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Mentoring Primary Education Student Teachers: Understandings of Mentoring and Perceptions of the Use of Formative Assessment within the Mentoring Process

Lorele Mackie
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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, that the work is my own, and that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signature: Date:
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people who have supported me in the completion of this thesis:

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My family and friends for their patience, support and belief in me.
Abstract

This study is concerned with understanding the complexities inherent in the mentoring process. It investigates understandings of mentoring primary education student teachers within a school placement context. Further, it explores understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices to support professional learning within that process. In addition, it aims to identify salient implications for mentoring practices within Initial Teacher Education.

Within an instrumental, collective case study, a purposeful sampling strategy was employed in terms of selecting student teachers at a particular stage on a specific programme (an undergraduate primary education degree), their class teacher mentors, and their placement school management level and local authority mentors. Semi-structured interviews were used alongside a constructivist grounded theory approach to data analysis and theory generation (Charmaz, 2006). Current Scottish education policy is used to frame and exemplify points made with a variety of national and international literature employed to analyse findings and suggest recommendations for future mentoring research, policy and practice.

Findings indicate that participants understood mentoring as a multidimensional process involving a range of relationships designed to support the mentoring of student teachers within a school placement context. Four relationships, which differ in terms of extent and form/function, are evident: class teacher mentor/mentee; school management mentor/class teacher mentor/mentee; school/university and local authority/school. These relationships appear to range in proximity from close to barely existent. The key relationship is that between class teacher mentor and mentee.

Findings further suggest variability in understandings of formative assessment. Most participants were comfortable in describing its forms through examples of classroom practice. However, talking about function (why it is used) was an area of uncertainty. Participants also understood formative and summative assessment as
connected processes. Several professional learning sources were cited as the bases of their understandings.

With regard to perceptions of the use of formative assessment, findings suggest that it was used within the main mentoring relationship between class teacher mentors and mentees. Responses indicate that it was employed subconsciously in contrast to the structured, explicit way it is used with school pupils. Furthermore, participants viewed it as potentially helpful in the professional learning of mentors and mentees through strategies such as dialogue, self-evaluation and peer assessment. It was noted that support was required to develop the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. In this respect, participants were able to articulate how it might be implemented with reference to specific professional learning mechanisms, however, were unsure about what its content might be.

Based on findings, recommendations for policy and practice in the area of mentor education and partnership within Scottish Initial Teacher Education are suggested to foster a more cohesive, informed approach to mentoring student teachers. Future directions for research emerge in terms of the use of a variety of mentors from within and outwith school placement contexts, investigation of the role of the university tutor within emerging enhanced partnership arrangements, and an exploration of how formative assessment might be more consciously integrated into the mentoring process.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIFL</td>
<td>Assessment is for Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFE</td>
<td>Curriculum for Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLPL</td>
<td>Career Long Professional Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTCS</td>
<td>General Teaching Council for Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMIE</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITE</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>Professional Development School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
<td>Standard for Initial Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
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<td>SFR</td>
<td>Standard for Full registration</td>
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Chapter One - Introduction

Background
This research project originates from my experiences as both a primary education class teacher and a higher education lecturer. On return to classroom teaching following four years of secondment as a Primary Education Teaching Fellow in a Higher Education Institution (HEI), my expectations were of movement to a less prescriptive and creatively inhibitive school system in light of my work with students and recent policy developments such as the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). However, the school culture and structure appeared to reflect external pressures in that it was even more prescribed and controlling than had been previously. In this climate my experience was that the mentoring process exhibited hierarchical, undemocratic characteristics. Dissonance between rhetoric and reality was therefore evident given curriculum guidelines such as CfE and the dominant assessment policy in Scotland, ‘Assessment is for Learning’ (AifL). This has been, and continues to be, an explicit focal point for assessment practices in primary schools and is underpinned by the principles and practices of formative assessment in terms of how learners learn most effectively.

Based on my experiences of the mentoring process within school placement contexts as an HEI tutor, it intrigued me that these principles and practices were not accorded the same focus within the learning of student teachers. This led to an investigation of literature and identification of a ‘gap’, namely that substantial research evidence exists with regard to the importance of formative assessment principles and practices with learners in school contexts (see for example Black and Wiliam, 1998; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Black and Wiliam, 2001; Harlen, 2005; OECD, 2008) but less so in Higher Education (Nicol and Macfarlane Dick, 2006). Little explicit acknowledgement of the significance of formative assessment in the literature about mentoring beginner teachers is apparent. The majority of recognition evidences individualised, implicit examination of aspects such as critical reflection, feedback, self-regulation and shared criteria (see, for example, Bleach, 1997;
Salient connections between mentoring beginner teachers and key formative assessment principles and practices are therefore unclear.

**Context**

The Scottish Initial Teacher Education (ITE) structure is such that all prospective teachers must undertake either a four-year undergraduate or one-year postgraduate qualification within a university provider (GTCS, 2012). These programmes offer both theoretical and practical input about education, learning and teaching (ibid.). Students are required to complete modules within university as well as school placement experiences in order to meet the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) requirements for the Standard for Initial Teacher Education (SITE) (ibid.). As such there are five parties involved in the mentoring process to support the professional learning of primary education student teachers: the mentee, class teacher mentor (CT mentor), placement school and local authority. The placement allocation system in Scotland requires schools to indicate to their local authorities if they are able, and/or willing, to mentor student teachers and at what primary stages. This information is then relayed to the placement system, which allocates students to local authorities based on the information provided by universities about the school placements required. At this stage each school is advised of students to be mentored during the school year according to the information originally provided to the local authority. The school management member of staff responsible for mentoring then allocates a class teacher mentor to the student.

On completion of the programme, in order to obtain full registration status with the GTCS, all students must undertake one year of induction to evidence competence against the Standard for Full Registration (SFR) competency standards (ibid.). This can be done through the one-year induction post offered within a Scottish school or through the alternative flexible route by teaching on supply, in independent schools or outside of Scotland (ibid.). The process outlined is the only route to obtaining full
registration with the GTCS. Other countries, such as England and the USA, have
more variety of routes. For example, in England five routes are currently available:
undergraduate and postgraduate programmes based in universities; School-Centred
Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) that is developed and enacted by groups of cluster
schools; Employment-based Initial Teacher Training (EBITT) where candidates
learn to teach within schools; and Teach First, a programme of EBITT led by a
registered charity (UKK, 2014). Similarly, the USA has both a traditionally based
university route as well as alternatives such as the Boston Teacher Residency,
Chicago and New York Teaching Fellows programmes and Teach for America
(TFA) where graduates undertake an intensive five-week course as a basis for EBITT
(Menter, Hulme, Elliot and Lewin, 2010; Imig, Wiseman and Imig, 2011).

Mentoring within Scottish ITE has been reported as variable in quality for a number
of years (see, for example, HMIe, 2005; Scottish Government, 2011; Education
Scotland, 2015). The latest review of teacher education recommends that mentoring
be addressed at national and local levels to ensure quality provision (Scottish
Government, 2011). It suggests that mentors should be chosen on the basis of their
knowledge, understanding and skills in the area of mentoring and requisite
assessments, and that all teachers should see themselves as responsible for teacher
education so be provided with appropriate training (ibid.). Mentor education for the
specific context of ITE is currently not available within the Scottish context. It is
only available to a small minority of mentors who oversee post-ITE induction year
teachers. This is a salient factor given the complexity of the mentoring process
(Hall, 2003) and the multiple, potentially conflicting roles often required of mentors
such as being both mentor and assessor (Fransson, 2010). In addition, research
evidence reports positive correlations between mentor education and the quality of
subsequent mentoring practices (see, for example, Harrison et al., 2005; Hennison
Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, Bergen, 2008; Crasborn, Hennison, Brouwer,
Korthagen and Bergen, 2011; Hoffman, Wetzel, Maloch, Greeter, Taylor, DeJulio
and Khan Vlach, 2015).
Research Aims and Questions

In light of this background and context, my research aims were constructed around mentor and mentee understandings of mentoring primary student teachers and the use of formative assessment within that process:

- to further understand the complexities inherent in the mentoring process by investigating understandings of mentoring primary education student teachers in a school placement context, and by exploring understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices to support professional learning within that process;

- to identify salient implications for mentoring practices in Initial Teacher Education.

Three sequential research questions were constructed from these aims:

1. What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of mentoring within a school placement context?
2. What are mentors’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?
3. To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional learning?

These questions were written sequentially as interpretation of how mentors and mentees perceive the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process necessitates initially ascertaining their understandings of both the mentoring process and formative assessment as separate entities.

My adoption of a constructivist epistemological standpoint is evident in study research aims and questions. Constructivism views human beings as purposeful and resourceful in their actions; these are deliberate, and meaning is constructed within and through such actions (Cohen et al., 2007). Whilst acknowledging the variety of
conceptions of constructivism, two are prevalent in education (Fosnot, 1996) and to the foci of this study, namely psychological constructivism and social constructivism. Psychological constructivism is concerned with individual construction of knowledge and understanding. This occurs through the development of schemas of information using processes of assimilation, where it is possible to fit new knowledge into pre-existing schemas, and accommodation where new schemas have to be created in light of new knowledge (Bredo, 2000). Criticisms of this theory include that it is overly focused on individuals and so does not address shared understandings (ibid.). It may be argued that social constructivism addresses this concern in its emphasis on constructing knowledge and understanding through social interaction (Littledyke and Huxford, 1998). In this respect learning is a social process, where language is central to individuals making meaning (Vygotsky, 1978), and depth of comprehension is key as opposed to acquiring de-contextualised knowledge and skills (Fosnot, 1996; Larochelle, Bedwarz and Garrison, 1998; Selley, 1999; Cresswell, 2007). A vital concept is the zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is viewed as a mechanism for understanding co-construction of knowledge and described as the gap between what can be achieved independently and through working with a more capable other (Vygotsky, 1978).

Constructivist research is exploratory and process oriented in order to undertake in-depth investigations that foster understanding of the perspectives of ‘actors’ within their social and historical contexts (Littledyke and Huxford, 1998; Jonassen, 2006; Cresswell, 2007). This epistemological conception is appropriate for this study as it is concerned with understanding the perceptions of mentors and mentees in its analysis and interpretation of the mentoring process. This process is subject to both individual and social constructs where knowledge and understanding are developed independently and collaboratively by participants. My research aims were therefore constructed around mentor and mentee understandings of mentoring primary student teachers and the use of formative assessment within that process.
Thesis Structure

This initial chapter has outlined my rationale for the study, its research aims and associated research questions. It has further provided a brief overview of current Scottish ITE arrangements in order to contextualise the project. Finally, it offers an outline of the thesis structure.

In chapter two a thematic review of the literature is undertaken to ascertain how this study fits into the current body of knowledge, to identify existent gaps (Locke, Silverman and Spirduso, 2004) thereby contextualising research questions and informing my analysis of findings.

Chapter three, methodology, outlines the process of designing, undertaking and analysing this research study.

Chapters four and five present and discuss my analysis of study findings. Chapter four addresses research question one about mentor and mentee understandings of mentoring within a school placement context. Chapter five focuses on research question two, understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment in mentoring within a school placement context, and research question three about the extent to which formative assessment supports mentor and mentee professional learning.

Chapter six identifies limitations of the study, draws conclusions with regard to my research questions, outlines contribution to knowledge and makes recommendations with regard to future mentoring research, policy and practice. Finally, personal and professional reflections are presented.
Chapter Two - Literature Review

This study is concerned with understanding the complexities inherent in the mentoring process. It investigates understandings of mentoring primary education student teachers within a school placement context. Further, it explores understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices to support professional learning within that process. In addition, it aims to identify salient implications for mentoring practices within ITE. Given the broad range of areas encompassed, a thematic literature review has been undertaken in the following four areas: teacher education and professional learning; mentoring and professional learning; assessment and professional learning; mentoring, formative assessment and professional learning. The review aims to ascertain how this study fits into the current body of knowledge, to identify existent gaps (Locke, Silverman and Spirduso, 2004), thereby contextualising research questions, and to inform analysis and discussion of my study findings. Its organisation is systematic in that literature reviewed in one section builds on, and relates to, another.

Section one addresses aspects of teacher education and professional learning. It considers wider political, economic and social factors in order to contextualise the requirements of teachers of the twenty first century. Collaboration as a dominant discourse is then presented and linked to conceptions of partnership. Building on this section, the next part focuses on specific aspects of mentoring and professional learning. It begins with an exploration of definitions of mentoring and its benefits. A variety of mentoring models are then examined encompassing consideration of mentoring roles and relationships. Next, the area of support is investigated with regard to mentee developmental stages and mentor education. Section three examines assessment and professional learning. It begins by outlining the dominant Scottish school-based assessment policy, ‘Assessment is for Learning’ (AifL), and links it to existent research literature on formative assessment. Teacher education competency frameworks are then examined in relation to summative assessment. Connected to the previous section, part four on mentoring, assessment and professional learning looks at formative assessment within a Higher Education (HE)
context, identifying a gap in existent literature where salient connections between mentoring beginner teachers and key formative assessment principles and practices are unclear. However, collaborative mentoring practices, which incorporate aspects of formative assessment, are acknowledged in the literature and so are subsequently addressed. Throughout this thesis the term professional learning is used to reflect current education research, policy and practice with regard to teaching as a career where learning is continual. Since the McCrone Report (Scottish Executive, 2001), all teachers have been expected to engage in continued professional development. The term Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) reflects this conception and extends it in its perspective of all teachers being responsible for identifying and developing their own professional learning (GTCS, 2012).

**Teacher Education and Professional Learning**

**Teaching in the 21st century**

In the constantly changing knowledge society of the twenty first century the process of learning is a central component and teaching is a key profession (Hargreaves, 2003). In the context of a knowledge society with lifelong learning as a requisite capacity, political, economic and social agendas have led to an increased emphasis on school improvement (Forde, McMahon, McPhee and Patrick, 2006). To exemplify, the European Commission has put forward a strategy aimed at fostering a variety of competences in future citizens of the twenty first century (European Commission, 2008). Suggested competences incorporate communication, literacy, numeracy and digital capacities, the ability to learn new skills in order to foster continued competitiveness in a global context, and competences in learning to learn to develop citizens who are able to self-regulate and work both independently as well as with others (ibid.). Such a strategy places increasing demands on the education systems of member countries as it necessitates the development of less rigid curricula and more innovative, creative pedagogies to foster such competences. Achievement is directly connected with quality teaching and learning (Forde *et al.*, 2006).
These increasing demands on education systems have implications for the attributes necessary in teachers and how they are fostered: teachers should be committed to teaching and enthusiastic for learning (Arthur, Grainger & Wray, 2006; Scottish Government, 2011); be widely educated, independent thinkers who engage in continuing professional learning (OECD, 2007; Scottish Government, 2011); they require knowledge and skills for practice but should also be able to reason actions and justify strategies by engaging in multidisciplinary scholarship incorporating education, sociology, social psychology and social policy (Field, 2010). Further, they should understand children as individuals and learners (OECD, 2007; Smith, Lovalt and Turner, 2009; Scottish Government, 2011) in that learning to teach requires a deep understanding of learners and how they learn in order to have an impact on learners to foster sustainable learning (Scottish Executive, 2004; Scottish Government, 2011). A broad, critical perspective on education influenced by reference to practice and research is required (QAA, 2006; OECD, 2007; Scottish Government 2011) as learning to learn professionally entails developing the capacity to be inquisitive, observant and analytical. Teachers should also understand the purposes of education, how schools work (QAA, 2006) and be able to collaborate with a range of colleagues and agencies (Glaister & Glaister, 2005; OECD 2007; Scottish Government, 2011). These desirable attributes evidence the complicated and challenging nature of teaching and learning.

**Collaboration in teacher education**

The aforementioned complexity and the need to foster quality through teacher education is emphasised in the 2008 report by the International Alliance of Leading Educational Institutes (Scottish Government, 2011). Collaboration, accountability and commitment to lifelong learning are identified as key facets of such quality (ibid.).

The significance of collaboration has come to the fore in response to the individualism and prescription fostered by managerial agendas (Hargreaves, 2000) and may occur between a variety of people within and beyond the school community (Hargreaves, 1994). In the Scottish context several recent significant reforms
evidence a focus on collaboration through recommendations about collegiality and engaging in broader partnerships. For example, the McCrone Agreement outlines professional conditions of service and pay for teachers (Scottish Executive, 2001). It promotes a cultural shift from compliance to collegiality (MacDonald, 2004) and endorses notions of professional trust in its encouragement of teachers to use their professional judgement (Menter et al., 2004) within more collaborative and flatter hierarchical structures (ibid.) The latest curriculum, ‘CfE’, emphasises collaboration in terms of involving a broader range of partners in education such as parents, carers and other agencies (Scottish Executive, 2004), engagement in reflective practice (Scottish Executive, 2006) and professional judgement through curriculum that is more open to interpretation in terms of content and pedagogy (Scottish Executive, 2004). The most recent review of ITE, Teaching Scotland’s Future (Scottish Government, 2011), maintains that schools should be professional learning environments with the capacity to effectively mentor and assess beginner teachers employing a model of enhanced partnership between schools, universities and local authorities (ibid.).

Collaboration is important for both schools and individuals in terms of responding to change within a collegiate working culture, promoting effective practice (Williams, Prestage and Bedward, 2001) and, as such, for the professional learning of teachers, whether beginner or more experienced. This professional learning may be with regard to development of aspects such as subject knowledge and retention; fostering metacognitive awareness and positive approaches to learning; encouraging independence and competence; developing critically reflective thinking and interpersonal skills; transference of knowledge, understanding and skills to other contexts (Hargreaves, 2007). In order to transfer knowledge effectively across different settings, metacognitive understanding is necessary so that it can be further developed and appropriately re-contextualised (Hermanson, 2014). Such a conception of teaching and learning evidence a constructivist perspective in respect of its view of human beings as purposeful and resourceful in their actions; actions are deliberate and meaning is constructed within and through such actions (Cohen et al., 2007). In this respect learning is a social process where language is central to
individuals making meaning, both individually and through social interaction, (Vygotsky, 1978), and depth of comprehension is key as opposed to acquiring de-contextualised knowledge and skills (Fosnot, 1996; Larochelle et al., 1998; Selley, 1999; Cresswell, 2007). A vital concept is the zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is viewed as a mechanism for co-construction of knowledge and is described as the gap between what can be achieved independently and through working with a more capable other (Vygotsky, 1978).

Collaboration within teacher education contexts is significant in fostering a quality teaching profession (Menter, 2008). Such quality requires collaboration between key partners in ITE.

**Partnership in teacher education**

Within the Scottish context, the rhetoric on the importance of, and the need for, improved partnership is evident in the last three reviews of teacher education: the stage one (Deloitte and Touche, 2001) and stage two reviews (Scottish Executive, 2005), and the latest report: ‘Teaching Scotland’s Future’ (Scottish Government, 2011). The stage one review suggests more formal partnership arrangements between teacher educator institutions, local authorities and schools in the form of ‘Teacher Development Partnerships’ be brought about (Deloitte and Touche, 2001). This did not take place prior to the stage two review (Scottish Executive, 2005). This review recommends that local authorities should be more involved in school placements in terms of organisation, mentoring and assessment, and that formal arrangements are put in place by local authorities to gauge the quality of these school placements (*ibid.*). Further, suggestions of partners engaging in increased dialogue regarding the school placement to foster improved provision are made (*ibid.*). Overall, accountability for ITE should be shared between teacher educator institutions and local authorities (*ibid.*). The latest review echoes such sentiments (Scottish Government, 2011). In their 2009 report, Moran, Abbott and Clarke noted that formal partnership agreements were still deficient for reasons of lack of government resource allocation despite being recommended in a variety of reports and reviews such as the ones noted previously (McNally, 2002). In this respect
issues of continuity between ITE and newly qualified teacher contexts are relevant. Continuity cannot be assumed given the challenging nature of transition from being a student teacher to a newly qualified one with more extensive responsibilities (ibid.). In Scotland the notion of teaching as a process of continual professional learning is recognised post-ITE through the induction year and subsequent GTCS professional update requirements in order to foster quality teaching (Menter et al., 2010). The induction year was designed as a further year of teacher education involving schools, universities and local authorities to provide structured mentor support to foster continuity and progression in learning (McNally, 2002). It is suggested that ITE is the foundation of a teachers’ professional learning but this should be seen as a continuing process (Scottish Executive, 2001; Anthony and Kane, 2008; Menter et al., 2010). Anthony and Kane’s (2008) data shows that continuity between ITE and the early years of teaching was variable between beginner teachers and their school contexts.

One of the difficulties with the notion of partnership is lack of mutual comprehension of the roles and responsibilities of each partner can be a tension (Kirk, 2000). In order for partnership in ITE programmes to utilise a variety of forms of knowledge and a variety of experts, roles and responsibilities must be clear (Livingston, 2008). Thus far partnership between teacher educator institutions, local authorities and schools has not been addressed effectively: ‘...partnership in ITE appears to be the strikingly visible gap in the jigsaw of a coherent and comprehensive approach to teacher development in Scotland’ (Brisard et al., 2006:64). The stage two review of ITE (Scottish Executive, 2005) advocates clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of partners (ibid.). Similarly, the 2003 HMIE Scoping Review of ITE identifies issues of school placement regarding quantity and quality (Smith et al., 2006) again with the recommendation that clarity is required regarding roles and responsibilities alongside a related plan of action (ibid.). This lack of clarity has a potentially detrimental effect on the quality of student teacher placement experiences.
Complementary partnership

The model of partnership proffered in the 1990’s aims at avoiding repetition between the roles of teacher educator institutions and schools in that they were complementarity with an aim of fully collaborative partnerships (Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting and Whitty, 2000). The nature of this complementary relationship means partnership is vital (Cameron-Jones and O’Hara, 1993). Such a relationship is where school placements promote contextualised knowledge and understanding whereas teacher educator institutions foster that which is more generalised (Smith et al., 2006). This type of collaboration fosters different forms of knowledge and recognises that theory and practice both contribute to views on teaching (ibid.). In the current context of a knowledge society teachers have to cope with a variety of information from multiple sources, such as theoretical, practical and tacit knowledge; colleagues; policy documents; parents and pupils (Cain, 2015). Therefore, the involvement of more than one party in teacher education is vital in that a variety of perspectives are significant in fostering quality (Hargreaves, 2003). A traditional theory/practice duality is a common conception of university and school roles and responsibilities within ITE contexts (Zeichner, 2010). Definitions of what constitutes theory and practice are contested, however, for the purposes of this study, the terms ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are used as they are ordinarily within ITE settings (ibid.). Traditionally addressed in university settings, theory refers to the principles, concepts and ideas underpinning education activities and experiences (Eraut, 1994; Hobson, 2003; Zeichner, 2010). Practice refers to teaching activities and is the focus of school placement experiences (Allen and Wright, 2014). Schulman (1987) maintains that teachers require three types of knowledge: content (subject), pedagogical (how to teach), and pedagogical content (knowing how to make content comprehensible to children). One view is that content and pedagogical knowledge should have a robust research basis as this promotes teacher professional learning in a variety of ways, for example, cognitively, attitudinally and relationally (Mincu, 2015), and so can assist in decision-making and with practical suggestions (Winch, Oancea and Orchard, 2015). In this respect, schools should promote a culture of engagement with theoretical perspectives by disseminating relevant resources from research and encourage teachers to undertake both individual and collaborative
reflective practice in order to enact theory and theorise their practice (Mincu, 2015). The development of reflective practitioners requires both university and school involvement (Cheng, Tang and Cheng, 2012). In order to engage in constructive reflective practice beginner teachers require certain skills in, and attitudes towards, critical thinking. It is argued that these are best developed in the university context whilst recognising that schools play an important role in developing this as a component of teacher continual professional learning (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

Acknowledgement that the social settings for ITE are significant in their own rights (see, for example, Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Williams and Soares, 2010; Allen and Wright, 2014) contributes to the continuation of a theory/practice duality (Klieger and Oster-Levinz, 2015) and can also mean that the balance towards theory or practice may tip accordingly. Some studies report the practical element as being more highly regarded (Hobson, 2003; Gleeson, O’Flaherty, Galvin and Hennessy 2015; Tang, Wong and Cheng, 2015). Universities are widely acknowledged in the literature as being the most effective settings in which to address analytical approaches and to present relevant knowledge and understanding about learning and teaching practices, for example, a university lecturers’ work gives them greater access to a broad variety of teaching strategies than is probable for a teacher, enables them to engage with research and theory, and to elucidate and investigate teaching as a practice (see, for example, Korthagen, Loughran and Russell, 2006; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Tang et al., 2015). Menter et al. (2010) identify this aspect as a particular strength of the Scottish ITE context through its consistent attention to the theoretical basis of education as a subject in its own right and to its associated disciplines as a basis for meaningful approaches to teacher professional learning. If such as foundation is not evident beginner teachers may incline towards a simplistic approach to their learning that does not recognized the complex nature of learning and teaching (Korthagen et al., 2006).

The two contexts may also be viewed as connected in the view of university learning as preparation for teaching practice in school settings. This kind of correlation is useful in helping to circumvent the traditional theory/practice duality and thus foster
ITE experiences which evidence a holistic, joined up approach to mentee professional learning (Dewhurst and McMurtry, 2006; Korthagen et al., 2006; Tang et al., 2015). Allen and Wright (2014) note the significance of both school and university staff in promoting theory and practice as an integral process rather than individualistic elements. These kinds of connections can be challenging as they involve university and school settings working together to offer learning experiences which are connected and foster analytical forms of learning, whilst recognizing that the social settings in which learning takes place are significant in their own right (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Klieger and Oster-Levinz, 2015; Tang et al., 2015).

Hagger and McIntyre (2006) advocate the importance of both theory/practice and practice/theory relationships. School placement experiences may be enhanced through consideration of these different perspectives (Allen and Wright, 2014) given that neither one on their own is a sufficient foundation (Furlong and Maynard, 1995; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006) if ITE is conceptualised as teacher education as opposed to a technicist view of teacher training (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007). These constructed understandings are multifaceted and subjective, therefore, it is important to challenge them through both theoretical and practical elements of ITE programmes, acknowledging that these understandings and elements may accord or be in conflict with each other (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

Theory into practice is where university learning is understood as preparation for teaching practice in schools, and in terms of these settings affording mentees the opportunity to enact such learning. This may be conceptualised as ‘applied theory’ (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007). This view aligns with Tang et al.’s (2015) study where mentees viewed school placements as a chance to put theory into practice and acknowledged the value of university based conceptual learning in developing competence in teaching. In opposition, other studies report mentees as being focused on learning to teach by enactment without consideration of theoretical aspects (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). Mentees may pay more attention to the practical knowledge of mentor teachers rather than theoretical perspectives (Braten and Ferguson, 2015) as they deem this as most relevant given that the realities of
teaching practice (Knight, 2015). Such understanding of using the theory learned in university as a basis for practice may be indicative of an ‘understanding-oriented’ approach to learning where theory is seen as informing practice and thus fostering development of effective practitioners (Hobson, 2003). In this sense the significance of understanding wider educational contexts, practical techniques and the ability to apply practice in a critically considered manner is significant (ibid.). Learning in university settings may attempt to connect theory and practice but mentoring support is required to help mentees construct understandings both within university and school placement contexts (Haggarty, 2002). Mentees also need time and space to engage in critically about practice with reference to theory, values and different contexts (ibid.).

Another conceptualisation is that of relating practice to theory. Hagger and McIntyre (2006) describe this as ‘practical theorising’ where teachers critically evaluate their teaching practices in relation to the ideas of a variety of others, namely educational researchers and experienced teachers. This is more commonly referred to as ‘reflective practice’ (Schön, 1987) but goes further than this in its requirement of critical construction and co-construction of meaning from practical experiences in order to develop more in-depth, informed and reasoned comprehension about teaching as opposed to uncritical, technicist perspectives (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007). This can be viewed as leading to the emergence of ‘grounded’ theory, that which results from reflection on practice in light of existent theoretical knowledge (ibid.). In addition, the identification of next steps for teaching practice may be interpreted as re-constructing meaning and cultivation of ‘personal practical theory’ within the process of devising specific actions based on new understandings gained from practice (ibid.).

Provision of quality mentoring is a central facet of the aforementioned joined up theory/practice experiences (Cheng et al., 2012). In this respect it is important to note that assumptions that effective teachers make effective mentors do not reflect the complexities inherent in mentoring (Gardiner, 2009; Jaspers et al., 2014). The findings of Tillman (2005) report the use of tacit knowledge and understanding as
useful but that advice was not necessarily suitable with regard to pupil learning. It may also be detrimental to mentee professional learning (Peters and Pearce, 2012) in terms of the capacity to offer a theoretically informed rationale for teaching and learning approaches (Jones and Straker, 2006). This kind of tacit reliance fails to recognise that mentoring can be a central facet of change in fostering teachers who are aware and able to cope with the complicated nature of teaching as an academic, social and cultural process (Gardiner, 2009).

**Collaborative partnership**
Moving forward from the notion of the complementary partnership outlined above, a collaborative one (Furlong et al., 2000) means schools and teacher educator institutions have a mutual comprehension of teacher education (Kirk, 2000). This kind of partnership entails a variety of dimensions and is wider than just school placement (Kirk, 2000). It is equitable and reciprocal, not a one sided relationship in that both school and university involvement is advantageous, for example, schools can access research information from universities, be involved in action research, and universities can make research more relevant to practical contexts (*ibid.*). Teacher engagement with, and critical employment of, research may be promoted through such a partnership (Hargreaves, 2003), which can assist in mentoring dialogue in terms of giving mentees access to a variety of kinds of professional knowledge (Furlong and Maynard, 1995). This type of partnership necessitates a change in university and school roles in that they may be ‘equal but different’ (Mullen, 2000:4), for example, a change in role for university mentor to a more formative one working with student teacher and school mentor regarding ways of mentoring effectively (Brisard, Menter and Smith, 2006). Issues can arise because of traditional notions of university tutors as in positions of power due to espoused hierarchical conceptions of theory and practice (Stanulis and Russell, 2000). However, equality of roles may be fostered if teachers are acknowledged as the main proponents of practical knowledge.

The latest Scottish ITE review echoes the sentiments of a more collaborative partnership and further notes conceptions of an enhanced one making specific
recommendations with regard to the use of ‘hub’ schools where university tutors and school staff work much more closely together to promote quality and consistency of placement experiences and to address the traditional theory/practice divide (Scottish Government, 2011). This model is based on the Professional Development School (PDS) practices in the United States and Australia (Menter, Baumfield, Carroll, Dickson, Hulme, Lowden and Mallon, 2011). Instructional coaches in schools lead on the professional learning of qualified teachers and student teachers (Snow and Marshall, 2002). Indicative of a social constructivist view of learning (Vygotsky, 1978), schools and universities work collaboratively on a regular basis in this model to observe and assess mentees (Snow and Marshall, 2002) akin to a community of practice (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002) where personal and professional relationships are central (Menter et al., 2011). Findings from a Scottish ITE provider indicate that the use of this model resulted in positive effects on the professional learning of student teachers in the areas of teaching capacity, confidence and self-esteem (ibid.). Data further indicates that students gained in terms of both personal and professional dimensions of mentor support (ibid.). However, such positive movements within the realms of partnership are not without issues (Snow and Marshall, 2002). All parties involved must appreciate that the process is mutually beneficial for it to be effective (ibid.). As in any mutual mentoring context, reciprocity is key for collaborative mentoring relationships in its acknowledgement that all are mentors and learners. This fosters equity among mentors and mentees (Stanulis and Russell, 2000). If this is not evident managerialist conceptions of governance may result rather than models of professional learning such as was the case with the English National Partnership Project (Furlong, McNamara, Campbell, Howson and Lewis, 2008).

Building on the above review of the desirable attributes of teachers of the twenty first century and the role of collaboration and partnership, the next section looks more specifically at mentoring and professional learning within teacher education.
Mentoring and Professional Learning

Given the changing nature and inherent tensions of the local, national and international contexts which influence the teaching profession, mentoring has the potential to have a transformative function in terms of learning in that, for education to remain ‘meaningful and relevant’, those involved in ITE need to adapt to this changing context (Livingston, 2008:855). In its proposals for education, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) focuses on learning, citizens who can live and work in the knowledge society and fostering wider community relations (Hargreaves, 2003). If this is to be achieved then teaching should be a profession where the learning of all of its members is central (ibid.). Different kinds of knowledge should be acknowledged and evident, for example, knowledge and understanding of both pedagogy and learners is essential (Livingston, 2008). Comprehension of, and involvement in, processes of educational change is also vital (ibid.).

To foster the teacher capacities noted previously, effective mentoring in both university and school contexts is vital. Beginner teachers learn through their relationships with others (Harrison et al., 2005), therefore, collaborating with a mentor is important (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). In this respect mentoring is a social process (Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors and Edwards-Groves, 2014) where collaboration is significant. As noted previously, both university and school settings are significant for ITE (see, for example, Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Williams and Soares, 2010; Allen and Wright, 2014). Opportunities for teaching practice occur mainly within school placements, which are required for students to observe, practice and develop requisite capacity (Pollard, 2005). Such capacity encompasses not only teaching skills but also comprehension: teachers should be reflective about subject, pedagogy and wider educational issues (ibid.). The significant amount of time spent in schools by student teachers means that mentoring is vital to foster quality and sharing of knowledge from one generation to another (ibid.). The latest review of Scottish teacher education reports that many student and newly qualified teachers, especially those in the primary sector, held their school placements in very high regard in terms of their quality and the support of mentors.
(Scottish Government, 2011). However, twenty three per cent reported experiences that were not as positive. This is a salient issue for teacher education (ibid.). It is important to note that the quality of school placements is not just about classroom experiences but connected to wider issues such as the cultures and structures in schools with regard to learning and teaching (ibid.).

**Definitions of mentoring**

Mentoring can mean many different things (Ambrosetti and Dekkers, 2010) and bring to light a variety of underpinning assumptions (Hall, 2003). The distinction between coaching and mentoring is an important one. The terms of often used interchangeably with recognition of difference lacking; one recent example is the latest review of teacher education (Scottish Government, 2011) where the phrase ‘mentoring and coaching’ is evident throughout the document with no further explanation. There are many definitions of mentoring and coaching existent in the literature (Kemmis et al., 2014). For example, coaching may be viewed as a process that fosters progression in the performance of teams and individuals; often the focus is on particular skills (Arnot and Sparrow, 2004). Mentoring is suggested as where a more experienced colleague supports, challenges and facilitates the learning of another (Pollard, 2005; Carnell et al., 2006). However, coaching is usually part of mentoring, and mentoring can involve coaching (Carnell et al., 2006). The two concepts ‘overlap’, for example, both involve listening, supporting, making learning goals clear, observing, fostering self awareness, questioning, reflective practice (Cordingley, Bell and Temperley, 2005). Given the lack of consensus in definition and its interchangeable use with coaching, a broad definition of mentoring is adopted in this thesis, one that encompasses the above descriptions of mentoring and coaching.

**Mentoring models**

There are a number of mentoring models that examine dimensions of mentoring work. Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) model is a well-documented framework of structural, supportive and professional dimensions of mentoring, and examines the
role of mentors and associated strategies within these dimensions. It is helpful framework for understanding mentoring in conjunction with other models such as that of Kwan and Lopez-Real’s (2005) model of pragmatic, managerial and interpersonal elements, and Ambrosetti, Knight and Dekker’s (2014) relational, developmental and contextual aspects. These models employ the work of Yeomans and Sampson (1994) and build on it in different ways. Kwan and Lopez-Real’s (2005) model of pragmatic, managerial and interpersonal elements is based on mentor views about the most significant roles occupied by mentors and is reflective of the professional and supportive dimensions identified by Yeomans and Sampson (1994). Pragmatic aspects equate to professional roles such as feeding back, observing, and modelling; similarly professional in focus, managerial elements refer to assessment and quality assurance roles; the interpersonal role refers to the supportive dimension in its notions of counselling and friendship. Ambrosetti et al.’s (2014) relational, developmental and contextual model focuses on mentoring relationships. It is noted that definitions of mentoring should encompass all three aspects but that this is not usually the case (Ambrosetti, and Dekkers, 2010). The relational and developmental aspects are about the nature and purpose of the relationship (Ambrosetti et al., 2014). The relational element mainly focuses on the interpersonal relationship between mentor and mentee but is linked to the developmental aspect within the realms of collaboration (ibid.). The developmental part is concerned with the purpose of the mentoring relationship, namely mentee and mentor professional learning (ibid.). The contextual aspect is concerned with the environments within the school and profession that may affect relationships within the mentoring process. This model builds on Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) framework in its specific focus on mentoring relationships and in its recognition of influential contexts outwith school settings.

The structural dimension of Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) model is described as focusing on the mentee as a person, as opposed to a student teacher, thereby fostering an environment that is comfortable and as stress free as possible. The structural component refers to activities promoting a school environment where mentees are able to experience success in their professional learning, and is described as a mentor
adopting roles such as planner, organiser, negotiator, inductor utilising strategies and skills like negotiating, informing, implementing and organising (*ibid.*).

The professional dimension emphasises mentee professional learning in the practicalities of learning to teach and the mentor roles involved in this process (*ibid.*). Recognition that there is a professional dimension in mentoring beginner teachers is evident in the literature (see, for example, Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005; Dewhurst and McMurry, 2006; Rajuan, Beijaard and Verloop, 2007; Laker, Laker and Lea, 2008). Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010) notes the limited amount of literature on the role of the mentee in a mentoring relationship. However, key roles are identified as working with a mentor to foster appropriate knowledge and skills, teaching lessons, observing mentors, having professional dialogue, carrying out requisite tasks, identifying targets and engaging in reflective practice (*ibid.*). It is further noted that every mentor role has a corresponding mentee role but this interrelationship is not explicitly explored in existent literature to any great extent (*ibid.*).

The professional dimension involves a mentor adopting roles such as trainer, educator and assessor (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). A training role entails mentors acting in ways that aim to assist mentees to deal efficiently with specific teaching situations (*ibid.*). In this respect, more directive strategies and skills such as demonstrating/modelling, commentating, advising and telling are employed (*ibid.*). Yeomans and Sampson (1994) maintain that an advisory strategy encourages mentees to decide for themselves about their next steps in that it provides them with a starting point, for example, where they might look for the information required. In this respect, it may be viewed as less than telling but not completely non-directive. Mentee roles associated with mentors as trainers are observing mentors’ teaching practice and taking notes on this process, taking advice from mentors and altering practice on this basis (Ambrosetti and Dekkers, 2010).

Within the professional dimension a mentor may also adopt the role of an educator (*ibid.*). This entails mentors assisting mentees to move further from current practice-
specific situations to analysis and application in other such contexts (ibid.). In this respect, strategies and skills such as discussing, reflecting, questioning and facilitating are employed (ibid.). This kind of educative role entails a collaborative relationship. Associated mentee roles are suggested as being willing to participate in activities to develop professional knowledge, understanding and skills; constructing aims and working towards them with mentoring support; listening; offering practical suggestions within mentoring conversations and teaching episodes; willingness to accept feedback and to work with the mentor and others; reflecting on practice individually and in dialogue with a mentor; and taking responsibility for their own professional learning (Ambrosetti and Dekkers, 2010). The role of mentors as educators is indicative of a conceptualisation of mentoring where mentees actively take part in their own learning (Schwille, 2008). The focus of this mentoring is not just on learning about current practice but on transference of knowledge, understanding and skills to different situations (Rajuan et al., 2007). Aims are based around developing mentee independence to foster autonomy through improved comprehension of teaching, learning and learning to teach (Schwille, 2008). This role again aligns with constructivist theories, for example, with regard to mentees actively constructing knowledge and understanding by amending existing schemata through processes of assimilation and accommodation (Bredo, 2000) based around their teaching experiences and reflection about them. In addition, mentors adopt a scaffolding role within mentees’ zones of proximal development in order to assist them in developing more advanced knowledge, understanding and skills.

The assessment role of a mentor is situated within both formative and summative conceptions. Mentors provide summative reports on mentees and engage in formative assessment on an informal, continual basis using observation and feedback (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). This feedback is focused on strengths and development points to foster mentee professional learning (ibid.). Associated mentee roles are suggested as knowing assessment criteria and employing it to evaluate teaching practice; engaging in critically reflective practice in order to self-assess teaching practices; and employing mentor feedback in conjunction with self-assessment to progress professional learning (Ambrosetti and Dekkers, 2010).
Yeomans and Sampson (1994) describe the supportive dimension as a mentor adopting roles such as host, friend and counsellor utilising strategies and skills like chatting, praising, encouraging, openness, empathy and communication. Recognition that there is a supportive dimension in mentoring beginner teachers is evident in the literature highlighting aspects such as openness, care, concern, empathy, tact, positivity, and recognition of the mentee as a person, of their needs and career stage (see, for example, Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; Rippon and Martin, 2003; Jones and Straker, 2006; Certo, 2005; Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010; Aspfors and Bondas, 2013). It is suggested that a supportive dimension helps to build confidence in a mentee and, in doing so, promotes successful progression in learning to teach (Ambrosetti, 2010) as well as their ability to recognise the personal dimension of teacher/pupil relationships and why it is significant for learning (Aspfors and Bondas, 2013). It can also assist mentors to acknowledge when they need personal support themselves given the complexity and inherent demands of school classrooms (Rajuan et al., 2007). This dimension fosters an ethos of openness to individual and joint construction of knowledge and understanding (Hargreaves, 2010) through its emphasis on a more educative perspective on learning, one focused on independence in learning and empowerment (Jones and Straker, 2006). Gender can also be a consideration in that a focus on personal aspects is more likely to occur in female dominated environments (Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010). This can be explained through female gender focus on relationship bonds (Certo, 2005) and collaboration (Hyland and Lo, 2006).

A connection between supportive and professional dimensions is evident in a variety of studies (see, for example, Yau, 1995; Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005; Jones, 2009; Ambrosetti, 2010; Hargreaves, 2010; Jaspers et al., 2014; Achinstein and Davis, 2014). Such a connection is significant in the context of collaboration in that an effective personal relationship facilitates the collaborative aspect of mentoring (Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005) and is vital in promoting active trust. This kind of trust does not result from expectations based on traditional hierarchical relationships but is actively sought (Giddens, 1994) at personal and/or professional levels (Hargreaves, 1994). However, professional dialogue can be constrained by the
personal dimension of a mentoring relationship. For example, friendship may not be conducive to mentee professional learning in that it can be difficult to engage in discussions about development points for fear of offending the mentee (Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005). In this respect it is important to maintain professional distance (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994), akin to a teacher/pupil relationship, however, this is problematic in terms of how a mentor balances this distance with personal aspects of the relationship.

A supportive dimension of a mentoring relationship may also cause tensions when assessment roles and responsibilities are placed on mentors. There appears to be no consensus in the literature regarding whether mentor and assessment roles should be separate (Fransson, 2010; Ingleby and Tummons, 2012). A dual role can be advantageous in fostering professional accountability and more structured, transparent mentoring procedures utilising formative assessment practices (Carver and Feiman-Nemser, 2009). Mentors also have extensive knowledge of their mentee, class and school (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). However, it has been suggested that if a ‘critical friendship’ is developed then a dual role is possible but is more difficult to negotiate (Yusko and Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

The influence of managerialist agendas of efficiency and inherent control mechanisms such as competency frameworks may cause conflicts for mentors with regard to professional trust and in terms of the need to make objective assessment judgements within a relationship that contains a subjective element. In the current Scottish education context pupil learning is the main focus due to quality frameworks of accountability such as HGIOS (How Good is our School?), parental expectations, unofficial league tables, HMIe inspections and subsequent published reports. The emphasis of HGIOS 2 is on using models of effective practice as a basis for defining quality education through target-setting at national and local level (Reeves, 2008). Schools are subject to inspection procedures by HMIe. These inspections focus on educational quality and standards with the aim of promoting improved and innovative practices to foster better learning experiences for pupils (ibid.). Quality indicators such as HGIOS 2 are employed by HMIe inspectors to support appraisals
and inform comments on ways school might make improvements. Due to competing demands, mentor support of mentees can be detrimentally affected due to a tension between responsibility for pupil learning and for that of the mentee (Rajuan et al., 2007). This may be exacerbated if mentoring takes place within the mentor’s own class as mentors feeling of responsibility for pupil learning is heightened (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). The primary school context might also increase feelings of responsibility because teachers are in charge of one class of pupils as opposed to several as in secondary school settings (Jaspers et al., 2014). This dual responsibility can lead to mentors being conflicted in their approach and with regard to professional trust, for example, as mentors they may want to encourage mentees to address complex situations and learn, however, as class teachers they are reticent to subject pupils to potentially detrimental learning experiences (ibid.).

In addition, subjectivity can be challenging within the realms of a relationship that is unpredictable regarding the nature and extent of its interactions. Mentors may be reticent to make assessment decisions as these are potentially problematic particularly in cases where the mentee is failing, for example, having to make negative judgements may lead to relationship conflict (Iancu-Haddad and Oplatka, 2014). Mentors may feel that the failure reflects negatively on them and the school context and so are reticent to make that judgement. Assessment roles may also interfere with supportive relationships by placing mentors and mentees in more traditional apprenticeship, managerialist driven relationships where a novice/expert power duality is prevalent (Ambrosetti, 2010). Trust may be compromised therefore constraining participation in open, professional dialogue and, in doing so, encourage mentees to engage in compliant practices rather than experimentation and risk-taking (Jones, 2009). Further, in relationships where tensions exist within mentor and mentee personalities, it can be argued that objective judgment becomes problematic (Rippon and Martin, 2003).

Within mentoring models, mentor and mentee roles and relationships can be further explored in terms of procedure, power and personal elements (ibid.). Procedural relationships focus on technical aspects of teaching and do not account for mentee
needs or capabilities; those based on power centre on understandings of apprenticeship therefore support may be deficient and compliance expected; personal relationships emphasise collaboration between mentor and mentee with constructive dialogue as a key component in developing understanding (Harrison et al., 2005). A continuum of mentoring styles may be derived from these relationships from directive to non-directive, namely those based on mentors giving information and instruction to those that encourage mentees to be reflective, autonomous practitioners (ibid.). These styles may alter in emphasis as mentees progress through teacher education programmes (Pollard, 2005).

