline in numbers has slowed in subsequent years (ETF, 2018a, p. 26). Recent ETF workforce data indicates that 10% of FE teachers have no formal teaching qualification, a rise of 4% since 2015-16 (ETF, 2019). In the same period, the proportion of teachers with teaching qualifications at Levels 3, 4 and 6 also showed a decline; however, those with Level 7 (Master's level) qualifications slightly increased (to nearly 35% of the total). It appears that the majority of employers still expect their teachers to be qualified, suggesting that teaching qualifications remain valued. However, this may be as much for the message high levels of qualification convey to external bodies such as Ofsted, as for their contribution to teachers' expertise.

The focus of this study is on FTs who have qualified via an in-service route. In contrast with ITE for schools, over 70% of ITE courses in FE are for in-service teachers (ETF, 2018a, p. 30), meaning that the workplace plays a significant role in their development. The workplace learning of in-service trainees, however, remains under-researched (Maxwell, 2014, p. 378). There is also a growing number of ITE trainees working on a voluntary basis in the FE sector while completing an in-service qualification (ETF, 2018a, p. 14). This shift appears to be linked to the decline in paid teaching posts in the sector since the introduction of austerity measures in 2010, in conjunction with the removal of the requirement for a teaching qualification (Thompson & Russell, 2017, p. 639). It is also indicative of the diverse ways in which the in-service route may be used by individuals for whom a full-time, pre-service route may not be appropriate. As the next section will go on to show, the FTs who took part in this study are united by their completion of an in-service ITE qualification through the same university but diverge in many other significant ways. It is, therefore, important to consider the micro-contexts of these individuals.

1.4 Micro contexts: 'the stuff of people's lives'

As a case study, this study values local, context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006), rooted in 'the stuff of people's lives' (Smith, 2005, p. 39). The boundaries of the case will be considered in detail in Chapter Four, but here I set out who the participants are and where they work, as a basis for subsequent exploration of their learning. The study focuses on eight FTs, all of whom completed their ITE qualification part-time from 2015 to 2017, except for one, Tina, who took part in my pilot study and who graduated in 2016. Although they all achieved a 'Lifelong Learning' qualification, two of the participants were working exclusively in schools. This was made possible by the increasing numbers of 14-16-year-olds admitted to colleges following the introduction of applied diplomas in 2008 (Orr, 2010) and the

recommendations of the Wolf Report in 2011. Over this period, the boundaries between school and college sectors became increasingly blurred and led to the inclusion of 14-16-year-olds in previously post-compulsory ITE qualifications. Wolf's recommendations also led to the recognition of QTLS as an accepted status in schools (Wolf, 2011, p. 11). Furthermore, schools now employ many staff in 'paraprofessional' (Bishop & Sanderson, 2017, p. 127) and unqualified roles, who may use the in-service ITE qualification as a part-time route to fully qualified teacher status. Of the 15,200 SET members in 2017, nearly 20% were employed in schools (SET, 2017, p. 4). Of the two FTs in schools, Justin had worked as a Cover Supervisor and unqualified teacher of drama at Grange School, a non-selective secondary school in an urban borough with high levels of deprivation, while Susan had many years' experience as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) at Fernside School, an independent special school in a semi-rural setting.

The eight FTs have contrasting educational backgrounds, with one qualified to Master's level and two who had progressed through qualifications at Level 2 and 3 in the college within which they worked. The 'Lifelong Learning' ITE qualification offers different levels of qualification depending on the prior educational level of the applicant. Teachers who have followed a vocational route and achieved a Level 3 qualification in their subject area pursue a Certificate in Education (CertEd) at Level 5, while degree level applicants complete a Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at Level 6 or post-graduate options at Level 7. Again, this offers routes to qualification that are not available in ITE for schools, where a degree remains essential. Of the participants in this study, five held a CertEd and three a PGCE. Only two FTs referred to applying for QTLS status, both of whom were working or intending to work in schools. However, the official equivalence of QTLS and QTS was not recognised by one school, which expected the FT, Justin, to take a subsequent course leading to QTS. Justin relates his attempt to persuade a senior manager of its equivalence with QTLS: 'I did show her on the internet that it has exactly the same legal standing as QTLS, but she wasn't… 'no', she said, 'no, we need QTS'' (Justin, interview 1). This suggests the disjunctures that may exist between policy as it is formulated and codified at the macro level and the enactment of this in everyday practice.

In comparison with FTs who complete a pre-service ITE qualification, where the transition to full-time employment may be significant (Avis & Bathmaker, 2009), the majority of FTs in this study were employed by a single employer before, during and after their qualification. Leah had worked as a placement officer in the Childcare department of Northvale College, moving into a teaching role six months before commencing the CertEd. Kerry, similarly, had worked as an Animal Care technician, before gaining a part-time and then full-time teaching post at the college. Ryan completed his own Level 3 maths qualification alongside teaching

Functional Skills maths at Northvale; after completing his CertEd, he moved to Milltown College, as a full-time teacher of Functional Skills and GCSE maths. Tina had less continuity in her employment: she completed the practice-based element of the PGCE through voluntary teaching of German 'A' level at Castle College, and, following qualification, was employed on a part-time basis as a teaching assistant at Castle College and a neighbouring independent girls' school.

While six of the FTs worked following qualification in General FE Colleges, there were more striking differences between the two schools in the study, than between the secondary school and the FE colleges. This points to the impact of many of the same levers, notably that of a shared inspection regime, across educational sectors. It also highlights the need for attention to the particular and context-specific, a focus which is enabled by the small number of participants in my study, and the use of ethnographic techniques to explore their localised experiences. This approach also demands recognition of my own contextual position, as I will explore further in the next section.

1.5 Locating my standpoint

Beyond my experience as a teacher educator, a role I still held during the data generation period (although from September 2017 this was as an employee of the University rather than one of the partner colleges), my study is also informed by my experience as a lecturer in FE from 2002 until 2017. It is further underpinned by a feminist perspective on the social world, developed through my life experience and during my earlier undergraduate and postgraduate studies. I aim to show here how these two strands (the FE experience and a feminist perspective) combine to contribute to my position in relation to this study. This is important because these experiences and perspectives inevitably shape the interpretations made in this study. They also provide the epistemological and ontological basis for my methodology.

For feminist researchers, in particular, recognising the position of the researcher in relation to the subjects of their research is regarded as a key element of 'reflexivity' (May & Perry, 2011, p. 29), through which the researcher seeks to avoid the idealised neutrality of much academic knowledge (Harding, 1992). The 'god-trick' of a seemingly impartial and all-knowing (male) viewpoint serves to subordinate and devalue the embodied, situated knowledge of female subjects (Haraway, 1991, p. 189). But this critique may similarly be applied to the position of other marginalised groups, whether on the grounds of class, race, sexualities or other characteristics. Indeed, as Smith maintains, sociology has traditionally excluded the 'everyday' knowledge people have of their lives (2005, p. 10). For ethical and

methodological reasons, therefore, I aim to be transparent about the experiences and assumptions I bring to the study.

Smith identifies how her dissatisfaction with the conventions of 'established social scientific discourse' (2005, p. 10) stemmed from the profound disjuncture she felt between her everyday experience as a single-mother and her life as an academic in a Canadian university. These disparate sites of activity required different 'modes of consciousness' (2002, p. 17) which were utterly incompatible, marked not just by different concerns but a different language. Influenced by the feminist movements of the 1970s, she argued for the need to approach research from a 'standpoint' (2005, p. 10) rooted in the everyday experience of the world, a personal arena which, for women in particular, was marginalised by the dominant discourse. As Smith notes, even the term 'everyday' serves to erase the night-time work of women in the home (2002, p. 42). My own understanding of the world is similarly underpinned by a feminist awareness that the separation of the personal and the public serves to marginalise and delegitimise the perspectives of those who are engaged in the work of managing a household or bringing up children. Like Smith, I view this standpoint as 'open to anyone' (2005, p. 10), rejecting the essentialist tendencies of some feminist standpoint theory, while maintaining that knowledge is necessarily 'embodied' (p. 23).

Smith's theorisation also allows a connection to be made between this separation of the personal and the public and the experience of an individual within an institution. When I entered an FE college as a teacher of English (ESOL) on an hourly-paid basis to predominantly asylum-seekers and refugees, my 'everyday/everynight' (Smith, 2005, p. 24) concerns were for the language and social needs of the students in my classes. The teacher-student relationship was fundamental to this and I felt personal responsibility for their welfare. But my involvement at this level was increasingly in tension with the concerns of the institution, which cast students as numbers to be retained and classroom teaching as a list of approved strategies. The personal of my lived experience could not easily be reconciled with this institutional discourse.

Through the lens of IE, however, it is possible to better understand this tension. Institutions are interesting, Smith asserts, precisely because they must 'subdue and displace the particularity of individual perspective [sic] that arises spontaneously in actual work settings' (2002, p. 22) in order to construct the forms of consciousness that enable the institution to operate across individual contexts. This task is achieved through the co-ordinating function of 'ruling relations', forms of organisation that are 'trans-local' and that may more commonly be labelled 'bureaucracy', 'management' or 'mass-media' (2002, p. 45). This may be illustrated through an example taken from my personal experience of teaching a group of

ESOL students in an FE college in 2002. Here, the discourse of attendance served to co-ordinate the action of taking the register (a physical document at that time) in a specific classroom at a specific time with the institutional production of auditable data. The real-world experience of the students, whose attendance was affected by mental health issues, Home Office appointments and, in extreme cases, deportation, was reduced to marks on the register. Through a focus on attendance, the ruling relations that translate people's everyday experience into trans-local concepts are thus made visible. Understanding that it is possible to hold both individual and trans-local dimensions in view and that this provides a productive approach to inquiry (Smith, 2005, p. 10) has enabled me to identify a standpoint for this study. Indeed, it is in the fault line between the experience and 'good knowledge' (Smith, 2002, p. 19) of the individual FT in their first year after qualifying and the wider institutional and policy contexts that this study is located.

1.6 Research questions

The research questions (RQs) underpinning this study seek to articulate the relationship between individual experience and institutional and policy contexts, while holding up the components of this relationship for detailed scrutiny. The RQs form a thread through the chapters of this study and inform the methodological choices made. RQ1 addresses the current institutional and policy context, aspects of which have already been analysed in this chapter. While context is used in the singular here, it is understood as consisting of multiple layers, or indeed, contexts. RQ2 focuses on the learning of the FTs, first in terms of what they learn and then how this occurs. The final research question seeks to combine the first two questions, by considering how the context shapes the learning of the FTs and thus how this relationship may be theorised.

The research questions are listed here and repeated, for clarity, in the methodology and discussion chapters (Chapter Four and Chapter Seven):

1. What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?
2. a) What do former trainees learn in their first year after completing their formal qualification?
   b) How do they learn this?
3. a) How does the current institutional and policy context shape the learning of former trainees?
   b) How may the relationship between the learning of former trainees and the institutional and policy context be theorised?

1.7 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters, of which this introduction forms Chapter One. The review of existing literature relating to my topic is not confined to one chapter, but distributed across the first three chapters to allow its integration with the analysis of relevant issues and the conceptualisation of key terms.

Chapter Two focuses on policy, first conceptualising how policy is understood in this study, and, secondly, reviewing the literature associated with the institutional and policy contexts in which the FTs learn (RQ1). It is significant that policy is not conceived simply as a backdrop for this study but as an aspect of the FTs' lived experience. It is deeply connected with the learning of the FTs, as the subsequent chapter goes on to show.

Chapter Three similarly combines conceptual understandings with a review of the literature, but here in relation to learning. It sets out how learning is theorised in this study, developing a theoretical framework that informs my methodology. It then reviews extant literature relating to learning in workplace contexts, including the learning of teachers, considering how this study may contribute to current understandings.

Chapter Four explores the implications of these conceptualisations of policy and learning for my methodology, and sets out the approach and methods adopted. It provides a critical justification of the decisions made in relation to my research questions, including the use of visual methods, which are found to contribute strongly to the identification of learning.

Chapter Five communicates the approach adopted to data analysis, showing how different methods were used to allow the systematic analysis of different types of data. Examples are drawn on to illustrate the process by which findings were established from the raw data.

Chapter Six forms the first chapter communicating my findings. It approaches the data contextually, focusing on individual FTs and sites of employment, although some thematic links are made between these. It aims to offer detailed, contextual insights in relation to the research questions, without eliding the differences between participants and settings.

Chapter Seven discusses my findings in relation to my research questions. It seeks to answer the questions posed by adopting a thematic approach to the data. It considers the contribution of the theoretical approach adopted and its possible limitations.

Chapter Eight concludes that the theorisations of policy and learning adopted in this study and informing its methodology have allowed valuable insights to be gained into what and how FTs learn after qualification. The implications for policy and practice are highlighted and suggestions made of the contributions of this study to the field.

1.8 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has introduced the purpose of the study, highlighting the personal experiences and perspectives informing its focus. It has situated the study within its wider political and historical context, and pointed to the local contexts in which the participants, and myself as researcher, are embedded. It has conveyed the study's epistemological and ontological alignment with Smith's IE, the methodological significance of which will be made clear in later sections. Finally, it has introduced the research questions that inform each part of the study. The next chapter explores both institutional and policy contexts in more depth, identifying key themes in the literature, and linking the study's conceptualisation of policy with its methodology.

Chapter Two: Institutional and policy contexts

2.1 Chapter introduction

Chapter One has started to analyse policy within the context of FE, and ITE within FE, thus contributing to the answer to RQ1, which asks: *What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?* It is important to define what is meant by policy as it is used within this study, in order to achieve clarity at a methodological and analytical level. Similarly, it is necessary to identify what is understood by the 'institutional context'. Furthermore, aspects of both institutional and policy contexts that have not been considered in Chapter One demand deeper analysis.

The purpose of this chapter is thus three-fold: first, to set out how policy and institution are conceptualised within this study; secondly, to review the literature relating to the policy context for the FTs who form its focus. Finally, to operationalise the understanding of institutional and policy contexts reached in this chapter, laying the groundwork for the study's methodology (Chapter Four).

2.2 Definitions

2.2.1 What is policy?

The term policy 'means different things to different people in different contexts' (Hillier, 2006, p. 1). Indeed, as Ozga highlights, 'there is no fixed, single definition of policy' (2000, p. 2). Historically, from the mid-twentieth century onwards, policy has been approached by analysts as a rational process, which involves defining and finding solutions to given problems (Hillier, 2006, p. 3). This process is conceived hierarchically, with policy makers formulating policy and then seeking to transfer this through a process of implementation to those working in the field (Raffe & Spours, 2007, p. 6). Within this top-down model, the role of the practitioner is assumed to be minimal, with teachers, for example, being objects rather than subjects of the process. If the intended outcomes of the policy are not achieved, this is considered a failure of implementation. For many, this is how policy is still viewed; however, this rationalist model has been exposed more recently as an inadequate representation of how policy works. Increasingly, 'the jumbled, messy, contested creative and mundane social interactions' (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012, p. 2) in which the process of policy making is enmeshed have been recognised, a perspective which works against attempts to define policy in neutral terms. It recognises that policy is always contested, as it involves the negotiation of different interests within existing power structures. As Lingard and Ozga assert, 'policy making in education is a political and normative activity' (2007, p. 6), involving the 'authoritative allocation of values' (p. 3). In order to understand and potentially challenge

the policy-making process it is therefore necessary to ask 'whose values' (p. 3) are being asserted and to whom or what they are being applied.

This approach to policy goes beyond a view of policy as texts to be implemented. As Ozga asserts, policy is 'struggled over, not delivered, in tablets of stone' (2000, p. 1). The policy text, which may take the form of a written report or a spoken pronouncement, is inevitably interpreted in diverse ways over which the writer or speaker has little control. Policy is thus, in Ball's terms, both text and discourse (1994, p. 15). Understanding a particular policy, such as the requirement for students on *16-19 Study Programmes* to achieve a grade 4 in maths and English if they have not already done so (DfE, 2017), involves exploring not just the content of the policy text, but the ways in which it is translated and interpreted in practice. The text itself often reflects its potentially problematic reception. As Lingard and Ozga observe, policy texts are 'usually heteroglossic in character, discursively suturing together differing interests to achieve apparent consensus and legitimacy' (2007, p. 2). This can be seen in the apparent logic of the following extract from government guidance on *16-19 Study Programmes*:

> Employers have expressed concerns regarding the literacy and numeracy skills of school and college leavers for many years. That is why all students aged 16 to 19 studying 150 hours or more, who do not hold at least a GCSE grade 4 (reformed grading) or grade C (legacy grading), are required to study these subjects as part of their study programme in each academic year. This requirement is a 'condition of funding'. (DfE, 2017, p. 12)

Employer 'concerns' are established as a legitimate causal foundation for the emphasis on maths and English, which, by the end of the extract, justifies not just a 'requirement' for students to pursue these subjects, but a basis on which funding can be granted or withheld.

Whether aware of it or not, the teachers in my study are enmeshed in this web of policy as text and discourse. Their everyday thoughts, actions and interactions are implicated in a process with which they may not actively engage but which nevertheless shapes what they say and do and what can be said and done (Ball et al., 2012, p. 3). This is not just a discursive process but a material one, involving physical aspects of their context, such as 'buildings and budgets, available technologies and local infrastructures' (Braun, Ball, Maguire & Hoskins, 2011, p. 588). The combination of the material, the interpretive and the discursive together contribute to a theory of policy as enactment:

> Enactments are always more than just implementation, they bring together contextual, historic and psychosocial dynamics in to a relation with texts and

imperatives to produce action and activities that are policy. (Ball et al., 2012, p. 71)

When policy is referred to in this study, it refers to this dynamic process of enactment. Defining policy in this way allows for the systematic investigation of the policy context through tracing the interactions of the individual practitioner with the texts and objects they encounter or create. It is here that Smith's IE offers a conceptual and methodological resource that goes beyond the epistemological and ontological contribution outlined in Chapter One. Smith's work foregrounds the role of texts not just as a key medium of policy enactment, but as constitutive of modern institutions themselves, as the next section will consider.

2.2.2 What is an institution?

Institutions have been defined in multiple ways in different disciplines, depending on the philosophical or scientific approach adopted (Guala, 2018). Ball et al. note the differing understandings of what constitutes a 'school': as a physical site, circumscribed by a boundary fence; as a local institution, with a web of historical relationships with the wider community; and as an abstract concept, signifying the provision of 'schooling' or education (2012, p. 70). They conclude that a 'school' is a social construct, 'a creaky social assemblage' (p. 70) made up of material, social and cultural dimensions. For this reason, they warn against using the 'school' as a unit of analysis for research, a warning which could equally be applied to the 'college', where the conceptual boundaries are similarly weak.

Yet Smith offers a conceptualisation of the institution that provides a productive investigatory perspective. This conceptualisation stems from her understanding of the social. She regards the social as 'arising in people's activities […] in particular local settings at particular times' (2002, p. 21). From this practice-based perspective, 'people are always embodied. They are always somewhere at some time' (p. 21). This, as Smith repeatedly argues, avoids the trap of objectifying the social world (Smith, 2001, p. 162) and thus creating an artificial dichotomy between the individual's 'doings' and their co-ordination with the doings of others, expressed in sociological concepts such as 'family, 'community', or, indeed, 'institution' (examples of what Smith terms 'blob-ontology' (p. 166)). The institution may thus be found in the everyday actions of the individual, co-ordinated with the actions of others through the ruling relations (Smith, 2002, p. 45). As in Ball et al.'s analysis, the institution is a fluid construct, yet it can be investigated through tracing this process of co-ordination. Indeed, for the purpose of this study I will use the term 'institution' to refer to the co-ordination of the local and the trans-local, reserving the term 'organisation' to refer to a specific college or school.

RQ1 inquires after the current 'institutional and policy context' for the FTs in my study. The theorisation of policy as enactment blurs the boundaries between institution and wider policy context, locating the latter within the actions and interactions of individuals. Similarly, in Smith's analysis, the institution is found in the co-ordination of these everyday doings. Uniting the dimensions of institution and policy further are texts, which are recognised as fundamental to both policy enactment (Ball et al., 2012, p. 71) and institutions (Smith, 2001, and throughout her writings). As Smith argues, 'texts are of foundational ontological significance to the existence of anything we can call "large-scale organization," or "institution"' (2001, p. 168).

Texts are defined by Smith as 'definite forms of words, numbers or images that exist in a materially replicable form' (2001, p. 164). This is a broad definition, which includes aspects of the material environment referred to by Ball et al. (2012). As such, they perform a unique function in abstracting and objectifying the practices that together constitute the work of the institution. Smith draws here on Marx's theorisation of the ways in which the relations between people may be objectified but 'not appear as such' (Smith, 2001, p. 162). An institutional discourse is constructed, which masks the actuality of what people do (Smith, 2006a, p. 8). This can be seen in the current distinction in FE between the roles of 'teacher', 'trainer' or 'assessor' (ETF, 2020), which suggests a concrete differentiation between roles that is not reflected in practice. Through their written job descriptions, however, the everyday doings of the teacher, trainer or assessor are 'hooked' into the 'extra-local', economic relations of the institution (Smith, 2001, p. 164), implicating them in a system permeated by unequal relations of power.

The work of the FTs in this study is thus situated within a textual 'architecture' (Smith, 2002, pp. 22-23) that is explicitly linked to capitalist forms of social organisation:

> Increasingly social organisation as it evolves away from people in direct relationships is displaced or regulated by exogenous systems of rationally designed, textually mediated forms of organisation that connect people's everyday/everynight worlds into the contemporary regime of capital accumulation. (Smith, 2002, p. 39)

Texts enable a market-based approach to all kinds of social organisation, of which work is the most dominant example. Indeed, many authors have identified the increasing significance of texts within the contemporary workplace (Smith, 1990; Gee & Lankshear, 1995; Barton & Hamilton, 2005). Work is defined broadly by Smith to include 'anything or everything people do that is intended, involves time and effort, and is done in a particular time and place and under definite local conditions' (2006a, p. 10). Investigating the actions of

the FTs in their specific local contexts is thus central to understanding the institutional and policy context within which they work (RQ1). For this reason, part of the answer to my first research question lies in the findings of my empirical study which will be discussed in Chapter Seven. It remains necessary, however, to expand the analysis of the policy context introduced in Chapter One, in order to contribute to my response to RQ1, and to outline the institutional discourse within which the empirical findings are located. These form the twin aims of the next section.

2.3 Institutional and policy contexts 2012-2018

The policy context addressed in this study is bounded temporally by the period from March 2012, when the interim report of the Lingfield Review was published (DBIS, 2012a), to July 2018, which marks the end of my participants' first year after qualifying. The demarcation of this period allows aspects of the policy environment current to the study to be identified and the focus of the case study to be maintained; however, these current themes necessarily rest on the 'sediment' (Ball et al., 2012, p. 46) of previous policy interventions. This section therefore reviews developments in educational policy since its 'economization' (Ozga, 2000, p. 24) from the 1980s onwards, with an emphasis on the impact of these developments on the teaching workforce. It does not seek to catalogue specific policy initiatives, although those most relevant to this period, such as *Prevent* or *16-19 Study Programmes*, appear either in this section or in Chapter One. Instead, the analysis will be structured through the consideration of three dominant and closely related themes from the literature: economization, visibility, and spatiality. While it will be shown that the broad shifts in direction apply across educational sectors, not just in England but internationally, the primary focus will be on English FE.

2.3.1 Economization

Since the global oil crises of the 1970s, an explicit link has been made between the quality of education in the developed world and the demands of the economy. In the UK, this was prominently signalled by James Callaghan's 'Ruskin Speech' in 1976, which is widely regarded as the 'catalyst for greater central government involvement in the curriculum and ensuing educational reform' (O'Leary, 2014, p. 12). Within this paradigm, economic failure can be directly attributed to educational failure. This is what Ozga refers to as the 'economizing' of education, a general agreement that 'the main function of education is the service of the economy' (2000, p. 24), and which has led since the 1970s to the redesign of education according to the model of the flexible, competitive, post-Fordist market. This sits within a broader neo-liberal model, which, as Simmons highlights, is based on certain assumptions about 'both the nature of people and the role of the state' (2010, p. 369). Governments informed by neo-liberal understandings assume that people are naturally

motivated by self-interest and that the state should enable this individualism to thrive. But, ironically given this assumption, they also maintain that the state must work to promote competitive behaviour and to regulate the competitive practices of the market (p. 370). The role of the teacher within this model is subordinate to the demands of the 'knowledge economy', as the Leitch Review of Skills in 2006 indicated, with its goal of enabling people to gain the knowledge and skills necessary 'to maximise economic prosperity, productivity and to improve social justice' (Leitch, 2006, p. 1).

This privileging of the economic is apparent in the language used to talk about education (Simmons, 2010, p. 366). As Ozga argues, the 'new state formations' have replaced concepts once central to public life, such as equality or justice, with 'hollowed out' concepts 'like client, consumer, stakeholder, quality, excellence, leadership, performance' (2000, p. 6). The inclusion of 'social justice' in the remit of the Leitch review appears to straddle both camps, signalling the New Labour government's professed commitment to tackling inequality, yet harnessed to the driving force of achieving economic prosperity. O'Leary notes how terms which originally conveyed explicit political intent have been 're-packaged in an 'ideology of neutrality'', demanding their use as signifiers of 'technical', rather than ideological or political, content (2014, p. 16). The current hegemony of the phrase 'teaching, learning and assessment' (TLA) (see, for example, Ofsted, 2014) is indicative of this process, as is the insistence on referring to the 'learner'. The term 'teacher', and by implication the teacher's role, remains problematic within this dominant discourse (Biesta, 2009b), retaining its association with previous educational paradigms. It is notably avoided in many recent policy texts (DfE & DBIS, 2016).

While the economization of education is evident across educational sectors, it is particularly pronounced in FE (Simmons, 2010; O'Leary, 2014; O'Leary & Wood, 2017). This can be traced back to Incorporation in the early 1990s, as set out in Chapter One. Policy levers have been central to this process of economization, specifically those represented by 'formula-based funding; regular inspection; and statistical performance data' (Fletcher, Gravatt & Sherlock, 2015, p. 156). These levers have been applied in combination to force the sector to adapt to and adopt shifting policy priorities. While this approach has undoubtedly increased the sector's accountability to central government, it has not been found to lead to significant improvements in the sector's performance (Fletcher, Gravatt & Sherlock, 2015, p. 174). As Raffe and Spours observed of FE in 2007, 'there has been a continuing cycle of policy innovation with little evidence of cumulative learning' (p. 2). A study of the impact of policy on 'learning and inclusion' in the sector from 2004 to 2007 similarly found few signs that policy led directly to changed teaching practices (Coffield et al., 2007). This was partly because of the complexity and diversity of the sector but also because of a

lack of understanding of how policy levers worked. While they could 'powerfully mould' (Coffield et al., 2007, p. 736) institutional practices, they also had negative effects such as increased workload and work-related stress, as well as 'unintended and perverse consequences' (p. 736), such as diverting staff time from teaching to bureaucracy.

At an institutional level, the economization of education can be linked to the rise of 'the new managerialism', which applies management techniques deemed to work in the private sector to public sector management (Randle & Brady, 1997 p. 125). The ostensible goal is to increase efficiency and productivity, and to ensure that the workforce is accountable. This is connected to a neo-liberal discourse characterised by, as Tummons argues, 'a power imbalance between teachers and the state, privileging compliance over critique, and characterising teaching in terms of professional competence as opposed to professional knowledge' (2016, p. 346). Managerialist approaches seek to eliminate ambiguity in order to achieve greater uniformity and hence efficiency (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005, pp. 7-8). But Smith and O'Leary highlight the dangers of such 'managerialist positivism', which reduces complexity to 'black and white' distinctions, and in so doing 'deliberately excises inconvenient truths' (2013, p. 246). Knowledge becomes limited to boxes that can be ticked, with implications for the learning of both teachers and students.

A powerful connection can be made here to what Dorothy Smith terms 'an order of facticity' (2001, p. 175). Texts, she argues, may be used in a regulatory way to 'fix' understandings even as they are communicated across different contexts, since one part of what she labels the 'text-reader conversation' (p. 175), the text itself, remains unchanged. They thus enable 'an order of facticity suppressing divergent perspectives and establishing a shared and enforceable common ground, a virtual reality standardized across multiple settings' (p. 176). This analysis may be applied to the role played by policy texts such as government reports or Ofsted documents. Indeed, the *Common Inspection Framework* (CIF) (Ofsted, 2015b) occupies a particularly powerful position across educational providers because it sets out the inspection measures against which all providers are judged (p. 4). Although a revised inspection framework was introduced in 2019, I refer to the 2015 version here, as this was in operation during the data generation period of this study. The CIF reduces complex areas of practice, such as tackling educational inequality or protecting vulnerable young people, to simple statements against which inspectors' judgments can be made. One of the measures of effective leadership and management, for example, is the extent to which 'leaders, managers and governors […] make sure that safeguarding arrangements to protect children, young people and learners meet all statutory and other government requirements, promote their welfare and prevent radicalisation and extremism' (p. 13). Furthermore, providers are expected to 'actively promote British values' (pp. 12-13). The CIF thus calls on the regulatory

power of other texts, here safeguarding guidance and the '*Prevent* strategy' (HMG, 2011) inscribed in the government's counter-terrorism legislation (HMG, 2015b), to engender action and compliance. Apparently straight-forward, positive terms such as 'safeguarding' and 'welfare' are used in conjunction with heavily contested concepts such as 'radicalisation', 'extremism' and 'British Values', without any recognition of the complexity of this terrain (Thomas, 2016; Bryan, 2017). The task of negotiating the meaning of such measures and translating them into practice is left to those working within educational organisations, knowing that they will be judged through a high-stakes inspection process (Keep, 2015, p. 468) on the outcome of their interpretations. In this way, the inspection body itself operates as a policy lever, not just measuring compliance but generating action.

For the individual, working within a managerialist culture may involve conforming to external ideals such as those deriving from the CIF, while maintaining an ironic awareness (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005) that these form an elusive and inadequate measure of their performance. This experience engenders what Ball labels (after Lyotard, 1984) the 'terrors of performativity' (2003, p. 216): 'a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change' (p. 216). Such a regime constitutes an assault on the value systems and modes of being of the subjects it touches: 'teachers are represented and encouraged to think about themselves as individuals who calculate about themselves, "add value" to themselves, improve their productivity, strive for excellence and live an existence of calculation' (p. 217). Professional judgment is replaced by the need to be seen to be meeting institutional objectives, whether or not these align with deeply held principles or beliefs. The high degree of managerialism in FE, linked to its intense economization, makes performativity a feature of the FE context. As Bennett and Smith assert:

> the key quality of the FE subject-as-teacher is not to get noticed. This isn't necessarily the same thing as being compliant. Rather the FE subject seeks to avoid the attention of the centralised institutional audit. To have performance measured is inevitable, what must be avoided is additional scrutiny. (Bennett & Smith, 2018, p. 11)

This analysis homogenises to an extent the 'FE subject', who conversely may seek 'to get noticed' in order to have their performance rewarded within this managerialist system. However, in an institutional context permeated by texts, which demand certain actions and regulate the institutional discourse, avoidance of scrutiny is certainly a significant challenge. Indeed, visibility, as the next section will show, forms another key dimension of the institutional and policy context.

2.3.2 Visibility

Since the Education Reform Act of 1988 and the subsequent introduction of observation-based systems of teacher appraisal (O'Leary, 2014, p. 19), the inspection of classroom practice by outside bodies has formed a substantial element of teachers' working lives, across the English education system. As indicated above, inspection formed one of the levers that accompanied the move to a corporate model of FE, to ensure that centralised policy agendas were followed. While Ofsted became the single external agency responsible for inspecting schools and colleges in 2007, its expectations and practices have had a far-reaching effect on the internal procedures within institutions. One tool through which institutions seek to align their practices with their perception of Ofsted expectations is the lesson observation. For Ball et al. observation is a 'tactic of policy translation, an opening up of practice to change, a technique of power enacted by teachers one upon the other' (2012, p. 46). In this way, policy is made visible, as is the teacher's own practice and ultimately the individual herself. The authors' analysis draws on Foucault's concept of 'disciplinary power', a 'modest, suspicious power, which functions as a calculated but permanent economy' (1977, p. 170). Using instruments such as 'hierarchical observation' it permeates a given society, ensuring that every individual is subject to its differentiating gaze. Crucially, once teachers know that they are visible and hence may be observed, actual physical observation is not necessary, the disciplinary effects of potential observation serving to enforce institutional expectations.

Ofsted plays a significant role, therefore, in policy enactment within education in England. It performs the dual function of providing an external judgment of the quality of 'provision', and generating 'market information' to promote 'consumer choice' (Gallagher & Smith, 2018, p. 130). Its judgments can contribute to the success of institutions or lead to their closure. On an individual level, teachers can become branded successes or failures. Schools and colleges thus devote substantial resources to the job of interpreting and translating Ofsted-related policy messages. This is a complex task, as it involves piecing together fragments of policy indications from multiple sources, including key policy texts such as the CIF, periodic 'What works and why' guidance documents (Ofsted, 2014), but also public comments made by the Chief Inspector and word of mouth accounts of encounters with inspectors in other schools and colleges. Wilson (2015) shows how beliefs about Ofsted expectations contribute to the endurance of scientifically unfounded concepts such as 'learning styles' (2015, p. 112), long after Ofsted has ceased to refer to them. The 'decoding' of information gleaned from multiple sources and subsequent 'recoding' (Ball et al., 2012, p. 3) in internal policy texts and procedures is likely to lag behind shifts in central policy.

What is uniform across schools and colleges is the perceived need to provide visible evidence of how external requirements are being met. Developments in technology have enabled the creation of centralised data management systems, such as the commonly used ProMonitor™, through which student progress and achievement can be tracked. These systems simultaneously track staff actions, as staff share textual and numerical data across the organisation, in a public display of their compliance with institutional expectations. The action of phoning a student to find out why they have not attended college, for example, is accompanied by the recording of this action on the central database, in part so that other members of staff are aware the student has been contacted, but also to ensure a trail of evidence is generated that is open to both internal and external audit. Such attention to visibility in effect involves a doubling of activity, not just *doing* but recording the doing, with clear implications both for staff workload and for individuals' belief in the purpose and authenticity of their work.

2.3.3 Spatiality

A final theme which contributes to understanding and conceptualising the institutional and policy context for the participants in my study is that of spatiality. This concept is defined in Henri Lefèbvre's terms as more than just physical space. It draws on Marxist conceptualisations of society by encompassing not just the 'physical arrangements of things' (Shields, 1998, p. 146) but patterns of social interaction and their historical traces:

> The study of space offers an answer according to which the social relations of production have a social existence to the extent that they have a spatial existence; they project themselves into a space, becoming inscribed there, and in the process producing that space itself. (Lefèbvre, 1991, p. 129)

In this way, spatiality combines space and time, reproducing historical relations at the same time as producing current and future possibilities for action. Paying attention to the material appearance of things and the ways in which this is perceived and understood is thus a valuable way of recognising the historical and actual social relationships within any given context (Ball et al., 2012, p. 21). Beyond this, the material must be recognised as a significant influence on the practices enacted in and through it. Context must be 'taken seriously' (Braun et al., 2011).

The importance of material context is evident in a number of studies that have considered the development of teachers within schools and colleges. Douglas's study of student teachers in school settings in England found that localised contexts, not just at the level of the individual school but of individual subject departments within a school, were highly significant in shaping the learning opportunities of the student teachers (2015). Similarly,

Hodkinson and Hodkinson highlight the influence of the subject department on the learning of both novice and established teachers in English secondary schools (2005). While subject departments tend to be more diffuse and fragmented within FE colleges, prevailing practices within different vocational areas are found to be significant in shaping the identity formation of in-service trainees in FE colleges (Orr & Simmons, 2010). Indeed, the diversity of the trainees' experiences and the contingency of factors affecting their development is identified by Orr and Simmons as a key feature of the FE context (2010, p. 86). Ball et al. find that context is 'unique to each school, however similar they may initially seem to be' (2012, p. 40). This study thus seeks to differentiate between the contexts in which the participants are situated, even where these may at first appear similar, and to recognise the influence of the sites in which the participants work.

New school and college buildings form a prominent feature of the current educational landscape, in the wake of the New Labour *Building Schools for the Future* programme and its FE counterpart, *Building Colleges for the Future* (Smith, 2017). For Bennett (2018), echoing Lefèbvre's analysis of the social production of space, the new architecture of the FE college is the 'physical manifestation of corporate structure, writ large in the landscape' (p. 99). Smith (2015) analyses how the spectacle of 'flagship' or 'landmark' buildings, with extensive use of glass, 'showcases' the college's functions to the wider community and thereby 'communicates the assimilation of students and teachers into a commodified fantasy in which educational relationships are pushed closer to those found in a shopping mall than in a classroom' (2015, p. 91). He thus connects the prominence of the façade and the illusion of transparency that it presents with the simulations and paradoxical visibility required by a culture of performativity. Support for Smith's argument can be found in the critical analysis of a text which purports to describe the impact of the college new build. Grainger, Wilderspin, van Heyningen and Pitcher (2015) use the language and principles of the market to contrast the architecture of the new FE estate with that of the old, establishing unexamined connections between the 'new' spaces and the types of teaching and learning that they enable. Indeed, developments in teaching and learning are held up retrospectively as justification for the new architectural designs: 'New approaches to teaching and learning meant that classrooms were no longer necessarily an unimaginative series of boxes off a central corridor' (p. 113). Even surveillance is cast as a positive measure, reducing incidences of bullying, and producing the desired student behaviour through design:

> Harassment takes place in covert, unsupervised areas; openness encouraged more, and more subtle, behaviour management, with an emphasis on visibility and clear lines of sight. Open spaces, more glass, and CCTV designed out the old, hidden areas which concealed furtive behaviour. Security measures were also designed

into these new buildings. As a result, security could become more relaxed. (Grainger et al., 2015, p. 114)

This is an unwitting description of Foucault's panopticon, an architectural apparatus designed to 'induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault, 1977, p. 201). Classrooms with glass walls, open 'learning spaces' with no walls, and the obligatory carrying of identification passes are all elements of this disciplinary system.

While Grainger et al.'s account is not based on empirical data, it presents the neo-liberal perspective on the impact of the new build, highlighting the 'freedoms' and 'flexibility' it offers (2015, p. 112), with students recast as consumers. Many teachers working in schools and colleges are not working in new buildings; many work in a diverse range of buildings from different eras which shape their practices in different ways. Different cultures co-exist within these buildings, just as the sediment of historical policy making continues to run beneath and through the layers laid down by new initiatives. Attempts to exercise autonomy in these environments are often expressed in terms of spatiality. As Ball et al. observe,

> policy is […] only ever part of what teachers do. There is more to teaching and school life than policy. There are […] corners of the school where policy does not reach, bits of practice that are made up of teachers' good ideas or chance or crisis – but this space for action is also produced or delimited by policy. (2012, p. 6)

Resistance to the impact of policy is connected with the search for places where the teacher can act out of reach of dominant accountability structures. But even the search for these spaces involves a negotiation with policy. This is reflected in Gleeson and Shain's notion of 'strategic compliance' (1999, p. 482), whereby middle managers in FE seek to achieve their own value-based goals for students while partially complying with senior managers' expectations. Here, action is possible because it is masked by ostensible alignment with institutional priorities. As Orr found of the more experienced teachers in a study of pre-service trainee experiences in FE from 2005 to 2008, it was quite possible to 'speak fluently the language of performativity whilst valuing and, where possible, practising education based on different values' (2012, p. 58). But, in a later longitudinal case study of three FE teachers (from 2006 to 2011), Orr questioned whether the teachers' actions could be termed 'strategic', given little evidence of an overall goal, preferring the term 'tactical compliance' (2011, p. 18). As it is now approaching 30 years since Incorporation, it could be that the underlying values that motivate the search for 'corners' in which strategic action is still possible have been significantly eroded.

Yet teachers often view the classroom (or workshop) as an autonomous space, as decisions about classroom practice can be made 'in action' (Kolb, 1984) once the door is closed. Similarly, the staffroom, which in FE generally comprises a workspace combined with tea and coffee-making facilities for teachers from a particular subject area or designated faculty within the organisation, may also be seen as a space in which it is possible to side-step the pressures of accountability by establishing relationships with colleagues and discussing topics stemming from outside the workplace. However, both classroom and staffroom remain subject to the tensions arising from a performative workplace environment. As indicated above, the awareness of observation as a disciplinary tool is carried by the teacher into their own teaching spaces, even if the physical walls of their classroom are solid rather than made of glass. Slawson reports of schools being constructed without staffrooms, these social spaces viewed with suspicion by managers with a focus on efficiency and the optimum use of space (2018). Yet the kind of informal interactions enabled by social spaces such as staffrooms have been shown to be instrumental in teacher learning. In Francisco's recent case study investigating how novice teachers in Australian vocational colleges learn to become teachers, the scheduled morning tea break, which facilitated 'the telling of stories and discussion of shared issues associated with their teaching work' (2020, p. 12), was identified as a key practice through which teachers learnt from their colleagues. Likewise, Derrick shows how the 'informal dimensions of practice' (2020, p. 279) are valued by FE teachers in helping them to work more effectively, particularly in terms of producing innovation. This study thus pays attention to the ways in which practice interacts with, or, indeed, is produced by space, reading spatiality, alongside texts, as a source of insight into the FTs' experience.

