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The CPD Needs of Mentors in Post-Compulsory Initial Teacher Training in England.

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ABSTRACT
This paper discusses the CPD needs of mentors within post-compulsory ITT provision in England. The discussion applies the ideas of Weber, Foucault, Habermas, and Bourdieu in interpreting the implications for post-compulsory ITT mentor CPD training. The paper’s primary and secondary research findings appear to indicate that mentors within this field of education struggle to gain the professional acceptance that Weber has popularised. Alongside struggling to achieve professional recognition it can also be argued that post-compulsory ITT mentors may not use the same ‘discourse’ or ‘way of talking’ about teaching as their mentees. This finding is relevant to the work of Foucault. The subsequent attempt to achieve ‘collaboration’ and the potential ‘contestation’ that may be experienced links to the work of Habermas and Bourdieu.
Theoretical background

In his (1995) book *After the Fact* Clifford Geertz argues that much fieldwork experience becomes akin to the following simile:

- Wonder Boy trapped in the tent.
- The prairie had been set on fire.
- He had no more bullets.
- All his food was gone.
- Night was coming.
- How would Wonder Boy get out of the tent?

End of chapter 22.

Chapter 23. After Wonder Boy got out of the tent (1995, p.120).

Geertz is arguing that the crucial element of the encounter (how Wonder Boy got out of the tent) is missing within many fieldwork accounts. The authors of this paper consider this analogy to be similar to the experiences that many trainees have on their post-compulsory Initial Teacher Training programmes. Whether full-time or part-time, the trainees can experience a challenging few months of lectures, assignments and teaching practice. The intensity of the process can mean that the trainees are unable to reflect fully on their developmental journey to qualified professional status. Brookes (2005, p.45) cites Foster (2002) to argue that this occurrence is a result of the lack of a ‘systematic monitoring of the training process’. This argument can be developed to propose that if the mentor arrangements within post-compulsory ITT were robust it would help in enabling a systematic monitoring of the training processes. This would give trainees more opportunity to think about how they have developed from ‘trainee teacher’ to ‘competent professional’.

It is ironic that there is so much current debate about mentoring within ITT. For example, one of the themes of a conference organised by the International Professional Development Association (IPDA) at Stirling University in December 2006 was the debate over the effectiveness or otherwise of mentoring within teacher training. This current focus on mentoring can give the impression that the mentor-mentee relationship is a recent development when in fact the notion of ‘apprenticeship’ and ‘master craftsman’ has a long history. Brookes (2005, p. 43) argues that as far back as 1805, Bell and Lancaster recommended that new teachers needed to be inducted into the profession by ‘taking a share in the office of tuition’ as opposed to having theoretical training in pedagogy (Brookes, 2005, p. 44). In other words it was being recommended that trainees needed to be inducted into the profession by practical instruction from a ‘master craftsman’.

Two hundred years later, the English inspection agency OFSTED commented that this process of novice being nurtured by an expert is underdeveloped within ITT. A significant factor that has led to this conclusion is the inconsistency of mentor support within ITT. In this context the term mentoring refers to the ‘support given by one (usually more experienced) person for the growth and learning of another’ (Malderez, 2001, p.57). Hobson (2002, p.5) argues that Tomlinson places this definition of mentoring within the context of modern initial teacher training by defining mentoring as ‘assisting student-teachers to learn how to teach’ (1995, p.7).
Hobson (2001, p.5) also argues that there are three main factors that have led to mentoring in ITT becoming such an important area of debate. These factors are legislative, pedagogical and a product of student experience. It can also be argued from the results of this research that the influence of OFSTED and the ambiguity of understanding that exists about mentoring are two other reasons why there is so much interest in this aspect of ITT. Hobson (2002, p.5) draws attention to legislative factors such as the Department for Education Circular 9/92 (DFE, 1992), which have made mentoring an important component of teacher training. The consequence of this circular has been that student teachers on postgraduate courses spend two-thirds of their courses within teaching contexts. In a training environment in which ITT in England is expected to follow the lead of school based teacher training (a point revealed through the curriculum changes for post-compulsory teacher training proposed in 2007 by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) and Standards Verification UK (SVUK)) this legislative development has increased the importance of mentors working alongside trainee teachers.