The complexities inherent in mentoring mean that there is no one ‘recipe for success’ (Harrison et al., 2005:425). The mentoring process, with its range of mentoring models and associated elements such as roles, relationships and mentoring styles, is influenced by personal epistemological beliefs about knowledge and related conceptions of learning and teaching (Olsson, Cruickshank and Collins, 2016). Such beliefs may be viewed as a spectrum ranging from simple conceptions of knowledge as factual to that which is actively constructed and continually developed (Schommer-Aitkins and Easter, 2009). Entwistle and Peterson (2004) detail conceptions of knowledge based in epistemology as ranging from dualistic perspectives of knowledge as absolute to multiplism, where knowledge is acknowledged as provisional, to relativist notions of knowledge as personally reasoned. Associated conceptions of learning range from dualistic passive acquisition of facts and memorisation to multiplistic application and use of knowledge to relativist notions of understanding learning and the ability to adopt multiple perspectives (ibid.). It may be argued that more passive conceptions inhibit learning due to lack of confidence to think for oneself and thus reliance on external factors such as authority figures and documentation (Olsson et al., 2016) such as competency frameworks in teacher education contexts. Schommer-Aitkins and Hutter (2002) suggest that more relativist notions foster mentors who are able to engage in critical reflection, adapt processes as required and think for themselves. Mentoring is a complex process requiring different approaches according to different factors such as mentee needs and contextual influences. Mentors’ capacity to
grapple with such demands and possible tensions between these and their own beliefs about knowledge, learning and teaching suggests that explicit awareness of epistemological beliefs is significant (Olsson et al., 2016). Such awareness may facilitate a more reasoned approach to mentoring where practices are based on informed decisions rather than driven by expectations from university and/or competency frameworks.

Mentoring may take on different meanings and forms depending on the existent cultures and structures in learning environments (Carnell et al., 2006; Kemmis et al., 2014). For instance, mentoring within a quality assurance focused environment may lead to a restricted view of it as supervision focused on skills (Rix and Gold, 2000). This can be categorised as prescriptive, directive, normative conduct (ibid.) and is argued as not fostering dialogue because it is based on accepted traditions and separation of groups (Sachs, 2000), for example, expert and novice teachers. In contrast, reflective of constructivist theories, more collaborative school cultures adopt less directive, more educative strategies in their emphasis of developing autonomy and self-regulatory capacities (Iancu and Oplatka, 2014).

Directive methods equate with a view of teaching as a technical, simplistic activity (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000) as opposed to the realities of complexity. Research by Harrison et al. (2005) showed that mentors who did not consciously foster reflective practice with mentees tended to remain on the directive end of the mentoring continuum. This kind of mentoring promotes relationships where mentors tend to advise, dominate talk, view themselves as the expert and are product rather than process focused (Carnell et al., 2006). It is common in schools and higher education and is akin to an instructional model of learning, widely recognised as not conducive to effective learning or mentoring (Rogers, 2004).

More non-directive methods based in constructivism are not as evident in schools and higher education but are suggested as more effective for mentoring practices (Carnell et al., 2006) in that they promote the development of a positive mentor/mentee relationship (Kim and Danforth, 2012), which is conducive to the
promote the promotion of teachers as change agents able to collaborate with others to develop strong teaching cultures where effective learning and teaching is key (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). Critical reflection and fostering mentee capacity are central to such methods (Harrison et al., 2005). Learning is emphasised through facilitation of mentee understanding where the mentor scaffolds using a variety of techniques, for example, use of higher order questioning to foster metacognitive awareness (Carnell et al., 2006), and those that are concise, focused, honest and foster responsibility for learning (ibid.). Shared comprehension through discursive practices and a more equal relationship between mentor and mentee, where the mentor talks to a lesser extent, is central to development of knowledge and understanding. Mentees are encouraged to be ‘active and resourceful’ which means mentors need to use strategies other than advisory ones (ibid.:6). However, mentors may have issues in adopting more non-directive methods (Langdon, 2014) and mentees may desire direction (Strong and Baron, 2004), therefore, are employing mentors as sources of information and skills to foster performance as opposed to learning through constructing and co-constructing understanding (Hargreaves, 2010).

Pollard (2005) asserts that mentoring should be a developmental process in order that appropriate support is provided for mentees as they progress through the stages of learning to teach. Student developmental concerns are a salient factor in mentoring: at first the mentor may need to provide more directive support (ibid.). However, as time progresses mentee independence in terms of teaching should increase, therefore, expectations can expand and support may be more non-directive (ibid.).

Maynard and Furlong (1993:36) suggest that student teachers go through five stages of development: ‘early idealism, survival, recognising difficulties, hitting the plateau and moving on’. In the ‘early idealism’ phase students’ ideas stem from personal experiences of schooling (ibid.). These may prevail but tend to decrease when they embark on school placements (ibid.). ‘Survival’ occurs as students struggle to comprehend the complex nature of teaching which results in a focus on techniques and ‘cures’ as opposed to consideration of underpinning principles, therefore, mentor assistance with analysis of observations is required (ibid.). ‘Recognizing difficulties’
is where students begin to comprehend the nature of teaching to a greater extent and so recognise some of the issues involved (ibid.). This leads to a focus on summative judgements as opposed to learning opportunities, which often results in copying the mentor teacher with an emphasis on techniques and organisation rather than comprehension of underlying aims and consequences (ibid.). In ‘hitting the plateau’ students have teacher presence and competence in that they can manage the class and motivate pupils to participate (ibid.). However, subsequently they may cease to develop further because they feel safe (ibid.). Mentors then need to encourage mentees to engage in further thought focused on pupil learning as opposed to focusing on their own teaching (ibid.). ‘Moving on’ means reflective practice is engaged with and confidence increases so mentees are more able to take responsibility for their own professional learning (ibid.).

Models of mentoring and developmental continuums may provide a useful reference point for examining mentor and mentee roles and relationships with regard to mentee learning. However, the process of mentoring is much more complicated than these frameworks suggest in terms of their perceived linear nature and lack of accuracy. Such continuums and models should be viewed as recursive and cumulative (Furlong et al., 1994) to reflect the developmental concerns of mentees. Mentors need to make judgements about individual mentee requirements (Strong and Baron, 2004), and recognise that this may be in opposition to what the mentee desires (Pollard, 2005), because student teachers develop at different rates and often have to revisit certain areas as more in-depth investigation or application within a different context is required (Furlong et al., 1994). Awareness of the inaccuracy of mentoring models/continuums is vital, for example, critical reflection should always be part of mentoring but will vary in its degrees of use (ibid.). It is reported that beginner teachers require basic competence before reflective practice may be engaged with (Maynard and Furlong, 1993), however, it is also suggested that they are able to critically reflect even when teaching experience and competence is limited (Eraut, 1995). Daloz (1986) suggests that mentees require both support and challenge, however this assertion is problematic. Balance is required or issues arise, for example, if the level of support is low but challenge high the mentee is unlikely to
express ideas and viewpoints (ibid.). Challenge involves aspects such as encouraging experimentation, sharing insight, asking questions, encouraging reflection and co-planning (Certo, 2005). Such practices are collaborative and educative in that mentors facilitate mentee understanding in terms of encouraging them to consider a variety of perspectives (ibid.) and to develop professional autonomy (Harrison, Dymoke and Pell, 2006). This autonomy is vital for entry into a profession requiring a variety of teacher roles including taking responsibility for professional learning in order to foster quality learning and teaching (Hudson, 2013). Patrick et al. (2010) maintain that mentoring should not focus on an instructive approach but promote mentee capacity to critically reflect on practice and encourage them to evaluate a variety of teaching for effective learning strategies. Certo (2005) reports that previous studies indicate a lack of challenge and predominance of instructional support. If challenge is not evident mentees may fail to develop the broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills required. Instead compliance to current procedures may dominate and result in stagnation of practice (O’Brien and Christie, 2005).

**Benefits of mentoring**

As noted above, models of mentoring and developmental continuums may provide a useful reference point for examining mentor and mentee roles and relationships with regard to mentee learning but both mentors and mentees may benefit from the mentoring process in terms of professional learning (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh and Wilss, 2008). However, to facilitate such learning, mentor and mentee roles need to be clear (Pollard, 2005). The mentee should be aware of context and practices of the school to foster integration into culture and structures, be open to constructive dialogue with the mentor, and exhibit a professional attitude showing initiative and willingness to participate in assessment through self-evaluation (ibid.). The mentor should focus on organising the placement to develop mentee capacity and be supportive of the mentee showing awareness of both professional and pastoral care roles (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994).
Benefits of mentoring for mentees include increased confidence, feelings of being part of an organisation (Hansford, Tennant and Ehrich, 2002), development of reflective practice, heightened awareness of learning, focus on specific skills, ability to ask for assistance, capacity to communicate new insights and to review difficulties incurred (Carnell et al., 2006). It is argued that mentees should work with a variety of mentors within a school (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). The literature is unclear about how involved, for example, a management level member of staff should be in mentoring beginner teachers, some suggesting a more extensive role than others (see, for example, Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Tillman, 2005; Youngs, 2007; Desimone, Hochberg, Porter, Polikoff, Schwartz and Johnson, 2014). Management level mentors occupying a secondary role is evident the literature (see, for example, Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Flores and Day, 2006; Peters and Pearce, 2012). This role tends not to be one of direct instruction where managers/leaders consistently offer beginner teachers feedback on the content and pedagogy of their teaching practice (McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Wood, 2005; Flores and Day, 2006). However, it may be further interpreted as a team mentoring method, one of bi-support (O’Brien and Christie, 2005).

In addition, contact with mentees may be limited given the current education context requires that school management attend to managerial discourses of efficiency and inherent quality control mechanisms as well as a variety of administrative responsibilities (Peters and Pearce, 2012). Patrick et al. (2010) report that beginner teachers felt more able to seek advice from senior members of staff if management was carried out in an approachable, more equitable way as opposed to reflective of traditional hierarchies of power. Such interactions are often underrated given the demands of formal competency mechanisms (Williams and Prestage, 2002). They may be termed as collegial in nature and are significant with regard to making the mentee feel welcome within the school context and to their professional learning (McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Desimone et al., 2014). The importance of management style is a salient factor in developing such collaborative and supportive school cultures (ibid.). These kinds of cultures are more likely to foster positive environments that promote professional learning and personal well-being in both
beginner and more experienced teachers (ibid.). Within collaborative school cultures mentoring may be viewed as co-constructed using a variety of mentors given that it can be difficult for one person to realize all the components of a complex process (Tang, 2010; Ulvik and Sunde, 2013).

Involvement in mentoring may also be beneficial for mentors, for example, in terms of currency of knowledge, greater comprehension of their own practice, capacity regarding variety in mentoring strategies, increased self-esteem (Carnell et al., 2006), reflective practice and professional dialogue (Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005). Their cultural capital can also be enhanced in a variety of ways, for example, it helps them to unpack personal experiences, learning about others and their lives is experienced, and cognitive and social gains are evident in the empathetic, supportive, challenging dimensions required by the mentoring process (Philip and Hendry, 2000). In addition, as part of a professional learning community mentors may learn about the mentoring process and become more effective by reflecting critically on experiences through interactions with other mentors (Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1992).

**Mentor education**

As noted previously, mentoring is a complex process (Harrison et al., 2005). Mentors need to be equipped to deal with this complexity to ensure mentee learning needs are met (Ulvik and Sunde, 2013) as well as take opportunities with regard to their own professional learning. In this respect, they require mentor education to foster understanding of specific aspects such as how teachers develop, various teaching strategies, different dimensions of mentoring, how to communicate the complex nature of learning and teaching, and how to offer a variety of ways of interpreting the classroom environment (Elliot and Calderhead, 2004).

The importance of mentor education is well documented in existent literature (see, for example, McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005; Hobson Ashby, Malderez and Tomlinson, 2009; Hudson, 2013; Pogodzinski, 2012; Desimone et al., 2014; Richter, Kunter, Lüdtke, Klusmann, Anders and Baumert, 2013; Ulvik and Sunde, 2013; Langdon, 2014). It is reported as inconsistent in terms
of its quality and availability in some studies (see, for example, Harrison et al. 2005; Bubb, Earley and Totterdell, 2006). The latest Scottish review of teacher education recommends that mentoring is addressed at national and local levels to ensure quality provision (Scottish Government, 2011). It further suggests that mentors should be chosen with regard to the knowledge, understanding and skills they possess (ibid.). However, all teachers should see themselves as responsible for teacher education and so be provided with appropriate training as mentoring capacity fosters dialogic practices within school contexts in general (ibid.). One approach to achieving this aim for all teachers is reported from a New Zealand where, in partnership with teacher education universities, a senior member of staff was selected to liaise with mentors and mentees in clusters of schools about mentoring (McCormack and Thomas, 2003). Study findings indicate that quality of mentoring had begun to increase as a result (ibid.). In addition other studies have suggested that the opportunity of having a variety of viewpoints in the course of mentoring assists with mentee professional learning in its provision of constructive assessment information (Tillema and Smith, 2009; Tillema, 2003).

Mentor education within the context of Scottish ITE is not specifically available. The latest Scottish partnership review reports that any mentor education available is targeted at those involved in the post-ITE induction programme with mentors reporting positive effects of such input (Education Scotland, 2015). In comparison, in England the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) requires that mentors of partnership schools in university based ITE programmes undergo mentor education with their partner HEI provider (EPPI 2008; Sorensen, 2014). Inspections are carried out for both schools and ITE providers (EPPI, 2008), which emphasize rigorous quality assurance focusing on effectiveness and areas for improvement against statutory national frameworks (ibid.). In cases where organisations are judged to need improvement a further inspection is carried out with one year. Schools in Scotland are subject to similar inspection procedures by HMIe. These inspections are focused on educational standards, quality and achievements. However, a less demanding system for those involved in ITE is evident. All teacher education programmes must be accredited through the GTCS.
However, unlike the English context, teacher education providers and partners are not inspected as such: HMIe carry out ‘Aspect Reviews’ from time to time but these reviews are reported to have little impact on provision (Smith, 2010). There is no requirement to meet suggestions for improvement or change. This has a potentially detrimental effect on quality and consistency within ITE, for example, with regard to mentoring and assessment practices. The latest review of ITE specifically addresses this area in its recommendation that quality assurance mechanisms for mentoring and assessing beginner teachers should be applied through GTCS accreditation procedures and HMIe inspections to both schools and teacher education institutions (Scottish Government, 2011).

Ambrosetti et al. (2014) note that class teacher mentors of ITE students are neither confident nor certain in the area of mentoring so are ill-equipped with regard to complexities of the mentor role, which can result in inappropriate support for mentee learning being provided. This is exacerbated by the short timescales of school placements and dual mentor/assessor roles (ibid.). Variability in the quality of school placements is reported in the latest Scottish review of partnership between local authorities and university ITE providers (Education Scotland, 2015). Mentees interviewed for this review noted that mentors relied on their experience rather than having had formal education on mentoring. Similarly, Hoffman et al. (2015) report that mentors who have not undergone mentor education depended on their own experiences of being mentored. Although experience may be a factor in learning to mentor effectively, there is a danger of becoming engrained into accepted practices (Langdon, 2014). Reliance on tacit and experiential knowledge may fail to recognise that mentoring can be a central facet of change in fostering teachers who are aware and able to cope with the complicated nature of teaching as an academic, social and cultural process (Gardiner, 2009).

Having time allocated to mentor in school is also noted as vital, for example, in terms of mentors being more able to undertake observations and engage in dialogue with mentees (Desimone et al., 2014). In Scotland under the McCrone Agreement (Scottish Executive, 2001), a review of teachers’ pay and conditions, teachers are not
required to mentor student teachers or newly qualified teachers (Kirk, 2000). Mentoring is viewed as a professional obligation, expected from external organisations, a matter of dedication and personal desire (Brisard et al., 2006). The most recent review, Advancing Professionalism in Teaching (McCormac, 2011), does not formalise this requirement but it does recognise the importance of mentors within the induction year following ITE.

With regard to the forms mentor education may take, it is argued that effective career long professional learning (CLPL) takes a variety of complementary forms and that teachers should engage with all of them (De Vries, van de Griff and Jansen, 2014). Knowledge and skills should be kept current, including cognisance of relevant theoretical bases in line with continually changing educational demands, as this provides a foundation for significant meaning making constructed from other sources of learning such as reflective and collegiate practices (ibid.).

Professional learning amongst peer groups is argued to be most effective and sustained when depth of learning, collaborative contexts and teacher requirements and expertise are considered (Menter et al., 2010). It is also suggested that consistent professional learning opportunities for mentoring are better than traditional short CLPL courses (Pogodzinski, 2012). If these conditions are met mentors are more likely to be able to gain knowledge, understanding and skills to assist them in their roles (Gardiner, 2009). Carroll (2009) suggests that such collaborative forums may be supported by teacher engagement with external sources like traditional CLPL courses. They provide teachers with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills, to engage in reflective practice and collaboration with other teachers (De Vries et al., 2014), therefore, could be viewed as in alignment with the European Commissions’ (2007) agenda for quality enhancement in teaching and teacher education. However, this agenda may be marred by managerial conceptions of target setting and efficiency, which positions teachers as an instrument for school and pupil advancement rather than as continuing professional learners (Czerniawski, 2013). In alignment with the latest review of ITE (Scottish Government, 2011), the McCormac report (Crown Copyright, 2011) noted that high quality CLPL should be
available for areas relevant to teacher professional learning. It further advised that its availability was variable within different local authorities (ibid.). It is argued that adult learners want to be involved in the content, purposes and activities of such courses. It may be suggested that doing so fosters engagement with, and ownership of learning as opposed to the traditional hierarchical model of course imposition. However, these kinds of courses also have inherent issues in that their quality and availability have been reported as inconsistent (Forde et al., 2006). Such provision tends to be carried out over a day or less with no follow up thus minimising any long-term impact (ibid.).

Assessment and Professional Learning

Assessment is an integral part of learning. As noted in the previous section, within the mentoring process a dual role of mentor/assessor is often evident (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; Fransson, 2010; Ingleby and Tummons, 2012; Ambrosetti et al., 2014). Mentee professional learning involves consistent assessment of their teaching competence by mentors. There are many types of assessment, for example, formative, summative, informal, formal, product, process, criterion-referenced, norm-referenced, baseline, diagnostic, ipsative and so on (Kyriacou, 1991). However, the key point is that assessment can become disconnected from the learning process, therefore, it is necessary to ensure that it focuses on the gap between where a learner is in their learning, and where they need to be, the desired goal (LTSc, 2008), and not simply be a bolt-on addition at the end. It should be an integral part of the education process, continually providing both ‘feedback and feedforward’ and therefore needs to be incorporated systematically into teaching strategies and practices (DES, 1988). In this respect it helps in providing an emerging picture of learning and achievements such as those espoused by competency frameworks in the case of student teachers (QAA, 2006).

Assessment is for Learning (AifL) policy

The predominant assessment policy in Scotland for some time has been ‘Assessment is for Learning’ (AifL). This policy evidences the research basis and identified
underpinning principles and strategies of formative assessment (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Given the identified positive outcomes of this type of assessment for pupil learning (see, for example, Black and Wiliam, 2001; Harlen, 2005; OECD, 2008), it may be suggested that this should be reflected in the ways in which student teachers are supported in their professional learning. In this respect, it is important to outline this policy as teachers’ understandings of formative assessment are likely to be situated within it. The policy was designed to support learning, provide feedback to pupils, parents and other teachers, and identify next steps in learning (LTSc, 2004). In addition, its function is to provide information as a basis for monitoring and evaluating provision and attainment at school, education authority and national level (ibid.). It comprises three elements: assessment of learning, assessment for learning and assessment as learning (ibid.).

Assessment of learning, more commonly termed summative assessment, emphasises the gathering and interpretation of assessment evidence and is designed to establish the extent to which learners have achieved the learning intentions of a programme of work (LTSc, 2004). This is evident in teacher education in that summative judgements are made of students on school placements based on competency standards. Assessment for learning is about supporting classroom learning and teaching (LTSc, 2004) where information is gathered and used to adapt the teaching to meet the needs of the learner. The focus here is the gap between where a learner is in their learning and where they need to be. Vygotsky (1978) termed this the ‘zone of proximal development’. This is a particularly salient element within any learning process. Within the realms of mentoring student teachers, support in this respect can be influenced by elements such as the mentor/mentee relationship and other contextual factors like school cultures and structures. Assessment as learning can be seen as fostering improved attainment as well as supporting learners in its focus on learning to learn (HMIe, 2011). It involves the development of metacognitive awareness where learners develop an increased consciousness of what they are learning, how they are learning and what helps them to learn. This helps them to take more responsibility for their learning and participate more in the process of learning. Self and peer assessment are the cornerstones of this element which
fosters the characteristics and skills required by independent, motivated learners (LTSc, 2004). Such learners are more likely to engage in lifelong learning (ibid.). It can be related to teacher education in that understanding children as individuals and learners is essential in order to teach, therefore, a model of learning to learn professionally seems appropriate. It entails consideration of many aspects, for example, cognitive, affective, social, cultural, emotional and physical where progression is viewed more broadly than that of the cognitive domain.

**Formative assessment**

‘AifL’ components of assessment for learning and assessment as learning are derived from the literature on formative assessment. Formative assessment is a dialogic process and enables connection between assessment and the learning process (Black and Wiliam, 1998). It focuses on improving the process of learning as opposed to merely measuring progress (Hargreaves, 2007). It involves teachers, learners and peers obtaining, interpreting and employing assessment information to inform their decisions about appropriate next steps in learning (Black and Wiliam, 2009).

Formative assessment has its basis in constructivist epistemology (HMIE, 2011) where knowledge is constructed by individuals and in collaboration with others resulting in multiple interpretations (Serafini, 2001) and learners taking responsible for their own learning (Clarke, 2001). Learning and teaching are viewed as interactive, therefore, a supportive, collaborative learning ethos is required for it to be effectively employed (HMIE, 2011).

Formative assessment is not an all encompassing ‘answer’ to educational issues. In this respect it may be viewed as valid in its provision of substantive evidence across more variety of areas than is typically encompassed in summative assessment (Harlen, 2005) but it can also be less reliable due to its interpretative nature (Yorke, 2003) and the influence of different contexts on perceptions of learner capability (Harlen, 2005). However, it is a powerful way of achieving quality learning, equality of student outcome and fostering lifelong learning (OECD, 2008). Black and Wiliam (2001) focus on the link between formative assessment and attainment maintaining that it is more effective for less able students. This results in the gap
between less and more able decreasing while attainment increases in general (*ibid*.). Its principles are four-fold, learners learn best when: they understand clearly what they are trying to learn, and what is expected of them; they are given feedback about the quality of their work and what they can do to make it better; they are given advice about how to go about making improvements; they are involved in deciding what needs to be done next, and who can give them help if they need it (*ibid*.). Associated practices are, for example, sharing learning intentions and success criteria, self and peer assessment, improved questioning and feedback (Clarke, 2001). These principles and practices are interlinked in that while particular instructional episodes may highlight one of these strategies, others are inevitably involved (Black and Wiliam, 2009).

Formative assessment can be asynchronous or synchronous (Black and Wiliam, 2009). Asynchronous is where the teacher plans to gather and use assessment evidence focusing on curriculum requirements, for example, in deriving learning intentions (*ibid*.). In the case of mentoring student teachers the Standard for Initial Teacher Education (SITE) would be used as a reference point. Synchronous notions focus on what happens during the lesson (*ibid*.) so incorporates both curriculum and broader learning aims and is a social process involving learners (Cowie and Bell, 1999). Strategies are, for example, shared success criteria and questioning (Torrance and Pryor, 2001). Within the realms of mentoring it may not be appropriate for this to occur during lessons where student teachers are teaching for reasons of developing their confidence and fostering their status as a teacher. Such interactive formative assessment is more likely to happen in team teaching contexts and in post-lesson reflective conversations between mentor and mentee. A criticism of this kind of assessment strategy is its lack of systematic focus (Cowie and Bell, 1999). However, asynchronous and synchronous formative assessment is connected and appropriate: focused aims are significant alongside more flexible opportunities for relevant and reflective discourse (*ibid*.).

Feedback is a salient element of formative assessment; it is a two-way process and depends on quality, constructive dialogue (HMIE, 2011). Indicative of a
constructivist perspective, it is suggested that feedback should not consist of one person feeding back to the other but involve individual and shared reflection (ibid.) and both support and challenge incorporating self-regulated learning skills (Hargreaves, 2007). In a mentoring context both praise and criticism should be part of mentor feedback (Hennison et al., 2008; Hoffman et al., 2015). This focus on current progression as well as future practice is both significant in assisting beginner teachers learning to teach (Schwille, 2008). If such a balance is not evident beginner teachers may adopt a mainly deficit view of their teaching (Long, Hall, Conway and Murphy 2012), ignoring their strengths thus failing to reach their potential (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012). It may highlight the mentor/mentee power imbalance and lead to mentees feeling exposed (Sewell, Cain, Woodgate-Jones and Srokosz 2009), bullied (Maguire, 2001) and relationships breaking down (Kim and Danforth, 2012). Mentees are more likely to be receptive and learn if dialogue is presented in a personable manner (Hyland and Lo, 2006; Jones, 2013) but mentors may not share development points with mentees in order not to jeopardise existent positive relationships (Timperley, 2001).

In order for feedback to be enacted and effective in progressing learning, both learners and teachers must understand the learning focus and related criteria for assessment (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). This forms the basis for any advice about how to progress and identify appropriate next steps (OECD, 2008). Learners must understand the criteria and how they might go about reaching it, therefore, any learning aims must be relevant for learners’ current understanding and appropriate progression (Black, 2007), which, from a social constructivist perspective, entails learner involvement in formulating the criteria (Rust, O’Donovan and Price, 2005). As such it is vital that learner needs are understood by teachers in order to plan and scaffold appropriately (Harlen, 2005). This specificity in learning aims and assessment criteria assists learners to develop metacognitive awareness in that they are more likely to understand what makes effective learning and why (Black, 2003). In addition, learners are likely to be more motivated when a clear direction for learning is evident thus fostering the likelihood of increased self-efficacy (Chappuis, 2009).
Peer- and self-assessment are salient aspects of the feedback process particularly with regard to the development of metacognition where learners bring unconscious learning processes to the fore so can employ them in future experiences (Assessment Reform Group, 2009; HMIE, 2011). In terms of self-assessment, the main issue is not reliability as pupils are mainly honest but the need for clarity of learning intentions (Black and Wiliam, 2001). If evident learning is more effective as pupils are able to enter into dialogue with teachers and peers (ibid.). Teacher involvement is key to both self and peer assessment strategies in order to contribute and model more developed skills in evaluation, existent due to their own experiences of assessment and learning experiences (Sadler, 1998). These should be shared with learners in order to foster development of evaluation and thus metacognitive awareness (ibid.). This is problematic as it necessitates teacher comprehension of underpinning principles and practical techniques (Reid, 2003).

With regard to the aforementioned teacher comprehension, an evaluation by Marshall and Drummond (2006) suggests that only one fifth of teachers who said they were employing formative assessment in their classrooms were doing so according to the aforementioned principles and practices. Findings in opposition are reported by Reid (2006) with regard to postgraduate ITE student teacher understanding and implementation, whereas Tang’s (2010) study of the incorporation of formative assessment into teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge evidenced a mixture of the aforementioned technicist teachers, resulting in a procedural approach, and those who showed a more principled understanding. This meant that practice was less procedural and more adaptable indicative of a more informed approach to teaching in that teachers were enacting theoretical principles (ibid.). Herman, Osmundson, Dai, Ringstaff and Timms (2015) maintain that knowledge basis is an influential factor in the quality of its enactment. Marshall and Drummond (2006) also highlight the importance of a principled understanding of formative assessment with specific reference to one of its foci, that of the metacognitive domain aimed at fostering learner autonomy. They maintain that this entails teacher understanding of principles about how learners learn most effectively, such as those noted by Black and Wiliam (1998), and that comprehension of constructivist based teaching roles is
also significant. In this respect enacting formative assessment requires more than implementing strategies and techniques derived from research but an understanding of the principles that underpin them (ibid.). As such, it is argued that research literature should be more readily available and comprehensible for teachers and policy makers to promote informed practice (Priestley, Minty and Eager, 2011) as teachers are less likely to engage with new approaches to teaching content or pedagogy if they are tasked wholly with the translation of principles into practice (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Furthermore, knowledge most valued by teachers is reported as being that which is recent and in a form appropriate for immediate enactment (Cain, 2015).

It could be argued that formative assessment is challenging for teachers as it involves adopting new strategies (Black and Wiliam, 2001), which do not always align with their existent beliefs about teaching and learning (Carnell et al., 2006), for example, if a transmissive approach is believed to be most then effective formative assessment will be problematic: ‘…what is needed is a classroom culture of questioning and deep thinking in which pupils learn from discussions with teachers and from one another’ (Black and Wiliam, 2001:9). Teacher beliefs about how much each pupil can learn can also be a barrier: those who think that intelligence is fluid rather than fixed are more likely to support pupils in fulfilling their potential (ibid.).

A further barrier to formative assessment is summative assessment even though research evidences suggests formative practices lead to better results (Hargreaves, 2007). Its focus on performance rather than learning aims (OECD, 2008) traditionally prevails and does not show whether pupils understand certain ideas/concepts as assessment is restricted with marking over-simplified therefore unreflective of a variety of knowledge and skills (HMIe, 2011). Harlen and Deakin-Crick (2003) found that summative assessment fostered lack of engagement with formative assessment. Further, if formative and summative assessment are used simultaneously it is argued that learners do not attend to the formative advice and may focus on product rather than recognising the importance of process (Butler, 1988). For student teachers their concern is with being ‘satisfactory’ on the
summative assessment report rather than thinking about what they are learning and why. However, it may be argued that formative and summative assessment can be used effectively in tandem (Black and Wiliam, 2001). The issues here are what roles each plays and how they relate to each other (ibid.). One suggestion is that formative practices have the potential to make a contribution to summative reports in that a substantial amount of information is gathered about learning and used to inform progressive next steps (Black, 2003) which helps in determining whether summative criteria have been met (Harlen, 2005). Harlen (2005) suggests the use of feedback to communicate details about progress in learning as well as teaching learners to self-assess in relation to assessment criteria are particularly useful in this regard.

**Summative competency frameworks**

Beginner teachers work to attain certain competency standards. In Scotland this is in the form of the Standard for Initial Teacher Education (SITE) (QAA, 2006). This is a summative, competency framework and is based on the benchmark statements of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (ibid.). It acknowledges the academic and practical elements aspects of ITE, the role of quality initiatives and self-evaluation in schools, the Guidelines for ITE (SOED, 1993), the GTCS accreditation process, and partnership arrangements between local authorities, teacher educator institutions and schools (QAA, 2006). Competency frameworks stem from a global focus on standards, the quality of teachers, attitudes and choice (Christie, 2008). Definitions of competence have implications for learning, teaching and assessment, for example, transmissive versus reflective, achievement as opposed to learning for understanding (Whitty and Willmott, 1991). At the core of the debate around competency models is whether teachers are trained merely to act or educated to reason their actions (Tomlinson, 1995): ‘managerialism’ versus ‘pedagogic excellence’ (Patrick et al., 2003:245). These are important issues for teacher education and the teaching profession in general.

Whitty and Willmott (1991) identify a variety of issues with competency models such as lack of consensus on what competence means, a view of teachers as technicians, a focus on product rather than process and problems with identifying
salient competences. The literature evidences a great deal of criticism of competency models as fostering teachers who are technicians in that this type of model makes it difficult to describe the complexities and creativity of teaching (ibid.). Teachers as risk-takers or those who try out different methods is not promoted (Menter et al., 2006). The complex nature of teaching or valuing different forms of knowledge is not recognised (Furlong, 2005) where competences are the focus resulting in conceptions of teaching as lacking reflection, insight and creativity (Hegarty, 2000). The focus is more on ‘how’ not ‘why’ therefore lacks attention to broader educational concerns; compliant practice is also assumed (Kirk, 2000).

Product in terms of technical elements of teaching as opposed to process and reasoning are more likely to be emphasised within competency frameworks because it is easier to develop criteria for these more tangible facets of teaching (Whitty and Willmott, 1991). Such a focus does not promote critical reflection (Furlong et al., 2000). Instead a view of teaching as lacking in complexity, as a prescriptive set of certain ways to teach is evident, for example, if mentees adhere to particular instructions (competences) they will be successful teachers (Moore, 1996 in Smyth and Shacklock, 1998). In Scottish teacher education competency frameworks have evolved to reflect the complexity of teaching in their inclusion of personal and professional elements such as attitudes, values, judgement and reflection (GTCS, 2006). It is also argued that they make expectations clearer in terms of mentoring requirements (Whitty and Willmott, 1991), however, it may be suggested that they foster standardisation rather than quality (Sachs, 2001). As such, compliance becomes a central factor with views of learning constrained by misalignment of mentee requirements and competency frameworks (Hargreaves, 1992) in opposition to more democratic views where mentee needs are key with competences employed as a foundation for critical reflection (Bleach, 1997).

In opposition to criticisms of the competency model, Brown (1996) argues that the 1993 model acknowledges the complex nature of teaching. It professes a wider view of the teaching profession as encompassing knowledge, understanding, critical engagement, attitudes and skills (Christie, 2008) and is suggested as the Scottish
Education Department’s attempt to reconcile government view of competences with perspectives of others to include reflective practice (Brown, 1996). Competences may also be viewed as serving a professional purpose in terms of accountability on the part of teacher educator institutions, identifying common goals for university and school mentors, fostering focused criteria for beginner teachers and ITE programmes, providing a basis for assessment and dialogue for university and school mentors, and developing competent teachers (Kirk, 2000). In addition, they can foster clarity regarding assessment and so lend themselves well to the profiling procedures used in teacher education, and to both formative and summative assessment (Whitty and Willmott, 1991).

Competency frameworks may be viewed as a minimum requirement for ITE programmes, a list of desirable attributes for beginner teachers to be competent practitioners (Kirk, 2000). This conception is acknowledged in the SITE (QAA, 2006) where the expected elements are indicative of the need for flexibility to allow teachers scope in the evolution of roles and responsibilities necessitated by the complex nature of teaching (Christie, 2008). The SITE is seen as an initial step in the teaching profession, evident in the links to competences exhibited by the Standard for Full Registration (SFR), Chartered Teacher and Standard for Qualification for Headship (Menter et al., 2006). These documents espouse notions of teacher professionalism underpinned by a concept of the ‘extended’ (Hoyle and John, 1995) or ‘activist’ (Sachs, 2003) professional. The SITE evidences the importance of research, theory, commitment and values in comparison to the English equivalent (New Professional Standards for Qualified Teacher Status and Requirements for Initial Teacher Training) which may be viewed as more reflective of the ‘restricted professional’ due to its emphasis on training through subject knowledge, teaching skills and techniques (Menter et al., 2006) as opposed to salient aspects such as values, self-evaluation and evidence informed practice (DfEE, 2002). The Scottish SITE has three competency standards and general descriptors for each. A study by Tang (2008) takes this a step further by suggesting a conceptual framework whereby each overarching competency standard is broken down into specific, descriptive assessment criteria which are structured as four levels of
increasingly complex progression, namely beginner, threshold, advanced novice and competent in order to provide a differentiated framework of development for beginner teachers. This is designed to facilitate their awareness of their current stage of learning and where they are aiming to progress to in their professional learning (ibid.). However, it is emphasised that the use of this framework should not be used in a mechanistic way but rather as a means of developing meaningful capacity for mentee professional learning and apposite approaches to assessment (ibid.).

**Mentoring, Formative Assessment and Professional Learning**

Substantial research evidence exists with regard to the importance of formative assessment principles and practices with learners in school contexts (see, for example, Black and Wiliam, 1998; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Black and Wiliam, 2001; Harlen, 2005; OECD, 2008) but less so in Higher Education (Nicol and Macfarlane Dick, 2006). Scaife and Wellington (2010:13) maintain that current English Higher Education national and institutional assessment policy evidences little involvement of students in processes: ‘assessment is something done to students, rather than for them, let alone by them’. In Scotland Higher Education institutions evidence some attempt at re-designing assessment practices to involve students, peers and tutors in both formal and informal feedback procedures with the aim of fostering self-regulation and requisite lifelong learning skills (Draper 2007). Similar attempts at re-forming university level assessment are apparent in Australia (Scaife and Wellington, 2010).

Little explicit acknowledgement of the significance of formative assessment in the process of mentoring beginner teachers is apparent in the literature: one example is evident from the Netherlands (Tillema and Smith, 2009) which addresses the effect of lack of agreement between mentees, university tutors and school mentors regarding the assessment criteria for lesson ‘appraisals’ on students’ acceptance of feedback and subsequent progression in the process of learning to teach. Another identifies the use of portfolios as the most effective model of formative assessment
for promoting the personal and professional learning of student teachers during school placement experiences (EPPI, 2003). The majority of recognition of the importance of formative assessment principles in the literature on mentoring evidences individualised, implicit examination of aspects such as critical reflection, feedback, self-regulation and shared criteria (see, for example, Bleach, 1997; Kullman, 1998; Hargreaves and Fullen, 2000; Stanulis and Russell, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Harrison et al., 2005; Perry Hutchinson and Thauberger, 2008; Wang and Odell, 2008; Schwille, 2008). Salient connections between mentoring beginner teachers and the key formative assessment principles and practices are therefore unclear. However, the importance of collaboration in mentoring is acknowledged (see, for example, Sachs, 2003; Carnell et al., 2006; Patrick et al., 2010). It incorporates some of the elements of formative assessment noted above and occurs in different ways.

**Mentoring and collaboration**

Collaboration is recognised as a key concept in mentoring practices appropriate for learning to teach in a twenty first century context (Hargreaves 2000; EPPI 2008). It is central to mentoring as it addresses improvement in teaching and issues of social justice and equality through practices such as critical reflection, active trust, self-regulation, respect and reciprocity (Hargreaves, 2000). In this sense: ‘…collaborative mentoring promotes a kind of counter-culture that is opposed to prevailing institutional practices of separation and exploitation’ (Mullen, 2000:5). A situated learning model is relevant here which equates with the social constructivist view of learning conversations to share experiences, understand and construct new ones (Rix and Gold, 2000). In order to promote collaboration in mentoring the use of appropriate types of assessment is necessary. Formative assessment connects learning and assessment processes, therefore, seems an apposite strategy in fostering the professional learning of beginner teachers. It allows mentees to construct knowledge and understanding both individually and in collaboration with others through practices such as shared learning intentions and success criteria, self and peer assessment, quality questioning and feedback. As noted previously, the importance of collaboration in mentoring is recognised in existent literature (see, for
example, Sachs, 2003; Carnell et al., 2006; Patrick et al., 2010) and incorporates some elements of formative assessment. Within schools collaborative mentoring may occur at micro level within classroom contexts, between the mentee and main mentor, and at a more meso level, for example, through the employment of a variety of school based mentors within professional learning communities.

**Meso level collaboration**

Effective mentoring entails teachers being able to work with a range of adults, being confident in their own decisions but able and willing to take account of others’ views (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). The transient nature of a knowledge society means that collaboration is desirable as it is problematic for individuals to keep abreast of requisite knowledge, understanding and skills (Wenger et al., 2002). Whether planned or spontaneous in form, if a school culture is not one of collaboration then mentoring and assessment practices are unlikely to be collaborative either (Williams and Prestage, 2002). One approach used to foster meso level collaboration is within a professional learning community (PLC). These are described using a range of terms, for example, communities of practice, learning circles and professional learning communities (Le Cornu, 2004).

Engaging in these professional learning communities is now common practice in the teaching community (Watson, 2012). Within such communities collaboration between teachers and wider parties takes place through mechanisms such as collaborative dialogue, critical reflection and joint activity (Hargreaves, 2000; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002) to promote teacher professional learning and educational change designed to enhance practice through innovation and exploration as opposed to hierarchical notions of delivery and implementation (Le Cornu, 2004). Participation may promote individual professional learning and that of colleagues (Kemmis et al., 2014), including enhancement of their abilities as mentors (Gratch 1998) and ability to engage in appropriate assessment processes, through shared practice, critical reflection and collective activity on classroom based and wider educational issues (Hargreaves, 2000; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Wenger et al., 2002). Winch et al. (2015) suggest that teachers can gain practical
knowledge through learning from peers and engaging in reflective dialogue. This may foster ‘social interruption of data’ where professional dialogue encourages teachers to work together to uncover and scrutinize practical issues as well as creating new difficulties that may be employed by individuals and the school community as a whole (Priestley et al., 2011:8). It may also avoid what Hargreaves (1994) calls ‘balkanisation’ where teachers isolate themselves within their own departments or classrooms and so limit collegiate practice and learning. Collaboration is fostered between a variety of stakeholders, for example, mentors, mentees and higher education institutions. Mentors may adopt a socialisation role to help beginner teachers to participate in a professional learning community (Laker et al., 2008).

However, issues such as power, pre-dispositions and over-socialisation may be apparent within these communities. Hierarchies of power can be evident where some members are full participants and some are on the periphery, which can result in their contributions being marginalised (Roberts, 2006). This is significant for student teachers who often try to integrate themselves and become part of a PLC through a mentoring relationship (Handley, Sturdy, Fincham and Clark, 2006). Their participation may be viewed as peripheral given that they have an additional set of support structures from their HEI and are within certain learning contexts for a finite amount of time. Reflection and enquiry founded on evidence-based practice and critical analysis are vital for professional learning (Priestley et al., 2011). Teachers should discuss and debate educational initiatives within PLCs in order to make meaning thus surface level enactment may be avoided (Forde et al., 2006). However, teachers are limited in terms of the time and space required to engage with such collaborative dialogue and theoretical principles (Kuusisaari, 2014). As such, PLCs may be dysfunctional in terms of over-socialisation. ‘Groupthink’ may be evident (Hargreaves, 2003) in terms of members being predisposed towards particular knowledge and less inclined to contemplate alternatives (Roberts, 2006). In addition, features of an effective PLC, for example, formation of personal and professional relationships, shared understandings and trust, may inhibit learning and the inclusion of new members like mentees (Wenger et al., 2002).
Micro level collaboration

Micro level collaboration occurs between the main mentor and the mentee. This is significant for beginner teachers in assisting them to cope with the unpredictable nature of teaching and learning within the context of the limited range of knowledge, understanding and skills they possess at the beginning stages of their teaching careers (Patrick et al., 2010). Mentee professional learning can be positively influenced by working with a mentor (Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010), for example, with regard to the development of confidence, particular skills, reflective practice, a heightened awareness of learning, the ability to ask for help, and the capacity to communicate new understandings (Certo, 2005; Carnell et al., 2006). Orland-Barack and Hasin (2010) maintain that collaborative mentors focus on process as opposed to just product.

Mentoring conversations are a significant part of a collaborative mentoring process, (Schwille, 2008). It is suggested that spontaneous collaboration is more effective in fostering the professional learning of beginner teachers (Patrick et al., 2010) because mentoring is continual using professional dialogue as the key support mechanism (Williams and Prestage, 2002). However, it is also reported that structured collaboration is successful in improving mentoring practice in that consistent mechanisms are in place (ibid.). Such collaboration is important, for example, in terms of considering difficult situations, addressing anxieties and specific aspects of teaching (Hargreaves, 2010). This can be interpreted as mentors taking an interactive role (Young et al., 2005). This requires equity in the mentoring relationship, which can take the form of mentors and mentees acknowledging that each other have a unique and valuable input to offer (ibid.). Interactive mentor roles are indicative of more non-directive methods of mentoring where the focus is on facilitating mentee understanding through mentor scaffolding using a variety of educative strategies in order to foster responsibility for learning (Carnell et al., 2006). Shared comprehension through dialogic practices moving between practice and reflection within a more equal mentor/mentee relationship is key to developing knowledge and understanding (ibid.). Such practices are collaborative, indicative of both individual and co-constructed learning (Hargreaves, 2010).
Critical reflection and self-regulation

Mentoring conversations traditionally happen between a more experienced teacher as mentor and the mentee. Such mentoring dialogue may foster the development of critically reflective and self-regulatory capacities. Self-regulated learning is where learners control elements of thought, motivation and actions while learning (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The concept of ‘adaptive expertise’ is a central facet of self-regulated learning where learners are able to use metacognitive knowledge and understanding to manage complicated tasks (Buzza, Kotsopoulos, Mueller and Johnston, 2013). Traditional notions of critical reflection are reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-on-action happens after a teaching episode as a means of analysis to foster understanding whereas reflection-in-action involves reflection within the teaching episode (Schön, 1987). It is argued that reflection-in-action involves learners using ‘adaptive expertise’ as they reflect during teaching and make decisions/adaptations as appropriate (Buzza et al., 2013).

Mentoring relationships, aims and activities influence how much and what kind of critical reflection takes place (Harrison et al., 2005). Personal experiences of schooling and teacher education (Sachs, 2003) are an essential foundation for formulating questions on existent beliefs and practice to foster change (Graham, 1999; Harrison et al., 2005), therefore, it is inappropriate to engage in simplistic mentoring dialogue such as that which merely recounts the events of a lesson (Bleach, 1997). A variety of studies of beginner teachers indicate that encouraging reflection was not a dominant mentor role (see, for example, Dymoke and Harrison, 2006; Certo, 2005; O’Brien and Christie, 2005); instead mentors led and dictated mentoring conversations, which were focused on their own thoughts and experiences (Certo, 2005).

It is argued that reflection-on-action is more appropriate for a mentoring context because teaching is both deconstructed and reconstructed in order to inform future practice (Harrison et al., 2005). In this sense reflection-for-action is also evident making progress in professional learning more likely (ibid.). Its aim is to promote positive change in teaching practices through engagement in metacognitive thinking.
and individuals taking responsibility for their own learning (ibid.). Akin to reflection-on action, pre-and post-lesson conversations may be interpreted as mentoring outside-of action (Schwille, 2008). Although advantageous in mentees’ gaining practical experience and opportunities to build teaching confidence and competence, outside-the-action mentoring may promote inferior quality teachers in that the mentor role is on the periphery during teaching episodes and can take a supervisory, rather than educative, position depending on the nature of post-lesson conversations (ibid.). Mirroring reflection-in-action, Schwille (2008) maintains that mentoring inside-of-action, where mentors work actively with mentees within teaching episodes, is an effective approach and more likely to be undertaken with student than post-ITE teachers as mentors and mentees work within the mentor’s classroom. It assists with mentee professional learning in terms of thinking ‘in the moment’, for example, immediacy of response to pupil learning and adjustment of lesson content and teaching skills (ibid.). This type of thinking is difficult to develop outside of a teaching episode (ibid.). However, such an approach has issues centred on the traditional view of the novice/expert teacher. Mentees may feel inhibited due to feelings of being undermined during teaching episodes and so lack credibility with pupils. This can, in turn, detrimentally influence the learning and teaching experiences of both mentees and pupils.