2.4 The individual within institutional and policy contexts

The final part of this chapter seeks to operationalise the understandings of policy and institution set out above, forming a bridge with my methodology (Chapter Four). Central to this operationalisation is the concept of practice, which I have already shown to be relevant to the investigation of individual experience within institutional and policy contexts. It is now necessary to define more carefully what is meant by practice, and to situate this conceptualisation within the understandings of institutional settings and policy enactment set out so far. IE is further explored as a means of connecting the everyday practices of the FTs in this study with their institutional and policy contexts, and previous applications of IE in a range of contexts are reviewed. The equally important and closely related question of how learning is conceptualised and operationalised will be addressed in Chapter Three.

There are many strands to practice theory, together signalling what Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and Savigny term a 'practice turn' (2001), and they are marked by certain shared features

(Mahon, Kemmis, Francisco & Lloyd, 2017). These may be summarised as: a focus on the everyday, in which practices are viewed as 'situated, social and relational' (p. 5); a recognition of the significance of material things, including texts and symbols; and a view of knowledge as embodied and enacted through practice, rather than something codified and separable from the individual. Significantly for the methodology of this study, 'we know more than we can say' and 'what we do typically means more than we know' (p. 5). This epistemological perspective leads to a rejection of phenomenological approaches which focus on the meaning of a phenomenon or experience for those involved (Creswell, 2007, p. 57). Instead, individual accounts of personal experience are worked through and beyond, in order to identify the ways in which local, everyday practices are 'hooked into' the 'extra-local' (Smith, 2001, p. 164). IE thus offers an approach capable of tracing the dynamic relationship between the individual and their institutional context, itself permeated by the wider policy context, which is central to my research questions. This approach does not imply a rejection of the value of personal experience but rather a rejection of the assumption that it is merely personal. As Smith asserts of IE, it 'takes up a stance in people's experience in the local sites of their bodily being and seeks to grasp what can't be grasped from within that experience, namely the social relations implicit in its organisation' (2001, p. 161). A top-down approach to investigating the impact of policy on teacher learning is thus rejected in favour of a bottom-up perspective, rooted in the practices of the individuals involved.

The methodological link between the actualities of people's doings and the social relations that organise them, and which they also construct, is provided by texts. Theorists within the field of New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Gee, 1996; Street, 1995) make this connection between textual and wider social practices explicit: 'Literacies are situated. All uses of written language can be seen as located in particular times and places. Equally, all literate activity is indicative of broader social practices' (Barton, Hamilton & Ivanič, 2000, p. 1). Practices are more than just what individuals do. Although they may include both tiny and large actions, from switching on a computer to completing a project such as an EdD, practices have a 'cultural significance beyond the individual activities' themselves (Barton & Hamilton, 2005, p. 18). They are generally linked with 'specific areas of life' (p. 18), which give them their significance, even though these areas may be overlapping and the boundaries between them blurred. Turning on the computer may be a practice associated with checking emails on starting a day's work, for example, but it may also mark the initiation of social contact with colleagues. Its cultural significance derives from the patterning of this activity through its routine reoccurrence in association with specific, recognisable activities.

While Smith does not use the term literacy practices, her conceptualisation of the role of texts in institutions is closely aligned with the work of Barton, Hamilton and others (Street,

2012). Texts perform a dynamic function, co-ordinating the ruling relations in Smith's analysis (1990, p. 212), just as they serve to 'synchronise activities' within a literacy practices approach (Barton & Hamilton, 2005, p. 22). They pervade the institution and are evident not just in material form but in '*how* people talk about their work' (Smith, 2002, p. 31). This means that talk can provide insights into the social relations that form the institutional setting, as Chapter Four will further explore.

The value of IE for research concerned with the 'social organisation of knowledge' (Kearney, Corman, Hart, Johnston & Gormley, 2019, p. 19) has been recognised across multiple fields. Smith is explicit about the need to 'substruct' social concepts such as 'organization' or 'institution' '*ethnographically*' (Smith, 2001, p. 168, original emphasis), that is, using techniques of observation, interview and other methods of empirical investigation in actual settings. Although Smith does not regard IE as a specific method of enquiry, it does provide a cohesive methodological approach, which has been applied primarily in social work, health care, legal, and education settings, particularly in Smith's native Canada and the United States (Doll & Walby, 2019). Kearney et al. advocate its use in health professions education because of its capacity to illuminate the 'lines of fault' between the increasingly standardised discourse of evidence-based medicine and healthcare accountability structures on the one hand, which include the codified standards that students are expected to meet, and 'what actually happens in practice' for patients and students on the other (2019, p. 22). This disjuncture is characterised by Corman as a gap between what is known by practitioners through their work practices and the 'positivist ways of knowing' that exclude and displace such forms of knowledge (2017, p. 620), echoing Smith's analysis of how texts are used to impose and enforce a 'virtual reality' (2001, p. 176). Such practices of 'not knowing' (Kearney et al., 2019, p. 22) can be related to my own experience of the attendance register, discussed in Chapter One. My knowledge of the issues affecting students' attendance was systematically erased through the limited recording options available on the register. As no space was accorded to these issues, they were taken not to exist, generating a debilitating disjuncture between personal and institutional realities. Crucially for Kearney et al., IE allows not just for exploration of such situations but for them to be challenged (2019, p. 22).

In the context of socio-legal studies, Doll and Walby (2019) advocate the use of IE for similar reasons. They illustrate how both those who are subject to criminal justice proceedings and those working within this sphere are drawn into the frame of a textually-mediated legal discourse that 'presses the messiness of life into standardised categories' (p. 154), which are then treated as facts. IE allows these 'practices of inscription, classification and ratification to be analysed' (p. 153), so that their impact on people's lives can be shown. This then creates the potential for change.

The dominance of textual practices in teacher education led Tummons to adopt IE as one element of his theoretical framework when exploring the assessment of trainee teachers in FE (2010). The tools of text-reader conversations (explored in Chapter Four) and interviews allowed him to substruct the dominant narrative of rigorous assessment procedures through revealing the 'ground up', situated perspectives of those 'who do the work' (Tummons, 2010, p. 355). While Kearney et al. (2019) and Doll and Walby (2019) advocate the use of IE as a force for change, Tummons views it as a way of exploring what makes people act 'in the ways that they do' (2010, p. 355) and thus of understanding how the ruling relations operate in a particular context.

As set out in Chapter One, the transformative and emancipatory potential of IE is not the primary motive for using aspects of IE within this study. My research is not conceived as an instrument for change, but rather as a means of better understanding what happens within the contexts inhabited by my participants, so that this understanding may contribute to principled decisions about how to navigate similar contexts. Given the insights of IE into the ways in which institutions regulate and exert power on individuals, the possibility of change is inherent in this aim, linking my study within the field of education to others in a diverse range of institutional settings.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has addressed the definition of concepts inherent in this study, primarily those of policy and the institution. It has analysed aspects of the policy context relevant to the experience of the participants in this study, with a focus on the period from 2012 to 2018. It has also considered in broad terms how the relationship between individual and institutional context may be explored empirically, using insights from social practice approaches and IE. This process of operationalisation will be extended through the discussion of specific methods in Chapter Four.

Before proceeding to my methodology, however, it is essential to address the remaining concept central to my research questions, that of learning. As indicated in Chapter One, the primary focus of the study is on the learning of the FTs, not on the nature of their institutional settings. The next chapter will therefore set out the conceptualisation of learning as it is used within this study, and review the literature relating to learning in and through the workplace. It will also begin the operationalisation of the concept of learning as the basis for my methodology.

Chapter Three: Learning

3.1 Chapter introduction

Learning is fundamental to this study. It forms the core of the 'intellectual puzzle' (Mason, 2002, p. 17) I am seeking to 'solve', as expressed in my research questions. A key element of this 'puzzle' is the relationship between learning and its social context (RQ3), and this has informed the social practice approach adopted. The previous chapters have foregrounded the contribution of IE, as a social practice-aligned approach, in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology. It has been shown to offer practical ways of linking everyday experience in the workplace with the institutional and policy context. But IE does not directly address learning, making it necessary to introduce further elements to my theoretical framework.

This chapter fulfils three significant functions: first, it provides a conceptualisation of learning, appropriate for the context and focus of this study, and building on previous studies of workplace and apprenticeship learning; it then integrates this conceptualisation with elements of IE to generate a theoretical framework for this study; finally, it reviews the literature relating to the workplace learning of teachers, and, specifically, former in-service trainee teachers in FE. It thus situates the study in relation to the literature and seeks to justify its relevance.

3.2 Conceptualising learning

3.2.1 Learning or education?

The question of education is always a normative one (Biesta, 2009a, p. 1). It involves value judgments regarding what it is desirable to learn and what constitutes 'effective' learning (Biesta, 2009b, p. 35). For Biesta, the shift in recent years towards a focus on learning, and away from 'teaching' or 'education', is not the progressive shift that those who advocate placing the learner at the centre of the process might assume (see, for example, Ofsted, 2014, p. 5). Instead, it implies a narrowing of our understanding of learning to a focus on the individual in isolation, which prevents us from talking about the content of learning, its purpose or the relationships which exist between individuals. This is encapsulated in what Biesta terms a discourse of 'learnification' (2009b, p. 36), which runs counter to the three dimensions identified by Biesta as the purpose of education: qualification, socialisation, and subjectification. Qualification is understood much more broadly than in its common usage in the UK as the gaining of knowledge, dispositions, skills or understanding that enable someone to 'do something', whether this is performing a particular job role or participating in society (2009b, pp. 39-40); socialisation refers to the role of education (whether overtly or more implicitly) in shaping people into members of a particular culture or society;

subjectification, meanwhile, pulls in the opposite direction, enabling individuals to become autonomous subjects. While these three dimensions underpin my understanding of education, I am not using the term learning in this study in a similarly normative sense. My intention was to establish what former trainees actually learn in the workplace, as opposed to what they are expected to learn or even what they think they are learning. This echoes Wenger's assertion that 'even failing to learn what is expected in a given situation usually involves learning something else instead' (1998, p. 8). To identify what this is in practice requires a definition of learning which encompasses learning that may not be seen as morally valuable or socially useful, and a methodological approach which allows this conceptualisation to be adequately operationalised. I will return to normative understandings of education in my interpretation of my findings and my evaluation of their implications for future educational practice.

While my research questions are underpinned by assumptions about learning, this is neither understood in the reductive context of 'learnification' nor as a substitute for education. The subjects of learning in my study are former in-service trainee teachers in further education, defined in part by the fact that they have recently completed a specific ITE qualification and that they are now employed in a teaching capacity. Other factors serving to define and locate these individuals will be discussed in my methodology (Chapter Four). RQ2a assumes that they *learn* in their first year after qualifying, and hence that something has required or motivated them to do so; RQ2b also assumes that they learn some*thing* some*how*. My research questions could be said to reflect the policy backdrop which regards all practising teachers as continually developing (see Chapter One), most especially those who have recently qualified (Ofsted, 2015a). They might also point to the wider discourse of 'lifelong learning' (see, for example, Coffield, 2000, p. 4) and the expectation that all participants in knowledge based economies continue to learn in order to fit themselves to the changing needs of the economy (Avis, 2016, p. 55). My motivation, however, was to gain a fuller picture of what and how individual former trainees learn in practice, whether in support of, running counter to, or perhaps despite this policy context.

3.2.2 A socio-cultural approach to learning

Another feature of the recent policy context, and of educational research until the 1980s (Illeris, 2017, p. 21), is its understanding of learning through the metaphor of *acquisition* as opposed to *participation* (Sfard, 1998, p. 5). In the former, knowledge is represented as something which can be gained, whether through a process of transmission, appropriation or

construction; in the latter, the emphasis is not on knowledge but on 'knowing', an active process which is always situated within a social context. As Sfard states, 'the permanence of *having* gives way to the constant flux of *doing*' (1998, p. 6; italics in original). Significantly, the *Transforming Learning Cultures* (TLC) research project, a large-scale investigation into learning in FE which ran from 2001 to 2005 (James & Biesta, 2007, p.7), approached learning as social participation, but found that the efforts of policy makers and senior managers were often directed towards acquisition (Hodkinson et al., 2007, p. 403). This was significant because it meant that broader features of the learning environment identified by the project as crucial to learning were marginalised as targets of reform.

My study adopts a similarly socio-cultural approach to learning. This has its roots in the work of Vygotsky, although I go on to expand the relational and participatory elements of this socio-cultural perspective beyond Vygotsky's initial theorisation. In developing a psychological theory of learning in the 1930s, Vygotsky introduced the cultural environment as a key mediating element in the acquisition of individual knowledge, a premise adopted and extended by other theorists working in the post-Vygotskian tradition (Engeström, 2001, p. 134). The relationship between the object of the learning and its subject is always mediated by a tool or artefact, creating a three-way relational model. In the context of my study, if the subject is the former trainee, and the object a particular strategy for managing behaviour, the strategy is mediated by any number of culturally and historically specific features of the individual's context, such as: the language used in the workplace to represent it; the processes through which it is implemented; and the physical tools, such as reward cards or disciplinary procedures, with which it is associated. Even the learning of content knowledge, which forms the focus of RQ2a, thus draws on a relational view of individual, socio-cultural context and learning.

3.2.3 Learning in and through the workplace

The focus of my research on learning in institutional contexts post-qualification suggests a distinction between the formal learning engaged in during the ITE course, and the informal, less clearly recognised learning taking place in the workplace. However, despite significant debate in the early 2000s, this divide between formal and informal learning as distinct theoretical categories has not been upheld by the literature or by empirical studies. Malcolm, Hodkinson and Colley (2003) reviewed the literature using the terms 'formal, informal and non-formal learning' and found that despite multiple attempts to delineate these terms, there was no agreed categorisation that successfully maintained their boundaries. As Hodkinson and Colley later state: 'learning which would be classified as informal by one person was seen as at least partly formal by someone else, and vice versa' (2005, p. 7). Furthermore, when seeking to test out the distinction between formal and informal learning in relation to

three different subject areas within FE settings, they found that there were many aspects of the 'formal' process of gaining a qualification that had significant 'informal' attributes (p. 7), and, conversely, that ostensibly informal areas of learning, such as learning how to adopt the style of dress expected of a childcare practitioner, were in fact structured by the social norms implicit in the formal qualification. Nevertheless, they acknowledge that the construction of 'informal learning' as a concept has served to raise the profile of this area of learning, and to challenge the 'standard paradigm' of learning (p. 24, with reference to Beckett & Hager, 2002). As Boud and Middleton highlight, informal learning generally goes unrecognised in organisations, seen as 'part of the job' or a way of 'doing the job properly' (2003, p. 195). For Eraut, it is 'largely invisible', not just ignored but suppressed by the dominant discourse, which recognises codified knowledge to the neglect of more tacit forms of knowing (2004, p. 249). Without the language to address it, this tacit knowledge may evade analysis. Indeed, as Beckett and Hager argue, accepting that it is tacit suggests placing this form of knowledge beyond investigation (2000, p. 302).

The relevance of this discussion for my study is largely methodological. If a significant proportion of the learning under investigation is unrecognised by those involved this represents a challenge for the researcher. Beckett and Hager (2000) addressed this issue by focusing on professionals' experiences of 'judgment-making': 'deciding what to believe or do taking into account a variety of relevant factors and then acting accordingly' (2000, p. 303). This provided them with a proxy for learning, a theoretical lens through which to view the 'organic' learning of the individual. Although this approach has a strong empirical focus and is effective in exploring the informal dimensions of learning, it is also primarily phenomenological, locating learning within the experience of the individual. This is incompatible with the ontological and epistemological approach adopted in this study, as set out in Chapter Two and expressed in Smith's assertion that:

> Our directly known worlds are not self-contained or self-explicating despite the intimacy of our knowledge of them. The everyday/everynight of our contemporary living is organized by and coordinated with what people, mostly unknown and never to be known by us, are doing elsewhere and at different times. (Smith, 2002, pp. 18-19)

In the light of this emphasis on the inter-connectedness of the individual and their institutional and policy context, Billett's (2002) influential conceptualisation of workplace learning is more helpful. He goes beyond the idea that workplace learning is either informal or tacit, asserting that the workplace 'invites and structures individuals' participation in work' and that this in turn 'shapes the kind and quality of their learning' (p.38). Billett's approach

effectively unites structural factors and individual agency as dimensions of learning and has been influential in the subsequent development of theoretical frameworks for researching workplace learning, most notably Fuller and Unwin's 'expansive-restrictive continuum' (2003 a framework which allows the formal elements of the learning of apprentices in the workplace to be explored alongside opportunities for participation within workplace structures. However, neither Billett's nor Fuller and Unwin's models allow fully for the detailed, ground-up study of the learning of the individual in the institutional context that my research questions prioritise. For this reason, I will turn to the original studies that provide the foundation for these models and show how these contribute to my own theoretical framework.

3.3 Developing a framework to investigate workplace learning

3.3.1 Situated learning and legitimate peripheral participation

Chapter Two set out a conceptualisation of human activity as social practice. This approach has been taken up in different ways by researchers exploring the processes of learning. A key reference point here is the work of anthropologist Jean Lave, who challenged the assumption that what was learnt in one context (such as formal schooling) could easily be transferred to another (such as the workplace) through her ethnographic studies of 'cognition in practice' (Lave, 1988). Mathematical skills demonstrated by adults under test conditions were found to differ markedly from those applied under everyday conditions in the supermarket. Lave argues that knowledge developed through the 'everyday' has wrongly been considered to be inferior to scientific thought, reasserting the value of everyday experience as 'the major means by which culture impinges on individuals, and vice versa' (p. 15). This emphasis on situated activity as the locus of socialisation and, by extension, learning, is further expounded in Lave and Wenger's seminal work, *Situated Learning* (1991). Situated learning is more than just learning in practice or 'learning by doing' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 31). The separation of the person and the activity implied by this phrase is replaced by a relational view of learning, whereby 'agent, activity, and the world mutually constitute each other' (p. 33). As Lave and Wenger acknowledge, this perspective has its roots in a Marxist understanding of social practice, which highlights the dialectical and historical nature of the social world: the structures laid down by specific historical acts serve to shape future possibilities for action and determine the ways in which historical processes are understood (McLellan, 1977, p. 164). Features of the concrete world can therefore provide direct insights into abstract conceptualisations of culture and society, and vice versa (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 38).

This 'analytical perspective' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 39) is relevant to my study in two fundamental ways: first, it removes the primary distinction between learning through practice, as represented by the workplace element of the former trainees' qualification and their continuing work in their institutions, and learning through intentional instruction, as represented by the taught element of their ITE course and ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The contrasting contexts offered by the workplace and the classroom may shape the learning that occurs, but this is a question of context or situation rather than of the fundamental processes by which learning takes place (Hodkinson & Colley, 2005, p. 9). Secondly, the adoption of a 'culturally concrete' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 39) perspective on learning means that my study does not seek to isolate learning from its historical and cultural context: the everyday actions of the former trainees in their institutional contexts are viewed as elements of, and, therefore, windows on their learning.

The primary analytical concept employed by Lave and Wenger here is that of *legitimate peripheral participation* (LPP) (1991, p. 29). Learning takes place through the sanctioned participation of an individual in a community of practice (CoP). The newcomer to this community is enabled through the structures of the practice to play an increasingly full role in its productive activity. This participation effects change in the community and in the person: 'learning involves the whole person; […] it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person' (p. 53). This echoes Smith's emphasis on people's embodied experience: 'they are always somewhere at some time' (2001, p. 21). Similarly, Lave and Wenger regard this process of identity construction as enabled and constrained by the 'systems of relations' (1991, p. 53) within the community. The recently qualified former trainee may develop identities which are indicative of their learning, of becoming a teacher, for example, but these are shaped by the practices to which they have access. If the teaching community does not recognise the legitimacy of their position as peripheral participants, their trajectory towards fuller participation may be impeded.

The position of 'newcomers' in relation to 'old-timers' is problematic in Lave and Wenger's analysis (1991, p. 57). Fuller, Hodkinson, Hodkinson and Unwin (2005) find through their empirical studies that participation in social practice is indeed a 'prime determinant' (p. 64) of workplace learning, but they also find that LPP does not fully account for the learning of experienced employees from novices, for example, nor for the learning of novices through supporting others. The FTs in my study are viewed (and view themselves) simultaneously as 'newcomers' and 'old-timers' in relation to different aspects of their practice, depending on their level of experience and the perceptions and practices of those around them. This echoes Hodkinson and Hodkinson's findings in their study of the workplace learning of secondary school teachers (2005), which employs a CoP lens. The authors find that the

different subject departments in a school provide opportunities for novices (such as a student teacher and two NQTs) to learn through participation in the work of the department; however, they also find that old-timers continue to learn through participation as full members of the community, without 'movement from the periphery' (Fuller et al., 2005, p. 60). Lave and Wenger acknowledge that legitimate peripherality may be empowering, in enabling the participant to move towards fuller participation, or deeply disempowering, when barriers are put in place that prevent participation, but do not fully recognise the different positions within the 'relations of power' (1991, p. 36) that one individual may simultaneously occupy. I will go on to address this question of power relations in Section 3.3.4.

3.3.2 The role of artefacts

Another significant aspect of Lave and Wenger (1991) for my study lies in the concept of artefacts. This concept is closely linked to Smith's conceptualisation of texts, forming a strong theoretical and methodological bridge between Lave and Wenger (1991) and Smith (1990; 2001). Social practices leave historical traces, identified as 'physical, linguistic, and symbolic' artefacts (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 58), as well as social structures, which serve to constitute and reproduce the practice. These might range from physical tools, such as whiteboards or late slips, to shared terminology, such as differentiation or paperwork. LPP involves having access to these tools as well as using and understanding them. In this way, they become 'transparent' to the user, at once visible, in that their meaning is fully recognised, and invisible, in that they are used as an integral part of the practice and interpreted unproblematically (p. 103). The extent of the former trainees' participation and thus the extent of or limitations to their learning is laid down in the artefacts associated with their practice.

This theoretical perspective offers an important contribution to my methodology, providing a means of operationalising the conceptualisation of learning. The use of a particular recording document by a former trainee to respond to disciplinary matter, for example, points to their ease, or otherwise, with the practices of the community. Furthermore, the language they use to describe the incident represents a further artefact employed within the practice and hence another potential window on their learning.

3.3.3 Participation and reification

The role of artefacts within learning is further extended through the concept of reification in Wenger's later work (1998). Reification refers to 'the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into 'thingness'' (Wenger, 1998, p. 58). These 'objects' do not necessarily take a concrete form, but include abstract terms such as democracy or reification itself, bringing to mind the objectified language that

Smith associates with institutional discourse (2001, p. 165). Reification serves to separate the objects from ourselves, suggesting that they have a reality of their own (Wenger, 1998, p. 57). The signs and symbols we see around us, although stemming from our practice, may become divorced in time from the practice that produced them and to which they ostensibly refer. Reification thus has a 'double edge', revealing and concealing the phenomenon in question (p. 61). A written statement of an organisation's values, for example, such as might be displayed in a school reception area, may be strikingly at odds with the experience of those who work or study there. The 'vestiges' of human practices represented by their reified form are thus 'only the tip of the iceberg […] tokens of vast expanses of human meanings' (p. 61).

Whereas Smith does not seek to connect the reification represented by texts with the process of learning, Wenger (1998) provides this connection through his explication of the dual role of participation and reification in the negotiation of meaning. Meaning forms one component of Wenger's formulation of a social theory of learning, which includes three further dimensions: practice, community and identity, as shown in *Figure 1* below:

Figure 1: Components of a social theory of learning (Wenger, 1998, p. 5)
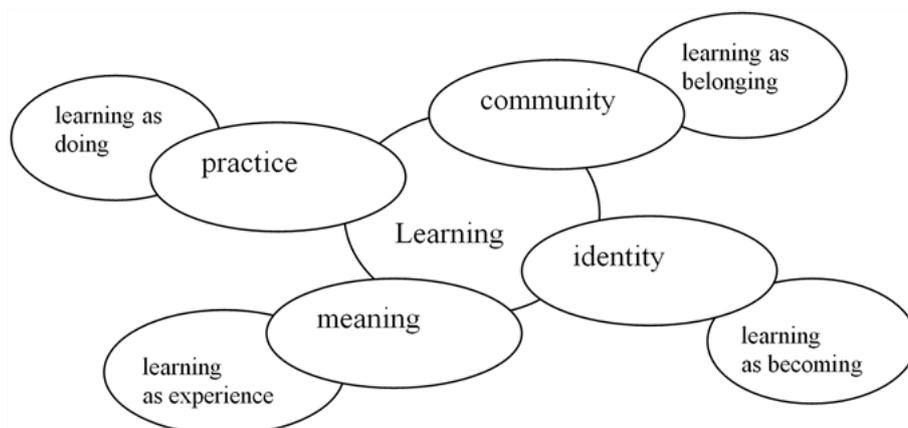
These dimensions are 'deeply interconnected' and 'mutually defining' (Wenger, 1998, p. 5), together setting out how learning occurs through participation in a CoP. It is this concept of a CoP and its three constituent properties of 'mutual engagement', 'joint enterprise' and 'shared repertoire' (p. 72) that has been most widely applied in the study of workplace and organisational learning (Barton & Tusting, 2005, p. 2); but it is important to recognise that community is only one of the dimensions of learning, and is itself deeply bound up with practice: a 'process by which we can experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful' (Wenger, 1998, p.51). While there is a danger of following a circular argument here, the interconnectedness of each term leading back to another, this mutual definition also allows a focus on each of the dimensions to shed light on aspects of the others, and,

indeed, to illuminate the central concept of learning. Meaning, practice, community and identity each offer a possible theoretical lens through which to view learning as a social practice. For this study, I have chosen to bring the dimensions of meaning and practice to the fore. This does not mean that community and identity are excluded; indeed, they are implicit in my use of the other two terms. But my focus on the individual FT as my unit of analysis leads me to reject the adoption of community as my primary theoretical lens. As Tummons notes, community was (in Lave & Wenger, 1991) 'a by-product' of the analysis of learning as LPP (2018a, p. 4), and only expanded in Wenger (1998). For the purpose of my analysis, it can be assumed that where there is participation in practice there are other people involved, but the definition and hence the boundaries of these communities are not regarded as significant. Similarly, identity formation is acknowledged as one dimension of the learning of former trainees, but for reasons of viability it forms a backdrop to my study rather than its central focus.

The theoretical framework adopted in this study (represented in *Figure 2* below) foregrounds the meaning and practice dimensions of Wenger's model (1998), and offers the basis for a provisional definition of learning as *the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice*. This can be illustrated through the example of the medical insurance claims processor, Ariel, whose learning and work feature in the vignette provided by Wenger (1998). When Ariel is faced with the task of processing a claim, she draws on multiple aspects of her context and prior experience to know how to act; the claim, as a physical object, also carries with it its own history and obtains its meaning and significance from its interaction with the practices of the claims community. Since meaning involves the interaction of two processes, those of participation and reification, meaning is not fixed, but always negotiated. 'It is in the convergence of these two processes [participation and reification] that the negotiation of meaning takes place' (Wenger, 1998, p. 55). To use a further example from the context of my study, a teacher preparing a session is participating in the accumulated practices of the organisation for which they work, of the students who come (or do not come) to their classes, of their own historical development as a teacher; these practices have been reified and continue to be reified through artefacts such as schemes of work, teaching resources and the physical space of the teaching environment. Although this is a social model of learning, it does not exclude the individual. To participate fully in the practice, the teacher must experience it as meaningful, and this negotiation of meaning is an individual as well as a social process. It is also simultaneously a process of learning.

Figure 2: Learning as the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice
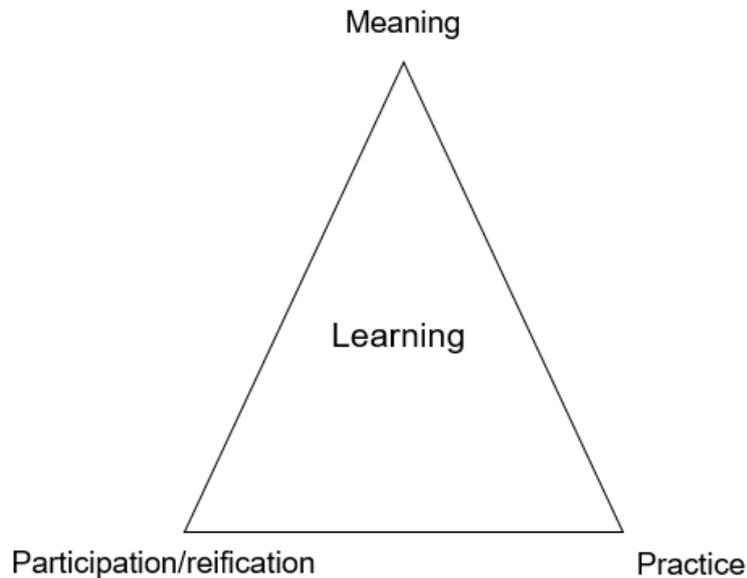
3.3.4 Limitations of LPP and CoPs

Since the publication of Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998), the theoretical framework(s) offered by LPP and CoPs have been applied extensively, though not always rigorously (Tummons, 2014a), to workplace and organisational learning. They have also been subject to extension and critique. Fuller et al. (2005) find a relational approach to workplace learning highly productive, in that it allows the 'whole person' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53) to be considered within their social context, but argue that this necessitates a context-specific rather than a generalised approach. Each practice and each individual within this practice will generate different forms of learning. This could lead to research that becomes entirely individualised, thus losing the potential theoretical insights offered by LPP and the capacity to apply these across settings. This issue is addressed further in Section 3.3.5, and in Chapter Four, where the advantages of a case study approach combined with aspects of IE are delineated.

Another significant critique of Lave and Wenger's (1991) work is its neglect of the role of formal learning as an element of apprenticeship learning. In seeking to break away from the 'standard paradigm' of learning in environments established for this purpose, they tend to disregard the role of teaching, 'off-the-job' learning and formal qualifications in the development of employees (Fuller et al., 2005, pp. 65-66). The extent to which the workplace enables and recognises these forms of learning, that is, the extent to which they are regarded as 'legitimate', has an influence on the quality of learning that can take place

(p. 66). This echoes the disconnect evident in FE contexts between participation in an ITE course and development within the workplace (Lucas & Unwin, 2009). The perceived disparity between the knowledge teachers are assumed to acquire through ITE and the skills they are expected to develop in the workplace often reflects a simplistic separation of theory and practice. But where employers adopt 'expansive' approaches to learning (Fuller & Unwin, 2003) this opposition is erased, and the potential of both informal and formal contexts for learning is recognised.

Attempts to use CoPs as a theoretical framework for the investigation of the learning of teachers in FE have often failed because the three identifying elements of a CoP are not easily found in the messy, conflict-riven context of FE colleges (Orr, 2013, p. 278). Boud and Middleton (2003) evaluate the contribution of the CoP framework to the analysis of the informal learning of four different 'workgroups' within a further education institution in Australia and find the framework inadequate conceptually because it is unable to account for the loosely bound networks evident within the workplace, and for the learning that occurs through interactions extending beyond these networks (p. 200). Lucas (2007), in relation to teacher education, challenges 'the notion that there exists a single, uncontested or harmonious community of professional practice in FE from which trainees can learn' (p. 97, with reference to Gleeson, Davies & Wheeler, 2005, p. 455). This does not mean that the concept of CoPs itself is flawed, just that it cannot provide the desired analytical heft for investigating learning within FE.

A final significant critique of LPP and CoPs lies in their neglect of power relations, particularly in the context of the workplace. Fuller et al. (2005) note that in most of the examples given in Lave & Wenger (1991), 'communities are described as rather stable, cohesive and even welcoming entities' (p. 53), neglecting the inequalities of class, race and gender that run through them. They cite the argument made by Gee and Lankshear that this view of the 'enchanted workplace' serves to prop up the structures of the 'new capitalism' which demands apparently autonomous, self-managing teams (Gee & Lankshear, 1995, p. 5). Although Lave and Wenger acknowledge the struggle for legitimacy that participants face, given the 'hegemony over resources for learning and alienation from full participation' that form an inherent part of the historical development of the community (1991, p. 42), this is presented as a necessary conflict between newcomers and old-timers, rather than as a system of structural inequalities that may disadvantage even long-term, experienced members of the community. The impact of race, gender, class and other forms of inequality that cut across society and that are often reproduced in the workplace is not addressed. The FTs in my study may thus be established members of staff who are no longer regarded as

novices yet are marginalised or prevented from learning by unequal access to the affordances of the workplace.

Although the model of learning adopted thus far does not specifically exclude the workings of power, it does not directly address them either. The next section seeks to show how attention to the role of texts, through the insights offered by IE, allows power relations to be foregrounded and a key limitation of LPP and CoPs to be addressed.

3.3.5 The contribution of IE

The previous section highlighted three central critiques of LPP and CoPs in relation to the study of learning in the workplace: i) LPP neglects the role of formal or planned learning opportunities, such as specific training; ii) LPP fails to offer a sufficiently nuanced account of how more experienced employees learn; iii) in both LPP and CoPs, power relations are side-lined. The necessity of pursuing context-specific rather than generalised approaches to research was also highlighted. This section considers how the integration of elements of IE with the model of learning deriving from Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) serves to address each of these critiques in turn.

To address the first critique, the model of learning set out in Section 3.3.3 does not rely on an assumption that learning is present (or absent) in particular activities or places, such as training sessions or the canteen, but recognises learning where and whenever it occurs. It is not necessary, therefore, to make a distinction between formal and informal learning settings. Similarly, IE focuses on what people do, adopting investigative strategies that seek to go beyond the assumptions that people may bring to the investigation. Participants' understanding of what constitutes 'work', for example, may not be as 'generous' as that developed by Smith (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 25), and may exclude unpaid activity. In Smith's terms, their understanding may be subject to 'institutional capture' (2005, p. 119), whereby the discourse of the institution 'enters into' and 'perverts' (p. 155) the participant's actual, local experience. In relation to learning, participants are likely to adopt to some extent the dominant discourse of acquisition and formal qualification, only recognising what is viewed as learning within this discourse. But IE focuses on everyday work practices and these are analysed for the ways in which they exhibit and carry forward broader institutional processes. It is not assumed, therefore, that the participant occupies a particular position (as novice, for example) in relation to those around them; their location is identified through 'talking with [them]' about what they do (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 22). Questions of relative peripherality may be relevant but these are not imposed in advance, helping to address the second critique of LPP.

The context-dependent nature of the learning process, which is fundamental to LPP, also aligns with an IE approach, which recognises that individuals will be 'located somewhat differently' from each other (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 18) and that it is not appropriate to generalise across a group. However, the overarching purpose is 'to find and describe social processes that have generalising effects', as these 'institutional processes may produce similarities of experience, or they may organize various settings to sustain broader inequalities' (p. 18). This is not the purpose of my study, as its focus is on learning. But learning as the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice is theorised as occurring within a nexus of social relations which serves to connect the individual contexts of my participants.

The most valuable theoretical 'plug-in' (Tummons, 2018a, p. 15; Jackson & Mazzei, 2013, p. 262) that IE provides in relation to LPP addresses the third critique listed above in allowing power relations to be traced and thus potentially challenged. This connection is made by Barton and Hamilton (2005) who show how the 'framings' (p. 14) provided by a theory of literacy practices can uncover such relations, and who include Smith's IE approach under this broad umbrella. They note that most of the examples of reification in Wenger's vignette (1998) are in fact literacy artefacts (Barton & Hamilton, 2005, p.15), texts that mediate between people through the process of being written and read for different purposes and at different times (Barton & Hamilton, 1998). As I have already highlighted, reification and participation are conceived by Wenger as a dualism: 'two inseparable and mutually constitutive elements' (1998, p. 66). Texts thus shed light on the processes of participation that produce(d) them. But Smith goes further than this, in regarding texts themselves as 'in action', shaping and regulating our activities (Smith, 2005, p. 167). We thus act in a 'textually mediated' social world (p. 10). This is facilitated by the replicability of the text, which allows it to turn up in an identical form in other contexts, forming a bridge between different areas of social action. As Smith graphically states: 'Texts suture modes of social action organised extralocally to the local actualities of our necessarily embodied lives' (p. 166). As such they are fundamental to the ruling relations (p. 10), and co-ordinate people's doings across space and time. Indeed, Smith argues, 'they *are* people's doings' (p. 170).

Smith's argument goes beyond the seemingly neutral function of reification in Wenger's formulation. He maintained: 'We produce precisely the reification we need in order to proceed with the practices in which we participate' (1998, p. 69). So, for example, the agenda of a meeting may be typed up and circulated in order to promote shared understandings of its purpose. In Smith's more dynamic, power-informed analysis, however, the moment of the agenda's production (its writing) and its intersection with the actions of the people who take it up (its reading) can be traced as connections to the institutional system of

relations which shapes this process. The agenda-writer may deliberately seek to exclude certain topics from discussion; a reader may disregard the agenda, seeking to dismiss it as merely a paper artefact; another may use the agenda in an attempt to ensure the meeting runs to time. It is clear from this example how power relations may be played out through these textual practices.

3.3.6 An integrated theoretical framework

The insights of NLS regarding the centrality of texts (Chapter Two) and, specifically, Barton and Hamilton's (2005) critique of CoPs, led me to IE as an empirical approach that is capable of supplementing and extending Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger's (1998) model of learning. IE's primary contribution is in enabling the power dynamics in operation in a workplace setting to be exposed and explored. This contributes to my ability to answer RQ3a and forms part of my investigation into how learning in an institutional and policy context may be theorised (RQ3b). It leads me to a revised definition of learning for the purposes of this study as *the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice, which is (often) textually mediated and permeated by power relations*. The triangle of my initial framework thus sits within a larger box that represents the web of ruling relations in which all practice, but especially institutional practice, is situated (*Figure 3* below).

Figure 3: An integrated theoretical framework
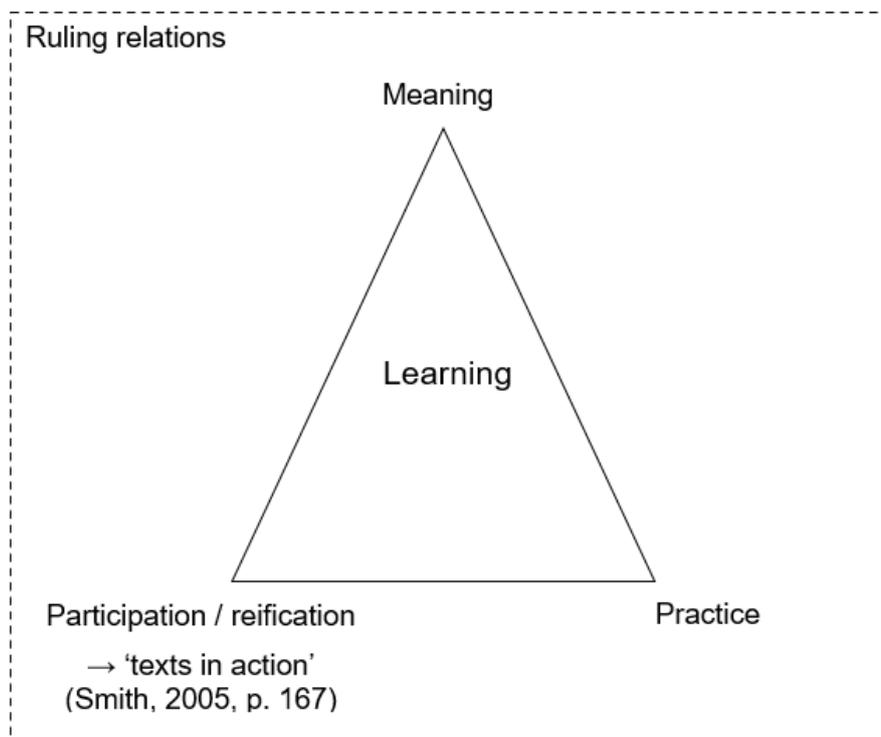
The margins of this box are indicated by a dotted line because the extent of this web is not easily delineated. The concept of reification within this theoretical framework is further broken down to emphasise the role of 'texts in action' (Smith, 2005, p. 167), which will be considered further in relation to methodology in the following chapter.

3.4 The learning of teachers in FE

A review of the literature relating to the learning of teachers in FE reveals that existing research addresses predominantly the learning of trainee teachers, as opposed to practising teachers, and, specifically, pre-service trainees. There is a marked differentiation between ITE and CPD in the literature (Tyler & Dymock, 2017, p. 17), with the impact of one on the other rarely explored (Husband, 2018). This is problematic when exploring the learning of former in-service trainees, as both their ITE experience and their on-going CPD in the workplace may be factors affecting their learning. Furthermore, the learning of teachers in FE is a complex terrain to map because of the diversity of terms used both for learning and for the sector. In carrying out a literature search, the term 'vocational education' was used in addition to 'further education' to ensure international perspectives were included, and these terms were combined with various iterations of 'teacher learning', 'professional learning', 'professional development' and 'CPD', to reflect the multiple ways in which the learning of teachers in the workplace may be denoted. While there are connections to a wider literature relating to learning in organisations, this is largely excluded from the parameters of this study.

This section first discusses terminology relating to the learning of teachers in the sector and clarifies the use of terms in this study; it then reviews findings from the literature relating to the workplace learning of teachers in FE, whether as trainees or established teachers, where this extends earlier discussions of workplace learning; finally, it considers current contexts for the learning of teachers in FE.