Hobson (2002, p.6) draws attention to the changes in pedagogy that also raise the importance of the mentor-mentee relationship. As opposed to appearing to be ‘a sage on the stage’ the pedagogical focus is increasingly on being ‘a guide on the side’. This mirrors the OFSTED change of focus onto ‘learning’ as opposed to ‘teaching’. It means that there is increasing interest in how skills are developed through ‘coaching’ as opposed to ‘teaching’ (Sloboda, 1986, p. 32-33) alongside the continuing influence of Vygotskian and Rogerian paradigms of learning (Hobson, 2002, p. 6). The consequence has been an increased interest in the humanistic processes that enable the development of professional skills. It can be argued that as opposed to listening to a ‘master’ the focus is now on the pedagogical processes that characterise the interaction between ‘master’ and ‘apprentice’.

Hobson (2002, p.6) goes on to highlight ‘the conceptions of those who are seeking to become teachers’ as being a further factor that has contributed to the recent heightened interest in mentoring. These students have been identified as having clear expectations that they would be allocated a mentor to help them in their training. Hobson (2001) found that 92.4% of 277 ITT students thought that it would be ‘very valuable’ or ‘essential’ to plan lessons with a mentor. Moreover these students made reference to the importance of combining this mentor support with feedback from university tutors (Hobson, 2002, p.6).

This appears to suggest that although the concept of mentoring is not recent its importance as an aspect of ITT has increased in recent years. It is deemed as being a desirable component of ITT both by student teachers and OFSTED. This point is reinforced by Chambers & Roper, (2000) who argue that ‘a lack of support’ is one of the most important reasons why student teachers fail to complete their ITT courses.

The work of Barone (2006), Brooks (2006), and Byrne (2006) has been especially useful in helping to inform the theoretical framework that is used for discussing the paper’s findings. These three researchers comment on the link that exists between ‘education’ and ‘social reproduction’. Pope (2006, p.997) comments that education has long been recognized as a ‘field’ having the potential to effect the movement of ‘hierarchies of social class, gender, race, ethnicity, disability and other aspects of social inequality’. The authors accept that education is a ‘fluid’ area of social
interaction that enables the cultivation of creative engagement with established educational roles. The work of Barone (2006), Brooks (2006), and Byrne (2006) is characterised by the dominant theme of education and cultural reproduction. This means that it is related to the influential ideas of Max Weber (1905), Michel Foucault (1977), Jurgen Habermas (1989) and Pierre Bourdieu (1993). These four theorists are of particular interest to the authors because they help to clarify an understanding of the fluidity and creativity that appears to exist within post-compulsory educational contexts.

Weber (1905) discusses the nature of professional roles. He juxtaposes the professions to ‘bureaucratic tasks’ because of the autonomous power of professionals. It can be argued that it is the shared understanding of the nature of the teaching profession that informs our collective understanding of this field of education. Foucault’s (1977) work draws attention to the importance of ‘discourse’ or ‘conversations’ within society in general and within particular aspects of society such as the teaching profession. This means that the conversations that teachers and learners have about education impact upon the educational field. These conversations enable ‘cultural reproduction’ and perpetuate the existing educational field or conversely promote new understandings of the meaning of teaching and learning. The nature of such discourse in relation to cultural reproduction has been popularised by Bourdieu (1993) who argues that shared understandings of teaching and learning perpetuate the educational field. The converse occurrence of conflict and discord within the realm of ideas is discussed by Habermas (1989) and also links to the creative interaction occurring within educational contexts.

The authors are interested in identifying how the role of the mentor within post-compulsory ITT can be interpreted in relation to the ideas of Weber, Foucault, Habermas, and Bourdieu. The questions we consider include: What if mentors are not equated with professional roles? What if mentors are not talking about teaching in the same way that trainee teachers talk about teaching? What if mentors are not equated with the shared goals of the teaching profession? What if mentors within the post-compulsory sphere are aware that their terms and conditions are worse than those of other mentors in other sectors of education? These questions link to the implications for CPD training needs of mentors working within this sector of education. They are used to structure the discussion of the primary research findings of this project.