Research evidence suggests that learners can learn the skill of self-regulation (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Formative assessment is significant in fostering the self-regulatory capacities of student teachers through its advocacy of their involvement (OECD, 2008) and therefore a focus on collaboration and the development of metacognition (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). It can be argued that self-regulation requires that learners are intrinsically motivated to learn (Sproule, Martindale, Wang, Allison, Nash and Gray, 2013). Such motivation can be explained self-determination theory (SDT) to examine the correlation between motivation and controlled/autonomous action (Tessier, Sarrazin and Noumanis, 2010). Cognitive evaluation theory (a sub-theory of SDT) maintains that social-contextual factors promoting autonomy and confidence lead to improved intrinsic motivation (Tessier et al., 2010; Deci and Ryan, 2008). If three basic psychological
needs, autonomy, competence and relatedness (feelings of security and connection to others) (ibid.), are fostered in social contexts then cognitive, social and behavioural development improves (Deci and Ryan, 2008), for example, with regard to attainment, effort and quality of learning, creativity, engagement and ability to retain (Tessier et al., 2010). Key aspects in meeting these are ‘autonomy support, structure and interpersonal involvement’ (ibid.:243). Deci and Ryan (2008) maintain that relatedness and autonomy support in particular foster intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. These two facets are salient to mentor/mentee relationships. Formative assessment is important in promoting self-determined motivation, which relies on understanding of why success has been achieved and about capacity to learn rather than fixed intelligence (HMIE, 2011). As with the skill of self-regulation, enactment of autonomy support strategies can be learned (Sproule et al., 2013), however, teachers’ beliefs may influence their interpersonal style and so can inhibit adoption of such an approach (Tessier et al., 2010).

Indicative of a more constructivist perspective on learning, mentees can keep track of and regulate progression in learning, for example, they can make decisions regarding learning goals, approaches to such goals, how to manage resources, responses to feedback and the end product (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). ‘Internal feedback’ develops in the process of tracking progress; more effective self-regulated learners develop more effective internal feedback and use it in order to progress learning (Butler and Winnie, 1995). They are also able to employ feedback from others (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Therefore, in the context of teacher education, having a mentor is important where self-regulation develops through formative assessment processes such as shared assessment criteria and quality feedback. This is not a one-way process but a shared one, desirable for the development of lifelong learners (Boud 2000). The assumption that learners comprehend feedback is also often prevalent in the literature but this may not be the case so dialogue is important in facilitating the construction of understanding (Higgins, Hartley and Skelton, 2001).
In the context of higher education, the literature on formative assessment and self-regulated learning suggests seven facets of effective feedback: clarity with regard to learning goals and expectations; development of self-assessment; provision of feedback focused on learning; dialogue between teacher and learner or learner and peer about learning; development of motivation and building of self-esteem; giving learners the chance to address the difference between their own and the desired learning; and providing information that informs teaching practices (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Tillema (2009) maintains that appropriately focused feedback involves specifying agreed learning aims and assessment criteria at the outset. Tang (2008) further suggests that the learning of mentees is improved through shared understanding of assessment criteria, involving mentees in evaluating their teaching in light of these criteria and subsequently deciding on relevant next steps in learning to teach. Mentors need to use specific learning foci and associated success criteria dialogically in such a way as to foster the development of both personal values and professional elements of teaching in order that mentees can engage in critical reflection and are capable of making changes to professional actions as appropriate (Jones, 2009). Furthermore, if agreement is not reached regarding the assessment criteria for lesson appraisals, mentees’ acceptance of feedback and subsequent progression in the process of learning to teach may be detrimentally affected (Tillema, 2009). This is not an easy process but is a salient issue as a student’s willingness to engage with feedback and ability to progress may be dependant on a shared understanding of the focus for such appraisals (ibid.).

**Power**

In an educational context all learning environments are influenced by power relationships (Seddon, Billett and Clemans, 2004). Traditional hierarchies of power may inhibit collaborative, constructive dialogue (Graham, 1999) in that mentors are viewed as more experienced and may use this perception to direct dialogue, sanction particular actions and associated reasoning (Ritchie et al., 2000). This can mean mentees make decisions compliant with mentor views (Young et al., 2005) thus duplicating existing practice rather than engaging with that which is emancipatory (Cochrane-Smith and Paris, 1995). As a result they may feel inhibited in developing
the confidence and competence to make autonomous decisions and so resentful towards their mentor (Hargreaves, 2010), which is not conducive to a positive mentoring relationship.

Within this sort of traditional power duality, an oppositional dynamic of powerful and powerless is apparent (Seddon et al., 2004). In mentoring relationships this manifests as a perception of mentors as the ‘expert’ and of mentees as the ‘novice’ (Berliner, 2001). This is due to mentors being positioned in authoritative positions within the organisation (school) as qualified teachers and because of their greater experience, assumed knowledge, understanding and skills (Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2009). Berliner (2001) argues that this is inaccurate as expertise does not necessarily equate with experience, some teachers may never progress beyond a level of basic competency. However, Tsui (2003) maintains that experience may be an influential factor in developing teacher expertise if it is used as a learning tool. This entails engaging in conscious reflective practice, which problematizes teaching procedures, utilising theoretical knowledge either as enacting theory in practice or theorising practical knowledge (ibid.). Such theoretical knowledge provides teachers with the opportunity to engage further than pragmatic notions of teaching through in-depth conscious analysis thereby fostering the transformation of experience into expertise (Winkler, 2009).

It is difficult to avoid traditional hierarchies of power as they pervade school cultures and structures (Fenimore-Smith, 2004). However, considering other conceptions of power provides alternative interpretations and bases for reflection. Foucault (1979) disputes traditional notions of power as a duality of either powerful or powerless suggesting that both are possible (ibid.). A notion of power as ‘flux’ is apposite here where participants may be interpreted as being both powerful and powerless in the same context (Foucault, 1979). For example, a mentee can be powerless in being evaluated in a lesson but powerful as the teacher in that lesson (Ritchie et al., 2000). They are positioned as being both learners and being learned from so both powerless and powerful (Certo, 2005; Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012; Iancu and Oplatka; 2014). Power may also be viewed as resistance, for example, in the form of silence.
(Foucault, 1979). This resistance distorts the traditional power duality of being silenced so therefore powerless. In these senses of resistance and ‘flux’, power is viewed as enacted within interactions, rather than something that is possessed (ibid.), and is in a constant state of change (Graham, 1999).

Adopting alternative notions of power may promote reciprocity in mentoring relationships (Ambrosetti et al., 2014). Reciprocity and active trust are both significant within collaborative mentoring relationships to promote professional learning by means of critical reflection. Lack of reciprocity can mean mentoring is directive resulting in mentee practice being compliant and replicated with limited use of their learning from ITE (Hargreaves and Jacka, 1995). Active trust, which can occur at both personal and professional levels, is essential in the development of mentee confidence and competence (Hargreaves, 1994; Sachs, 2003). A view of mentoring as mutual encompasses the reciprocity and active trust necessary for collaborative mentoring relationships in its acknowledgement that all are mentors and learners. This fosters equity among mentors and mentees (Stanulis and Russell, 2000). Beginner teachers are effective sources of learning as their lack of attachment to certain teaching practices and experience of a variety of school contexts fosters flexibility and openness to different perspectives (Ulvik and Langorgan, 2012).

However, mentor willingness to position themselves and be positioned as learners is demanding as being seen to alter a perspective may be viewed as a weakness (ibid.). In this respect, personal and professional trust is important thus facilitating openness to cognitive conflict around existing ways of working and thinking (ibid.). This conflict opens up the opportunity to learn and understand teaching in new and different ways leading to a more symmetrical mentoring relationship appropriate for co-constructed knowledge and understanding (ibid.). Mentees are empowered with confidence and competence through this position and as they engage in both individual and shared constructions (ibid.). Mentors may benefit professionally in areas such as current curriculum and pedagogy knowledge, reflective practice, professional dialogue (Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005), capacity regarding variety in mentoring strategies, increased self-esteem (Carnell et al., 2006), and job satisfaction (Brisard et al., 2006; Langdon, 2014). This context can be increasingly beneficial...
for mentors if they have identified development needs that can be addressed through engagement in mentoring (Ambrosetti et al., 2014). It may also challenge mentors to question existing school cultures and their inherent understandings, beliefs and values (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012). Those conducive to collaboration are more cognisant of learning for all and so more effective contexts for beginner teachers (ibid.) as learners occupy positions of visibility (Long et al., 2012). Such collaboration is dependent on an ethos of trust (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012) and authenticity, as opposed to contrived collegiality where purposes are not negotiated (Hargreaves, 2003). Such contrived collegiality may result in lack of quality and longitudinal improvement as mentor attitudes and values need to change rather than merely their practice (Hargreaves, 1992).

**Peer mentoring/peer assessment**

Shared comprehension through dialogic practices moving between practice and reflection within a more equal mentor/mentee relationship is key to developing knowledge and understanding (Carnell et al., 2006). Traditionally they occur between an experienced teacher as mentor and the mentee, however, peer mentoring is an emergent area. Peer mentoring between mentees is carried out within the realms of a more equal relationship (Licklider, 1995). It encourages critical reflection and reform as feedback is both given and received therefore deeper thinking and understanding about practice may be fostered (ibid.). As part of this process, peer assessment allows mentees to learn from each other’s practice on their school placements (Kensington-Miller, 2011). This may be described as having an alternative support mechanism to discuss any issues as well as possible solutions (ibid.). In doing so, it is argued to foster improvement in teaching practices (Cheng et al., 2012) and encourage mentees to think more specifically about competency standards and how to achieve them (Liu and Carless, 2006). Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan (2009) report that their study participants felt they had improved across a variety of teaching areas such as planning, questioning, teaching approaches, class management and pupil assessment. In addition, as qualified teachers they may be involved in peer assessment with colleagues so these kinds of experiences in teacher education are advantageous (ibid.). It may also be argued that peer assessment is
valuable as it can be a non-threatening support mechanism (Laker et al., 2008) as mentees are at similar stages of professional learning (Mackie and Frame, 2008). In this respect peers may feel comfortable to ask questions and take on board feedback more readily than they would with mentors (Douglass, Smith and Smith 2013; Wiliam, 2014) in that dialogue is more symmetrical (Mackie and Frame, 2008). However, peer assessment is not without its issues in that trust is required between parties with regard to the feedback offered (Kuusisaari, 2014). Several studies indicate that peers are not convinced that they have requisite knowledge, skills and experience to provide meaningful comments (see, for example, Liu and Carless, 2006; Mackie and Frame, 2008; Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009; Kuusisaari, 2014). Peer assessment is further argued as promoting mentee learning within the realms of reflective practice in requiring them to engage in both self and peer evaluation of teaching (Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009). In this respect it fosters the development of metacognitive capacities (Wiliam, 2014) where, through adopting a more active role (Liu and Carless, 2006), learners develop an increased consciousness of what they are learning, how they are learning and what helps them to learn (LTSc, 2004). Friendships formed within a university context as part of teacher education may prohibit ability to engage in constructive feedback in that mentees can feel inhibited in criticising peers’ teaching (Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009). It might adversely affect the relationship but by not doing so they are providing a false representation of the lesson (ibid.), which is unhelpful in terms of mentee progression in learning to teach. McGarr and Clifford (2012) further report that some of their study participants were not positive about peer assessment as they felt peers were likely to be more critical and, in that respect, may experience feelings of guilt. This highlights the importance of peers understanding both the purposes and value of processes like peer assessment (Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009).

Conclusion

To conclude, this review has examined areas pertinent to any exploration of understandings of mentoring student primary education teachers and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within that process: teacher education and professional learning; mentoring and professional learning; assessment and
professional learning; mentoring, formative assessment and professional learning. Professional learning is an essential component of the teaching profession and so a central facet of teacher education. The demands on teachers of the twenty first century are increasingly complex and bring to the fore collaboration as a dominant discourse. These two areas were therefore investigated to contextualise subsequent sections. Given the emphasis on collaboration, partnership within teacher education is also subject to more intense scrutiny and so examined in terms of its different forms and functions. Mentoring is an integral part of teacher education in that it supports the professional learning of mentees and also mentors. This is a complex area in itself requiring a detailed exploration. In this respect, definitions of mentoring, a variety of mentoring models encompassing consideration of mentoring roles and relationships, and mentee development stages were investigated alongside benefits of the process and the importance of mentor education. Collaboration is recognised as a key concept in mentoring practices appropriate for fostering the professional learning of mentees in a twenty first century context. This necessitates the use of appropriate types of assessment. The dominant Scottish school-based assessment policy, ‘Assessment is for Learning’ has been, and continues to be, an explicit focal point for assessment practices in primary schools and is underpinned by traditional conceptions of summative assessment but emphasises the principles and practices of formative assessment. This policy and associated research were explored in relation to teacher education competency frameworks and as a basis for discussion of mentoring, formative assessment and professional learning. A gap in existent literature was identified and outlined in respect of salient connections between mentoring beginner teachers and formative assessment principles and practices being unclear. In this regard such principles and practices are not accorded the same focus within the learning of student teachers as they are with school pupils. However, the literature does acknowledge collaborative mentoring practices, which incorporates elements of formative assessment and so these were addressed.
Chapter Three - Methodology

This chapter will outline the process of designing, undertaking and analysing this study. As ethical considerations are of prime importance in any research project these are outlined at the outset. The case study research design used to frame the project will be explained and employed as a rationale for my sampling strategy and choice of data gathering methods. Salient aspects of qualitative research, namely trustworthiness and reliability, are also discussed. Finally, my constructivist grounded theory analysis strategy is outlined with regard to the importance of methodological congruence and the process leading to theory generation.

As noted in chapter one, the aims of this research project are:

- to further understand the complexities inherent in the mentoring process by investigating understandings of mentoring primary education student teachers in a school placement context, and by exploring understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices to support professional learning within that process;
- to identify salient implications for mentoring practices in Initial Teacher Education.

Its associated research questions are:

1. What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of mentoring within a school placement context?
2. What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?
3. To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional learning?
Research Ethics

The British Educational Research Association’s Ethical Guidelines (2011) have been used as fundamental reference documents. Key aspects relevant to this study are informed consent, confidentiality, accuracy of reporting and positionality.

During the data gathering process requisite steps were taken to facilitate participants’ understanding of the research study, its inherent processes, why their participation was required, how and to whom it would be disseminated (BERA, 2011) in order to provide enough detail on which they could make a decision about participation (Kvale, 2007). Written, informed consent for participation in the study and for publication of any of the data used in this report was sought and received (see Appendix A). Participants had the opportunity to withdraw at any time, to amend or add to the transcription of the interviews in which they took part, and to comment on my interpretations of the data.

The importance of participant confidentiality (ibid.) was attended to through the use of pseudonyms in transcripts, analysis documents and the end report. It is not possible to be absolutely certain of anonymity as, through informal conversations within their schools and local authorities, participants may have shared experiences of interviews or presented them as part of their professional development portfolios.

In research studies any possibility of bias should be acknowledged as it may influence the objectivity of conclusions (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006). By paying specific attention to reflexivity, the potential influence of my experiences, attitudes and values is acknowledged (Simons, 2009). My strategy is one of ‘detached honesty’ in continually questioning and challenging myself about all aspects of the research undertaken (Gillham, 2000:28). This may be carried out in a variety of ways, for example, seeking advice about aspects of the research process from others such as supervisors; triangulation of data; engaging in data analysis that looks for and discusses that which does not fit with emergent themes (ibid.). This strategy of ‘detached honesty’ is evident throughout my study by engaging in detailed critical analysis of the research process and its inherent decision-making procedures in an
effort to make these transparent to the reader. For example, in this chapter my research design, data gathering methods and analysis processes are described and reasoned clearly and honestly. In subsequent chapters critical analysis of findings is undertaken with due acknowledgement of the possibilities of multiple interpretation through my reading of literature and communications with participants. Recognition of the ways in which my past and present experiences in the context primary education are similar to those of participants, and so influenced my interactions with them and in subsequent interpretation of data, is important (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002). Having these sorts of shared experiences was advantageous in that it enhanced my ability to listen to and interpret participants’ perspectives, however, it was also important to question my understandings and interpretations through engagement with relevant literature (Denzin, 2001).

**Case Study Research Design**

There are a variety of design frames that are appropriate for educational research, for example, action research, case study, ethnography, evaluation, experimental and survey (Thomas, 2009). The design selected for use depends on identified research purposes and questions. Interpretive paradigms are typically espoused by qualitative, inductive research designs that focus on comprehending the construction and interpretation of social reality by its actors (Gubrium and Holstein 2002).

Having examined a number of research designs, case study was selected for this study. Case study research is an investigation of the particular (Simons, 2009). It is an apposite design for research situated within an interpretive paradigm (Cohen et al., 2000) and for studies of complex social phenomena focused on understanding significant elements of real-world contexts (Yin, 1994; Bassey, 1999; Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Stake 2005). My constructivist epistemological position fosters a study underpinned by notions of multiple realities, of knowledge and understanding constructed by its inhabitants. Research questions focus on understanding lived experiences (Cohen et al., 2000) of the mentoring process, including the influence of contextual factors (school, local, national, beliefs and values), through analysis of mentor and mentee perceptions. Therefore, a qualitative case study research design
and associated methods is appropriate. The detailed reporting inherent in a case study, referred to as ‘thick description’, promotes thorough exploration of social phenomena in that the different viewpoints of participants can be depicted and investigated comprehensively (Simons, 2009). The most significant facet of case study is therefore fostered, namely elucidation of possible reasoning behind particular findings of the study rather than just the findings themselves (Denscombe, 1998). This aspect of case study is attended to throughout my study but particularly in the findings and discussion chapters using a critical reasoning approach (Thomas, 2009), which entails considering why key findings are meaningful.

The types of case study research design selected are influenced by research aims and questions (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006). Stake (2005) suggests three types that are largely reflective of a more interpretive paradigm concerned with qualitative inquiry: intrinsic, instrumental and collective. An instrumental, collective case study is apposite for this study. An instrumental type is concerned with examining a specific case to understand a phenomenon, theory or concern (Stake, 2005). In my study an overarching case, the process of mentoring primary student teachers, is used to comprehend a phenomenon: mentor and mentee understandings of mentoring and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within that process. It is collective to provide a more holistic view of that phenomenon in that individual cases are examined but situated within a collective study. Case study research is reported as suited to the study of a single case rather than multiple cases (Simons, 2009), however, it has also been argued that both are appropriate, for example, with regard to the use of multiple cases to promote increased understanding of a single case (Gillham, 2000; Gomm et al., 2000). Cresswell (2007) advises that four or five cases are sufficient so analysis can be carried out within and across cases. Within the overarching collective case of the mentoring process in my study, four individual cases were investigated: class teacher mentors, student teachers (mentees), school management mentors and local authority mentors. University tutors were not involved in the study as my interest was in mentoring within school placement experiences and the everyday reality of that process. Within Scottish ITE in general, and the specific teacher education institution involved in this study, ‘teamed models’
of mentoring where teacher mentors, university tutors and mentees collaborate in the process of mentoring the student teacher (Fenimore-Smith, 2004) are not evident. University tutors from the institution in this study make one school placement visit to the student teacher unless there are issues with progression in learning to teach. Any other contact is carried out over email and tends to be limited. The placement visit gives a snapshot of the student teacher’s progression so is insufficient in developing a substantive mentoring relationship with the mentee. Its function is a formative one where the tutor does not make any summative judgment, rather offers support to school mentors and student teachers where required.

**Sampling strategy**

A purposeful sampling strategy was employed in terms of selecting student teachers at a particular stage (year three) on a specific programme (an undergraduate primary education degree programme). The rationale for this strategy is that students in year three have experience of the mentoring process from a previous placement and would be able to use the experiences gained through this study to build on and enhance professional learning, and to reflect forward to their final year four placement. My strategy was to recruit the class teacher mentors of these student teachers to make up six mentoring pairs. The structure of these pairs was to facilitate comparative analysis of responses where appropriate. Mentors were situated in six Scottish primary schools. These schools were all of a reasonable size, at least one class at each stage, which gave student teachers access to a variety of staff members. Schools were situated in both urban and rural areas within two local authorities. All of these schools mentor student teachers on a regular basis and employ formative assessment practices with pupils as a matter of everyday learning and teaching.

The original plan was that students were to be situated within one local authority with data from this context used to contextualise and help illuminate school based mentor and mentee responses as well as gaining an alternative perspective on research questions. However, a logistical issue meant that insufficient students were located within one local authority so two were required. This added an additional
dimension to data gathered as it meant that responses and documentation could be compared across the two local authority level mentors.

**Cases**

Class teacher mentors were all primary class teachers ranging in age and experience, from those at the beginning of their career, for example, mentor A was in her fifth year of teaching post-induction; mentor F in her first year post-induction. The other four were at a variety of stages, from mid-career to nearing retirement. Two of the six were promoted members of staff, namely Principal Teachers. Three of the six were experiencing being a mentor for the first time. The other three had mentored many students in the course of their teaching careers.

Mentees were student teachers on an undergraduate primary education degree programme in year three. This programme addresses both the content and pedagogy of primary education from theoretical and practical perspectives. The students had all had experience of being mentored in a previous placement and ranged in age, from three ‘typical’ undergraduate students (early twenties) to three more ‘mature’ student (over thirty) who had returned to higher education from another career.

School management level mentors were from the same schools as the class teachers mentors. All were experienced primary teachers who had worked in a variety of management level roles; four were Headteachers and two Depute Headteachers. All had a remit for mentoring student and induction year teachers in the school as part of their responsibilities.

Local authority level mentors were experienced teachers who had a remit for mentoring induction year teachers in addition to many other responsibilities. They were both new to their roles following a re-structure of local authority staffing.
### Table 3.1: Participant Pseudonyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentors</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Mentees</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor A</td>
<td>CTA</td>
<td>Mentee A</td>
<td>STA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor B</td>
<td>CTB</td>
<td>Mentee B</td>
<td>STB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor C</td>
<td>CTC</td>
<td>Mentee C</td>
<td>STC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor D</td>
<td>CTD</td>
<td>Mentee D</td>
<td>STD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor E</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Mentee E</td>
<td>STE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor F</td>
<td>CTF</td>
<td>Mentee F</td>
<td>STF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School management mentor A</td>
<td>SMTA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>School management mentor B</td>
<td>SMTB</td>
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<tr>
<td>School management mentor C</td>
<td>SMTC</td>
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<td>School management mentor D</td>
<td>SMTD</td>
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<tr>
<td>School management mentor E</td>
<td>SMTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>School management mentor F</td>
<td>SMTF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local authority mentor A</td>
<td>LAA</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local authority mentor B</td>
<td>LAB</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Data Gathering Methods

Data collection methods should be appropriate for the purpose(s) of the investigation (Bassey, 1999), its research questions (Silverman, 2006) and the type of the case study selected (Denscombe, 1998). For this study, qualitative methods are appropriate as they foster more in-depth comprehension of social phenomena in their elucidation of aspects such as experiences and social interactions (Silverman, 2006). Interviewing was selected for my study and is a prevalent method in case study research (Cohen et al., 2007).

### Interviews

Prior to selecting any method for data collection it is advisable to consider its advantages and disadvantages. Interviewing fosters rich data (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006) on aspects such as experience, perceptions and feelings from the perspectives of selected actors (Denscombe, 1998). Unstructured and semi-
structured interviewing involves an element of flexibility where questions may be outlined prior to the interview then a probing technique employed to elicit further data (Robson, 2002). In a case study research design interviews assist in gaining an in-depth insight into the ‘lived experiences’ of actors (Silverman, 2006:74). As in this study they are key in making sense of social phenomena (*ibid.*) and apposite when the aim is to elicit actors’ perceptions about the significance of the phenomenon under investigation (Robson, 2002).

Interviews are inescapably subjective, influenced by context and by the interviewer/interviewee relationship (Fontana and Frey, 2005). This imbalance of power towards the interviewer (Denscombe, 1998) may result in the ‘interviewer effect’ where interviewees say what they think is expected as opposed giving an honest account (*ibid.*). Interviewing also takes substantive amounts of time for interviewees and researchers (Bechhofer and Paterson, 2000). Transcription and analysis of data may be time consuming due to the flexible nature of unstructured and semi-structured interviews in comparison with the pre-coding existent in structured interview questionnaires (Denscombe, 1998). In spite of these issues, interviews were an effective way of collecting data for this study as they afforded opportunities to talk to both mentors and mentees about their understandings and perceptions.

Given the instrumental, collective case study design of this study, the partially structured format of the semi-structured interview is appropriate in elucidating data specific to each case as well as fostering comparative analysis of data sets (Esterberg, 2002). Interview schedules were formulated around the three research questions with associated themes from the literature review noted alongside. A probing strategy was employed as the inherent flexibility of the semi-structured interview allows for comprehension of viewpoints of participants’ lived world (Kvale, 2007) during the interview and so presents opportunities for the interviewer to inquire further thereby promoting depth of analysis (May, 2001). As a novice researcher, it was important to construct these schedules then obtain feedback from my supervisors in order that questions and probes were relevant, specific enough and not leading.
Pilot interviews were carried out prior to interviews one and two for class teacher mentors and mentees. The interviews for school management and local authority level mentors were made up of similar questions so there was no need for pilot interviews in these cases. Piloting interviews is important to obtain information on clarity and interpretations of questions posed, to practice interview techniques (Drever, 1995) and test equipment (Clough and Nutbrown, 2002). The pilot interviews brought to light the importance of making time to ascertain the opinions of the interviewee both during and after the process (Drever, 1995). If a question was not clear during the pilot it was vital to stop, explain further and ask the interviewee for opinions on how to revise it. The pilot interviews also highlighted the need to take time and effort to engage with participant responses in order to uncover what Charmaz (2006:34) states as ‘the subtlety and complexity of respondents’ intentions and actions’ rather than just moving onto the next question. At the end of the interview general opinions on both the interview questions and interviewer techniques were ascertained. This dialogue, along with reviewing the recording of the interview and seeking advice from my supervisors, was a helpful tool in revising the interview schedules and developing my skills as an interviewer.

**Role of interviews**

As a researcher it was important to be flexible with regard to interview times and venues. Each interview lasted approximately an hour as this allowed enough time to obtain sufficient, quality data without taking advantage of participants’ time and effort given that they were taking part of their own volition. Further, interviews took place at a time suitable for participants. Class teacher mentors and school management level mentors elected to be interviewed in their school contexts and local authority level mentors in their respective workplaces as these venues fitted in with work and personal commitments. Spaces within these venues were selected as appropriate to minimise interruptions and to facilitate audio recordings (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Participants feeling comfortable to speak freely was also a concern, for example, conducting these interviews in my university office could have been inhibitive as it may have fostered/exacerbated any existing participant conceptions of a hierarchy between universities and schools (*ibid.*).
Mentees were interviewed before the beginning of the placement and after it ended so as not to impinge on their time whilst on school placement. These interviews took place in my university office for reasons of mentee convenience and constraints on university room availability. This may also be interpreted as a ‘safe’ space for mentees to talk about their experiences in that it was outwith the school placement context. However, being mindful of the potential conceptions of hierarchy noted above, it was stressed to mentees that my role in their school placement was not as a university tutor but as a Doctoral student. This was carried out through an informal introductory conversation about my studies and experiences as a student, which fostered a mutual empathy and understanding of both the rewards and pressures of student life. Explanations about confidentiality and that the study was about their understandings, as opposed to testing their knowledge about mentoring, were also important in making mentees feel at ease to talk openly as did my own willingness to share transcripts and the final thesis.

Class teacher mentors and mentees were interviewed twice. The first interview aimed to ascertain individually constructed understandings of the mentoring process based on prior experiences of mentoring/being mentored. Questions about their understandings of formative assessment and perceptions of its potential role were also asked (see Appendix B). The second interview was used to uncover understandings of the mentoring process and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the current mentoring experience. In this respect understandings are viewed as both individually and co-constructed. To find out more about comprehensions of this specific mentoring process rather than general understandings as in the first interview, a selection of questions from interview one were repeated. My interest was not only in the ‘in situ’ understandings themselves, but also in whether they were different than those expressed previously. New questions about the perceived use of formative assessment, its role in professional learning as well as facilitators and barriers to its use were also asked (see Appendix B).
School management and local authority level mentors were interviewed once in order to ascertain understandings of the mentoring process and formative assessment as well as to gain their perceptions of the role of formative assessment in the mentoring process and with regard to professional learning (see Appendix B). A second interview was not necessary as they were not the within class mentor. It was anticipated that responses from these participants would be indicative of their management perspective and role. In that respect they would be interesting in themselves but also useful in illuminating some of the class teacher mentor/mentee perceptions.

**Transcription**

My decision to transcribe each interview was influenced by the aims of the study. As it is concerned with perceptions and understandings my focus was primarily on the content of participant responses. Although cognisant of the arguments around transcription such as the time it takes (Denscombe, 1998) and claims of it being unnecessary to transcribe every interview verbatim (Walford, 2001), my focus on the content of responses, and the need to present this accurately, required intimate engagement with the data through transcription of all interviews.

Given that thirty-two hours of interview data had been recorded, an audio typist was used for reasons of time. In terms of accuracy, this also meant that it was not just my listening that decided what was heard and transcribed. Accuracy was checked on receipt of transcriptions by listening to the digital recordings of each interview and relevant amendments made such as omissions, unclear words/phrases and typographical mistakes. The audio typist was not required to record detail of speech such as intonation, the use phatics, fillers or hesitations/silences. This is a very time-consuming process and, arguably, not necessary given the aims of this study as it would be in one focused on, for example, discourse analysis. My engagement with these sorts of verbal and non-verbal nuances during the interview process and in listening to transcripts fostered relevant notes to inform both my interview technique and interpretation of data. Following this process of checking for accuracy, transcripts were emailed to participants for further scrutiny. They made no
amendments, and comments received tended to be of a humorous nature about how much they had talked and their use of colloquial language.

**Validity and Reliability**

Traditional notions of validity and reliability attract much debate within the realms of qualitative research. The paradigm in which the research is situated, its aims and research questions influence the ways in which they are conceptualised. My stance accords with Simons (2000) in that the concern is less with what terms are used and more that the research should be rigorous:

…readers of your case study need to be assured that your findings are accurate, credible, plausible and trustworthy given what you are trying to understand in the particular context of your case. (2000:132)

External validity refers to the extent to which the results of a study are generalisable (Merriam, 1988). If knowledge is viewed as constructed, embedded in social and historical contexts and concerned with investigation of the particular, then it is not necessarily relevant to discuss generalisation in the traditional sense based in a positivist research paradigm (Kvale, 2007). Instead, discussion may be on whether the knowledge may be transferable through other forms (ibid.) such as ‘fuzzy’ generalisation (Bassey, 1999). The notion of a ‘fuzzy’ generalisation is such that there are no absolute social truths stated, just possibilities put forward regarding the potential for research findings to be more widely applicable in terms of influencing policy and practice through dialogue between relevant parties (ibid.). In this respect, ‘fuzzy’ generalisation is apposite for this study given its focus on comprehending and making meaning from the perceptions of actors within their specific contexts then using these findings as a basis for considering possible future research, policy and practice.

Internal validity is an important consideration due to its focus on the rigor of the research process and consideration of different explanations for findings (Merriam, 1988). One key approach to promote internal validity is triangulation (Simons,
2009) where findings are examined from a number of viewpoints in order to cross-reference them (Stake, 2005). There are four main types of triangulation: data, investigator, theory and methodological (Denzin, 1978). Data triangulation involves time, space and people (ibid.), and is apposite for this study as it is commonly used in case study research to promote ‘thick description’ and substantiate the significance of specific findings (Simons, 2009). It was employed in terms of interviewing four particular groups involved in the mentoring process: class teacher mentors, mentees, school management level mentors and local authority level mentors. These groups provided a variety of perspectives on the mentoring process and the use of formative assessment within it.

The question of whether reliability, where findings are replicated in multiple instances, is appropriate for qualitative research is debatable (Cohen et al., 2007). If the social world is constantly changing then the concept is rendered irrelevant (Silverman, 2006). However, research as rigorous means that it must be considered despite issues with regard to the focus of case study on the particular (Cohen et al., 2007), and the disparate nature of human behaviour (Merriam, 1988). Lincoln and Guba (1985) advocate the notion of findings as reasonable as opposed to replicable. Throughout the process of this study my supervisors were an important resource in discussing the reasonableness of findings and subsequent interpretation, for example, at the coding stage of analysis then in synthesising codes to abstract key themes and make sense of them.

**Data Analysis: A Constructivist Grounded Theory Approach**

Data analysis is an essential part of any research project and entails ‘… dissect (ion) (of data) meaningfully, while keeping the relations between the parts intact’ (Miles and Huberman, 1994:56). Methodological congruence is vital in that an appropriate approach should be selected which is consistent with the researcher’s epistemological position and the research design (Thomas, 2009). Constructivist grounded theory was adopted as an approach to data analysis and theory generation
because the suggested framework provided me with systematic guidelines within which to undertake this part of my research project. Charmaz (2006) views this approach as a collection of non-prescribed principles and practices to be employed in a flexible manner by researchers to construct meanings, and thus theories, about social phenomena within particular contexts and time periods. As a novice researcher this flexible but systematic design was very helpful in guiding me through the process of analysing and interpreting data. Its process of detailed deconstruction gave me confidence that the complexities of social phenomena were being addressed, and that both commonalities and differences within the data were accounted for. Classic notions of the ‘discovering’ of data and theory are rejected where the researcher is silent (Mills, Bonner and Francis, 2006) and replaced by the researcher as the author in rebuilding participants’ experiences and understandings (Hallberg, 2006) thus theories are constructed from the data gathered (ibid.). This process of analysis and interpretation is a shared one with participants as co-creators of data and meaning where the relationship between researcher and participants is key (Hayes and Oppenheim, 1997).

**Constructivist grounded theory coding**

Data analysis is an ongoing process and should begin immediately with regard to the research questions and not when all the data has been collected (Charmaz, 2006) otherwise salient aspects may be overlooked, further significant investigation not carried out, and the task may appear insurmountable. My analysis took place during the interview process in order to make sense of responses and probe further within the interview. This was also the case following interview 1 in preparation for interview 2 with class teacher mentors and mentees where key themes or probes were noted. Miles and Huberman (1994) advise that coding is an effective mechanism for sustaining such analysis. Coding means condensing data into sections of descriptive or interpretative/inferential information and giving each an appropriate name (ibid.). It is a process of making meaning from data that involves interpretation at both verbal and tacit levels (Charmaz, 2006).

In accordance with constructivist grounded theory, three stages of coding were
adopted: initial, focused and theoretical. In doing so it was important to be mindful of constantly analysing data, meaningful dissection (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and criticisms of coding itself. Simons (2009), for example, suggests that it can be mechanistic and prescribed, overly descriptive, abstracted and inflexible resulting in losing the ‘big picture’ of what the data means. My use of research memos and consistent notation of emerging themes, absences and interesting elements for each research question enabled me to abstract meaning from data at a more holistic level while also engaging with the finer detail through coding. This varied approach proved helpful when at the point of finalising key themes and sub-themes for each research question.

The constructivist grounded theory coding strategy was used within my case study research design. A collective case study requires within case analysis to identify key themes and foster thick description of individual cases prior to cross-case analysis (Simons, 2009). Appendix C provides an overview of the four stages of analysis undertaken and described below:

- Analysis stage 1 - within case initial coding
- Analysis stage 2 - within case focused coding
- Analysis stage 3 - within case theoretical coding
- Analysis stage 4 - cross-case theoretical coding

Throughout the process coding documents and interpretations were sent to my supervisors to check that they were reasonable. This gave me confidence in the coding process and allowed us to engage in critical discussions about my interpretations. This was a particularly important process for me as a novice researcher as it brought to the fore both similarities in interpretation but also differences in perspectives which led to further exploration.

**Initial Coding - analysis stage 1**

Initial coding has its basis in classic grounded theory where data is analysed in detail through close reading of word, line and segments of data (Charmaz, 2006). It helps
researchers to interpret what is actually in the data and to avoid preconceived ideas being applied (*ibid*.). Line by line coding was carried out for all participants for each interview question. For example, within the CT mentor case, responses were coded for each of the six CT mentors for each interview question in interviews 1 and 2 (see Appendix D for an illustration). This was time consuming and somewhat frustrating as not every line contains a code. However, it was very useful in maintaining attention to the detail of the data and resonated with my perfectionist, logical mindset as well as stemming fears of ‘missing something’.

Codes are ‘grounded’ in the data as inductive strategies such as constructivist grounded theory advocate. A common criticism of grounded coding is that it may evidence bias. Links between the data and analysis should therefore be clear in order to evidence the important role of participants in the theory developed (Mills *et al.*, 2006). To do this ‘in vivo’ codes were employed where participants’ language is used in codes and when the theory is articulated (Charmaz, 2006). My use of ‘gerunds’ (-ing action words), as opposed to topic words, also helped in staying grounded in the data and in preventing premature theory building before sufficient analysis had been carried out (*ibid*.).

**Focused Coding - analysis stage 2**

Focused coding is a subsequent mechanism to refine codes, it ‘…uses the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate, and organise large amounts of data…’ (Charmaz, 2006:46). This was carried out within each case and involved refining initial coding by examining codes for commonality and difference. Within each case initial codes from each participant were compared for each interview question. Analysing codes for commonality was determined to be an effective basis for justifying construction of focused coding and subsequent theoretical coding/themes. In this respect, initial codes evident from over 50% (four out of six) of participants within each case were utilised in constructing focused codes whilst also paying attention to salient differences/individual voices. The result of this process was a list of focused codes for each interview question within each
case. For example, within the CT mentor case 147 initial codes were reduced to 20 focused codes for question 11 in interview 2 (see Appendix E).

The constant comparative method inherent in analysis situated in an interpretive paradigm entails being flexible to revise codes whilst visiting and revisiting data as the research process progresses (ibid.). Revisiting data from initial coding while focused coding led to the emergence of new codes but also revision of existing ones. This strategy was existent throughout the analysis process and when writing the final thesis. It gave me further confidence with regard to both the process and products of the analysis.

Having constructed focused codes, quotations from the transcripts, which both exemplified and explained codes further, were noted. Selecting these quotations entailed conscious decision-making about which data best exemplified the focused codes and helped to ensure findings were grounded in the data. Although a time-consuming process, it was of significant value when selecting quotations to assist in explaining, exemplifying and substantiating theoretical coding/themes in the findings/discussion chapters.

**Theoretical Coding - analysis stages 3 and 4**

For the constructivist grounded theory approach, theoretical coding is the merging of concepts into groups (ibid.). It assists researchers to identify connections between codes so theories begin to emerge (ibid.). Thomas’ (2009:229/233) description of theory as ‘…about making connections, identifying issues and offering reasoned explanations…tying strands together, intertwining ideas, weaving a fabric that is sometimes called theory…’ made this part of the process clear. This assisted me in identifying emerging theories in the data through analysis stage 3 where focused coding was examined within each case in relation to each research question. This was facilitated, but not constrained, by having aligned interview questions with research questions prior to carrying out interviews. To exemplify, with regard to the CT mentor case it became apparent from focused codes and memos about research question 2 that use of formative assessment practices within the mentoring process
was acknowledged as being beneficial but its actual use by class teacher mentors and mentees was subconscious as opposed to its planned, conscious use with school pupils. This was noted as a theme. Within that theme, sub-themes detail the variety of ways in which this manifested itself. One such sub-theme is that of ‘constructive dialogue’. This phrase encapsulates participants’ descriptions from the focused coding process. Throughout the process of theoretical coding a critical reasoning approach (Thomas, 2009) was adopted about why these codes were meaningful in order to facilitate construction of relevant discussion points. These key questions/points were noted in research memos and used as a basis for my discussion of findings.

Analysis stage 4 involved a cross-case analysis in that the above within case emergent themes and sub-themes for each research question were compared across the four cases. This was carried out to further refine themes and sub-themes ascertaining both commonalities and differences. This constructivist grounded theory analysis process resulted in themes and sub-themes being identified for each research question (see Appendix F).

**Conclusion**

To conclude, having outlined the process of designing, undertaking and analysing this research study, the following two chapters provide a description and discussion of my findings. As explained in chapter one, given the sequential nature of my research questions, chapter four addresses research question one, and chapter five focuses on research questions two and three with relevant connections made from one chapter to another. As discussed in this chapter, my aim is to provide a credible account by reporting in a clear, honest and critical way.
Chapter Four - Mentoring in Action

This chapter addresses research question one about mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ (mentees) understandings of mentoring within a primary school placement context. Findings are presented then salient discussion points explored in relation to the themes and sub-themes identified (see Appendix F).

As outlined in chapter one, in Scotland there are five parties involved in the mentoring process to support the professional learning of primary education beginner teachers: the mentee, class teacher mentor (CT mentor), placement school and local authority. Based on a review of apposite literature, participants were asked a variety of questions about mentoring with regard to whom it involved, its forms, benefits, and the roles, characteristics and styles of mentors and mentees. Data from this study indicates that participants understood mentoring as a multidimensional process involving a range of relationships designed to support the mentoring of student teachers within a school placement context. Within the aforementioned arrangement of Scottish ITE mentoring, four relationships, which differ in terms of their extent and form/function, are evident: local authority/school; school/university; school management mentor/CT mentor/mentee; CT mentor/mentee.

These relationships appear to range in proximity from close to barely existent. Responses indicate that the key relationship is that between CT mentor and mentee. It is a close one, evident on a daily basis within the classroom and the associated expectations derived from the wider context of the student’s degree stage and competency expectations (SITE) set out by the GTCS. Looking holistically at study data elucidates this close relationship in that participants understood mentoring as being focused on classroom practice, namely the mentee learning to teach. Analysis of CT mentor and mentee responses suggests an understanding of mentoring as involving both personal and professional dimensions. From these dimensions elements of collaboration and power also emerge. In comparison, the relationship between the school management mentor, CT mentor and mentee is a more remote one, evident at a structural level prior to the placement and if there are issues during
the placement. The connection between school and university is similarly understood as remote with universities being seen as responsible for theory and schools for practice. Findings indicate that the relationship between local authorities and schools is barely existent and involvement in mentoring is not evident apart from in the induction year that follows undergraduate and postgraduate primary education ITE programmes. Figure 4.1 summarises the key themes and sub-themes around these four relationships regarding how participants understood mentoring in terms of whom it involves and the extent of this involvement.
Figure 4.1: Mentoring Relationships within a Primary School Placement Context
In this chapter within case data is presented in table form with cross-case data used for purposes of illustrative exemplification. This cross-case data was selected as representative of participants’ experiences and to provide a variety of examples under each theme and sub-theme. For each example an overview of participants’ understandings is provided then specific respondent data cited. In doing so, difference is recognised alongside similarity.

**Local Authority/School Relationship**

The relationship between local authorities and schools in the context of ITE is barely existent. There is lack of consensus about whether local authorities should be involved with mentoring student teachers and, in reality, such involvement is not evident apart from in the induction year that follows undergraduate and postgraduate primary education programmes.

**Lack of involvement of the local authority**

When talking about who was involved in mentoring the student teacher and the influence of agencies other than the placement school, CT mentors and mentees made no mention of the local authority. SMTC was the only school management level (SMT) mentor who mentioned the local authority in that she felt their involvement should be evident given that these authorities would be looking for newly qualified teachers to fill teaching vacancies on completion of their degree programme. Local authority level (LA) mentors saw support for student teachers as coming from schools. LAA specifically noted that it was the school management’s role to support the classroom teacher in the mentoring process and to develop their skills in that area. LAB viewed schools as being experienced in dealing with students so saw no particular role for herself in that context. LA mentors also remarked that university support was essential, making particular reference to the university tutor visit. They viewed themselves as having more of a role with induction year teachers in the year proceeding ITE while those teachers worked towards the GTCS Standard for Full Registration (SFR) and would become more directly involved with inductees where issues with progress arose. LAB maintained
that the most difficult situation was when the inductee seemed to take on feedback but was unable to put it into practice. In those contexts she talked about the importance of clearly identifying points of incompetence (in relation to the SFR) and procedures the school should follow in dealing with the situation.

CT mentors, mentees and SMT mentors noted that there was no guidance provided by the local authority about mentoring student teachers. LAA talked about schools using university documentation with regard to understanding expectations of student teachers on particular placements. LAB remarked that mentor education could only be provided for those with a specific role in mentoring induction year teachers as there were no resources to fund anything further.

**Recognition of need for involvement**

Despite the absence of involvement and guidance, LA mentors felt they should be involved more in mentoring as a whole. LAB noted that she would like to be more involved with student teachers prior to the induction year but that resourcing prohibited it. LA mentors maintained that having additional support was beneficial for inductees.

The benefit of probationer teachers, they all know that I am here. I think they see my role as a supporter for them. A few of them have come and asked basic questions that they are maybe frightened to ask at the school. **LAB**

LAA made specific reference to the induction year in terms of assisting inductees with aspects such as online profiling and their school mentors with the mentoring process. Lack of time and having multiple remits were identified as key factors that prohibited further involvement in mentoring in any context. LAA noted the link between the two in that she had responsibility for curriculum development, co-ordination of induction year placements and student teacher placement allocation as well as organising those involved in taking the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH) so time was very short. This meant that she had to prioritise things that needed more urgent attention noting, ‘if it is not broken, don’t fix it’.
School/University Relationship

The connection between school and university is understood as remote and focused on professional elements. Participants make explicit reference to a school/university relationship with universities being viewed as responsible for theory and schools for practice.

Explicit reference

Explicit reference to a school/university relationship is evident in responses about school involvement in mentoring and guidance provided about the process. CT mentors recognised the university and school connection in a variety of ways, for example, that the aim of both was for the mentee to make progress in the process of becoming a teacher. Responses also indicate that mentees could be interpreted as being learned from as well as being learners. CTB noted that student teachers brought new ideas from university settings while CTA acknowledged that they also had the opportunity to put university learning into practice. CTD remarked that further contact with the university could be made if there were issues with the mentee.

…we don’t have an awful lot of partnership with the University but that’s because if the student’s doing fine and they’re learning…we know you’re doing your job and they know we’re doing ours…I suppose there would be more contact if there…were problems... CTD

Mentees also recognised the university and school connection in their comments about it being the practical part of learning to teach. STD noted specifically that placement is where university learning begins to make sense. STE remarked that she valued the view of her CT mentor more than the university tutor as the CT mentor was actually ‘doing the job’.

As in the case of CT mentors, SMT mentors acknowledged the university and school connection in a variety of ways, for example, within comments about the importance of working together to foster quality teachers. In doing so, SMTA and SMTC noted
specifically that the university’s role was to prepare students for placement experiences. When on placement SMTD maintained that university tutors should listen to the feedback from the school mentors as they were spending the majority of time with the student teacher. The importance of the school was also evident in the comment by SMTE that the weighting of responsibility for mentoring was with the school. She further remarked, as CTD, that increased contact with the university was only made if there were issues.

I think that we’re very good at identifying which students can go a little bit further and which ones just need to continue doing what’s the requirement rather than that little bit extra…I think that it has to be very clear that if we have any concerns very early doors I’m quite happy to pick up a phone and make contact…it is a partnership thing. But I do think that it’s weighted on us.  SMTE

The placement guidelines were also understood as part of the school/university relationship. CT mentors viewed them as the main source of guidance for mentoring the student teacher, CTA referred to them as her ‘bible’. They noted that the guidelines were clear and helpful in setting out requirements of the mentee for the placement experience but commented that if further assistance with mentoring was required they would engage in professional dialogue with colleagues in school. CTE remarked that this was especially important for teachers who were inexperienced in mentoring student teachers. Similarly, SMT mentors noted that the university guidance was the main source of information for mentoring the student teacher with SMTB and SMTC specifically commenting that the guidelines were ‘to be followed’.