3.4.1 Terminology for teacher learning

Boud and Hager (2012) argue, with implicit reference to Sfard (1998), that the dominant metaphors of learning as 'acquisition' and 'transference' have distorted the concept of professional development, not just in education but across all sectors. While the term professional development itself suggests an organic metaphor of growth and 'becoming' (Boud & Hager, 2012, p. 20), it has become associated with approaches to CPD that: i) focus on outcome rather than process; ii) devalue tacit ways of knowing; iii) are divorced from practice; and iv) view learning as an individual rather than a social process. Derrick (2013) similarly highlights the ideological baggage carried by the terms 'professional' and 'professionalism', which have become closely associated with standards-based, regulatory

approaches to teacher development, advocating a model of 'practitioner development' in its place. With reference to Schön's metaphorical distinction between the 'high ground' of technical rationality and the 'swampy lowland' of professional practice (Schön, 1983, p. 42), Derrick argues for an approach to practitioner development which focuses on 'the problems of practice that are not amenable to technical-rational definitions', being 'just too complex, too messy, to deal with in that way' (2013, p. 272). Boud and Hager likewise argue that CPD must 'be located in what professionals do and how they do it' (2012, p. 18), on the basis that 'nothing influences learning more powerfully and unconsciously than the everyday circumstances of work itself' (2012, p. 24).

In recent years there has been a shift within educational organisations away from referring to staff development or CPD in favour of the term 'professional learning' (evident in documents gathered in the course of this study), perhaps because of the connotations of mandatory, outcomes-focused CPD carried by the earlier terms. The term professional learning appears intended to signal newer metaphors of learning, identified by Boud and Hager as 'participation', 'construction' and 'becoming' (2012, p. 22), which are dominant themes in the workplace learning literature. These metaphors are not necessarily borne out by the practices adopted in the name of professional learning, in a reminder of the emptying out of language characteristic of economized workplace contexts (Ozga, 2000, p. 6; see Chapter Two). Within this study, I use 'learning' to refer to the process of negotiation of meaning conceptualised in earlier sections of this chapter. This subsumes what may be referred to elsewhere in the literature as professional development or professional formation (Husband, 2020, p. 43). The term 'CPD' is used as a practical shorthand for initiatives both within and outside organisations intended to lead to the development of staff. Although this term evokes a model of learning as acquisition, instances of CPD are interrogated for learning as it is theorised in this study.

3.4.2 Workplace learning: affordances and constraints

As Francisco notes, much of the research into the learning of FE teachers in the workplace has focused on how the workplace supports or constrains their learning, rather than on what and how they learn (2020, p. 4). This emphasis is reflected in Maxwell's review of the literature pertaining to the workplace learning of in-service trainee teachers in FE, in which 11 significant studies are addressed (2014). Maxwell draws on Billett's conceptualisation of 'workplace affordances' (2002) to identify a strong link in the literature between the affordances of the workplace and the learning of in-service trainees. She highlights how these affordances are shaped by the culture of the organisation and the structuring of work within it (2014, p. 387). She finds little research, however, into how trainees learn from the experience of teaching, and how knowledge is constructed from this. Given the shift Maxwell

identifies towards the work-based training of teachers in schools, this represents a concerning gap in the literature (2014, p.379). Another gap is the impact of factors beyond the organisation on the workplace learning of trainees. She attributes this gap to the methodological similarities between the studies, which tend to be small and qualitative, focusing on the perspectives of the trainees rather than explicitly on the policy context. Although my study is similarly small-scale and qualitative, the use of a case study approach in conjunction with understandings drawn from IE allows me to investigate the participants' learning within their institutional contexts while connecting this with the wider policy context. Indeed, the impact of the policy context on the learning of the FTs forms an explicit focus of my study (RQ3a).

Studies of pre-service trainees on placement in FE settings echo the findings of in-service focused studies in questioning the capacity of FE colleges to support the learning of trainees. Dixon, Jennings, Orr and Tummons' ethnographic study of trainees on placement in four colleges across the north of England investigates the experiences and relationships formed by trainees on placement, and what they learn about teaching through this process (2010, p. 382). The authors find that the lived reality of the trainees' experiences is extremely diverse and often confusing, bound up with the messy and sometimes dysfunctional environments in which they participate (p. 391). Ironically, given the role of FE colleges in supporting apprenticeship learning in their students, FE colleges are found to lack established ways of recognising and fostering this type of learning in trainee teachers. It is not that trainees fail to learn (Wenger, 1998) but that they predominantly learn to 'cope' with the challenges presented, impeding their pedagogical development (Dixon et al, 2010, p. 390). Indeed, without a strong contribution from the university-based element of their training, their learning in the workplace may serve to reproduce poor or 'dysfunctional practice' (p. 391). This danger is recognised by Francisco in her 2-year longitudinal study of what novice VET teachers in an Australian setting learn in the workplace (2020). Employing the conceptual framework of practice architectures (Kemmis et al., 2014), she identifies the considerable impact of 'site-based arrangements' (Francisco, 2020, p. 16) on teacher learning, including the impact of her participants' employment status. She finds that the participants 'learnt to do what others in their teaching department did' (p. 15), concluding, in line with earlier studies in English FE (Orr, 2012; Orr and Simmons, 2011), that 'relying largely on VET teacher learning in the workplace for the ongoing development of teaching approaches […] is not enough' (Francisco, 2020, p. 15). With its focus on learning in the workplace post-qualification, this study seeks to contribute to understandings of how the workplace shapes teacher learning in the current English FE context.

3.4.3 Individual dispositions

One aspect of the learning of teachers in the workplace that has not been addressed thus far but that features in the literature, notably in the various strands of the TLC research project (James & Biesta, 2007), is the role of individual biographies and dispositions. The term 'dispositions' is used with reference to Bourdieu, denoting the thoughts and actions of the individual activated by the 'field', the structured social space of which individuals' actions necessarily form a part (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Together, dispositions constitute a person's 'habitus', a structuring system that generates and shapes an individual's practices in the field (Grenfell, 2007, p. 58). Past experiences necessarily contribute to dispositions. This relational model of individual and society is consistent with the social practice models of learning considered earlier in this chapter and has similarly been applied to teacher learning. Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2005), as part of the TLC project, explore how teachers learn in the workplace and find that their learning is influenced by three dimensions: the culture of school departments; the wider influence of national policy; and the dispositions of the individual teacher (p. 117). These dispositions are found to affect the extent to which opportunities for learning are exploited, and in turn shape the culture of the school environment. Avis and Bathmaker's longitudinal study of trainee pre-service teachers in FE (2006 & 2009) reveals a similarly relational process. The formation of the trainees' professional identity is found to be contingent on the biography of the individual trainee, as well as the social and pedagogic practices in which they participate. Such empirical findings, in conjunction with their theoretical underpinnings, suggest that the individual biographies and dispositions of the FTs in my study may contribute to the ways in which they negotiate meaning in their practice and hence to what and how they learn. This returns me to Lave and Wenger's conception of learning as involving the 'whole person' (1991, p. 53). Through a case study approach, and the involvement of a limited number of participants, the study allows individual dimensions of the FTs' experiences to be recognised and differences between these to be foregrounded. These individual dimensions contribute to the negotiation of meaning necessitated by the FTs' everyday participation in practice, as stated in Section 3.3.3. However, the question of identity formation, of learning as 'becoming' (p. 53) remains peripheral to my research questions, and I do not seek to build on existing research (for example, Colley, James, Diment & Tedder, 2003; Goh, 2015) in this area. Instead, the lens of my inquiry remains focused on the FTs' participation in practice and the process of learning that this involves.

3.4.4 Current contexts for teacher learning

With the planned introduction of T-levels (DBIS & DfE, 2016), there is a current focus on the capacity of FE teachers to implement and teach these new qualifications, reflected in the

ETF's analysis (2018b) of training needs in the FE sector. It is significant that the language of this ETF report echoes the reductive approach to teacher learning associated by Boud and Hager with metaphors of learning as acquisition (2012). Teacher learning is presented as 'training' rather than education, implying that there are specific, pre-determined tasks for which teachers can be prepared, and, likewise, identifiable 'barriers' that can be 'overcome' (ETF, 2018b, p. 11). The analysis suggests that the sector is more successful in providing mandatory training, than in meeting the development needs of its staff. While 80% of respondents (including teaching staff and managers) reported receiving training in safeguarding and *Prevent* (p. 40), less than two-thirds agreed that they undertook all the training they 'wanted and needed' (p. 63), with this figure standing at just 52% in FE colleges. The three primary barriers perceived by teachers in accessing training were: that the employer was unwilling to offer or pay for it; that they were unwilling or unable to fund it themselves; and that they were 'too busy at work' (p. 124). Perhaps not surprisingly, given the highly economized working environment identified in Chapter Two, only a third of respondents agreed that their organisation allowed them 'to set aside time for training and development' (p. 126).

The ETF report does not consider what types of training or development are perceived to be lacking; however, a research report commissioned by the DfE to review 'teaching, leadership and governance in FE' (DfE, 2018b) provides more insights into teachers' views. Although the authors state that the research evidence is limited, they conclude: 'collaborative forms of CPD are most valued by teachers, which can include peer observations, formal and informal networks, coaching and mentoring and action research' (p. 13). Teachers are also found to value development relating to their subject specialism, although opportunities for this are limited by their access to other subject-specialist teachers, with networks between organisations being less developed than in schools (p. 13). Even within ITE in FE the role of subject knowledge and the corresponding development of subject-specific pedagogy remains problematic (Hanley, Hepworth, Orr & Thompson, 2018), in part because of the generic nature of most ITE programmes. There are also more deep-seated issues relating to the epistemological difficulty of distinguishing between subjects in a sector organised according to vocational curricula which cross traditional disciplinary boundaries (Fisher & Webb, 2006, p. 342). Most teachers in FE, with the exception of those teaching English or maths, for which more subject-specific programmes are available, may have access to vocational 'updating' (Andersson & Köpsén, 2019) but few opportunities to relate this vocational knowledge to pedagogy.

Since the dissolution of the IfL in 2014 (see Chapter One), there has been no external requirement for teachers in FE to provide evidence of participation in CPD. ETF figures

suggest that teachers continue to spend around 30 hours per year on CPD (ETF, 2019), which matches the previous IfL requirement. However, this emphasis on measuring CPD in terms of hours of engagement remains problematic and does not convey the quality of the CPD or the range of activities through which teachers may be learning. For many teachers, CPD is viewed as a ''tick box' exercise for [their] organisation' (ETF, 2018b, p. 66), rather than as a chance to address their own development needs. The Professional Standards (ETF, 2014), which are central to achievement of ITE qualifications and QTLS, and which include the expectation that teachers will 'maintain and update' knowledge of both their subject specialism and educational research (Standards 7 and 8), have little weight within the sector, as they are not attached to levers of funding or inspection. Membership of the SET, which works to 'champion the quality of teaching and training across further education, vocational teaching and training' (SET, 2020b, p. 1), stood at 15,200 in March 2017 (SET, 2017), compared with the once 200,000 strong membership of the IfL (Petrie, 2018, p. 117). Nearly 20% of SET members in 2016-17 worked in schools, further reducing its significance for the FE sector and suggesting that membership is motivated for many by the need to maintain their QTLS status.

The current context for teacher learning in FE is thus disparate and predominantly dependent on policies adopted within individual organisations, rather than on external regulation. In a sector where staff time is highly pressurised, the primary focus is on ensuring teachers are trained to meet statutory requirements and that this training is visible to external auditors, perhaps contributing to teachers' perception of CPD as box-ticking. The theorisation of learning developed earlier in this chapter, however, enables me to go beyond such formal and reductive notions of CPD, and to investigate the multiple practices through which the FTs learn, whether intended by their organisation or not.

3.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has built on previous studies of workplace learning to develop a conceptualisation of learning that may be applied to the teachers in this study. It augments a social model of learning deriving from Wenger (1998) with elements of IE to ensure that relations of power are fully recognised. Learning is thus defined for the purposes of this study as *the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice, which is (often) textually mediated and permeated by power relations*. The study is further situated within its field through a review of literature relating to the workplace learning of teachers and an analysis of the current context for teacher learning in FE. This chapter has thus completed the groundwork for my methodology which forms the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1 Chapter introduction and research questions

Methodology has formed a strong thread running through the previous three chapters, even though it does not feature explicitly in the chapter titles. The conceptualisation of the central themes of institution, policy and learning has helped to establish a secure basis for the operationalisation of these concepts. More significantly, the ontological and epistemological foundations of Smith's Institutional Ethnography (IE) have been shown to underpin the study. IE informs both the way in which the topic and its subjects are approached, and understandings of what constitutes knowledge in this context. Furthermore, it provides methodological tools for the operationalisation of key concepts, as the previous discussion of the role of texts has illustrated.

The focus of this chapter is thus primarily on methods, rather than methodology. It sets out the study's design as a qualitative case study, considering the sampling and ethical decisions relevant to identification of the case. It goes on to demonstrate the affordances of my chosen research methods in terms of answering my research questions, with particular attention to the contribution of visual research methods. Limitations of these methods are also considered.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions, as set out in Chapter One:

1. What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?
2. a) What do former trainees learn in their first year after completing their formal qualification?
   b) How do they learn this?
3. a) How does the current institutional and policy context shape the learning of former trainees?
   b) How may the relationship between the learning of former trainees and the institutional and policy context be theorised?

4.2 Qualitative case study or institutional ethnography?

As set out in the first three chapters of this thesis, the learning of the FTs within their institutional and policy contexts is approached through their everyday lived experience in the workplace. This focus implies an interpretative research approach, marked by an idiographic attention to 'specific social settings, processes or relationships' (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 11), and the foregrounding of 'people, and their interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings, as the primary data sources' (Mason, 2002, p. 56). However, the over-riding

focus of the research questions is not on the experiences or perspectives of the FTs but on their learning. The conceptualisation of learning as a social practice (Chapter Three) is significant in informing my methodology. It demands qualitative data capable of illuminating the practices in which the FTs participate and the ways in which they negotiate meaning in their specific context. A qualitative case study, drawing on IE's insights into the role of texts, provides an appropriate research design, as I will go on to clarify. The areas of alignment and deviation of this case study from an institutional ethnography are addressed in this section.

As discussed in Chapter Two, IE adopts a social ontology, in which the social theory of Marx and the perspective provided by women's standpoint 'are, respectively, a place to begin and a place to go' (Walby, 2007, p. 1011). Drawing on Marx, Smith regards the social not as an abstraction but as the product of the 'actualities of people's everyday lives' (2005, p. 10). The commitment to women's standpoint is rooted in the notion that sociology objectifies and ultimately erases knowledge gained through women's experience (Smith, 1992). Smith later extended the reach of standpoint 'to include any subject who 'disappears' in objectified knowledges' (Walby, 2007, p. 1011). Through a social ontology this marginalised knowledge is made central and used as the basis for the explication of the social relations in which the individual subject is enmeshed. By 'mapping' (Smith, 2005, p. 29) these relations and presenting an analysis of the social in action to the subjects involved, people are offered a potential tool for change, underlining the emancipatory mission of IE.

While I had not fully explored IE when I initially designed my methodology (in Spring 2016) and started to generate data (the following year), my study shows significant alignment with Smith's social ontology. My research questions seek a bottom-up understanding of FTs' learning within a social context, which values their experiences and attempts at meaning-making. My research differs from an institutional ethnography in its purpose, however. Although it derives from my own identification of a problematic to be addressed, as set out in Chapter One, this provides a personal motivation for pursuing the topic, rather than one formulated through the interests and concerns of those involved. My research questions were established before I entered the field, deriving from my own prior knowledge and research interests, rather than being formulated through an initial exploration of the problematic with its subjects, as advocated in IE (Smith, 2002, p. 23). While change is viewed as a potential outcome of the increased knowledge and understanding generated by my research, this did not form a primary goal, and was not anticipated within the time frame of the study. In summary, an institutional ethnography seeks to explicate the social relations of a particular institutional complex in order to offer its subjects the ability to effect change;

but the purpose of my research is to better understand the process(es) through which learning takes place in specific institutional settings.

This focus on a specific instance of a phenomenon (the learning of FTs) in its real-life context makes case study an appropriate research strategy. As Simons highlights, case study can mean different things for different people (2009, p. 19) and it may draw on different research traditions (Stake, 1995, p. xi), but it is particularly well-suited to exploring 'the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a 'real life' context' (Simons, 2009, p. 21). It does not dictate the use of particular methods, although its focus on understanding the 'holistic and meaningful characteristics' of events in context (Yin, 2009, p. 4) leads to the characteristic use of a range of methods. Case study values 'concrete, practical (context-dependent) knowledge' (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 221), showing a clear alignment with the epistemology underpinning IE.

4.3 What is my case?

Case study research is distinctive, in Stake's terms, because it pays close attention to 'what is and what is not 'the case' – the boundaries are kept in focus' (Stake, 2000, p. 23). This implies a process of selection (Hakim, 2000, p. 59) and therefore careful definition of the criteria for what is included and what is not. This is achieved in part through my research questions, which specify the social entity in question (the learning of FTs) and which also offer preliminary criteria (social, political, geographical and temporal) for my selection of a specific case within this. RQ1 establishes my focus on: i) English FE; ii) the workplace context; iii) former in-service trainee teachers; and iv) the current policy context. These parameters are further narrowed by RQ2a which specifies the first year after qualification as my timeframe. To achieve the level of context-rich detail required, the case was further bounded to those former in-service trainee teachers achieving one of a suite of higher level ITE programmes (CertEd, PGCE or PGDipE) through one university. Although these programmes are taught and assessed through a network of around 21 FE providers ('Centres') across England, the curriculum is shared, as are its underpinning aims and values, making the completion of this course, along with continuing to teach, the most significant criteria for determining my case.

In other respects, however, this case lacks the secure boundaries Stake regards as fundamental to case study research: 'A child may be a case. A teacher may be a case. But her teaching lacks the specificity, the boundedness, to be called a case' (1995, p. 2). The same could be said of 'the learning' of the FTs. Ball et al. warn against regarding a school (or presumably a college) as a fixed, composite unit for research purposes, arguing that it is better viewed as a 'creaky social assemblage' (2012, p. 70), constructed through the multiple

actions and discursive practices of all those associated with it. Case study researchers, similarly, do not all view a case as easily bounded, indeed, Yin advocates case study research in situations where the boundaries between the 'phenomenon' and its context are unclear (2018, p. 15). The theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three holds the learning of the FTs to be deeply integrated with their institutional context. While for Stake the case is 'a bounded system that exists independently of inquiry' (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000, p. 8), the case in this research is not regarded as 'out there' but as theoretically constructed through the research process (Ragin, 1992, p. 9).

Despite the study including multiple individuals and sites, it constitutes a holistic, single case study, as the case consists of the process of learning of the FTs, rather than of each FT or organisation. In Yin's terms, 'no logical sub-units can be identified' (2018, p. 52) and it is presumed a 'common' case, capturing the 'circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation' relating to the theoretical focus of my study (Yin, 2018, p. 50). There is also no intention of replicating the study across multiple cases.

4.3.1 Unit of analysis

While my case sets the FTs within multiple layers of context, consisting, for example, of their organisation, their physical location, the qualification they have just completed and the policy context of English FE, the individual FTs constitute my units of analysis. It would be unfeasible, given the time constraints and size of my study, to consider all, or even a selection of the contextual layers as individual units of analysis, especially as the FTs are distributed between several employers. This raises another important distinction between my study and IE. IE 'does not study individuals' (Smith, 2006a, p. 7) but works through accounts of their experience to explain 'how the experience came to happen as it did' (Campbell, 2006, p. 91). Although my study similarly rejects a phenomenological approach, focusing on the process of learning rather than individuals' experiences and perceptions, it necessarily seeks a detailed exploration of each individual's practices in their specific location, as the differences not only in workplace context but in individual biographies and dispositions (see Chapter Three) are understood to be relevant factors in their learning. A tension remains, however, between recognising and communicating the particularities of each FT's situation, and contributing to the 'collective story' (Richardson, 1988, cited in DeVault, 1991, p. 245) represented by the case. I return to this issue when considering contextual analysis in Section 5.6.

4.4 Sampling and generalisation

As indicated above, the rationale for my choice of a single case was that it was likely to be typical of other similar cases. It is not regarded as representative, however, in the sense of

statistical generalisation. As Yin argues, case studies allow for theoretical rather than analytical generalisation, the specific instances of a phenomenon enabling the researcher to confirm or dispute theoretical propositions (2018, p. 20). This is an area of both alignment with and deviation from IE. Smith states clearly that IE is not concerned with producing a representative sample, as the researcher is sampling a process, not a population (2002, p. 25). This suggests the type of theoretical sampling set out above. Generalisation is achieved through the explication of social relations that extend beyond the particular case (p. 39), indeed, 'institutions are themselves generalisers' (p. 25), co-opting the local, everyday actions of individuals into the trans-local structures of the institution, or as Smith might term it, 'moving them upstairs' (1992, p. 89). This is a useful insight in relation to my study as it contributes to the theorisation of the relationship between individual and social context and thus between the process of learning and its institutional and policy setting (RQ3b). IE claims to reject theory, however, viewing it as an aspect of the 'mainstream sociology' (Smith, 2005, p. 49) it seeks to displace. IE's materialist and empirical approach of explicating ruling relations through the study of local settings is regarded as opposed to theorisation (Campbell & Gregor, 2004, p. 89). But this assertion has been strongly challenged on the grounds that it underplays the role of IE itself as an interpretative framework (Tummons, 2018b, p. 153; Walby, 2007, p. 1013) and that it depends on a narrow definition of theory (Tummons, 2018b, p. 159). Theory is understood in this study as a 'generalizing [or] explanatory model' (Thomas, 2007, p. 27), which serves as an heuristic in the empirical task of investigating the learning of FTs. This model does not consist of one theory of learning but of the integrated conceptualisation of learning within the context of ruling relations set out in Chapter Three. This theorisation of the learning process informs my methodology by suggesting what I should look for in my empirical research. I would argue, with Tummons (2018b) and Walby (2007), that IE's theorisation of the social world performs the same role in IE.

The selection of sites and participants for my study was underpinned by principles of both diversity and comparability. My understanding of FE as a highly diverse sector made the range of contexts in which FTs work an important factor to consider in my sampling. As Maxwell (2014) highlights, contexts outside FE colleges have been neglected in prior research. In practice, however, the difficulties I encountered in finding FTs willing to participate in my research made the range of places of employment more random than deliberate, with six out of eight participants working in General FE Colleges, as shown in *Table 1* below.

Table 1: List of participants and sites

Participant (anonymised)	Employer (anonymised)	Employer type	ITE 'Centre' (anonymised)
Tina	Castle College; Independent School	General FE College; Independent girls' school	Castle College
Nicole	Castle College; left to become self-employed	General FE College; Private salon	
Micha	Middleton College	General FE College	Middleton College
Justin	Grange School	Non-selective secondary school, in process of academisation	
Leah	Northvale College	General FE College	Northvale College
Kerry			
Ryan	Milltown College	General FE College	
Susan	Fernside School	Independent special school	

Of the remaining participants, one worked with young people in a special school with residential and day pupils and another worked in a secondary school that had been judged inadequate by Ofsted and was in the process of becoming an academy. A further participant worked in both an FE college and an independent girls' day school. This inclusion of school settings broadened the scope of my study and potentially weakened the relevance of my findings for FE. However, I decided not to exclude these participants from my study because they were indicative of the range of settings in which former in-service trainees work and therefore of the current ITE in FE context. I also regarded each setting as unique and interesting, regardless of the sector to which it belonged. As Smith asserts, 'divergence is primary: consensus is a chimera' (2002, p. 22), echoing the emphasis in case study research on valuing the unique nature of each context. Furthermore, while my understanding of the structuring effects of apparently personal characteristics such as age, class, gender and ethnicity led me to seek a diverse sample in relation to these categories, these were not set up as variables in my research design (Mason, 2002, p. 134). Balanced with this

approach, however, was the need to recognise the impact of individual biographies and dispositions on the data (see Chapter Three). The pseudonyms selected are intended to give some suggestion of the participants' age, class, gender and ethnicity, in order to support the communication of my findings.

A counter-consideration in terms of sampling was the need to limit the diversity of the different elements of my case in order to achieve a degree of comparability within it. I set a constraint on the geographical spread of my sample by approaching final-year trainees in two Centres via an online survey as the trainees qualified and continued in employment. This produced a very small number of volunteers, leading me to carry out a small pilot of my research tools with one FT in early 2017, and delaying the start of my main data generation period until September that year. I had aimed to recruit twelve participants, on the grounds that this figure would allow for a diverse range of experience and contexts, as well as comparability and some potential attrition. I had also rejected the option of recruiting participants from the Centre in which I worked, as these FTs would be my former students, exacerbating the power imbalance between researcher and researched (Oakley, 1981). I was concerned that these FTs might feel obliged to participate. Subsequently addressing two sizeable cohorts of final-year trainees face to face led to only a small handful of potential participants, however, so I took the pragmatic decision to approach the cohort of recently qualified trainees from my own Centre (not identified here to protect anonymity), my ethical concerns lessened somewhat by my recent move to the University. As predicted, this cohort produced more willing participants, confirming my fears that they were motivated by the desire to 'give something back' to me as their former teacher, and highlighting the need for reflexivity as my research progressed. This resulted in the recruitment of eight FTs, including the one that took part in the pilot study, all of whom were retained to the end of the data generation period.

4.5 Ethics

The research was conducted in accordance with the BERA guidelines (2018), this apparently simple statement belying the 'actively deliberative, ongoing and iterative process of assessing and reassessing the situation' (BERA, 2018, p. 2) that all research necessitates. As indicated above, the need to recruit and retain participants had to be balanced against the ethical need for voluntary informed consent. Through an initial information and consent form (*Appendix 1*) I sought to inform potential participants fully of the project and engage them in its purpose, while not over-specifying what I was looking for. A tension ran through the research process between building rapport and allowing participants to retain an open perspective on the subject under investigation. This derived from my awareness of how conventional understandings of learning might influence the data

(as set out in Chapter Three), and also of my position as a teacher educator: I was concerned that FTs would tend to provide what they thought I wanted to hear, perhaps presenting a narrative of continuing professional development in line with Ofsted and SET expectations (see Chapter One).

This was a particular concern in relation to the participants I had taught. Indeed, the desire to please is evident across the data set, with several instances of participants checking 'is that the kind of thing you want?', raising concerns about the validity of the data. A pilot interview conducted with one participant in February 2017 (seven months prior to the main data generation period) provides a more nuanced perspective, however. The interview data suggests that the participant's motivation to participate in the study derived from her strong desire to speak to a professional in the field of teacher education about her perceptions of ITE in England. Perhaps in part because of our shared backgrounds as language teachers ('you did German', Tina interview 1), she viewed me as someone who understood and therefore someone worth talking to about the topic. The desire to please may be accompanied by a desire to inform and these two motivations can run alongside each other.

I also chose to interview a manager with responsibility for staff development in each of the three Centres through which the FTs had qualified and from which I had obtained institutional consent (*Appendix 2*). This was in order to access institutional perspectives relating to my research questions. I limited this to three organisations for pragmatic reasons: first, I judged that three interviews would provide sufficient data to inform my analysis; secondly, I had not sought institutional consent from each of the organisations in which the FTs worked, on the basis that I was investigating the individual not the institution. This might have raised issues if I had then approached the institution for an interview with a manager, even though each FT's line manager was aware that I was entering the institution to interview the FT. This suggests my underlying awareness of the potentially sensitive nature of research within this contemporary educational context, where competition between institutions, as well as concerns around the safeguarding of students, makes the protection of information particularly important.

For ethical reasons, I have taken steps throughout the research process to store data securely following GDPR regulations and to protect the anonymity of participants and organisations. Using pseudonyms is a key aspect of this, although this strategy does not necessarily prevent participants or organisations from being recognised by those who know the person or the context well (Allen & Wiles, 2016, p. 151). I was keen to avoid the 'paternalistic' approach (p. 153) of assigning pseudonyms to participants and instead asked them how they would like to be represented. Most expressed no preference (see *Appendix*

3), so I sought to use their pseudonyms to reflect what I knew (or perhaps assumed) of their age, gender and class background. I chose not to give the managers who contributed to my study pseudonyms, instead identifying them as Manager A, B, and so on (see *Table 3*). This reflected the role they played as informants in relation to the central units of analysis in my case, that is, the eight participants. One of these participants selected a pseudonym but then accidentally copied a manager into the email trail, both revealing her participation in the study and her chosen pseudonym. When asked how she felt about this she stated that she did not mind the manager knowing she was involved but would not want her comments sharing with her '*or anyone in the college*'. Although she subsequently identified a different pseudonym, this incident has influenced the writing and dissemination of my findings.

The discussion above confirms the need to review ethical decisions throughout the duration of the research. This also requires a degree of reflexivity on the part of the researcher, whose values, assumptions, and beliefs necessarily shape the qualitative research process (Mason, 2002, p. 52). This principle is fundamental to the ontology and epistemology of IE: as Smith reminds the institutional ethnographer, 'the social as your research phenomenon is to be found in that ongoing process of which you're a part' (2006a, p. 2). Given my prior employment in FE as a teacher educator it is easy to recognise this involvement on one level, but the implications of this statement extend to my position as a researcher in generating data and producing findings. Campbell and Gregor maintain that 'institutional ethnographers cannot step out of their bodies and histories to know 'in general'' (2004, p. 7). Their knowledge is built out of the subjective experience and understandings that they bring to their research. But, as Walby argues, the degree of reflexivity necessitated by this awareness is not fully evident in IE accounts (2007, p. 1017). While the 'informants' in IE are viewed as 'experts', who assist the researcher in determining how the ruling relations operate in their context, the role of the researcher in providing the interpretative frame which determines what is significant and identifying 'what actually happened' (Campbell & Gregor, 2004, p. 18) is underplayed. In this study I have sought to be as transparent as possible about how I am interpreting and transforming the data. To this end, reflections recorded in field notes contribute to my analysis; transcripts and drafts of writing were also shared with participants in order to seek confirmation, or otherwise, of the perceived accuracy of my interpretations.

While I leaned ethically towards a participatory approach, this was not built into the design of my study. The use of the term 'participant' conveys a desire to break down the traditional imbalance in power between researcher and researched, which has been criticised extensively by feminist researchers (Oakley, 1981; Stanley & Wise, 1993, p. 3). But the use of 'a particular term does not itself alter the nature of the relations involved' (Campbell &

Gregor, 2004, p. 67). By the time of the pilot interview, clearly formulated research questions were already in place, as well as an outline methodology, allowing little space for participants to shape the study and undermining their ability to become co-researchers. In practice, my relationship with the participants in my research was shifting and indeterminate; it also varied between participants, depending on their prior understandings of research and their relationship with me as the researcher. For example, participants were encouraged to share documents and photos that appeared significant to them in relation to their learning or development. Micha clearly saw herself as actively contributing to this project and sent me documents such as staff development schedules and observation reports, as well as email updates. Most participants, however, merely responded to my questions, reflecting in part the pressures on their time but also the role assigned to them by my research approach.

4.6 Methods of data generation

The use of the term 'data generation' as opposed to 'data collection' reflects my conception of the case as 'made', as opposed to 'found' (Ragin, 2000, p. 9). What types of data are sought and, indeed, what counts as data at all is regarded as a product of the theoretical approach of the researcher. This stance recognises the process of abstraction through which empirical phenomena are transformed into objects of science (Becker, 1998, p. 50, with reference to Latour, 1995). It also serves as a corrective to the problem Walby identifies with the ontology of IE, that is, 'that it takes the world as if it was to be discovered instead of interrogating the way ontology itself constitutes the world' (2007, p. 1017).

In order to answer my research questions, a variety of methods was needed, an approach facilitated by the case study design (Hakim, 2000, p. 10). Methods were matched ontologically and epistemologically to the research question (Mason, 2002, p. 26), as shown in the operationalisation grid presented in *Appendix 4*. The aim was not triangulation, as the data generated through different methods cannot be assumed to be comparable in any straightforward sense. Instead, my goal was multiplicity, reflecting the complexity of my subject matter and allowing for interaction between the different levels inherent in my research questions. My primary methods were as follows: document analysis; semi-structured interviews, with limited use of photo-elicitation; and Pictor interviews (King et al., 2013). Visual data and observations from the case study sites were also recorded in the form of field notes. I will consider each primary method in turn here.

4.6.1. Document analysis

Within IE, relevant documents for analysis may be identified before entering the research field in order to gain an initial understanding of the 'problematic' that is being addressed (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 35). Further significant texts are then identified through the

process of talking to and observing informants. Many of these texts will be internal to the organisation involved. A similar procedure was adopted in this study (see *Table 2* below), in which both publicly available and internally identified documents were used. This approach aligns in part with methods employed in case study research where documents may be used to gain a detailed understanding of the case (Simons, 2009, p. 63); but it goes beyond this in treating documents not just as a 'source of information about something else' (Smith, 2001, p. 169) but as central to the analysis. They are understood as 'crystallized social relations' (Campbell & Gregor, 2004, p. 79), a material connection between the practices in which former trainees participate and institutional structures, between the former trainees' learning and its social context. Texts thus run through each of the methods employed, including interviews, rather than being confined to document analysis, as in much case study research.

Table 2: Texts contributing to analysis

Source	*Text*	*Method of analysis*
Publicly available	*Sainsbury Report* (DfE & DBIS, 2016) *Post-16 Skills Plan* (DBIS & DfE, 2016) *Common Inspection Framework* (Ofsted, 2015b) *16-19 Study Programmes* (DfE, 2017)	Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2003)
	Ofsted reports relating to each site College/school websites Staff development programme (Middleton)	IE: mapping of 'intertextual hierarchies' and 'sequences of action' (Smith, 2006b)
Observed/obtained within site	Marked student's book (Ryan) GCSE specification (Ryan) Photos of workspace (Nicole) Teaching observation report (Micha) Staff development framework (Northvale) Staff development day programme (Micha) Timetable (Kerry)	IE (as above)

Documents are defined here in the same way as texts, that is, 'as material in a form that enables replication (paper/print, film, electronic and so on) of what is written, drawn or otherwise reproduced' (Smith, 2002, p. 45). The initial purpose of document analysis in my study was to deepen and extend my knowledge of the current policy context, as expressed in RQ1 and addressed in Chapter Two. This involved identifying and reading policy documents relevant to the context in which the FTs were working. However, extracts from four documents, the *Sainsbury Report* (DfE & DBIS, 2016) and the related *Post-16 Skills Plan* (DBIS & DfE, 2016), the *Common Inspection Framework* (Ofsted, 2015b) and guidance on *16-19 Study Programmes* (DfE, 2017) were subjected to more detailed analysis through the tools of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2003; see Appendix 18 for an example of this in practice). This limited use of CDA was adopted as a way of connecting the 'discursive practices' of the texts on the one hand with 'wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes' on the other (Fairclough, 2013, p. 93). Although IE offers tools for tracing the relations between texts and mapping the sequences of action they serve to coordinate (Smith, 2006b; see also Chapter Five), it is less effective in enabling the 'internal relations' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 36) of texts at the level of grammar and vocabulary to be scrutinised. CDA was used to address this gap.

IE introduces the concept of 'regulatory texts' (Smith, 2006b, p. 79), higher-order texts that serve to standardise other texts in an 'intertextual hierarchy' (p. 79) and to govern people's actions. Ofsted's *Common Inspection Framework* (2015b) provides a clear example from this context of such a text, as explored in Chapter Two. Key policy documents, such as the *Sainsbury Report*, were initially assumed to be regulatory texts and therefore important in alerting me to the ways in which my participants' everyday practices were 'hooked' into and shaped by the dominant discourse established at a trans-local level. In practice, however, policy texts such as the *Sainsbury Report* and the *Post-16 Skills Plan* were notable more for their absence in the data, with Ofsted documents playing a much more prominent role. The significance of this finding will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

Even without physically entering the case study sites, I was able to access documents that were relevant to the local setting. These included Ofsted reports, staff development programmes and the information available on the institution's website. It should also be noted that my professional experience gave me a detailed knowledge of the documents associated with the central co-ordination of the ITE programme that the FTs had participated in. This meant that I was alert to language and concepts potentially deriving from this curriculum in its written form, as distinct from the discourse associated with 'teaching and learning' within the FT's own institution.

Within the case study sites, I gathered a range of texts in order to trace their role as co-ordinators of action. These included images of items that the participants drew my attention to (such as a GCSE maths specification on the wall of a classroom), and texts that they shared with me (such as a report of the observation of their teaching). The texts observed in Milltown College (Ryan, see *Table 2*), from which I had not obtained institutional consent, were significant not because of their content but because of the role they played in Ryan's practice. He drew my attention to the GCSE specification and to the marked book as he spoke, and I photographed these in order to supplement the audio recording of the interview. These texts were not analysed independently of the spoken data.

I had initially planned to use photo-elicitation within interviews as a way of prompting talk about aspects of the participant's daily practices that they regarded as significant to them. As Mannay emphasises, photos may counter the danger that important elements of the research context might be overlooked due to their familiarity to both participant and researcher (2016, p. 31). Photos may also serve to give vague references 'sharpness and detail' (Banks, 2007, p. 65). In practice only one participant responded to the request for photos prior to the interview taking place. Nicole took three photos of her workspace and teaching environment, and these were used to focus a discussion about the location of her daily practices. In place of photo-elicitation I chose to use the 'Pictor technique' (King et al., 2013), a visual elicitation method which does not rely on participants producing images in advance of the interviews. This will be discussed in the section below.

Overall, the number and range of texts physically accessed was limited. However, this does not represent a significant methodological limitation, because of the other ways in which texts appear in my data. The value of 'listening for texts' (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 34) in the spoken data will be set out in the next section.

4.6.2 Interviews

Interviews are conventionally used to find out 'what another person has to say about her or his experience of a defining event, person, idea or thing' (Nunkoosing, 2005, p. 699). As a method, they are 'attuned' to complex, intricate subject matter (Denscombe, 2010, pp. 173-4), allowing me, for example, to explore the ways in which participants make sense of the policy context. The interview is not a 'neutral tool', however, instead producing 'situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 48). As Hammersley highlights, one way in which interview data is used is as a 'source of evidence about the constructional or discursive work' carried out by interviewees (2008, p. 91). In relation to my operationalisation of learning, this is a strength of the method, as it gives access to the ways in which participants negotiate the meaning of events and

experiences. The interview data is not regarded as a 'transparent window on the practices and context in question' (Terry, 2019, p. 19), but it is valued as a source of insights into the processes of meaning-making that these stimulate, and hence, of the FTs' learning.

Although IE informs many aspects of my methodology, there are important distinctions to be made here between my use of interviews and their role in institutional ethnographies. In IE, interviews are used 'not as windows on the informants' inner experience but in order to reveal the "relations of ruling" that shape local experiences' (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 15). In my study, I am similarly looking through or beyond the individual account in order to identify something of which the participant may not be aware. Learning is conceptualised as a complex activity, enmeshed in local and trans-local power relations, and which is likely to be inaccessible as a concept to the person engaged in it. Asking a former trainee 'what did you learn this year?' would be a fruitless and inadequate way of answering my research questions. But, unlike in IE, my focus remains on the individual and their learning, rather than on the institution or the ruling relations that constitute it. Interviews are not used as a way of mapping the institutional structure but of revealing the practices, participation/ reification and negotiation of meaning that together constitute the learning of the individual in their social context.

This approach is informed, however, by IE's conception of institutional discourse. Those who work in institutions, particularly those in positions of authority, become used to employing language in certain institutionally sanctioned ways, which appear 'natural' to other members of the institution (Campbell & Gregor, 2004, p. 71). When asked by an interviewer about their practices, interviewees, particularly those in positions of power or public visibility, will tend to respond using this institutional language, making it hard to identify the actual, local practices involved. But this is at once a problem and a resource (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 37), as spotting this institutional language can provide insights into the ruling relations in operation. When a participant refers to '*learning walks*' (Justin, interview 2), for example, this allows me first to question what they mean by these and how they are understood in their institution, but the term also forms a bridge between their local experience and the observational practices evident trans-locally, across their institution and in other similar contexts.

This institutional discourse is also evident in the texts that serve to co-ordinate the actions of individuals within the institution (Smith, 2006b, p. 67). This is achieved through their materiality, the text forming the fixed, atemporal element in a 'text-reader conversation' (Smith, 2001, p. 176), which joins multiple readers together and regulates their activities in a temporal sequence. The regulatory text constitutes a technology that 'stands free of particular moments of speaking and doing among particular individuals' and is hence able to

construct 'an order of facticity' (Smith, 2001, p. 176), as set out in Chapter Two. Even where access to the text itself is not possible, these texts appear in people's speech, through which it is possible to trace their regulatory effects. By 'listening for texts' in interviews, and indeed 'asking about texts' (DeVault & McCoy, 2006, p. 36), it is possible to explore the tensions and divergences that may erupt through the layers of institutional discourse.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the FTs near the start of their first year after qualifying and then again towards the end of the academic year (2017-18). The intention was to introduce a longitudinal element to the study, allowing the process of development from the start to the end of the year to be traced, although analysis of the data does not support this assumption of a trajectory (see Chapter Six). My initial plan to include further narrative interviews (Chase, 2011) with selected FTs to explore the influence of biographical factors on their development and to trace the transition from trainee to FT was adjusted following the pilot narrative interview (see *Table 3* below), as it became clear that the scope of my study was too broad. This narrative interview was not included in my data set and the question of transitions excised from my research questions.