**Methodology**

All the research participants work within the UK post-compulsory education sector with students aged 14 years and above. This sector of education is characterised by a range of educational institutions offering an even more diverse range of educational programmes. There are large-scale ‘mixed economy’ institutions offering ‘further education’ and ‘higher education’ programmes. Alongside this provision there are smaller-scale institutions offering either ‘higher education’ or ‘further education’. Many of the educational institutions have their origins in the post-war educational expansion of the nineteen-fifties and nineteen-sixties. The learners who are educated in these institutions are also characterised by diversity. There are school pupils studying vocational subjects such as ‘health and social care’ alongside adults studying degree level programmes such as the ‘Early Years Sector Endorsed Foundation Degree’. The staff employed in this sector of education are also from a range of
backgrounds. There are academics with PhD qualifications, teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and lecturers with vocational backgrounds in areas such as ‘painting and decorating’ who may not have any formal teaching qualifications. In 2002, the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) in England identified that 16% of those teaching in post-compulsory education had no formal teaching qualifications.

The diversity of this area of education means that it is difficult to give the sector a precise definition. Traditionally it is referred to as ‘post-compulsory education’ as it is not ‘school based’. It is also an area of education that may be regarded by some as being of less importance than school and university education. One of the research respondents referred to post-compulsory education as ‘the poor relation of schools and universities because the terms and conditions of employment are often inferior to the schools and the universities’.

The research findings in this paper are a product of three data collection methods. Questionnaires have been issued to 60 mentors (Appendix 1) and 60 ITT students (Appendix 2). These questionnaires focus upon identifying the CPD needs of mentors. The mentors and ITT students come from a range of backgrounds and teaching contexts in the northeast of England. The researchers knew the ITT students in a professional context and this helped to ensure a 100% completion rate of the questionnaires. The researchers also knew the ITT mentors as part of two programmes of academic study and this again ensured a 100% completion rate for the questionnaires. The methodology follows Brookes’s (2005, p. 52) model of research with mentors engaged in the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) in England in terms of number of respondents but whereas Brookes develops his questionnaire data with a series of one-to-one informal interviews with six experienced mentors this methodology has used a focus-group approach to discuss mentoring CPD needs with six selected participants. The researchers were keen to generate a discussion forum about post-compulsory mentor CPD needs so this is why this research method was selected. The process followed the recommendations of Kreuger (1994) and Munday (2006) in that it provided a permissive, non-threatening environment that generated rich discussions about mentoring CPD needs and mentoring collective identity. The methodology has aimed to identify perceptions of CPD needs from both mentors and ITT students. This is because the authors of the paper want to explore the argument that the lack of clarity about the professional role of a mentor is one of the main reasons why there is uncertainty within this aspect of ITT. OFSTED (2006) have made reference to the ‘inconsistencies’ within ITT mentoring relationships. An aim of this research has been to explore the nature of this inconsistency. Alongside the questionnaire and focus group data, the methodology has used findings from two OFSTED inspections of post-compulsory ITT provision in the northeast of England.

Triangulation has become an important aspect of the methodology (Denzin, 1978; Statham, Richardson and Cook, 1991; Flick, 1998). Fielding and Fielding (1986, p.31) provide a critique of triangulation, arguing that ‘using several research methods can actually increase the chance of error’. The basis of this critique is that those researchers who are unaware of anti-bias procedures and rely on three or more primary research methods may see increasing weaknesses within their work. This point was considered in trying to apply Denzin’s principles. Although the primary research methods of this project have been triangulated, the data has also been considered in relation to previous research into mentoring by Hobson (2002) and
Brookes (2005). This has been in order to situate the research within a wider context as opposed to just relying on the triangulated primary data of this research project.

Findings

The research has generated five main findings:

1. the role of the mentor within post-compulsory ITT needs clarification;
2. mentors need to have greater awareness of the aims of post-compulsory ITT programmes;
3. uncertainty is present in relation to mentor training needs within post-compulsory ITT;
4. mentor training is inconsistent within post-compulsory ITT;
5. professional boundaries within the mentor/mentee relationship are underdeveloped within post-compulsory ITT.