Mentees noted that guidelines were of assistance in clearly setting out expectations of them. STA and STC made particular reference to the topics provided for the mid-placement review meeting between CT mentor and mentee as a mechanism for specific discussion rather than just focusing on things as they arose. STD suggested that it would be helpful for CT mentors to have guidelines focused on expectations of them as mentors, for example, in terms of consistent formative dialogue, as well as those detailing requirements for mentees. Mentees further remarked that a characteristic of an effective mentor was that they were familiar with university
documents. STB stated that the anxiety she felt about what was expected of her on placements was made worse if mentors did not read the guidelines provided.

CT mentors viewed one role of mentees as meeting university expectations as set out in placement guidelines.

… to follow what she is being asked to do…she’s got to do quite a lot of lessons. So we have to fit that into the timetable. So she has to keep me well informed as to…what’s necessary…We don’t want to get to the last week or two and…have a lot to, to do... CTB

Local authority mentors referred to the school/university relationship within the context of the university tutor visit. LAA stated that normally this was a positive experience but could be fraught with tension if the school mentors and university tutor disagreed about the mentee’s teaching capabilities. The university tutor was also noted as part of the school/university relationship by a minority of other participants. SMTE commented on the tutor visit but viewed the university as removed from daily teaching practices. SMTA, CTB and CTF noted the tutor as a source of information if they had further questions not answered in the guidelines provided.

Theory/practice juxtaposition

Findings show that the roles of schools and universities were understood as different but complementary and both important. CT mentors viewed university as focused on theoretical aspects of learning to teach, as being a context in which to listen, take notes and discuss. They maintained that school placements were significant in putting that learning into practice in order to see different classes and experience the ‘pitfalls’ first hand. CTF further noted placement as an opportunity to find out what works for the mentee in practice and identify aspects they needed to know more about.

…I think a distinction has to be made that when they are at university they are getting a lot of theorist based things and the chance then when they come out to actually put it into practice, see what works for them, what doesn’t work for
them, what they thought they might have known but actually ‘I haven’t got a clue about this, I’ll have to go back and revisit’. It is fine reading it in a book but…It has to be done actually hands on and in practice. **CTF**

This focus on gaining practical experience was seen by CT mentors as a benefit of mentoring for mentees in that they could gain hands on experience with a variety of learners in a realistic setting. **CTB** pointed out that as a student her school placements were of most benefit because children are all different.

I think to be able to do things and practice that you’ve been learning about is absolutely essential…I know myself many years ago as a teacher training the…most I ever learned was in the schools…you always felt that…putting…the theory into practice was the most…beneficial side of teacher training… Because children are not…they don’t do anything by the book…And each class is totally different so they need experience…to be able to…teach any stage or size of class or type of children. **CTB**

Mentees also viewed university as focused on theoretical aspects of learning to teach, as providing the foundation on which to develop and practice teaching skills in school settings. **STE** further noted that the two contexts have to come together, suggesting that university tutors be able to talk about practice and that placement mentors be able to connect practice to theory.

I see the university as very much theory based. Where when you’re in placement I see it more as a practical and…the teacher to give you more practical advice than the theoretical side…But…somewhere along the line the two a’ them’s got to come together. Your tutor at uni would need to be able to give you practical advice. And on placement your mentors should be able to give…where it links to theory. **STE**

The opportunity to gain practical experience was identified by mentees as a key element with regard to characteristics of effective mentors and in terms of benefits of mentoring for the mentee. Mentees stressed learning from mentors in terms of the knowledge and skills of curriculum and pedagogy they had built up over their years of teaching. In terms of theory/practice elements, **STF** further expressed that enacting theory was complex but practice made it easier.
…I was learning and developing the skills of a teacher…I think it is easy to read the theory and you think that you know all that is involved but when it comes to putting it into practice there is so much that you forget to do. The more you practice…it becomes like second nature and you don’t have to think about it so much. STF

As with mentees, SMT mentors understood university settings as focused on the theory of learning to teach and school placements as contexts in which to enact such learning. SMTC articulated this as universities teaching what should be done and schools as giving mentees experience of what is actually done. She further noted that the two elements are needed to make a ‘rounded’ teacher.

I suppose [universities are] to prepare them as much as they can for coming in to schools. Giving them as much knowledge of what is current in education, education thinking, what are good skills and strategies that they need to develop. But the school role is to give them the experience of developing that. I think you need the two…that is very important…Because if we don’t then I think there is not the same join…it can be either too academic and they don’t have the experience, and I think you need both to make a rounded teacher. SMTC

**School Management Mentor/Class Teacher**

**Mentor/Mentee Relationship**

As with the school/university relationship, that between the school management mentor, CT mentor and mentee is also remote. It is evident at a structural level prior to the placement and if there are issues during the placement.

**Remote involvement**

At structural level, the placement allocation system in Scotland requires schools to indicate to their local authorities if they are able and/or willing to mentor student teachers and at what stages. This information is then relayed to the placement system, which allocates students to local authorities based on the information provided by universities about the school placements required. At this stage each school is advised of students to be mentored during the school year according to the information originally provided to the local authority. The school management
member of staff responsible for mentoring then allocates a class teacher mentor to
the student. Responsibility for this allocation of CT mentors was recognised in SMT
mentor responses. They saw one of their roles as selecting CT mentors who they felt
could support a student teacher appropriately. They used adjectives such as ‘good’
and ‘quality’ to describe the teaching ability of such CT mentors. SMTE noted the
importance of teaching ability but also talked about being allocated a student as
confidence building and empowering for qualified teachers.

I wouldn’t ever give a member a’ staff a student who wasn’t going to be able
to fulfil the requirements for meeting that students needs…I need to be
confident that they have got a quality member of staff…They need to
understand that process of learning and teaching for them to be able to
support a student…And for some members a’ staff it’s actually to boost their
own confidence…it’s very rarely in schools that class teachers get a chance to
sit back and actually observe their class being taught by somebody else. And
what they…get from that is the fact that actually I do know what I’m talking
about… It’s empowering for them because it’s an acknowledgement that they
do know their job. SMTE

SMT mentors also felt that CT mentors were mainly responsible for mentoring the
student teacher during the placement experience. Similar to the views of LA mentors
about their role with inductees, they saw themselves as having an indirect role with
student teachers, as being in a more supportive role as a secondary mentor and
focused predominantly on professional elements. However, SMT mentors also
identified a personal element, being approachable, as a characteristic of an effective
mentor in terms of making the mentee feel that he/she could go and talk to the SMT
mentor if required. Responses mainly focused on providing a second level of mentor
support for the CT mentor and mentee. For example, with regard to her role SMTF
remarked that she would enter into professional dialogue with the CT mentor about
the mentee’s progress. SMTC understood her role as making sure the mentee had
everything required on a practical level and that she/he felt welcome in the school
thereby recognising both professional and personal elements of her role. SMTB
noted that having a class teacher as the primary mentor was her own experience of
being mentored but that she was available and approachable. She further commented
that support for the mentee should also come from the university.
...it’s the responsibility of the class teacher to be mentoring and supporting the student because that’s why that student’s been placed in the class, to gain advice and to gain support...that was my experience...when I was learning my job all those years ago, the headteacher didn’t pop along and offer me advice and support...I would have expected to get quite a lot of support as well from university...I’m in the staffroom every play time and lunchtime. So I am there and approachable. SMTB

University support was also a factor in terms of providing guidance at school level for mentoring. SMT mentors noted that there were no formal school policy or guidance on the mentoring process. University placement guidelines were used with regard to understanding expectations of student teachers on particular placements and professional dialogue between colleagues about mentoring strategies.

CT mentors noted that SMT mentors had indirect, ad hoc, informal involvement with mentees stating that interactions occurred in the staffroom or in class if they were covering for the class teacher for any reason. CTA and CTF recounted that the SMT mentor had carried out an observation of the mentee for quality assurance purposes. Within the context of this study this was not commonplace, SMT mentors preferring to rely on the judgement of the CT mentor.

Mentees made specific mention of school management level involvement in their mentoring as being focused more on wider, professional aspects of education as opposed to daily classroom teaching practice. STD stated that broader educational topics such as school ethos, having a professional attitude, the importance of working collegiately and its requisite skills were the focus of any interactions with the SMT mentor. Similarly, parental expectations and the role of the community were significant aspects of the school STE was placed in so were a key concern of the management staff. STC was an exception to this wider educational focus as she also consulted the SMT mentor for specific advice on classroom teaching practice because she felt no mentoring was taking place from the CT mentor in that she was not being offered much constructive feedback.

The depute head was in charge of students and probationers in the school...I would actually go in early in the morning and chap her door on the way past
and ask her, ‘how should I do this’. Because she was quite good at giving you advice…Cause I felt like if I asked (CT mentor’s name), while she would be nice about it, there would be nothing constructive that I could…build on. **STC**

This predominant focus on wider, professional educational elements remarked on by mentees was also evident in SMT mentor responses about effective characteristics of SMT mentors and regarding the benefits of having an SMT mentor for mentees. Having a sound knowledge and understanding of education and remaining up to date was viewed as an effective characteristic of an SMT mentor. SMTF noted this aspect alongside knowing about educational theory in the context of being able to support both mentee and CT mentor. In addition, she remarked that being approachable was significant in building relationships with both parties. In terms of the benefits for mentees of having a SMT mentor, having someone else to talk to about learning and teaching outwith the classroom context was viewed as providing an alternative, wider perspective.

The experience of the headteacher is going to be different from the experience of a class teacher…the teacher is doing the day-to-day practice but I think as a leader in a school you have got to be able to link that practice to the big picture. It has got to link…with local and national priorities and I think you have got to be able to put that across. **SMTF**

**Involvement if issues**

Similar to LA mentor and university involvement, a further dimension of SMT mentors’ remote participation in mentoring student teachers was evident in that they would become involved if there were issues with the mentee’s teaching progress. SMT mentors saw this kind of secondary support of the CT mentor/mentee relationship as a benefit for CT mentors in terms of offering an alternative opinion or strategies.

If the student’s doing really well and…I have put…the student into a class where I have confidence in the teacher and the teacher is confident that the student’s doing well then I actually don’t see a role for me…My role would only come into play…if there were any issues and the class teacher needed a sounding board to discuss some concerns that were coming to light. **SMTB**
SMT mentors maintained that they would speak to the CT mentor, and also the mentee if appropriate, when difficulties arose in order to assist the mentee to progress. SMTE further noted that it was important to do this through dialogue to support the CT mentor rather than take over mentoring.

I would do that (support) with a conversation with the class teacher…to make sure that I wasn’t looking to be taking over because that would be inappropriate to do because…this is about a discussion with a class teacher about mentoring a student. So in that respect it would be that I was then supporting the class teacher to move that student on if they were not able to do that. SMTE

SMT mentors also expressed that the multiple demands of their management role was a barrier to being directly involved with mentees as it meant time was usually in deficit. SMTB remarked that being allocated funding when mentoring a student teacher would facilitate more direct involvement.

… it’s time…give us a budget. We’re having…a student teacher. We want this student teacher to have the best possible experience in your school…you could use the budget perhaps to do what you feel would be best for that student. It might be to release me from a key task…that would mean that I can use that time…to actually have a discussion and dialogue with the student. SMTB

Class Teacher Mentor/Mentee Relationship

Participants were asked a variety of questions about mentoring a student primary teacher on placement with regard to whom it involved, its forms, benefits, and the roles, characteristics and styles of mentors and mentees. Findings indicate that they understood it as involving a variety of parties, such as pupils, other teachers, management staff (Headteacher, Depute Headteacher, Principal Teacher), learning assistants, in an ad hoc, informal way but recognised the CT mentor as being the main mentor. This is, in part, facilitated by the structure of the mentoring system in Scottish primary schools where students are placed in one class with one or two class teachers for each placement undertaken. CTC viewed her role as the key person the student goes to for advice. A similar view was expressed by STB who also noted the
CT mentor’s support as a key element in terms of providing time and documents that would support her planning. Both these views are indicative of the mentoring process being understood as focused on the mentee developing practical teaching skills. Drawing on data, the CT mentor/mentee relationship is understood as a close one based around professional and personal dimensions. Within this close working relationship, further understandings of the mentoring process emerge in terms of collaboration and with regard to different conceptions of power. These themes and sub-themes are summarised in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Class Teacher Mentor/Mentee Relationship

Personal and professional dimensions

Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) theory of mentoring work is employed as an analytical framework for this section. It is a useful framework for analysis in conjunction with subsequent models such as that of Kwan and Lopez-Real’s (2005) model of pragmatic, managerial and interpersonal elements, and Ambrosetti et al.’s (2014) relational, developmental and contextual aspects. As outlined in chapter two, these models employ the work of Yeomans and Sampson (1994) and build on it in
different ways. The model encompasses three elements: structural, supportive and professional (*ibid*.). The supportive element is re-named as ‘personal’ as participants in this study used the term ‘support’ with regard to both professional aspects of teaching as well as personal/pastoral care dimensions. In addition, given that this dimension is described as involving mentor roles such as being a friend and/or counselor who exhibits interpersonal skills like empathy and encouragement (*ibid*.), this label seems apposite. Across interviews one and two participants were asked variety of questions about mentoring to ascertain their understandings. Questions about who the process involved, mentor and mentee roles in conversations and characteristics of an effective mentoring relationship were repeated in interview two in order to identify dominant understandings that could be attributed to being ‘in situ’ within this particular mentoring relationship as opposed to those constructed/co-constructed from prior experiences.

Responses about mentoring style indicated that both CT mentor and mentees recognised a personal dimension. CTB suggested that there should be friendship and trust in the relationship. These elements were also evident in the response of STB in terms of making it easier to approach the CT mentor about issues and ask questions. CTB further indicated that putting the mentee at ease was important.

> I think you have to develop…a sort of friendship, trust. And especially…with (participant name)…who was extremely nervous when she came to me at first…I think that it’s important to try to make her feel…at ease. So there has to be a wee bit of a personal rapport between you. **CTB**

> I think there has to be an element of friendship. You’re in somebody’s classroom…you’re working alongside them daily. And I felt I could go up and… at the end of the first day, she was…‘so how was it’?...I said, ‘I’m absolutely shattered’! And…she just came over and gave me a hug…that’s important to me…it makes her more approachable…you could express your concerns…it makes it a lot easier if we have to go up and speak and ask things. **STB**

However, this recognition of personal elements by CT mentors and mentees was not substantively evident across their other responses about the mentoring process. Both within and cross-case analyses indicate responses were primarily focused on
professional elements showing that participants’ declarative understandings differed from their empirical descriptions. This suggests that the process of explaining what is understood is complex and may be contradictory.

**Personal dimension**

Recognition of the personal dimension of mentoring was limited and narrow in range within and across cases. CT mentors and mentees acknowledged a personal element in the context of what constituted an effective mentoring relationship, and the characteristics of an effective mentor and mentee. Within case data indicates that CT mentors viewed being enthusiastic and empathy as significant mentee role whereas mentees viewed their role as focused on the professional dimension of learning to teach. Similarly, mentees saw reassurance as a role of the mentor whereas CT mentor responses were about the professional dimension of mentoring. Neither CT mentors, nor mentees recognised any personal dimension with regard to mentor and mentee roles in mentoring conversations, or benefits of the mentoring process for mentors or mentees. Within and cross-case data is summarised in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Personal Dimension**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor role</th>
<th>Class teacher mentors</th>
<th>Mentees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentee role</td>
<td>being enthusiastic, empathy: recognising that everyone makes mistakes</td>
<td>reassuring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Characteristics of effective mentor</td>
<td>reassuring, empathy: recognising all make mistakes</td>
<td>being approachable, empathy: recognising all make mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Characteristics of effective mentee</td>
<td>being open to constructive criticism</td>
<td>being open to constructive criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Characteristics of effective mentoring relationship</td>
<td>being personal trust getting on</td>
<td>being personal trust getting on</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>being supportive (care; value; being appreciated)</td>
<td>being supportive (care; value; being appreciated)</td>
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*Cross-case commonalities*
Cross-case commonalities were evident regarding characteristics of an effective mentor, mentee and of an effective mentoring relationship. Responses about effective mentor characteristics evidence empathy, specifically recognition that everyone makes mistakes, as a key aspect. CTC suggested that reassurance is important as all teachers make errors, not just student teachers. STC expressed the view that this acknowledgement of the fallibility of all teachers would be something she would expect of her mentor.

I think you have to reassure them that everybody gets it wrong. Certainly I’ve already told (participant name) that there are days where sometimes I think ‘oh that didn’t go very well, I’ll not do that again’. And that’s something that you have to get used to as a teacher…sharing…bad experiences with them makes them feel better cause they realise ‘oh right I’m not the only person who gets it wrong’. CTC

I would expect them to say ‘do you know what, these days happen and it happens to us all. But you’re a professional. It’s what you’re paid to do’. STC

In terms of the characteristics of an effective mentoring relationship, getting along with each other and trust were noted as important. With regard to getting along, CT mentors as approachable and positive was noted as significant as well as mentees being willing to engage in the process of learning to teach. CTB felt that the mentee being happy and learning assisted in them having a good relationship. This exemplifies a link between personal and professional dimensions.

I think…she’s made it clear that…she’s happy to be with me and…she’s learning a lot from me. And…that helps towards…the way that we feel about each other…if she was…criticising or, or not happy with what I was doing then I don’t suppose we would have such a good relationship with each other. CTB

STD also noted this connection in her reflection that having a good friendship based on talking about more that just classroom practice helped the relationship to become an honest one where she felt more able and comfortable to ask the CT mentor for help.
… it can’t always be all business and all work … It is nice to find out more about the person and I think you become more honest with each other as well and you don’t hold back and say things you might not have said otherwise…having an actual friendship with your teacher just makes everything more comfortable. The atmosphere is nicer and you are more willing to just go and say to them ‘I have a problem with this, can you help me with that?’.”  

STD

Trust was seen as building up over time and facilitated by getting to know each other, which, in turn, fostered the development of positive, open communication. CTA felt that becoming more closely acquainted had helped form a bond of trust. STB noted trust in terms of feeling that the mentor was communicating openly rather than making fun of her covertly.

I suppose this comes under trust, knowing they are not going to laugh at you and talk about you behind your back. Obviously people do but I’d want them …even if it is something that is negative in the right sense, that they would be able to say that to my face… STB

Professional dimension

Across CT mentor and mentee cases the professional dimension was significantly more evident than personal elements. Both within and cross-case analyses indicate responses were focused on professional elements regarding mentor and mentee roles, their roles within mentoring conversations, characteristics of effective mentors and mentees, and of an effective mentoring relationship. No ‘in situ’ difference regarding the nature of responses was evident when questions were repeated in interview two about roles within mentoring conversations and characteristics of an effective mentoring relationship. However, the extent of responses was more specific in places as participants were able to use the current mentoring experience to exemplify. This lack of ‘in situ’ difference suggests that, within the context of the existent placement context, participants were assimilating understandings constructed and co-constructed through previous experiences. Within this study this was the case for the majority of participants. Within and cross-case data is summarised in Table 4.2.
<table>
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<th>Table 4.2: Professional Dimension</th>
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<td><strong>Mentor role</strong></td>
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Both CT mentors and mentees recognised *learning* as a key element of the role of the mentee. CT mentors placed importance on mentees being keen and committed to learn a variety of aspects about classroom practice. CTE noted learning about a variety of teaching practices and about working collegiately in particular.

To join in collegiate sessions and actually learn what it is like in a school…To look at the different ways classrooms can be organised as well. To look at how teachers cope with mixed abilities. How do you organise group work? How do you organise your resources? How do you organise your support staff? And learning all a’ those practical things that actually make a working classroom work effectively. CTE

Mentees’ focus was on learning as much as possible during their placement. STA placed particular importance on being seen to be willing to learn in her role as a student teacher. STC talked in more specific terms about the role of the student as a proactive one making effective use of the mentor to foster development of teaching practices.

I think you can’t just go in and think that you’re going to be told how to do everything and gonnae be spoon-fed…I think it’s up to you as the mentee to go in and use your mentor effectively to allow your skills to develop…That’s what you’re there to do, we’re beginners. You know, we’re just learning. STC

*Having practical knowledge* was viewed by CT mentors and mentees as one characteristic of an effective mentor. This knowledge encompassed curriculum and practical learning and teaching skills. STF placed particular importance on different pedagogies, assessment and behaviour management. STB noted that her CT mentor
was very informed on recent curriculum developments and practices. She linked this
to the CT mentor’s years of teaching experience but also that she consciously kept
herself up-to-date. CT mentors also placed importance on being organised, for
example, with regard to planning, the use of classroom assistants and transitions.
CTC viewed the practice of teaching as more important than content knowledge as
topics vary from year to year. This emphasis was seen as especially important for
mentees.

Well I think in terms of that you need to obviously have a good knowledge of
what you’re teaching. But more…a good knowledge of teaching methods
and how things can be taught rather than actually knowing everything about
the subject you are doing. Cause obviously in the primary you might be
doing Bruce and Wallace this year. You might be doing the…world war is
another year…But I think knowledge of the actual process of teaching is
probably more important, for a student anyway.  CTC

One characteristic of an effective mentee was noted as being able to engage in self-
evaluation about teaching episodes. Mentees talked about the need to evaluate their
practice in terms of what went well and what required attention. CT mentors also
noted this aspect and further viewed it as significant in terms of fostering
professional learning. CTE highlighted the importance of considering reasons
behind certain outcomes and of thinking about next steps in their teaching practice.

I think if they can actually really focus on their own practice and actually say,
pick out why something didn’t go well…So they need to be able to actually
look at a lesson or a group of lessons and…evaluate themselves, see if they
can come up with a way forward.  CTE

*Professional trust* was understood as a key aspect with regard to characteristics of an
effective mentoring relationship. CT mentors noted that trust was built up over time
and talked specifically about the importance of trusting the mentee with confidential
information as well as the mentee trusting the advice of the mentor. Trust as mutual
was viewed as important. This was also the case with mentees who maintained that
trusting the advice and experience of mentors was significant as well as being trusted
to be working within the class and with teaching resources. CTA, CTD and STD
described trusting the mentee with confidential information about the class. CTD
also talked about the mentee trusting in the advice offered, and being trusted to be left on her own in charge of the learning and class management of the class. STD noted being trusted to be in the class and having mutual trust with regard to each other’s resources.

I think trust…from a professional point of view, a lot of things you, you have to tell your mentee as a student in your class. But then I think they have to trust you. That you know what you’re doing and you’re…gonna do the best for them…that whatever you’re saying…will work. And I think we have to then trust them because we’re leaving them with our class…they’re gonnae monitor things and keep the same level of discipline up and the same level of expectations of learning. CTD

…she must have trusted me to be able to be in her class and look through the files for the kids and…she did leave me with her computer and all of her stuff…and obviously I trusted her with my folder every day. STD

As noted previously, personal trust was linked to professional trust in terms of progressively building up a relationship of trust on a personal level, which then facilitated professional trust. For example, CTE talked about trust building up by getting to know each other through conversations and that the importance of both parties feeling able to communicate openly was facilitated by mentors showing their aim was to help mentees learn rather than judge them. STF felt that working together consistently fostered a trusting relationship, which helped her to trust in the advice offered based on her mentor’s knowledge and experience of teaching.

Linked to self-evaluation, asking questions was cited as a significant role of the mentee within mentoring conversations. CT mentors viewed mentees asking questions based on self-evaluations about lessons they had taught as important. This fostered clarity about what kind of advice they required and showed that they could think for themselves. The view of the mentee as proactive was again evident. CTC maintained that asking questions showed that mentees were thinking independently as opposed to always being directed. CTF commented on the quantity and types of questions being asked. A vast number of both literal questions, those based on fact-finding, and inferential ones, such as those concerned with more complex ideas and reasoning (Brown and Wragg, 1993), were evident. As the placement moved on the
mentee became more independent in putting forward her ideas and asking for an opinion showing progression in learning.

She…asked lots and lots and lots of questions but completely relevant things…A lot of why questions…She was very, very knowledgeable about the theory behind why things…were happening…To begin with it was all ‘how should I do this? What should we do next? How should I teach this?’ But by the end of it, it was more looking for reassurance of ‘this is my idea, what do you think…which was great because you could really see the progression then. **CTF**

Related to the notions of quantity and type of question, the majority of mentees focused more on asking lots of fact finding ‘how to’ questions about classroom practice. **STC** said that she questioned a number of different staff within the school about how to improve her teaching practice. In contrast to previous views about thinking for oneself and becoming independent, **STA** liked that the mentor could tell her how best to teach.

…she did say I asked a lot a’ questions but she said that was a good thing…I like the fact that she was so knowledgeable and could…tell me like exact answers for things…And obviously by asking her, she’d be able to tell me the way that she finds best. **STA**

Linked to the view of asking questions as a key role for the mentee within mentoring conversations, **CT** mentors and mentees cited *listening* as a key role of the mentor in such conversations. Responses indicate that they are talking particularly about listening in order to respond. This manifested itself in answering questions, giving advice and feedback as well as taking account of the views and needs of the mentee. Listening in this respect is more specific and purposeful because listening, as a general concept, does not necessarily entail offering a response (Burleson, 2011). This more specific and purposeful conception is appropriate for the type of listening evident here. **STA** talked about the mentor being a good listener if she/he thought about what the mentee had said and responded to try and help. **CTA** expressed the view of needing to listen, of being aware of mentee needs and then responding accordingly. This expression of need adds a further dimension in that it suggests the feeling of having a professional responsibility to the mentee.
I think if your student…has got questions you need to be able to listen to your student’s needs and be able to answer those questions and give help where it’s needed.  

**Implicit collaboration**

As discussed in the previous section, the mentoring process is understood as involving both personal and professional dimensions. Within these dimensions collaboration emerges. Collaboration is defined in the broad sense of the act of working together to achieve something (Collins, 2015). CT mentor and mentee responses indicate that collaborative practices are evident but in an implicit sense. With regard to the role of the mentee, only half of CT mentors and mentees noted collaborating explicitly so this was not viewed as a majority finding. Within and cross-case data is summarised in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Implicit Collaboration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class teacher mentors</th>
<th>Mentees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forms taken by mentoring process</strong></td>
<td>having discussions (professional sense)</td>
<td>having discussions (professional sense)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>making joint decisions re: topics of discussions</td>
<td>making joint decisions re: topics of discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>team teaching</td>
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<td>having a balance of directive and non-directive</td>
<td>having a balance of directive and non-directive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discussing the lesson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor role</strong></td>
<td>discussing the lesson</td>
<td>reassuring</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>supporting (professional and personal senses)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sharing ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>being positive</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>guiding</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>questioning re: self-evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>building confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentee role</strong></td>
<td>being open to constructive dialogue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mentor role in mentoring conversations</strong></td>
<td>encouraging self-evaluation</td>
<td>encouraging self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>listening in order to respond guiding</td>
<td>listening in order to respond guiding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encouraging the student to lead conversations</td>
<td>encouraging student to think</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentee role in mentoring conversations</th>
<th>supporting positively (professional sense)</th>
<th>asking questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of effective mentor</td>
<td>reassuring</td>
<td>being approachable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of effective mentee</td>
<td>being open to constructive criticism</td>
<td>being open to constructive criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>communicating with mentor and others</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>being involved with wider school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of effective mentoring relationship</td>
<td>being trust (personal and professional)</td>
<td>being trust (personal and professional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of mentoring for the mentor</td>
<td>learning from the student</td>
<td>learning from the student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefits of mentoring for the mentee</td>
<td>asking questions/for help</td>
<td>asking questions/for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>being part of an organisation</td>
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</table>

*Cross-case commonalities*

With regard to collaboration as implicit, when asked a number of questions about the forms taken by the mentoring process in the current context, CT mentors and mentees noted *having discussions* as a central element. These took place before and after teaching episodes and were both formal and informal. Topics focused on the mentee learning to teach in their emphasis on aspects such as planning and elements of the mentee’s teaching practice. CT mentors specifically talked about topics based around lessons and associated resources. Mentees noted aspects such as discussions about preparation for the following day and around any questions/issues that had arisen. CT mentor and mentee cases indicated that both sides instigated discussion topics.

I think they just came about because (participant’s name) asked or maybe it was something that had come up if I’d looked at her folder. Or something that I thought of. **CTD**

…a kind of mixture between the two of us but it was mostly situations that would arise during teaching or during the class time, even after school. And she would bring things up as well ‘I noticed you did this, you could have
done that better by doing …’ or ‘how do you think you could have done that better’. So it was both of us really. STA

**Encouraging self-evaluation** was viewed as one role of the mentor within mentoring conversations. CT mentors viewed this as important in getting mentees to think independently as a central skill in the reflective practice required of teachers. In addition, given that mentees tended to be quite harsh in their self-evaluations, it fostered opportunities to encourage mentees to focus on strengths as well as development points. CTE noted self-evaluation in terms of assisting the mentee to engage in balanced reflection as well as specifying next steps in her teaching and for the children’s learning.

To help her reflect on what had gone well. What hadn’t gone so well and maybe to help her to identify next steps as well as for the children so that she could then think ‘ok, that lesson, didn’t go well, why didn’t it go well?...So to really help her reflect and evaluate her practice more than anything else. And then look at how she could develop that further. CTE

Mentees saw being encouraged to self-evaluate as significant in developing abilities to think for themselves in order to progress in their teaching practice. STB recognised that the CT mentor was encouraging her to think about her teaching practice in relation to her own experiences and knowledge.

…she would get me to think about it so I came up with an answer and she would say ‘yes’ or ‘no, have you thought about this’. Getting you to enquire and think about your own experience and your own knowledge and how you can put that into practice. STB

**Being open to constructive criticism** was one characteristic of an effective mentee noted. Communication between CT mentor and mentee was seen as essential in facilitating mentees being receptive to such feedback and for mentors to be able to provide it. Both cases focused on areas for development when talking about constructive criticism. Mentees maintained that such feedback helped them to identify development areas to foster progression in their learning.
I don’t think you can develop as a teacher without it. Nobody is going to be able to walk into a classroom and be this great…I think you need…the (constructive criticism) or how can you move on from your ideals? **STC**

STA noted that sometimes mentors evaluated lessons differently than mentees. The inference here is that mentors know best rather than the perspective of knowing ‘differently’. CT mentors noted the importance of constructive criticism in mentee progression and further stated that mentees should ask for help when required within this process. The difficulty in being receptive to constructive criticism was also acknowledged.

**Being able to take on constructive criticism from a mentor…can sometimes cause… not friction but stand offish … It is an openness to take on feedback from someone with more experience and the advice from them…they have to be able to take constructive criticism which is difficult for anybody. Nobody likes it. **CTF**

Following on from CT mentors’ comments on the importance of mentees asking for help as part of the self-evaluation process, *asking for help* was also seen as a specific benefit of mentoring for mentees. Linked to asking questions generally, CT mentors saw it as important that mentees could go to them and ask for help. CTA further acknowledged, as with constructive criticism, that asking for help could be difficult for some mentees for a variety of reasons.

**I think because you know your mentor’s job is to go to them for help and advice, it makes it easier for people to ask for help and advice…Some people just really hate asking for help…I think having experience of asking your mentor for advice should help you to ask other people in the future…probably some people have a bit of…a pride issue…they might want to think they can do it on their own, be independent. I think some people sort of feel like a failure if they have to ask for a bit of help. **CTA**

Mentees also linked asking for help to asking questions generally and felt it was important seek assistance in order to have a successful placement experience. Feeling at ease and reassured that the mentor was there to help were noted as significant. STD talked about being proactive before asking for help to show
teaching capacity and avoid appearing as expecting to be ‘spoon fed’. In formulating these ideas independently she then sought her CT mentor’s approval.

I was able to ask for help…I would come up with my own ideas but I would ask her if she thought it was OK. I wouldn’t have felt that it was appropriate to just ask for help to be handed to me…Because you want to show that you are not totally incapable and that although maybe you are not as good as she is, you don’t want to seem totally out with your depth. I wanted her to know that I could do some things by myself. **STD**

**Power**

In opposition to the notions of explicit and implicit collaboration, conceptions of power emerged from participants’ understanding of mentoring. These are interpreted as a traditional opposition (duality), where one party is perceived as powerful and one as powerless, and as in a more Foucauldian ‘flux’ form where no one person is viewed as owning power, rather actors can be both powerful and powerless in the same context (Foucault, 1979). Another dimension emerges in the form of power/collaboration co-existence where conceptions of power are evident within collaborative practices. Within and cross-case data for power elements is summarised in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Power**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms taken by mentoring process</th>
<th>Class teacher mentors</th>
<th>Mentees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>observing/being observed giving feedback on next steps</td>
<td>being directive having a balance of directive and non-directive</td>
<td>being directive having a balance of directive and non-directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring style</td>
<td>giving feedback observing formally and informally giving ideas modelling</td>
<td>giving constructive feedback observing/being observed questioning re: self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor role</td>
<td>learning meeting university expectations</td>
<td>learning observing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentee role</td>
<td>giving advice/feedback leading</td>
<td>giving feedback asking questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor role in mentoring conversations</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Mentee role in mentoring conversations

- asking questions
- feeling need to be compliant
- feeling unable to disagree

Characteristics of effective mentor

- having practical knowledge
- giving advice/feedback
- being knowledgeable re: university documents/input

Characteristics of effective mentee

- learning

Benefits of mentoring for the mentor

- learning from the student making mentor reflect on own practice

Benefits of mentoring for the mentee

- asking questions/for help getting practical experience
- asking questions/for help getting constructive experience

*Cross-case commonalities

Power as duality

An understanding of CT mentors in positions of power and mentees as powerless was evident in the data. With reference to mentoring styles, participants identified that those of CT mentors encompassed a directive element. CT mentors noted that mentees require a lot of guidance as they are learning to teach. CTB felt that student teachers could not be left to their own devices. CTD noted that the class was her responsibility so she had to retain control over learning and behaviour. In addition, CT mentors’ style of mentoring was seen as dependent on the mentee’s teaching confidence and competence. CTB noted that her mentoring style differed according the capacity and character of the mentee but also felt that they should be specifically positioned as learners.

Well I’d probably be more inclined to…be more directive…so that the student would realise…that they don’t actually know it all. They have to learn…you would be slightly different depending on the ability and character of the person that you’re the tutor for… some would need a lot more help than others. **CTB**
Responses indicate that as mentee competence improved, mentor confidence increased and so mentoring styles became less directive. The importance of giving mentees the freedom to try things out as part of their learning was acknowledged and that making mistakes was a key aspect of this process. STE noted her CT mentor as being more directive at the beginning of the placement as she was in the process of ascertaining her mentee’s teaching capacity. This decreased as she developed more confidence in the mentee’s abilities. STE linked this to being trusted in a professional sense.

And I was…growing in my confidence and getting to know the class better, she could sorta give me free reign cause I think for the first two weeks she was never away fae my side unless she had to be. And then I think at one point she said, ‘right, och I’m gonnae leave you cause I know you’re fine’…initially it was ‘right what you doing, show me…I’d be discussing it wi’ her rather than labouring over everything that I’ve got and every resource I’m gonnae use. There was an element a’ trust that came in. STE

Mentors giving feedback was understood as a key element in the forms taken by the mentoring process, role of the mentor generally and within mentoring conversations. With regard to forms of mentoring, CT mentors talked about discussing strengths and development points with the mentee then giving feedback on next steps for teaching in future lessons. Mentees noted getting feedback on lesson content and pedagogy. Having consistent access to their CT mentors was also viewed as important. STB described the CT mentor as observing lessons and giving constructive feedback on positive aspects as well as things to work on.

…and she would observe and she would give constructive feedback. And…she…pointed me in the right direction. She told me what was good. She said areas to work on which I thought was…really good. STB

Providing feedback was also understood as part of the mentor’s role. A focus on strengths as well as areas for development was again noted. This is in opposition to descriptions of a characteristic of an effective mentee as being open to constructive criticism, cited in the previous section, where comments focused of aspects for improvement. STC maintained that feedback was a main component in how mentors
can support mentees through giving positive points and aspects for development. She felt some were afraid to highlight areas for improvement but stressed that mentees needed that feedback in order to progress. CTF used a formative assessment technique (stars and wishes) after lessons to balance feedback given and to regulate the amount for mentees to think about. Ideally, feeding back took place right away in order that mentees did not over focus on negative aspects.

I tend to do two stars and a wish for individual lessons. They cannot improve everything right away. It is a long slow process…Once they have finished teaching, I try to meet immediately after they have done a direct teach, so that we can get immediate feedback because once you have had time to self-reflect on it you tend to think ‘I didnae do that. I could have done that better’. CTF

Within mentoring conversations, giving feedback was described by CT mentors as more balanced towards ways to improve rather than positive aspects. CTA saw one of her roles as giving information based on her own experiences about how to address certain aspects so the mentee could use it in her own practice. CTE felt that it was also important to listen to the mentee’s views, however, if she considered what the mentee was suggesting to be inappropriate, she would direct her towards a different approach based on her own teaching experiences. She further noted that the mentee should not take this personally. STE stated that her she received a lot of feedback, mainly verbal but written when required, and that her CT mentor did focus on strengths as well as development points to help her remain realistic in terms of expectations of herself.

…she was really…good at pointing out what was going well. And she was very…good at saying to me…‘you know, you need to realise where you are’…she thought that I had higher expectations for myself and I was hard on myself…And when I took her advice on board, she would say to me ‘oh I see the difference…which was really good because, ‘oh I’ve learnt something new… STE

CT mentors thought that mentees felt an expectation of compliance within mentoring conversations because the mentor had more teaching experience and the mentees
were positioned as learners. CTA linked this expectation to the notion of respect and to requiring the mentor’s time.

I think most students would feel the need to be compliant…it’s…a matter of respect really. I think they respect…the mentor because they know they’ve been in the job and they’ve had the experience. And…most mentees…would think they’re still in a learning position and that they’ve been given this opportunity to come into someone else’s class and they’re taking up that person’s time. CTA

CTE noted that mentors were different in that some expected mentees to be compliant because they liked things to be done their way in class whereas others were more open to mentees trying out new things and to dialogue about it. Mentees noted that they felt the need to be compliant in mentoring conversations and that they could not communicate differences in opinion due to the mentor being more experienced. STA further remarked that, due to her mentor’s experience, she did not feel able to disagree if the opportunity arose but would ask questions in a respectful manner. In such a situation reading on the topic helped her to view it as a difference of opinion rather than right or wrong.

Sometimes you just felt a bit like, ‘well you are the teacher…you have been doing this for so long…I’m just starting out’…you don’t really feel in the position to disagree…And then reading up on it, you realise that it, it’s just a difference a’ opinion…sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t…I wouldn’t turn round and be like ‘no I dinnae agree wi’ that’. But just…question it…without being disrespectful obviously. Cause at the end of the day she’s been a teacher for my whole life... STA

Power as ‘flux’

Building on power as duality, an alternative conception is that of power as ‘flux’ where participants may be interpreted as being both powerful and powerless in the same context (Foucault, 1979). Participants’ understandings of learning and observation are used as illustrations.

With regard to learning, mentees are positioned as being both learners and being learned from, powerless and powerful respectively. To exemplify, regarding
characteristics of an effective mentee, mentees are positioned as powerless in the role of learners in the classroom of a more experienced teacher. A willingness to learn by trying out new things was viewed as vital by CT mentors. CTE noted that mentees need to learn how to improve through failure but should not take such experiences personally. In addition, CTF maintained that taking ownership of learning was important. Mentees noted being open to new ways of teaching and guidance from mentors as key characteristics of an effective mentee. STB remarked on learning as happening progressively and the importance of having your own ‘knowledge’ but being open to other ideas. In addition, learning was viewed in the realms of advance preparation for being in class.

You have to learn, and I think it is something you acquire over time. The most important thing is obviously have the knowledge…about your role as a teacher but being open to observe, to get instruction, to take things in that are going on around you rather than having the mind-set ‘I am going to do this my way’…You have got to put the background work in before you go into the class….and if you don’t know something jolly well go and find out about it. **STB**

In opposition to the above, mentees are positioned as powerful in responses about the benefits of mentoring for mentors. They are viewed as being learned from and as making mentors reflect more on their own practice. CT mentors viewed mentees as sources of learning on different aspects of teaching, such as curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, based on their university learning and other teaching experiences. CTF remarked that she was aiming to improve her own teaching by observing and talking to the mentee.

I like the idea of they are coming out with all these brand new ideas…Being able to use some of the ideas that they are coming in with. New behaviour strategies that might be coming up. New formative assessment ones… really I am looking to improve my practice by taking on anything that I have learned from watching the student teach or professional dialogue that we have together… **CTF**

Mentees thought that they could bring new ideas for curriculum and teaching strategies if mentors were receptive to learning from them. STA noted that mentors
may be encouraged to look at things differently rather than being stuck in a rut of the same practices.

I think quite often student teachers cause they’re just learning everything…can bring new things to the classroom. Cause if you’ve been doing something for a while…some people kinda get stuck in their way a’ doing things. So having like a fresh eye on it kinda thing can help inject a wee bit a’ life into it. …I feel sometimes that like student teachers have a lot a’ ideas…like I said to her. She was like ‘oh I never thought about doing that’. So I think they can kinda learn from us as well. **STA**

Mentees are also in a position of power in that their presence in class makes the mentor reflect on their own practice more than usual. CT mentors talked about seeing themselves as role models for mentees so felt it was important to think about their teaching practices carefully. CTD explained that it made her consider not just what she did in class but why. In terms of professional learning, CTF noted that this heightened reflection could highlight areas for development in her own practice. Mentees felt that having responsibility for a student teacher made CT mentors think about their own practice in more detail and to question it. STA remarked that this depth of self-evaluation might not be a usual occurrence given the demands of daily classroom practice. However, by engaging in more in depth reflection STC noted that CT mentors could be learning from the mentee.

This notion of power as ‘flux’ is further illustrated through the example of observation. With reference to the forms taken by the mentoring process, CT mentors understood themselves as both the observer and the observed thus fostering notions of being powerful and powerless. CT mentors can be viewed as powerful in observing the mentee as their role is that of the ‘expert’. However, they may also be powerless as can be learning from the student as noted in previous examples. This observation was both formal and informal: formal where advanced notice was given and formal observation notes taken; informal where the CT mentor was observing inconspicuously while engaged in other activities. CT mentors viewed monitoring mentee progress through observing their lessons and feeding back on strengths and
areas for development as a key component of observing. CTA viewed this as the main function of a mentor.

I have watched (participant’s name) teach and have taken groups while (participant’s name) is teaching full time… in order to be able to discuss her teaching with her so that we can both identify her strengths and then areas for development as well. That’s our main role. CTA

Mentees saw one role of a mentor as observing but also of being observed. In being observed mentors are powerful in their role as the ‘expert’ but also powerless in that they are under critique by the mentee. As noted previously, mentees felt the need to be compliant but did have their own opinions even though they felt unable to communicate them. With regard to the role of a CT mentor as being observed, mentees noted that they were learning from these observations. STF noted that it might be the case of not always agreeing with what was seen but that it was important to seek guidance from mentors. The importance of, and progression gained, from observing a CT mentor in terms of the teaching strategies and presence were remarked on specifically by STC.

To be able to watch a mentor and learn from, I mean they…have developed their skill over years…And I think if anything I learned more from a placement through observation…And when…it came to me delivering my lessons…I had picked up strategies she’d used, the way she spoke to the children, her mannerisms, the way she handled behaviour issues…my lesson was totally different than it would have been if…I hadn’t had the opportunity to watch. STC
### Collaboration/power co-existence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>observing/ being observed</td>
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<td>asking questions</td>
<td>being open to constructive</td>
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<tr>
<td>feeling need to be compliant</td>
<td>criticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>learning from the student</td>
<td>being trust (professional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>asking questions/for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>making mentor reflect on own practice</td>
<td>having a balance of directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asking questions/for help</td>
<td>non-directive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>learning from the student</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>getting practical experience</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
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<tr>
<td>being trust (personal)</td>
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<td>getting on</td>
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| Personal                                           |                                 |

### Figure 4.3: Collaboration/Power Co-existence

Figure 4.3 illustrates cross-case data on collaborative and power elements of professional and personal dimensions of mentoring evident in the data.

Personal/collaboration elements are limited with no personal/power aspects evident. However, the figure shows that collaboration and power co-exist within the professional dimension of mentoring, for example, within mentoring conversations where mentors give feedback but also encourage self-evaluation. They also co-exist with regard to certain aspects such as asking questions/for help, and having a balance of directive and non-directive mentoring styles.
As noted in the section on implicit collaboration, asking questions/for help was understood as a characteristic of an effective mentee. Descriptions of this aspect indicated a collaborative element but also one of power in terms of perceptions of what appears to be a novice/expert relationship. STA noted that sometimes mentors evaluated lessons differently than mentees. The inference here is that mentors know best rather than the perspective of knowing ‘differently’. With reference to benefits of mentoring for mentees, STD talked about being proactive before asking for help to show teaching capacity and avoid appearing as expecting to be ‘spoon fed’. In formulating these ideas independently she then sought her CT mentor’s approval, again indicative of a novice/expert relationship.

With regard to mentoring style, CT mentors noted that encouraging mentees to learn for themselves was important but being more directive when required. In this respect they saw their mentoring styles as balanced between being directive and non-directive. CTB noted that her mentoring style differed according the capacity and character of the mentee but also felt that they should be specifically positioned as learners. CTE saw herself as directive in some respects but also felt that allowing mentees opportunities to think and practice for themselves was important. She noted in particular the importance of modelling practice for the mentee but also recognised that this was not always effective. In addition, she was positive about the student taking on responsibility if able to do so as this experience gave them a sense of the reality of being a teacher.

I am probably somewhere in the middle. I think it is important to try and be a good role model yourself but to appreciate that my way doesn’t always work and it is not always the right way… if I think the student is able, I like them to do as much as they can…I am not completely directive but I will try and point in the right direction and I do think it is important…that students have the confidence and the freedom to think. CTE

Similarly, mentees saw flexibility in mentoring style as evident in that CT mentors were directive about certain things when required, for example, curriculum content and pedagogy, but were also open to mentee ideas and opinions. STF saw her mentor as adopting a balance of directive and non-directive styles. She
acknowledged there were particular aspects, such as curriculum content, where her CT mentor was less flexible but also that there was room within that area for her to make decisions for herself, for example, about learning activities and pedagogy.