Table 3: Interviews carried out

Participant (site)	Type of interview	Timing
Tina (Castle)	Pilot semi-structured, including Pictor Pilot narrative (excluded from data set)	Feb 2017 May 2017
Manager A (Castle)	Pilot semi-structured	Feb 2017
Nicole (Castle/self-employed)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1) Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2) – via video call	Oct 2017 Aug 2018
Micha (Middleton)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1) Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2)	Oct 2017 Jul 2018
Justin (Grange)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1) Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2) – via video call	Oct 2017 Jul 2018
Leah (Northvale)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1) Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2)	Sep 2017 Jun 2018

Kerry (Northvale)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1)	Oct 2017
	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2)	Jul 2018
Ryan (Milltown)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1)	Oct 2017
	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2)	Jul 2018
Susan (Fernside)	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 1)	Oct 2017
	Semi-structured, including Pictor (round 2)	Jul 2018
Managers B & C (Northvale)	Semi-structured	Feb 2019
Manager D (Middleton)	Semi-structured	Feb 2019

The semi-structured interview schedule (*Appendix 5*), including use of the Pictor technique, was piloted with one participant in early 2017, having followed Mason's 5-step procedure for qualitative interview preparation, which seeks to ensure that the resulting 'loose' interview structure is nonetheless underpinned by systematic, 'intellectual' choices (Mason, 2002, p. 69). This involved connecting my RQs to the questions posed in the interview, as shown in *Appendix 6*. I also noted the responses I expected to elicit, in order to be explicit about my prior assumptions and alert to their possible impact on my interpretation (*Appendix 7*). I returned to these assumptions when analysing my data and considering my findings. A semi-structured interview with a manager in the same organisation was also piloted (*Appendix 8*). Both interview schedules were found to work well, in that the questions were understood as intended and elicited detailed discussion of the issues raised. The Pictor tool proved particularly effective in this respect, as the next section will consider. For this reason, a Pictor task formed part of each of the semi-structured interviews carried out with the remaining FTs at the start and end of the academic year (*Appendix 9*). For practical rather than methodological reasons further interviews with managers did not take place until February 2019, after the end of the data generation period with FTs. Although this meant that I captured their views at a different point in time, when both their organisation and the wider FE landscape had potentially changed, this had the positive effect of extending the period covered by my study. The time lapse between interviews with FTs and managers also allowed me to become familiar with the existing data, enabling me to listen and probe the managers' responses more assertively.

4.6.2.1 Pictor interviews

RQ3 explores the inter-relationship of policy context and individual learning. As with the concept of learning, it was anticipated that participants would find it difficult to report how their practice was influenced by shifts in policy or to specify examples of this. It was also anticipated that participants would understand policy in multiple ways (see Chapter Two). These assumptions were confirmed by FTs' responses to the direct question posed: 'can you name any recent policy developments that are relevant to your role?' (see *Appendix 5*). The question was typically followed by a pause and often a request for clarification about what was meant by 'policy developments'. One participant responded, '*you're testing my knowledge now*' (Leah, interview 1), suggesting that I might be checking how much awareness had been retained since the completion of her ITE course. Other participants interpreted policy in terms of internal policies, for example, around safeguarding or British Values.

To provide a more nuanced perspective on how policy shapes the participation and practices of FTs and how meaning is negotiated in this process, I chose to use a Visual Elicitation Method (VEM), namely the Pictor technique (King et al., 2013). This VEM has many of the advantages of other visual methods, as set out by Rose (2016): VEMs may prompt the interviewee to 'talk about different things', including places that researchers cannot go, prompt 'different kinds of talk', including talk that is more emotional and affective, and reveal the taken-for-granted, by introducing an element of distance between the interviewee and features of their everyday experience; finally, where participant-generated visual materials are used, the interviewee is empowered by being positioned as the 'expert' who takes control of the interpretation of the material (2016, pp. 315-316).

Beyond these generic advantages of VEMs, the Pictor technique facilitates the graphic illustration of relationships between different people or entities, making it ideally suited to the exploration of collaborative working within teams (King et al., 2013). As King et al. highlight, when asked to talk about these relationships, professionals may seek to present an idealised version of reality. The constraints of the Pictor method, which requires participants to label sticky arrows and position them in relation to each other on a sheet of paper, may encourage the naming of factors that might otherwise be avoided and work to expose significant tensions between the constituent parts. Although my research questions relate to policy, rather than team-working, there is a similar focus on the inter-relationship between the individual and elements of a wider network. This relational focus makes the use of this particular form of graphic elicitation (Bravington & King, 2018; Terry, 2019) particularly appropriate.

Following the semi-structured portion of the first interview with FTs, participants were introduced to the Pictor task both verbally and through an instruction sheet (*Appendix 10*). This posed the question: *Who or what influences what you do in your job role?* They were then asked to use sticky arrows to identify key agents (people or things) relevant to their response and to place these wherever they saw fit on a large sheet of paper, making sure that one of the arrows represented themselves. They had a choice of three different colours but they were not obliged to use all of these. They were asked if they would prefer to be left alone to complete their chart or if they were happy for me to stay in the room. Sufficient time was allowed for them to reflect and consider their response. They were then asked to explain the resulting chart, eliciting a spoken response to the graphic prompt.

In the pilot interview with Tina, who worked as a language teaching assistant in an FE college and also in an independent school, the Pictor task generated over 15 minutes of speech from the participant, with only two further spoken prompts. The chart itself was restricted in its scope, compared with the 'classic' Pictor chart defined by Bravington (cited in King et al. 2013, p. 1149). It contained only six arrows, although the participant supplemented these with written comments as she spoke, adding the word '*exam!!!*', for example, to the arrow that was initially labelled '*curriculum*' (see *Figure 4* below). By contrast, a 'classic' chart is complex, showing a diverse range of people, the relationship between them indicated by the positioning and direction of the arrows. It also focuses on a specific 'case', which, in the field of research with health professionals where Pictor was first developed (see, for example, Berg et al., 2017), might be centred on a single patient. The pilot use of this tool suggested, however, that even a restricted chart, with a looser focus and less emphasis on the relationships between people, could be highly revealing in relation to my research questions. It is important to note that the chart was not analysed in isolation from the spoken data but by 'moving iteratively' (King et al., 2013, p. 1147) between the two. The piloting of the tool, albeit with only one participant, led me to identify a number of affordances that it offered: it was revealing of the practices in which the FT participated (such as the preparation of students for exams and the careful assessment of their needs) and the significance that these held for her (reified through the placement of the arrows); it also prompted extensive spoken interpretation of these practices, providing insights into the often fraught negotiation of meaning this involved. As Banks notes of the use of photos within interviews, the chart appeared to ease the interview process by playing the role of a 'neutral third party' (2007, p. 65).

An example of this is provided by the blank orange arrow on Tina's chart, placed at a slight distance from her in the centre. Pointing to this arrow, Tina raises the topic of her contract at the college (discussed more fully in the initial semi-structured interview) and tells me about a

job offer from another organisation, teaching students individually online. What concerns her is the rate of pay being offered: '*In general, I think there is a problematic: How low do you go? What is my threshold? How cheap am I selling myself?'* (Tina, pilot Pictor interview). This reflects a similar dilemma to the one inherent in her current job role, in which she views herself and acts as a teacher, yet is paid as a teaching assistant. When asked if her rate of pay influences the way in which she works, she refers to her values, or '*self-ethos*':

> *It's so strong that… I'm not doing that. It would be justified, you know, I'm not judging anybody else who is much more pragmatic and saying I'm not paid for hours of preparation […]. But I really want to become a good language teacher and that is still a journey, so I'm using every experience that I have here to develop.* (Tina, pilot Pictor interview)

In her view, the sticky arrow is not worthy of being named because the impact of contracts, pay and the financial constraints they stand for may be keenly felt, but not allowed to determine her actions. In summary, even an absence on a Pictor chart can provide powerful insights into both the context in which the FT works and the processes of meaning-making that this generates.

In the second interview conducted with FTs at the end of the year, I considered asking participants to produce a new chart in response to the same prompt but rejected this as too repetitive for the participants and unlikely (based on my initial analysis of the round one interviews) to produce significantly different results. Instead, I chose to show the participants their first chart, giving them the opportunity to comment on this and make changes as appropriate. This provided valuable insights into the extent, or otherwise, of the shift that had taken place both in the policy landscape and in their personal interpretations in the intervening period.

Figure 4: Tina's Pictor chart

Note: text marked with an asterisk* was written on the adjacent arrow. The terms 'fixed' and 'variable' were written on the flipchart paper.

* Learning aim + assessment of students determine what I am doing in lessons

fixed

My students*

Curriculum gives frame + topics*

*exam!!! timetable

variable

Material/study which helps me

Me

Colleagues

variable
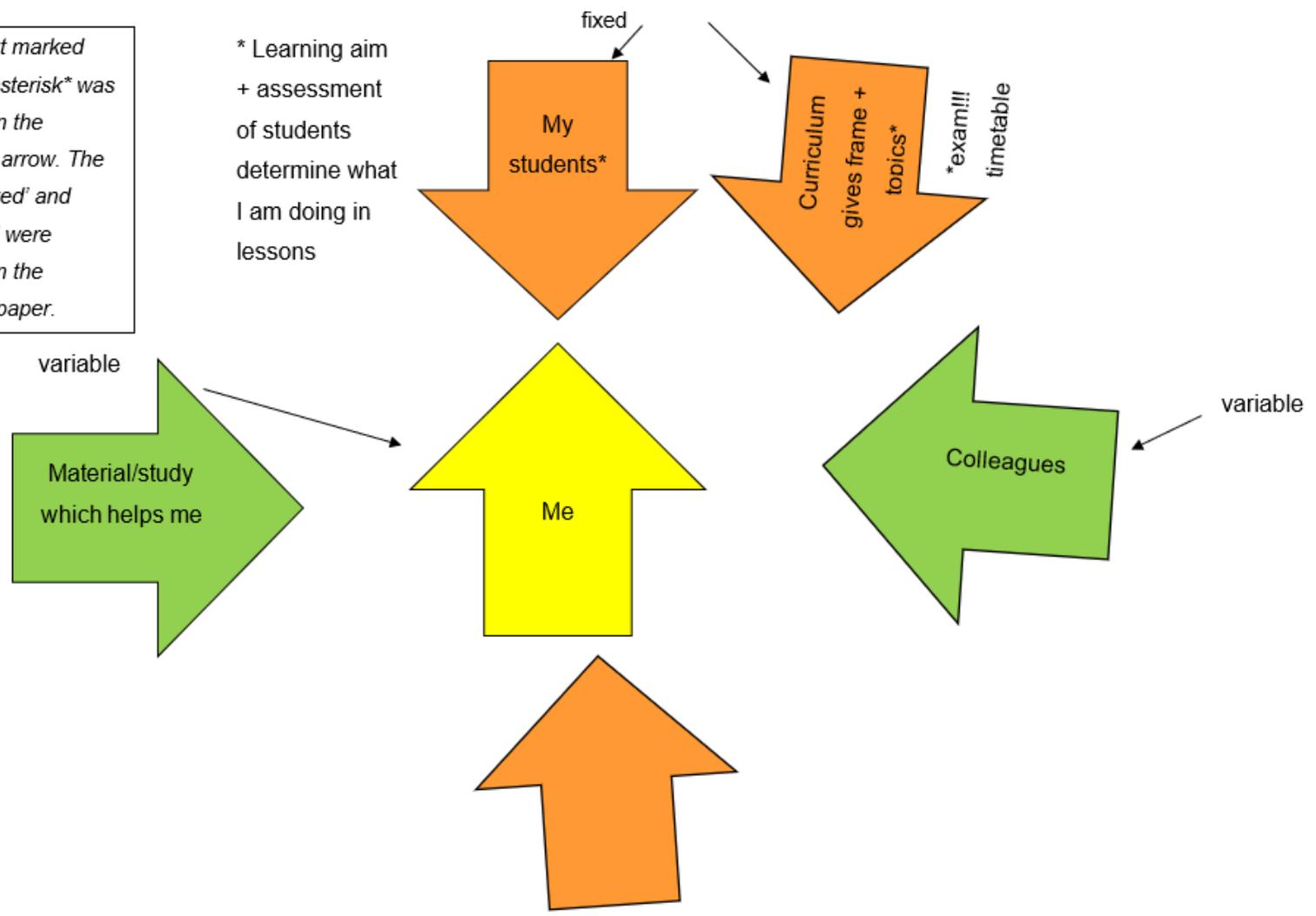
4.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has explored the methodological choices made in the study, connecting these decisions to the research questions and highlighting their ethical implications. It has sought to disambiguate the relative contributions of IE and case study to this methodology, arguing that the study constitutes a qualitative case study underpinned by a social ontology deriving from IE, and making use of methods associated with IE. It has set out the range of methods used, specifically document analysis and interviews, with consideration given to the role of a Visual Elicitation Method in enabling the research questions to be answered. Examples drawn from the pilot study have been used to support this discussion.

The next chapter is similarly methodological, setting out the approach adopted to data analysis in relation to the different methods of data generation and considering how this process contributes to the production and communication of my findings.

Chapter Five: Analysing the data

5.1 Chapter introduction

Data analysis has been an iterative process in this study, as is common in qualitative research (Creswell, 2007, p. 150). It started with the first pilot interview and continued through the writing of the thesis. The use of a case study design, incorporating a range of methods of data generation (see Chapter Four), necessitated a variety of methods of analysis. The key focus was on gaining a detailed understanding of the case, 'attending' to the different types of data produced (Yin, 2018, p. 164) and using these to provide an integrated analysis.

Four general processes have been followed, reflecting the four aspects of Creswell's data analysis 'spiral' (2007, p. 151): managing and organising the data; reading and reflecting on its content; describing, classifying and interpreting the data; and representing the data in visual form. These have been used to give structure to this account. But the movement between these processes has been in 'analytic circles' (p. 151) rather than following a linear progression, meaning that there are areas of overlap between sections.

This chapter sets out my approach to data analysis, considering its methodological implications, and justifying the methods used in relation to the different types of data collected and the research questions. I demonstrate how these methods have been used to achieve an integrated analysis that supports the communication of my findings.

5.2 Approach to data analysis

The use of a social practice lens, informed by elements of IE, to investigate the learning of FTs in their institutional contexts required an approach to analysis capable of connecting the detailed exploration of everyday practices with critical and theoretical perspectives on the data. IE emphasises 'explication', the materialist and empirical task of revealing 'how people working in a particular place are coordinated by work going on elsewhere' (Rankin, 2017, p. 2), in order to demonstrate 'how disparate interests are activated or subordinated' (p. 2). Relations of power are thus exposed. However, my focus on the process of learning within institutions, rather than on the institution itself, led me to adopt methods of data analysis that are not generally adopted in IE, primarily that of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is important to note that IE is considered an 'agenda for enquiry' rather than 'a methodological technique' (Walby, 2013, p. 141), with data analysis recognised as an under-developed aspect of this approach (Rankin, 2017, p. 1; Walby, 2013). These two factors make the use of other data analysis methods alongside the textual tools provided by IE both attractive and appropriate (Tummons, 2018b; Walby, 2013).

The alignment of research questions, data generation methods and approach to analysis is represented in *Appendix 4*. The study adopted three distinct methods of analysis: thematic analysis, and, within this, template analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010); contextual analysis; and document analysis, including CDA (Fairclough, 2003) and the mapping of textual processes (Turner, 2006). These correspond in part to the different data generation methods used, with thematic and contextual analysis applied to the interview data, while CDA was employed for the analysis of documents. The rationale for these choices is presented in this chapter. However, there is no simple correspondence between data generation and data analysis methods. Documents and visual data also contributed to the thematic analysis, while the interview data was 'sliced' in two ways (Mason, 2002): first, cross-sectionally, to enable themes running between the interviews to be identified; and secondly, non-cross-sectionally, so that a holistic perspective on the individuals in their specific contexts could be achieved and the particular aspects of their experience explored. Observations from the case study sites in the form of field notes were used to contribute to this contextual analysis.

5.3 Managing the data

Interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants and the recordings saved on an encrypted device. Notes were taken during the interview, partly in case of technical failure but also to record non-verbal information, such as body language or facial expressions. Immediately after the interview, further notes were made of my thoughts and impressions (see *Appendix 11*), and referred to when listening to the recordings in order to cross-check initial interpretations. I then transcribed the interviews to allow for the detailed analysis of the spoken interactions, including the language used. This was important because of the need to spot 'institutional hooks and traces' (McCoy, 2006, p. 123) that formed a bridge between the participant's account and the wider institutional and policy context. This might take the form of institutional discourse, such as the use of the terms 'excellence' or 'competence' (Manager D interview). I sought a balance, however, between including sufficient detail to retain the context of the dialogue's production (Kvale, 1996, p. 182), and going beyond what was necessary for an interpretative reading. Listening to the recordings multiple times in conjunction with my notes supported me in achieving this balance, as did the small number of participants, whose voices I could 'hear' when working with the transcripts. While I initially resisted the idea of transforming the spoken data by translating it into the grammatical forms associated with written English (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999), I found Wolcott's distinction between 'raw' and 'cooked' data helpful in this respect (1994, p. 13). I worked with the 'raw' data which was characterised by '*erms*' and paralinguistic features such as laughs or sighs at the point of analysis, but ultimately used the more polished 'cooked' form of written English to communicate my findings. This respected the probable desire of my participants, as teachers, to appear articulate and

coherent, while reducing the danger of misinterpreting the reified transcript of their speech. The process of listening to and transcribing the round 1 interviews allowed principled decisions to be taken about how to approach round 2. Rather than following a sequence of questions as in round 1, I based the round 2 interview schedule on areas for discussion and themes to explore (*Appendix 9*), in an attempt not to shape unduly the participants' framing of their experiences.

5.4 'Reading' the data

Mason identifies three ways of 'reading' qualitative data (2002, pp. 148-9): literally, for 'what is there' in the spoken or visual data, in terms of the words used or the items that are documented; interpretively, for the meanings and understandings that the data represents; and reflexively, considering how the position of the researcher informs the data generated and the interpretation reached. My analysis prioritised the second approach, viewing the data as a form of discourse to be read 'through' and 'beyond' (p. 149), corresponding with my theoretical focus and my primarily etic perspective. Elements of a literal reading were also included, however, as my triangular conceptualisation of learning (see Chapter Three) necessitated the identification of practices in which the participant engaged. Concrete activities such as encountering students on the stairs or speaking to a manager were regarded as significant (RQ2). RQ1 also signalled an interest in which policies were referred to by name (and which were not), as well as the language associated with policy discourses more broadly (Ball et al., 2012). This literal reading occurred in conjunction with an interpretive reading. My awareness throughout the process of data generation of the influence of my presence, as a physical and social being, on the type of data generated extended into the analysis process. There were clear instances within the interview data of participants anticipating what I would be likely to understand or relate to, presumably because of what they knew about me as an individual. This was evident in snippets of spoken data, such as the inclusion of the tag question '*aren't they?*' on the end of the following phrase alluding to the importance of colleagues: '*They're the ones who understand, aren't they?*' (Leah, interview 1). This positioned me as a fellow practitioner who was assumed to share the participant's perspective. A reflexive reading was essential in order to remain alert to the extent of my influence on the data.

5.5 Describing, classifying and interpreting the data

The first steps in systematically interpreting the data followed Stake's principle of 'categorical aggregation', as opposed to 'direct interpretation' (1995, p. 74). The purpose was to achieve a cross-sectional analysis of the data, identifying categories (referred to below as themes) that enabled questions to be answered across the data set. This was followed by contextual analysis, which retained the holistic features of the interview data, combining this with

understandings gained through document analysis and the use of textual strategies deriving from IE. Contextual and document analysis will be addressed in separate sections below.

5.5.1 Identification of initial codes

Transcriptions were saved as Word documents and the process of analysis started by seeking to 'generate initial codes' before 'searching for themes' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). However, it proved problematic establishing what 'counted' as a code (p. 82), and, by implication, what to identify as a theme. I found the notion of 'descriptive coding' (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 153) particularly problematic, as it appeared impossible to separate description from interpretation, even initial decisions about what to highlight in the transcript involving judgments about what was significant. This led me to seek to formalise the questions and assumptions I was bringing to the data, in effect identifying *a priori* themes. These derived primarily from my research questions, informed by my theoretical framework and review of the literature, but also included assumptions and areas of interest deriving from my personal experience (see *Appendix 12*). Re-reading the data with these *a priori* themes in mind allowed me to start to highlight relevant aspects of the data, as is shown in the initial coding reproduced in *Appendix 13*. Although this suggests a deductive approach, coding was not limited to the areas defined by the *a priori* themes. 'Family', for example, was assigned a code, even though it was not identified as an *a priori* theme, because it occurred multiple times in the interview, suggesting that it might be significant. It was excluded at a later stage, however, as it was not found to contribute to answering my research questions.

5.5.2 Template analysis

A review of the initial coding process made it clear to me that my 'codes' were ultimately closer to 'themes', due to their interpretative rather than descriptive nature. King and Horrocks define themes as: 'recurrent and distinctive features of participants' accounts, characterising particular perceptions and/or experiences, which the researcher sees as relevant to the research question' (2010, p. 150). Sensitivity to the unique aspects of the participants' accounts is balanced with a recognition of the significance of the researcher's judgments (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 82). The need to integrate these two facets and to find a 'middle ground between top down and bottom up' (King, 2012, p. 430) approaches, led me to adopt template analysis (Brooks, Mccluskey, Turley & King, 2015) as a style of thematic analysis appropriate for my study. In template analysis, *a priori* themes can be used where they appear valuable and appropriate, but they can later be dispensed with if the data is not found to support them. This was beneficial for my study because it allowed for a balance between theoretically-informed and exploratory approaches to the data. Furthermore, it is not necessary to move from descriptive to interpretive coding, themes being developed from the start in response to the 'richest data (in relation to the research

question)' (Brooks et al., 2015, p. 429). Another advantage of this approach is that an initial template can be produced early in the process of data analysis, before all the data has been collected or transcribed. In practice, I produced a template (see *Appendix 14*) from the interview shown in *Appendix 13*, and used this to approach the data from the other round 1 interviews, and to prepare for round 2. This template then went through multiple revisions as I applied it to the remaining round 1 interview data, deleting, re-ordering and extending hierarchies of themes. While the first four over-arching themes were maintained throughout these revisions, I decided to integrate that of 'personal dispositions' with the other themes, on the basis that individual dispositions permeated the participants' discussion of the other themes and could not logically be separated from them.

Following the initial analysis of the first round 1 interviews in Word, the analysis of the full round 1 data set was carried out using NVivo. Having already chosen to employ template analysis, I did not identify any further methodological implications relating to this use of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS). As Tummons (2014b) and Bazeley and Jackson (2013) argue, the fear that CAQDAS will drive methodology by leading researchers to adopt 'code and retrieve' methods of analysis to the exclusion of others ignores the current affordances of the software and downplays the role of the researcher in the interpretive process. NVivo was of practical value in allowing me to retrieve sections of text relating to a selected theme (Creswell, 2007, p. 168) and to 'cut' and 're-cut' the data as my thematic template developed. To guard against the decontextualisation of the data, which is a danger not just of software programmes (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, p. 7) but of categorical analysis itself (Mason, 2002, p. 166), relatively large sections of text were coded against individual themes, allowing them to be re-read in context. I took notes of changes made to the template as it developed and stored screenshots to record this process. As the final interviews from round 1 were coded, the number of additions and changes made to the template significantly decreased, suggesting that it adequately captured the themes arising in the interview data as a whole. This template is shown in *Appendix 15*.

King warns that the process of constructing the template in template analysis can cause the researcher to lose sight of the research aims and of the particularities of the data in context (2012, p. 447). This is further complicated by the use of a visual elicitation tool as an interview prompt, generating visual data which needs to be read in conjunction with the spoken data. A review of the template resulting from round 1 analysis led me to consider whether the identified themes enabled me to answer my research questions. The following sections address these issues in turn: first, the process of analysing the Pictor data; secondly, the revision of the template in order to connect the data analysis to the research questions; and finally, the use of contextual analysis to guard against the isolation of themes.

5.5.3 Pictor analysis

The spoken data elicited through the Pictor technique was analysed in conjunction with the semi-structured interview data using NVivo to support this process. However, this approach served to isolate the spoken data from the Pictor chart which had acted as its prompt. When working with the spoken data at a thematic level, it was therefore necessary to 'move iteratively' between this and the visual chart (King et al., 2013, p. 1147), so that the meaning of both was understood. An example of this process is Leah's reference to her timetable: '*I've put myself and the timetable together because that's what I have to do, you have to do, you know you have to stick to your timetable'* (interview 1). When Leah speaks of putting herself and her timetable '*together*' she is alluding to the close proximity of the labels on her Pictor chart (see *Figure 5* below), a spatial relationship that, as the shift in personal pronouns suggests, is indicative of the significance of the timetable not just to her in her role, but to all teachers in her position: '*that's what I have to do, you have to do*' (my emphasis).

Figure 5: Reproduction of Leah's first Pictor chart
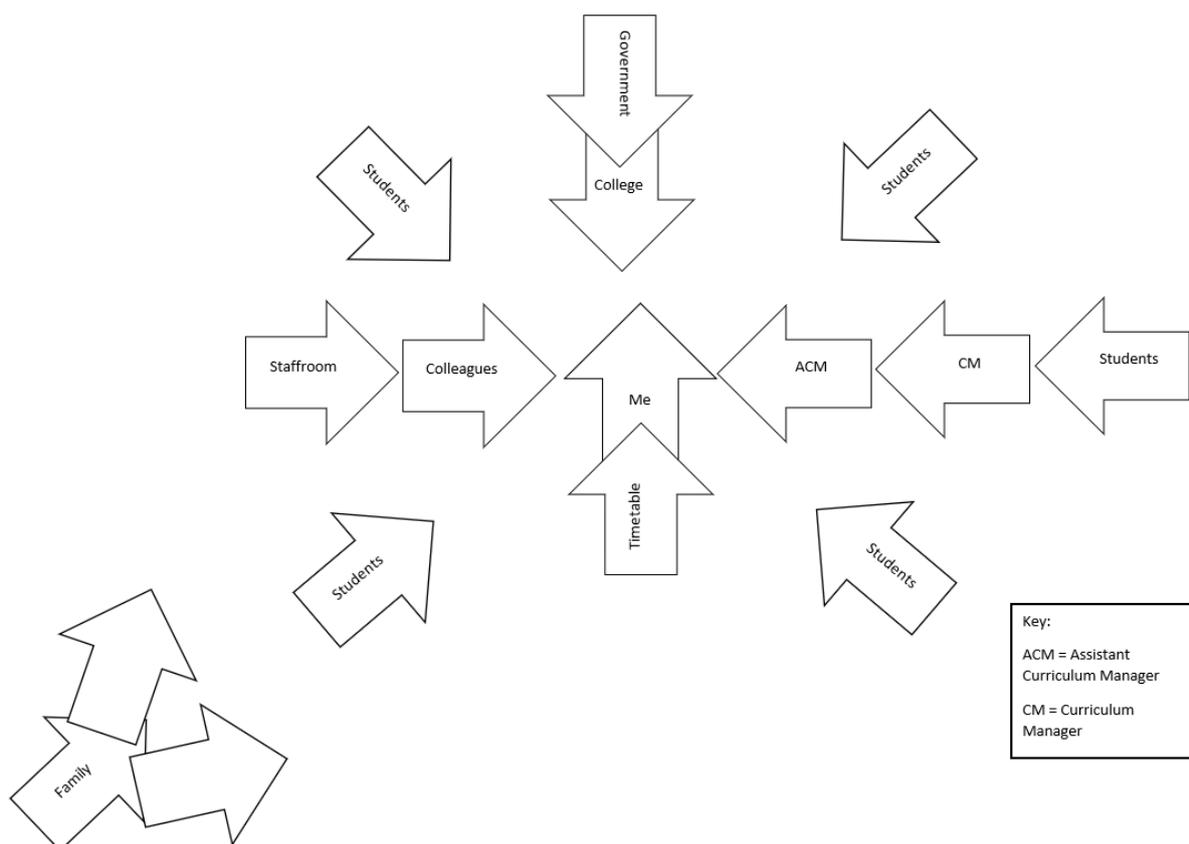
Interpreting the spoken data in conjunction with the chart lends graphic weight to Leah's description of this position; a reading of the chart in isolation could be potentially misleading. The remoteness of the label for '*family*' from the other items on the chart, for example, might be seen to signify a weaker influence on the participant's job role; in the interview, however, this placement is justified in the following terms:

the main people that influence anything that I do in my life and who have the biggest, most positive influence are my family. So I have to put them on there and I've put two arrows [blank] coming from my family because they're around everything and if it weren't for them and if it didn't fit in with them then I wouldn't do it because they're my priority. So that's why I've put them first and they'll always come first. (Leah, interview 1)

Here both the spatial position of the '*family*' and the temporal sequence of their placement on the chart are used to convey their primary significance to the participant.

The reification of influences and practices encouraged by the Pictor technique forms both a strength and a limitation of the method. On one level, the close connection between participation and reification means that the Pictor chart could be seen as a literal representation of the practices in which the participant participates. The timetable, for example, carries within it the practices of teaching and engagement with students which constitute the core elements of the teacher's role. As Wenger highlights, the relationship between participation and reification must be constantly negotiated (1998, p. 55); so when the participant chooses to label an aspect of their experience and place it as a physical item on the chart, a negotiation of meaning is taking place. This is then explored through the participant's interpretation of the chart, providing insights into both their practices and their understandings of these. But on another level, the label '*timetable*' has been produced through the administration of the Pictor technique and could be seen as a reified product of the tool itself. Indeed, the instructions given to the participant (*Appendix 10*) provided some examples of what they might include, such as, 'my staffroom', 'my timetable', 'the Sainsbury Report'. This was to encourage them to 'think as widely as possible' (King et al., 2013, p. 1140), but carried the danger of determining their responses. In practice, six of the eight initial charts produced within my study include the label '*timetable*'. The *Sainsbury Report*, however, is named in only one, while family (not mentioned in the written guidance) features in three. This quantitative analysis 'suggests that the written guidance may shape the participants' responses but it does not determine them' (Terry, 2019). Through the spoken data it is possible to detect instances where the labels appear particularly influenced by the tool or, indeed, by the position of the researcher, as I will explore in my findings. This was another reason why the Pictor charts and the spoken data were not analysed in isolation.

5.5.4 The revised template

Before proceeding to apply the template produced through the round 1 interviews to the full data set (Brooks et al., 2015, p. 204), I considered to what extent ordering the data in this way enabled me to answer my research questions. Although many themes dominant in my research questions (policy at institutional and national level; teacher development) were also

foregrounded in the template, the themes still failed to form a strong theoretical bridge between the data and my conceptualisation of learning. The themes allowed an exploration of the FTs' experience and perceptions of policy, but not how it shaped their learning (RQ3a). Similarly, the themes offered insights into aspects of the teacher's role and development, but these remained removed from the 'what' and 'how' of their learning (RQ2). A further degree of abstraction was necessary in order to apply the conceptualisation of learning set out in Chapter Three, which combined the three elements of *practice*, *participation/reification* and *meaning* in a triangular inter-relationship.

Working from the initial template, I regrouped the existing themes under new over-arching themes: *participation in practices*; *reification*; and *negotiation of meaning*. Participation and practices were joined in this way because of the difficulty of separating them in the data: where there is a practice, such as monitoring attendance, there is also inevitably participation in this (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). The same argument could be made for participation and reification; however, it was much easier to isolate instances of reification in the data, thus providing a further valuable lens through which to consider participation. The *negotiation of meaning* was the most problematic theme to apply, partly because of its level of abstraction, but also because all interview data involves the negotiation of meaning to some extent. This is inherent in the interview process (Hammersley, 2008, p. 95) and could therefore be applied to the full data set. It was used here to categorise two aspects of the data: instances of negotiation of meaning prompted by the interview itself and carried out within the interview time-frame, such as when the participant is caused to reflect on an aspect of their experience; and instances of participants conveying the ways in which they perceive and formulate their own experience, for example, their perceptions of the impact of their ITE qualification. These extend beyond the time-frame of the interview, although there may be some overlap between these two categories. There were three areas in the data where this latter form of negotiation was most prominent: in relation to policy; the role and status of the teacher; and in relation to learning. These formed sub-themes within the *negotiation of meaning* theme. At this point, a new set of nodes was created in NVivo to correspond to the hierarchy of themes within the new template (see *Appendix 16*), and this was then applied to the round 2 interview data, with only minor changes being made before the revised template was applied to the full data set.

5.6 Contextual analysis

As set out in Chapter Four, a case study approach was adopted in order to 'retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events' (Yin, 2009, p. 4). While the case in question here is not a single event or social process, there are clear limitations associated with using only a cross-sectional approach to data analysis (Mason, 2002, pp. 165-6): first,

elements of the data, such as individual trajectories or institutional processes are obscured rather than revealed through this method of analysis; secondly, the particular, such as experiences that relate only to one site, is neglected in favour of the common; finally, the interview data may become isolated from other data relating to its context. To address these issues, the data was 'sliced' in four different ways and grouped into 'bags' as shown in *Table 4* below (Mason, 2002, p. 156). The different slices can be seen as alternative lenses, allowing different aspects of the data to come to the fore. The aim was to achieve an in-depth exploration of issues relating to RQs 1, 2, and 3a, rather than to contribute directly to the theory development implicit in RQ3b.

'Bag 1' focuses on Leah and Kerry, who both work at Northvale College. There are striking differences between their experiences of learning, and specifically CPD, within this institutional context. A detailed contextual analysis, which draws on data from interviews with Northvale participants and managers, observation on visits to the site, and the mapping of textual processes (see *Appendices 19 and 20*) is thus particularly productive in exploring the interaction of individual and institutional factors. I sought to ensure that each of my participants was the focus of a similarly detailed contextual analysis, albeit through different contextual lenses. The longitudinal focus of 'bag 2' was chosen for Tina, Nicole, and Ryan to allow individual aspects of their learning trajectories to be explored. This lens could have been applied to any of the participants, each of them constituting an individual unit of analysis. However, these participants were chosen because of the prominent contrasts between their trajectories, even where, in the case of Tina and Nicole, they worked for the same organisation. 'Bag 3' was selected to ensure that the institutional context of school settings was recognised in a study with a predominant focus on FE. Although Justin and Susan (from Grange and Fernside schools respectively) were thus paired within one 'bag', the focus remained on them as individuals, the contrasts between their settings brought sharply to the fore through their different institutional experiences.

The final contextual lens is provided by a central theme from the data, that of monitoring, with a particular focus on the monitoring of staff through observation. This may appear contradictory, in that thematic analysis is being used to determine the focus of contextual analysis. This lens also differs from the other three in drawing on data from across the data set, rather than focusing on individual participants or settings. However, I chose to maintain this tension between thematic and contextual analysis by using this data to generate a vignette (see Section 6.5), through which aspects of the data 'taken to be representative, typical or emblematic' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 81) are presented as a 'bit of a story' (Thompson, 2017). The vignette's value for my analysis lies in the systematic process it involved of moving from themes identified across multiple individuals and sites to a single, contextual representation of these. The mapping of regulatory texts within one institutional

setting (Middleton College; see *Appendix 17*) provided the underpinning for the textual processes involved; however, the power of the vignette derives from the universality it claims: this is how an FT negotiates the experience of monitoring and observation within their institutional setting, on the basis of the data analysed within this study.

Table 4: Approach to contextual analysis

	Bag 1	*Bag 2*	*Bag 3*	*Bag 4*
Contextual lens	Learning in an institutional context	Longitudinal trajectories	The particular: school contexts	Monitoring
Data for analysis	Interviews with Leah, Kerry and Managers B and C from Northvale College. Documents relating to Northvale. Observation on site visits to Northvale.	Interviews with Tina, Nicole and Manager A from Castle College. Interviews with Ryan from Milltown College. Visual and documentary artefacts relating to these participants.	Interviews with Justin and Susan from Grange and Fernside schools. Documentary evidence. Observation on site visits.	Interview data relating to the theme of monitoring. Documentary evidence from Middleton College. Observation on site visits (all sites).
RQs addressed	RQs 1, 2a, 2b & 3a	RQs 1 & 2a	RQs 1 & 3a	RQs 1, 2a, 2b & 3a

5.7 Document analysis

The analysis of documents performed two significant functions in relation to my research questions: i) as a source of insight into the institutional and policy context within which the FTs work (RQ1 & 3a); and ii) as a way of tracing the reification element of my triangular conceptualisation of learning, and hence of identifying what and how FTs learn within these contexts (RQ2a & b). CDA was used in a limited way to address the first of these functions, while the tools of IE were used for the second. CDA and IE are closely aligned but offer distinct affordances in relation to data analysis. Both view language as a social practice, indivisible from and constitutive of social structures and relations. Fairclough identifies 'genres of governance', forms of action that serve to sustain 'the institutional structure of contemporary society' (2003, p. 32). There is a clear echo here of Smith's analysis of how institutions are constructed through 'textually mediated forms of organisation' (Smith, 2002, p. 39). However, as stated in Chapter Four, IE does not provide the linguistic tools through which a systematic analysis of the 'internal relations' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 36) of a text may be achieved. Fairclough (2003) suggests categories or 'aspects' of analysis (see *Appendix*

18) which may be applied systematically to a text, allowing internal syntactic and lexical features to be identified, as well as those linking the text to its wider social context. This combination of linguistic and social analysis makes CDA particularly suited to the analysis of policy texts (Taylor, 2004), engaged as they are in a 'struggle over meaning' (p. 435). As justified in Chapter Four, the use of CDA within my study was limited to the analysis of extracts from four texts identified as relevant to the institutional and policy context: the *Sainsbury Report*, the *Post-16 Skills Plan*, the CIF and the guidance on *16-19 Study Programmes* (see *Table 2*). This analysis informed my understanding of both the policy context and the institutional discourse within which the FTs worked.

An example from the *Sainsbury Report* illustrates the tactical use of language to frame the terms of debate (see *Appendix 18*). The term 'vocational' education is replaced in the report by 'technical' education, in an attempt to negate its inferior status in relation to 'academic' education and narrow its focus to education which is closely aligned with specific areas of employment. The report states: 'Technical education is not, and must not be allowed to become, simply 'vocational education' rebadged' (DfE & DBIS, 2016, p. 23). The writer uses a declarative statement to assert a truth ('is not'), and then seeks to reinforce this with the modal exhortation 'must not be allowed to', the use of the passive voice leaving the agent in this action unspecified. But, ironically, given the purported message, this is primarily a linguistic exercise, seeking to bring about change through a shift in vocabulary.

Fairclough highlights the significance of denials (such as, 'is not') in implying an assertion that has been made 'elsewhere' (2003, p. 47). The *Sainsbury Report* clearly argues against a wider discourse which threatens to perpetuate the current status of vocational education. This communication between texts, both explicit and implicit, is referred to as 'intertextuality' (Fairclough, 2003) and provides a further connection between CDA and IE. While CDA allows for a detailed linguistic analysis from the starting point of the text, IE provides a model for tracing the connections between texts as they arise in their empirical settings. Smith suggests two complementary and overlapping research practices: the first pursues texts as 'coordinators of sequences of action'; the second explores how texts are related in an 'intertextual hierarchy' (Smith, 2006b, p. 66; see also Chapter Four). Through these practices, it is possible to map the power relations of the institution, which constitute the 'actual conditions of people's work' (Turner, 2006, p. 142).

It proved difficult in practice to separate the mapping of texts as links in sequences of action from the mapping of their hierarchical relationships. This can be seen in the textual map created to illustrate the CPD process in Leah's accounts (*Appendix 19*). Under the thematic category of *reification*, references to texts, such as emails and observation reports, were identified in the spoken interview data. My prior analysis of key policy texts also enabled me

to identify intertextual connections with other texts, such as the CIF, that were not explicitly mentioned in Leah's accounts but implied through instances of institutional discourse (Smith, 2001, p. 165). The mapping process thus shows the temporal relationship between texts (Leah's research project leading to her students' written personal targets, for example), the passage of time indicated through the inclusion of 'time's arrow' on the map (Smith, 2006b, p. 67). But the relationships on the map may also be hierarchical, as in the relationship between the CIF and the *FE and Skills Inspection Handbook* (Ofsted, 2016), or between this and the Ofsted lesson observation. The map does not distinguish easily between temporal and hierarchical relationships, reducing its value as a tool for analysis. Furthermore, some texts mentioned by participants are not related clearly to other texts: '*appraisal*' thus stands alone on Leah's map.

The three textual maps produced in this study do not have the depth and complexity of those generated by institutional ethnographies (see, for example, Turner, 2006, p. 145). However, the purpose of my study was not to map the institution. Textual mapping formed only one element of my data analysis, contributing to my ability to recognize the position of the individual within their institutional setting (RQ1), and to trace how their participation (exhibited through reification) shaped their learning (RQ2). Even the absence of textual inter-relationships, as in Kerry's accounts (see *Appendix 20*), proved revealing, as I will demonstrate in Chapter Six.

5.8 Chapter conclusion

This chapter discussed my approach to data analysis, showing how my chosen methods enabled me to address the research questions, while remaining consistent with the ontological and epistemological approach of the study. Three overarching methods of analysis were used: template analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010); contextual analysis; and document analysis, including CDA (Fairclough, 2003) and the mapping of textual processes (Turner, 2006). The next chapter begins the communication of my findings, situating the FTs within their institutional contexts and discussing evidence relating to the research questions in a holistic manner. The second findings chapter (Chapter Seven) will then address the findings in relation to each research question in turn.

Chapter Six: The FTs in their institutional settings

6.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter explores findings relating to each individual FT within their institutional setting. This allows a bottom-up consideration of RQ1: *What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?* The chapter also seeks to illuminate the descriptive elements of RQ2a: *What do FTs learn in their first year after qualifying?* The model of learning set out in Chapter Three highlights the importance of the practices in which the FTs participate, and this chapter provides insights into what the FTs do at work. This level of descriptive detail ensures that 'idiosyncratic' (Mason, 2002, p. 166) aspects of each individual FT's experience are not elided through a focus on cross-sectional themes, and is designed to encourage 'naturalistic generalization' on the part of the reader (Stake, 1995, p.85).