Although the research participants said that they are familiar with the general concept of mentoring, uncertainty appears to exist over the mentor’s role. Several participants drew attention to the ‘ad hoc’ nature of this role. In other words it is perceived as being a role that is important as ‘a natural development of a professional relationship’.

This point is made in the following reflection:

In teaching it’s hard to be a loner. There may be some individuals who are less sociable than others but if you want to work at your skills you need to bounce ideas off people. You get to know a colleague someone you have a bit of ‘chemistry’ with and you then develop your professional ideas. How it happens is through that process of professional interaction. It’s not something planned. It develops as a more natural process. (Peter, an experienced mentor)

Another research participant drew attention to the lack of definitive guidance over who mentors are and what they are expected to do.

Before you start a teaching post most people receive a job description that gives a good outline of what you’re supposed to be doing. With mentoring this never seems to happen. I have received mentor handbooks and these handbooks do give an overview of what I’m supposed to be doing but the underlying ethos and philosophy is never fully explained. What I mean is that there’s never an explanation for the type of mentoring model we’re supposed to be following. (Jill, a new mentor)

Although this reflection relates specifically to the post-compulsory context it can be argued that it is relevant to mentoring within education in general. Research undertaken for the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) in England (DfES 2006) has also identified that clarification of the mentoring role is needed. To meet this CPD need both trainees and mentors in this research project have identified the importance of more detailed documentation that outlines the specific role of the mentor. This point is developed in the following reflection:

I try to be an organised teacher so I have my various A4 files for each of the courses I deliver. It always helps because I have a syllabus a scheme of work and my lesson plans. I know what I’m supposed to be doing even though it often doesn’t go to plan! When I get to my mentoring file it’s an altogether different matter. I do have a
mentoring handbook but I don’t have a set of documentation that explains what I should be doing. (Kate, an experienced mentor)

The research findings also draw attention to the uncertainty that exists in the minds of mentors over the exact aims of post-compulsory ITT programmes. This corresponds to Hobson’s (2002, p. 6) point about the changing nature of pedagogy. This research identifies that many of the mentors were uncertain of aspects of post-compulsory ITT training.

When I did my Cert.Ed I enjoyed the experience. Like any professional qualification I didn’t do the award for the sheer love of study. I needed the qualification to teach but I had a great tutor who made me feel part of an excellent HE institution. Now that I’m a mentor I find it hard to draw on aspects of my training to help my mentee because the nature of the programme seems to have changed so much. It’s as if the focus is away from teaching and on learning. (Denise, an experienced mentor)

The above reflection refers to the changes that have occurred within post-compulsory ITT. As opposed to focusing on traditional teaching techniques such as ‘confident awareness of one’s subject area’ and ‘effective classroom management skills’ there is increasing emphasis being placed upon the facilitation of learning. This is a theme that is commented on by Ecclestone (2002), Race (2002), and Petty (2004). It can be argued that it has occurred in part as an indirect consequence of the OFSTED focus on ‘learning’ and ‘attainment’ as opposed to previous emphases that have focused on ‘teaching’. It would seem that ‘observing the whole class’ is the current OFSTED strategy as opposed to ‘observing the teacher’. The indirect consequence is that this change of focus has contributed to the paradoxical situation whereby experienced mentors can struggle to guide their mentees if they rely on the lessons of experience. Their philosophy of teaching does not equate to the current tripartite themes of ‘teaching, learning and attainment’. This argument is reinforced by the following student reflection on her experience of the post-compulsory mentoring process:

I get on very well with my mentor. She has lots of experience and I admire the way she has complete control over the learners. This seems effortless for her whereas I sometimes find I struggle to get the same amount of authority over some of the more challenging groups. Part of me would like to be able to teach like her but there are also certain difficulties I experience. My mentor says things like ‘if they talk to you about personal problems tell them to arrange an appointment with a counsellor. You are a lecturer you are not a counsellor’. (Julie, an ITT trainee)

This reflection alludes to the tension that can exist between traditional interpretations of teaching and newer Rogerian inspired ideas of ‘guiding and supporting learners’ (Hobson, 2002, p.6). It reveals that mentors can have a very different vision of teaching compared to their mentees. It may also be proposed that if mentors receive CPD so that they are able to identify newer models of teaching and learning, the tension in the mentor/mentee relationship may be eased. This research has identified that such a proposal is more complex than it might seem. The mentors who took part in the study appear to be uncertain about their training needs because they are unsure of which model of mentoring they are supposed to be following.