Discussion

Local Authority/School Relationship

Local authority involvement

Findings suggest that the relationship between local authorities and schools in the context of ITE is barely existent. LA mentors felt they should be involved more in mentoring as a whole but viewed ITE as the responsibility of schools and universities so talked more specifically about their role in the post-ITE induction year. The attention of LA mentors on induction, as opposed to ITE, may be explained with reference to the quality assurance mechanisms employed by HMIE and the requirement of Scottish teachers to meet the SFR competency elements. The induction year focus is on progression from the SITE requirements to meeting those for the SFR. It is a high stakes environment as failure means the ruination of a future teaching career. One LA mentor made specific reference to these sorts of situations and to the importance of clearly identifying points of incompetence in relation to the SFR as well as procedures the school should follow. Given the importance of induction and the issues with resourcing identified in study findings, it may be reasonable to suggest that any time available to LA mentors was accorded to induction.

Another explanation may be with regard to the lack of attention accorded by HMIE quality assurance mechanisms to ITE. In England OFSTED inspections are carried out for both schools and ITE providers (EPPI, 2008). They emphasize rigorous quality assurance focusing on effectiveness and areas for improvement against statutory national frameworks (ibid.). In cases where organisations are judged to need improvement a further inspection is carried out with one year. Schools in
Scotland are subject to similar inspection procedures by HMIe. These inspections are focused on educational standards, quality and achievements. However, a less demanding system for those involved in ITE is evident. All teacher education programmes must be accredited through the GTCS. However, unlike the English context, teacher education providers and partners are not inspected as such: HMIe carry out ‘Aspect Reviews’ from time to time but these reviews are reported to have little impact on provision (Smith, 2010). There is no requirement to meet suggestions for improvement or change. This has a potentially detrimental effect on quality and consistency within ITE, for example, with regard to mentoring and assessment practices. The latest review of ITE (Scottish Government, 2011) specifically addresses this area in its recommendation that quality assurance mechanisms for mentoring and assessing beginner teachers should be applied through GTCS accreditation procedures and HMIe inspections to both schools and teacher education institutions.

The issue of continuity between ITE and induction emerges from the finding of ITE being viewed as the responsibility of schools and universities. Continuity cannot be assumed given the challenging nature of transition from being a student teacher to a newly qualified teacher with more extensive responsibilities (McNally, 2002). It is suggested that ITE is a basis for professional learning but is not enough on its own as pursuing a teaching career is a continuing process (Scottish Executive, 2001; Anthony et al., 2008; Menter et al., 2010). Anthony et al.’s (2008) data shows that continuity between ITE and the early years of teaching was variable between beginner teachers and their school contexts. My study findings indicate that LA mentors were not involved with mentoring student teachers, therefore, it could be suggested, compromising continuity between ITE and induction. As outlined in chapter two, in Scotland the induction year was designed as a further year of teacher education involving schools, universities and local authorities to provide structured mentoring support to foster continuity and progression in learning (McNally, 2002). Given that it is planned and regulated by local authorities, it may be suggested that facilitating continuity from ITE and beyond is an important role for them to undertake (ibid.). In 2005 local authorities were reported to be examining the issue
of continuity and working on producing policies to facilitate and inform it (HMIE, 2005). In this study, no such policies or guidance were evident in the local authorities suggesting that progression in this area has stalled.

LA mentors’ view of ITE as the responsibility of schools and universities is in opposition to partnership recommendations made in the last few reviews of ITE. The latest review (Scottish Government, 2011) echoes the recommendations of the previous one (Scottish Executive, 2005) in its comments that local authorities should be more involved in school placements in terms of organisation, mentoring and assessment (ibid.). Moran et al. (2009) report that formal partnership agreements were still deficient for reasons of lack of government resource allocation despite being recommended in a variety of reports and reviews such as the ones noted previously. This same deficiency is evident in my study findings. Similarly, LA mentors identified specific resourcing issues of lack of time and having multiple remits as prohibitive factors in their involvement in mentoring. The aforementioned findings indicate that progression in the area of promoting continuity between ITE and subsequent professional learning through partnership between schools, universities and local authorities continues to be an area that requires attention. It may be suggested that, given these parties are ‘gatekeepers’ to the profession in respect of their quality assurance role in teacher education and beyond, it is vital for them to work together to provide a consistent and coherent professional learning experience from the outset of a teaching career.

School/University Relationship

Explicit reference and theory/practice juxtapositions

Participants make explicit reference to a school/university relationship with universities being viewed as responsible for theory and schools for practice. Findings show that the roles of schools and universities are understood as different but complementary and both important. The importance of working together to foster quality teachers was recognised, however, a traditional theory/practice duality
emerged in that the university role was articulated as being focused on theoretical aspects of learning to teach whereas school placements were seen as contexts for learning about practice. This is a common conception of university and school roles and responsibilities within ITE contexts (Zeichner, 2010). As outlined in chapter two, the theory/practice duality is a complex one. However, for the purposes of this study, the terms ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are used as they are ordinarily within ITE settings (ibid.). Traditionally addressed in university settings, theory refers to the principles, concepts and ideas underpinning education activities and experiences (Eraut, 1994; Hobson, 2003; Zeichner, 2010). Practice refers to teaching activities and is the focus of school placement experiences (Allen and Wright, 2014).

In this study both contexts for learning were viewed as important in their own right. This finding is in alignment with previous literature (see, for example, Eraut, 2003; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Williams and Soares, 2010; Tang et al., 2012; Allen and Wright, 2014) and in opposition to studies where the practical element was more highly regarded (Hobson, 2003; Gleeson et al., 2015; Tang et al., 2015). In considering notions of power, according value to both contexts may be interpreted as an example of power as ‘flux’ (Foucault, 1979) in that schools can be viewed as both powerful and powerless. For example, powerless with regard to CT mentors learning from mentees’ knowledge of current practices derived from university learning, the view that the university guidelines are to be followed regarding the content and expectations of the placement experience, the university tutor visit to assess progress and, aside from that, contact being made only when there are issues with mentee progression. On the other hand, schools may be seen as powerful through findings that fostering practice is predominantly their responsibility and that practical input from school mentors is valued over that of the university tutor. Universities are widely acknowledged in the literature as being the most effective settings in which to present relevant knowledge and understanding about learning and teaching practices and promote critical analysis (see, for example, Korthagen et al., 2006; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Tang et al., 2015). Menter et al. (2010) identify this aspect as a particular strength of the Scottish ITE context, like the one in this study, through its consistent attention to the theoretical basis of education as a subject in its own right.
and to its associated disciplines as a basis for meaningful approaches to teacher professional learning. If such a foundation is not evident beginner teachers may incline towards a simplistic approach to their learning that does not recognize the complex nature of learning and teaching (Korthagen et al., 2006). It can be argued that this is an appropriate conception of the main focus of the university role given that the majority of university tutors, as in this study, are no longer practising class teachers, therefore their capacity to take responsibility for practical elements may be restricted.

In my study recognition was also evident of the two contexts being connected in the view of university learning as preparation for teaching practice in school settings, and in terms of these settings affording mentees the opportunity to enact such learning. It can be argued that this kind of connection is useful in helping to circumvent the traditional theory/practice duality and thus foster ITE experiences, which evidence a holistic, joined up approach to mentee professional learning (Dewhurst and McMurtry, 2006; Korthagen et al., 2006; Tang et al., 2015). Provision of quality mentoring is a central facet of such joined up experiences (Cheng et al., 2012). In this respect, findings further acknowledge the need for the two contexts to interlink in the view that university tutors and school mentors should be knowledgeable about both practice and theory. Allen and Wright (2014) note the significance of both school and university staff in promoting theory and practice rather than treating them as individualistic elements. However, these kinds of connections can be challenging as they involve university and school settings working together to offer learning experiences, which are connected and foster analytical forms of learning, whilst recognizing that the social settings in which learning takes place are significant in their own right (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006; Klieger and Oster-Levinz, 2015; Tang et al., 2015).

In light of the above discussion, theory/practice findings may be further explored in terms of models of partnership between universities and schools. The rhetoric on the importance of, and the need for, partnership is evident in the last three reviews of teacher education (Deloitte & Touche, 2001; Scottish Executive, 2005; Scottish
However, these relationships still tend to be led by universities (Menter et al., 2010). In this study the limited contact between university and schools, and the theory/practice duality may be indicative of partnership based on ‘complementarity’ (Furlong et al., 2000) where school placements promote contextualised knowledge and understanding and teacher educator institutions foster that which is more generalised (Smith et al., 2006). This type of partnership recognises that theory and practice both contribute to views on teaching (ibid.) and, it may be argued, is significant in the knowledge society where both theoretical and experiential evidence are important to foster learning (Hargreaves, 2003). In this respect, the university context affords tutors greater access to a broad variety of teaching strategies than is probable for a teacher, enables them to engage with research and to elucidate and investigate teaching as a practice, whereas, practising teachers have greater access to knowledge that is contextual and so essential to teaching practice (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). However, such a division of responsibility contributes to the continuation of a theory/practice duality (Klieger and Oster-Levinz, 2015).

In other respects, a more connected approach is apparent in findings as noted previously. The university involved in this study employs seconded practising teachers from local authorities to work with students and core university staff to facilitate links between theory and practice, including sharing current practice, and to help develop more collaborative mentoring practices. Similar approaches are evident in Australia and Holland through the use of ‘scholarly’ teachers (Menter et al., 2010). These connections may be interpreted as a move towards a more ‘collaborative’ partnership (Furlong et al., 2000) where the relationship between schools and teacher educator institutions is more equitable and reciprocal with both school and university involvement being recognised as advantageous (Kirk, 2000). This kind of partnership promotes a more comprehensive and consistent strategy for teacher professional learning (Menter et al., 2010) and is also in alignment with recommendations about enhanced partnership within the latest review of ITE, which include engagement in increased collaboration between school, university and local authorities regarding school placements to foster improved provision and to address
the traditional theory/practice divide (Scottish Government, 2011). In this respect, a collaborative partnership may be helpful in challenging the theory/practice divide by making clear the different and complex ways in which theory can used. In this study, different conceptualisations are not explicitly articulated but can be interpreted from participant responses: translating theory into practice and practice into theory. In the first instance theory is used as a basis for practice. The latter is when theory follows practice, is used to deconstruct it and, in some cases, reconstruct it to form new theories (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

Findings may indicate a conceptualisation of ‘theory into practice’, or ‘applied theory’ (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007), in that university learning is understood as preparation for teaching practice in schools, and in terms of these settings affording mentees the opportunity to enact such learning. These findings align with those of Tang et al. (2015) where mentees viewed school placements as a chance to put theory into practice and acknowledged the value of university based conceptual learning in developing competence in teaching. In opposition, other studies report mentees as being focused on learning to teach by enactment without consideration of theoretical aspects (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). Participants’ understanding of using the theory learned in university as a basis for practice may be indicative of an ‘understanding-oriented’ approach to learning. This is where theory is seen as informing practice and thus fostering development of effective practitioners (Hobson, 2003). In this sense the significance of understanding the wider educational context, practical techniques and the ability to apply practice in a critically considered manner is significant (ibid.). However, it is important to recognise that use of theory may be selective as mentees make subjective decisions with regard to its value depending on factors such as their evolving personal and professional beliefs, and whether they see it as useful in practice (Cheng et al., 2012).

Data also suggests a conceptualisation of relating practice to theory with regard to participant understandings of roles in mentoring conversations as mentees engaging in self-evaluation and being encouraged to do so by CT mentors. This entailed
individual and collaborative reflection on mentee lessons in terms of strengths and areas for development, and possible reasons why this was the case. Hagger and McIntyre (2006) describe this as ‘practical theorising’ where teachers evaluate their teaching practices in relation to the ideas of a variety of others, namely educational researchers and experienced teachers. This is more commonly referred to as ‘reflective practice’ (Schön, 1983) but goes further in its requirement of critical construction and co-construction of meaning from practical experiences in order to develop more in-depth, informed and reasoned comprehension about teaching roles and practices as opposed to an uncritical, technicist perspective (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007). In addition, findings about the identification of next steps with regard to mentee professional learning may be interpreted as re-constructing meaning and cultivation of ‘personal practical theory’ within the process of devising specific actions based on new understandings gained from practice (ibid.).

CT mentors and mentees viewed self-evaluation as important with regard to mentee professional learning. Smith and Hodson (2010) concur and specify questioning, trying out alternatives and exploring resultant practices within the realms of more general theories as key to such reflection. In order to foster such exploration, planning formats used by the university in this study explicitly require mentees to evaluate the ‘what, why and how’ of their teaching practice with reference to theoretical perspectives regarding the insights about teaching that have emerged through their practice (see Appendix G). The responsibility for discussing this theoretical element tends to lie with the university tutor during the school placement visit because school mentors, as reported in this study, view themselves in a practical role. This may be interpreted as encouraging mentees to ‘practilise theory’ and also as maintaining the traditional theory/practice duality. However, it is important to note that development of reflective practitioners requires both university and school involvement (Cheng et al., 2012). In order to engage in constructive reflective practice beginner teachers require certain skills in, and attitudes towards, critical thinking. It is argued that these are best developed in the university context whilst recognising that schools play an important role in developing this as a component of teacher career long professional learning (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).
With reference to the above findings, it is important to note that self-evaluation is a requirement of teachers as detailed in the GTCS SITE and SFR competency frameworks in respect of engaging with theory using both the conceptualisations noted previously (GTCS, 2012). Hagger and McIntyre (2006) maintain that both notions of the theory/practice relationship are equally important. School placement experiences may be enhanced through consideration of these different notions (Allen and Wright, 2014) given that neither one on their own is a sufficient foundation for effective teaching and learning (Furlong and Maynard, 1995; Hagger and McIntyre, 2006) if ITE is conceptualised as educative as opposed to a technicist view of training (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007). This is particularly relevant for beginner teachers, like those in this study, whose initial knowledge and understanding of learning and teaching is most likely restricted to their own knowledge and beliefs (Smith and Hodson, 2010). These constructed understandings are multifaceted and subjective, therefore, it is important to challenge them through both theoretical and practical elements of ITE programmes, acknowledging that these understandings and elements may accord or be in conflict with each other (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006).

**School Management Mentor/Class Teacher Mentor/Mentee Relationship**

**SMT mentor involvement**

Findings indicate that the SMT mentor role was a remote one. The literature is unclear about how involved a management level member of staff should be in mentoring beginner teachers, some suggesting a more extensive role than others (see, for example, Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Tillman, 2005; Youngs, 2007; Desimone et al., 2014). Within collaborative school cultures mentoring may be viewed as co-constructed using a variety of mentors given that it can be difficult for one person to realize all the components of a complex process (Tang, 2012; Ulvik and Sunde, 2013) often involving competing educator, trainer and assessor roles. This may also help to address problematic mentoring relationships by creating a network of mentors with varied experiences, values and practices. In this study SMT mentors
expressed that the multiple demands of their management role was a barrier to being directly involved with mentees as it meant time was usually in deficit. The current education context means that school management are required to attend to managerial discourses of efficiency and inherent control mechanisms as well as a variety of administrative responsibilities which may mean that their contact with mentees is limited (Peters and Pearce, 2012).

SMT mentors saw one of their roles as selecting CT mentors who they felt could support a student teacher appropriately. This appropriateness was judged on the basis of teaching ability. Youngs (2007) maintains this is an important criterion in terms of content knowledge and observation, both observing mentees and being observed as mentors. However, it is important to note that effective classroom teachers are not always effective mentors (Gardiner, 2009; Jaspers, 2014). In addition, the SMT mentor role focused predominantly on the professional dimension of learning to teach. However, personal elements such as being open and welcoming are also important qualities (O’Brien and Christie, 2005). Data suggests this was evident in that being approachable was identified as a characteristic of an effective SMT mentor in terms of making the mentee feel that he/she had someone else to go and talk to if required. This notion of approachability aligns with other studies (see, for example, Wood, 2005; Patrick et al., 2010; Peters and Pearce, 2012) in terms of promoting both personal and professional support. Patrick et al. (2010) report that beginner teachers felt more able to seek advice from senior members of staff if management was carried out in an approachable, more equitable way. Management style is a salient factor in developing collaborative and supportive school cultures (Peters and Pearce, 2012). In my study collaboration was evident implicitly between CT mentor and mentee indicating this kind of school culture. These kinds of cultures are more likely to foster positive environments and collaborative mentoring practices that promote professional learning and personal well being in both beginner and more experienced teachers (Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010; Peters and Pearce, 2012). Within such practices the personal dimension is salient in fostering such professional learning (Rajuan et al., 2007).
Findings further suggest that SMT mentors saw themselves in a more informal, supportive role as a secondary mentor to mentees, for example, making sure they had everything required on a practical level and that they felt welcome. In this respect interactions with the mentee were unplanned, occurring in passing. Such interactions are often underrated given the demands of formal competency mechanisms (Williams and Prestage, 2002). They may be termed as collegial in nature and are significant with regard to making the mentee feel welcome within the school context and to their professional learning (Desimone et al., 2014; McCormack and Thomas, 2003). In respect of this collegial aspect of my findings, the development a positive, collaborative school culture by school managers, where the contributions of beginner teachers are welcomed, is important (McCormack et al., 2006) as learning to teach entails development of teacher identity (Flores and Day, 2006). This process begins and develops from initial experiences (ibid.) and is an unstable, changing process where the beliefs and values of teachers are influenced by the different contexts in which they work (Sachs, 2001).

Positioning themselves in a secondary role aligns with the literature (see, for example, Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Flores and Day, 2006; Peters and Pearce, 2012). In this study SMT mentors shared a structural, inductor role, as described by Yeomans and Sampson (1994), with CT mentors in providing an overview of school and class procedures. As in other studies (McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Flores and Day, 2006), for the majority of participants their role was not a direct instructional one where managers/leaders consistently offer beginner teachers feedback on the content and pedagogy of their teaching practice (Wood, 2005). This may be explained by way of the ITE placements context of this study in that this requires them to be placed in the classrooms of other teachers as opposed to having full responsibility for their own class. In this respect, the class teacher is at close hand to mentor rather than another member of staff being required to fulfil this role. However, in my study this lack of instructional role was not the case for one SMT mentor who was regularly asked for specific advice on classroom teaching practice by the mentee who felt no mentoring was taking place from her CT mentor.
SMT mentors adopted a more formal role with mentees in that they would become involved in mentoring if there were issues with the mentee’s teaching progress. When this was not the case CT mentors were wholly responsible. One perspective here may be that an element of professional trust appears to be evident connected to CT mentor selection based on being an effective teacher, the assumption being that the trust placed in teachers with regard to with pupil learning extends to the learning of mentees (such an assumption can be problematic as noted previously). However, this trust in the CT mentor may be suggested as questionable given that SMT mentor involvement is restricted therefore awareness of the CT mentor’s mentoring practices is limited. SMT mentors saw their support as a beneficial for CT mentors in terms of offering an alternative opinion. This may be interpreted as a team mentoring method, one of bi-support (O’Brien and Christie, 2005). Such approaches may assist in providing support for the main mentor and indirectly for the mentee in terms of promoting their professional learning (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Youngs, 2007). The SMT mentor role described may also be helpful in contexts where mentors have a dual responsibility as mentor and assessor, similar to the one in this study, in terms of the assessment role being adopted or shared by the management level mentor (ibid.). Within the context of this study this was not commonplace: two SMT mentors carried out formal observations of mentees but the majority preferred to rely on the judgement of the CT mentor.

A further aspect of the secondary role of SMT mentors evident in their interactions with mentees was their focus on wider, professional aspects of education such as school ethos, having a professional attitude, and working with colleagues, parents and the community. This may be indicative of SMT mentors adopting a socialisation role. The extent of this role is limited given the time spent with mentees and of the school placement experience but appeared a useful one in terms of mentees obtaining a broader view of what it means to be a teacher. It is suggested that mentoring in this respect is about socialising beginner teachers into school cultures to promote understanding of their values and aspirations, which facilitates membership of a PLC (Tillman, 2005). Being part of such a community helps beginner teachers, such as those in this study, to adopt a broader view of learning to teach in terms of
understanding the sociocultural environment of the school and catchment area, including the variety of factors that may affect learners within that context, and can thus promote teacher efficacy with regard to both personal development and professional learning (Flores et al., 2011). Involvement in a professional learning community may also avoid what Hargreaves (2004) calls ‘balkanisation’ where teachers isolate themselves within their own departments or classrooms and so limit collegiate practice and learning. In my study this is a significant factor as mentees spent the majority of their time and mentoring experience with their CT mentor. From a social constructivist perspective, it is helpful for mentees to have another ‘expert’, in this case the SMT mentor, to assist them in making sense of learning and teaching experiences evident within their zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). However, participation in a PLC may be on the periphery where beginner teachers try to integrate themselves by way of mentoring relationships but may be marginalised due to factors such as limited amounts of time spent within any one context as was the case for mentees in this study.

The above variety of SMT mentor roles appears to be a response, which is tacit in nature, to mentoring in school contexts. This is a valid response in terms of recognising the value of tacit knowledge and understanding (Eraut, 2000) but it could also be discussed within the realms of adopting a more informed understanding of the mentoring process. For example, the assumption of SMT mentors that effective teachers make effective mentors does not reflect the complexities inherent in mentoring (Gardiner, 2009; Jaspers, 2014). The findings of Tillman (2005) report the use of tacit knowledge and understanding as useful in fostering mentee professional learning (Peters and Pearce, 2012), however, it does not promote theoretically informed rationale (Jones and Straker, 2006) so may fail to recognise that mentoring can be a central facet of change in fostering teachers who are able to cope with the complicated nature of teaching as an academic, social and cultural process (Gardiner, 2009). In this respect, it could be suggested that more formal guidance is apposite. In my study, SMT mentors noted that there was no formal school policy or guidance on mentoring. One explanation may be that mentor education in ITE was non-existent within the context of this study. It was only
available to a small minority of mentors who oversee post-ITE induction year teachers, whereas, in England OFSTED requires that mentors of partnership schools in university based ITE programmes undergo mentor education with their partner HEI provider (EPPI 2008; Sorensen, 2013). Such a lack of guidance may be appropriate if it is enough for mentee knowledge and understanding to be limited to that of their mentor (Ulvik and Sunde, 2013). However, it can also be suggested that this kind of mentoring is insufficient (Gardiner, 2009) because it is not informed by relevant literature (Hobson et al., 2009; Jaspers et al., 2014). This literature indicates that, in order that mentors are equipped to deal with the complexity inherent in supporting both professional and personal dimensions of mentoring (Ulvik and Sunde, 2013), they require specific understanding of aspects such as how teachers develop, various teaching strategies, the personal dimension of mentoring, how to communicate the complex nature of learning and teaching, and are able to offer a variety of ways of interpreting the classroom environment (Elliot and Calderhead, 2004).

**Class Teacher Mentor/Mentee Relationship**

**Personal dimension**

Findings indicate that the key mentoring relationship is between the CT mentor and mentee. Analysis of these participants’ responses suggests that they understand mentoring as involving both personal and professional dimensions. Responses about mentoring style indicate that both CT mentor and mentee cases recognised a personal dimension but this was less in evidence across other responses about the mentoring process. It was only evident with regard to the characteristics of an effective mentor, mentee and of an effective mentoring relationship. Recognition that there is a personal dimension in mentoring beginner teachers is evident in the literature highlighting aspects such as openness, care, concern, empathy, tact, positivity, and recognition of the mentee as a person, of their needs and career stage (see, for example, Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; Rippon and Martin, 2003; Jones and Straker, 2006; Certo, 2005; Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010; Aspfors and Bondas,
Gender can also be a consideration in that a focus on personal aspects is more likely to occur in female dominated environments (Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010) such as those in this study where all participants were women. This can be explained through female gender focus on relationship bonds (Certo, 2005) and collaboration (Hyland and Lo, 2006). A personal dimension helps to build mentee confidence and so can promote successful professional development in learning to teach (Ambrosetti, 2010), as well as the ability to recognise a personal dimension of teacher/pupil relationships and why this is significant (Aspfors and Bondas, 2013). It can also assist mentors to acknowledge when they need personal support themselves given the complexity and inherent demands of school classrooms (Rajuan et al., 2007). This dimension fosters an ethos of openness to individual and joint construction of knowledge and understanding (Hargreaves, 2010) through its emphasis on a more democratic perspective on learning, one focused on independence in learning and empowerment (Jones and Straker, 2006). It would seem obvious that this element be focused on, however, in the managerialist context of efficiency and inherent control mechanisms such as inspections and quality indicators (Menter et al., 1997), it is suggested that this is not a realistic assumption (Aspfors and Bondas, 2013). For example, Rajuan et al. (2007) report a restriction in mentors’ personal support of mentees due to a tension between their responsibility for pupil learning and for that of the mentee.

In my study the extent of CT mentors and mentees’ recognition of a personal dimension of their relationship may, in part, be explained by the stage mentees were at in their teacher education and in relation to CT mentors’ perceptions of mentee developmental needs. It is important to note that mentor and mentee perspectives may not align in this respect (Pollard, 2005) such as with mentoring pair C in this study where mentee and CT mentor perceptions differed with regard to the amount of professional support required by the mentee. This resulted in the mentee expecting more professional support than the CT mentor judged was required. The mentee was therefore dissatisfied to the extent of articulating that she felt no mentoring had taken place and so had sought support from the SMT mentor. Although acknowledging this was the mentee’s perceived reality, this view of lack of
mentoring was not entirely accurate in that her CT mentor had supported her more within the personal dimension through reassurance.

Pollard (2005) states that mentoring should be a developmental process so that appropriate support is provided for mentees as they progress through the stages of learning to teach. In the early part of teacher development, such as the student teachers in this study who were in their second five-week school placement, mentees may need a more directive approach. As mentees move through the stages (outlined in chapter two) mentors use and adjust mentoring strategies to ensure they are appropriate. Professional support may decrease and therefore lead to a greater focus on personal aspects (Rippon and Martin, 2003; Certo, 2005; Jones 2009). Since mentees in this study were early on in their ITE school placement experiences, it seems legitimate that CT mentors’ prioritised professional over personal dimensions of the mentoring relationship.

As outlined in chapter two, Maynard and Furlong’s (1993:36) suggest five stages of mentee development: ‘early idealism, survival, recognising difficulties, hitting the plateau and moving on’. Using these stages as a framework for analysis is helpful as a reference point for examining mentor roles and mentee development in learning to teach in the context of this discussion. However, the process of mentoring is complex, therefore, such developmental continuums should be viewed as recursive and cumulative (Furlong et al., 1994) to reflect the developmental concerns of mentees. In this respect it may be more realistic to suggest that all stages are evident but that some are more dominant than others. In this study the dominant stages appeared to be two and three, ‘survival’ and ‘recognising difficulties’. These stages were evident through data where mentees talked about learning to teach, getting practical experience, feeling the need to be compliant regarding mentors’ views and practices, and other associated responses focused on professional aspects within the classroom and relationship with the CT mentor. ‘Survival’ is where mentees struggle to understand the complex nature of teaching, which results in a focus on techniques and fixes (Maynard and Furlong, 1993). In ‘recognising difficulties’ mentees start to comprehend the nature of teaching to a greater extent acknowledging
some of the issues involved (ibid.). This often results in copying the mentor teacher focusing on techniques and organisation rather than comprehension of underlying aims and consequences (ibid.). Less dominant appeared to be stages one and four, the ‘early idealism’ phase, where personal experiences of schooling are prevalent in influencing mentees’ teaching practice, and ‘hitting the plateau’ where mentee confidence and competence is more developed but subsequently may cease to progress further because they feel safe resulting in mentors having to encourage them to engage in further thought focused on pupil learning as opposed to just on their own teaching (ibid.). The last stage of the framework highlights the aforementioned difficulties with developmental continuums. ‘Moving on’ means reflective practice is engaged with where mentors are in an ideal position to assist mentees analyse and reflect (ibid.). It is reported that beginner teachers require basic competence before reflective practice may be engaged with (Maynard and Furlong, 1993), however, it is also suggested that they are able to critically reflect even when teaching experience and competence is limited (Eraut, 1995 in Harrison et al., 2005). Mentees in this study were engaged in reflection through being open to constructive criticism and engaging in self-evaluation and being encouraged to do so by their CT mentors. In this respect, it is important to note that reflective approaches vary in degrees of use and quality according to mentee competence and confidence, therefore, a recursive and cumulative perspective is vital in order that support is appropriate.

**Personal and professional dimensions as connected**

As outlined in chapter two, there are a number of mentoring models that examine dimensions of mentoring work. Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) model is a well-documented framework of structural, supportive and professional dimensions of mentoring and examines the role of mentors and associated strategies within these dimensions. It is helpful framework for understanding mentoring in conjunction with other models that build on it in different ways such as that of Kwan and Lopez-Real’s (2005) model of pragmatic, managerial and interpersonal elements, and Ambrosetti et al.’s (2014) relational, developmental and contextual aspects. Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) model has three dimensions: structural, supportive and professional. As previously noted, in this study the supportive dimension was
re-named as ‘personal’ because participants used the term ‘support’ with regard to both professional aspects of teaching as well as pastoral care dimensions. Yeomans and Sampson (1994) describe the personal dimension as a mentor adopting roles such as host, friend and counsellor utilising strategies and skills such as chatting, praising, encouraging, openness, empathy and communication. In this model strategies and skills are noted as interrelated in that skills are the main ways of implementing the strategy, therefore, they may be described in the same way (ibid.). For this reason they are referred to in unison in this discussion of findings.

Within the context of this study, CT mentors and mentees recognised a personal dimension to their mentoring relationship with regard to three areas: characteristics of an effective mentor, which was expressed as empathy; of an effective mentee in the form of being open to constructive criticism; and of an effective mentoring relationship in terms of getting on and building trust. These elements were linked to the professional development of mentees. This connection between personal and professional dimensions aligns with other studies (see, for example, Yau, 1995; Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005; Jones, 2009; Ambrosetti, 2010; Hargreaves, 2010; Jaspers et al., 2014; Achinstein and Davis, 2014).

Friendship was recognised as a key characteristic of the CT mentor/mentee relationship in this study as part of ‘getting on’, which entailed chatting about more than just classroom practice as this helped the mentee to feel more able and comfortable to ask the CT mentor for help. This finding is in alignment with Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) study where this kind of chatting facilitated discussion of professional elements especially regarding areas of difficulty identified in the mentee’s teaching practice (ibid.). Empathy, meaning being openly receptive to attempting to feel, experience and respond cordially to the descriptions of another person’s experiences (Pask and Joy, 2007), was also identified as a significant component in my study. It was seen as facilitating professional dialogue, specifically recognition that all teachers make mistakes not just student teachers. Yeomans and Sampson (1994) also noted this element in terms of mentors’ ability to put themselves in a mentees’ shoes in order to make them feel comfortable to talk. This
was especially important if there were issues with the student teacher’s teaching practice (ibid.). However, identification with such feelings can be challenging for a mentor in terms of controlling their own emotions (Pask and Joy, 2007) in order to respond appropriately and constructively. CT mentors and mentees noted a link between personal to professional trust in terms of progressively building up a relationship of trust on a personal level through the relationship components of getting on and empathy which, in turn, facilitated trust about professional aspects such as sharing confidential pupil information with mentees and trusting the advice of mentors. This kind of relationship is significant because it fosters an ethos where professional as well as personal concerns can be discussed (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994) and because, in the absence of a relationship based on personal trust, beginner teachers may be reticent to ask more experienced teachers for help for fear of being viewed as incompetent (Fransson, 2010).

The link between personal and professional dimensions evident in my study findings can both help and hinder the mentoring process. Viewing personal and professional dimensions of mentoring as connected rather than a duality is significant in the context of collaboration. Beginner teachers learn through their relationships with others (Harrison, Lawson and Wortley, 2005), therefore, working with a mentor is vital (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). In this respect mentoring is a social process (Kemmis et al., 2014) where collaboration is vital. In my study the sub-theme of collaboration emerged from professional and personal dimensions of mentoring and is discussed in more detail later in this chapter. However, in the context of this section, collaboration entails supportive working practices so can be viewed as both a personal and professional element of mentoring (Ambrosetti et al., 2014). An effective personal relationship facilitates a collaborative aspect of mentoring (Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005). This process is key in developing active trust, which can be both personal and professional (Hargreaves, 1994) and is actively pursued as opposed to resulting from expectations based on traditional hierarchies (Giddens, 1994). Mentee professional learning can be positively influenced through collaboration with a mentor (Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010). Within such practices the personal dimension is salient in fostering this learning, for example, in building
mentee confidence and identity as teachers through encouraging and motivating them to experiment and take risks (Rajuan et al., 2007). Laker et al. (2008) also report that mentees placed greater value on feedback within personally supportive mentoring relationships. Such collaborative processes are underpinned by social constructivist theories where parties construct knowledge and understanding through dialogue with others about the practicalities of learning to teach. In contrast, mentoring within a quality assurance focused environment may lead to a restricted view of it as supervision focused on skills (Rix and Gold, 2000). This approach to mentoring does not promote dialogue as it is founded on accepted traditions and separation of groups (Sachs, 2000) and potentially leads to relationships where dualities of power are evident, for example, expert and novice teachers. This traditional notion of power was apparent in my study and is reported as unlikely to foster consistent professional or personal mentoring support (Jones, 2009).

Professional dialogue can be constrained by the personal dimension of a mentoring relationship. The sort of friendship in a mentoring relationship evident in my study may not be conducive to mentee professional learning in that it can be difficult to engage in discussions about development points for fear of offending the mentee (Kwan and Lopez-real, 2005). In this respect it is important to maintain professional distance (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994), however, this is problematic in terms of how a mentor balances this distance with personal aspects of the relationship. Knowledge and understanding of the complexities of mentoring with regard to relationships and their inherent roles need to be clear to facilitate this balance.

A personal dimension of a mentoring relationship may also cause tensions when assessment roles and responsibilities are placed on mentors as in the context of my study where the CT mentors had whole, or part, responsibility for the summative report at the end of the placement. There appears to be no consensus in the literature regarding whether mentor and assessment roles should be separate (Fransson, 2010; Ingleby and Tummons, 2012). A dual role can be advantageous in fostering professional accountability and more structured, transparent mentoring procedures utilising formative assessment practices (Carver and Feiman-Nemser, 2009).
Mentors also have extensive knowledge of their mentee, class and school (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). It has also been suggested that if a ‘critical friendship’ is developed then a dual role is possible but is more difficult to negotiate (Yusko and Feiman-Nemser, 2008). The influence of managerialist agendas of efficiency and inherent control mechanisms, such as the SITE competency frameworks in my study, may cause conflicts for mentors in terms of the need to make objective judgements within a relationship that contains a subjective element. Mentors may be reticent to make assessment decisions as these are potentially problematic, for example, having to make negative judgements may lead to relationship conflict (Iancu-Haddad and Oplatka, 2014). In addition, assessment roles may interfere with supportive relationships by placing mentors and mentees in more traditional apprenticeship relationships where a novice/expert power duality is prevalent (Ambrosetti, 2010). Trust may be compromised therefore constraining participation in open, professional dialogue and, in doing so, encourage mentees to engage in compliant practices rather than experimentation and risk-taking (Jones, 2009).

**Professional dimension**

Analysis of CT mentor and mentee responses suggest that they comprehend mentoring as involving both personal and professional dimensions but that these understandings are focused on the professional dimension. This was evident across responses to a variety of questions about mentoring with regard to whom it involved, its forms, benefits, and the roles, characteristics and styles of mentors/mentees. Recognition that there is a professional dimension in mentoring beginner teachers is evident in the literature (see, for example, Yeomans and Sampson, 1994; McNally, 2002; Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005; Dewhurst and Mcmurty, 2006; Rajuan et al., 2007; Laker et al., 2008). This dimension emphasises mentee development in learning to be a teacher. My findings align with this perception in that a holistic perspective of the data is indicative of participants’ understanding mentoring as being focused on classroom practice, namely the mentee learning to teach. However, existent literature varies regarding the kinds of professional activities reported. For example, practical teaching skills, which are reflective of a more supervisory approach to mentoring, and aspects like developing autonomy and self-regulatory
capacity, more indicative of an educative strategy, are noted. This variety is evident in my study and is now discussed with reference to a selection of findings. As in the previous section, Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) model is employed as a framework for understanding mentoring in conjunction with other models.

Within this model descriptions of both structural and professional elements are relevant to the professional dimension of mentoring within Scottish placement schools. The structural component refers to activities promoting a school environment where mentees are able to experience success in their professional learning, and is described as a mentor adopting roles such as planner, organiser, negotiator and inductor utilising strategies and skills like negotiating, informing, implementing and organising (ibid.). Within the context of this study, these aspects are part of, rather than separate from, a CT mentor’s professional role in creating a specific classroom context conducive to mentee learning as well as within the wider school setting (discussed previously regarding the role of the SMT mentor). In a classroom context the planner role involves both mentors and mentees planning how to complete tasks related to the aims of the placement such as class teaching responsibility (ibid.). In the context of this study, these were set out in the placement documentation provided by the university and enacted by CT mentor and mentee. An organiser role is closely linked to that of the planner with the main emphasis on organising the classroom environment to facilitate completion of placement tasks (ibid.). In this respect, CT mentors noted a key characteristic of mentors was to be organised and flexible in order to facilitate mentee learning. With regard to the negotiator role, mentors are expected to organise a suitable learning environment for mentees, which entails negotiating activities such as professional dialogue with other members of staff and communication with the university tutor to foster consistent views of mentee development (ibid.). This was the case with the CT mentor in this study as the main mentor; study participants also recognised mentoring as involving a variety of parties, such as other teachers, management staff and learning assistants. Mentees engaged in dialogue with these parties in an informal manner. The inductor role is to provide an overview of school and class procedures, for example, regarding school policies and associated classroom practices. These tasks were shared by the
CT mentor and SMT mentor (as discussed regarding the SMT mentor/CT mentor/mentee relationship) and typically occur at the initial stage of the placement. Mentees were also required read and interpret relevant school documentation as part of their teaching file remit in order to develop knowledge and understanding of the wider school context.

Yeomans and Sampson (1994) further describe the professional dimension as a mentor adopting roles such as trainer, educator and assessor. These three components are evident in my study (see Table 4.2). A selection of examples is now discussed. A training role entails mentors acting in ways that aim to assist mentees to deal efficiently with specific teaching situations (ibid.). In this respect, more directive strategies and skills such as demonstrating/modelling, commentating, advising and telling are employed (ibid.). In my study findings such as CT mentors having practical knowledge and being observed as well as mentees getting practical experience and observing their CT mentors are relevant examples of demonstrating/modelling. In the context of school placements mentees observe mentors and consider these observations (Ambrosetti et al., 2014) as one way of gaining practical experience. These observations also foster an understanding of the complex nature of learning and teaching (ibid.). Mentors model their understandings of what constitutes effective practice. In doing so they require practical knowledge entailing content (subject), pedagogical (how to teach), and pedagogical content (knowing how to make content comprehensible to children) (Schulman, 1987). Orland-Barack and Hasin (2010) maintain that effective mentors have a substantive knowledge basis founded on theoretical perspectives, which they are able to discuss and put into practice to enrich mentees’ experiences of learning to teach. In my study CT mentors viewed the theoretical aspect of teaching as the responsibility of the university as discussed previously. As such it is pertinent to raise the issue about their awareness of the principles underpinning their practice. On one hand, it may be suggested that such principles have become embedded and automatized through experience. In this respect, they are demonstrating knowing-in-action (Schön, 1983) and the onus is on the mentee to relate practice to theory, reconstructing their individual knowledge and understanding in the process. On the other hand, CT
mentors’ theoretical knowledge may be questionable through their views of theory as the responsibility of the university. This is a significant aspect given the current education context and its inherent demands such as external influences focused on accountability and new curricula. For example, in Scotland ‘CfE’ promotes new perspectives on learning, which places demands on teachers’ knowledge and understanding in that they must select salient content and pedagogical strategies in a less prescriptive, more creative context (Scottish Executive (2004)).

Mentoring strategies/skills of advising and telling are evident in the data through CT mentors’ role of giving feedback with regard to the content and pedagogy of mentees’ teaching practice in order to foster professional learning. This feedback varied in its form, from CT mentors adopting an advisory role in listening to mentee views, being open to new techniques being attempted through providing opinions and deciding on the appropriateness of suggestions, to more a directive form of telling where the CT mentor would direct the mentee towards a tried and tested approach based on personal teaching experiences. Yeomans and Sampson (1994) maintain that an advisory strategy encourages mentees to decide for themselves about their next steps in that it provides them with a starting point, for example, where they might look for the information required. In this respect, it may be viewed as less than telling but not completely non-directive. In their study some mentors found this strategy challenging (ibid.). In contrast, CT mentors in my study adopted advisory strategies by both giving direct feedback and being receptive to mentees having their own opinions, however, if what the mentee was suggesting was considered to be inappropriate, a more directive approach was employed.

The notion of mentors as trainers is indicative of a traditional instructional-based, supervisory notion of mentoring (O’Brien and Christie, 2005), based on a power duality, where mentors are narrowly conceptualised as experts tasked with transmission of knowledge and mentees as novice receptors of such knowledge. Aims are based around competency standards, such as those in the SITE (QAA, 2006), to foster capable and independent teachers (Kemmis et al., 2014). This training/supervisory approach to mentoring is likely to foster relationships where
mentors advise, dominate talk, view themselves as the expert and are product rather than process focused (Carnell et al., 2006). These strategies are common in schools and higher education, are akin to an instructional model of learning and widely recognised as not conducive to effective learning or mentoring (Rogers, 2004). As such, they may be suggested as inadequate given the demands of a knowledge society and inherent educational reforms. However, it is important to acknowledge that, from a developmental perspective, appropriate support should be provided for mentees as they progress through the stages of learning to teach (Pollard, 2005).

This perspective maintains that in the early part of teacher professional learning mentors may need to adopt a more directive approach (ibid.). There are also instances within mentoring relationships when direction in the form of telling is apposite, for example, in giving requisite information on pupil pastoral and academic concerns, and with regard to health and safety issues (Hargreaves, 2010).

Within the professional dimension a mentor may also adopt the role of an educator (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). This entails mentors assisting mentees to move further from current practice-specific situations to analysis and application in other such contexts (ibid.). In this respect, strategies and skills such as discussing, reflecting, questioning and facilitating are employed (ibid.). In my study educator based mentoring strategies/skills are evident. A selection of examples is now discussed.

Findings indicate that the ability to carry out self-evaluation of teaching practices was understood as a key characteristic of an effective mentee. This took the form of reflecting on their practice in terms of thinking about strengths and development areas as well as specifying next steps in teaching. Schön (1987) describes reflection-in-action as that which occurs while teaching and reflection-on-action as reflection in retrospect, used for analytical purposes to foster understanding. He maintains that these are necessary in learning to teach (ibid.) Reflection-on-action was evident from mentees in this study and is, arguably, more valuable for mentors and mentees as it involves both deconstructing and reconstructing teaching, and fosters the capacity in mentees to apply new knowledge and understanding to different
situations therefore fostering change in practices (Yeomans and Sampsons, 1994). Mentees’ consideration of their next steps in teaching is indicative of reflection-for-action where beginner teachers make sense of their learning to increase understanding (Harrison et al., 2005) making progress in professional learning more likely. The kind of reflection on strengths and development points engaged in by mentees could be interpreted as a simplified notion of just talking about the events of a lesson (Bleach, 1997). However, it is argued that reflection needs to be explored in a meaningful way in order to promote professional learning (ibid.). Findings indicate that this is evident in the form of mentee consideration of reasons behind lesson outcomes in terms of why some aspects of the lesson had been successful and why some had not. This type of reflection is concerned with asking questions about current beliefs and practice based on personal experiences of schooling and teacher education (Harrison et al., 2005; Graham, 1999). Its aim is to promote positive change in teaching practices through engagement in metacognitive thinking and individuals taking responsibility for their own learning. CT mentors in this study encouraged mentees to engage in such reflection and so were adopting an educative role, which facilitates more in depth, insightful consideration (Schwille, 2008). This kind of educative role entails a collaborative relationship (discussed in the following section about implicit collaboration).

In Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) study mentors identified asking questions as a key part of their role. In contrast, CT mentors and mentees in my study did not identify this strategy. However, asking questions was cited as an important mentee role. These questions were based on lesson self-evaluations and were perceived as showing that mentees could think for themselves, and as communicating with CT mentors about the sort of advice they required. This perception is indicative of mentees being proactive in their own learning process and of attempts at developing independence. CT mentors viewed mentees as asking both literal questions, those based on fact-finding, and inferential ones, such as those concerned with more complex ideas and reasoning (Brown and Wragg, 1993). Mentoring as challenge (Daloz, 1996) may be an appropriate conception here in that a more metacognitive level of mentee engagement aimed at promoting their own professional learning is
evident. In contrast, mentees maintained that their questions focused more on fact finding ‘how to’ questions about classroom practice, for example, in order to clarify understandings, gain reassurance and be told how best to teach. This is more indicative of the training/supervisory approach to mentoring discussed previously.

Linked to the view of asking questions as a key role for the mentee, listening as a key role of the mentor was cited. A CT mentor’s role within a mentoring conversation was viewed as listening in order to respond. Listening in this respect is more specific and purposeful because listening, as a general concept, does not necessarily entail offering a response. A constructivist perspective is apposite here. Burleson (2011) conceptualises constructivist listening as a process by which communications are interpreted to foster comprehension of them and associated possible implications. Listening may simply be at surface level: a ‘mindless’ process accepting facts, ideas or opinions presented (ibid.:29). More ‘mindful’ listening entails listening for more in-depth, underpinning meanings appropriate for the context in which it occurs (ibid.:29). ‘Mindful’ listening was apparent in that a CT mentor was viewed as being a good listener if consideration had been accorded to what the mentee had said and a response offered to try and help. This also entailed listening in order to develop awareness of mentee needs, which suggests the feeling of having a professional responsibility to the student teacher.

Aspects such as self-evaluation and questioning discussed above can be interpreted as mentors being in an educative role. This is indicative of a conceptualisation of mentoring where mentees actively take part in their own learning (Schwille, 2008). The focus of this mentoring is not just on learning about current practice but on transference of knowledge, understanding and skills to different situations (Rajuan et al., 2007). Aims are based around developing mentee independence (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994) to foster autonomy through improved comprehension of teaching, learning and learning to teach (Schwille, 2008). This approach appears more adequate given the demands of a knowledge society where, as noted in chapter two, a variety of teacher characteristics are desirable. Mentors adopt a collaborative approach with mentees (Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1992) to promote professional
learning through encouraging them to employ a questioning approach, and by assisting them to overcome issues as opposed to simply directing them to solutions (Iancu and Oplatka, 2014). Educatively mentoring entails mentors employing their knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning to decide on the most appropriate ways to support mentee professional learning (ibid.). This role again aligns with constructivist theories, for example, with regard to mentees actively constructing knowledge and understanding by amending existing schemata through processes of assimilation and accommodation (Bredo, 2000) based around their teaching experiences and reflection about them. In addition, mentors adopt a scaffolding role within mentees’ zones of proximal development in order to assist them in developing more advanced knowledge, understanding and skills (Vygotsky, 1978).