However, the chapter is not solely descriptive. It is organised into four sections which cluster FTs and institutions according to themes, drawing on a wide range of data sources, as set out in Chapter Five (*Table 4*). This allows connections and contrasts between FTs and institutions to be explored analytically, while ensuring that all eight FTs and all six institutions are included in the analysis. Visual devices, such as textual mapping and Pictor charts, are used to support this process and to 'display' the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11).

The themes of the four sections were chosen for the following reasons: Section 6.2 addresses engagement with CPD, because of the relevance of this topic to the research questions (RQs1 & 2) and its dominance within the data; Section 6.3 considers the learning of three FTs from a longitudinal perspective, ensuring that individual biographies and dispositions and their influence on the FTs' learning are explored; Section 6.4 addresses the school settings in which two of the FTs are employed, allowing the distinctive features of these contexts to be considered; finally, Section 6.5 takes the form of a vignette, which is intended to illuminate the theme of monitoring and observation, but distils many other thematic strands running through this chapter. With the exception of the school settings, each FT and each site could have appeared within any other section because of the commonality of themes across the data set; FTs and institutions were placed where they appeared most resonant, that is, where the 'richest data' (Brooks et al., 2015, p. 429) was found. While connections are made within each section to the study's research questions, answers to the research questions will be explored systematically in Chapter Seven, which integrates findings drawn from contextual and thematic analysis and considers each research question in turn.

6.2 Engagement with CPD: Northvale College

6.2.1 Leah

At the start of the 2017-18 academic year, Leah had been working as a lecturer in childcare at Northvale College for two and a half years. She had worked within the childcare team in a non-teaching capacity for over 5 years before she was offered a teaching position and encouraged to complete the Level 3 Award in Education and Training and then the PGCE. She identifies strongly with the caring professions and holds firm expectations of the attitudes and behaviour associated with these: '*because we are health and care and I'd be very surprised if somebody didn't show a student that they cared, because we're all from that kind of background*' (Leah, interview 1).

Leah has positive perceptions of CPD, including the mandatory sessions that all teachers are required to attend at the start of the academic year. This appears to derive from her trust in managers to identify what is needed and to act accordingly. She welcomes the communication of their expectations, as she then knows what '*we all have to do*' (interview 1). This perspective informs her willing participation in the whole-college staff development programme for the year. Here, there was a choice between pursuing an action research topic independently and conducting '*supported research*' (interview 2) with a group of colleagues. Leah chose the latter, as she regards '*being in the room with other colleagues and being able to share things*' as '*more beneficial than going off on my own*' (interview 2).

Leah's participation in CPD is suffused with textual practices (*Appendix 18*). These allow the ways in which her individual actions are co-ordinated at a supra-individual level to be exposed, revealing both institutional and policy dimensions. Leah explains that everything she did as part of her research had to be recorded on an online tool, which could be viewed by those managing the programme, and which also provided key resources around the CPD themes. Her chosen area of research was the use of feedback for her Level 1 childcare students. This was clearly in written form:

> *it was all about students actually reading the feedback I gave them. Rather than just saying 'great, I've passed that, I'm gonna put it in my file', they actually had to read the feedback, my annotations and everything* (Leah, interview 2).

The reification of assessment practices that allows the students to build a portfolio of work is perceived as potentially endangering the learning process, with students merely compiling evidence rather than developing their skills or knowledge. To this end, Leah requires the students to set a personal target '*for next time*' (interview 2), thus allowing this to be monitored and progress recorded. She reports how valuable this was during the recent

Ofsted inspection, when she was able to demonstrate the tracking of the learners' progress against '*bronze, silver and gold*' (interview 2) expectations:

> *I had the actual booklet there, I could get a booklet from each student and say 'this is how I look at it, this is what they expect from me and what I expect from them'* (Leah, interview 2).

In contrast, Leah had decided not to ask her Level 2 students to record their targets in the same way because they were able to remember them without a written prompt. But an internal observation by the quality manager identified this as an area for development, leading Leah to conclude, '*I think next time I'll just make it more obvious, just write it down for everybody*' (interview 2). While she regarded her feedback intervention for Level 1 students as successful in terms of enabling the students to develop, the same strategy at Level 2 is perceived as a paper exercise.

A similar tension is apparent in relation to the reification of her own development through CPD. On the one hand, recording her activities online gives them structure and prompts her to reflect on her progress. She gains a concrete sense of having complied with college expectations, just as her students value seeing their personal targets '*ticked off*' (interview 2). But on the other hand, she is aware that meaningful development extends beyond visible compliance. She gives examples of CPD specific to her subject area that she values above the whole-college CPD programme. These include meetings of teachers from different providers who work with the same awarding body. These activities are valued because they allow a focus on context-specific practice. As Leah states, '*it's not to say the staff development about teaching isn't useful, because it is, but it's then fitting that into your subject, isn't it?*' (interview 2).

Leah clearly recognises that for CPD activities to have an impact they must be integrated with existing practices and understandings, which are specific to her subject and the context in which she teaches. This implies a process of negotiating their meaning, and hence, learning. But this is impeded by the combined pressures of the job, the completion of an online form following each group CPD session providing insufficient opportunity for reflection:

> *it's only recently, this past month, that I've been able to sit in the staffroom and share things and talk about things. Throughout the year I have been very busy, so I've not really had the time to reflect. I actually put that on my appraisal, 'I don't feel we have enough reflection time', I don't feel we have enough time in between lessons to think 'that worked really well, I'll do that again' or 'that didn't'. There isn't enough time to do*

that. And that does affect your teaching because you're always rushing, aren't you,
onto the next thing. (Leah, interview 2)

While Leah values the college CPD programme because it reassures her that she is complying with college expectations, aligned with wider accountability structures such as those stemming from Ofsted, she also suggests that informal interactions with colleagues, facilitated by time spent in the staffroom, are at least as effective in supporting her development as a teacher. She ensures that this concern is made visible in her appraisal record, but the CPD she values most is ultimately invisible and not open to measurement.

6.2.2 Kerry

Like Leah, Kerry had been working as a teacher at Northvale College for two and a half years before the time of the first interview, although she had only recently moved into a full-time role. She had also completed qualifications there as a student and worked in a non-teaching capacity before taking on voluntary teaching hours in order to achieve her CertEd. As a lecturer in Animal Care, she was part of a different department from Leah, housed in a different building and staffroom. Interview recordings were resonant of this vocational environment, with reptile tanks gurgling in the background.

While for Leah the staffroom is a site of positive interaction and development, Kerry's experience of interaction with colleagues is much more ambivalent. Once again, the practices in which she participated were mapped through their textual traces, a process which was significant in revealing her relative isolation and disconnection from institutional processes (*Appendix 20*). Paramount for Kerry is her '*crazy timetable*' (interviews 1 and 2; also labelled on Pictor chart), which means that she is teaching eight different groups, placing significant demands on her in terms of preparation and course management. She clearly draws on the support and experience of colleagues to address issues that arise and to discuss changes to the programme. She gives the example of the *Sainsbury Report*, which is expected to necessitate a change in assessment strategies and hence a rewriting of assessment briefs. But this activity is absorbed into the normal working of the team: '*we're used to it, so it's only like a couple of hours' additional work to change the format, so it's not a big one at the minute*' (interview 2). What could be perceived as the most significant policy development in FE in recent years (RQ1) is neutralised at practitioner level through a pragmatic focus on its implications for assessment. Kerry has also experienced conflict with some colleagues, in one case because of the difficulty of establishing her competence and authority as a teacher, as opposed to a technician within the same team. In another case, she refers to '*clashing personalities*' (interview 1), which makes presenting a united front to students in terms of expectations of behaviour challenging.

The staffroom is regarded not as a site of development but as a place of refuge, albeit one that has to be strongly defended. In her first interview, Kerry refers to the team's struggle to guard the staffroom from other people (primarily students), whether in person or on the phone. This is physically represented in their desire to '*put something over the window and say 'This office is closed. We're having lunch'* (interview 1). By the time of the second interview, some progress is reported in that

> *we have put purple boards up in the office, so they're a bit like a barrier so that if they knock on the door they can't actually see if we're sat there, so that deters them a little bit more. Apparently we're not allowed to put a sign up saying 'at lunch' because people in the office have lunch at different times* (Kerry, interview 2).

The perception of managers as a powerful force working against the interests of the teaching staff comes through strongly in Kerry's account. This contrasts with Leah, who perceives both her immediate manager and her head of department as working collaboratively to align the interests of students, staff and college. The battle to exclude outside interruptions may be partially overcome, but Kerry cannot prevent the intrusion of emails. These prompt the first practices she engages in every day:

> *Soon as I walk in at 8 o'clock in the morning, the computer's on and I'm answering loads of emails, trying to justify why my students have missed maths and English but they've been to vocational* (Kerry, interview 1).

'*Management*' (interview 2) are presented as an undifferentiated mass, who contribute to her workload and fail to give her the support she needs as a recently qualified teacher. She refers to the work she has to take home, and the impact this has on her ability to balance her job with her caring responsibilities as a single parent. Additional training, lesson planning and the recent Ofsted inspection are all referred to as sources of workload and stress that managers have failed to alleviate. By the time of the second interview, the relationship between Kerry and '*management*' appears to have become especially dysfunctional, despite the dark humour of the following account:

> *I get loads of emails from management in capital letters, so it's almost like they're shouting at you from behind the computer. And because I can't see red a lot of the emails look quite gappy to me, but apparently they're all written in bold red writing. So I just delete them because I can't read them and I've requested that they're not sent in those colours, and they're still sending them*. (Kerry, interview 2)

As 'texts in action' (Smith, 2005, p. 167) these emails are thwarted in their intended purpose. While the textual practices in Leah's work prompt other related actions creating a web of connected practices, Kerry's work is marked by disconnection. Although part of the same

institution, participation in the whole-college CPD described by Leah is conspicuously absent in Kerry's account. She dismisses the programme's content as just '*what we do on a daily basis*' (interview 2) and explains that she has been unable to attend most of the team sessions because of clashes with her timetable and the pressures of dealing with safeguarding issues. Significantly, the online hub that is designed to co-ordinate the CPD programme across the college is a source of frustration for Kerry and works against her full participation:

> *you're expected to upload what you've done on to an online thing, but I'm rubbish with computers, so every time I've asked for assistance, whether it's ProMonitor™ or uploading CPD, it feels like I'm ignored all the time* (Kerry, interview 2).

Like Leah, Kerry refers to her appraisal meeting as an opportunity to raise these issues and have them recorded. But while Leah registered the need for further time to reflect, Kerry focused on the lack of support for teachers from managers, especially for newly-qualified teachers like herself.

Strikingly, Kerry's negative experience of CPD within the college is not reflected in her attitude towards professional development outside it. In the first interview she refers to a coaching qualification she is undertaking independently, and by the end of the year she has signed up for an Open University degree programme. The course relates directly to the subject she teaches but her decision to undertake it is kept firmly outside college management procedures and CPD priorities. The reasons for such a marked separation of internal and external professional development become clearer when Kerry relates her past experience of attending GCSE English classes within the college. She reports being the victim of discriminatory remarks, directed at the minority ethnic group to which she belongs. When she filed a written complaint, she felt that no meaningful action was taken, and she left the course. This suggests a two-fold impact on her development: her need for a higher level of literacy skills remained unaddressed; and, more significantly, her trust in her employer and colleagues was severely impaired. This example highlights the importance of considering individual contextual factors (including ethnicity) in relation to learning (RQ3a).

With the exception of the practices that are undertaken within the Animal Care team, such as preparing documents for the External Verifier (EV), writing assignment briefs or welcoming new students, where there is a high degree of collaboration between team members, Kerry's participation in the practices associated with her job role is marked by frustration and feelings of disconnection. Leah is able to comply fully with college CPD expectations, which means performing visible acts of recording but also negotiating the meaning of these activities and thus developing her practice. Kerry encounters barriers at every turn, her struggle to engage in the textual practices required by the institution restricting the extent of

her participation and her ability to experience this as meaningful. It is only where she can participate on her own terms, outside the institution, that she appears to engage in positive professional development. This has implications both for how CPD is supported and facilitated within the institution, and for the recognition of CPD outside it.

6.2.3 Two managers

By the time the TLA Quality Manager (Manager B) and the Deputy Principal for Curriculum and Quality (Manager C) at Northvale College were interviewed together in February 2019, a shift had been made at institutional level away from the term 'CPD' and towards 'professional learning'. This was reified in the new *Professional Learning Framework* (2018-19), which provided the core regulatory text governing professional development across the college. The term 'CPD' was seen to carry negative connotations, of being '*done […] to*' (Manager C) rather than being in charge of one's own professional learning. The new framework was highly textualised, with the apparent intention of motivating individual activity, co-ordinating this across the institution and allowing for both internal and external monitoring. This can be seen in the description of the use of video observation, where shared texts are designed to propel the process of teacher development:

> *staff select the video of their choice, they do the analysis of it, they complete the evaluation form, they submit that and then it's viewed independently by their allocated observer and then there's a collaborative conversation about what the outcomes of that are and the next steps in moving forward* (Manager B).

As such, the framework encapsulates the tension between a professed commitment to meaningful, self-directed professional development, and the perceived necessity of ensuring compliance and accountability.

Managers at a senior level were aware of the complexity of the teacher's role and the challenge of preparing teachers for this through ITE. As the deputy principal reflects:

> *I don't know what qualification would prepare new teachers to go onto a teaching timetable where it's not just what goes on in the lesson, it's every other aspect of that, from sorting out your timetable to developing relationships with colleagues to developing strong relationships with leaders within the college* (Manager C).

The perceived pedagogical focus of the ITE qualification is contrasted with the broader skills required of the practising teacher, necessitating on-going professional development. It is also recognised that workload and the pressure on teachers' time militate against this development: *'it's so fast-paced, both in the classroom and in terms of all the other work that is required of teachers. If you could just come in and plan and teach, oh, it would be wonderful'* (Manager B). But within the constraints of this context, the role of the *Professional*

Learning Framework is to ensure that all teachers work to develop their practice and to co-ordinate this process at an institutional level. It is founded on a process of self-monitoring and reflection, where teachers identify their own areas for development and, with the support of centralised resources, work to address them. But their activity is connected through textual processes, such as the sharing of their workbook with their line manager and the review of their development at appraisal, with wider institutional monitoring. The piloting of video observation referred to above encapsulates this interplay of individual autonomy and institutional accountability. Both managers acknowledge that not all teachers will engage successfully in this process:

> *I would say a very small percentage of staff might not be able to apply themselves. I don't know, just supposing these tutors shouldn't have been a teacher or struggle with that reflection, being able to see what they need to improve on* (Manager C).

The reasons for this struggle to engage are seen as stemming partly from the individual and partly from external factors, such as the complex needs of the learners, the diverse demands of the role and the limited time available. But failing to develop in this way is seen as indicative of a failure to perform successfully as a teacher. From a manager's perspective, teachers who slip through the gaps in this institutional process, despite the support in place, pose a significant challenge to the college and to the quality of students' education:

> *But my argument […] is you know in order to be a doctor you've got to be fit to practise. A child or a young person or an older person's education is just as important in my mind as anything else so we should have the exact same level of high expectations of our teachers, but I just don't know whether we do* (Manager C).

The college Ofsted report of 2018 comments approvingly that teachers who seemed unable to improve had left the organisation, suggesting that, however self-directed the learning process, it ultimately remains within strict parameters of performance management. While Leah is able to learn and thus perform, Kerry's stymied attempts to participate risk exposing her to institutional sanctions.

6.3 Learning trajectories

6.3.1 The language teacher

At the time of the pilot interview in February 2017, Tina was working as a foreign language teaching assistant at Castle College and at a nearby independent girls' school. Her role was to develop students' speaking skills in preparation for A level and GCSE exams. She had completed her in-service PGCE through a voluntary teaching placement at Castle College, having previously commenced a secondary PGCE at the local university. She had recently applied for QTLS with a view to teaching in schools. She was qualified to Master's level in

Germany and continued to work on an ad hoc basis as a trainer of international peace-keepers through the German foreign office.

In contrast with most of the other FTs in my study, the practices in which Tina engages are primarily teaching-focused. Although the College has recently downgraded her job description to '*teaching assistant*' (pilot interview), Tina continues to approach her role as a '*teacher*'. This is evident in her discussion of the practices involved, and is conveyed graphically on her Pictor chart (see Chapter Four, *Figure 4*). Unlike class teachers in her organisation, she does not have pastoral or administrative responsibilities, her core focus being to use her teaching skills to support the students' language development. She contrasts, for example, the approach she takes to teaching two individual students, one of whom can hold a fluent conversation in German, while the other is much weaker. Her differentiated strategies are also informed by her regular discussions with the class teacher, who was her mentor during her PGCE, and by her prior knowledge of the group: '*I know the students very well from there, I taught them in class when I was a trainee, so we have a very good understanding*' (Tina, pilot interview).

The autonomy Tina exercises in her teaching is constrained only by the pressures of preparing students for exams. This is represented on her Pictor chart by the '*curriculum*' label, to which she adds the word '*exam!!!*' during our discussion, the orthographic features highlighting the frustration she feels at the curriculum's '*total exam orientation, the learning to the test*' (pilot Pictor interview). The key area of learning she identifies from her PGCE is that students react negatively if they perceive that her teaching is not sufficiently exam-focused: '*if I would stray, they would call me back*' (pilot Pictor interview). Tina refers repeatedly to '*the book*', signifying both the actual course book from which the students work, but also '*the Bible*' of the curriculum that this stands for. Against this backdrop, Tina's revised strategy is to offer '*little sprinkles [of additional material] but not too much*' (pilot Pictor interview).

Although now qualified, Tina's priority remains developing her expertise as a language teacher. This personal quest is not connected to the expectations of the institution, which does not regard (or pay) her as a teacher. '*I was told 'if you have a PhD and you apply for toilet cleaning you wouldn't get a higher rate either, you are just cleaning the toilet*' (pilot interview). She participates in the mandatory CPD provided by both the organisations for which she works, but also carries out her own '*research*' (pilot Pictor interview) and has signed up voluntarily to a distance learning course with a focus on subject-specific pedagogy. Her learning is not directed towards a specific career goal, but towards the personal mission of becoming a '*good language teacher*' (pilot Pictor interview). Indeed, her next steps are determined in part by her husband's new job, which is set to take her to a

different part of the country. Here, she hopes to teach adults, perhaps in a university setting, which would allow her to provide intensive language teaching, without the stress and workload she associates with teaching in schools. Her trajectory thus highlights the way in which individual and contextual factors interact, each serving to shape the learning of the FT (RQ3a).

6.3.2 The prosthetic make-up specialist

Nicole also taught at Castle College but in the Hair and Beauty department. She had achieved her own qualifications in media make-up at the College, before working in industry as a prosthetics specialist. This involved, for example, creating '*amputees' legs and blown off things like that*' for armed forces training, and took her all over the world: '*Hong Kong, Germany, Gibraltar, Ireland, all over England*' (Nicole, interview 1). She completed her CertEd while teaching at the College and was now working full-time after returning from maternity leave. Her teaching was split between HE and FE provision, with pastoral responsibilities for a group of Level 3 students. She also continued to offer Hair and Beauty services privately for weddings and other special occasions.

While Tina's Pictor chart is focused solely on teaching, this is conspicuously absent in Nicole's chart. She organises the influences on her job role into those associated with her line manager, those relating to her own concerns and activities, and those stemming from her students (*Appendix 21*). She uses arrows pointing inwards from the left-hand side to indicate sources of support. Her account conveys a sense of being caught between management expectations and student pressures, as well as between the contradictory demands of HE and FE teaching:

> *I mean I love HE because it's specialist and it's my prosthetics […] and I love all of that. But I'd rather do one or the other. I'd rather be solely FE and know what I'm doing. I'm constantly asking questions in the staffroom and you feel like you're pestering because you don't know. But because I've been here four years they're looking at me as if to say 'you should know this' and I'm thinking... [whispers] I don't know anything* (Nicole, interview 1).

While colleagues are identified as sources of support, this relates primarily to issues around safeguarding or student attendance, rather than around teaching. It appears that the immediate pressures of dealing with an upset or absent student routinely take precedence over finding collaborative pedagogical solutions. Indeed, she avoids interaction with colleagues by remaining in the prosthetics classroom with her laptop rather than using the staffroom. She also refers to the difficulty of engaging Level 3 students in dedicated theory sessions, but rejects the kind of strategies advocated on her CertEd, such as role-play or student presentations, as unsuccessful with her students. '*'I'm not doing that' [they say]*.

They won't do it. That's where I'm at' (Nicole, interview 1). This feeling of obstruction echoes Tina's encounter with student resistance but, in this case, does not appear to be overcome by a continuing experimentation with alternative strategies. It also stands in marked contrast to the approach that the College's Quality Manager seeks to foster through the '*take-away sessions*' she runs for teaching staff. These are aimed at building a '*professional dialogue*' and giving teachers '*tangible take-away ideas that they could actually put into practice*' (Manager A, pilot interview). While Nicole reports being '*told off*' for not using the staffroom and being '*made to go [there]*' (interview 1), this does not appear to have had an impact on her view of colleagues and professional interaction as a resource for pedagogical development.

A similarly restrictive attitude to learning is evident in her view of qualifications. It seems that the CertEd was '*just something that you do*' (Nicole, interview 1) in order to retain your position as a teacher, rather than stimulating ongoing development. She also reports being under pressure from '*up there*' (interview 1) to gain a higher-level subject specialist qualification but is sceptical about how interesting and '*worthwhile*' this would be. She does value achieving qualifications, however, both for herself and her students, as '*without college I couldn't have done what I do now*' (interview 2). She also cites '*graduation day*' (interview 2) as the most rewarding aspect of her job. By the time of Nicole's second interview, she has left the College, and is running her own salon with a view to establishing a training academy. The salon represents a space that is free of the constraints imposed by the College, where Health and Safety considerations, Study Programme requirements and the mandatory group tutorials on British Values all conspire to obstruct her central goal of sharing her subject expertise and enabling students to achieve qualifications. As she states:

> *now I feel like I can teach, and the girls are going to love it, and then they'll go away with their certificates […] they come in, they go out, they come in, they go out, I'd rather that* (Nicole, interview 2).

In this new environment, the strands on her Pictor chart are reduced to herself, her clients, and the nail technician she works with (Pictor interview 2). The pressure to achieve a higher qualification has dissipated, Nicole's chief concern now being to keep abreast of the latest treatments in her field. Unlike in the College, where she perceived an over-zealous concern for Health and Safety as a barrier to innovative practice, here she is free to make her own decisions. She also believes that her students will be freed from extraneous subject-matter: '*spending their time doing bloody British Values rather than learning what they're supposed to be learning*' (interview 2). Like Tina, Nicole is ultimately positioned outside the confines of the institution, her practices shaped by her own priorities and values rather than institutional ones. Unlike Tina, however, this trajectory is motivated not by the quest to develop her

pedagogical skills, but by the desire to re-inhabit the familiar territory of her vocational subject.

6.3.3 The learner as teacher

Ryan works at Milltown College as a teacher of Functional Skills and GCSE maths, a post he gained after completing his CertEd at Northvale College. This was where he achieved many of his own qualifications, including his GCSE maths, and where other members of his family also worked. Milltown College is a smaller institution but has recently become part of a large regional FE college. Through this college Ryan is undertaking a Level 5 subject-specialist qualification in teaching maths. By the time of the first interview, he had been a maths teacher for between three and four years.

Like the majority of the FTs in this study, Ryan identifies his students as a key influence on his job role: '*I focus on my learners because I think they're the most important*' (Pictor interview 1). But his account is striking in the level of identification he feels with the students and the extent to which his advocacy of their interests over-rides managerial expectations. This appears to stem from his own experience as a learner, including on the CertEd course:

> *I know my forte is behaviour management skills. I can relate to the learners in regards to the way I am as a learner. You'll remember I was terrible [laughs]* (Ryan, interview 1).

He gives examples of strategies he has implemented with his classes that are effective but remain out of sight of college managers, citing these as evidence of what he learnt through his ITE experience:

> *It gave me a broader understanding of what I should and shouldn't do and what I probably could get away with. The autonomy allows me to be able to do that and that's something I learnt on my CertEd, that actual word 'autonomy' [half laughs] and being able to be left to your own devices type of thing* (Ryan, interview 1).

Unlike Nicole, he appears actively engaged with the priorities and values of the institution, but is prepared to define these on his own terms. His first Pictor chart includes the label '*success*' (*Appendix 22*). He says:

> *I've put success down. But I've put success down not for achievement but for success within learning in the classroom. If I feel my learners have come in and learnt something within that lesson whether it's mathematical or in life I feel that is a success* (Ryan, Pictor interview 1).

Although using a term strongly associated with the metrics informing performance management and funding mechanisms within colleges, he subverts this by redefining it in

ipsative terms, and including learning that is not directly course-related. In Ryan's second interview at the end of the year, he removes the '*success*' label from his chart altogether (*Appendix 23*):

> *Because all year I've said to my learners it's not about that, it's about what you learn in the class and I hope you take it out, take it out that you've learnt something* (Ryan, Pictor interview 2).

In its place he adds a '*poverty*' label, referring to the levels of deprivation in the local community and the issues these pose for students. Again, a student-centred perspective comes to the fore.

While Ryan participates readily in college CPD, he regards much of the content of the Level 5 course as irrelevant, due to his prior experience and what he learnt on the CertEd. He is more enthusiastic about the opportunities he has had to mentor less experienced colleagues, and about a specific session he attended relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). This appears to resonate with him because it encouraged teachers to put themselves in the position of their students. He explains how the trainer used puppets to act out situations that young people might encounter, using a puppet '*dressed as a common teenager, for example, so he had a hat on, he had a trackie on, so he would talk behind it and he'd be talking about a scenario that he's had*' (interview 2). This apparently led Ryan to share a strategy he used routinely with his students to address the issue of stereotyping, describing his own experience of visiting a town in the region known for its middle-class respectability:

> *I was dressed in tracksuit bottoms, a hooded top with my hood up, pushing a pram with five kids. Now I'm in a place like X, so what would people think of me? And it's interesting to get their thoughts because instantly they would say 'chav' or 'deadbeat' or 'dole dosser' or all these things, so I said but 'what do I do? I'm none of those things'. So that for me is a powerful message for all my learners, trying to do that at the beginning of the course. Because then they get a feel for the fact that I'm only human* (Ryan, interview 2).

His powerful identification with his students extends to a recognition that he conveys a similar class identity, even if he now has the professional role of a teacher. Although this personal positioning may lead to conflict with managers, it appears that it is sufficiently aligned with college priorities in its outcomes (enabling students to achieve their qualifications) for Ryan's methods to be accepted, or at least overlooked. Indeed, he concludes his second interview by saying he is expecting a promotion.

It is clear from the three trajectories considered in this section that each is unique and shaped by a multitude of personal and societal factors that extend far beyond these FTs' shared experience of a single ITE programme. Although Tina and Nicole both move outside the institutional context in which they qualified, they expect to remain in a teaching role, indicating the range of contexts in which FTs achieving this qualification may teach. Ironically, Ryan's struggles as a learner strongly condition his continuing work as a teacher, and allow him to achieve a degree of institutional recognition. As with Tina, the attempt to define and uphold his personal values in this role prompts an ongoing negotiation of meaning and therefore learning. By contrast, Nicole's rejection of institutional expectations involves a re-assertion of the norms of her vocational domain, leaving her values and practices unchanged. This contextual analysis thus contributes not only to RQ1, in providing a bottom-up view of current institutional and policy contexts, but also to RQ2a, highlighting the individual variation in what FTs learn in their first year after qualifying, shaped by their relative contextual positions.

6.4 School contexts

Although Justin and Susan both work in schools, these constitute strikingly different institutional settings, serving as a reminder of the diversity within educational sectors as well as between them. This account seeks to foreground areas of divergence and congruence between the two school settings, while avoiding the assumption either that a direct comparison can be made or that these settings are representative of other schools. The experiences of each FT are situated within their specific institutional and policy contexts, contributing to a nuanced understanding of these contexts (RQ1) and their influence on the FTs' learning (RQ3a).

6.4.1 Justin: Grange School

Justin is Head of Drama at Grange School, a comprehensive school for 11 to 16-year olds in a highly deprived borough on the edge of a larger conurbation. He worked previously as a self-employed actor/performer, then as a teaching assistant and cover supervisor, before gaining a role as an unqualified teacher of English Literature at the school and commencing his CertEd. While he feels his teaching abilities have been recognised in his promotion to a teaching and leadership role, the school has required him to pursue a further qualification leading to QTS, not convinced of its equivalence with QTLS. In an apparent attempt to bolster his qualifications further, he has voluntarily started a part-time degree course at the University. The accepted value of the CertEd within FE does not appear to carry through into this school setting.

Justin's initial Pictor chart identifies multiple influencing factors on his role (*Appendix 24*), but the relationship between these is subject to ongoing negotiation and interpretation within

both interviews. Ofsted and the school's recent Ofsted report, which graded the school '*inadequate in all areas*' (Justin, interview 1), form a primary focus, as they have led to the replacement of the senior leadership team, with the exception of the head teacher, and the appointment of an Interim Executive Board (IEB) to steer the school towards '*academisation*'. The Ofsted report also drives a programme of CPD focused on pupil safety, and an increased emphasis on '*paperwork*' (interview 1).

Justin occupies an ambivalent position in relation to this heightened level of accountability. The '*B12 report*' (which lays the groundwork for academisation) is identified as a factor contributing to his promotion, as he was observed and commended on his ability to engage students effectively. But when questioned on the position of his own label on the chart (off to one side), he says:

> *I'm not in the line of Ofsted and the head teacher. I think my role is just as important as these roles because if it wasn't for people like myself and my colleagues then we wouldn't have any of this going on* (Justin, Pictor interview 1).

Without teachers dealing day to day with students, he suggests, there would not be a school at all. He recognises the need to tackle poor behaviour in the school, in particular racist and homophobic bullying, but shifts repeatedly between top-down and bottom-up perspectives, discussing at length the level of disadvantage experienced by many of the students which he sees as a factor contributing to their behaviour and academic performance. Referring to the '*SEND / PP*' label on his chart, he says:

> *I don't know why I put this at the top but I think this is quite a high priority for me. I've a real drive with SEN and Pupil Premium learners because I have the mindset of 'why shouldn't they have the same opportunities as other learners?'* (Justin, Pictor interview 1).

A similarly dual perspective is evident in his addition of a '*Financial*' arrow to the Pictor chart in his second interview. By this point, his leadership role has been '*deleted*' as subject areas are brought together within larger faculties: '*it's all been streamlined, we're academising*' (Justin, interview 2). In this new era, '*number-crunching*' (interview 2) is viewed as the primary consideration: '*it's all about accountability; everyone's nervous*' (interview 2). While they wait for a new budget to be set, teachers are subject to '*book monitoring, book scrutinies, lesson observations, learning walks, all those types of things*' (interview 2). Although Justin is critical of '*box-ticking*' (interview 2), and uses his social media connections with drama teachers in other schools to argue against producing unnecessary written evidence, he accepts that financial factors are critical to education, influencing the resources available to both families and schools. But his response to this challenging environment is

primarily personal, asserting that it is the positive attitude maintained by himself and his colleagues that has enabled the school to improve: '*[You have to] go in every day and think 'right, today is a new day, what can we do today to make things better for me and my learners?'* (Pictor interview 2). This appears to be his strategy for survival in a shifting and often brutal landscape.

6.4.2 Susan: Fernside School

Susan teaches young people aged 16 to 19 with severe and complex needs at a special school which is part of a charitable trust. The provision includes residential care, as well as drop-in support for families. Susan worked at the school as an HLTA for six years before starting her CertEd, and as a support assistant before that. She also had a parallel role as manager of the support staff, which ended when she took on her teaching position.

The contrast between Susan and Justin's initial Pictor charts is striking. Although any analysis in isolation from the spoken data has been avoided because of the dangers of misinterpretation, Susan's account confirms the contrast in working contexts that the charts suggest. Her chart shows four strands of connected arrows, all pointing to the students at the centre (*Appendix 25*). Susan's own label touches both the '*students*'' and the '*parents*', indicating the closeness of her involvement with both groups. She explains that communication with parents about their children's education is a priority and that she emails them '*every week*' (Susan, Pictor interview 1). But her primary considerations are the '*happiness*' and '*well-being*' of the students, factors which she sees as implicitly connected with the '*curriculum*' and '*assessment and progress*'. Communication with other professionals is also crucial to the care of the students: '*they all lead towards the students, because they've got a big influence as well*' (Pictor interview 1). Susan sets '*aims*' for her students which she communicates to the residential staff, and any night-time issues are reported back at the morning handover meeting. Regular reviews also take place with professionals outside the organisation, the Local Authority and its service teams working in conjunction with the school. There is a clear line of leadership connecting Susan to the head teacher, governors, and trustees, in contrast with the more ambiguous and mediated relationship between Justin and senior managers at Grange School. Indeed, as a teacher, Susan is also a member of the trust and is expected to represent it to the outside world. Ofsted does not appear on Susan's chart or in her account, the school's 'outstanding' rating appearing to reflect rather than drive the quality of the provision.

More tension is evident in the second interview, when Susan reports finding it difficult to step back from her prior responsibility for managing the support staff, intervening on one occasion to organise staff rotas. Without this management role, she sometimes feels excluded from decisions that affect her, while her responsibilities as a class teacher have involved her in

difficult conversations with parents and in new practices such as working with awarding bodies. But she adds only one label to her Pictor chart, attaching the '*Rochford Report*' to the '*assessment and progress*' label on her chart. This regulatory text strongly influences her role, as she works with the head teacher and other members of her team to implement Rochford's recommendations for the assessment of students 'working below the standard of national curriculum tests' (Standards & Testing Agency, 2016, p. 1). This is seen as a welcome contribution to the school's practices, which will lead to better recognition of students' progress:

> *you can't make our students do things, and a lot of the things are experiential, and it's moving them forward through that experience and understanding that the steps they make are very small, so your curriculum can actually focus on the happiness and the wellbeing and it's looking out for things that the students are really interested in* (Susan, Pictor interview 2).

When re-assessing her original chart, Susan reflects that although the arrows appear '*hierarchical, they're very much one really*' (Pictor interview 2). Compared with Justin's experience within Grange School, where individual accountability appears to take precedence over collective goals, Fernside School provides a stable and cohesive environment within which teachers are able to work collaboratively to meet the students' needs. Although both are school settings, there is a much greater degree of commonality between Justin's institutional context and that of FTs in FE colleges than between the two schools. This highlights the variation and complexity inherent in the current institutional and policy context (RQ1).

6.5 Monitoring and observation: vignette

Chris checks his phone as he pulls into one of the last spaces in the car park. Ten minutes to spare until he needs to walk through the staffroom door. He listens to the end of the track on the radio and then heads towards the college lobby. It has changed beyond recognition in the four years he has been there and now reminds him more of Ikea than a college. A glass façade has been added and the brickwork inside is painted in the college's colours, partially covered by larger than life photos of smiling students. The lobby is still quiet as most of the actual students haven't arrived yet. He swipes through the automatic barriers, barely registering who is on reception, and takes the shortcut through the canteen to the Victorian building that houses his department.

He notices that new posters have gone up in the corridor showing the college's mission statement and letting students know that 98 percent of them were satisfied with the quality of their course in the last survey. With another Ofsted inspection due, it's not surprising that the building is being spruced up a bit. The staffroom still has its familiar smell, though, and

nobody has managed to reduce the mess of files cluttering every surface. He can see the top of his line manager's head in the glass booth in the corner. Chris is pleased to find a computer free and logs on quickly so that he can check his emails and do a final bit of printing before class. He spots an email from the Vice Principal with information about the next whole-college staff development day and flags this to remind him to come back to it later. His manager wants to know why a learner didn't attend his maths class yesterday. He spoke to the learner about this at the end of the day but didn't get time to enter the information on the system. He responds quickly and then goes to the photocopier to pick up the worksheet for his starter activity.

One of the new members of the team is struggling to fix a jam in the machine. He helps out, silently regretting the loss of his friend and mentor, Fiona, who left at the end of the previous year. Although he is recently qualified himself, he is now one of the longest standing members of the team and seems to be the one that people go to when they have difficulties. He makes a mental note to contact Fiona later to see if he can speak to her about his application for the Health and Care post.

Opening the door to his classroom, he feels like he is entering his own space. It makes him proud of the effort he has put into creating a welcoming learning environment for the students, even with limited resources. After all, these are students who were switched off by school and had no idea what vocational path to take at college. He sometimes thinks of his department as a kind of 'prep' school for the deeply underprivileged. Many of the students would be better off in work, he is sure, rather than being recycled within the education system, but he tries to bring a bit of the outside world in. With the help of YouTube and his partner he has taught himself to do things he never imagined he could do. He even got them making drinks coasters last week.

As the clock nudges closer to 9am he becomes more anxious about who is going to turn up. He has the obligatory starter activity ready on the screen, with the handout set out on the tables. If anyone came in to do a walk-through observation, he would be able to show them his teaching file, containing his lesson plan for the session, his scheme of work and evidence of each student's progress against their individual targets. But this doesn't count for much if the students don't attend.

He reconsiders the layout of the tables. When he was observed with this group before Christmas twelve out of fifteen students arrived late. The observer suggested he prepare a 'late table' so that the stragglers wouldn't disrupt the rest of the group. But that could be a very large table! He included it on his action plan anyway, and when he was re-observed with a more punctual group it was ticked off as a development point. It is so hard when you're working with students with such difficult home lives. That's the problem with the

standardised approach that the college has adopted since the last Ofsted inspection: 'This is how we do it here'. But should that be the same way for a Level 3 group as for Level 1 learners like his? They think you're just moaning when you say it doesn't fit your students. But sometimes it's like forcing a square peg into a round hole.

At the start of the year, he was still in touch with a couple of others from his PGCE group. It helped to talk to people from outside college; you don't want to ask too many questions at work. It's not somewhere you feel you can make mistakes. But now he feels more prepared to try things out and just see if they work. You've still got to chisel in all the ICT, the British Values, the spelling and the individual targets, but you can do it in a way that works for the students. He's hoping that today's session will get them interested. They seemed to enjoy designing their posters in the last session and it generated some great discussion, although not always about the topic in hand.

The door opens and Hayley and Emily throw themselves at one of the tables, fighting over the seats. He knows he's supposed to challenge this kind of behaviour and establish the college expectations. But they are there, on time, and ask if they will be able to produce their posters that day. He adopts his most enthusiastic tone of voice and welcomes them in.

6.6 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has provided rich, contextual detail relating to each of the FTs within their institutional settings. Approached through four contrasting lenses, those of CPD, learning trajectories, school contexts, and monitoring and observation, the complex interplay of the FTs' practices and their institutional contexts has been explored. Practices have been found to be shaped not only by the social relations of the institution, co-ordinated with wider policy pressures, but by the personal experiences and dispositions of the individual FTs. While certain themes, such as that of accountability, resonate across organisations, divergent responses are evident even within a single organisation to the same institutional prompts. The experiences of the FTs in school settings are particularly diverse, highlighting the importance of adopting a contextual approach that distinguishes between settings. The next chapter will seek to combine contextual and thematic analysis in order to address the research questions, while continuing to recognise the unique aspects of the individuals and contexts that make up the case.

Chapter 7: Discussion of findings

7.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter seeks to answer my research questions, listed again here for the purpose of clarity:

1. What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?
2. a) What do former trainees learn in their first year after completing their formal qualification?
   b) How do they learn this?
3. a) How does the current institutional and policy context shape the learning of former trainees?
   b) How may the relationship between the learning of former trainees and the institutional and policy context be theorised?

Findings are discussed in relation to each question, drawing on both thematic and contextual analysis. By connecting the research questions to the three dimensions of the relational model of learning (practice; participation/reification; and the negotiation of meaning) that inform my methodology and structure my thematic analysis I have sought to maintain the complexity of the inter-relationships between research questions, while organising and presenting my findings in a systematic way. RQ1 is in part addressed through the review of literature in Chapters One and Two; but it is addressed empirically in Section 7.2 through a focus on reification. As the counterpart of participation, reification provides insights into the materially embedded practices of the FTs, connecting them with the trans-local relations of the institution. The current institutional and policy context of these FTs can thus be examined, and ways suggested in which this may be shared with other individuals beyond this study.

While RQ1 is approached through the lens of reification, the second descriptive research question, RQ2a, involves the complementary dimension of participation in practice. Wenger states (of claims processors): 'one reason they do not think of their job as learning is that what they learn *is* their practice' (1998, p. 95, italics in original). Successful completion of a claim is viewed by the claims processors as performance of their job role, rather than an instance of learning. Although Wenger's assertion here over-identifies learning with practice, prioritising the perceptions of the claims processors and disregarding the other dimensions of his social theory of learning, identification of the practices in which the FTs engage is significant in enabling me to identify what they learn. This will be explored in Section 7.3.

The second part of RQ2 asks *how* the FTs learn (RQ2b), necessitating a focus on the third dimension of the learning model, the negotiation of meaning. In Wenger's analysis, meaning must be negotiated because of the continual interaction of the dual processes of participation and reification (1998, p. 52). Even apparently routine activities involve a continual struggle to 'experience the world […] as meaningful' (p. 53), meaning being created through a dynamic process of 'interpreting and acting' (p. 54). To process a medical claim, the processor must interpret the meaning of artefacts such as claim forms while acting within the shared history of participation open to claims processors (p. 55). Section 7.4 explores how the FTs in this study navigate a web of textual processes, using their knowledge and experience of what participation in this practice entails to take meaningful action.

The negotiation of meaning is deeply connected with the context in which the practice takes place. The duality of participation/reification binds the FT to their institutional and policy context, the interconnection of action and interpretation necessitating the negotiation of meaning within a specific material context. Section 7.5 considers how the negotiation of meaning, and thus the learning of the FTs, is shaped by their current institutional and policy context (RQ3a).