It’s all very well to say that we need to be trained by having CPD if we are mentors but it’s more complicated than this. It’s a bit like the analogy of ‘closing the stable door after the horse has bolted’. All of this should have been
considered prior to establishing the mentoring programme. (Kate, an experienced mentor)

One of the less experienced mentors echoes this reflection by drawing attention to the lack of clarity that appears to exist in relation to post-compulsory mentor training needs.

I have a dread of being sent over to the university for a day’s mentor training and it being a waste of time. We have to begin by establishing exactly what we are supposed to be doing as mentors and then we are in a more adequate position to identify clear training needs. (Jill, a new mentor)

Both of the last two reflections about mentoring support the recommendations of the DFES research of 2006 in relation to the clarity that is needed if the mentoring relationship is to be effective. It also appears to be the case that even when mentors are trained there are inconsistencies within the training. This point is developed in the following mentor reflection:

We did get some mentor training and I did find it worthwhile but I thought that the training might have been coordinated by one of the national organisations responsible for the coordination of teacher training. I thought that there might have been a lead being taken by the DFES or FENTO or LLUK or SVUK. When I went to the evening training session I was a little surprised to find that it was coordinated by the College my mentee was doing his ITT with. (Peter, an experienced mentor)

If the responsibility for training mentors rests with individual organisations there can never be consistency of approach. This reveals a quality assurance issue that is commented on by OFSTED in 2005 and 2006. It is also important to emphasise that the uncertainty that exists over how many mentors will attend training sessions exacerbates this concern.

I have been to mentor training events at the College but I have usually found that there have been very few other mentors who have taken up the offer. This is a shame because I would value the opportunity to network with other mentors so that I could discuss some of the issues with those who have a similar role to me. (Kate, an experienced mentor)

Another key finding relates to the underdeveloped nature of professional boundaries within the mentor/mentee relationship. Both ITT students and mentors have commented on the ‘uneasiness’ that can exist between mentor and mentee owing to the lack of clarity over ‘professional boundaries’.

Part of the difficulty I have had in understanding what my mentor is supposed to be doing is due to the uneasiness I feel over our professional relationship. It’s really different to the relationship that I have with my academic tutor. I have clearly defined expectations of this person. I know that she will teach me well, that she will give me feedback on my assignments and return my work within a few weeks. I know she will come and observe me teaching fill in the forms and be very helpful. I know exactly what to do when she is with me and there is a clear professional boundary. With my mentor it’s a totally different relationship. (Nigel, an ITT trainee)
This lack of definition over what script the mentor/mentee are expected to follow is understandable when there are differing interpretations of mentoring. Moran and Dallat (1995, p.21) make reference to three distinctive mentoring styles that are identified by Maynard and Furlong (1993) as the ‘apprenticeship model; the competence model; and the reflective practitioner model’. The uncertainty that exists over which type of mentoring model is being followed inevitably contributes to lack of surety in relation to mentoring professional boundaries. This argument is reinforced by the following mentor reflection about this issue.

I’ve been teaching for over 20 years so I’m very used to the role. I have a particular notion of what is good teaching. With my mentoring role nothing is so clear! I don’t really know what my ‘mentor hat’ is and what I’m supposed to be doing when I’m wearing it. I think that my mentee senses this so at times there are strains in our relationship. (Peter, an experienced mentor)

The research participants state that it is the uncertainty that exists over the exact nature of the mentor’s professional identity that generates this lack of clarity. From these reflections about mentoring within post-compulsory ITT it would appear to be the case that it is like the Geertzian analogy of ‘the lady sawed in half’ that is ‘done but never really done at all’ (1988, p.2).

**Discussion**

This research reveals that the professional boundary between post-compulsory mentors and mentees is underdeveloped. It is the lack of clarity over the mentor’s role that is creating a situation of ‘uneasiness’ and ‘strain’. These findings can be considered in relation to a number of theoretical perspectives. The following discussion reflects on what the respondents have said in relation to the ideas of Weber, Foucault, Habermas, and Bourdieu.