In discussing trainer and educator roles of mentors, the complex nature of mentoring is again apparent. These roles may overlap depending on the mentoring context and/or aims (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). In my study this overlap is evident, for example, regarding feedback where CT mentors advise through both offering direct advice and encouraging mentees to think for themselves. It is also apparent in the different perceptions of mentee questioning in that CT mentors had a more educative perception based on the different types of questions posed whereas mentees viewed their questions as instructional. Yeomans and Sampson (1994) suggest that appropriate mentoring approaches be enacted when and where required in terms of mentee need. It may be argued that training is more evident when mentees are at the beginning of their learning therefore can be categorised more as novice teachers and so focused on understanding basic teaching principles. An educative approach may be more appropriate after baseline competency is developed allowing more focus on development of mentee independence in decision-making. However, as discussed previously with regard to mentee stages of development, learning to teach is not a linear process (Furlong et al., 1994). Thus it could be suggested that an educative approach may be adopted from the outset in accordance with constructivist theories on learning. In reality, mentoring comprises different approaches, however, theoretically each is aligned with particular perspectives on teaching, which conflict
and may cause confusion (Kemmis et al., 2014). In this respect, clarity regarding mentoring aims and participant roles is vital to foster effective mentoring where the focus is on mentee professional learning.

The final role suggested within the professional dimension is an assessment one which entails mentors assessing mentees both formatively and summatively using strategies and skills such as observing, recording and communicating feedback (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). As discussed with regard to the personal dimension of a mentoring relationship, both tensions and advantages are evident within this dual role. In my study no explicit indication of a mentor having a role as an assessor was evident with regard to participants’ understandings of mentoring, however, implicit awareness is apparent, for example, through CT mentors being viewed as having roles of giving feedback and observing. The lack of explicit recognition of mentor as assessor may be explained in that this role in Scottish schools is assumed, established practice. Jones et al. (2005) suggest that such an assumption may be due to the influence of a teacher education competency framework used for target setting, quality assurance and accountability purposes.

As noted previously, in this study CT mentors and mentees’ understandings of mentoring focused around the professional dimension of their relationship. This may be explained in a variety of ways. The issue of having a finite amount of time for school placements within ITE programmes and the impact this may have on the focus of support provided has been discussed previously in respect of the personal dimension of the CT mentor/mentee relationship. The imbalance of focus evident within personal and professional dimensions of the mentoring relationship could also be a question of understanding. It could be suggested that lack of comprehension of complexity is apparent, for example, in terms of different approaches to mentoring, requisite underpinnings and subsequent impact on forms and roles. As discussed previously, this may be explained through the finding that mentor education is non-existent within the ITE context of this study. Further considerations are of internal and external pressures regarding quality assurance and accountability around school
pupil and mentee learning given that both are influential in the mentoring of student teachers. These are now explored.

In the current Scottish education context pupil learning is the main focus due to quality frameworks of accountability such as HGIOS, parental expectations, unofficial league tables, HMIE inspections and subsequent published reports. The emphasis of HGIOS 2 is on using models of effective practice as a basis for defining quality education through target-setting at national and local level (Reeves, 2008). Schools are subject to inspection procedures by HMIE. These inspections focus on educational quality and standards with the aim of promoting improved and innovative practices to foster better learning experiences for pupils. Quality indicators such as HGIOS 2 are employed by HMIE inspectors to support appraisals and inform comments on ways schools might make improvements. Due to competing demands, mentor support of mentees can be detrimentally affected due to a tension between responsibility for pupil learning and for that of the mentee (Rajuan et al., 2007). This may be exacerbated if mentoring takes place within the mentor’s own class, as in my study, as mentors feeling of responsibility for pupil learning is heightened (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). The primary school context might also increase feelings of responsibility because teachers are in charge of one class of pupils as opposed to several as in secondary school settings (Jaspers et al., 2014). This dual responsibility can lead to mentors being conflicted in their approach and with regard to professional trust, for example, as mentors they may want to encourage mentees to address complex situations and learn, however, as class teachers they are reticent to subject pupils to potentially detrimental learning experiences (ibid.).

Mentoring beginner teachers in Scotland is influenced by one key external quality assurance and accountability mechanism based on the benchmark statements of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and influenced by wider education contexts. Beginner teachers work to attain professional competency against the SITE elements (GTCS, 2012). This is a professional competency framework for beginner teachers and could be argued as a factor in CT mentor and mentees’ predominant
focus on the professional dimension of their relationship. It is set and regulated by the GTCS, Scotland’s independent, self-regulatory teaching council. Registration with this council is required in order to teach in Scotland. The GTCS provides professional competency standards (provisional and full) for all teachers irrespective of age, stage or context, makes judgements on whether these are met on a career long continuing professional learning basis from ITE onwards. In this respect, as in this study, activities for completion within school placement guidelines provided by universities are based on these standards, which are also are used to assess competency at the end of the placement. In addition, all teachers are aware of a need to maintain full registration through a system of professional update (GTCS, 2014). The influence of these standards pervades ITE in that it provides benchmarks for the design and assessment of professional learning programmes, inclusive of academic and school placement components.

From the above findings and discussion it is apparent that CT mentors and mentees understand mentoring as involving personal and professional dimensions. Elements of collaboration and power emerged from these dimensions. These aspects are now discussed.

**Implicit collaboration**

In my study collaboration is recognised mainly in an implicit way. Explicit collaboration was not viewed as a key finding as it was only noted by half of CT mentors and mentees with reference to the role of the mentee. However, as outlined in chapter two, given the attention accorded to collaboration within the current Scottish education context influenced by the wider educational discourses and inherent agendas of a knowledge society, study participants may have been expected to be more explicitly recognisant of this element therefore its omission is an interesting one. In Scotland several recent significant reforms evidence a focus on collaboration through recommendations about collegiality and engaging in broader partnerships. For example, the McCrone Agreement promotes a cultural shift from compliance to collegiality (MacDonald, 2004) and endorses notions of professional
trust in its encouragement of teachers to use their professional judgement (Menter et al., 2004) within more collaborative and flatter hierarchical structures (ibid.). The latest curriculum, ‘CfE’, emphasises collaboration in terms of involving a broader range of partners in education such as parents, carers and other agencies (Scottish Executive, 2004). The most recent review of ITE (Scottish Government, 2011) maintains that schools should be professional learning environments with the capacity to effectively mentor and assess beginner teachers employing a model of enhanced partnership between schools, universities and local authorities (ibid.).

As noted previously with regard to personal and professional dimensions, the lack of explicit reference to collaboration may be a question of participant understanding of the complexity of mentoring in the context of the provision of professional education opportunities but also of the aforementioned education reforms. Confusion may be evident given the tension between the rhetoric and reality of these reforms where collaboration is promoted but within omnipresent managerialist external agendas not conducive to collegiate practice in their focus on accountability, competence and pupil attainment. However, it may be that teachers do understand these reforms and that they are engrained in school cultures and structures so are established practice. My study findings are indicative of implicit collaboration suggesting that school cultures were positive in this sense. Strong school cultures champion collaboration where teachers are able to discuss the nature of learning and teaching whereas schools with individualist cultures are not conducive to such practices (Williams and Prestage, 2002). If a collaborative school culture is not evident then it follows that classroom and mentoring practices are unlikely to be collaborative either. William and Prestage (2002) report that beginner teachers who worked within such cultures experienced greater professional learning and personal fulfillment.

In my study collaboration is recognised mainly in an implicit way and is now discussed further with reference to a selection of findings. CT mentors and mentees identified mentoring conversations as a part of the mentoring process. However, it is vital to examine the essence of such dialogue in order to consider its significance (Schwille, 2008). Findings indicate that this dialogue took place before and after
teaching episodes, and were both formal and informal. In this respect, collaboration may be identified and described as both planned and spontaneous (Williams and Prestage, 2002). It is suggested that spontaneous collaboration is more effective in fostering the professional learning of beginner teachers (Patrick et al., 2010) because mentoring is continual using professional dialogue as the key support mechanism (Williams and Prestage, 2002). However, it is also reported that structured collaboration is successful in improving mentoring practice in that consistent structures are in place (ibid.).

Furthermore, CT mentors and mentees indicated that both sides instigated discussion topics. This can be interpreted as mentors taking an interactive role to some extent in that this role entails topics of conversations being jointly instigated and responsive to both mentor and mentee needs (Young et al., 2007). This responsiveness to both parties was not evident in my findings where topics focused wholly on mentee needs. This could be explained by the ITE context where mentees are in an earlier stage of learning to teach, therefore, a conception of novice and expert teacher is prevalent. It may also be about understanding of mentoring and its inherent relationships, forms and roles discussed previously with regard to the SMT mentor. Furthermore, an interactive role requires equity in the mentoring relationship, which can take the form of mentors and mentees acknowledging that each other have a unique and valuable input to offer (ibid.). My findings reflect this in CT mentor and mentee acknowledgement of learning from each other. Interactive mentor roles are indicative of more non-directive methods of mentoring where the focus is on facilitating mentee understanding through mentor scaffolding using a variety of educative strategies in order to foster responsibility for learning (Carnell et al., 2006). Such practices are collaborative, indicative of both individual and co-constructed learning (Hargreaves, 2010).

Findings suggest that conversation topics focused on the mentee learning to teach in their emphasis on elements of the mentee’s teaching practice. From a social constructivist perspective, dialogue is a vital component in learning as a mechanism by which to organise thinking, re-frame or build new understanding (Bruner, 1985)
within the social and organisational context of the parties involved (Vygotsky, 1978). In the learning of beginner teachers (Schwille, 2008), it is significant, for example, in terms of considering difficult situations, addressing anxieties and specific aspects of teaching (Hargreaves, 2010). These conversations can be categorised as outside-the-action component mentoring where mentor and mentee discussion takes place before and after teaching episodes, as in this study, in a cyclical form of dialogue and reflection (Schwille, 2008). This is indicative of educative mentoring where mentors assist mentees to interpret and understand teaching and learning in order to further develop teaching capacity (Iancu and Oplatka, 2014). Although advantageous in mentees’ gaining practical experience and opportunities to build teaching confidence and competence, outside-the-action mentoring may promote inferior quality teachers in that the mentor role is on the periphery during teaching episodes and can take a supervisory, rather than educative, position depending on the nature of post-lesson conversations (ibid.).

As discussed regarding the professional dimension of mentoring, the ability to self-evaluate was understood as a key characteristic of an effective mentee. Within mentoring conversations CT mentors encouraged mentees to engage in self-evaluation and so were adopting an educative role, which requires a collaborative relationship. Their role may be seen as educative in respect of challenge (Daloz, 1996) as opposed to instructional support. Challenge involves aspects such as encouraging experimentation, sharing insight, asking questions, encouraging reflection and co-planning (Certo, 2005). Such practices are collaborative and educative in that mentors facilitate mentee understanding in terms of encouraging them to consider a variety of perspectives (ibid.) and to develop professional autonomy (Harrison et al., 2006). This autonomy is vital for entry into a profession involving both pupil academic and pastoral care roles where teachers need to take responsibility for their own professional learning in order to foster quality learning and teaching (Hudson, 2013). Patrick et al. (2010) maintain that mentoring should not focus on an instructive approach but promote mentee capacity to critically reflect on practice and encourage them to evaluate a variety of teaching for effective learning strategies. In opposition to my findings, Certo (2005) reports that previous
studies indicate a lack of challenge and predominance of instructional support. This may be explained in that challenge is argued to be appropriate when a basis of competence has been achieved (Harrison et al., 2006). However, as noted previously with regard to reflective practice, this assertion seems inaccurate as beginner teachers do have capacities in areas associated with challenge even with limited teaching experience (Eraut, 1995). If challenge is not evident mentees may fail to develop the broad range of knowledge, understanding and skills required of twenty-first century teachers. Instead compliance to current procedures may dominate and result in stagnation of practice (O’Brien and Christie, 2005).

In contrast to my findings, a variety of studies indicate that encouraging self-evaluation was not a dominant mentor role (see, for example, Certo, 2005; O’Brien and Christie, 2005; Harrison et al., 2006); instead mentors led and dictated mentoring conversations, which were focused on their own thoughts and experiences (Certo, 2005). Indicative of an educative approach, CT mentors in my study viewed self-evaluation as important in getting mentees to think independently as required by qualified teachers. Mentees also recognised this skill in terms of progressing in their teaching practice. This dual focus on current progression as well as future practice is important in assisting beginner teachers learn to teach (Schwille, 2008). In addition, a focus on strengths as well as areas for development was noted given that mentees tended to be quite self-critical in their self-evaluations. This balance aligns with Yeomans and Sampson’s (1994) study and is significant in promoting mentee awareness in order that appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are developed. If such a balance is not evident beginner teachers may adopt a mainly deficit view of their teaching (Long et al., 2012), ignoring their strengths thus failing to reach their potential (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012).

The recognition of collaboration evident in this study is significant given the importance of the concept in the current education contexts as noted previously, and also due to its implications for the professional learning of teachers whether beginner or more experienced. For beginner teachers collaborating with a mentor is significant in assisting them to cope with the unpredictable nature of teaching and
learning within the context of the limited range of knowledge, understanding and skills they possess at the beginning stages of their teaching careers (Patrick et al., 2010). Mentee professional learning can be positively influenced by working with a mentor (Orland-Barack and Hasin, 2010), for example, with regard to the development of confidence, particular skills, reflective practice, a heightened awareness of learning, the ability to ask for help, and the capacity to communicate new understandings (Certo, 2005; Carnell et al., 2006). This emphasis on professional learning was noted in my study through the focus on mentee learning to teach evident in aspects such as having discussions, mentees being able to ask questions and for assistance, and CT mentor encouragement of self-evaluation.

Mentor professional learning can also be positively influenced through working with a mentee. This sort of mentoring relationship is reciprocal in nature, however, a power differential is still evident in that the mentor is the more experienced party with its attached notions of expertise (explored further in the next section). Mentors may benefit in areas such as current curriculum and pedagogy knowledge, reflective practice, professional dialogue (Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005), capacity regarding mentoring strategies, increased self-esteem (Carnell et al., 2006) and job satisfaction (Brisard et al., 2006; Langdon, 2014). These elements were evident in my study through participants’ accounts of having mentoring discussions, learning about current curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices from mentees, gaining job satisfaction, and having to reflect more on their own practice in order to articulate reasons behind practice. Furthermore, findings associated with the personal dimension of the CT mentor/mentee relationship such as being empathetic and getting on, which entailed chatting about more than just classroom practice, could be viewed as contributing to the development of a mentor’s cultural capital. This cultural capital may be enhanced in that the personal dimension of a mentoring relationship assists them to unpack personal experiences, to learn about others and their lives, and to make cognitive and social gains through the empathetic facets required by the mentoring process (Philip and Hendry, 2000). Despite the potential for mentor professional learning, it is an area that can lack attention (Langdon, 2014). This may be due to a focus on mentee needs, lack of mentor education and
the complexities of the role (ibid.), for example, operating as both mentor and assessor as discussed previously.

**Power**

Power can provide insight into organisational relationships and structures (Garvey et al., 2009). Based on findings, my interpretation of it takes different forms: as a duality and as ‘flux’. An additional facet emerges in the form of power/collaboration co-existence where conceptions of power are evident within collaborative practices. These elements are now discussed with reference to a selection of findings.

**Power as duality**

In an educational context all learning environments are influenced by power relationships (Seddon et al., 2004). Within a power duality, an oppositional dynamic of powerful and powerless is apparent (ibid.). In mentoring relationships this manifests as a perception of mentors as the ‘expert’ and of mentees as the ‘novice’ (Berliner, 2001). This is due to mentors being positioned in authoritative positions with the organisation (school) as qualified teachers and because of their greater experience, assumed knowledge, understanding and skills (Garvey et al., 2009). Berliner (2001) argues that this is inaccurate as expertise does not necessarily equate with experience, some teachers may never progress beyond a level of basic competency. Mentoring is indicative of a training approach, where more directive strategies and skills are employed (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994), symptomatic of a perception of teaching as simplistic (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000) as opposed to the realities of its complexity. Such methods are mentor focused and encourage mentee dependence suggestive of managerialist notions of compliance (Harrison et al., 2005).

In my study a directive element of CT mentoring styles was identified, positioning mentees as learners. This was attributed to, for example, mentees being beginner teachers and CT mentors having responsibility for the learning of pupils. This
positioning aligns with literature regarding issues mentors have with adopting more non-directive methods (Langdon, 2014). However, mentees may desire direction (Strong and Baron, 2004), therefore, are employing mentors as sources of information and skills to foster performance as opposed to learning through constructing and co-constructing understanding (Hargreaves, 2010). Further, direction may be required based on mentee learning needs so the demands of more non-directive methods might not be conducive to their professional learning. As noted previously, appropriate support should be provided for mentees as they progress through the developmental stages of learning to teach (Pollard, 2005). A directive approach can be disadvantageous in that it may be restrictive rather than promotional in terms of mentee capacity (Young et al., 2007; Hargreaves, 2010). Conversely, it can also assist mentees to develop some degree of understanding of the academic and pedagogical facets of teaching (Schwille, 2008) but this may be limited to a conception of teachers as classroom technicians as opposed to an educative view of those able to reason and exercise their professional judgement based on informed practice.

Power as duality may influence dialogic interaction between mentors and mentees. In my study CT mentors were in a position of power in their provision of feedback to mentees. The language used by CT mentors and mentees, of giving and getting feedback, is in itself indicative of a directive approach. Feedback varied in its focus in that strengths as well as areas for development were noted with regard to forms of the mentoring process and the mentor’s role, whereas descriptions of a characteristic of an effective mentee as being open to constructive criticism were mainly about aspects for improvement. This may be attributed in part to the language used in that the word ‘criticism’ usually has negative connotations rather than understandings of the wider sense of being ‘critical’. This sort of unbalanced feedback is significant as it may highlight the mentor/mentee power imbalance and lead to mentees feeling exposed (Sewell et al., 2009), bullied (Maguire, 2001) and relationships breaking down (Kim and Danforth, 2012). This was not evident in my study but is a worthy cautionary point. It was also noted that CT mentors could evaluate lessons differently than mentees therefore influencing the feedback provided. The inference
being that mentors know best, rather than a more equitable perspective of knowing ‘differently’, again suggestive of a perceived novice/expert relationship and its associated power dynamics.

As discussed with regard to the professional dimension of mentoring, feedback varied in its degree of directness. CT mentors adopted an advisory role in listening to mentee views, being open to new techniques by providing opinions and deciding on the appropriateness of suggestions, to more a directive form of telling where they would direct the mentee towards a tried and tested approach based on personal teaching experiences. The variation in level of mentor direction may be linked to mentors feeling responsible for the learning of class pupils, as noted above, in that they are trying to restrict the potential for mentee error through their feedback (Jaspers et al., 2014). In addition, the act of a mentee seeking approval for suggestions is indicative of their awareness of the power differential inherent within a novice/expert relationship.

Compliance was explicitly noted by CT mentors and mentees in respect of mentees feeling the need to be compliant within mentoring conversations and is indicative of a conception of mentoring as training rather than education (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). CT mentors’ expectation of compliance was based on their greater teaching experience and preferred teaching techniques with some being more open to mentees trying out new things and to dialogue about it. However, in this dialogical context mentors could protect their position of power by deciding on the appropriateness of any suggestions and direct mentees to alternatives if required. Such dialogue can be advantageous through mentee experience of cognitive conflict by engaging in discussion about their ideas, however, authentic exploration may not be evident due to the communicative constraints of the existent power differential (Ritchie et al., 2000). In my findings mentees noted feeling the need to be compliant and that they could not communicate differences in opinion due to the mentor being more experienced. This sort of power duality evident focuses on the concept of apprenticeship therefore expectation of compliance is apparent. Mentors use their experience to exert power (Ritchie et al., 2000) to direct dialogue, sanction particular
actions and associated reasoning (*ibid.*). Therefore, mentees are likely to imitate observed practice and make decisions in line with those of the mentor (Young *et al.*, 2007) thus duplicating existing practice rather than engage with that which is emancipatory (Cochrane-Smith and Paris, 1995). As a result they may feel inhibited in developing the confidence and competence to make autonomous decisions and so resentful towards their mentor (Hargreaves, 2010), which is not conducive to a positive mentoring relationship.

Expectations and feelings of compliance may be further explained through the CT mentor’s dual role as mentor and assessor. This dual role means that the power differential is weighted towards the mentor (Dewhirst and McMurty, 2006). As noted previously, implicit awareness of the assessment role is apparent through CT mentors being viewed as having roles of observing mentees and giving them feedback. Akin to my findings where mentees felt unable to communicate differences in opinion, this may inhibit beginner teachers in terms of their willingness to participate in honest, constructive discussions about their own practice and that of their mentor (Jones, 2009) as assessment tensions can undermine personal and professional trust. As in my study, resultant mentee practice is likely to be compliant with that of the mentor (Rippon and Martin, 2003; *ibid.*).

**Power as ‘flux’**

It is difficult to avoid traditional hierarchies of power as they pervade school cultures and structures (Fenimore-Smith, 2004). However, considering other conceptions of power provides alternative interpretations and bases for reflection. Power may be viewed as resistance (Foucault, 1979). In my study, mentees’ silence in being unwilling to communicate differences in opinion, preferring to comply with mentor practice and read on the topic to assist in developing a wider perspective of difference rather than of right or wrong, may be viewed as resistance to CT mentors’ enactment of power. This resistance distorts the traditional power duality of being silenced so therefore powerless. Therefore, a conception of power as ‘flux’ is apposite here where participants may be interpreted as being both powerful and powerless in the same context (Foucault, 1979). In this sense power is viewed as
enacted within interactions, rather than something that is possessed (Balan, 2015), and is in a constant state of change (Graham, 1999).

Study findings indicate that CT mentors and mentees understood mentors as both the observer and the observed thus fostering notions of being powerful and powerless. In being observed mentors are powerful in their role as the ‘expert’ employed as a source of learning. They may provide lesson episodes with explicit purposes for mentee observation rather than an unstructured incidental learning approach (Schwille, 2008). In this respect they are powerful in modelling effective practice and deciding on a focus for the observation. If the observation focus were mutually negotiated then the power relationship would be a more equal one. In contrast, mentors may also be perceived as powerless in being observed in that they are under scrutiny by the mentee even when this critique is silent. As noted above, this can be interpreted as mentee resistance of power. Through critique, mentees can also be accepting and rejecting certain practices in order to help develop their own teaching skills and persona (Richter et al., 2011). Aligned with social constructivism, observing a mentor may provide a foundation for co-constructed post-lesson dialogue, which can may help to reduce power differentials and illuminate the complexities of teaching through engagement with reasoning behind practices (Graham, 1999). This indicates that learning to teach is more than obtaining knowledge and skills but about a more metacognitive process of learning in being aware of how learning takes place and why.

In observing the mentee CT mentors may be viewed as powerful as the ‘expert’ who monitors and feeds back on the novice’s progress indicative of a traditional power duality. However, they can also be powerless in this situation in that they may be learning from mentees. Findings indicate that mentees were perceived as sources of knowledge on different aspects of teaching based on their university learning and other teaching experiences, and as making mentors reflect more on the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of their own practice. In the above examples, mentees are positioned as being both learners and being learned from so both powerless and powerful. Beginner teachers are effective sources of learning as their lack of attachment to certain
teaching practices and experience of a variety of school contexts fosters flexibility and openness to different perspectives (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012). This conception of the mentor/mentee relationship is one of reciprocity (Ambrosetti and Dekkers, 2010; Ambrosetti et al., 2014) and, as such, is in opposition to the traditional notion of mentoring based on mentor knowledge (ibid.) and may assist in avoiding stagnatory practice. Its success entails the identification and comprehension of mentee strengths (ibid.), therefore, collaborative dialogue based around both mentor and mentee evaluations is significant. Such collaboration is dependent on an ethos of trust (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012) and authenticity, as opposed to contrived collegiality where purposes are not negotiated (Hargreaves, 2003). Such contrived collegiality may result in lack of quality and longitudinal improvement as mentor attitudes and values need to change rather than merely their practice (Hargreaves, 1992).

Mentor willingness to position themselves and be positioned as learners is demanding as being seen to alter a perspective may be viewed as a weakness (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012). In this respect, personal and professional trust is important and can facilitate openness to cognitive conflict around existing ways of working and thinking. This conflict opens up the opportunity to learn and understand teaching in new and different ways leading to a more symmetrical mentoring relationship appropriate for co-constructed knowledge and understanding. Mentees are empowered with confidence and competence through this position. This context can also be beneficial for mentors if they have identified development needs that can be addressed through engagement in mentoring (Ambrosetti et al., 2014). It may also challenge them to question existing school cultures and their inherent understandings, beliefs and values (Ulvik and Langorgen, 2012). Collaborative school cultures are more cognisant of learning for all and so more effective contexts for beginner teachers (ibid.) because learners occupy positions of visibility (Long et al., 2012). However, it is important to note that in the process of power differentials becoming more equal, mentoring relationships may suffer as the mentee gains in confidence to question mentor capacity (Garvey et al., 2009). Maintenance of an
effective relationship is dependent on how this is approached by both parties with collaboration and positive interactions as key.

**Collaboration/power co-existence**

Movement to more equitable mentoring relationships brings the matter of collaboration and power co-existence to the fore. In my study collaboration and power co-exist within the professional dimension of mentoring, for example, within mentoring conversations mentors give feedback but also encourage self-evaluation. They also co-exist within certain elements, namely asking questions/for help, and having a balance of directive and non-directive mentoring styles, which differed according to mentee confidence and competence. CT mentors acknowledged that their style tended to alter as the placement progressed. As previously acknowledged, in the early part of teacher development mentees may need a more directive approach (Pollard, 2005). As mentees move through the stages mentors use and adjust mentoring strategies to ensure they are appropriate in meeting mentee needs and level of dependence/independence (Strong and Baron, 2004; Pollard, 2005; Ambrosetti, 2010).

It is argued that a more non-directive mentoring style is more effective for mentoring practices (Carnell et al., 2006) in that it promotes the development of a positive mentor/mentee relationship (Kim and Danforth, 2012) conducive to the promotion of teachers who are able to collaborate with others to develop strong teaching cultures where effective learning and teaching is key (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000). This style is aimed at capacity building and founded on constructivist theories. However, it may be argued that this is problematic within the tensions in the current education context centred on quality assurance mechanisms alongside more educative conceptions of learning. As noted previously, this results in mentoring being comprised of different approaches each aligned with particular perspectives on teaching, which conflict and may cause confusion for both mentors and mentees (Kemmis et al., 2014). Such conflicts may be moderated within supportive interpersonal relationships where mentors and mentees comprehend the importance of quality relationships within a mentoring process that is influenced by the
education context in which it is situated (Rippon and Martin, 2003). Paying attention to the manner in which interactions are conducted may also be helpful, for example, mentees are more receptive to constructive feedback if it is presented in a collaborative, reassuring and personable way (Hyland and Lo, 2006).

**Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter has described and discussed the findings of research question one about mentors’ and student teachers’ understandings of mentoring within a school placement context. Findings show that mentoring is understood as a multidimensional process involving a range of relationships to support the professional learning of student teachers. Four relationships are evident and vary in terms of their extent, form and function: local authority/school; school/university; school management mentor/CT mentor/mentee; CT mentor/mentee. These relationships range in proximity from close to barely existent. Participant responses indicate that the key relationship is that between CT mentor and mentee. It is a close one evident on a daily basis within the classroom and is focused on the mentee learning to teach. It is understood as involving both personal and professional dimensions. From these dimensions elements of collaboration and power also emerge. In comparison, the relationship between the school management mentor, CT mentor and mentee is a more remote one, evident at a structural level prior to the placement and if there are issues during the placement. The connection between school and university is similarly understood as remote with universities being seen as responsible for theory and schools for practice. Findings indicate that the relationship between local authorities and schools is barely existent and involvement in mentoring is not evident apart from in the induction year that follows undergraduate and postgraduate primary education ITE programmes.
Chapter Five - Formative Assessment and Mentoring

This chapter addresses research questions two about mentors’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment in mentoring within a school placement context, and research question three about the extent to which formative assessment supports mentor and mentee professional learning. As outlined in chapter three, the following themes and sub-themes emerged.

**Table 5.1: Research Question Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent understandings</td>
<td>• Form – the ‘comfort zone’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Function – the ‘discomfort zone’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Professional learning sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subconscious use of formative</td>
<td>• Constructive dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>assessment</td>
<td>• Uncertainty about the value of specific learning foci and success criteria</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Formative and summative as complementary processes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer assessment</td>
<td>• Potential</td>
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</tbody>
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**Table 5.2: Research Question Three**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting professional learning</td>
<td>• Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective practice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Responsibility for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for support</td>
<td>• Uncertainty about what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specificity about how</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings are now presented and discussion points explored in relation to the themes and sub-themes identified.
Understandings of Formative Assessment

Participant understandings of the form and function of formative assessment were explored through questions about what they comprehended by the term formative assessment and why they thought formative assessment practices were used. Most participants were comfortable in describing its forms through examples of their classroom practice. In this sense, it could be suggested that this area was their ‘comfort zone’ of understanding. However, uncertainty was evident in responses about its function, which may indicate that this was an area of ‘discomfort’.

Form: the ‘comfort zone’

When asked about what they understood by the term formative assessment CT mentors used their classroom practices with school age children as a context to describe a variety of forms. Three out of six noted the significance of dialogue in using formative assessment. However, the majority cited allowing children to decide on next steps in learning as important and were more comfortable to describe a list of the strategies and techniques they employed. CTF was very keen to ascertain pupils’ points of view and listed twenty-two strategies and techniques such as sharing learning intentions and success criteria, traffic lights and thumbs up/down/to the side. Similarly, mentee responses focused on strategies and techniques from classroom practice.

In my placement they used learning logs…It was very much that each child had their own and they were having to assess, self-assess how well they had done throughout the week in literacy and numeracy. She used the thumbs up, thumbs down, thumbs in the middle…The smiley face in learning logs at the end of the week. She didn’t…really do peer assessment as such... STB

Reflective of their role as secondary mentors for mentees, SMT mentors reported their role with formative assessment as discussions with school staff with reference to practices with school pupils. As in the cases of CT mentors and mentees, a focus on listing strategies and techniques was apparent in their responses. This was exemplified by SMTC who also noted formative assessment as an on-going process.
formative assessment is assessment as you are going on...having shared the criteria, what you are going to do so that the children know what they are learning while they are learning, you teach your lesson and at the end of it you ask the children to indicate how they feel they are with the learning...they rate how well they think they have done...here we use green, red and amber...You have also got peer assessment as well. So all that is feeding in...I like a no hands up classroom, because that keeps everybody thinking... SMTC

In comparison to the above findings, LA mentors made no mention of specific classroom strategies and techniques, preferring to note giving feedback as a key element of their guidance role for schools with regard to induction teachers. LAB noted that she would provide support to mentors within schools in an induction context. LAA talked about her input with induction teachers who were experiencing difficulties in terms of observing and feeding back.

I would try and give them some guidance from classroom observations that I have made, on improvements that they could be making but then I expect them to demonstrate how they have done it...And then I would be going back and asking them...or certainly to the school and the headteacher...how they have made those improvements. It is up to the school...I will just step in as and when they want me to. LAA

**Function: the ‘discomfort zone’**

Given the form-focused responses regarding understandings of the term formative assessment, participants were asked why they thought formative assessment practices were used in order to elicit their understandings of its functions. Participants exhibited uncertainty when addressing the question so resultant responses were general as opposed to specifically related to the main principles of formative assessment articulated in key research, policy and practice documentation. SMTE specifically recognised that teachers have struggled with this aspect in terms of understanding why they are using this type of assessment.

I think this is what the PLCs have struggled with a little bit is that it becomes about the techniques that you’re using rather than the impact and the values. Why are you doing that?...Why are you using the lollipop sticks? Do you
understand why you’re using that? Do the children know why you’re using them. Or is it a gimmick?...And you used to have check lists just to make sure you were using all the strategies. But actually didn’t impact at all on what you were actually doing. SMTE

Responses from SMT mentors evidenced a general understanding of function as progression in learning. For example, SMTC noted that if formative assessment was not built into learning and teaching, pupils would never move on in their learning. Similarly, LA mentor understandings of function centred around progression in learning, however, the context of their responses was beginner teachers rather than school pupils.

CT mentors cited the importance of pupils understanding what they are learning and being able to improve. They struggled to explain further with regard to understanding learning, however, both CTA and CTC felt that if pupils were unsure of this aspect, then it would be difficult for them to experience success in learning. In terms of improvement, understandings focused on knowing next steps in learning in order to progress but opinions on how this might be addressed varied. CTA and CTD talked about the importance of pupils identifying errors in order to address them and so progress learning. On the other hand, CTE and CTF emphasised that pupils should also recognise what they had done well. CTE specifically noted this aspect as significant in order to avoid feelings of failure.

Mentees described formative assessment as a means by which to progress learning using themselves as examples as well as classroom practice with pupils. Common areas acknowledged were the importance of identifying gaps in learning in order to take action to foster progression. STE specifically maintained that in learning to teach self-evaluation should be about both strengths and development points but that the latter were more important with regard to making progress.

With regard to the above findings, participants cited several professional learning sources as the bases of their understandings of formative assessment. Mentees maintained that their learning about formative assessment was through university
lectures, reading materials and practical experience. STB cited Shirley Clarke’s books but the rest were non-specific. No detail was provided on particular learning points from reading materials. With regard to practical experience, mentees noted observing mentors on school placements as well as opportunities to put formative assessment into practice themselves in these contexts in addition to opportunities offered by the university.

In comparison to mentees, two CT mentors noted the use of reading materials on formative assessment; both referenced Shirley Clarke’s books and CTE also cited Black and Wiliam’s research. However, as with mentees, no further details were given about which particular sources had been read or what specific points were taken from these sources. The dominant means of professional learning cited by CT mentors were CLPL and collegiate practice. CLPL took the form of external courses but the organising bodies of such courses were not specified. Learning through collegiate practice was carried out through professional learning communities, observing colleagues and dialogue within their own school environment as well as on CLPL courses. SMT mentors reported their role with formative assessment as discussing it with staff with reference to school practices but that there was no specific school policy on formative assessment. Four out of six remarked that the local authority policy on assessment or learning and teaching was available, which was assumed to contain information on formative assessment. SMTD reported the school had no assessment policy at that time while SMTA noted it should be embedded into all other policies so was not a separate one. LA mentors said that policy documentation on formative assessment aimed at a school pupil context was available at local authority level but not for mentoring beginner teachers. LAA also remarked that the policy was an old one while LAB noted that formative assessment was included in the learning and teaching document but not as a separate entity.

Use of Formative Assessment in Mentoring

Findings indicate that formative assessment was used within the main mentoring relationship between CT mentors and mentees. As noted previously, SMT mentors
reported their role with formative assessment as discussions with staff about practices with school pupils, and for LA mentors feedback was part of their guidance role for schools with regard to induction teachers.

**Subconscious use of formative assessment in mentoring**

In the context of the mentoring taking place in this study, CT mentor and mentee responses indicate that formative assessment was employed subconsciously in contrast to the structured, explicit way it is used with school pupils based on the Scottish ‘AifL’ policy.

I think maybe we do it but…we’re not really aware we use formative assessment…We’ll say ‘you did that really well…but maybe next time you could look to do that’….We’re just not aware we do it in a kind of two stars and a wish way. **CTD**

Reflective of the professional dimension of mentoring discussed in the previous chapter, key elements of formative assessment that emerged from data were constructive dialogue, specific learning foci and success criteria, and lack of explicit use of the SITE as assessment criteria.

**Constructive dialogue**

In alignment with CT mentor and mentee understandings of having discussions as a form taken by the mentoring process, dialogue emerged as a key element of how they perceived the use of formative assessment in mentoring. This was evident through responses about how they had consistently talked about how lessons had gone. CTC specifically noted this in terms of the informality of such discussions.

…it’s just making sure each time…she can tell…me how she’s got on…and I’m giving her…little bits of advice…those kinda informal conversations are a form of formative assessment. **CTC**
Related to this notion of dialogue, CT mentors and mentees viewed having good communication as a key characteristic of their relationship to foster the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. Specific attributes of such communication emerged, for example, CTF felt that positivity was important whereas CTE focused on being open and honest in order that meanings were clear so less likely to be misinterpreted. Being open and honest was also recognised by STE and STA. STA particularly felt that she should not feel constrained in what she talked about for fear of displeasing her CT mentor and that it was important to be open to the opinions of others in order to progress in learning to teach. Such attributes are reflective of the personal dimension of mentoring discussed in chapter four.

The above dialogue may be interpreted as constructive in that discussions were concerned with both successful elements of mentees’ lessons, areas for development as well as consideration of next steps in learning. The more balanced nature of this discussion both aligns with, and is in opposition to, findings in chapter four about understandings of mentoring where CT mentor and mentee responses about being open to constructive criticism focused on areas for development as did CT mentors’ views of giving feedback as part of their role within mentoring conversations. In contrast, a balance of focus on strengths and development points was evident with regard to such feedback from both CT mentor and mentee cases in talking about the forms taken by the mentoring process and the general role of a mentor.

With regard to the more balanced, constructive dialogue evident in responses about the use of formative assessment in mentoring, mentees talked about how CT mentors asked for their perspectives on the strengths and development areas of lessons prior to offering their own views and suggestions. STA felt that this was so that she gave an honest opinion rather than one coloured by the views of her CT mentor. STF also noted that her CT mentor would then build on her perspective by making further positive and developmental suggestions. In opposition to this finding, STD did not view dialogue as constructive with her CT mentor as she felt it did not encompass development points. This may be explained in that her CT mentor felt STD was
already very able to self-evaluate so it was more important to offer reassurance in areas where she had been overly critical.

I was able to...help her...because if she became too critical or she worried about something I was able to reassure her and explain that...she had done something exactly as I would have done it. But maybe next time to look at doing such and such. So I think I was really just there to, to reassure her.  

**CTD**

CT mentors used the ‘stars and wishes’ formative assessment technique employed with school pupils as an analogy in descriptions of discussing strengths and development points with mentees. CTA also maintained that quality feedback was a balance of both positive and negative aspects of teaching but that emphasising the positive was important in fostering confidence in mentees and not overloading them with too many things to think about. In addition, reflective of understandings of mentoring as collaborative identified in chapter four, responses indicated that this was a two-way dialogue. CTE’s response exemplifies this point and further links the process to self-evaluation.

We talked about...almost the two stars and a wish thing. What did we think went well, what did you think went well, what did I think went well?...and what one thing or two things we could maybe improve in the next lesson...just trying to help her self-evaluate well...  

**CTE**

CT mentors identified mentees’ ability to engage in constructive self-evaluation as an essential characteristic of a mentor/mentee relationship to foster the use of formative assessment in mentoring. Reflective of a key role of mentors within mentoring conversations identified by both CT mentors and mentees in chapter four, CT mentors talked about their role in encouraging mentees to engage in self-evaluation, for example, CTB noted that it was important to elicit her mentee’s perspective but also offer some feedback and advice given that she was in the process of learning to teach. As noted above, mentees remarked that CT mentors gave feedback having elicited mentee self-evaluations of lessons.
Next steps for mentee learning were also identified as part of the dialogue between CT mentors and mentees. CT mentors reported that these were discussed alongside strength and development points; CTD and CTE noted them as specifically linked to the areas for development identified. Reflective of the forms taken by the mentoring process articulated in the previous chapter, responses indicate that decisions were made jointly between CT mentor and mentee. CTB and CTD maintained that this process made mentees think for themselves and so fostered understanding. The importance of taking responsibility for learning in order to promote engagement was also suggested by CTC and CTD. Similar views were evident from mentees with regard to the importance of mentees thinking independently in order to progress in learning to teach. In addition, STA said that her CT mentor would make suggestions and ask her how she felt about them. They would discuss alternatives if she was uncomfortable with any of the suggestions made.

Questioning formed part of the aforementioned constructive dialogue. In contrast to findings in chapter four which focus on mentees asking questions, responses in this section are about CT mentor questioning. Both CT mentor and mentee descriptions of the questions posed to mentees were mainly literal ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions, for example about how the lesson had gone generally, and specifically about positive and negative aspects. CTF was the only respondent who talked about asking ‘why’ questions and encouraged her mentee to think about transferring knowledge and understanding to different contexts.

…it’s fine reflecting on saying ‘yes this worked well, that worked well and I would use this again’. Why though? Why did that happen well? Where could you use that in another context? CTF

**Specific learning foci and success criteria**

CT mentor and mentee cases reported that they did not have specific learning intentions or success criteria as targeted foci for mentee lessons in the ways they do with school pupils based on the ‘AifL’ policy. STA and STE noted that they reviewed self-evaluations and CT mentor feedback independently and tried to take next steps forward in future lessons. CT mentors remarked that they talked about
areas for development within constructive dialogue but did not set specific aspects to target in future lessons. CTD made the assumption that STD would work on areas discussed. In contrast to the majority, CTF used the language of formative assessment practices more consciously in mentoring STF. She also reported consistently using specific learning intentions and success criteria linked to the SITE as assessment criteria regarding teaching competence.

In addition, CT mentors lacked a consensus as to whether this formative assessment strategy might be helpful. They felt it may be useful in some ways but not in others. For example, CTB and CTC both noted that if a mentee were having difficulties in a particular area, such as behaviour management, then it would be helpful to have a specific learning focus on this aspect. CTD further noted that this might also be useful if the pupil context meant certain aspects required attention, for example, pace and challenge for learners. CTC and CTA maintained that having specific learning foci in a lesson meant other areas of teaching practice could be neglected.

… you might forget to cover other aspects of your teaching because you’re focusing so highly on the particular learning intention that you’ve been given for that lesson… I think with teaching there’s such a wide range of things you’re doing within a lesson that it might be quite difficult to pinpoint just one or two things that you’re looking for. CTA

In contrast with the use of success criteria as an assessment focus with pupils as part of the ‘AifL’ policy, findings indicate that the SITE was not used explicitly as assessment criteria in mentoring in that it was not a driver in discussions about mentee progression. Mentees reported that the SITE was not referred to specifically in discussions with their CT mentors. Mentees said they were aware of the SITE elements as the criteria aimed for in terms of teaching competence. STA made explicit use of them in her written self-evaluations in order to note which elements were being addressed.

It wasn’t specifically mentioned. In some of my written evaluations of my lesson plans, I have referred to some SITE benchmarks…most of the things you were talking about would fall into the categories. But it was never mentioned, you need to do this because it is one of the benchmarks. STA
As with mentees, the majority of CT mentors remarked that the SITE was not referred to specifically in discussions with mentees but maintained they were aware of them. CTA said the SITE was in the back of her mind akin to success criteria. CTC also noted that she referred to the placement guidance provided by the university and recognised that these were based on the SITE. As noted previously, CTF made more formal use of the SITE. She reported that when STF was in her full responsibility period for class teaching they discussed a focus SITE element for each day in terms of what it meant, why it was important, how it might be enacted and assessed. These evaluations contributed to the CT mentor’s final summative placement report. She noted referring to the SITE explicitly as significant because it gives mentees specific criteria to aim for and is something employed in schools as an assessment of competence, therefore, all teachers need to be familiar with such mechanisms.

Participant understandings of formative assessment were also evident in terms of formative and summative assessment being viewed as connected processes. CT mentors viewed them as linked in that the end of placement summative assessment report was seen as an accumulation of formative assessment dialogue. In this respect, the formative dialogue undertaken informed the summative report.

…there’s not gonnae be anything in the summative assessment that she doesn’t already know about. And because we’ve talked about things on a daily basis…makes it better because the student probably knows or has a better idea of what’s coming because you’ve been talking about it…you’ve discussed things and you’ve given them feedback already. So they probably have…a good idea of whether it’s gonnae be good or bad already. CTC

Similar views were evident from SMT and LA mentor responses. SMTA and LAA both noted this connection specifically in terms of using the evidence from formative assessment to inform the summative judgement made.

I think there has to be some kind of summative assessment…I think if you are using the formative assessment to gather all your evidence for that, then I think you could make a good judgement call... LAA
Mentees also saw formative and summative assessment as connected and further specified that this meant they were not worried about the contents of the summative report because discussions about their teaching practice had been on-going. In this respect, STE noted that it would have come as a shock if she had not been deemed satisfactory at the end of the placement.

…I would have been shocked if I’d failed due to the conversations I have wi’ her…If I’d got to the end and she said there’s something drastically wrong wi’ my practice I’d have been devastated cause I woulndae have seen it coming…It [the formative dialogue] gave me reassurance. STE

This view was also evident from LAB who maintained that if formative assessment is accurate and valid then summative assessment is just confirmation, therefore, by the end of the placement there should be no surprises. This was not the case for one mentee, STC, who maintained that she felt she received no mentoring as she received little feedback. This made her concerned about the final summative report.

There wasn’t a lot of mentoring…I just got no feedback whatsoever on…anything…I got my report at the end which I was terrified to get because…from the feedback that you’re getting throughout your placement, how you’re doing, I had no idea whatsoever. STC

**Potential for the Use of Formative Assessment in Mentoring**

Drawing on their repertoire of formative assessment practices with pupils, CT mentors felt that these would also be helpful within mentoring with regard to progression in mentees’ learning. However, they noted that they would not employ the language used with pupils such as two stars and a wish, fist of five and traffic lights as this was not appropriate for adult learners. The majority placed particular importance on being able to adapt such language for use with students. As noted in chapter four, CTF was an exception to this finding in that she used the language of ‘stars and wishes’ within feedback with reference to her understanding of forms taken by the mentoring process. However, in considering the potential of formative assessment for use with mentees, she also noted that there were certain techniques.
she would not use like ‘thumbs up, down or to the side’ but did not given any further explanation.

Formative assessment was viewed as helpful within mentoring in terms of its inherent knowledge, understanding and skills being potentially beneficial with regard to the both mentor and mentee professional learning.

**Mentee professional learning**

In terms of mentoring student teachers formative assessment was seen as helpful with regard to progression in learning to teach through dialogue and peer assessment. LA mentors talked about its importance with regard to dialogue about learning and ways to move forward. CT mentors, mentees and SMT mentors all noted that it could help student teachers to develop the ability to self-evaluate. They viewed this as happening through discussions about positive points and development areas of lessons in order to foster progression in learning to teach.

It definitely is a way to make teachers be much more reflective on their practice. ‘What went well? How could you improve next time?…and what do you think the next steps are?’…I think there is an awful lot to be learned from that kind of formative approach…you are constantly looking at improving your practice… **SMTB**

Within such conversations feedback, questioning and being encouraged to think for themselves were noted as potentially significant by mentees. STC and STD talked about the importance of feedback from CT mentors and questioning, both being asked questions and asking questions themselves.