The approach to this chapter, as set out above, is based on the assumption that the model of learning drawn from Wenger (1998) and Lave and Wenger (1991), complemented by the understanding of texts and ruling relations deriving from IE, provides an adequate means of answering my research questions. The previous chapters of this thesis have sought to justify this approach, both theoretically and in relation to the data. My final research question (RQ3b), however, demands a critical evaluation of the contribution of this specific theoretical approach to understanding the relationship between context and learning, and a consideration of what may lie beyond its reach. Section 7.6, therefore, provides a discussion of the theorisation of learning that may be drawn from the empirical findings set out in the previous sections of this chapter. It also addresses the potential limitations of these findings, and other ways in which this question might be approached.

7.2 What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England? (RQ1)

As justified above, the current institutional and policy context of the FTs will be addressed empirically through the concept of reification. Although instances of reification pervade the data, three dominant areas have been selected here because of their power to illuminate this research question. They are prominent themes in the data by virtue of the number of times they appear, but their significance lies in the strength of the connections they afford between

this dimension of the theoretical model (reification) and the focus of this research question (RQ1). These three themes are the *timetable*; *qualification*; and *observation*.

The first instance of reification to be considered is that of the *timetable*, which represents in written form the organisation of the FTs' teaching practices. It is through the timetable that the individual teacher is inscribed in the institution, their contractual duties laid out in terms of contact hours with students, levels of teaching, and when and where this teaching takes place. When asked 'what have you done today?' (interviews 1 and 2), FTs most commonly refer to their timetable. As Leah explains, '*that's what I have to do […], you have to stick to your timetable […], that's what you're doing*' (Leah, Pictor interview 1). The timetable thus fixes institutionally recognised elements of the teacher's participation in time and space. This applies equally to FTs in schools and colleges, although contracts may vary.

For Kerry, the timetable signifies intense pressure on her ability to '*cope*' (Kerry, interview 2). Her '*crazy timetable*' (Pictor interview 1) is '*horrific*' because it represents the eight different groups she teaches, squeezing out time for planning, preparation, marking and pastoral care, to the extent that '*you just feel like you can't actually take a 10 minute breath*' (Kerry, Pictor interview 1). Similarly, Leah is encircled by '*students*' on her first Pictor chart, representing the different groups she teaches. She adds further '*student*' labels when she returns to this at the end of the year, because:

> I've got my Health and Social Care Level 1, Childcare Level 2, which is two groups, so that's two lots of teaching separate times, the 6-month Level 2, the Level 3 second years and the Level 3 first years, which were two groups, so it's like eight groups really (Leah, Pictor interview 2).

While for Leah this is not a cause for complaint ('*everybody's the same*', Pictor interview 2), the constant drive towards greater 'efficiency' (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005) that dominates the 'new managerialism' (Randle & Brady, 1997 p. 125) and informed the Area Based Reviews within FE (HMG, 2015a, p. 4) is evident here in the FTs' accounts of their working week: '*Monday morning's my only prep time*', Ryan states, '*so it's really important that I look at my scheme of work, and print out everything I need for the week*' (interview 1). The pedagogical process is here reduced to the technical task of checking one written document and duplicating more.

There is a deep-seated acceptance, furthermore, that without the timetable and the student contact hours it represents, the FT might not be in paid employment at all. This is evident in all the FTs' accounts, with the exception of Susan's, perhaps because the specialised function of her school cushions her from the competitive pressures that mark both the FE

context and that of a school judged '*inadequate*' (Justin, interview 1). As both Kerry and Leah state, using almost identical wording, '*if it weren't for the students we wouldn't have a job*' (Leah, Pictor interview 1; echoed in Kerry, Pictor interview 1), indicating the 'logic of the new work order' (Gee & Lankshear, 1995, p. 7), wherein managers' responsibilities and concerns are adopted by the '"front line workers" themselves' (p. 7). The urge to complain about excessive demands on the FTs' time is neutralised by a dominant discourse that places primary emphasis on metrics or '*number-crunching*' (Justin, interview 2). This is evident when Nicole voices her manager's predicted response to the issue of the 10 hours she is required to '*do*' (Pictor interview 1) beyond the 37 on her timetable because of gaps between her scheduled teaching hours: '"*but it's [curriculum development time], Nic, you could go home if you wanted". She hasn't said that, but she would. You just know what they're going to say before they even say it*' (Nicole, Pictor interview 1). Managers ('*they*') are seen as spokespeople for an undefined but predictable force that controls what can be said and done. While Nicole's response suggests a highly passive acceptance of her situation, the timetable, in conjunction with a powerful discourse of efficiency and necessity, limits the potential of the FTs to challenge the structure of their work. For it is through the timetable that the ruling relations of the institution are constituted and made visible, and thus that the nature of the current institutional and policy context can be identified (RQ1).

A second prominent area of reification in the data relates to *qualification*, in the sense of achieving external criteria laid down by awarding bodies. The external qualification prescribes what must be taught and performs a regulatory function over the scheme of work, a teacher-produced text which comes to stand for the curriculum, and even knowledge, itself. Significantly, Nicole's preparation to teach on a self-employed basis is expressed in terms of such physical artefacts:

> I'm going to have a big PowerPoint up there, I've done all my lesson plans, all my schemes of work, I've looked into accrediting how to do it, so I've done all my PowerPoints for it, so everything paperwork-wise is ready to roll (Nicole, interview 2).

Where teaching practices do appear, they are predominantly assessment related. Ryan's discussion of his teaching occurs with reference to the GCSE maths syllabus, which he has pinned to the classroom wall:

> Over there, that's all the topics you need to know at GCSE. There is no way in an entire year I could teach those topics. Not a chance. So what I've done is we've

highlighted which topics they need to master, so fractions, for example, we're going to be spending about 6 or 7 weeks on them (Ryan, interview 1).

Although this extract conveys careful attention to the students' individual needs, Ryan's focus is ultimately on adopting teaching and assessment practices that will enable the students to pass. He discusses at length his design of an initial assessment strategy that will allow him to demonstrate to the student their progress within each lesson, in response to feedback from an observer:

So he was telling me how to record that data, because that's your progress in learning in that lesson […] It's all about creating the correct spreadsheet to go on the front of the book or on the back of the book (Ryan, interview 2).

Like Ryan, most of the FTs discuss improving their teaching in terms of improving the visibility of assessment practices, in part to motivate students, but equally to make student progress visible to an observer. The focus of Leah's self-directed staff development is thus monitoring students' personal targets, which they display '*on their tables'* for her to '*tick off*' (Leah, interview 2).

This focus on assessment points to the significance of monitoring of students as an aspect of qualification. With the exception of Tina, who does not refer to administrative responsibilities, all the FTs spend non-timetabled time administering assessment processes and tracking student attendance and achievement. Speaking during the students' half-term holiday, Micha states: '*today I have been doing my admin, so all my marking, getting my IV stuff sorted, and putting it all up on the […] system*' (interview 1). In the context of FE, where student achievement determines funding, centralised monitoring systems, such as ProMonitor™, perform a significant role. The dominance of these systems stems not just from the time it takes to enter the required information, but from their function as tools of reification in co-ordinating the work of individuals across the institution. When Ryan writes '*I haven't seen this learner*' (interview 1), he expects the '*attendance people*' (interview 1) to pursue the reasons for the learner's non-attendance. Similarly, Nicole refers to '*doing ProMonitor™*' (interview 1) and '*chasing up students*' (interview 1). Smith's analysis of the role of texts in constituting the modern institution illuminates the significance of ProMonitor™ in this context. As Smith observes, 'today, large-scale organization inscribes its processes into textual modes as a continuous feature of its functioning' (1990, p. 213). These modes, she asserts, have been extended through 'the development of the computer' (p. 213). The process of online recording reduces the face to face practices of teaching and assessment to written entries on the '*system*', which allow the actions of both students and teachers to be

co-ordinated and monitored. The development of online systems and the extended reach of accountability processes that they enable is a key aspect of the current institutional context for the majority of the FTs (RQ1).

An awareness of the limitations of these written entries, however, and their failure to capture the extent of the personal and social issues affecting the students, is evident in three of the FTs' accounts. When a student raises a serious safeguarding concern, Nicole refers to the '*paperwork*' (interview 1) this generates, as well as the knock-on effect on student attendance. But she recognises the severity of the issues faced by the students, and, by extension, herself as their teacher:

> *Home troubles and mental health and things like that. I am literally a counsellor. We had three that had bipolar last year […] Three in one year. That's a lot. Personality disorders, anorexia, bulimia, ... ADHDD, that's a new one for me this week* (Nicole, interview 1).

Similarly, Kerry refers to the importance of detecting safeguarding issues (Pictor interview 1) but recognises the difficulty of relying on written comments in ProMonitor™ to do so, as these are constrained by the bounds of confidentiality. The flow of information which the centralised system is designed to ensure is impeded by the limits of reification, as not everything can be put into writing. Nor can written comments encompass the complex web of factors affecting students. As Leah states of student attendance, '*it's not as easy as coming in every day […], it's not as cut and dry*' (Pictor interview 1). While the online system purports to facilitate transparent communication across the institution, it is hindered by the 'double edge of reification' (Wenger, 1998, p. 61), unable to encompass the complex and shifting processes of participation. The tension between institutional expectations of transparency and the underlying complexity of practice marks the FTs' experience of these online systems.

A similar tension is evident in relation to the requirement for vocational students to achieve GCSEs in maths and English. Within the strand of *qualification*, this policy forms a key aspect of reification in the data and thus of the current institutional and policy context for many of the FTs (RQ1). Except for Tina, all the FTs working in FE colleges refer to the activity of monitoring student attendance in maths and English classes, whether through emails or other written records. The achievement of a grade itself constitutes a powerful form of reification, serving as a barrier or gateway to further study. Micha experiences this through her Foundation level students, defined as such not because of their vocational abilities but because of their failure to achieve the requisite grades in maths and English:

many of them have aspirations to move on to Level 2 and Level 3 programmes in
Hair and Beauty, for example. They already create acrylic nails, they're already
doing hair, […] many of them have weekend jobs in that sort of environment. We
can't let them do the Level 1 course because they can't get better than a D at maths
because it's not their strong suit, so I think it's become a barrier to progression for a
lot of these kids (Micha, interview 1)

Constrained by the legislative framework that demands these qualifications as a 'condition of funding' (DfE, 2017, p. 12), the only 'space for action' (Ball et al., 2012, p. 6) available to teachers is in how they mediate the requirements to students ('*I think you can sometimes word it in a more nurturing way*' (Leah, Pictor interview 1)) and in how they design and teach their own curriculum. Susan, in the environment of a special school, perceives the revision of student assessment following the Rochford Review (Standards & Testing Agency, 2016) as an opportunity to better meet the needs of her learners, but for other participants, in both school and colleges, the rigid demands of qualification prompt a range of adaptive strategies, in order to evade the '*strait-jacket*' of exams (Tina, interview 1), to counter '*box-ticking*' (Justin, interview 2), and to help students to achieve genuine '*success*' (Ryan, Pictor interview 1). The qualification is a powerful influence on their practice, but is recognised as distinct from what they view as relevant or genuine learning.

A final key area of reification in the data which is indicative of the current institutional and policy context is that of *observation*. As suggested by the examples above, FTs work to offer a visible demonstration of institutional expectations. This is achieved in part through the production of artefacts such as emails and written records, but also through the performance of teaching practices captured in formal lesson observations, '*learning walks*' (Justin, interview 2; Middleton manager interview) and '*walk throughs*' (Micha, interview 2). These modes of observation are explicitly spatial, opening up the domain of the classroom to the wandering regulatory gaze and connecting the local practices of the teacher to trans-local ruling relations. They are also textual, employing written observation records to connect teachers' practices with other institutional processes, such as the process of self-assessment (Ofsted, 2015b) or participation in CPD. As one Quality Improvement Manager states:

I'm really keen to link more closely the observation reports with CPD activity and
performance reviews. I'm very keen to get that kind of through-put. I've done a lot of
work in terms of the quality of those observation reports, because I strongly believe
that that's a lasting legacy. That written report is a lasting legacy, it's the only lasting
legacy of that observation (Manager A, Castle College).

While this manager recognises the powerful role of reification as a 'source of remembering' (Wenger, 1998, p. 88), of providing an 'enduring imprint' (p. 88) or '*lasting legacy'* of practice, she only implicitly recognises its 'double edge' (Wenger, 1998, p. 61), whereby the written record conceals or misrepresents the practice, simultaneously acting as a source of 'forgetting' what the practice involves (p. 88). As with their perception of qualification, this duality is experienced by many of the FTs as '*box-ticking*' (Justin, interview 2; Micha, interview 2), the performance of certain behaviours for the purpose of observation or external scrutiny, which are not representative of their everyday work with students. Justin thus challenges the expectation to show marked written work from his drama students: '*why should we just box-tick for the sake of box-ticking? […] The priority should be what is best for our learners'* (interview 2). Micha refers to the experience of lesson observation in similar terms:

> It's a box-ticking exercise that is very subjective and you can't fit it all in. It's not possible to have pace and challenge and support and checking spelling on everybody's piece of work when it's a ten-minute activity, so there's always going to be an area for weakness, or embedding IT, British Values, Equality and Diversity, employability concepts […]. There's always going to be something [where they go] 'you could do more of this' and then you know by the time it comes round to the next observation you just make sure you've got plenty of that in (Micha, interview 2)

For the FT, observation involves matching the teacher's classroom practices to an extensive set of pre-determined expectations, which may vary according to the observer. The goal is the written confirmation that these expectations have been met, despite the FT's awareness that the resulting observation report represents an 'order of facticity' (2001, p. 175) or 'virtual reality' (p. 176) distinct from their everyday experience.

A counterpart to its 'box-ticking' function is the role observation plays in allowing certain FTs to demonstrate their successful compliance and provide affirmation of their teaching abilities. Nicole regards lesson observations as a '*boost more than anything […] I am doing the right thing and I am OK*' (interview 2). Leah also speaks positively of being observed: '*I felt proud that the feedback I got from the assistant principal was good'* (interview 2). For Susan, observation is linked to her progress within the institution, '*because obviously before your professional development review you have a class observation*' (interview 2). Justin, likewise, becomes involved in a discussion with a senior manager about his '*5-year plan*' (interview 2), following a successful observation.

Nevertheless, even these FTs exhibit a strong awareness of the lack of developmental impact associated with the observation itself. Like appraisal, it is seen as a process of recording rather than changing practice. Despite her positive experience of observation, Leah finds that her observers' feedback reinforces rather than supplements her own perceptions: '*I think they just said what I thought anyway*' (interview 2). Leah, Kerry and Micha all refer to changes they have made or intend to make in response to observation feedback, but these are to satisfy the requirement for elements of their practice to be made visible to the observer, rather than because they will support the students' learning. No links appear in the data between observation and subject-specific pedagogical development, perhaps because observations are generally carried out by managers who do not share the FT's subject specialism.

The demand for visible compliance with legislation such as *Prevent* is prominent, however, with British Values forming the subject of mandatory staff development sessions (Ryan, interview 1; Justin, interview 1; Middleton manager interview; Tina, interview 1; Nicole, interview 2;), as well as a focus for observation (Micha, interview 2; Northvale managers interview). National policy is thus enacted, but there is no indication in the data of whether this goes beyond the superficial recording of compliance. Both FTs and managers are alert to the need to '*keep up*' (Ryan, interview 2) with policy developments but appear to be motivated by the '*fear of Ofsted*' (Micha, interview 2) rather than a desire to engage with and shape policy developments. This highlights again the contradictory impact of policy levers such as Ofsted (Coffield et al., 2007, p. 736). Speaking at the time when the revised *Ofsted Education Inspection Framework* (EIF) (Ofsted, 2019) was subject to consultation, one manager stated: '*we've got the new Common Inspection Framework, so currently we're doing a lot of work around that to make sure everybody understands where they sit within the new framework and what the impact is going to be*' (Middleton manager interview). Rather than seeing an opportunity to inform the new framework, the manager regards this already as a regulatory text, against which existing practice must be measured. The text prompts action, but only in one direction, in terms of ensuring that college practice complies with the perceived expectations of Ofsted.

In summary, the lens of reification exposes three key aspects of the current institutional and policy context as it is experienced by former in-service trainees. These aspects are not experienced equally by all the FTs, although they appear strongly in most of the accounts, with only Susan working in a notably different environment. First, the primacy of financial efficiency is felt in extreme pressure on the FTs' time, leading to an emphasis on 'coping' (Orr, 2012) and to reductive approaches to teaching and assessment. The discourse accompanying this prioritisation of the market generates feelings of job insecurity, as well as

a reluctance to challenge the status quo. Secondly, and related to this, the linking of achievement of qualifications to financial reward (DfE, 2017) acts as a powerful policy lever, working in conjunction with the regulatory force applied by Ofsted. This engenders a focus on assessment rather than teaching, the visibility of assessment practices and achievement assured through close monitoring and recording. The practices of teaching and the everyday/night experiences of students are subordinated to these visible, measurable outcomes. Finally, FTs work in a performative environment where accountability is paramount. Observation of teaching is experienced primarily as recording rather than changing practice; where change is prompted this relates to the visibility of teaching and assessment practices, rather than pedagogical development.

7.3 What do FTs learn in their first year after completing their formal qualification? (RQ2a)

The discussion of instances of reification in Section 7.2 has pointed to many of the practices in which the FTs participate, because of the duality of participation and reification (Wenger, 1998, p. 87). As learning is conceived as the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice (see Chapter Three), identification of these practices contributes to an understanding of what the FTs learn. The practices in which the FTs participate are varied, both in terms of the range of practices evident across the data set and in terms of variation between participants. Carrying out risk assessments, for example, appears only in Nicole's accounts, but they form a significant aspect of her work at Castle College. Participating in social media, likewise, occurs only in Justin and Ryan's responses. As Chapter Six has sought to illustrate, the contrasting contexts and personal dispositions of the eight participants lead to variation in their work and their understanding of this. However, there is a significant degree of commonality between the participants in terms of the practices they engage in and the ways in which they are reified, even across school and FE contexts. It is not feasible to list all the practices in which the FTs participate because of the multiple levels at which practices may be identified, ranging from buying a cup of coffee to teaching a class. Instead, this section discusses the three areas of practice which contribute most strongly to an understanding of what the FTs learn (RQ2a). These are: *teaching*; *development*; and *collaboration*.

It is striking in the data how few activities are associated with *teaching* as an area of practice. I use teaching here to refer to the pedagogical practices of FTs carried out face to face with students in the classroom, workshop or other learning environment. There is clearly a strong overlap in the data between teaching and assessment, with the quest for improved student results driving teaching strategies. As Ryan states of his GCSE maths students, '*my main development now is that I need to know how to get people over [the]*

threshold […] from a three to a four. How I push them the extra mile to be able to do that'
(interview 2). But when assessment is separated from teaching, few activities remain in this
area of practice. There are three ways of interpreting this finding: first, it could be a limitation
of the methodology, which depended on talk rather than direct observation of practice, the
latter potentially leading to a fuller list of teaching activities; secondly, teaching may have
become such a habitual area of practice for these former in-service trainees that they failed
to identify distinct activities when talking about it; finally, the limited consideration of teaching
in the FTs' accounts may stem from the limited time for such evaluative activity in their
working lives.

To address each of these interpretations in turn, if the focus of the study were on practice,
the exclusion of observation would constitute a significant limitation. However, the focus is
on learning, with talk providing crucial access to the negotiation of meaning. If the FTs did
not feel prompted to talk about the practice of their teaching, despite the use of
methodological strategies designed to reveal such habitual practice, this is perhaps because
the key areas demanding negotiation lay elsewhere. Kerry states:

> *It's almost like you're learning every time you walk into a classroom. Something*
> *different happens, or a different situation, especially this year, it's been quite*
> *challenging on behaviour aspects being a course leader for Level 2. I've never had*
> *to deal with that volume of students, being responsible for making sure they go to*
> *maths and English, and, if they're naughty for other people, to give them*
> *disciplinaries. I'm not liking that side of my job* (Kerry, interview 1).

Her account moves swiftly from the decision-making necessitated by what happens in the
classroom to associated aspects of her role as '*course leader'*, leaving the teaching activity
itself unexplored. This is reflected across the data set, with FTs and managers referring to
the way in which teaching is squeezed out by the other demands of the role:

> *if you're not teaching and you're not marking and you're not sorting out a problem or*
> *an issue with a student, you're either at staff development or you're being asked to*
> *get some data for the management, or you're being asked to run a taster session, or*
> *you're being asked to go to an educational healthcare review, or, you know, there's*
> *always something* (Leah, interview 2).

Teaching is present in these accounts and remains the primary concern of the participants,
in that the other practices required of them are seen as interfering with this activity. But like
the pre-service trainees in earlier studies, the FTs are primarily engaged in 'coping' with
these demands (Dixon et al, 2010; Orr, 2012). As Nicole reflects after leaving the college:

'*it's just pressure, bums on seats, retention, numbers, marking, stresses of that lesson or that class that just happened, or stresses of what you've got to deliver, that, what was it? you know, about gender and the flag?*' (Nicole, interview 2). Teaching thus emerges as a positive ideal, continually marginalised by extraneous pressures, yet largely absent as a practice that can be explored empirically. This is significant in relation to the question of what FTs learn in their first year after qualifying (RQ2a). Teaching may be valued by the participants but, with the exception of Tina, who, ironically, is the only participant not employed as a '*teacher*' (Tina, interview 1) and thus has limited additional responsibilities, the FTs' primary areas of practice, and hence learning, are not within the classroom.

The second area of practice considered in relation to this research question is that of *development* (see Section 3.4.1 for discussion of this term). Some practices in which the FTs participate have the development of staff as their explicit objective. All the FTs refer to compulsory attendance at CPD sessions addressing current policy issues, such as *Prevent* and EDI. Although there is a recognition of the importance of fulfilling their statutory duties in these areas, CPD of this kind is not associated with developing their teaching, partly because of its pastoral rather than pedagogical focus, but also because it is generic rather than subject-specific. Micha states, '*I often struggle to connect some of the things in CPD to the environment in which I teach*' (interview 1). What she refers to as '*blanket CPD*' (interview 1) is viewed as an aspect of the standardised accountability measures adopted by the institution, rather than a tool for developing practice. Leah is less critical of the mandatory CPD sessions at Northvale College ('*it's staff development, they know what they're talking about*', interview 2) but expresses the desire for more Early Years specific training, for '*[it's] not to say the staff development about teaching isn't useful […] but it's then fitting that into your subject, isn't it?*' (Leah, interview 2). Ryan and Justin likewise value possible contact with teachers of their subject in other schools and colleges, viewing this as a way of developing their own practice (both, interview 2).

As teachers who have completed their ITE qualification, the FTs find opportunities to discuss their teaching with others increasingly restricted. In Lave and Wenger's terms, they are not viewed as 'legitimate peripheral participants' (1991, p.29), in part because, with the exception of Tina, they are contracted to perform a full teaching role, but also because they are relatively experienced compared with newer colleagues. This is a key area in which they differ from teachers who have completed their ITE qualification full-time on a pre-service course. Leah found that even when she was working towards her PGCE, she was treated by colleagues as a fully-fledged teacher: '*which in some ways was brilliant because they've obviously got faith in me to do the job correctly […] but in other ways it was kind of […] an expectation that I should know what I'm doing*' (interview 1). Micha reports being regarded

as a 'relative old-timer' (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 57), who is now expected to shore up less experienced colleagues: '*you don't want to ask too many questions when they're looking to you for their support*' (interview 1). Nor does she want to seek guidance from more senior staff in the institution because of their involvement in its accountability structures, instead asking questions of her former PGCE mentor who now works elsewhere. None of the FTs reports receiving additional support owing to their recently qualified status. As Justin states: '*in the eyes of the school now […] you're off and away*' (interview 2).

Rather than being mentored by others, many of the FTs now act as mentors themselves, a practice that they value for its contribution to their own development (Micha, Pictor interview 1). Ryan, Susan, Justin and Leah similarly convey confidence in their own abilities, made evident through the guidance they offer to others. Nicole and Kerry occupy a more ambiguous position in relation to new staff, suggesting that they are less secure in their own roles. Nicole, who has just returned from maternity leave, admits:

> I'm constantly asking questions in the staffroom and you feel like you're pestering because you don't know. But because I've been here four years they're looking at me as if to say 'you should know this' and I'm thinking [whispers] '*I don't know anything*' (Nicole, interview 1).

Kerry, meanwhile, refuses to mentor a new colleague because of his behaviour when she was a new teacher and he was a technician: '*I can't, after what he did on my first official day teaching, standing in the classroom laughing when I was abused by a student*' (interview 2). The potential for participation and professional development offered by mentoring others is thus closed off for these FTs, who instead seek opportunities elsewhere: in self-employment for Nicole, and external courses for Kerry.

The final area of practice to be considered in relation to the FTs' learning is that of *collaboration*. Colleagues are included in every Pictor chart, often in close proximity to the FT, suggesting their perceived significance in relation to the FT. Referring to her first Pictor chart, Leah states:

> I've put my colleagues near to me because they're the ones who I ask for advice, who ask me for advice, who we bounce off with each other, who help if you need some help […] who are there for you really and actually know what you're going through on a day to day basis. They're the ones who understand, aren't they? (Leah, Pictor interview 1).

Micha expresses the role of former PGCE colleagues in similar terms: the course provided access to a '*network* […] *of people that you can speak to and throw ideas off and bounce off*

in a safe space', in contrast with speaking to staff in her own institution who '*are there to improve standards'* (interview 1). Colleagues are thus contrasted favourably with managers, who may offer support and guidance, but always from a position of relative power. Kerry speaks first to a close colleague when a difficult situation arises, seeking '*dialogue between each other'* before they jointly decide that they need '*higher up advice*' (interview 1). Referring to the lack of support from '*management*', Kerry states: '*if I didn't have a strong team […] I think I would have sunk a long time ago*' (interview 2). Likewise for Justin, '*just having conversations with colleagues, the ones who've decided to stick it out and stay with it'* (interview 2) is a source of strength. The content of such conversations is not explicit in the data, although Leah does refer to the football sweepstake that she has been conducting in the staffroom: '*I was recording all the results from the weekend, we were all having a discussion, a bit of a laugh over who did well and who didn't*' (interview 2). This informal interaction clearly contributes to her understanding of the staffroom as more than just a workspace, instead signifying the identity of her team: '*it's very rare that you get to the point where you have to go: 'I need some help'. Usually somebody will say 'do you need some help?' […] it just shows what a close staffroom we are really and how supportive we are as colleagues*' (Pictor interview 2).

The value of these interactions appears to be closely related to the absence of hierarchical relationships between the participants, and to their informality. It is significant that the conversations are self-directed and unrecorded, the participants seeking out a '*safe space'* (Micha, interview 1) away from the accountability structures of the organisation. As well as emotional support, these informal interactions allow ideas to be developed and judgments to be made through a process of dialogic communication, of '*bouncing off*' each other. This suggests that the practice of communicating with peers may contribute strongly to the FTs' learning, involving not just the participation in practice but the negotiation of meaning. This dimension of the triangular learning model will be explored in the next section, which considers *how* the FTs learn.

7.4 How do FTs learn? (RQ2b)

The practices of seeking support from and interacting with colleagues do not necessarily imply learning. Learning, as set out in previous sections, involves the negotiation of meaning. It is therefore necessary to consider the extent to which the practices in which the FTs participate demand the negotiation of meaning. Wenger argues that 'even routine activities' involve the negotiation of meaning, because the relationship between participation and reification must be continually (re)negotiated (1998, p. 53). However, when the practice is not routine, is something we care about, or is particularly challenging, the process of negotiating meaning, according to Wenger, increases in 'intensity' (p. 53). Wenger's theory

lacks specificity, illustrated only through the vignette of the claims processor rather than through further empirical evidence. It is not clear precisely what it means to 'care about' something or at what level a practice might count as 'particularly' challenging. However, in conjunction with understandings from IE that foreground the active role played by texts, his theory offers a way of investigating how the FTs in this study learn through negotiating meaning. This will be shown through detailed analysis of three examples from the data, associated with three key areas of learning: *behaviour management*; *working with others*; and *mediating policy*. These areas have been selected because they are the themes most closely associated with the negotiation of meaning in the data set, and are, therefore, most revealing in relation to this research question.

Behaviour management is referred to frequently in the FTs' accounts, the term used explicitly by Ryan, Justin, Micha and Leah, and referred to more obliquely by Kerry and Nicole. When asked to recall a specific 'experience or event' (interview schedule 1: *Appendix 5*), that stood out for her in the previous few weeks, Kerry talks at length about the difficulty of handling complaints from colleagues about the behaviour of her students. The issue is prompted by the accounts she reads '*on ProMonitor™*' (interview 1):

> *So the students are absolutely fine in my classroom. We have had a big issue with phones, but that's just generic, all the time with phones. […] But every time they go to other people's classes they refuse to hand their phone over, they're quite rude and disruptive, so then I'm getting a negative off staff members in the office, but they don't understand that they are behaving for me. So then it's getting that professional balance, well, I'm having to address their classroom management, but without undermining them, and I'm finding it's been quite tricky* (Kerry, interview 1).

The written entries on the online system prompt a response from Kerry as their reader, reinforced by further comments in the staffroom. But Kerry is torn in how to act, struggling to choose between prioritising her own positive relationship with her students and upholding the professionalism of her colleagues. She goes on:

> *I've spoken to the colleagues and said I am going to address it with the learners. Because if I don't address it being course leader I can get into more trouble. And I've spoken to the learners, I've said, 'I've seen this on ProMonitor™'. I haven't said to them 'this tutor's come to me and said, 'you've been really disruptive'. 'This is on ProMonitor™'. I've read it out to them and said, 'can I please have your half of the story?'* (Kerry, interview 1).

Kerry uses the air of neutrality and distance generated by the reification of the complaints on ProMonitor™ to diffuse their association with specific tutors. She seeks to allow the text to speak for itself, to act on the students and prompt their own telling of '*the story*' without her mediation. Thus her negotiation of the meaning of the complaints (that they indicate poor *'classroom management'* on the part of her colleagues) is subordinated, at least superficially, to the students' interpretation. However, she is required to achieve some level of reconciliation between the perspectives of students and colleagues because of the need to work harmoniously with both groups, while being seen to take action and avoid '*[getting] into more trouble'*, presumably if the issue were referred to her manager. The negotiation of meaning involved in the dual processes of participation and reification is evident in this struggle to achieve a '*professional balance*', suggesting that this is a significant example of learning for Kerry.

A second example is evident in Susan's discussion of a '*challenging*' situation (interview 2) when *working with others*. Although Susan is more secure in her role than Kerry, she is still grappling with the new areas of responsibility that come with the role of teacher, as opposed to HLTA. One of these is dealing with parental complaints. She describes the pressure of communicating with the dissatisfied parents of one of her students, when they bring him into school each day:

> *it's not a difficulty being professional, don't get me wrong, but it's that way of handling a situation. I've had a lot of support from the head teacher, she's very clear that we deal with problems straight away, so if there's a complaint made then it's dealt with there and then, and the only time they made a complaint about me I offered to speak to them that night after school […] and because we said to them, 'right, OK, we've got a meeting at quarter past three, come and see us at quarter past three' [they said] 'oh, no, no, it's not that serious, don't worry about it, forget it'. But it was quite [pause] I don't like criticism anyway, and I never have done and I'll openly admit that, but it's not the criticism, it's the concern, 'have I done something wrong?', and you know that you haven't, so it's fine, yeah* (Susan, interview 2).

Here, Susan is negotiating the meaning of this event, in terms of establishing whether she acted appropriately. The chain of verbal communication from parents to Susan and Susan to head teacher is disrupted by the offer of a more formal meeting involving all the parties. This potential reification of the process, perhaps in written meeting records, causes the parents to acknowledge that '*it's not that serious*' but does not remove for Susan the fear that she has '*done something wrong*'. In order to continue successfully in her role as the teacher of the

student she must establish for herself that she handled the incident appropriately. Through doing so, she learns to carry out this challenging aspect of her role.

A final significant area of learning in the data is that of *mediating policy*. I will illustrate this with reference to a range of examples. Because of their position as teachers within their institutions, all the FTs are involved in mediating between the pressures of policy, at both institutional and national levels, and the needs of their students. Their managers may well be involved in the same process at a different level, but this is not explored in my study. The fraught position of the FT as mediator is evident in Leah's account of how she would respond to an imaginary '*directive*' from senior managers concerning attendance at GCSE maths and English classes:

> *I don't think I'd particularly ignore it, because whatever they're saying it's for a purpose. […] But I think that sometimes, with me, with my Level 1 learners, I think they do forget sometimes the actual needs that the learners may have. […] You need to take into account the issues that the learners might be having, the responsibilities that they might have, and it can have an effect. […] I do sometimes think they forget that. But then, they are here to learn, they've enrolled on a course, they're here to learn so I'd never ignore it, but I think I can sometimes word it in a more nurturing way, in a more positive way* (Leah, Pictor interview 1).

Leah exhibits here the process of negotiation that is prompted by the directive and that intervenes between this presumably written artefact and its communication to students. Indeed, the role of encouraging and enforcing attendance is deliberately passed on to the teacher, who is expected to balance the demands of the policy and the needs of the students. This tight-rope act is apparent in Leah's oscillation between empathising with the learners and reiterating the institutional mantra of '*they're here to learn*', suggesting her own process of learning in dealing with such situations.

Micha, similarly, discusses how she mediates the new institutional policy of setting homework in every session when working with '*non-traditional students*' (interview 2). She states: '*keeping them attending college is one thing but expecting them to go home and have the space, the facilities, the conditions that they would need to go away and do large amounts of homework is […] unrealistic*' (interview 2). Although her opposition to the policy is explicit, her intended response is more nuanced: '*if it's enforced, then homework will be to 'go home and consider' or 'go home and bring something to the next lesson'* (interview 2). She thus adopts a form of tactical compliance, protecting the students from the impact of the policy and herself from possible negative consequences.

Having the confidence to mediate policy in this way is associated by Ryan with his on-going development as a teacher. He links the understandings he gained studying professionalism during the CertEd course with his current willingness to deviate from institutional policy: '*I know the organisation have an idea of professionalism. I also have my idea about professionalism and sometimes I don't match with the organisation'* (interview 1). Although mobile phones are banned in class, he allows his students to use them within certain boundaries, associating this strategy with respecting his students as adults. Being prepared to establish his own rules represents for Ryan his new-found *'autonomy'* (interview 1), which he actively exerts in mediating college expectations.

In summary, the practices which dominate seven of the eight FTs' accounts are not those associated directly with teaching. While FTs may be continuing to learn to teach, other activities appear more significant to the FTs, because of the time they take up and the challenge they present in terms of negotiating their meaning. This is suggested in Micha's assertion that '*we've got [the teaching] by this stage*'; it is '*everything else*' that remains challenging (interview 1). When questioned about what constitutes '*everything else'*, she cites '*the safeguarding, the office politics, the time pressures, the accountability for things*' (Micha, interview 1). Although this implies a reductive understanding of teaching, Micha's individual assertion is borne out by the dominance of '*everything else*' in the data, to the exclusion of pedagogical decision-making. Only Tina, who is conscious that the effort she devotes to teaching far exceeds her contractual position as a teaching assistant, talks at length about her pedagogical practice. For other FTs, new or significant challenges such as managing behaviour, communicating with parents, and mediating between institutional expectations and personal understandings, provide the impetus for the negotiation of meaning and thus constitute the primary areas of learning for these individuals.

7.5 How does the institutional and policy context shape the learning of FTs? (RQ3a)

The role of context in shaping the learning of the FTs in my study has been implicit in my discussion of the first two research questions, because of the inter-relationship between elements in the social model of learning I adopt. Learning is connected to the institutional and policy context through the 'relations of ruling' (Smith, 1990, p. 6) which characterise institutional practice. These ruling relations are 'essentially textually mediated' (Smith, 1990, p. 6) and are thus 'plugged in' (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013, p. 262) to the learning model through the concept of reification (see Chapter Three). The inter-related nature of the different elements of the model means that ruling relations pervade the entire model, not just the participation/reification element. This section seeks to demonstrate how the institutional and policy context exerts influence on the FTs' learning by considering how the different

elements of the model, *practice*, *participation/reification*, and the *negotiation of meaning* are suffused by the ruling relations of the institution.

The practices in which the FTs participate vary according to their role and their institution. As a make-up specialist, Nicole spends time checking that her students are wearing the correct uniform and taking action to enforce this; as a teacher in a secondary school, Justin supervises students at lunchtime to earn some extra money; within a special school with residential students, Susan attends a meeting every morning in which the night staff '*hand over*' (interview 1) to the daytime cohort. These examples suggest the diversity of the FTs' roles and the range of contexts in which they work.

What the FTs have in common, however, is that their work is fundamentally institutional, in that their individual practices respond to textually mediated prompts connecting individuals across different times and places. An example of this is the 'condition of funding' written into *16 to 19 Study Programmes* (DfE, 2017, p.12). Reinforced explicitly by Ofsted expectations (Ofsted, 2017), the condition of funding prompts FE institutions to stipulate which students must study GCSE maths and English. This then leads to emails and other texts generated by managers seeking to enforce this policy, and written responses, online entries and other written and oral communication between teachers, colleagues, students and parents concerning the affected students' attendance and progress. Nicole cites a written entry she has seen in ProMonitor™: '*Ellie hasn't been into maths 9 o'clock this morning and she hasn't been for the last 3 weeks*' (interview 1). This prompts her to ring the student who claims that she has been attending her maths classes. The difficulty of reconciling these conflicting sources of information leads her to seek advice from colleagues in the staffroom: '*so I'm like "who do I believe?" […] "what would you do?*"' (interview 1). The need to act appropriately in response to an initial, seemingly factual prompt, generates the need to negotiate the meaning of the event, and involves Nicole in the processes of the institution.

In a special school context, Susan's practices are similarly shaped by an external document, in this case, the *Rochford Review*. Susan explains the value of an '*evidence app*' (interview 2), a tool that the school uses to record examples of progress made by the students against their personal targets. Visual evidence of students completing tasks can be connected through the '*app*' to the '*frameworks*' of the school's assessment process, designed to implement the recommendations of the *Rochford Review*. Susan gives an example of how her teaching and assessment practices are informed by the *Rochford Review*'s understanding of progress:

*We've got an activity where [one young man] drops balls in a tube and watches
them come out and the idea is that he realises that they come out the bottom and he
picks them up and puts them back in again. It's making progress like that because
his concentration level's absolutely zilch. We've got him where he's realising 'ooh
look, that ball's going to come, I'm going to pick it up and put it down'.* (Susan, Pictor
interview 2)

The recording of this activity in photos and videos represents for Susan the integration of
what is best for the student with external expectations of evidence of progress. As she
reflects in relation to the arrows on her Pictor chart: '*although these look like they're
hierarchical, they're very much one really, these arrows with the 'happiness', 'wellbeing',
'assessment', they're very much one. And I suppose that's the biggest influence, the
'Rochford Report'*' (Pictor interview 2; '*Rochford Report*' label added). Practices at a
personal and institutional level are thus closely aligned with this external policy document.

In Susan's experience, the requirement for visual evidence of achievement is unproblematic
because it recognises the genuine progress of her students and does not distort her
practice. The need for participation to be visible to others both within and outside the
organisation is a source of tension in the accounts of other FTs, however. Visibility involves
the production of texts (in Smith's broad definition of the term) and, hence, reification. The
model of learning applied in this study allows examples of reification in the data to be
connected empirically with the ruling relations of the institution and thus with the social and
political context in which the FT works. Whether in the form of marked books or
ProMonitor™ entries, these visual records 'hook' the FTs' participation in practice to
institutional expectations (Smith, 2001, p. 164). However, this can be a fraught process, as
Ryan's account of a lesson observed by an Ofsted inspector and judged to '*require
improvements*' (interview 2) shows:

*everything that Ofsted wanted was in the lesson, but I didn't put a show on, and the
Ofsted inspector did not move from that chair, and I thought they'd come in and look
at people's work, so everybody in the class more or less was doing something
different. I'd already put the delivery across - they came in when they'd just started
to work.* (Ryan, interview 2)

The observation failed, in Ryan's view, because the learning of the students was not visible
to the observer. The differentiated strategies that he employed were evident only in the
interaction between individual students and their written tasks, which could not be viewed
without moving around the room. His decision not to *'put a show on'* meant that his own

practice fell short against the observer's criteria, and thus failed to comply visibly with external expectations.

Ryan's experience also suggests, however, that the FTs may choose to act in ways that resist the institutional demand for visibility. Some of their practices, such as chatting to colleagues, engaging in social media or completing external courses, fall outside institutional expectations, but are prompted by the FTs' own judgment of what supports them in performing their job role. This indicates that their participation is not wholly organised or shaped by the pressures of the institutional context, despite the regulatory power invested in this. The demand for reification that has been shown to characterise the FTs' work, does not guarantee participation. Change may be strongly resisted or absorbed into existing practices, as Kerry's description of the revised assessment tasks that may be necessitated by the *Sainsbury Report* suggests: '*it's only a couple of hours' additional work to change the format*' (Kerry, interview 2). This emphasis on maintaining a 'sense of continuity in the midst of discontinuities' (Wenger, 1998, p. 94) is not prevalent in the FTs' accounts, however, where choosing how to act often involves a negotiation of meaning, rather than a dismissal of complexity. Ryan carries his own understanding of Ofsted expectations ('*everything that Ofsted wanted was in the lesson'*), and chooses not to '*put a show on*', believing that his own practice with his students is in accordance with these. Similarly, Susan and her team exercise judgment in how they choose to act in response to the textual stimulus of the *Rochford Review*, shaping the forms of participation and reification produced. The regulatory power of key texts, such as Ofsted guidance or reviews of assessment practices, is always mediated through the FTs' own negotiation of their meaning. This negotiation of meaning *is* learning, in the model of learning adopted in this study. These texts thus prompt learning on the part of the FTs, but not necessarily in accordance with the intended meanings of those who produced them.