The first of our main research findings is that the role of the mentor within post-compulsory ITT needs clarification. The respondents have revealed that there is uncertainty between both mentors and ITT students over the ‘professional responsibilities’ of mentors within this sector of education. This finding links to Weber’s (1905) discussion of ‘professions’and ‘bureaucracy’. Weber regards professions as a form of collegiate authority in which rational-legal power is based on representative democracy. This means that leaders in principle are first among equals. Professionals are associated with the intrinsic rewards and performance of a task. This generates professional ethics such as ‘independence’, ‘good practice’ and ‘confidentiality’. Weber contrasts ‘professionalism’ with ‘bureaucracy’ and a ‘bureaucratic mentality’ that is understood as being less autonomous and more ‘task dependent’. These characteristics of professionalism apply to teachers working in post-compulsory education. Their identity is explained by their professional characteristics and their relative autonomy results from these distinct characteristics. As opposed to the clear identity of a ‘teacher’, it appears that the role of ‘mentor’ is uncertain. This situation may change in time but it can only change into certainty when there is a shared understanding of what this professional role entails. One of the respondents referred to ‘mentoring’ as ‘a hoop that needs to be jumped through ahead of a visit from OFSTED’. This makes the role of the mentor sound more akin to a bureaucratic task than an aspect of professionalism. There may be aspects of teaching
that are also visualised as being ‘hoops to be jumped through for the inspectorate’ but it can be argued that there is in general a shared understanding of ‘professional teaching’ that gives autonomy and rational-legal power in contrast to the confusion surrounding post-compulsory ITT mentoring.

Our second main research finding is that mentors need to have greater awareness of the aims of post-compulsory ITT programmes. The critical factor appears to be that mentors often talk about teacher-training in a different way to ITT trainees. It appears that the interpretation that mentors and ITT trainees have of ‘pedagogy’ differs. This relates to the work of Michel Foucault (1977) who examines the changes of power relations within modern societies, from the regulation of the body to the regulation of the soul. Foucault draws attention to the changing regimes of power as societies move away from the public execution of the classical era to the modern regime of observation, surveillance, classification, hierarchy, rules, discipline and social control. Foucault’s work is relevant to the finding that many experienced mentors are unable to identify with the current models of teaching that have moved away from traditional models of hierarchical, teacher-centred pedagogy. In relation to this argument mentors and students talked about the importance of the VLE (or Virtual Learning Environment) in post-compulsory teaching and learning. This software enables the teacher to click a few mouse buttons to survey who is using learning materials, when they are using them and how often. This suggests a shift away from traditional models of teaching to more intricate ways of surveillance. It appears to suggest that models of pedagogy have responded to shifting societal boundaries of power and that those mentors who ‘live in the past’ are not able to identify with the modern models of teaching and learning.

The research has also identified that uncertainty is present over mentor training needs in post-compulsory ITT. This ‘uncertainty’ is exacerbated by the ‘inconsistency’ of mentor training. These findings link to the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu because they appear to suggest that the mentoring role is not an established part of ‘cultural capital’. Bourdieu (1993) has popularised this term by arguing that the major role of the education system is ‘cultural reproduction’, or in other words the reinforcement of the values of the dominant classes. This process occurs as long as the powerful are able to impose their definition of reality on others. This means that the purpose of teaching is not to enlighten but to reinforce the values of the dominant social classes. The reflections of the research participants draw attention to the uncertainty that exists over what mentors are supposed to be doing. To apply an analogy it is as if post-compulsory mentoring is an ill-fitting part of the teaching jigsaw. This uncertainty means that mentoring does not become a part of ‘cultural reproduction’. It is instead an uneasy equation that is at odds with the accepted understandings of the purpose of teaching and learning. It can be argued that if the mentoring role does become more clearly defined so that it equates to the role of a teacher it is more likely to become an accepted part of the profession. If one applies the ideas of Bourdieu this acceptance is more likely once the role of the mentor becomes part of the ‘cultural capital’ that in turn reinforces the views of the dominant classes.