… it [feedback]…opens up questions and you can then say ‘what is my next step then?’…it would have been good to…have been able to look back…if you can self-assess then you can properly criticise things…I would be able to build on it because I would really know how I felt. It wouldn’t just be about how somebody else felt… **STD**

The above findings are reflective of understandings about the benefits of mentoring for mentees where mentoring discussions, questioning and being encouraged to self-
evaluate were cited as key elements. Having engaged in the mentoring context in this study, CT mentors and mentees remarked that formative assessment had been useful within that process in terms of mentee professional development with regard to self-evaluation and taking responsibility for their own learning. CT mentors noted that engaging in self-evaluation assisted mentees in making decisions about next steps in their teaching to foster improvement. Mentees reported that self-evaluation independently and in dialogue with CT mentors was helpful in making them think constructively about their practice. STA and STB specifically noted the significance of mentor questioning within these discussions (as noted previously with regard to the use of constructive dialogue). Both CT mentors and mentees viewed mentees as taking responsibility for their own learning through factors such as making decisions about how to improve their practice by thinking for themselves as well as observing and having discussions with their CT mentor.

Peer assessment was also seen as potentially helpful for mentee professional learning. CT mentors noted that it would allow mentees to learn from each other’s practice on their school placements as opposed to learning from experienced teachers. CTD noted that this would give mentees more realistic ideas of what teaching practice might look like at their stage of professional learning. CTE also remarked that observing a peer undertaking the same school placement would be useful as they were experiencing the same expectations and workload demands. CTF felt that student teachers tend to make more effort with their lessons than experienced teachers so more learning may occur as a result. It was further suggested that the relationship between peers would be more comfortable than with CT mentors due to them being familiar with each other from university, therefore, feedback may be easier to take on board. Mentees noted that being at the same stage in their degree programme meant that they were all learners and were subject to the same expectations so could learn from each other, for example, in terms of getting different ideas and perspectives from different placement contexts. STA and STD also remarked that it would be a good opportunity to compare themselves to peers with regard to their teaching skills but did not specify why this was valuable.
...I do think it is good to see someone at the same level as you. They are still learning as well. Just to see how they are getting on. If they are at the same stage as you they might be thinking ‘I feel further ahead in my development than you are’... STA

In addition, peer assessment was viewed as potentially problematic. CT mentors talked about logistical difficulties, for example, CTD raised the issues of time within an already short five-week placement; CTE and CTC talked about possible difficulties in matching peers with regard to aspects such as personalities and age.

... you might have somebody who is 20 odd and somebody who is 40 odd and a 40 year old person might not like a 20 year old telling them ‘you could have done this better if you had done this’, because they have got experiences. So I think...you would have to consider how you match people up...that might be tricky. CTE

Mentees were concerned about being able to engage in constructive feedback with peers they knew through their degree programme. They maintained that it would be difficult to point out areas for development as these were the negative parts about a lesson. STB said she hoped that peers could be mature enough not to take such feedback personally. STD further suggested that perhaps observing but not engaging in feedback would be a more comfortable situation.

**Mentor professional learning**

Akin to responses about reflecting on their own practice as a benefit of mentoring for mentors, participants noted that mentor self-evaluation skills could be fostered through engaging with formative assessment within mentoring and that this may promote professional learning. SMT and CT mentors talked about using formative assessment practices as potentially helping to improve mentors’ teaching as it might make them think about their own practice in more detail within the realms of self-evaluation as they had to think about the advice and models provided for the mentee. CTF viewed the process as both reinforcing and enhancing what she believed to be effective teaching practice. Mentees felt that mentors would reflect more explicitly about their own practice through observation of mentee lessons. STD noted that this might make mentors think about alternative ways to practice through comparing the
lesson of a mentee to a similar one of their own. LAB noted that this was a two-way process with both mentor and mentee learning.

…when you are looking at somebody else’s practice closely, you are actually looking at your own practice closely as well…it is a two-way relationship where both parties are learning something…as soon as you engage with somebody else’s practice you bring your own practice into view and you examine that at the same time. **LAB**

Having engaged in the mentoring context in this study, CT mentors remarked that formative assessment had been useful within that process in terms of their professional learning with regard to knowledge and understanding about the mentoring process. In this respect a variety of aspects were evident such as the importance of constructive dialogue and communication skills. CTE specifically noted that she thought constructive dialogue should be a balance of positive comments and areas to work on. CTA remarked that she had learned the importance of how to communicate as well as thinking through whether the advice she was giving was appropriate.

**Support for using formative assessment in mentoring**

Participants noted that support was required to develop the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. Though acknowledging the need for support, participants were unsure about what the content of such support might be. LA mentors specifically suggested that using formative assessment required a less directive mentoring style. In this respect, LAA maintained that requisite mentoring skills are more difficult to develop with LAB further noting that mentor experience and confidence would be influential factors. Findings indicate that the university was seen as playing a central support role. SMTB stated that written guidance could be provided about effective practice in this area. Mentees further remarked that this could take the form of a checklist in the placement guidelines. CTF suggested university led CLPL courses and CTE the placement guidelines as ways of sharing best practice.
Although participants were unsure about what the content might be, they were able to articulate how using formative assessment in mentoring might be implemented with reference to specific professional learning mechanisms. CT mentors emphasised that having time allocated to mentor in school was vital rather than using time from other responsibilities or after school. Further, CTE and CTF both noted that time was essential so that dialogue was meaningful, not rushed. The numerous demands on mentor time were viewed as inhibiting factors by CTD and CTC.

...time’s probably the biggest barrier. Getting time to spend with the student...obviously you have to spend that at the end of the day or the start of the day. And...some days like there would be like staff meetings or other meetings that I would have to go to. And I would have to just...say ‘right we’ll talk about this tomorrow morning’...because in a school you’ve always...got meetings here or there or somewhere else which don’t stop just because you’ve got a student... CTC

Responses further indicated that mentor education through CLPL courses provided by universities and local authorities as part of an increased partnership strategy would be helpful. In addition, relevant expectations and examples should be included in the placement guidelines provided by the university. CTC and CTE remarked that the content of such courses and guidelines should be jointly negotiated with teachers in terms of what would work in practice.

Mentees felt that more guidance on mentoring in general and using formative assessment within that process was required for mentors. They talked about this in the form of schools providing guidelines on mentoring so that expectations and roles were clear. STA remarked that mentees need clarity on these areas so it would be helpful to have some kind of school policy and that this should be similar across schools and local authorities to promote consistency of placement experience. Further suggestions were that specific written guidance regarding the use of formative assessment in mentoring could be provided by universities within placement documentation and through CLPL courses led by local authorities. STC felt that if local authorities were encouraging schools to mentor student teachers then they should offer appropriate support.
SMT mentor responses lacked consensus about school support for using formative assessment in mentoring, three out of six suggested CLPL opportunities would be useful. They viewed provision of guidance as the role of universities through formal mechanisms such as CLPL courses and written guidance. SMTA noted that CLPL would be particularly valuable given that financial constraints at local authority level meant general provision of CLPL courses was less available. SMTE expressed a preference for an actual training course as she felt that some mentors may not read written guidance. SMT mentors were divided in terms of the involvement of the local authority. SMTD and SMTE maintained that the university was responsible for supporting the mentoring of student teachers whereas SMTA, SMTB and SMTF felt their input would be useful. SMTF talked about all three parties working together to best support mentees.

I think probably it is a process that has to be triangulated…there probably has to be an input from…the university, the local authority and the schools. If that process was triangulated and there was some training provided, that included the three agencies, then that would be the best possible support you could get. **SMTF**

LA mentors viewed support as coming from school collegiate practice. Responses indicate that SMT mentors should be leading such support in the form of professional dialogue within and across cluster schools. LAA further suggested that more experienced mentors could run in-service courses for colleagues. Further remarks were made about universities extending opportunities for partnership with schools to discuss aspects of school placement mentoring. LAB noted that it would be advisable to do this through certain partnerships as she saw it as impossible for universities to support every school in which a student teacher might be placed. With regard to involvement of the local authority, LAA maintained that CLPL courses should be provided in this area, as they are for other areas of professional learning, and that she would like to take part in dialogue so that expectations of mentors are clear even though she recognised that the SMT mentor should be engaging in such discussions. LAB noted the possibility of identifying a member of staff in a school cluster to address specific aspects of professional learning as a means by which to foster involvement of the local authority.
Discussion

Understandings of Formative Assessment: Form and Function

Mentees, CT and SMT mentors consistently described formative assessment through classroom practices with pupils thereby understanding may be viewed as based on pedagogical experience (‘form’). In comparison to the specific principles articulated in key research focusing on cognitive, situative and metacognitive elements of promoting learning (see, for example, Black and Wiliam, 1998; Black and Wiliam, 2009), which are reflected in Scottish ‘AifL’ policy documentation (LTSc, 2004), participant responses evidenced a general, surface understanding of the significance of formative assessment (its ‘function’). These findings are in alignment with an evaluation by Marshall and Drummond (2006) which suggests that only one fifth of teachers who said they were employing formative assessment in their classrooms were doing so according to the aforementioned principles. Most other teachers were reported as engaging at a more superficial level of implementation, that of the strategies and techniques derived from research principles (ibid.) Similar findings are noted in other studies (see, for example, Cowan, 2009; Hayward and Spencer, 2010), which interpret this as teachers’ lack of depth of understanding of key principles resulting in surface level enactment. This is indicative of an uncritical, technicist (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007) rather than ‘understanding-oriented’ approach to learning and teaching (Hobson, 2003). This technicist perspective may be elucidated by acknowledging the current education context with its many accountability focused demands and external influences (Peters and Pearce, 2012). It may be suggested that these demands, pervasive managerial agendas and inherent technicist views of teaching focused on the most efficient way to meet narrow product-driven goals (ibid.) are not conducive to the time required to engage with more understanding-oriented approaches to teaching. Given the demands of a knowledge society and inherent educational reforms, questions may be posed as to the appropriateness of such agendas in promoting the kinds of knowledge,
understanding and skills required of twenty first century teachers. Findings in opposition are reported by Reid (2006) with regard to postgraduate ITE student teacher understanding and implementation, whereas Tang’s (2010) study of the incorporation of formative assessment into teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge evidenced a mixture of the aforementioned technicist teachers, resulting in a procedural approach, and those who showed a more principled understanding. This meant that practice was more adaptable indicative of a more informed approach to teaching in that teachers were enacting theoretical principles (ibid.).

CT and SMT mentors’ general understanding of formative assessment ‘function’ may have implications for mentee experience in that mentees are socialised into existing form-focused practices. This may be explained by elements discussed in the previous chapter, namely expectations of compliance and to the attention accorded to theory and practice. Cowan (2009:81) notes ‘strategic compliance’ as a factor in ITE students’ adoption of formative assessment principles. In this study neither CT mentors or mentees noted this specifically with regard to formative assessment, however, understandings of a mentee’s role evidenced expectations of compliance based on CT mentors’ greater teaching experience, therefore, this could be noted as a relevant factor regarding espoused understandings of formative assessment. Extending this analysis, it may be suggested that the inference here is that experience equals expertise, however, this is not necessarily a valid connection. Tsui (2003) maintains that experience is an influential factor in developing teacher expertise if it is used as a learning tool. This entails engaging in conscious reflective practice, which problematizes teaching procedures, utilising theoretical knowledge either as enacting theory in practice or theorising practical knowledge (ibid.) as examined in the previous chapter. Such theoretical knowledge provides teachers with the opportunity to engage further than pragmatic notions of teaching through in depth conscious analysis thereby fostering the transformation of experience into expertise (Winkler, 2009).

With regard to the attention accorded to theory and practice, the use of tacit knowledge from practice may not necessarily be appropriate for mentee professional
learning (Peters and Pearce, 2012) in terms of offering an informed rationale for approaches to teaching and learning (Jones and Straker, 2006). However, the use of theoretical knowledge is only fully effective if combined with such experiential and contextual knowledge (Winch et al., 2015) whether through conceptions of ‘theory into practice’ or ‘practical theorising’ (Hagger and McIntyre, 2006). The findings of this study suggest that neither conception was compellingly evident with regard to participants’ understandings of formative assessment given the limited attention paid by participants to formative assessment ‘function’. Herman et al. (2015) maintain that knowledge basis is an influential factor in the quality of formative assessment enactment. Marshall and Drummond (2006) also highlight the importance of a principled understanding of formative assessment with specific reference to one of its foci, that of the metacognitive domain aimed at fostering learner autonomy. They maintain that this entails teacher understanding of principles about how learners learn most effectively, such as those noted by Black and Wiliam (1998), and that comprehension of constructivist based teaching roles is also significant. In this respect enacting formative assessment requires more than implementing strategies and techniques derived from research but an understanding of the principles that underpin them (ibid.). This was not convincingly the case in the findings of this study. One perspective is that participants’ descriptions of understandings through their practice could be termed as tacit knowledge derived from experience rather than theoretical sources. It may be suggested that such principles have become embedded and automatized through experience. In this respect CT and SMT mentors are demonstrating knowing-in-action (Schön, 1983) and the onus is on mentees to relate practice to theory. Mentees’ descriptions may be interpreted as reflective practice in the sense of learning from the ideas and practices of others. However, they do not appear to be engaging in ‘practical theorising’, as outlined in the previous chapter, in that responses indicated an unquestioning acceptance of such practices rather than one of critical evaluation.

An alternative perspective is that findings may be indicative of putting ‘theory into practice’, as discussed in chapter four, in that some participants made reference to research based reading material on formative assessment. The reading materials
noted by participants include research principles as well as strategies and techniques for practical enactment. As such it may be suggested that their focus, and subsequent engagement, was with the practical elements within these materials put forward as ways of enacting research principles. Given that the aforementioned practical content is included in the reading materials, they may view it as ‘theory’ as opposed to espoused definitions of it as principles, concepts and ideas underpinning education activities and experiences (Eraut, 1994; Hobson, 2003; Zeichner, 2010). However, it could also be argued that the theory/practice composition of these reading sources takes account of the need for research literature to be more readily available and comprehensible for teachers and policy makers in order to promote informed practice (Priestley et al., 2011) as teachers are less likely to engage with new approaches to teaching content or pedagogy if they are tasked wholly with the translation of principles into practice (Black and Wiliam, 1998). Furthermore, knowledge most valued by teachers is reported as being that which is recent and in a form appropriate for immediate enactment (Cain, 2015).

With regard to the aforementioned reading materials, mentor and mentee engagement is another consideration. CT mentors who made reference to particular reading materials gave no further details about what specific points were taken from these sources. This may be explained in part by their role perception as mentors. As noted in the previous chapter, CT mentors and mentees viewed theoretical knowledge as the role of the university and not of school placement mentors, a common conception of university and school roles and responsibilities within ITE contexts (Zeichner, 2010). In addition, teachers have to cope with a variety of information from multiple sources, such as theoretical and tacit knowledge, colleagues, policy documents, parents, and pupils, and so must prioritise accordingly (ibid.). As such, it could be argued that CT mentors placed more value on practical elements so this was the focus of their engagement.

Mentees cited university lectures and course reading materials but, as with CT mentors, gave no further details about particular sources or what specific points had been taken from them. The module undertaken prior to the school placement
included specific lecture and seminar input on formative assessment alongside an opportunity to include it in the associated summative assignment (see Appendix H). Learning in university modules may attempt to connect theory and practice but this requires mentoring support to help mentees construct understandings both within university and school placement contexts (Haggarty, 2002). They require time and space to engage critically about practice with reference to theory, values and different contexts (ibid.). In the university context, this was constrained because the summative assignment did not prescribe formative assessment as a key element so mentees may not have engaged any further than in-course input. Time and module structure also placed constraints on opportunities to engage students in critical dialogue about specific elements such as formative assessment. Furthermore, as noted in chapter four, school placement contexts were associated with the practical elements of teaching, therefore mentees may pay more attention to the practical knowledge of mentor teachers rather than theoretical perspectives (Braten and Ferguson, 2015) as they deem this as most relevant given that the realities of teaching practice (Knight, 2015). It may be suggested that this means that the onus is on the mentee to relate theory to practice on placement with support from the university tutor. However, contact in this respect was limited to one visit per placement and remotely as required, usually if there were issues or questions. Therefore, opportunities for critically reflective dialogue related to theoretical perspectives were limited.

In addition to the reading sources discussed above, CT mentors noted they had learned about formative assessment through dialogue with colleagues in professional learning communities within their own school environment as well as on CLPL courses. Collaborative forums such as the professional learning communities noted by CT mentors present benefits and challenges for teacher professional learning. Participation may promote mentor professional learning and that of colleagues (Kemmis et al., 2014), including enhancement of their abilities as mentors (Gratch 1998) and ability to engage in appropriate assessment processes, through shared practice, critical reflection and collective activity on classroom based and wider educational issues (Hargreaves, 2000; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Wenger et al.,
Within such forums Winch et al. (2015) suggest that teachers can gain practical knowledge through learning from peers and engaging in reflective dialogue. This may foster ‘social interruption of data’ where professional dialogue encourages teachers to work together to uncover and scrutinize practical issues as well as creating new difficulties that may be employed by individuals and the school community as a whole (Priestley et al., 2011). Such dialogue may be founded on tacit knowledge derived from practical experience or on theoretical principles. In light of previous discussions on conceptualisations of theory and practice in relation to teacher knowledge, it is apposite to note Kuusisaari’s (2014) findings, which, drawing on social constructivist theory, suggest that teachers require both support and challenge within collaborative forums in order to make gains in professional learning. Such gains require sharing ideas and working to evolve them through the use of a critical questioning approach with reference to theoretical sources (ibid.). Teachers should discuss and debate educational initiatives as part of these elements within PLCs in order to make meaning thus surface level enactment may be avoided (Forde et al., 2006). However, PLCs may also be dysfunctional in terms of over-socialisation. ‘Groupthink’ may be evident (Hargreaves, 2003:108) in terms of members being predisposed towards particular knowledge (Roberts, 2006) such as the form-focused understandings of formative assessment evident in this study. Indicative of a technicist, rather than understanding-oriented, approach to teaching (Orland-Barack and Yinon, 2007), this may be detrimental to both teacher education and pupil learning given the advanced levels of knowledge, understanding and skills required for a knowledge society (Hargreaves, 2003).

CT mentors also noted they had learned about formative assessment through CLPL courses. These courses provide teachers with opportunities to develop knowledge and skills, to engage in reflective practice and collaborate with other teachers (De Vries et al., 2014). However, they present both benefits and challenges for teacher professional learning. CT mentors’ reference to CLPL was in respect of external courses undertaken but the organising bodies of these courses were not specified. These sorts of formal courses could be viewed as in alignment with the European Commissions’ (2007) agenda for quality enhancement in teaching and teacher
education, which includes both formal and informal professional learning mechanisms. However, this agenda may be marred by managerial conceptions of target setting and efficiency, which positions teachers as an instrument for school and pupil advancement rather than as continuing professional learners (Czerniawski, 2013). Such a focus may promote input focused on techniques rather than that focused on comprehending underlying principles (Priestley, et al., 2014) leading to form-focused understandings such as the ones evident in this study. As discussed regarding reading materials as a source of professional learning, teachers’ engagement with CLPL programmes is influenced by their attitudes and values about learning and teaching. Priestley and Miller (2012) report that despite a sustained programme of CLPL on formative assessment underpinned by relevant theoretical principles and aimed at improving understanding of techniques, consistent teacher engagement was still not evident due to differing beliefs and values about learning and teaching.

A final comment on participants’ classroom based form-focused understandings of formative assessment is that this has implications for the transfer of knowledge to different contexts such as mentoring. In order to transfer knowledge effectively across different settings, metacognitive understanding is necessary so that it can be further developed and appropriately re-contextualised (Hermanson, 2014). This may be more aptly termed transformation rather than transfer as knowledge is reconceptualised during the process of enactment (ibid.). Participants’ perceptions of the use of formative assessment in the context of mentoring student teachers are now discussed.

**Subconscious Use of Formative Assessment in Mentoring**

CT mentors and mentees were asked about whether they had used formative assessment within the current mentoring experience. Responses indicate that formative assessment was employed subconsciously in contrast to the structured, explicit way it is used with school pupils. Possible explanations for this
subconscious use may be linked to elements noted previously: knowledge transfer and lack of guidance on mentoring. As noted above, participants’ understandings were predominantly form-focused. This may inhibit their capacity to transfer knowledge about formative assessment to a different setting, such as mentoring, because conceptual understanding is necessary so that appropriately re-contextualisation may take place (Hermanson, 2014). In addition, participants reported no guidance from the university guidelines or at school or local authority policy level on mentoring student teachers in general or about using formative assessment within the mentoring process. Reflective of personal and professional dimensions of mentoring, key elements of formative assessment that emerged from data were constructive dialogue, specific learning foci and success criteria, and lack of explicit use of the SITE as assessment criteria. These are reflective of key practices in seminal formative assessment research as outlined in chapter two. In this respect, it may be argued that CT mentors and mentees are engaging more with formative assessment in mentoring than they are explicitly able to articulate. These elements are now discussed.

**Constructive dialogue**

In alignment with CT mentor and mentee understandings of having discussions as a form taken by the mentoring process, dialogue emerged as a key element of how they perceived the use of formative assessment in mentoring. Typical of the phases of mentoring conversations (Crasborn et al., 2011), it may be interpreted as constructive in that discussions were concerned with both successful elements of mentees’ lessons, areas for development as well as consideration of next steps in learning. CT mentors used the ‘stars and wishes’ formative assessment technique employed with school pupils as an analogy in descriptions of discussing strengths and development points with mentees. The more balanced nature of this discussion both aligns with, and is in opposition to, findings about understandings of mentoring where a focus on development points as well as balanced dialogue were presented and discussed. It also accords with other studies where both praise and criticism were elements of mentor feedback in order to progress learning (see, for example, Hennison et al., 2008; Hoffman et al., 2015). Dialogue about how this might be
followed up is also significant as learners are more likely to be motivated to engage in future learning opportunities ((Black, 2007) when they have clear goals to pursue and know who can help them in pursuit of these (Black and Wiliam, 1998). In addition, reflective of the personal dimension of mentoring, CT mentors and mentees viewed attributes of positivity, openness and honesty in dialogue as significant. Emphasis on the positive was articulated as important in fostering confidence in mentees. Literature indicates that mentees are more likely to be receptive and learn if this is the case (Hyland and Lo, 2006; Jones, 2013).

Findings indicate that the constructive dialogue referred to within a formative assessment context was based on a feedback process. Feedback varied in its degree of directness in that CT mentors questioned mentees about their perspectives on strengths and development areas based on self-evaluation of lessons prior to offering their own views and suggestions. This aligns data from the previous chapter and with literature which suggests that effective feedback to progress learning should not consist of one person feeding back to the other but involve individual and shared reflection (Hargreaves, 2007; HMIE, 2011). This finding is also in opposition to studies (see, for example, Harrison et al., 2005; Crasborn et al., 2011) where mentors who had not undergone mentor education, such as those in this study, favoured a directive mentoring style within a hierarchical power relationship indicative of a conception of mentoring as training (Yeomans and Sampson, 1994). In my study quality feedback was viewed as being a balance of both positive and negative aspects of teaching. In addition, next steps for mentee learning were also identified as significant. These elements accord with the principles of formative assessment, namely that learners learn more effectively when they are given feedback about the quality of their work, what they can do to make it better and advice about how to make such improvements (Black and Wiliam, 1998).

Constructive dialogue also encompassed questioning. In contrast to findings in chapter four where mentees asked the questions, responses in this section were about CT mentor questioning. Both CT mentor and mentee descriptions of the questions posed to mentees were mainly literal ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions. Only one
respondent talked about asking ‘why’ questions and encouraged her mentee to think about transferring knowledge and understanding to different contexts. Quality questioning is a key component of interactive formative assessment practices (Black and Wiliam, 2009). Its aim is to foster dialogue in order to encourage learners to think for themselves and in order that teachers can elicit required information (Black, 2003) using different kinds of open questions from simple to more complex ones as outlined in the previous chapter. The prevalence of literal questions evident here may be a barrier to the use of formative assessment. It could be suggested that they are reflective of the predominantly form-focused understandings of formative assessment discussed previously. However, it may also be argued that formative assessment is challenging for teachers as it involves adopting new strategies (Black and Wiliam, 2001), which do not always align with their existent beliefs about teaching and learning (Carnell et al., 2006).

As noted previously, findings indicate that constructive dialogue encompassed mentee self-evaluation of their teaching practices. Reflective of understandings of mentoring discussed in the chapter four, CT mentors identified mentees’ ability to engage in constructive self-evaluation as an essential characteristic of a mentor/mentee relationship to foster the use of formative assessment in mentoring. In addition they talked about their role in encouraging such self-evaluation. This data is reflective of the formative assessment practice of self-assessment and related principles that learners learning best if they understand clearly what they are trying to learn, what is expected of them are involved in deciding next steps in their learning. The ability to assess work in relation to learning goals is essential to learning in respect of making meaning from tasks and in developing metacognitive capacities (Wiliam, 2014). Data also evidences the importance of taking responsibility for learning in respect of promoting engagement and independent thinking. This aspect is now discussed further in relation to self-determination theory (SDT).

Mentor roles such as quality questioning and encouraging self-evaluation are indicative of more interactive, non-directive methods where the focus is on
facilitating mentee understanding using a variety of educative strategies (Young et al., 2007). This can be more or less challenging for teachers depending on their existent philosophies of teaching (Hoffman et al., 2015). Teachers who are more constructivist in approach are more likely to use such methods in order to encourage the mentee to construct and co-construct learning (ibid.). This construction can assist in learners taking responsibility for their own learning through the development of self-regulatory capacity (Carnell et al., 2006). It can be argued that self-regulation requires that learners are intrinsically motivated to learn (Sproule et al., 2013). Such motivation can be explained using cognitive evaluation theory (a sub-theory of SDT), which maintains that if three basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence and relatedness (feelings of security and connection to others) (Tessier et al., 2010), are fostered in social contexts then cognitive, social and behavioural development improves (Deci and Ryan, 2008). Such relatedness and autonomy support in particular foster intrinsic motivation and self-regulation (ibid.). These two facets are salient to both professional and personal mentoring relationships as identified in this study. In this context formative assessment is significant through its advocacy of learner involvement (OECD, 2008) within a collaborative environment (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) and the promotion of self-determined motivation, which relies on understanding of why success has been achieved and about capacity to learn (HMIE, 2011). Therefore having a mentor is essential where self-regulation develops through processes such as quality feedback (Higgins et al., 2001), which includes the use of effective questioning and self-evaluation as apparent in this study.

In the context of higher education, the literature on formative assessment and self-regulated learning suggests several facets of effective feedback: clarity with regard to learning goals and expectations; development of self-assessment; provision of feedback focused on learning; dialogue between teacher and learner or peers about learning; development of motivation and building of self-esteem; giving learners the chance to address the difference between their own and the desired learning, and providing information that informs teaching practices (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Findings of this study evidence the majority of these in varying degrees as discussed in this chapter and the previous one. However, it may be argued that
clarity with regard to learning goals could be an area for further consideration in that for feedback to be enacted and effective both learners and teachers must understand the learning focus and related success criteria (Black and Wiliam, 2001). In addition, if connected to success criteria, it is also valuable in fostering skills in metacognition (OECD, 2008). In this study broad learning goals were outlined in the placement guidelines in relation to the SITE. However, findings indicate a lack of specific learning intentions or success criteria as targeted foci for mentee lessons. This aspect is now discussed.

**Specific learning foci and success criteria**

CT mentor and mentee cases reported that they did not have specific learning intentions or success criteria as targeted foci for mentee lessons. This does not align with formative assessment research and associated prevalent school practices based on the ‘AifL’ policy. Literature indicates that progression in learning requires clarity in comprehension of learning aims and associated assessment criteria that evidence such learning (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Learners must understand the criteria, and how they might go about reaching it, therefore any learning aims should be relevant for learners’ current understanding and appropriate progression (Black, 2007), which, from a social constructivist perspective, entails learner involvement in formulating the criteria (Rust *et al.*, 2005). As such it is vital that learner needs are understood by teachers (or mentors) in order to plan and scaffold appropriately (Harlen, 2005). This specificity in learning aims and assessment criteria assists learners to develop metacognitive awareness in that they are more likely to understand what makes effective learning and why (Black, 2003). In addition, learners are likely to be more motivated when a clear direction for learning is evident thus fostering the likelihood of increased self-efficacy (Chappuis, 2009). Similar suggestions have been made in the context of student teachers, for example, Tillema (2009) maintains that appropriately focused feedback involves specifying agreed learning aims and assessment criteria at the outset. Furthermore, if agreement is not reached regarding the assessment criteria for lesson appraisals, mentees’ acceptance of feedback and subsequent progression in the process of learning to teach may be detrimentally affected (*ibid.*). Tang (2008) further suggests that the learning of
mentees is improved through shared understanding of assessment criteria, involving mentees in evaluating their teaching in light of these criteria and subsequently deciding on relevant next steps in learning to teach. This may also assist in defusing the traditional power duality existent within mentor/mentee relationships, as discussed in chapter four, by empowering mentees in decision-making (ibid.). In this respect mentors need to use specific learning foci and associated success criteria dialogically to foster the development of both personal values and professional elements of teaching in order that mentees can engage in critical reflection and are capable of changing professional actions as appropriate (Jones, 2009).

Findings of my study further indicated that CT mentors lacked a consensus as to whether using these formative assessment practices in mentoring would be helpful. They felt it may be useful in some ways but not in others. For example, akin to the secondary mentoring roles adopted by SMT and LA mentors discussed in the previous chapter, CT mentors felt it would be helpful to have specific learning foci for mentee lessons if difficulties were apparent in particular areas. This perspective is in opposition to the way formative assessment is enacted with school pupils where intended learning is emphasised with unintended learning as a subsidiary element (Black and Wiliam, 2009). In respect of mentees, unintended learning appears to be prevalent through CT mentors’ reservations about specifying learning aims as this may lead to the neglect of other areas of teaching practice. This is reflective of the complicated and challenging nature of teaching in a twenty first century context where a variety of teacher characteristics are desirable given the demands of a knowledge society. However, whether all areas of teaching competence should be addressed in every school placement is also a salient consideration. In the current context of Scottish ITE this is standard practice because placement reports require comments on all of the SITE elements. Mentees also need to maintain a professional development portfolio as evidence of learning against the SITE elements. This portfolio forms the basis of learning in the induction year following ITE. At this point mentees are required to identify specific strengths, development areas and action targets under each competency (GTCS, 2012). It may be suggested that this is
appropriate as mentees are deemed to be competent across all of the SITE elements from their ITE experiences.

In contrast to the use of specific assessment criteria with pupils as part of the ‘AifL’ policy, CT mentors and mentees indicated that the SITE was not used explicitly in this way in mentoring. It was not a driver in discussions about mentee progression despite the final summative report being based on the SITE elements. The question of the basis for feedback comments is therefore again relevant. As discussed previously, teachers’ attitudes and values about learning and teaching are a significant factor in their approaches to their professional responsibilities. It may be suggested that lack of engagement with competency frameworks, such as the SITE, result from CT mentors prioritising the influence of mentee teaching on pupil learning, and that the mentee is primarily occupied with learning how to deal with the challenges of everyday classroom practices (Tillema, 2009). At the time of data collection the recent GTCS professional update requirements (GTCS, 2014), where teachers are required to keep a formal online record of their professional learning activities against each SFR element, were not in place so it may be argued that teachers were less consistently engaged with competency frameworks like the SFR or SITE. In addition, as noted in the previously, in my study there was no formal policy guidance at school or local authority level on mentoring student teachers. Furthermore, mentor education within my study contexts was non-existent for ITE and the university placement guidelines contained no guidance with regard to using formative assessment in mentoring. In this respect, it may be the case that mentors were limited in their understanding of the function of the SITE regarding its use to support mentee learning in a formative manner. It could also be argued that the factors discussed above contribute to the issues of quality and consistency of mentoring experiences raised in the latest review of teacher education (Scottish Government, 2011).

In light of study findings, the question of how to scaffold mentee progression whilst meeting requisite GTCS competency requirements is a salient one. The Scottish SITE has three competency standards and general descriptors for each. A study by
Tang (2008) takes this a step further by suggesting a conceptual framework whereby each overarching competency standard is broken down into specific, descriptive assessment criteria, which are structured as four levels of increasingly complex progression, in order to provide a differentiated developmental framework for beginner teachers to facilitate awareness of their current stage of professional learning and where they are aiming to be. However, it is emphasised that the use of this framework should not be used in a mechanistic way but rather as a means of developing meaningful capacity for mentee professional learning (ibid.). This entails mentors and mentees having a shared understanding of the criteria through dialogue where mentors offer suggestions as examples of how to meet the criteria but also foster mentee capacity to make judgements on their own progress including consideration of what next steps are necessary in order to progress (ibid.). In my study one CT mentor did seem to mirror this approach in some respects in that she discussed a focus SITE element with her mentee in terms of what it meant, why it was important, how it might be enacted and assessed. She viewed this as helpful in giving the mentee specific criteria to aim for and also recognised that such procedures are employed in schools as an assessment of competence, therefore, all teachers should be familiar with them.

As noted above the SITE was not used explicitly in mentoring discussions about mentee progression as a means of formative support or in light of the final summative report being based on the SITE elements. However, participants viewed formative and summative assessment as being connected processes. This is in opposition to traditional perceptions where they are placed as a duality with summative assessment based in positivist conceptions of knowledge and thereby aligned with the quantitative measurement of defined criteria which are used as a comparative measure against wider attainment expectations (Sach, 2015). In contrast formative assessment with its basis in constructivist epistemology (HMIE, 2011) is an integral, dialogic part of daily learning and teaching focusing on knowledge constructed by individuals and in collaboration with others (Serafini, 2001) to foster appropriate decisions about progression in learning (Black et al., 2009). In this respect it may be viewed as valid in its provision of substantive evidence across more
variety of areas than is typically encompassed in summative assessment (Harlen, 2005), however, it can also be less reliable due to its interpretative nature (Yorke, 2003) and the influence of different contexts on perceptions of learner capability (Harlen, 2005). It has also been argued that its use is impeded by the focus on summative assessment and that they ought not to be connected due to their purposive difference (Wiliam et al., 2004).

However, it may be argued that formative and summative assessment can be used effectively in tandem but the roles played by each and how they are related must be accorded due attention (Black and Wiliam, 2001). If used simultaneously learners may not attend to the formative advice and may focus on product, which for student teachers refers to their concern with being ‘satisfactory’ on the summative assessment form rather than thinking about what they are learning. This was not the case in my study where participants viewed formative and summative assessment as linked in that the end of placement summative assessment report was seen as an accumulation of formative assessment dialogue. In this respect, the formative dialogue undertaken informed the SITE summative report, therefore, was confirmation for mentees so anxiety around the report was alleviated. Harlen (2005) suggests the use of feedback to communicate about progress in learning as well as teaching learners to self-assess in relation to assessment criteria are particularly useful in this regard. This dialogic process aligns with understandings of discussion as a key part of mentoring within the context of collaboration. In light of these findings, it can be argued that the combination of placement dialogue and professional standards (such as the SITE) serves the functions of both formative and summative assessment (Cheng and Tang, 2008). In addition, these formative practices have the potential to make a contribution to summative reports in that a substantial amount of information is gathered about learning and used to inform progressive next steps (Black, 2003) which helps in determining whether summative criteria have been met (Harlen, 2005). In this sense their relationship is a complementary one, rather than a duality, with their different purposes remaining distinct. Formative and summative assessment may also be viewed as connected with regard to one person using both for their inherent purposes (ibid.). This was the
case in my findings where, as discussed in the previous chapter, the mentor’s role involved assessing mentees both formatively and summatively.

**Potential for the Use of Formative Assessment in Mentoring**

**Mentee and mentor professional learning**

In terms of mentoring student teachers, formative assessment was seen as helpful with regard to progression in learning to teach through dialogue and peer assessment. With regard to dialogue, mentees’ ability to self-evaluate, to take responsibility for their learning, provision of balanced feedback, and mentor and mentee questioning were identified as salient elements. These aspects have been discussed in this chapter, with regard to perceptions of the use of formative assessment in mentoring, and the previous one in respect of participants’ understandings of mentoring as encompassing a variety of dimensions.

As noted above, peer assessment was seen as potentially helpful for mentee professional learning. Peer assessment is an aspect of formative assessment and, like self-assessment, relates to principles that learners learning best if they understand clearly what they are trying to learn, what is expected of them, are involved in deciding next steps in their learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998). With regard to mentee professional learning, CT mentors and mentees noted that peer assessment would allow mentees to learn from each other’s practice on their school placements. Kensington-Miller (2011) describes this as having an alternative support mechanism to discuss any issues as well as possible solutions. In doing so, it is argued to foster improvement in teaching practices (Cheng et al., 2012) and encourage mentees to think more specifically about competency standards and how to achieve them (Liu and Carless, 2006). Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan (2009) report that in using peer assessment their study participants felt they had improved across a variety of teaching areas such as planning, questioning, teaching approaches, class management and pupil assessment.
Engagement in peer assessment may promote mentee learning within the realms of reflective practice in that it requires participation in both self and peer evaluation of teaching (ibid.). In this respect it fosters the development of metacognitive capacities (Wiliam, 2014) where learners develop an increased consciousness of what they are learning, how they are learning and what helps them to learn (LTSc, 2004). In this respect, peer assessment fosters the characteristics and skills required by independent, motivated learners (ibid.), who are able to take responsibility for their own learning, and evidences a social constructivist perspective in the advocacy of the use of reflection and collaborative activities where learners become more conscious of learning processes and so may employ them in future experiences (Black and Wiliam, 2009). However, peer assessment is not without its issues. Several studies indicate that peers are not convinced that they have requisite knowledge, skills and experience to provide meaningful comments (see, for example, Liu and Carless, 2006; Mackie and Frame, 2008; Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009; Kuusisaari, 2014).

CT mentors also suggested that the relationship between peers would be more comfortable than with them due to mentees being familiar with each other from university so feedback may be easier to take on board. Such relationships take time to build (Kensington-Miller, 2011) and trust is required between parties with regard to the feedback offered (Kuusisaari, 2014). As such matching of peers is significant to foster relationships that are positive, helpful and based on equality (Hargreaves, 2010). Some participants in my study suggested aspects such as personalities and age should be taken into consideration. As they were at the same stage in their degree programme, peer assessment may also be viewed as a non-threatening support mechanism (Laker et al., 2008) as mentees are at similar stages of development (Mackie and Frame, 2008) so may feel comfortable to ask questions and take on board feedback more readily that they would with mentors (Douglas et al., 2013; Wiliam, 2014) in that dialogue is more symmetrical (Mackie and Frame, 2008).

Data further indicates that peer assessment was viewed as potentially problematic. In opposition to the views of CT mentors, mentees were concerned about being able
to engage in constructive feedback with peers because it would be difficult to point out areas for development given that this was, in effect, criticism. Friendships formed within a university context as part of teacher education may prohibit ability to engage in constructive feedback in that mentees may feel inhibited in criticising peers’ teaching as they feel it might adversely affect the relationship but, by not doing so, they are providing a false representation of the lesson (Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009), which is unhelpful in terms of mentee progression in learning to teach. McGarr and Clifford (2012) further report that some of their study participants were not positive about peer assessment as they felt peers were likely to be more critical and, in that respect, may experience feelings of guilt. This highlights the importance of peers understanding both the purposes and value of processes like peer assessment (Al-Barakat and Al-Hassan, 2009).

In addition, CT mentors talked about logistical difficulties, for example, issues of time within an already short five-week placement. The teacher education programme in this study consists of two five-week and one ten-week school placements. Within these experiences university placement guidelines require mentees to meet expectations based on the SITE as a whole with regard to planning, teaching, pupil assessment and self-evaluation as well as tasks for university coursework. This is time consuming given the complex nature of school timetables and activities. A study on peer assessment within ITE indicated that organising time for peer assessment was problematic in this respect (Mackie and Frame, 2008). In addition, as mentees were usually not placed within the same school, they had to factor in travel time to complete the peer assessment activities set (ibid.).

With regard to mentor professional learning, participants noted that mentor self-evaluation skills could be fostered through engaging with formative assessment within mentoring and that this may promote mentor professional learning. This finding mirrors the understandings of CT mentors and mentees that a benefit of mentoring for mentors is making them reflect on their own practice. This aspect was discussed in chapter four with regard to mentor professional learning within the context of power relationships as ‘flux’ rather than duality. CT mentors also felt that
formative assessment had been useful with regard to their knowledge and understanding about the mentoring process through a variety of aspects such as reflecting on their own teaching, the importance of consistent, balanced dialogue and appropriate feedback. Again these aspects have been discussed within this chapter and the previous one. Participants also noted that they required support to develop the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. This aspect is now discussed further.

**Support for using formative assessment in mentoring**

Participants noted that support was required to develop the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. Given the significant amount of time spent in schools by student teachers, effective mentoring is vital to foster quality and sharing of knowledge from one generation to another (Pollard, 2005). The latest review of teacher education reports inconsistency in school placement experiences (Scottish Government, 2011). This is a salient issue for teacher education (ibid.) as mentors require specific understanding of aspects such as how teachers develop (Elliot and Calderhead, 2004) in order to be equipped to deal with the complexities inherent in supporting both professional and personal dimensions of mentoring as well as ensuring learner needs are met (Ulvik and Sunde, 2013).

LA mentors noted that mentor experience and confidence would be influential factors in developing the skills necessary to use formative assessment within mentoring. Although experience may be a factor in learning to mentor effectively, there is a danger of becoming engrained into accepted practices (Langdon, 2014). However, as noted with regard to understandings of formative assessment as form and function, expertise develops through experience if it is used as a learning tool, which entails conscious reflective practice to problematize teaching procedures (Tsui, 2003). In this respect, as discussed in the previous chapter, reliance on tacit and experiential knowledge may fail to recognise that mentoring can be a central facet of change in fostering teachers who are aware and able to cope with the complicated nature of teaching as an academic, social and cultural process (Gardiner, 2009). As such, without professional learning opportunities for mentoring, which
foster effective knowledge and understanding, the quality of placement experiences for mentees may be compromised (Ambrosetti et al., 2014).

Although participants acknowledged the need for support, they were unsure about what the content of such support might be. LA mentors specifically suggested that a less directive mentoring style would be appropriate. This may be particularly significant given that, in the absence of mentor education, mentors tend to be more directive (Hennison et al., 2008). This kind of mentoring promotes relationships where mentors tend to advise, dominate talk, view themselves as the ‘expert’ and are product rather than process focused (Carnell et al., 2006) akin to an instructional model of learning. This is widely recognised as not conducive to effective learning or mentoring (Rogers, 2004), and detrimental to a generation of new teachers who must cope with the demands of the knowledge society and related requirements of learning and teaching. Non-directive methods are based in constructivism and focus on facilitating mentee understanding through mentor scaffolding that encourages mentees to be active and resourceful using a variety of educative strategies (Carnell et al., 2006), where mentees are encouraged to deconstruct and reconstruct practice, in order to promote understanding of past experiences and inform future ones (Harrison et al., 2005). Therefore, it could be argued that those associated with formative assessment where learner involvement is paramount, for example, shared learning intentions and success criteria, self and peer assessment, quality feedback and questioning, are apposite.

Although participants were unsure about what the content might be, they were able to articulate how using formative assessment in mentoring might be implemented with reference to specific professional learning mechanisms. CT mentors emphasised that having time allocated to mentor in school was vital. This accords with Desimone et al. (2012) who found that formal time for mentoring meant that mentors were more able to undertake observations and engage in dialogue with mentees. In Scotland under the McCrone Agreement (Scottish Executive, 2001), a review of teachers’ pay and conditions, teachers are not required to mentor student teachers or newly qualified teachers (Kirk, 2000). Mentoring is viewed as a
professional obligation, expected from external organisations, a matter of dedication and personal desire (Brisard et al., 2006). The most recent review, the McCormac Report (Crown Copyright, 2011), does not formalise this requirement but it does recognise the importance of mentors within the induction year following ITE. Within this context mentors are accorded specific time to provide support for inductees. It may be argued that this helps to ensure mentees have designated time with mentors and thus, as noted regarding the potential of formative assessment in fostering mentee professional learning, acknowledges that such relationships require time to develop (Rippon and Martin, 2003).

Responses further indicated that mentor education through CLPL courses would be helpful. As discussed previously, mentor education within the context of ITE is non-existent in Scotland. It is only available to a small minority of mentors who oversee post-ITE induction year teachers (Education Scotland, 2015), whereas, in England OFSTED requires that mentors of partnership schools in university based ITE programmes undergo mentor education with their partner HEI provider (EPPI 2008; Sorensen, 2014). In alignment with the latest review of ITE (Scottish Government, 2011), the McCormac report (Crown Copyright, 2011) noted that high quality CLPL should be available for areas relevant to teacher professional learning. It further advised that its availability was variable within different local authorities (ibid.). In this study LA mentors viewed support as coming from school collegiate practice through professional dialogue within and across cluster schools. Professional learning amongst peer groups is argued to be most effective and sustained when depth of learning, collaborative contexts, teacher requirements and expertise are considered (Menter et al., 2010). It is also suggested that consistent professional learning opportunities for mentoring are better than traditional short CLPL courses (Pogodzinski, 2012). If these conditions are met mentors are more likely to be able to gain knowledge, understanding and skills to assist them in their roles (Gardiner, 2009).

Mentees also suggested it would be helpful to have some kind of school policy and that this should be similar across schools and local authorities to promote consistency
of placement experience. As noted previously, SMT and LA mentors reported that there were no formal school or local authority policy or guidance on mentoring. Furthermore, study participants felt that relevant expectations, roles and examples of using formative assessment in mentoring should be included in the university placement guidelines to foster clarity. This is reflective of recommendations made in the Stage 2 and HMIE Scoping Reviews of ITE, which advocate clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of partners with reference to issues of school placement quality (Smith et al., 2006). However, it also brings to the fore issues of collaboration and power in respect of the university being responsible for providing guidance. This is indicative of comments made in the previous chapter with regard to theory/practice juxtapositions and dimensions of power in respect of the view that the university guidelines were to be followed regarding the content and expectations of the placement experience. This perspective is further evident with reference to support required for using formative assessment in mentoring in that responses indicated that mentor education through CLPL courses provided by universities and local authorities should be part of a partnership strategy. However, two CT mentors remarked that the content of such courses and guidelines should be jointly negotiated with teachers in terms of what would work in practice. This accords with other studies (see, for example, Nabhani et al., 2014) where it is argued that adult learners want to be involved in the content, purposes and activities of CLPL courses. It may be suggested that doing so fosters engagement with, and ownership of, learning as opposed to the traditional hierarchical model of CLPL course imposition. One LA mentor noted the possibility of identifying a member of staff within a school cluster group to address specific aspects of professional learning as a means by which to foster involvement of the local authority in CLPL activities. This approach was used in a New Zealand mentoring programme where, in partnership with teacher education universities, a senior member of staff was selected to liaise with mentors and mentees in clusters of schools about mentoring (McCormack and Thomas, 2003). Study findings indicate that quality of mentoring had begun to increase as a result (ibid.). In addition, other studies have suggested that the opportunity of having a variety of viewpoints in the course of mentoring assists with mentee professional
learning in its provision of constructive assessment information (Tillema and Smith, 2006; Tillema, 2009).