At a deeper level, however, it is harder to resist 'institutional capture' (Smith, 2005, p. 119) and learn outside the relations of ruling. Smith states that the ruling relations 'include the complex of discourses, scientific, technical, and cultural, that intersect, interpenetrate, and coordinate the multiple sites of ruling' (1990, p. 6). They include the language with which we communicate, which itself is permeated by historical and current social relations. The subject 'as knower' exists, however, 'prior to the subject constituted in the text' (Smith, 1990, p. 5), and draws on her everyday/night experience when acting as a reader or writer. At the point of entry into the text, she engages in the 'work of coordination, the ongoing co-ordering that brings into being, that *is*, the social' (Smith, 1990, p. 9, italics in original). For the subjects of this study, the work of coordination may not be entirely institutional but it is necessarily social, and thus organised by and constitutive of the ruling relations. The spaces carved out

by their informal interactions with others or their resistance to institutional messages does not insulate them from the ruling relations. However, the ruling relations are themselves shaped by such actions, meaning that FTs can exert an influence, albeit strongly constrained, on the institutional and policy context of which they form a part. To return to this research question (RQ3a), the learning of the FTs occurs in tension with the context in which they work, strongly shaped but not determined by its regulatory structures.

7.6 How may the relationship between the learning of FTs and the institutional and policy context be theorised? (RQ3b)

Much of the work of theorising the relationship between the learning of FTs and their context was carried out either prior to or in tandem with the process of data analysis. The initial conceptualisation of learning set out in Chapter Three was developed through a review of the literature, then applied to the analysis of pilot data, and presented for peer review at conferences and through publication (Terry, 2019). The additional insights of IE were attached to this model as affinities between Wenger's concept of reification and Smith's focus on the role of texts were uncovered. IE, in conjunction with empirical findings, allowed this theoretical framework to be deepened and extended, and for the relationship between the learning of the individual and their institutional and policy context to be articulated. This revised, deepened model is shown in *Figures 6* and 7 below.

Figure 6: The relationship between the learning of FTs and their institutional and policy context

136
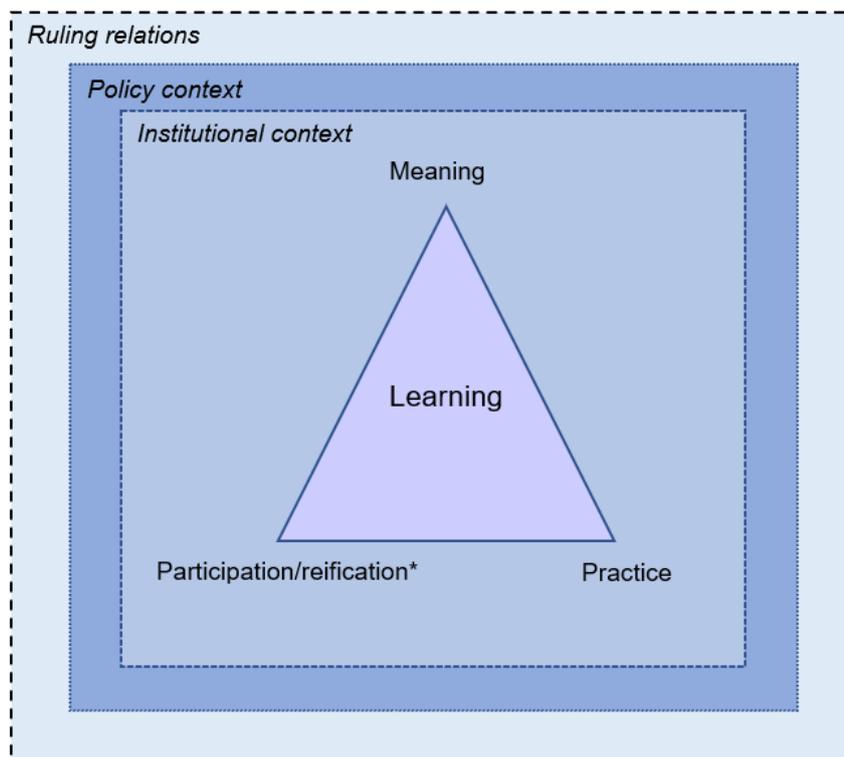
Figure 7: *Expansion of the reification dimension, adapted from Smith (2006b, p. 80)

Regulatory texts

FTs are at work reading and producing texts through which the ruling relations are mediated.
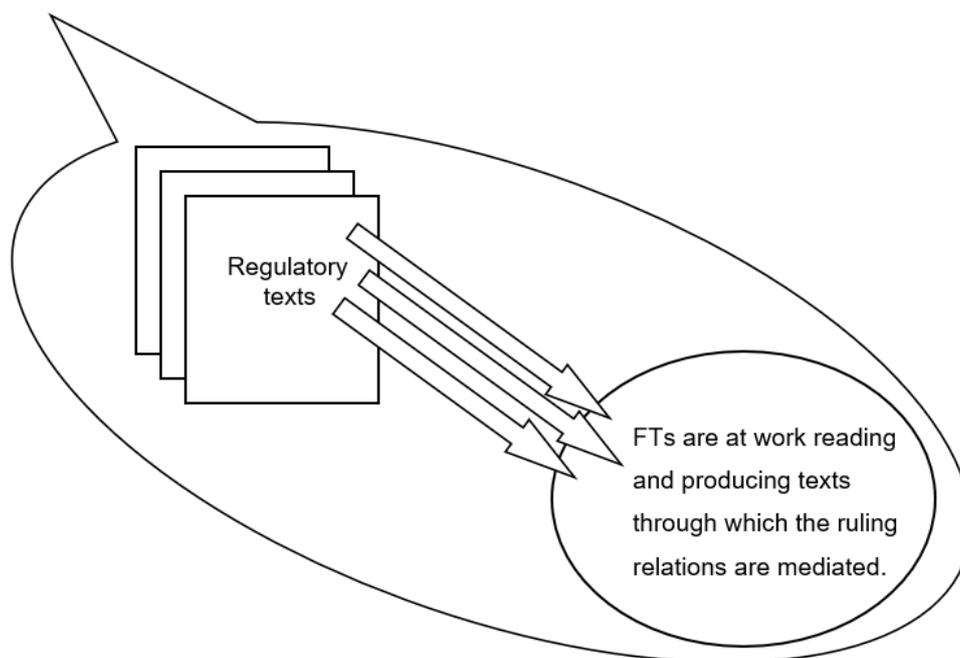
As the discussion in the previous sections of this chapter has demonstrated, the learning of the FTs takes place through the interplay of three dimensions: *practice*, *participation/ reification* and the *negotiation of meaning*. This learning does not occur in a vacuum, but through the necessary engagement with both institutional and policy contexts. While these contexts are shown in *Figure 6* as separate strata within the outer frame of the ruling relations, they should be understood as thoroughly porous layers, through which the central model of learning is simultaneously connected with institution, policy and ruling relations. The connection between these layers is established through the regulatory power of texts (*Figure 7*). The FTs read and produce texts, involving them in a continual mediation of their meaning, and 'hooking' them into the work of the institution. This is a relational process, through which the learning of the FTs is shaped and which in turn shapes the institutional and policy context.

This research question (RQ3b) has helped to focus my study of the relationship between the FT and their social context. However, the claim to offer a 'theorisation' (RQ3b) of this relationship demands further scrutiny. As stated in Chapter Four, theory has served as an heuristic in the study, providing an 'explanatory model' (Thomas, 2007, p. 27) that was applied to the empirical task of investigating the learning of the FTs. The model of learning set out in Chapter Three established *a priori* themes through which the data could be analysed and understood. Its function was thus retrospective, rather than prospective, explaining rather than predicting empirical findings. But to some extent the model also shaped the data generated: focusing on *practice*, *participation/reification* and the *negotiation*

of meaning led to the production of data relating to these themes. Perhaps not surprisingly, the data confirmed that this model of learning was productive in illuminating the learning of the FTs within their institutional contexts; however, a different theorisation of learning might have proved equally illuminating or revealed different themes. As discussed in Chapter Three, the dimensions of 'identity' and 'community' (Wenger, 1998, p. 5) were side-lined in this study in order to provide a strong theoretical focus, despite their potential explanatory power in relation to learning through practice (Colley, James, Diment & Tedder, 2003; Wenger, 1998). The model of learning in institutional settings presented in *Figure 6* is thus just one theorisation of this relationship, which might be complemented by others.

The primary contribution of the theorisation of learning offered in this study is indicated by the analysis presented in Chapters Six and Seven, that is, its ability to offer a tool for 'explication' (Smith, 2005, p. 70). It enables the researcher to work from the experience of the individual subject outwards, connecting their learning with the social relations which shape this and which they in turn shape. This tool has been applied to one case and found to be revealing. It could equally be applied to individuals in other institutional settings, particularly those marked by powerful policy levers.

7.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has set out the findings of the study in relation to the research questions, at the same time applying the model of learning established in Chapter Three. RQ1 was addressed through the theme of reification, while the question of what the FTs learn (RQ2a) was explored through the related dimension of participation in practice. How this learning takes place (RQ2b) was analysed through the third dimension of the model: the negotiation of meaning. Finally, the relationship between the learning of the FTs and the institutional and policy context was discussed (RQ3a) and a theorisation of this relationship presented (RQ3b). The next chapter will summarise the findings of this study, consider their implications and evaluate their contributions to the field.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Chapter introduction

This final chapter summarises the study's conclusions in relation to its central problematic: the relationship between the learning of recently qualified in-service teachers and their institutional and policy contexts. From these conclusions, the implications for policy and practice are considered, and the contributions of the study to the wider field suggested. First, however, I consider the impact of my own position on my analysis and the claims I have made.

8.2 Reflecting on my standpoint

In Chapter One I located my standpoint in the fault line between the lived experience of the individual FT and the wider institutional and policy contexts of this study. The generation and interpretation of my data have involved me in a complex series of methodological and ethical decisions that have tested this position. On the one hand, I have sought to do justice to the FTs who participated in the study and recognise the trust they placed in me when they agreed to take part. This involved paying close attention, through a range of methodological strategies, to what they offered me in the form of spoken or textual data. However, this stance was necessarily balanced with my responsibility as a researcher to go beyond my participants' views, seeking explication rather than representation. For this reason, I made very limited use of respondent validation, and present this final thesis with some trepidation about how it will be received. While I expect the participants to recognise the contexts it portrays, it is possible that they may not agree with my analysis of their individual positions.

A further tension underlies my relationship as researcher with the managers and organisations within this study. My initial commitment to a standpoint close to the position of the FTs suggests the valuing of their experience above that of their managers. This is reflected in my decision to refer to the eight FTs collectively as 'my participants' and to give them, but not the managers who also participated, pseudonyms. This approach can be justified with reference to my stated units of analysis, the individual FTs, consigning their managers to the context informing the analysis of my case. But I am also aware that my personal experience of managerialism in FE, which contributed to my decision to leave the sector, signified an underlying antagonism with college management structures. This made it especially important that I applied rigorous techniques to the analysis of my data, using the perspectives offered by managers to inform my analysis of the position of the FTs, for example, through the use of textual mapping. Conversely, this awareness also involved resisting 'institutional capture' (Smith, 2005, p. 119) and the powerful pressure I perceived from organisations to accept their narratives of professional development.

The participants within this study (both FTs and managers) inhabit an institutional landscape which is fraught with such tensions and power relations. This has heightened my awareness of the sensitivity of my findings and the need to protect the anonymity of the individuals and organisations involved. Rather than being a simple matter of adopting pseudonyms, it has involved excluding terms which might be too closely associated with certain organisations, and reducing the level of descriptive detail, even where it might have contributed to the communication of my findings. This process of evaluation and revision has continued up to the final submission of this thesis.

8.3 Summary of findings

The learning of the FTs, whatever the context in which they work, is fundamentally institutional. It is contingent on the practices in which the FT participates, and these are co-ordinated within the organisation and across settings through the action of texts. These texts, from 'regulatory texts' (Smith, 2006b, p. 79) such as the CIF (Ofsted, 2015b) to teachers' comments in ProMonitor™, serve to enact policy at institutional and individual levels. In negotiating the meaning of such texts and choosing how to act in response, the FTs learn how to perform their role in an institutional setting (RQ2b).

The reification represented by these texts does not necessarily prompt learning, however, just as it does not ensure participation (Wenger, 1998, p. 92). For many of the FTs, their work involves the production of texts that they view as a diversion from the more important tasks of teaching and learning. These texts fulfil a performative function, suggesting that learning has taken place, but masking the real-life processes involved. Such simulations of learning are evident in relation to both students and teachers. Justin criticises the '*box-ticking*' represented by his assessment of drama students (interview 2), while Micha refers to the process of lesson observation in similar terms (interview 2). Awareness of the disjuncture between formal qualification and learning is expressed in Ryan's distinction between '*success*' as it is categorised through college metrics, and what he defines as success in the students' terms (Pictor interview 2). While valuing the latter, he works to produce the necessary evidence of the former, exhibiting a form of 'tactical compliance' (Orr, 2011, p. 18) characteristic of the FTs in this study.

The requirement for visible evidence of performance, whether of students or teachers, can be traced through texts to the wider policy context (RQ1). At Middleton College, teaching files and lesson observation reports demonstrate compliance with the college's standardised expectations, designed to address the failings identified in the college's latest Ofsted report (*Appendix 17*). In the competitive landscape of ABRs (see Chapter One), achieving a more positive grading at re-inspection is essential to the college's survival and motivates the production of multiple texts, from staff development programmes to teaching checklists,

providing an audit trail to present to external inspectors. While the improvement of standards of teaching forms one of the targets of this process, and may be one of its outcomes, the 'fear of Ofsted' (Micha, interview 2) nevertheless elevates visible compliance above learning. Through texts, Ofsted acts not just as an inspection body but as a powerful policy lever (RQ1).

There is also a marked tension between the visible demonstration of student achievement and meeting the students' wider needs. This is evident in the account of Justin, working in a secondary school in the process of academisation, and in those of Leah, Kerry, Ryan and Nicole in FE colleges. Indeed, all these FTs are actively engaged in learning how to provide an audit trail successfully, while meeting the needs of their students (RQ2a). This is a challenging task, as the students' progress is affected by high levels of deprivation (Justin, interview 1; Ryan, Pictor interview 2; Micha, interview 1), complex home lives (Leah, interview 1; Micha, interview 2), safeguarding issues (Micha, Nicole, Kerry, Ryan, across both interviews) and a range of mental health issues (Nicole, Pictor interview 1). Expected by managers to monitor attendance and track progress through centralised systems such as ProMonitor™, the FTs are forced to mediate between the real-life, bottom-up pressures stemming from their students' experiences and behaviours, and the demand for acceptable metrics issued by managers at multiple levels. In negotiating between these competing pressures, the FTs learn, to varying degrees, how to navigate their role within a performative environment (RQ1 & 2a).

Although teaching forms the core practice in which the FTs engage, as dictated by their timetables, it does not appear to generate the negotiation of meaning, and hence, learning, prompted by other areas of activity (RQ2a). Teaching is marginalised in the majority of the FTs' accounts by other more problematic areas of practice: assessment, behaviour management, safeguarding and British Values all feature more prominently in the data. While each of these could be viewed as an aspect of teaching in a broad understanding of the term, it is significant that, with the exception of assessment, they are generic rather than subject-specific. Given that the FTs have all completed a generic ITE qualification, which relies to a large extent on the trainees' experience in the workplace under the guidance of a subject-specialist mentor to develop their expertise in teaching their own subject, it is of some concern that subject-specific pedagogy (Thompson & Hanley, 2017) remains absent.

This is not true of all the participants, and the exceptions are revealing. Tina's decision to work as a language teaching assistant rather than applying for jobs as a teacher was motivated, somewhat ironically, by the desire to develop her skills in the teaching of her subject, free from the additional responsibilities of the full teaching role. Susan's discussion of her practices in the special school is similarly focused on the learning of her students,

even while she works to support this through other aspects of her new role as a fully qualified teacher, communicating with support staff and parents, and developing assessment strategies. In contrast with the other FE and school contexts in this study, however, these wider duties remain closely aligned with the needs of her students, their wellbeing and development forming the central hub around which everything else is arranged.

Although subject-specific pedagogy is largely absent in the data, context- and subject-specific development opportunities are valued above generic, '*blanket*' CPD (Micha, interview 1). The latter is associated with meeting institutional expectations, while the former is seen as contributing to the FTs' learning (RQ2a & 2b). Opportunities to talk to peers and practitioners in other settings support the FTs in making sense of their own experiences and integrating new ideas with their own contexts. Yet the time and space necessary to enable such conversations is highly restricted by the conditions of the FTs' employment, the teaching of multiple groups of students at different levels (Leah, Kerry, Justin, Nicole) combined with the other duties associated with the teaching role limiting opportunities to stop and reflect, and to develop contacts outside the organisation. There are also individual barriers to participation. Kerry's experience of racial discrimination, which prevented her from completing a qualification within her organisation, affects her willingness to engage in other internal activities, as does her low level of confidence in her computer skills.

As a relational model, the theoretical model of learning adopted within this study recognises the tension between individual learning and social context, and the ways in which these shape each other (RQ3b). Designed as an heuristic to allow tacit, workplace learning to be investigated empirically, it has been extended through this case study, and shown to connect individual, institution and policy context, enabling their mutual relationship to be explored. This model could usefully be applied to the learning of practitioners in other institutional settings.

8.4 Implications

The implications deriving from my findings will be discussed in relation to the three groups for whom they have the most direct relevance: policy makers, organisations, and FTs.

8.4.1 Implications for policy makers

First, the study points to the impact of policy levers on what and how teachers learn, even where teacher learning is not the intended focus of the policy change. This echoes Coffield et al.'s (2007) finding that policy levers may produce 'unintended and perverse consequences' in a diverse and complex sector (2007, p. 736). Policy, enacted through the power of texts, shapes the practices and hence the learning of teachers. While the institutional setting forms the immediate context for the FTs' work, institutional practices have been shown to be co-ordinated with practices at a trans-local level, through the action

of texts. This can be seen in the way the 'condition of funding' (DfE, 2017, p. 12) attached to the requirement for students to achieve GCSEs in English and maths permeates the everyday practices of the FTs in FE colleges, prompting them to have conversations with students, parents and colleagues about student attendance, and to produce and respond to written messages and records. Where these practices are new or problematic, FTs are required to negotiate their meaning, which has been shown through the theorisation of learning applied in this study to contribute to their learning. The expectations inscribed in the CIF (Ofsted, 2015b) likewise exert powerful pressure on organisations across educational sectors in England, initiating a chain of connected regulatory texts, which seek to align the practices of teachers with standardised interpretations of Ofsted's inspection measures. A small change in the formulation of the policy lever, whether it relates to funding, inspection or performance management (Fletcher, Gravatt & Sherlock, 2015), can thus engineer significant change in the practices adopted at institutional level.

Secondly, my findings suggest that the decisions of policy makers and employers regarding what sort of learning they value may have a related impact on the learning of teachers. Not all the practices in which the FTs engage lead to useful or productive learning. A moral judgment is inherent in this statement, reflecting Lingard and Ozga's reminder that policy itself involves the 'authoritative allocation of values' (2007, p. 3). There is evidence that the FTs' practical engagement in the tasks of monitoring attendance, tracking progress, addressing safeguarding issues, and responding to emails enables them to learn how to perform these tasks successfully. This is part of fulfilling employers' expectations of a fully qualified teacher. However, such tasks can be viewed as peripheral if a more expansive definition of their role is adopted: as educators whose role is to support the 'qualification, socialisation, and subjectification' of their students (Biesta, 2009b, pp. 39-40; see also Chapter Three). The FTs may learn to provide visible representations of the achievement of their students through assessment records and qualifications, and of themselves through observation and CPD records, but these artefacts appear to support Biesta's diagnosis of a simulation of learning, or 'learnification' (2009b, p. 36), as opposed to representing a genuine process of growth (Boud & Hager, 2012, p. 20). My study suggests that engendering the latter in both students and FTs would require pulling policy levers that reduce the emphasis on measurable targets and performance, and that expand the spaces for professional judgment and autonomy; however, further research is needed to explore this connection.

8.4.2 Implications for organisations
This study has highlighted the role of organisations in enacting policy at an institutional level. Although organisations may feel powerless in the face of repeated policy shifts, my study

suggests that they should recognise the powerful role of interpretation in the process of policy enactment, and consider carefully how policy texts are translated into institutional practices.

Institutional practices have been shown to be significant in shaping the conditions of FTs' work, which, in turn, are of primary importance in relation to their learning. The strong interrelationship between the FTs' learning and the practices in which they participate means that making small changes to the conditions of their work is likely to have a corresponding impact on their learning. By the same token, developmental activities that are not rooted in the everyday realities of teachers' work are unlikely to be successful.

The diversity of settings, subject areas, teachers and students evident in this case study highlights the difficulty of applying standardised, top-down approaches to teacher development in this sector. The FTs in this study have been shown to learn through making sense of new experiences within the context of their practice. This process demands opportunities to negotiate what a particular approach might mean for them and their students, and having the professional autonomy to apply it appropriately. This is likely to be most successful where collaboration between teachers is facilitated, as discussion with others contributes strongly to the negotiation of meaning. Organisations should consider how space and time are made available for this activity.

8.4.3 Implications for FTs

Like organisations, FTs are implicated in the process of policy enactment through their interpretation and production of texts. A critical awareness of the part they play in co-ordinating the practices of the institution and in mediating the impact of policy might allow them to exert more influence over this process, albeit within significant constraints. Their close relationship with students, and the continual process of negotiation that this relationship demands, makes the contribution of FTs to institutional processes and policy making particularly important.

FTs should also recognise the ways in which they learn through their work, so that they can foster and develop the practices that support their learning. Communication with peers and experienced teachers, whether within the organisation or outside it, should be valued as a significant aspect of this development. Opportunities for reflection, which allow new ideas to be contextualised and new challenges to be met, should be embraced. This involves recognising that learning is not confined to formal CPD, although it may be prompted by such planned development activities.

8.5 Contributions

The contributions of this study to research and practice derive in part from the substance of its findings, and in part from its methodology. I suggest four areas of potential import:

i) The study provides detailed insights into the ways in which contrasting institutional contexts shape the learning of individuals within them. As a case study of the learning of FTs from one University in the North of England, it offers rich contextual detail, enabling the learning of eight individuals across six organisations to be understood in its full complexity and singularity.

ii) The study offers understandings of institutional processes that extend beyond the contexts explored in the study and which might be of value to practitioners working in other institutional contexts, including beyond education. The level of detail afforded by the case study strategy may allow those working in similar contexts to recognise aspects of their own experience in the accounts and relate their experience to the findings of the study. The ability to generalise from the study in this way derives not just from attention to the detail of individual experiences, but from the very nature of the institutional processes that form part of the investigation. In an 'economized' educational environment (Ozga, 2000, p. 24), where the discourse of 'capital accumulation' (Smith, 2002, p. 39) is clearly in evidence, the study reveals how the regulatory power exerted by key policy levers works to co-ordinate and standardise the language and practices of teachers within and between institutions.

The study also makes two methodological contributions:

iii) It builds on an existing model of learning (Wenger, 1998) by integrating this with one element of IE, namely an understanding of the role of texts in abstracting and objectifying the practices of the individual. This has enabled me to connect the learning of the FT through participation in practice with the structuring processes that constitute the institution. This theoretical framework might usefully be applied to the study of learning in other institutional contexts.

iv) The second methodological contribution lies in its use of a Visual Elicitation Method to generate and explore the discursive construction of tacit forms of learning (Terry, 2019). Chapter Three highlighted the difficulty of investigating workplace learning when it is not recognised by those who engage in it. The Pictor technique is a flexible tool that can be aligned with different methodological approaches (King et al, 2013). The use of this technique in this study contributed strongly to the generation of talk which evaded 'institutional capture' (Smith, 2005, p. 119) and allowed textual artefacts and processes to surface. In conjunction with the contribution of IE discussed above, it offers a suggestion of

how this methodological tool might be used in the investigation of informal learning elsewhere.

8.6 Chapter conclusion

For Smith, the explication of social relations achieved through IE is carried out on behalf of those who are implicated in them, with the intention of providing opportunities to effect change. As stated in Chapter Four, this study did not have an emancipatory intention, seeking better understandings of learning within institutional settings, without envisaging transformation as a result. However, this stance perhaps understates the personal commitment to those working in FE that provided the impetus for the study, as set out in Chapter One, and which has continued to drive its progress. Despite dynamic grassroots initiatives in FE research in recent years which have sought to foreground the voices of practitioners (Daley, Orr & Petrie, 2015; Simons, 2016), it remains a marginalised sector, making research which starts from the experiences of those who work within it particularly valuable. Smith conceptualises IE as a 'sociology for people' (2005), empirically grounded research which offers the means for people to connect the realities of their lived experience with the explicated social relations within which these are enmeshed. I hope that this study offers similar practical understandings to those who pick it up and read it.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Information sheet and consent form (participants)

Project Title: The workplace learning of 'newly qualified' in-service teachers in the Education and Training Sector

Purpose of the research: This study is being conducted by Rachel Terry in fulfilment of the award of Doctorate in Education (EdD) in The School of Education and Professional Development at the University of Huddersfield

Introduction and Background

There is a common-sense assumption that teachers who have recently completed a full teaching qualification such as the Certificate in Education or PGCE are fully rounded professionals, able to work independently with little need for further development. While this may be true, this view ignores the complexity of the relationship between theory and practice, as former trainees work to integrate their theoretical learning with the immediate conditions of their practice. It also denies the significance of learning in the workplace, as a source of professional development throughout a teacher's career. For former in-service trainees, who may have had substantial teaching experience both before and alongside their teaching qualification, the transition to fully qualified teacher may be a particularly complex one.

Aims of the study:

- To critically apply theories of workplace learning to the development of newly qualified in-service teachers in the Education and Training Sector in order to conceptualise their learning and to contribute to new understandings of this process.
- To better understand how the institutional and policy context shapes the development of newly qualified in-service teachers in the context of deregulation and the 2014 Professional Standards.
- To refine the use of visual methodological tools as a way of enhancing understanding of the relationship between individual, workplace and policy context in the professional development of newly qualified in-service teachers in this sector.
- To contribute to debates around the effective support and development of former trainees in a diverse and fluid sector.

Planned research methods

A case study design has been adopted. Data will be collected over a one-year period, using a range of methods:

- Semi-structured interviews with between 8 and 12 participants (former trainees) from 2 or 3 centres
- Interviews with HR/staff development representatives from each centre
- Document analysis

Participants will be asked to gather prompts to support the interviews, such as relevant documentary evidence and photos.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Data collected will be kept confidential and participants and organisations will remain anonymous.

Outcomes

The findings of the study will inform policy and practice in the support and development of 'newly-qualified' in-service teachers in the Education and Training sector. As well as contributing to understandings of how teachers learn in the workplace, the study will provide insights into the specific development needs of recently qualified in-service teachers in this sector. The findings will therefore contribute to planning and implementation of continuing professional development for new and existing teachers in this sector.

CONSENT FORM (PARTICIPANTS)

Project Title: The workplace learning of 'newly qualified' in-service teachers in the Education and Training Sector

Researcher: Rachel Terry, School of Education and Professional Development, Huddersfield University. Tel: <>. Email: <>

Please Tick

- I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

- I understand that in the event of my withdrawal, any data gathered up to this point will be destroyed and not used in the research.

- I agree to interviews being audio recorded and the recordings being used for the purposes of the research.

- I understand that the data will be anonymous and any direct quotes used in the report will be used under a pseudonym.

- I understand that data gathered in this research will be destroyed once the report is finalised.

- I would like to see a copy of the data in which I am involved.

Name

_____

Signature _____**Date_____**

Thank you for your participation in this research, if you have any further questions please contact me via email or telephone (see above)

Appendix 2: Information sheet (organisations)

Project Title: The workplace learning of 'newly qualified' in-service teachers in the Education and Training Sector

Purpose of the research: This study is being conducted by Rachel Terry in fulfilment of the award of Doctorate in Education (EdD) in The School of Education and Professional Development at the University of Huddersfield

Introduction and Background

There is a common-sense assumption that teachers who have recently completed a full teaching qualification such as the Certificate in Education or PGCE are fully rounded professionals, able to work independently with little need for further development. While this may be true, this view ignores the complexity of the relationship between theory and practice, as former trainees work to integrate their theoretical learning with the immediate conditions of their practice. It also denies the significance of learning in the workplace, as a source of professional development throughout a teacher's career. For former in-service trainees, who may have had substantial teaching experience both before and alongside their teaching qualification, the contribution of the organisation to their development may be especially significant.

Aims of the study:

- To apply theories of workplace learning to the development of newly qualified in-service teachers in the Education and Training Sector in order to conceptualise their learning and to generate new understandings of this process.
- To enhance understanding of the relationship between individual, workplace and policy context in the professional development of newly qualified in-service teachers in the context of deregulation and the 2014 Professional Standards.
- To contribute to debates around the effective support and development of former trainees in a diverse and fluid sector.

Planned research methods

A case study design has been adopted; however, the focus of the case is the individual, rather than the organisation. Data will be collected over a two-year period, using a range of methods:

- Semi-structured interviews with 8 participants (former trainees) from 3 centres
- Interviews with representatives from each centre with responsibility for staff development
- Document analysis

Former trainees will also be asked to take photos of their surroundings to act as interview prompts.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

Data collected will be kept confidential and the college (as an institution) will remain anonymous. Former trainees who participate in the research will also be assured confidentiality and anonymity.

Outcomes

The findings of the study will inform policy and practice in the support and development of 'newly-qualified' in-service teachers in the Education and Training sector. As well as contributing to understandings of how teachers learn in the workplace, the study will provide insights into the specific development needs of recently qualified in-service teachers in this sector. The findings may therefore contribute to planning and implementation of continuing professional development for new and existing teachers in this sector.

Researcher: Rachel Terry, School of Education and Professional Development, Huddersfield University. Tel: <>. Email: <>

Appendix 3: Record of email correspondence regarding pseudonym

Thu 6 Sep 2018

Hi <L>

Hope the start of the new term is proving positive for you and you get a good bunch of students.

I'm just putting together an article that I hope to get published in the *Research in Post-compulsory Education* journal. It's about using the 'sticky arrow' (Pictor) technique as a research method and I'm drawing on some of the data you provided. There are two things I want to check with you:

1) Is there a pseudonym that you'd like to be known by? Otherwise I would have to think of a name to give you!

2) Is the following biographical detail accurate and do you feel that it assures you sufficient anonymity?

'L is a childcare lecturer within the Health and Social Care department of a medium-sized FE college in a formerly industrial town in the North of England. At the time of the interview she had worked at the college for 8 years, first as a placement officer supporting the childcare team, then for the last 3 and a half years as a lecturer. During her time at the college she had completed a BA in Early Years and then the in-service PGCE. She identified strongly as a member of the caring professions, positioning herself and other members of her team as people who primarily wanted to help others.'

Just let me know if there is any detail I have got wrong or if there is anything you would rather I left out. I don't believe there is anything in my analysis of the data (or in what you said) that would cause any problems with an employer, for example.

If you could let me know by 11 Sep that would be great.

All the best

Rachel

Thu, 6 Sep 2018, 16:49

Hi Rachel,

I hope you're well?

The new term is very busy (as you know! :o)) but is going along nicely.

All the information below sounds good to me. I'm not bothered what name you give me, you know me, I'm quite laid back with that kind of thing.

Congratulations on being published, that's great.

Thanks,

<L>

Appendix 4: Operationalisation of research questions and methods of analysis (Mason, 2002, pp. 28-30)

Research Question (RQ)	Type of data/method	Justification – ontology/epistemology	Level of data	Method of analysis
RQ1 What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?	Policy documents – Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 2013)	CDA aligns with understanding of social world as constituted by *practices*: synthesises insights from social theorists and text-analytical traditions (Fairclough, 2013, p.131), in approaching language as a social practice, that is, a mode of action which is always socially and historically situated.	Documents relevant to teachers and teacher development in FE in England from 2012 to 2018.	Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2013)
	Texts found in case study sites (CDA)	Documents and visual artefacts gathered from case study sites allow exploration of how language from different contexts (Smith, 2006b) may resurface in others, conveying the hierarchical relationships between contextual levels.	Documents and other visual artefacts identified by researcher or suggested by participants as relevant to their experience in the workplace.	Mapping of intertextual hierarchies and sequences of action (Smith, 2006b)
	Semi-structured interviews with managers responsible for staff development	Interviews with those responsible within organisations for the development of FTs shed light on the processes through which policy is 'enacted' (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012). Accounts viewed as discourse and scrutinised for absences.	3 interviews, each in a different site	Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) Handled separately from FT data because questions asked/themes identified are different.
	Semi-structured interviews with FTs, including Pictor technique (King et al., 2013) and photos as visual elicitation devices	FTs may have a limited awareness of policy and be unable to identify how it has an impact on them and their learning. Pictor provides a visual tool through which their perceived position within the institutional and policy context can be explored. Where possible, photos taken by FTs in the workplace used to elicit discussion of places and practices inaccessible to the researcher.	8 participants, interviewed at the start and the end of their first year after qualifying (with exception of pilot). 8 initial Pictor charts and 5 second charts.	Template analysis (Brooks et al., 2015) Contextual analysis (Mason, 2002), including Pictor chart

	Visual data from case study sites – field notes	Observation of the material surroundings of FTs used to provide a detailed contextual understanding of the workplace.	6 case study sites, most visited on at least 2 occasions.	Contextual analysis (Mason, 2002)
RQ2a) What do FTs learn in their first year after qualifying? RQ2b) How do they learn this?	Semi-structured interviews, including Pictor (King et al., 2013) and photos as visual elicitation devices, with former trainees	Learning is conceived as *the negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice*. Interviews with FTs (with prompts) provide data on the practices they have participated in, the reification of this participation, and the negotiation of meaning it necessitates, both within and outside the interview situation.	As above	As above
	Semi-structured interviews with managers responsible for staff development	Interviews with managers may provide an alternative angle on the above, indicating institutional expectations and perceptions of what is learnt and how this happens.		
RQ3a) How does the current institutional and policy context shape the learning of FTs? b) How may the relationship between the learning of FTs and the institutional and policy context be theorised?	All of the above	Learning is conceptualised as occurring through a process of mutual interaction between individual and social context. The unit of analysis of this study is the individual, but the multiple layers of context in which they are situated are crucial to the analysis. All the data sources above will be used to develop a deeper understanding of how the relationship between these different elements is enacted in practice, contributing to theorisations of the learning process.	**In summary:** - Policy documents 2012-2018 - Texts relating to sites - 3 interviews with managers - 16 interviews with FTs, including Pictor - Field notes from 13 site visits	**In summary:** - CDA of documents/texts - Thematic analysis of manager interviews - Template analysis of FT interviews - Contextual analysis of range of data sources.

Appendix 5: Round 1 interview schedule (FTs)

Question/prompt	Topic(s)	RQ / 'mini' RQ
What is your current job role? How long have you been doing this role for? Has there been any change in your role as a result of undertaking or completing the Cert Ed/PGCE? Did this match your expectations? How do you see yourself now?	Current and previous job roles. What was their role when they started the course? During the course? After? Description of these roles. Perceptions of any shifts in role as a result of completing course.	2(iv) 2 (v)
What did you do today/this week? How representative is this of your 'normal' day/week? Is there anything that stands out to you as a significant experience or event?	Activities associated with job role. What constitutes a 'normal' day. Events or incidents that stand out. How do FTs conceive of their role/experiences?	2(i)
Who do you have contact with on a day to day basis? Who decides what you do each day? Which relationships are most significant to you?	People FTs come into contact with. Perception of own position in relation to others. Shifts in position.	2(ii)
Have you participated in any CPD in the last few weeks? If so, what was it/was it compulsory/who provided it? How valuable did you find it in terms of your development? Documentary evidence as prompts for interview (supplied by participants)	What organised development opportunities have FTs participated in? What CPD? Where? How? With whom?	2(iii)
Can you name any recent policy developments that are relevant to your role? If yes – how do you think this affects/will affect what you do? If no – no follow up.	Knowledge of recent policy developments. Which are seen to relate to own practice/personal development? Personal positioning in relation to policy.	1/3a(i)
Pictor technique (King et al., 2013) exercise: **who or what influences what you do in your job role?** Discussion of concepts, categories and relationships.	Influence of shifts in policy at local and national level. Impact on practice. Individual relationship with institutional, local and national policy context.	1/3a(ii)

Appendix 6: Planning for semi-structured interviews (Mason, 2002, pp. 69-70)

Research Question (RQ)	Mini questions arising from RQ	Topics/qs related to mini RQs	Interview qs / **strategy**
RQ1 What is the current institutional and policy context for teachers qualifying via the in-service route in further education in England?	1/3a) i) How aware of policy developments are FTs? How do they respond to these?	i) Knowledge of recent policy developments. Which are seen to relate to own practice/personal development? Personal positioning in relation to policy.	Can you name any recent policy developments that are relevant to your role? If yes – how do you think this affects/will affect what you do?
RQ3a) How does the current institutional and policy context shape the learning of former trainees (FTs)?	ii) Do policies at macro/meso level influence learning of FTs? Are cross-overs evident between the different levels?	ii) Influence of shifts in policy at local and national level. Impact on practice. Individual relationship with institutional, local and national policy context.	**Pictor technique** (King et al., 2013) as prompt for interview discussion: *who or what influences what you do in your job role?*
RQ2a) What do FTs learn in their first year after qualifying? b) How do they learn this?	2 i) What **practices** do FTs engage in on a day to day basis? How developmental are these activities?	i) Activities associated with job role. What constitutes a 'normal' day. Events or incidents that stand out. How do FTs conceive of their role/experiences?	What did you do today/this week? How representative is this of your 'normal' day/week? Is there anything that stands out to you as a significant experience or event? **Semi-structured interview & Pictor**
	ii) Who do FTs have contact with on a day to day basis? Which groups are they part of? How do they **participate**?	ii) People FTs come into contact with. Perception of own position in relation to others. Shifts in position. **Negotiation of meaning** of position.	Who do you have contact with on a day to day basis? Who decides what you do each day? Which relationships are most significant to you? **Semi-structured interview & Pictor**
	iii) What recognised opportunities for learning have they participated in?	iii) What organised development opportunities have FTs participated in? What CPD? Where? How? With whom?	Have you participated in any CPD in the last few weeks? If so, what was it/was it compulsory/who provided it? How valuable did you find it in terms of your development? **Semi-structured interview**
	iv) Has there been a change in their role since qualifying?	Current and previous job roles. What was their role when they started the course? During the course? After? Description of these roles.	What is your current job role? How long have you been doing this role for? Has there been any change in your role as a result of undertaking or completing the Cert Ed/PGCE? Did this match your expectations? How do you see yourself now? **Semi-structured interview & Pictor**
	v) What does it mean to be a qualified teacher as opposed to a trainee?	Perceptions of any shifts in role as a result of completing course.	

Appendix 7: Prior knowledge/expectations relating to interview questions

Question/prompt	Prior knowledge/expectations	RQ / 'mini' RQ
What is your current job role? How long have you been doing this role for? Has there been any change in your role as a result of undertaking or completing the Cert Ed/PGCE? Did this match your expectations? How do you see yourself now? (NB ambiguous – revealing? – possible prompts: NQT? FT? experienced teacher?)	Minimal change in status/role as a result of qualification. Insecure/shifting role. Experience/expertise unrewarded. Minimal sense of a transition related to qualification. Confused identities. Little recognition of identity as FT.	2 (iv) 2 (v)
What did you do today/this week? How representative is this of your 'normal' day/week? Is there anything that stands out to you as a significant experience or event?	Flux – no day a normal day. Demands out of proportion with time available/current knowledge/expertise. 'Paperwork' biggest part of role & understood as including everything that is not teaching.	2(i)
Who do you have contact with on a day to day basis? Who decides what you do each day? Which relationships are most significant to you?	Relationships with colleagues most highly valued – learn most from these. Informal rather than formal mentoring. Lack of clear management. Learning perceived as incidental rather than structured.	2(ii)
Have you participated in any CPD in the last few weeks? If so, what was it/was it compulsory/who provided it? How valuable did you find it in terms of your development? Documentary evidence as prompts for interview (supplied by participants)	Varying perceptions of CPD – valued by some as way to improve and recognise skills in key areas; dismissed as 'box ticking' by others – irrelevant to day to day needs. Varying availability of CPD.	2(iii)
Can you name any recent policy developments that are relevant to your role? If yes – how do you think this affects/will affect what you do? If no – no follow up.	Difficulty in naming policies. Confusion about what is meant by this. Attempt to recall knowledge gained through Cert Ed/PGCE. Embarrassment. Key policies likely to be named: around QTLS/deregulation; changes to GCSEs/FS; apprenticeships; Area Reviews? Sainsbury?	1/3a(i)
Pictor technique (King et al., 2013) exercise: **who or what influences what you do in your job role?** Discussion of concepts, categories and relationships.	Likely predominance of local over national/international. Hesitancy over relationships between different levels – lack of clarity.	1/3a(ii)

Appendix 8: Interview schedule (managers)

Question/prompt	Topic(s)	RQ / 'mini' RQ
What is your current job role? Has it changed in the last two years? What is your role in relation to newly qualified teachers – especially in-service former trainees in your organization?	Role within organisation. Changes to that role Relationship to FTs	1
How well do you think the initial teaching qualification prepares FTs for their role in the workplace?	Perceptions of ITE. Expectations of newly qualified teachers. Perceptions of contrast between formal qual and workplace practice.	2
What opportunities are there for teachers to develop in your organisation? Examples of CPD? To what extent do you feel the organisation is successful in supporting their development?	What organised development opportunities do FTs participate in? What CPD? Where? How? With whom? Role of organisation in supporting development.	2
What policies would you say have an influence on your role? To what extent do you think they have an impact on FTs?	Experience of policy. Understanding of this. Policy mediation/enactment. Impact of policy on teachers.	1/3a
How does the wider policy context constrain or enable teachers to develop on the job?	Influence of shifts in policy at local and national level. Impact on practice. Individual relationship with institutional, local and national policy context.	1/3a

Appendix 9: Round 2 interview schedule (FTs)

1. Discussion of transcript/themes emerging from interview 1 (transcript shared in advance; themes raised in interview)

Feelings on reading it

What has changed since last interview

Impressions of year as a whole

2. Development over course of past year

Themes to explore:

Perceptions of own learning

Participation in CPD

How organisation has supported learning (or otherwise)

Any experience of observation? Mentoring?