Our final main research finding is that professional boundaries within the mentor/mentee relationship are underdeveloped within post-compulsory ITT. The respondents have referred to the ‘tension’ and ‘conflict’ that may characterise the relationship between mentors and mentees. This ‘tension’ and ‘conflict’ links the
research to the ideas of Jurgen Habermas (1989). The tension existing within many of
the above reflections on the mentoring relationship links to the Habermasian
understanding of the nature of ‘advanced capitalist societies’. Habermas argues that
modern capitalist societies like the UK are subject to crises within the realm of ideas
rather than within the economy. This is because the state is not perceived to be
representative of all sectors of society even though there may be a situation of relative
economic stability. As an example, the education system is made up of a number of
distinct and at times competing groups of learners such as ‘early years’, the ‘14-19
sector’ and the ‘HE sector’. This research reveals that mentoring within post-
compulsory ITT is understood in relation to other forms of mentoring such as the
school based Post Graduate Certificate in Education programmes. All the mentors in
the research project made reference to school based ITT mentors being paid for their
services whereas post-compulsory ITT mentors do not receive any payment for their
work. This implies that the uncertainty that appears to exist within post-compulsory
ITT mentoring is an altogether more complex issue that may only be eased if there are
significant structural changes.

Conclusion and Implications for CPD

A number of CPD implications appear to be present within post-compulsory ITT
mentoring. The authors recommend the following five CPD initiatives:

1. Mentoring ought to be established as a professional role so that it has a similar
   professional status to ‘teaching’.
2. Mentor training needs to be more robust in order to give mentors and mentees
   a shared understanding of the objectives of ‘teaching and learning’.
3. Further research ought to be conducted on post-compulsory mentor training
   needs in order to inform future mentor training programmes.
4. Mentor training programmes ought to be developed in relation to the 2007
   standards for teacher training that have been introduced by SVUK and LLUK.
5. Contractual obligations ought to be established between mentors, mentees and
   ITT institutions in order to equate post-compulsory mentors with school based
   mentors.

Lucas (2007) draws attention to the implications of ‘standards-led education’. It is
ironic that the mentors who have taken part in this research project have said that they
are unsure of their role when post-compulsory education is structured by prescriptive
‘standards’. This lack of surety could be resolved with the provision of guidance on
mentor training from SVUK and LLUK in order to help to clarify the mentor’s role.
These governing bodies of post-compulsory ITT could also provide a definitive
mentoring model that outlines what mentors should and should not do. A key
recommendation relates to the payment of mentors. If mentors were paid for their
work and a contract was established between mentors and the governing bodies of
post-compulsory ITT this might mean that the role of a mentor becomes formalised
and apparent. This appears to be a particularly important concern for mentors
operating within this sector of ITT.
Appendix 1

Questionnaire for ITT mentors

Section 1: Trainer based support.

1. How many hours does the trainee have full teaching responsibility?
2. How often is the trainee observed and given feedback by the mentor or head of department or another qualified member of staff?
3. How frequently does the trainee meet formally with the mentor?
4. Does the trainee meet regularly with the head of department or class teacher to discuss issues such as CPD needs?
5. Are there any other comments that you would like to make at this stage about the mentor/mentee relationship?

Section 2: External support.

6. Please list any staff development needs you think that you have in your role as a mentor.
7. At various stages in the training there will be visits from a supervising tutor. Please comment on the purpose or usefulness of these visits.
8. Are there any other comments you would make about the university’s ITT provision?
9. Are there any aspects that you see as difficult or problematic?
10. Any other comments about your CPD needs as a mentor?
Appendix 2

Mentor CPD needs questionnaire for ITT students (PCET)

1. Do you think it is important to have access to mentor support?
   
   Yes
   
   No
   
   (please circle)

2. Do you think that the mentors associated with the programme are likely to be aware of the course’s main learning outcomes?
   
   Yes
   
   No
   
   (please circle)

3. What professional development needs do you think your mentors are likely to have?

4. If you have been supported by a mentor in the workplace or on another course what do you think are the main professional development actions that need to be taken if the role of a mentor is to be improved?
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