Anything else you would have liked to have had (in terms of support for learning/development)?

Anything you've read?

3. Actions/interactions today

4. Discussion of Pictor chart (from interview 1)

Give participant the opportunity to rearrange the arrows, add arrows, write on existing ones, discuss placement/inclusion of arrows.

Any shifts in policy?
Is there anything you want to say that you haven't had the chance to say?

5. Identification of documentary evidence relevant to learning/development as a teacher – accompany to desk/laptop. Take copies (where appropriate) or photos.

**Appendix 10: Instructions for Pictor technique (adapted from King, 2016)**

Think about all the people, groups, organisations (or whatever) that contribute in some way to what you do in your job. These might be specific people ('My colleague Sughra', 'My line manager'), groups of people ('My learners/students') or organisations ('My college/company', 'the Department for Education'). This is not meant to be an exclusive list – anyone that is important to you can be included, or shown as an absence.

For each of these, write a name or other identifier on the sticky arrows. You may use different colours of arrows to make distinctions between types of 'people', but you do not have to.

Now think about any other factors that influence what you do. Here you are thinking about 'things' rather than people. These may be concrete objects or places ('My staffroom'), abstract factors ('My timetable') or bigger influences such as specific policies or procedures ('The Sainsbury Report', 'Staff development policy').

Again, write each of these on a sticky arrow.

Now stick the arrows on a sheet of flipchart paper in a way that helps you to describe who or what influences what you do in your job role. One of the arrows must represent you. Do this in a way that helps you to highlight how the different people/bodies/things relate to each other as well as you. You may want to think about the distance between the arrows, as well as the direction they are pointing in. But there is no right or wrong; place them in whatever way helps you to show the different influences on your role.

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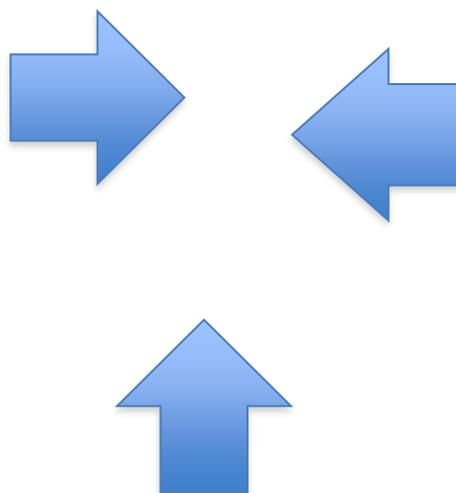
Appendix 11: Example of field notes

Fernside — descrip. Calm, well-managed.
'No noise. Carpeted. Informal dress - most staff in jeans.
Office (head-teacher's). Strategy docs
on wall — diff strands of improvement
plan. + display conveying school's
mission statement — w photos of residents.
Residential / day centre for children
v adults w multiple v profound disabilities.
What is different abt this context v
what is the same?
— v. structured / supported. Part of web of
organisation / professionals all jointly
responsible for care of these people
— but FE colleges also responsible for children /
vulnerable adults — same structures shd be in
place ??) FS run as a trust — cohesive,
supported by parents, charitable status?
— diff policies / influences — those relating
spec to those w disabilities eg. Rochford Review
— Ofsted as relevant but not perceived as
drives of practice. [Not mentioned; not by L. either]
Own dev. — planning to do QTLS in next
window. Shaped more by work in school than
external influences
(what does this mean?)

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LEARNING | CENGAGE Learning
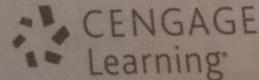
Appendix 12: *a priori* themes

From *theoretical framework*	From **RQs**	From *literature*	From *experience*
Learning as negotiation of meaning necessitated by participation in practice: • Practices • Participation/reification • Negotiation of meaning.	*RQ1* Institutional context; policy context. *RQ2* Learning – what? How? *RQ3* Position as recently qualified, in-service teacher – role/perceptions of ITE qualification.	Policy 'enactment' (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012) Tacit/informal learning (Beckett & Hager, 2002; Eraut, 2004) 'Affordances' for learning (Billett, 2002; Maxwell, 2014) 'Coping' (Orr, 2012)	Impact of workload. Tensions between management expectations and experience 'on the ground'. Tensions between 'success' data and 'learning'. Value of mandatory as opposed to self-directed CPD; generic vs. contextualised CPD.

Appendix 13: Extract from initial coding of Leah interview 1

Interview question	RQ	Participant response	Code
What is your current job role?	2	(Descriptive response – contributes to detail of specific case. MGL – FE – course leader for L1 Childcare; teaches L2 & L3 childcare; L1 H&SC; from Jan, L2 H&SC Starting 3rd full academic year of teaching. Started teaching in Feb before started PGCE. Did L3 AET first. Was required to do PGCE)	
Has there been any change in your role as a result of doing the Cert Ed/PGCE?	2 (NB originally RQ3 – transition)	erm not really no erm I started the PGCE when I was successful in gaining a teaching position so I actually gained the teaching position so I had the job to do it's you know it was my job so … it's the same really yeah I think I've been really lucky because I've worked at the college for 8 years so I was already an established member of the team anyway cos I stayed within the same team I just changed different job roles I just got a different job role so erm I was really lucky in that respect cos ... everybody knew what I were working towards, everybody knew that's what I wanted to do so when I was successful in the position everybody just treated me like I were now a teacher and that I was now a part of the teaching team which in some ways it was brilliant because .. they've obviously got faith in me to do the job correctly they've obviously they obviously knew that I'd do it ... to the best of my ability but then in other ways it was kind of .. I like autonomy and I like that but in other ways it was kind of an expectation that I should know what I'm .. what I should be doing and sometimes I were like I actually don't know what I'm supposed to do but I'm never afraid of asking I just ask if I needed help with anything but	continuity of role self-concept continuity of role role - expectations of teacher self-concept role – expectations of teacher help/support
How do you see yourself now?	2 (orig 3)	erm I've got more confidence. The first year that I had that I was course leader for the level 1 learners I was extremely nervous and really looking back I was a little bit .. soft for want of a better word really. erm because they you know the learners do come with extra responsibilities, extra erm things that they've got going on in their lives and really I was a little bit yeah a little bit maybe a little bit too understanding and I let them erm call the shots I suppose and it affected their learning really because I were letting them you know but now this last year and this year because I've got confidence and I've done it for a while now I'll take a step back and I'll say 'well, you're actually at college to learn. We can help you with whatever's going on in your life and we will help you but while you're in the	Perceived development - growth in confidence Impact of experience/time in role

		class you're here to learn', so I am a little bit more firmer I suppose ... I know how to handle it so a bit different that way … yeah with confidence	
What did you do at work today? Follow up qus: Anything else?	2	Yeah erm I had my course, so I had my level 1 learners. Erm we did some course content, some lesson course content, erm they did a group activity and then at the end they did a writing piece. … And that's it. Yeah [laughs] there's always something to do, there's always a student knocking at the staffroom for you to help them with something or yeah yeah I've had an upset student this morning so erm you know she needed to be .. you know needed some help, needed to feel better really so I dealt with that, along with the progress coach cos we're a good team together so we worked together to deal with that erm so yeah it's not just teaching there's a lot of others and although you've got your progress coach who are there to help you with the pastoral support and all that kind of erm erm aspect, it's still, you still can't say to a student who's coming up to you upset, 'well, that's not my job remit. Go and find a progress coach', that's not the kind of teacher I am. I will help them and you know and then I'll you know when they're calm and they're feeling ok then I'll go and get the progress coach, if they've come to me first, and then we'll work together as a team so although the teaching staff here are meant to be the teaching staff you still get involved in some of the pastoral support as well	Participation – teaching/timetable Participation – students site - staffroom Self-concept Role of teacher Collaboration
Would a different member of the team have dealt with it differently?		I don't think they would on our floor because we are health and care and I'd be very surprised if somebody … didn't show a student that they cared, because we're all from that kind of background. Erm and I can't really speak for other floors really ..	Institutional expectations of teacher site – department/floor self-concept – caring
How typical of normal working day?		[V promptly] Typical, a typical working day, yeah. Yeah, you've got your teaching to do and you do that to the best of your ability but then you've also got other things that you have to manage and.. you might have, I mean today as well I've been asked by the manager to make phone calls to prospective students, I've been asked to answer emails from other people about attendance, you know there's all things like that as well constant phone calls	participation – tasks beyond teaching expectations of teacher's role
Is there anything from the past few weeks that stands out as a significant event?	2	I do feel this past half term there's been a change in .. behaviour at college. It seems to be a lot more challenging … this year for some reason	Institutional context

Appendix 14: Initial template from Leah interview 1

1. Role of teacher
   1.1 Status as 'newly qualified teacher'
      1.1.1 Continuity of role (prior/post qual)
      1.1.2 Value of help/support
   1.2 Students
      1.2.1 Care for
      1.2.2 Pressures of
   1.3 What belongs to the role?
   1.4 Collaboration

2. Institutional context
   2.1 Timetable

   2.2 Colleagues (Participation) / Staffroom (Reification)

   2.3 Management expectations

   2.4 Student behaviour

3. Policy context
   3.1 Understanding of concept

   3.2 Policy enactment – tension between policy and 'on the ground' experience

   3.3 Impact of GCSE English/maths

4. CPD/staff development
   4.1 Learning from doing the job

      4.1.1 Confidence

   4.2 Mandatory CPD – institutional expectations

   4.3 Personal development – individual expectations/priorities

5. Personal dispositions
   5.1 Perceptions of role

      5.1.1 Agency

   5.2 Perceptions of learning

   5.3 Work/home life

Appendix 15: Provisional template after coding of Round 1 interviews (FTs)

1. **Policy**

1.1 awareness and perceptions of

1.2 enactment of

1.3 funding

1.4 changes to qualifications

1.5 curriculum

1.6 GCSE maths and English

1.7 Ofsted

2. **Institution**

2.1 experience of change

2.2 management structures

2.3 timetable

2.4 space

2.5 monitoring

    2.5.1 attendance

    2.5.2 compliance

    2.5.3 observation

    2.5.4 paperwork

3. **Teacher's role**

3.1 status

3.2 impact of Cert Ed/PGCE

3.3 autonomy

3.4 description of responsibilities and practices

3.5 time

3.6 impact of vocational area

3.7 behaviour management

    3.7.1 mobile phones

3.8 colleagues and other professionals

3.9 confidence

    3.9.1 make a change

3.10 centrality of students to role

3.11 work life balance

3.12 age

4. **Students**

4.1 learning from students

4.2 demographic

4.3 meeting students' needs

4.4 numbers

4.5 institutional arrangements

5. **Teacher development**

5.1 staff development

    5.1.1 mandatory CPD within institution

    5.1.2 voluntary CPD within institution

    5.1.3 voluntary CPD outside institution

5.2 passing on knowledge and experience

5.3 being mentored

5.4 learning by doing

5.5 justification of teaching decisions

5.6 research or enquiry

6. **Safeguarding**

7. **Relationship with interviewer**

Appendix 16: Revised template prior to recoding Round 1 and coding of Round 2

FTs template v2

Name	Files	References	Created On	Created By
participation in practices	0	0	25/02/2019 11:52	RT
students	0	0	25/02/2019 11:52	RT
meeting students' need	0	0	25/02/2019 11:53	RT
Safeguarding	0	0	25/02/2019 11:53	RT
behaviour management	0	0	25/02/2019 11:53	RT
colleagues	0	0	25/02/2019 11:54	RT
interaction with	0	0	25/02/2019 11:54	RT
progress coaches	0	0	25/02/2019 11:55	RT
managers	0	0	25/02/2019 11:56	RT
interaction with	0	0	25/02/2019 11:58	RT
monitoring	0	0	25/02/2019 11:56	RT
attendance	0	0	25/02/2019 11:56	RT
paperwork	0	0	25/02/2019 11:56	RT
numbers	0	0	25/02/2019 11:56	RT
Ofsted	0	0	25/02/2019 11:56	RT
maths and English	0	0	25/02/2019 11:57	RT
observation	0	0	25/02/2019 11:57	RT
reification	0	0	25/02/2019 11:58	RT
time	0	0	25/02/2019 11:59	RT
space	0	0	25/02/2019 11:59	RT
paperwork	0	0	25/02/2019 11:59	RT
observation	0	0	25/02/2019 11:59	RT
standards	0	0	25/02/2019 12:00	RT
negotiation of meaning	0	0	25/02/2019 12:00	RT
policy	0	0	25/02/2019 12:01	RT
role of teacher	0	0	25/02/2019 12:01	RT
learning	0	0	25/02/2019 12:01	RT

Left panel navigation:
- Quick Access: Files, Memos, Nodes
- Data: Files (FTs Round 1, Managers), File Classifications, Externals
- Codes: Nodes (FTs template v1, FTs template v2, Manager interviews), Relationships, Relationship Types
- Cases: Cases, Case Classifications
- Notes
- Search: Queries, Query Results, Node Matrices, Sets, Search Folders
- Maps
- Output

Appendix 17: Mapping of regulatory texts (Middleton College)
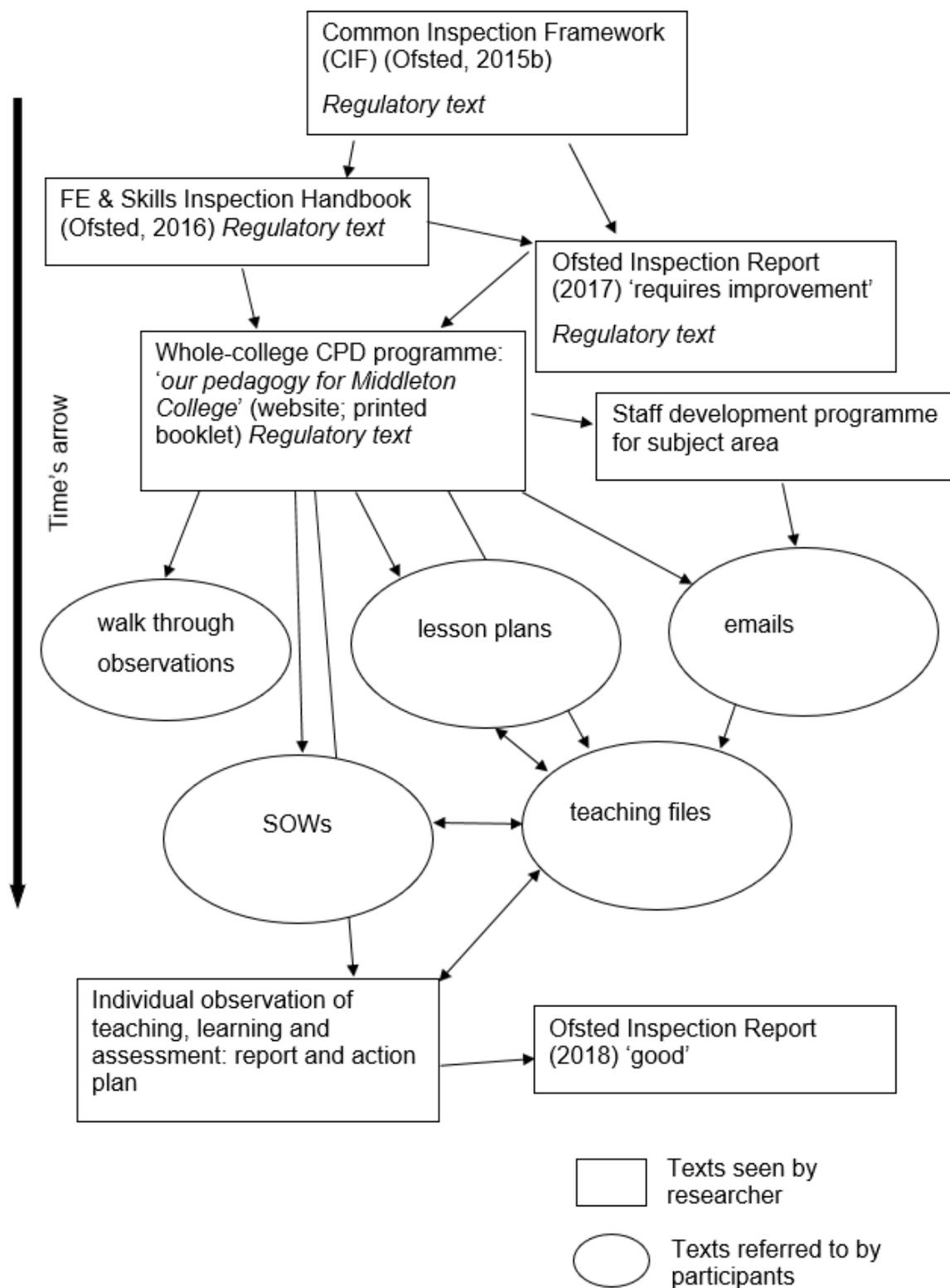
**Appendix 18: Example of CDA (*Sainsbury Report*)**

Analysis of extract from the *Sainsbury Report* (DfE & DBIS, 2016) applying Fairclough (2003, pp. 191-194).

Introduction – pp. 22-25

| Aspect of analysis	Analysis of text
Social events	Text is part of chain of texts relating to low productivity and linking this to skills. International comparisons drawn. Backdrop of attempts to reform the system of vocational education. This report framed within previous reports and initiatives.
Genre	Genre of 'hortatory report' - text 'apparently oriented to knowledge-exchange but actually oriented (also) to activity-exchange' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 112). On one hand seeking to present factual review of current situation. Uses footnotes to indicate supporting evidence. On other hand urging action: 'Unless we take urgent action', 'What is needed is a national system of technical education'.
Difference	Attempting to resolve or overcome difference. Engages in dialogue with alternative perspectives e.g. view of vocational education as inferior to academic education. Seeks to convince and persuade. Justifies use of term 'technical education' – debate not suppressed as in title and foreword.
Intertextuality	Draws explicitly on previous texts through references and footnotes. Also includes voices of 'individuals' (prospective students) and 'employers'. These are prioritised: 'Many of these qualifications hold little value in the eyes of individuals and are not understood or sought by employers' (p. 23). Brings in voices of parents/carers, teachers and the 'general public': 'Evidence shows that [these groups] have long regarded technical qualifications as inferior to academic qualifications' (p. 23). Government also significant voice. Has started to 'refer less frequently' to vocational education (p. 23).
Assumptions	Existential – that 'technical education' is a system; that government is a recognisable body that is able to act in response to this report. Propositional – that low productivity stems from poor technical education; that employers know what they need and are able to use this to shape technical education; that reform is possible and desirable. Value – that employment and economic productivity are common goods.
Semantic/grammatical relations	Dominated by causal relations. Establishing 'factual' reasons for problem stated in first sentence: 'The UK has a long-term productivity problem' (p. 22). Factual statements follow on from each other implying causal relationship: 'The productivity gap is holding our country back. Across the globe…' – productivity gap stems from poor technical skills. Also explicit causal relations: 'As a result of…'. Conditional clauses used to show implications of failing to act: 'Unless we take urgent action…' Problem-solution relationship.

Exchanges, speech functions & grammatical mood	Combination of knowledge-exchange and activity-exchange – feature of 'hortatory report'. Statements and demands. Strikingly combined in 'Technical education is not, and must not be allowed to become, simply 'vocational education' rebadged' (p. 23). Declarative statements of asserted truths used to express exhortation: 'we must communicate […] the truth that technical education leads to rewarding, skilled jobs…' (p. 23).
Discourses	Discourse of market – economic competition, value for money, education in service of market. 'the vocational system has remained insufficiently dynamic and responsive to the changing economic environment, and the prestige of vocational education has suffered' (p. 23). Causal link asserted through 'and' between low status of vocational education and its responsiveness to market. No evidence provided for this claim. Discourse of skills – tied to productivity Discourse of student as consumer – needs access and information to make marketised choices.
Representation of social events	Report set in context of series of previous reports/attempts at reform. Also in context of international comparisons, particularly relating to productivity. Social actors named (see intertextuality above) but these are generic rather than specific.
Styles	Strong collective voice speaking for the UK as a whole: 'our education and skills system' and for those in positions of responsibility: 'we need to offer'. Seeking to establish consensus, ownership. But also 'we' of authors of report (panel members): 'we believe that' in justification of 'technical' rather than 'vocational' education. Within same paragraph shifts between these two 'we's. Final paragraph returns to 'we' of panel – justifying reason for going beyond remit of review.
Modality	Similar to Foreword. In terms of epistemic modality (knowledge-exchange), text dominated by assertions of truth. Little modalisation of these declarative statements. Extract also marked by deontic modality (activity-exchange). High level of obligation – see analysis of 'is not and must not be allowed to' above. Combines epistemic and deontic modality in one sentence.
Evaluation	Authors commit to substantial reform (around 4 requirements), as opposed to 'tinkering' (p. 23). Employers' needs prioritised – contradictory, given that 'weak employer engagement' (p. 23) recognised as significant barrier to prior attempts at reform. Measures of international success valued. Reiteration of 'world-class' (pp. 24 & 25).

**Appendix 19: Mapping of texts relating to CPD – Leah**

Common Inspection Framework (CIF) (Ofsted, 2015b)

FE & Skills Inspection Handbook (Ofsted, 2016)

Regulatory text

Emails (from managers)

Shared online site (for records & resources)

Internal lesson observation

Research project: feedback on students' work

Students' personal targets

Appraisal

Ofsted lesson observation

☐ Texts seen by researcher

◯ Texts referred to by participant

Time's arrow

Appendix 20: Mapping of texts relating to CPD – Kerry

ProMonitor™

Appraisal

'crazy timetable'

'purple boards' in staffroom

'online thing' (shared online CPD records & resources)

Emails from 'management'

Complaint about GCSE English teacher

OU degree programme

Sainsbury Report (DBIS & DfE, 2016)

Revised assessment briefs

Texts seen by researcher

Texts referred to by participant
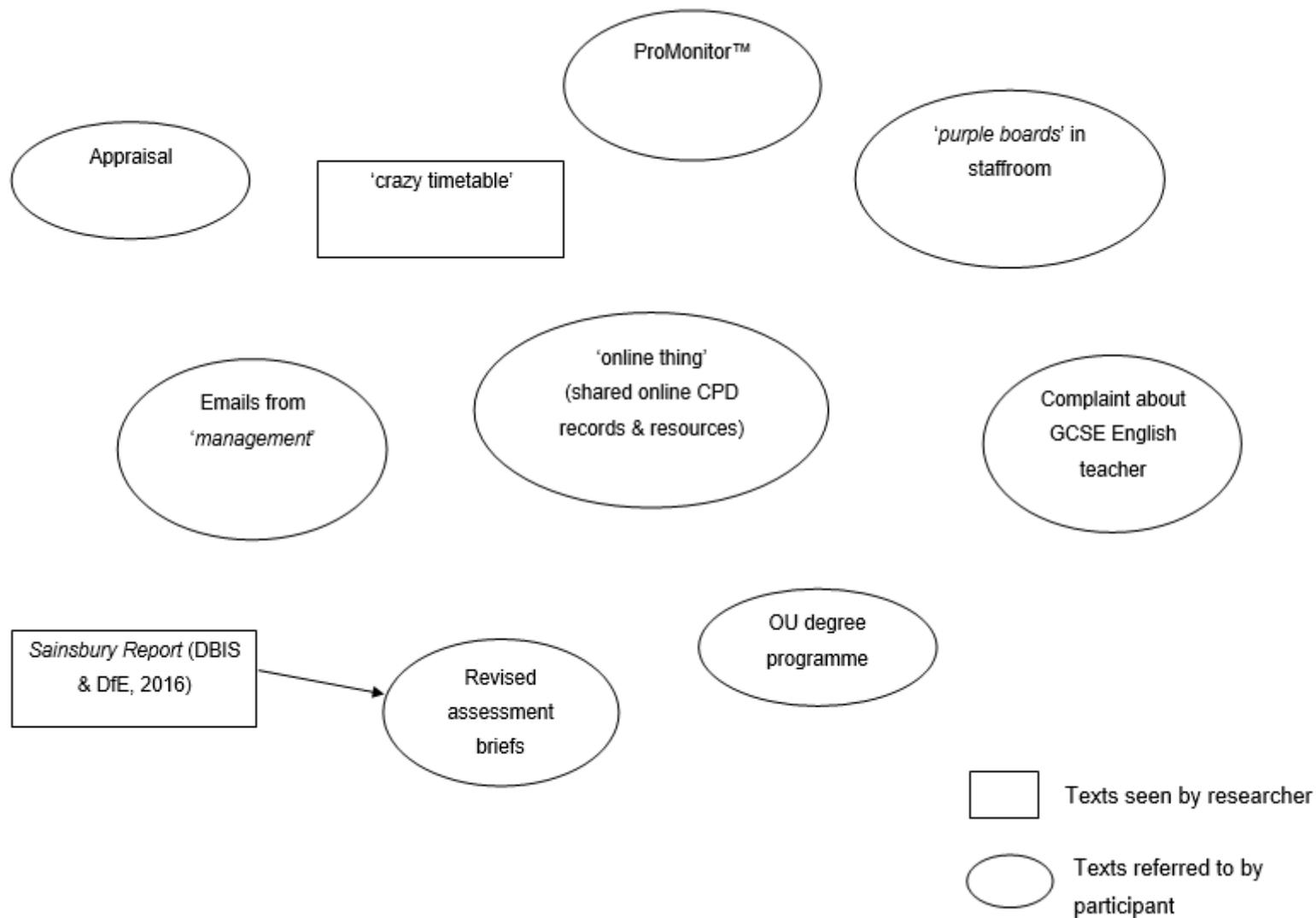
**Appendix 21: Nicole Pictor chart 1**
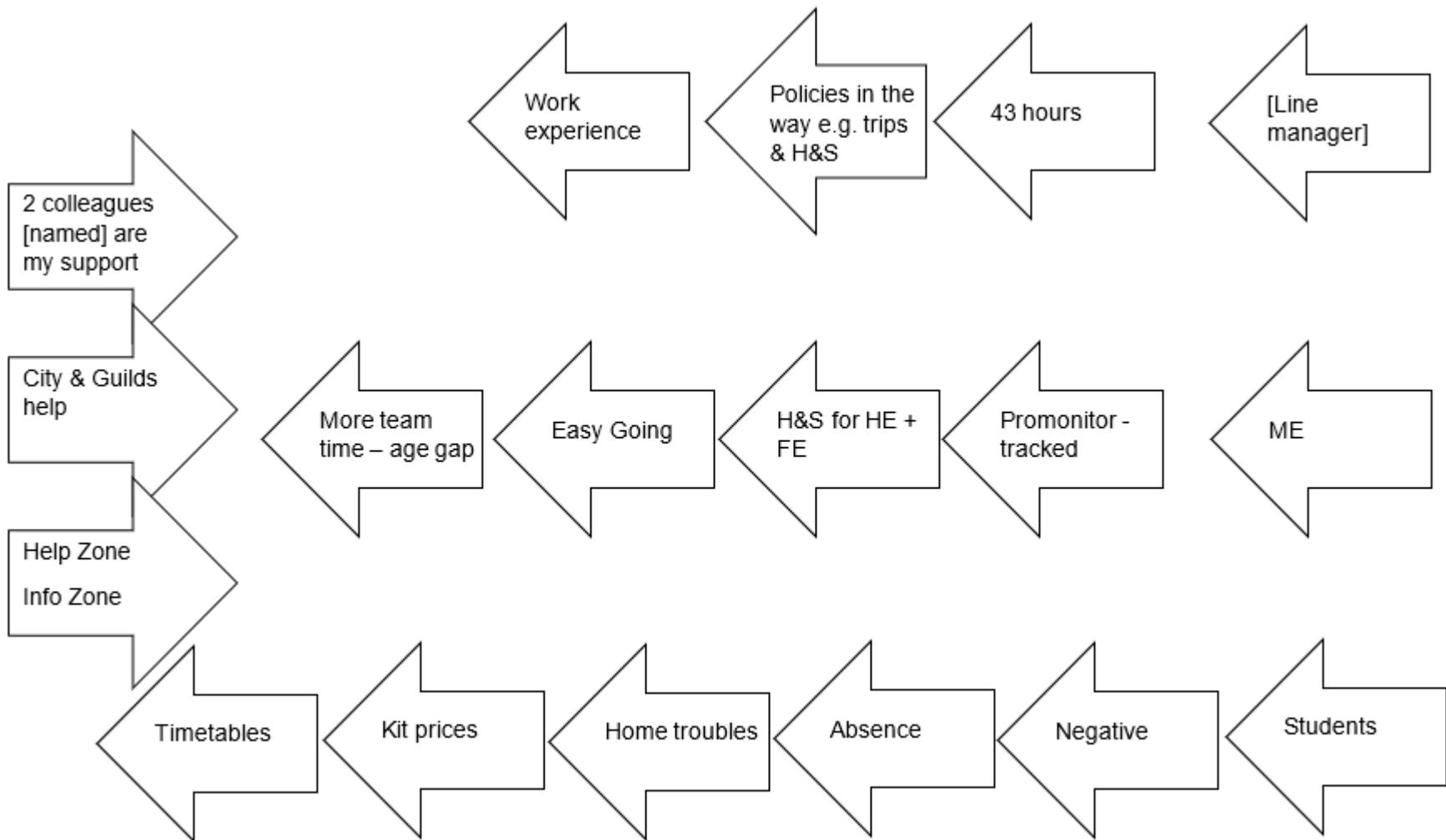
Appendix 22: Ryan Pictor chart 1
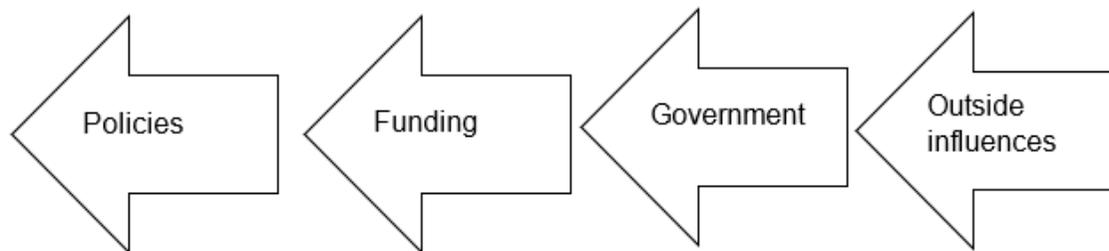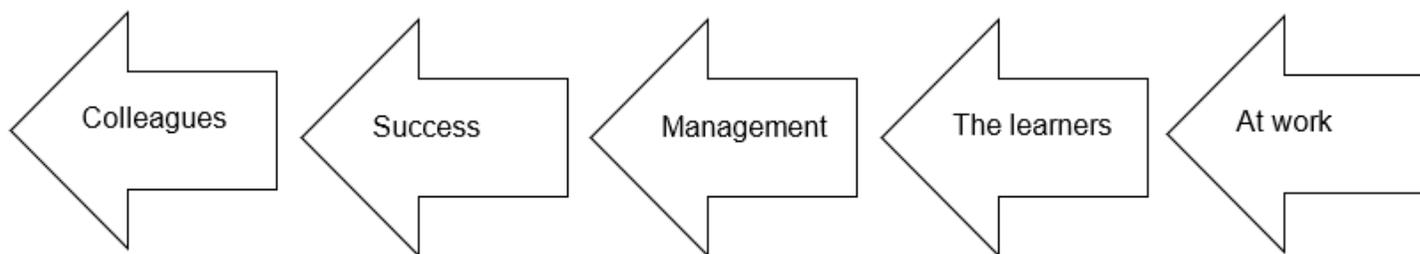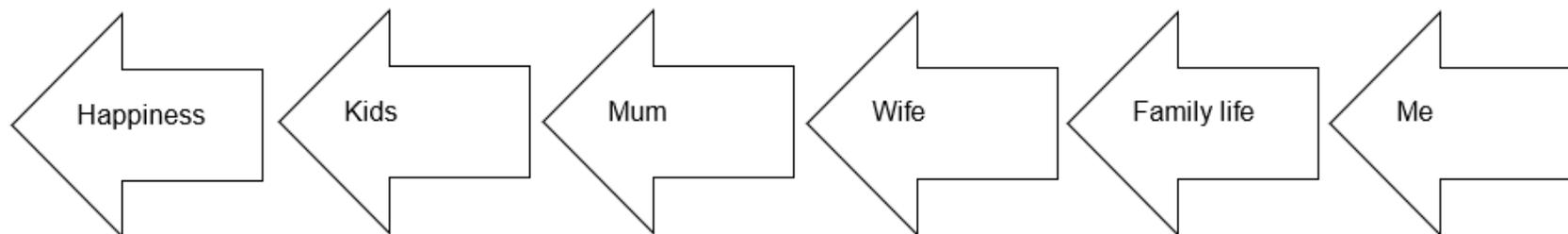
Appendix 23: Ryan Pictor chart 2
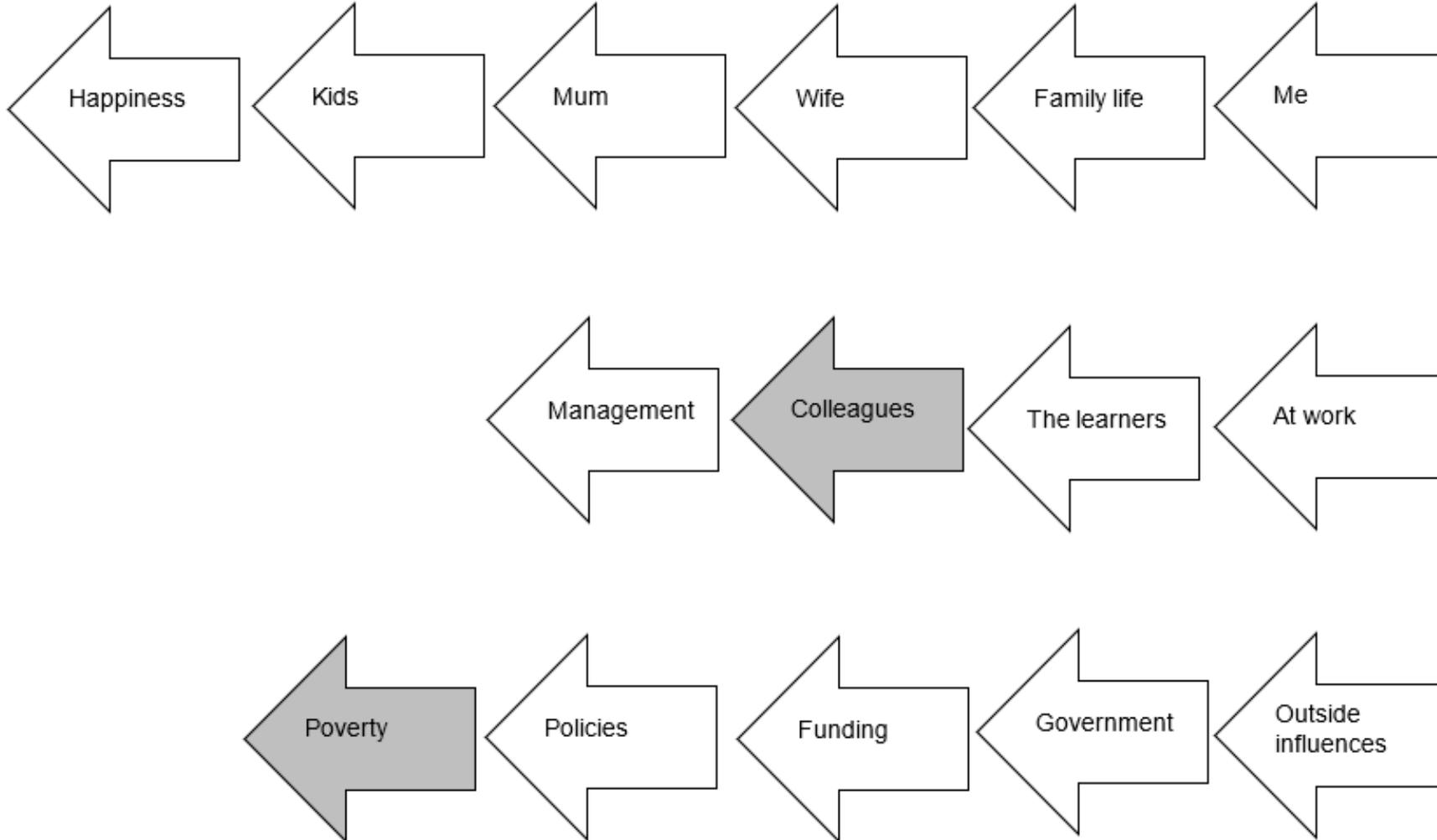
Appendix 24: Justin Pictor chart 1
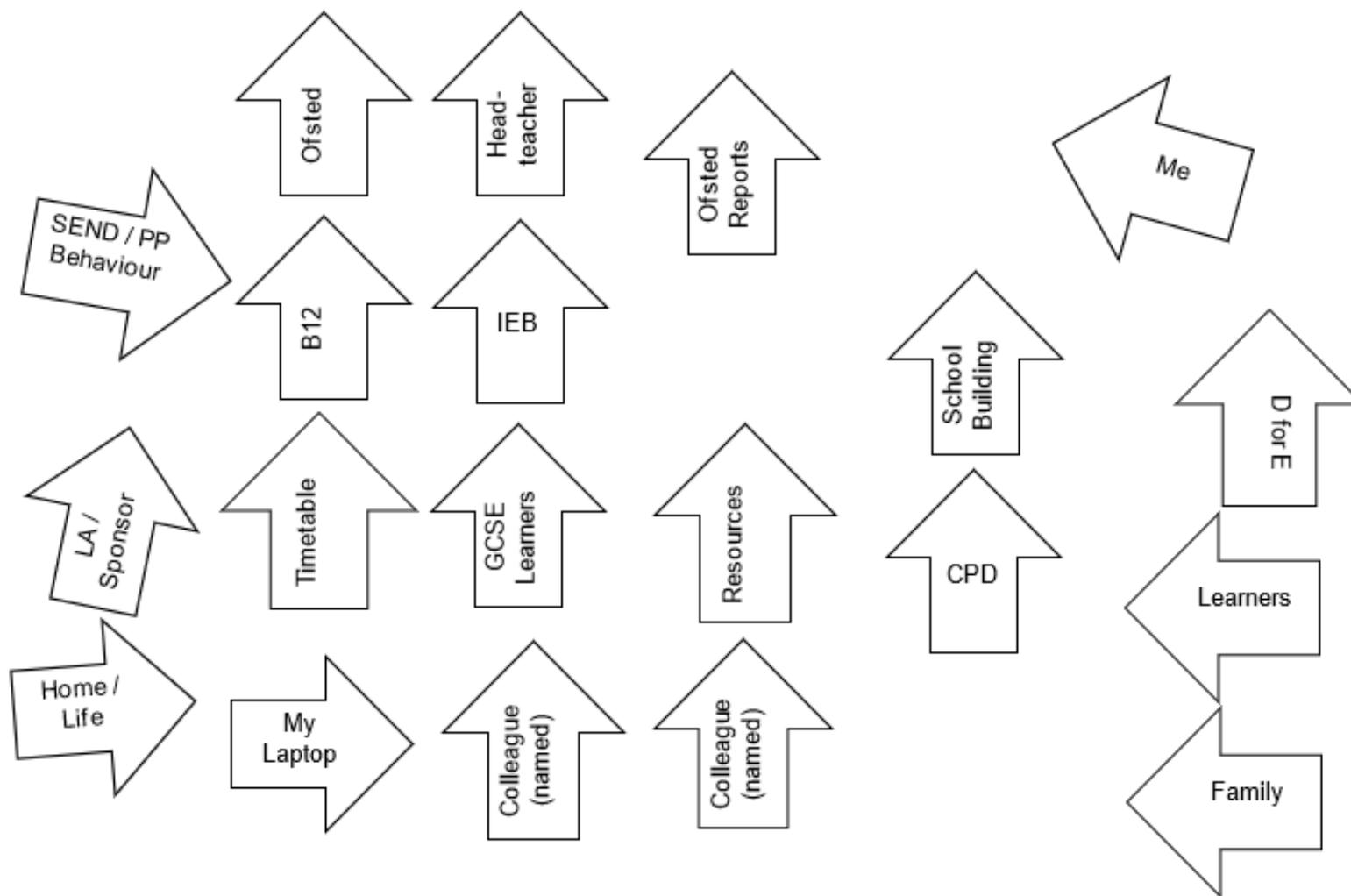
Appendix 25: Susan Pictor chart 1