Further remarks were made about universities extending opportunities for partnership with schools to discuss aspects of school placement mentoring. One LA mentor noted that it would be advisable to do this through certain partnerships as she saw it as impossible for universities to support every school in which a student teacher might be placed. The kind of partnership suggested by this mentor moves on from that based on complementarity (Furlong et al., 2000), where school placements promote contextualised knowledge and understanding and teacher educator institutions foster that which is more generalised (Smith et al., 2006), to that of an enhanced nature. The latest ITE review echoes conceptions of such enhanced partnership and makes specific recommendations with regard to the use of ‘hub’ schools where university tutors and school staff work much more closely together to promote quality and consistency of placement experiences (Scottish Government, 2011). This model is based on the PDS practices in the United States and Australia (Menter et al., 2011) where instructional coaches in schools lead on the professional learning of qualified teachers and student teachers (Snow and Marshall, 2002).

Indicative of a social constructivist view of learning (Vygotsky, 1978), schools and universities work collaboratively on a regular basis in this model to observe and assess mentees (Snow and Marshall, 2002) akin to a professional learning community (Wenger et al., 2002) where personal and professional relationships are central (Menter et al., 2011). Findings from a Scottish ITE provider indicate that the use of this model resulted in positive effects on the professional learning of student teachers in the areas of teaching capacity, confidence and self-esteem (ibid.). However, such positive movements within the realms of partnership are not without issues (Snow and Marshall, 2002). All parties involved must appreciate that the process is mutually beneficial for it to be effective (ibid.). As in any mutual mentoring context, reciprocity is key for collaborative mentoring relationships in its acknowledgement that all are mentors and learners. This fosters equity among mentors and mentees (Stanulis and Russell, 2000). If this is not evident managerialist conceptions of governance may result rather than models of
professional learning such as was the case with the English National Partnership Project (Furlong et al., 2008).

**Conclusion**

To conclude, data from this study suggests that understandings of formative assessment were variable. Most participants were comfortable in describing its forms through examples of classroom practice. However, talking about function, why it is used, was an area of uncertainty. Several professional learning sources were cited as the bases of their understandings. Participants also understood formative and summative assessment as connected processes. With regard to perceptions of the use of formative assessment, findings suggest that it was used within the main mentoring relationship between CT mentors and mentees. Responses indicate that it was employed subconsciously in contrast to the structured, explicit way it is used with school pupils. The key subconscious elements that emerged were constructive dialogue, specific learning foci and success criteria, and implicit use of the SITE as assessment criteria. Furthermore, participants viewed it as potentially helpful in the professional development of mentors and mentees in terms of learning to teach through mechanisms such as dialogue, self-evaluation and peer assessment. It was noted that support was required to develop the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. In this respect, participants were able to articulate how it might be implemented with reference to specific professional development mechanisms, however, were unsure about what its content might be.
Chapter Six - Conclusions, Recommendations and Reflections

This final chapter aims to draw conclusions and make recommendations from my research study. It begins by making conclusions with regard to my research questions and identifying study limitations. Next its contribution to knowledge is outlined and exemplified with regard to a synthesis of findings and associated discussions. Recommendations are subsequently made for future mentoring research, policy and practice. The chapter ends with some reflections on the research process from both personal and professional standpoints.

Conclusions

This study is concerned with understanding the complexities inherent in the mentoring process. It investigates understandings of mentoring primary education student teachers within a school placement context. Further, it explores understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices to support professional learning within that process. In addition, it aims to identify salient implications for mentoring practices within ITE.

Study participants were student teachers in year three of their undergraduate primary education ITE programme, their class teacher mentors, school management level mentors and local authority mentors of the schools in which the students were placed. Chapters four and five report key findings and discussion of my research questions. Each of these questions is now addressed in turn.

Understandings of mentoring within a school placement context

Chapter four describes and discusses the findings of research question one: what are mentors’ and student teachers’ understandings of mentoring within a school placement context? Findings and discussion show that mentoring is understood as a...
complex, multidimensional process involving a range of relationships to support the professional learning of the student teachers in this study. As discussed in detail in chapter four, my findings both align with and are in opposition to existent literature. Some studies (see, for example, Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Tillema and Smith, 2009; Tillema, 2003) suggest that the opportunity to work with a variety of mentors helps with mentee professional learning. In this study four mentoring relationships are evident, local authority/school; school/university; school management mentor/CT mentor/mentee; CT mentor/mentee. However, these relationships vary in terms of their form and function and thus the extent to which they provide quality assistance in fostering mentee professional learning.

The relationship between local authorities and schools in the context of ITE is barely existent. There is lack of consensus about whether local authorities should be involved with mentoring student teachers and, in reality, such involvement is not evident apart from in the induction year that follows undergraduate and postgraduate primary education programmes. The connection between school and university is similarly understood as remote with universities being seen as responsible for theory and schools for practice. The relationship between the school management mentor, CT mentor and mentee is also a remote one, evident at a structural level prior to the placement and if there are issues during the placement. Findings indicate that the key relationship is the one between the CT mentor and mentee. It is a close one, evident on a daily basis in the context of the classroom and associated expectations derived from the student’s degree stage and the SITE competency framework set out by the GTCS. A holistic examination of participant responses elucidates this close relationship in that mentoring is understood as being focused on classroom practice, namely the mentee learning to teach. Further analysis of CT mentor and mentee responses suggests that they understood mentoring as involving both personal and professional dimensions. From these dimensions elements of collaboration and power emerge. Figure 6.1 summarises the key themes around these four relationships with regard to how participants understand mentoring in terms of who it involves and the extent of this involvement.
Figure 6.1 Mentoring Relationships within a Primary School Placement Context
Understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment in mentoring student teachers within a school placement context

Chapter five describes and discusses the findings of research question two about mentors’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment in mentoring within a school placement context, and research question three about the extent to which formative assessment supports mentor and mentee professional learning.

Findings suggest that understandings of formative assessment are variable. Most participants were comfortable in describing its forms through examples of classroom practice. However, talking about why it is used, its function, was an area of uncertainty. Several professional learning sources were cited as the bases of their understandings, namely, reading resources, collegiate dialogue and CLPL courses. Participants also understood formative and summative assessment as connected processes in that the end of placement summative assessment report was seen as an accumulation of formative assessment dialogue. In this respect, the formative dialogue undertaken informed the final report. With regard to perceptions of the use of formative assessment, findings suggest that it was used within the main mentoring relationship between CT mentors and mentees. Responses indicate that it was employed subconsciously in contrast to the structured, explicit way it is used with school pupils. The key subconscious elements that emerged were constructive dialogue, specific learning foci and success criteria, and implicit use of SITE as assessment criteria.

The role of formative assessment in supporting mentor and mentee professional learning

The use of formative assessment in mentoring was perceived as supporting mentor and mentee professional learning in particular areas. In terms of mentoring student teachers, formative assessment was seen as helpful with regard to progression in
learning to teach through dialogue and peer assessment. With regard to dialogue, provision of balanced feedback, questioning, and mentees’ ability to self-evaluate and take responsibility for their learning were identified as salient elements. Participants also noted that mentor self-evaluation skills could be fostered through engaging with formative assessment within mentoring and that this may promote mentor professional learning. In addition, CT mentors felt that formative assessment had been useful with regard to their knowledge and understanding about the mentoring process through a variety of aspects such as reflecting on their own teaching, the importance of consistent, balanced dialogue and appropriate feedback. Participants felt that support was required to develop the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process. In this respect, they were able to articulate how it might be implemented with reference to specific professional learning mechanisms, however, were unsure about what its content might be.

Study Limitations

All research projects have limitations. Those relevant to this study include consideration of generalisation, recruitment and the interview process. As outlined in chapter three, a common criticism of case study research is lack of generalisability of findings. Given the qualitative nature of my study, it may be suggested that traditional positivist notions are inappropriate. The notion of a ‘fuzzy’ generalisation is such that there are no absolute social truths stated, just possibilities put forward regarding the potential for research findings to be more widely applicable in terms of influencing policy and practice through dialogue between relevant parties (Bassey, 1999). In this respect, ‘fuzzy’ generalisation is apposite for this study given its focus on comprehending and making meaning from the perceptions of actors within their specific contexts then using these findings as a basis for considering possible future research, policy and practice.

With regard to recruitment, initially my plans were to recruit student teachers from another university programme to avoid issues with using my own students such as the ‘interviewer effect’, where interviewees say what they think is expected as
opposed giving an honest account (Denscombe, 1998), and those with students feeling unable to be open in their responses for fear of being judged by one of their tutors. Recruitment had been agreed with the programme co-ordinator of another undergraduate primary programme, however, these plans fell through so participants were recruited from my own students. Fears about my students feeling unable to be open in their responses proved to be unfounded. In fact, my own attitudes and beliefs about the importance of establishing positive relationships with students were evident in that they felt at ease and therefore confident to be honest in their interview responses. This was evident through their non-verbal body language in appearing relaxed and verbally through laughter and sharing amusing stories. Mentees’ confidence to be honest was evident in the content of their responses, for example, in being critical of mentors and willing to share their thoughts on how the university and school might improve school placement experiences.

My selection of semi-structured interviews was an effective way of collecting data for this study as their inherent flexibility presented opportunities for me to inquire further thereby promoting depth of analysis (May, 2001). Building on pilot interview experiences and my awareness of being an active interviewer (Esterberg, 2002), my interview techniques became, if anything, overly active as interview transcripts were lengthy and detailed. This had implications for time spent on data analysis but the advice afforded to me by more experienced colleagues influenced my approach throughout the process: ‘better too much data than not enough’. However, there is a fine balance between too much and too little, something for further consideration when undertaking future projects. In addition, within interviews the issue of power is important as researchers may be viewed as more knowledgeable as the writers of the study and/or due to status such as being a Doctoral student or member of academic staff within a university. This can result in an imbalance of power towards the interviewer (Denscombe, 1998) and potentially the ‘interviewer effect’ noted previously (ibid.). In my study one CT mentor lacked confidence and often seemed to be concerned she was not giving me the ‘right answer’. This meant being reflexive in my awareness of her hierarchical perception of our relationship through being open in my probes and responses to assure her of
my interest in her understandings and viewpoints, that there was no ‘right answer’ per se. This is reminiscent of the notion of an ‘active’ interview, an attempt to integrate traditional and social constructivist approaches to interviewing where knowledge and understanding are jointly constructed through interviewer and interviewee dialogue to build shared interpretations within the interview rather than just from the end product (Esterberg, 2002).

Originally, my plans were to use focus group interviews after the semi-structured ones to probe issues arising from initial data analysis. This was not possible due to logistical issues, however, the detail contained in the semi-structured transcripts allayed my concerns about being unable to conduct the planned focus group interviews. It would have been interesting to examine responses from a focus group context where interviewees are more likely to produce more contentious responses than in an individual one, indicative of a ‘risky shift phenomenon’ (Thomas, 2009:169). However, this is something worth reflecting on within a post-doctoral research context.

**Contribution to Knowledge**

One contribution to knowledge is that this study is set within two Scottish local authorities and one Higher Education Institution. Participant understandings, perceptions and practices of mentoring within a primary school context are significant in contributing a Scottish perspective to the international body of literature in this area. As outlined in chapter one, the Scottish ITE structure is fairly narrow in that all prospective teachers must undertake either a four-year undergraduate or one-year postgraduate qualification within a university provider (GTCS, 2012). Subsequently, in order to obtain full registration with the GTCS, candidates must undertake an induction year either within an allocated Scottish school or through the flexible route by teaching on supply, in independent schools or outside of Scotland (ibid.). Other countries such as England, the USA and Canada have more variety of ITE routes.
An additional contribution is that my study addresses a gap in the current bodies of knowledge with regard to the use of formative assessment in mentoring beginner teachers. Substantial research evidence exists with regard to the importance of formative assessment principles and practices with learners in school contexts (see, for example, Black and Wiliam, 1998; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; Black and Wiliam, 2001; Harlen, 2005; OECD, 2008) but less so in Higher Education (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Little explicit acknowledgement of the significance of formative assessment in the process of mentoring beginner teachers is apparent in the literature: one example is evident from the Netherlands (Tillema and Smith, 2009) which addresses the effect of lack of agreement between mentees, university tutors and school mentors regarding the assessment criteria for lesson ‘appraisals’ on students’ acceptance of feedback and subsequent progression in the process of learning to teach. Another identifies the use of portfolios as the most effective model of formative assessment for promoting the personal and professional learning of student teachers during school placement experiences (EPPI, 2008). The majority of recognition of the importance of formative assessment principles and practices in the literature on mentoring evidences individualised, implicit examination of aspects such as critical reflection, feedback, self-regulation and shared criteria (see, for example, Bleach, 1997; Kullman, 1998; Hargreaves and Fullen, 2000; Stanulis and Russell, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Harrison et al., 2005; Perry et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2008). Salient connections between the key formative assessment principles and practices and mentoring beginner teachers are therefore unclear.

In addition, a synthesis of findings from chapters four and five demonstrates that participant understandings of mentoring influence how formative assessment is used within the mentoring process. To exemplify, collaboration is a requisite element of mentoring to promote the use of formative assessment because it is a dialogic process. Furthermore, the personal dimension of mentoring evident in data emerged as significant in the use of formative assessment practices in that attributes of positivity, openness and honesty in dialogue were seen as important. Moreover, indicative of the professional dimension, key elements of formative assessment that emerged from data were constructive dialogue, employing specific learning foci and
success criteria, and implicit use of the SITE as assessment criteria. These are key practices in seminal formative assessment research as outlined in chapter two. In this respect, it may be argued that CT mentors and mentees are engaging more with formative assessment within the mentoring process than they are explicitly able to articulate.

The constructive dialogue finding noted with regard to the use of formative assessment in chapter five is also understood as a key element of mentoring in the form of the feedback and self-evaluation. Furthermore, the balanced nature of feedback described with regard to the use of constructive dialogue is promoted by formative assessment texts and both aligns with, and is in opposition to, participant understandings of mentoring where a focus on development points as well as balanced dialogue was apparent. Constructive dialogue also encompassed questioning, which is a key component of interactive formative assessment practices (Black and Wiliam, 2009) using different kinds of open questions from simple to more complex ones as outlined with regard to understandings of mentoring in chapter four. However, an interesting distinction emerges in respect of its use as part of formative assessment in that responses focused on CT mentor questioning whereas, in respect of general understandings of mentoring, a key role of mentees was viewed as to ask questions.

To foster the use of formative assessment in mentoring, mentees’ ability to engage in constructive self-evaluation was identified as an essential characteristic of a mentor/mentee relationship. This data mirrors understandings of mentoring because self-evaluation was viewed as a key characteristic of an effective mentee and in terms of a CT mentor’s role in encouraging mentees to engage in such self-evaluation. It was also noted that mentor self-evaluation skills could be fostered through engaging with formative assessment within mentoring and that this may promote mentor professional learning. This finding reflects the view that a benefit of mentoring for mentors is making them reflect on their own practice. In addition, CT mentors felt that formative assessment had been useful with regard to their knowledge and understanding about the mentoring process through a variety of
aspects in respect of their understandings of mentoring, for example, reflecting on their own teaching, the importance of consistent, balanced dialogue and appropriate feedback.

**Recommendations for Research, Policy and Practice**

Recommendations are now made from this study that will inform research, policy, and practices in mentoring student teachers for universities, schools and local authorities within the Scottish context. These have the potential to extend to national and international settings with particular reference to the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process.

**Policy and practice**

Two areas for further development within mentoring policy and practice emerge from study findings and discussion: mentor education and improved partnership between ITE providers, schools and local authorities.

**Mentor education**

The findings of this study suggest that mentor education may help to improve the quality and consistency of mentoring for student teachers. The importance of mentor education is well documented in existent literature (see, for example, McCormack and Thomas, 2003; Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005; Hobson et al., 2009; Hudson, 2013; Pogodzinski, 2012; Desimone et al., 2012; Richter et al., 2013; Ulvik and Sunde, 2013; Langdon, 2014). The latest Scottish partnership review reports that any mentor education that was available is targeted at those involved in the post-ITE induction programme with mentors reporting positive effects of such input (Education Scotland, 2015). Data from my study indicates that there was no mentor education, formal policy or guidance on mentoring student teachers within schools and local authorities. Resultant suggestions are that a lack of comprehension of the complexity of mentoring is apparent, for example, in terms of the different
dimensions and approaches to mentoring and subsequent impact on the process. Ambrosetti et al. (2014) note that class teacher mentors of ITE students are neither confident nor certain in this area so are ill-equipped with regard to complexities of the mentor role which can result in inappropriate support for mentee learning being provided. This is exacerbated by the short timescales of school placements and dual mentor/assessor roles (ibid.). Variability in the quality of school placements is reported in the latest review of partnership between local authorities and university ITE providers (Education Scotland, 2015). Mentees interviewed for this review noted that mentors relied on their experience rather than having had formal education on mentoring. These findings mirror previous discussions about the data in this study in that reliance on tacit and experiential knowledge may fail to recognise mentoring as a central facet of change in fostering teachers who are aware and able to cope with the complicated nature of teaching as an academic, social and cultural process (Gardiner, 2009). Aspfors and Fransson (2015) note that any mentor education offered by local authorities in Scotland as driven by documentation rather than the process of mentoring. This may be explained, for example, with reference to the focus on the SITE competency framework (QAA, 2006) and associated requirements of student teachers to meet its specified elements. Such an approach may foster a transmissive, reductionist conception of teaching and what it means to be competent, for example, lack of consideration of spectrums of competency may be apparent. A focus on documentation can also lead to lack of mentor discussion about, and practise of, salient elements of the mentoring process such as reflective dialogue, and may result in a reductionist, technique-driven view of mentoring as opposed to recognizing its inherent complexity (Carver and Feiman-Nemser, 2009). This has implications for the planning of mentor education programmes in terms of their form and content.

The mentor education discussed above may take a variety of forms. As noted in chapter five, high quality CLPL should be available for areas relevant to teacher professional learning (Crown Copyright, 2011). Such learning needs to be continual in order to promote depth of knowledge and understanding as well as enhancing skills, and differentiated according to mentor requirements (Gardiner, 2009). As
articulated in this study, the content of CLPL courses should be jointly negotiated with teachers in terms of what would work in practice as this fosters engagement with, and ownership of, learning as opposed to the traditional hierarchical model of CLPL course imposition by local authorities or universities. Tillman (2005) also notes the importance of involving beginner teachers in dialogue about mentoring requirements in order to foster both mentee professional learning and pupil learning. In this sense the responsibility for developing an informed perspective about the mentoring process does not just lie with mentors. The inclusion of mentees in mentoring education opportunities is vital in order that they are informed and equipped to more effectively engage in the mentoring process. This may be carried out in a number of ways. An effective starting point could be for ITE providers to incorporate education about the mentoring process into placement preparation elements of degree programmes. This is not currently a significant requirement of ITE programmes in general and was not evident within the institution specific to this study. This may in turn facilitate further learning through other dialogic opportunities such as with individual school mentors and university tutors, and participation in CLPL courses within school placement contexts. The latter could foster inclusion into school PLCs where mentees are able to discuss and debate mentoring as a process in order to de-construct and re-construct meaning in an informed manner, indicative of a constructivist, understanding-oriented conceptions of learning and teaching, which might facilitate avoidance of surface level, technique-driven practices. However, mentees should also be aware that PLCs can be dysfunctional in terms of over-socialisation in that ‘groupthink’ may be evident (Hargreaves, 2003:108) where members are predisposed towards particular knowledge (Roberts, 2006) that might not accord with mentees’ own conceptions of learning and teaching.

Existent literature highlights key aspects to be considered when designing mentor education opportunities. Mentoring practices tend to be influenced by mentors’ own experiences of being taught and/or mentored, which may not align with current preferred methods (Rajuan et al., 2007), therefore, reflective of constructivist approaches to learning and teaching, it is important that mentors are given the chance
to deconstruct such experiences through mentor education opportunities (Jones and Straker, 2006). The variety of complex mentoring roles, relationships and potential tensions, such those associated with being both mentor and assessor, need to be attended to alongside appropriate practices to address them (Jones, 2009; Fransson, 2010; Achinstein and Davis, 2014). Consideration of both professional and personal dimensions is also necessary (Young et al., 2007). Ambrosetti et al. (2014) suggest that mentoring takes various phases so mentors need to be prepared with requisite theoretical knowledge and skills. The first phase is preparation where fundamental knowledge and skills are acquired (ibid.). These are vital in the pre-mentoring phase prior to the placement context where mentor and mentee establish the ethos, roles, aims and communicative forms of their relationship (ibid.). The development and evaluative phases are concerned with how aims are met, assessed and adjusted accordingly (ibid.). All of these phases require specific mentoring knowledge, understanding and skills that assist with comprehension and evaluation of the process of mentoring (Gardiner, 2009). Contextual differences may also be a salient consideration for mentor education opportunities. For example, Jaspers et al. (2014) point out that mentors in primary education contexts may be more exposed to the tensions of being a mentor and a class teacher than those in secondary schools as they are responsible for the same class all of the time rather than a succession of different pupils. This means primary education mentors may see mentee errors more often so are more aware of the influence on subsequent pupil learning (ibid.). This awareness can also be heightened by the closer relationship primary teachers may have with pupils due to the consistent time periods spent together (ibid.).

As noted previously, mentor education within the context of ITE was non-existent within local authorities in this study. University placement documentation was used as a guide regarding expectations and requirements of mentees. However, these guidelines provided no guidance with regard to specific approaches to mentoring or the use of formative assessment within that process. This is an area that could be addressed within the realms of mentor education in light of the findings of this study which indicate that formative assessment is being employed subconsciously in
mentoring practices, and that support is required in this area to promote mentor and mentee professional learning.

With regard to the feedback process more specifically, the recent partnership review indicates that consistency and quality of assessment feedback across mentors is variable (Education Scotland, 2015). Given that feedback is a key element of formative assessment principles and practices, including the use of formative assessment within mentor education would be useful. This may facilitate communications about expectations of students at certain points of their programmes akin to the practice of establishing success criteria within formative assessment practices. As noted previously, existent research indicates that lack of agreement between mentees, university tutors and school mentors regarding the assessment criteria for lesson ‘appraisals’ has a detrimental effect on students’ acceptance of feedback and subsequent progression in the process of learning to teach (Tillema and Smith, 2009). However, within this area it would be important to address the need to be flexible with regard to such assessment criteria, as is the case with school pupils where both intended and unintended learning is recognised, in order to foster the development of mentee personal values, capacity to make decisions and engage in constructive self-evaluation (Jones, 2009). Addressing this aspect of formative assessment may also help mentors and mentee capacity to engage with competency standards. In my study the SITE was not used explicitly in that it was not a driver in discussions about mentee progression despite the final summative report being based on the SITE elements. As discussed in chapter five, Tang (2008) suggests a conceptual framework whereby each overarching competency standard is broken down into specific, descriptive assessment criteria which are structured as four levels of increasingly complex progression in order to provide a differentiated framework of learning for beginner teachers.

**Partnership**

In my study responses indicated that mentor education provided by universities and local authorities as part of an increased partnership strategy would be helpful. This is an area that is currently receiving attention by ITE providers and local authorities
in response to the latest review of partnership (Education Scotland, 2015). In this review the value of existent arrangements was evident in mentees reports that they appreciated the opportunity to gain viewpoints from mentors in both school and university contexts while on school placements (ibid.). The involvement of current practitioners in university programmes was also highly rated in terms of their capacity to share their classroom practices (ibid.). However, the review suggests that partnership is still in need of attention in order to foster consistency of student experience within ITE programmes (ibid.). In this respect, the most recent ITE review (Scottish Government, 2011) recommends moving on from partnership based on ‘complementarity’, where school placements promote contextualised knowledge and understanding and teacher educator institutions foster that which is more generalised (Smith et al., 2006), to that of an enhanced nature. In my study the potential to develop this kind of enhanced relationship is evident in that one local authority mentor noted the possibility of identifying a member of staff within a school cluster to address specific aspects of professional learning about mentoring as a means by which to foster involvement of the local authority. This approach was used in a New Zealand mentoring programme where, in partnership with teacher education universities, a senior member of staff was selected to liaise with mentors and mentees in clusters of schools about mentoring (McCormack and Thomas, 2003). Study findings indicate that quality of mentoring had begun to increase as a result (ibid.).

However, consistency of movement towards enhanced partnership around ITE is disparate across HEI providers. Some university/local authority/school activities are primarily focused with practising teachers to develop continual professional learning within Masters degree programmes based around notions of the extended professional as described by Hoyle and John (1995). There is some evidence of universities working in partnership with schools and local authorities around the area of mentoring in general, for example, the University of Stirling undertook a funded project with a variety of school and local authority staff from Perth and Kinross Council to develop online resources to support mentoring practices (Watson and Fox, 2013).
Enhanced partnership arrangements more focused within ITE provision are also emerging from other HEI providers. For example, as discussed in chapter five, the University of Glasgow’s use of ‘hub’ schools where university tutors and school staff work more closely together to promote quality and consistency of placement experiences. An initial evaluation reports that students’ professional learning improved significantly (Menter et al., 2011). Data further indicates that students gained in terms of both personal and professional dimensions of mentor support (ibid.). In addition, Education Scotland’s (2015) most recent review of partnership arrangements notes that student experience was of better quality as a result of this model. One further example of potential enhanced partnership is evident within the University of Edinburgh’s revised undergraduate primary education degree programme. This programme entails a year-long school placement undertaken in year three. Plans are currently afoot in terms of developing the specific details of working closely in partnership with identified local authorities within this extended placement (University of Edinburgh, 2015). However, initial suggestions are of shared responsibility for mentee professional learning between the student teacher, school and university (ibid.). School mentors and university tutors will work closely together in terms of mentee support during the placement experience, for example, regular meetings to discuss mentee progression and to plan appropriate support will take place (ibid.). University tutors will also meet with students in groups regularly to discuss progress and experiences (ibid.).

As evident from the above examples, new partnership arrangements are being developed within the context of ITE. However, continued consideration of, and attention to, the functions and forms of such partnerships is required within policy and practice to promote consistency across ITE experiences.

**Future directions for research**

Future directions for research emerge from my study in the area of mentoring primary student teachers and with regard to the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process.
Findings suggest that further research into the use of a variety of mentors from within and outwith the school placement context would be apposite. In my study the main mentoring relationship resided between one mentor and the mentee. However, some studies (see, for example, Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Tillema and Smith, 2006; Tillema, 2003) suggest that the opportunity to work with a variety of mentors helps with mentee professional learning. There is also a lack of clarity about how involved a management level member of staff should be in mentoring beginner teachers (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2000; Tillman, 2005; Youngs, 2007; Desimone et al., 2014).

In my study a traditional theory/practice duality (Zeichner, 2010) was apparent with regard to the relationship between university and schools. Participants suggested that universities extend opportunities for partnership with schools to discuss aspects of school placement mentoring. In addition, continuity between ITE and the early years of teaching is noted as variable between beginner teachers and their school contexts (Anthony and Kane, 2008). Scottish local authorities’ work on examining the issue of continuity and working on producing policies to facilitate and inform it as reported in 2005 (HMIe, 2005) seems to have stalled. Therefore, investigation of the role of the university tutor within emerging enhanced partnership arrangements, such as within those described previously, would be apposite.

Finally, an exploration of how formative assessment might be more consciously integrated into the mentoring process would seem appropriate given existent research with school pupils which reports a positive correlation between formative assessment and raising attainment (Black and Wiliam, 2001). In addition, my study findings indicate that it was used subconsciously with primary student teachers and that participants view it as potentially helpful with regard to mentee progression in learning to teach and mentor career long professional learning. Subsequent evaluations of such integration would also be pertinent.
Reflections

Undertaking a Doctoral research study has been both a challenging and worthwhile experience. In their study of reflexivity, Fox and Allan (2014:101) describe it as ‘…a trip...with its potential properties of hallucination…’. My own ‘trip’ was more akin to a very long ride on a rollercoaster with its inherent multidirectional pathways leading to heightened senses and uncertainty on many occasions about which way was indeed ‘up’. On commencing the programme my expectations were based on learning in a professional sense, however, as the process unfolded it became obvious that personal development was also a salient factor. My levels of resilience emerged as a key focus in my negotiation of the challenges of a full time job in a new HEI and the variety of personal issues that arose throughout my EdD experience. At times it felt like being on an emotional rollercoaster, and the temptation to give up was ever present, however, my determination, genuine interest in the topic and desire to influence practice drove me through the many ‘ups and downs’ of the process.

From a professional standpoint, undertaking the EdD has increased my capacity to carry out research but also with regard to being a critically reflective practitioner. The taught component of the programme allowed me to learn about the research process itself, introducing hitherto unknown concepts such as ontology and epistemology. In this respect it challenged my existing knowledge, understanding and assumptions about what research was stemming from positivist based experiences of completing my Masters dissertation some years previously. In addition, the programme afforded me the opportunity to research an area of my choosing in depth that could have a positive impact on my own professional practice and, potentially, that of others. The opportunity to focus on one area in substantive depth has meant looking at my own practice with an even more critical stance in terms of questioning my mentoring practices, and the beliefs and assumptions that underpin them. It has provided me with further impetus to improve as a mentor myself and to be proactive in fostering more informed, consistent mentoring practices within my own HEI with the potential of extending these practices to others.
within the realms of existent enhanced partnership agendas in the Scottish ITE context.
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[accessed: 10.2.16]


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Appendix A - Consent Forms

Moray House School of Education
University of Edinburgh
St Leonard’s Land
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh EH8 8AQ

**Mentoring Student Primary Education Teachers:** an exploration of how mentors and mentees understand and perceive the use of formative assessment principles and practices within the mentoring process

**Purpose of Research**
This research study is being carried out to fulfill the requirements for the Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) degree programme. Within the context of primary education, it aims to foster further understanding of the complexities inherent in the mentoring process by exploring perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices in the mentoring of student teachers. It further aims to identify salient implications for mentoring practices in initial teacher education.

The study will ask you to participate in two 45-minute interviews during and after the placement of the year 3 undergraduate Primary Education student you are mentoring from the University of Stirling in January/February, 2012. The first interview will take place in either week 1 or 2 of the placement and the second interview at the end/after the placement. At the end of the placement you will also be invited to participate in a focus group interview involving mentor teachers for these year 3 students.
Anonymity and Consent
All of the information gathered from these interviews will be treated confidentially. The only people who will have access to your interview transcripts are the researcher and Ed.D supervisors listed below. The resultant thesis and publications will be made anonymous and details changed to protect your identity. You should also be aware that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without question. At the end of the study a summary of the main findings will be available to you.

Researcher: Lorele Mackie
Supervisors: Professor Lyn Tett and Dr. Rosie Mulholland

Agreement
Please indicate that you have read the details above and give your consent to participate in this study by indicating your name, by writing YES after ‘Agreed’ and then by filling in the date.

Name: Agreement: Date:

Questions about the study
If you have any questions about the study please do not hesitate to contact Lorele Mackie:
Email address: lorele.mackie@stir.ac.uk

Alternatively:
Phone: 01786 466130 (please leave a message if I am out of the office)
University of Edinburgh student email address: s0458913@sms.ed.ac.uk
Mentoring Student Primary Education Teachers: an exploration of how mentors and mentees understand and perceive the use of formative assessment principles and practices within the mentoring process

Purpose of Research
This research study is being carried out to fulfill the requirements for the Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) degree programme. Within the context of primary education, it aims to foster further understanding of the complexities inherent in the mentoring process by exploring perceptions of the use of formative assessment principles and practices in the mentoring of student teachers. It further aims to identify salient implications for mentoring practices in initial teacher education.

The study will ask you to participate in one 45-60 minute interview during or after the placement of the year 3 undergraduate Primary Education student you are mentoring from the University of Stirling in January/February, 2012.

Anonymity and Consent
All of the information gathered from these interviews will be treated confidentially. The only people who will have access to your interview transcripts are the researcher and Ed.D supervisors listed below. The resultant thesis and publications will be
made anonymous and details changed to protect your identity. You should also be aware that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without question. At the end of the study a summary of the main findings will be available to you.

**Researcher:** Lorele Mackie

**Supervisors:** Professor Lyn Tett and Dr. Rosie Mulholland

**Agreement**

Please indicate that you have read the details above and give your consent to participate in this study by indicating your name, by writing YES after ‘Agreed’ and then by filling in the date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Agreed:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Questions about the study**

If you have any questions about the study please do not hesitate to contact Lorele Mackie:

Email address: lorele.mackie@stir.ac.uk

Alternatively:

Phone: 01786 466130 (please leave a message if I am out of the office)

University of Edinburgh student email address: s0458913@sms.ed.ac.uk
## Appendix B - Interview Questions

### CT Mentor / Mentee Interview 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | The mentoring process | 1. Who does the mentoring process involve?  
2. Do you think it is important for schools to be involved in mentoring student teachers? Why/not?  
3. What do you see as the main roles of a mentor?  
4. What do you see as the main roles of a mentee?  
5. In your experience, what is the role of the mentor in mentoring conversations?  
6. In your experience, what is the role of the mentee in mentoring conversations? |
| • What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | The mentor/mentee relationship | 7. What are the characteristics of an effective mentor?  
8. What are the characteristics of an effective mentee?  
9. What are the main characteristics of an effective mentor/mentee relationship? |
| • What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | Benefits and barriers | 10. What are the benefits of mentoring for the mentee?  
11. What are the benefits of mentoring for the |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Mentors’ Understanding and Perceptions of Formative Assessment</th>
<th>The Role of Mentoring in Professional Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?</td>
<td>Understanding of formative assessment principles and practices</td>
<td>The role of mentoring in professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional development?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you understand by the term formative assessment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do you think these practices are used?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did you learn about formative assessment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you see the formative assessment practices used with pupils as being useful in the process of mentoring student teachers? If so, why / why not? In what way?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How might skills, knowledge and understanding do formative assessment practices benefit the professional development of mentors?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CT Mentor / Mentee Interview 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process?</td>
<td>The mentoring process</td>
<td>1. We talked last time about who the mentoring process involves referring to previous experiences. In the mentoring of this student teacher who did the process actually involve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. What forms did the mentoring process take with this student teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. What kinds of things were discussed between yourself and your mentee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. How were these topics decided on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. When did these conversations take place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Last time we talked about the role of the mentor in mentoring conversations as these dialogues are highlighted in much of the research. What was your role as a mentor in the mentoring conversations that took place with this student teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. What was the role of the mentee in these mentoring conversations?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8. How would you describe your mentoring style?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Does this style vary from student to student? Why/why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process?</td>
<td>The mentor/mentee</td>
<td>10. Last time we talked about mentoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | mentoring process | What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers? | The mentoring process | The mentor/mentee relationship | 11. Did you use formative assessment practices in mentoring the student teacher? If so, what kind; can you give some examples? | 12. Did these practices interrelate? If so, in what way? | 13. What characteristics of your mentor/mentee relationship were essential in fostering the use of formative assessment within the mentoring process? | 14. Last time we talked about whether and why formative assessment practices may be useful in the mentoring process. Were such practices useful in the process of mentoring this student teacher? If so, what kinds of skills, knowledge and understanding did such practices develop in the student teacher? | 15. In terms of your own professional development (skills, knowledge and understanding), have you benefited from using formative assessment practices in this mentoring process? In what ways? | 16. What do you see as being the main facilitators to |}

| To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional development? | The role of mentoring in professional development | Benefits and barriers |
- What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. What do you see as being the main barriers to using formative assessment practices in the mentoring process?</td>
<td>17. What do you see as being the main barriers to using formative assessment practices in the mentoring process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. What guidance has the school provided on the mentoring process?</td>
<td>18. What guidance has the school provided on the mentoring process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. What guidance have you received from the university?</td>
<td>19. What guidance have you received from the university?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. What about the local authority?</td>
<td>20. What about the local authority?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. How influential is external guidance on your mentoring practice?</td>
<td>21. How influential is external guidance on your mentoring practice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. What support structures could schools provide to promote the use of formative assessment practices within the mentoring process?</td>
<td>22. What support structures could schools provide to promote the use of formative assessment practices within the mentoring process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. What about the university?</td>
<td>23. What about the university?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. What about the local authority?</td>
<td>24. What about the local authority?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Management Mentor Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process?</td>
<td>The mentoring process</td>
<td>1. Who does the mentoring process (as a whole) involve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Do you think it is important for schools to be involved in the process of mentoring student teachers? Why/why not?</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3. What do you see as the main roles of a mentor at school management level?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. What guidance does the school provide on the mentoring process for class teacher mentors?</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Within the mentoring process, what is the role of parties outwith the school, i.e. the TEI and local authority?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Do they provide specific guidance on mentoring? If so, what form(s) does it take?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Is the involvement of these other parties important? Why/why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process?</td>
<td>The mentor/mentee relationship</td>
<td>8. What are the main characteristics of an effective mentor at school management level? (knowledge, understanding and dispositions)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process?</td>
<td>Benefits and barriers</td>
<td>9. What are the benefits for the mentee (student teacher) of having a school management level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Understanding of formative assessment principles and practices</td>
<td>The role of mentoring in professional development</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. What are the benefits for the class teacher mentor of having a school management level mentor?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. In your role as a school management level mentor, what do you see as being the main barriers to effective mentoring?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. What mechanisms would be helpful with regard to facilitating the role of a school management level mentor?</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. What do you understand by the term formative assessment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Does the school have a policy on formative assessment and how is it implemented?</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. To what extent are you involved in formative assessment?</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Do you see the formative assessment practices used with pupils as being useful in the process of mentoring student teachers? Why / why not? In what way?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. How might skills, knowledge and understanding do formative assessment practices benefit the professional development of mentors?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. What do you see as being the main facilitators to</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>19. What do you see as being the main barriers to using formative assessment practices in the mentoring process?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. What support structures could schools provide to promote the use of formative assessment practices within the mentoring process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. What about the university?</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. What about the local authority?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The role of mentoring in professional development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The role of mentoring in professional development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Local Authority Mentor Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | The mentoring process | 1. Who does the mentoring process involve?  
2. Do you think it is important for local authorities to be involved in the process of mentoring student teachers? Why/why not?  
3. What do you see as the main roles of a mentor at local authority level?  
4. What guidance does the local authority provide on the mentoring process?  
5. Within the mentoring process, what is the role of parties outwith the local authority, i.e. the TEI and school?  
6. Do they provide specific guidance on mentoring? If so, what form(s) does it take?  
7. Is the involvement of these other parties important? Why/why not? |
| • What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | The mentor/mentee relationship | 8. What are the main characteristics of an effective mentor at local authority level? (knowledge, understanding and dispositions) |
| • What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process? | Benefits and barriers | 9. What are the benefits for the mentee of having a local authority level mentor?  
10. What are the benefits for the school management level mentor and class teacher mentor of having |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Related Concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. As a local authority level mentor, what do you see as being the main barriers to effective mentoring?</td>
<td>a local authority level mentor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. What mechanisms would be helpful with regard to facilitating the role of a local authority level mentor?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?</td>
<td>Understanding of formative assessment principles and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional development?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?</td>
<td>The role of mentoring in professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?</td>
<td>Benefits and barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. What do you understand by the term formative assessment?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Does the local authority have a policy on formative assessment?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. As a local authority level mentor, to what extent are you involved in formative assessment?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Do you see the formative assessment practices used with pupils as being useful in the process of mentoring student teachers? Why / why not? In what way?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. How might skills, knowledge and understanding do formative assessment practices benefit the professional development of mentors?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. What do you see as being the main facilitators to using formative assessment practices in the mentoring process?</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. What do you see as being the main barriers to</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mentoring student teachers?</td>
<td>using formative assessment practices in the mentoring process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional development?</td>
<td>The role of mentoring in professional development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. What support structures could schools provide to promote the use of formative assessment practices within the mentoring process?
21. What about the university?
22. What about the local authority?
### Appendix C - Data Analysis Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Stage 1 (within case)</th>
<th>Initial Coding</th>
<th>Focused Coding</th>
<th>Theoretical Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mentor interview 1 – line by line coding for each interview question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mentee interview 1 – line by line coding for each interview question</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mentor interview 2 – line by line coding for each interview question</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mentee interview 2 – line by line coding for each interview question</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School Management mentor interview – line by line coding for each interview question</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Local authority mentor interview – line by line coding for each interview question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Analysis Stage 2 (within case) | • Mentor interview 1 – focused codes for each interview question  
• Mentee interview 1 – focused codes for each interview question  
• Mentor interview 2 – focused codes for each interview question  
• Mentee interview 2 – focused codes for each interview question  
• School management mentor interview – focused codes for each interview question  
• Local authority mentor interview – focused codes for each interview question |
| Analysis Stage 3 (within case) | • Mentor interviews – examine focused coding to identify themes and sub-themes re: each research question  
• Mentee interviews – examine focused coding to identify themes and sub-themes re: |
### Analysis Stage 4 (cross-case)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School Management mentor interview – examine focused coding to identify themes and sub-themes re: each research question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local authority mentor interview – examine focused coding to identify themes and sub-themes re: each research question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Compare within case emerging themes and sub-themes for each research question across the four cases to further refine themes and sub-themes ascertaining both commonalities and differences.
## Appendix D - Initial Coding Example (analysis stage 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Initial Code</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CT A</td>
<td>• Using formative assessment in an informal way</td>
<td>R        Yes I think I used formative assessment, not as formally as I would with the children. Other than sort of mid way through Nicola’s placement I filled in a midway report for Nicola.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Filling in the mid placement review</td>
<td>I        Yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Having a box for strengths like two stars</td>
<td>R        Just to let her know. So that had a big box full of strengths, sort of like two stars and then I had a box, a smaller box with next steps which would be like a wish, I suppose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Having a box for next steps like a wish</td>
<td>I        Yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Using it informally in discussions after teaching</td>
<td>R        So I’d say I used it more formally then. But I’d say it’s used informally every other day with our discussions after teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Seeing quality feedback as mostly positive comment with some areas to develop</td>
<td>I        So with the midway placement review and in your conversations, you’ve talked before about, talking about Nicola’s strengths and, you know, what her development needs are and discussing next steps with her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Seeing too many</td>
<td>R        Yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I        What would make, for you, quality feedback in those types of discussions or what you’ve written down in your progress review?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R        I think quality feedback would be a mixture of positive comments. Probably more heavy on the positive comments and maybe just one or two areas to develop. I think too many developmental points would not be good for, for confidence. And also I think you can only work on one or two main areas at a time. You can’t take too many things on board at the one time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development points as not good for confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being unable to take on board too many things at one time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix E - Focused Coding Example (analysis stage 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CT Mentor Case</th>
<th>Focused Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interview 2, question 11 | • Talking about how the lesson went  
                          • Discussing strengths  
                          • Discussing development points  
                          • Discussing next steps  
                          • Setting a manageable number of next steps  
                          • Deciding on next steps together  
                          • Using SITE implicitly  
                          • Using SITE explicitly  
                          • Seeing peer assessment as a positive strategy  
                          • Seeing peer assessment as helpful in terms of seeing someone at the same stage  
                          • Comparing peer assessment with peer observation as a qualified teacher  
                          • Seeing peer assessment as logistically problematic  
                          • Using peer assessment to learn from each other  
                          • Seeing peer assessment as problematic  
                          • Having specific learning foci for lessons as useful  
                          • Having specific learning foci for lessons as disadvantageous  
                          • Lacking specific learning foci for lessons  
                          • Asking what and how questions  
                          • Giving advice  
                          • Helping the student to reflect |
Appendix F - Theoretical Coding / Themes

Research question 1 - what are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings of the mentoring process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CT mentor/mentee relationship</td>
<td>• Personal and professional elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Implicit collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Power as duality and ‘flux’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collaboration/power coexistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School management mentor/CT mentor/mentee relationship</td>
<td>• Informal involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of recognition of need for involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/university relationship</td>
<td>• Explicit reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Theory/practice juxtaposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authority/school relationship</td>
<td>• Lack of involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognition of need for involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question 2 - what are mentor teachers’ and student teachers’ understandings and perceptions of the use of formative assessment within the process of mentoring student teachers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent understandings</td>
<td>• Form – the ‘comfort zone’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Functions – the ‘discomfort zone’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Professional learning sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subconscious use of formative assessment</td>
<td>• Constructive dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific learning foci and success criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Formative and summative assessment as complementary processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential</td>
<td>• Peer assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Research question 3 - to what extent does formative assessment support mentor and mentee professional learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting professional learning</td>
<td>• Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflective practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Responsibility for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for support</td>
<td>• Uncertainty about what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specificity about how</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G - Format for Lesson Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Focus Curriculum Area</th>
<th>Whole class/Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Intentions (including reference to relevant CfE outcomes/experiences)</th>
<th>Shared Success Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Strategy(ies)</th>
<th>Assessment Method(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Intentions in the CfE Capacities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successful learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident Individuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Opportunities for developing Cross-Curricular Links (including reference to relevant CfE outcomes/experiences)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differentiation</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening (consider your role and the role of the pupil – *remember to connect to the learner and give the big picture)</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Development (consider your role and the role of the pupil – *remember to encourage learners to experience through seeing, hearing, doing, i.e. VAK = visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
|                                                                                                              |        |
Close (consider your role and the role of the pupil - *remember to review and reflect)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment of Learning</th>
<th>Evaluation of Teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did the children approach the task?</td>
<td>What went well and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which children did well – what and why?</td>
<td>What did not go well and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which children did not do well – what and why?</td>
<td>What insights/teaching issues has this raised for you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What incidental learning, if any, occurred?</td>
<td>What might be the next steps for your teaching?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What might be the next steps for children’s learning?</td>
<td>Write a paragraph discussing this by drawing on theory and research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix H - Module Assessment Input Prior to Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>Lecture Synopsis And Key Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
ASSIGNMENT B (SUMMATIVE)

**Expected length:** about 2000 words

**Weighting:** assignment B represents 100% of the assessment grade

**To be submitted by:** Tuesday 6\textsuperscript{th} of December by 4pm

With reference to theoretical perspectives, policy documents and your microteaching experiences, discuss two aspects of your teaching that have developed in microteaching lessons (refer to the core lecture topics when selecting focus aspects, e.g. planning, creativity, assessment, developing positive relationships, teaching strategies, etc.)

N.B. Any references to individual children in your microteaching classes should be anonymous (e.g. ‘pupil A, pupil B’ etc).

In writing this assignment you should aim to:

- draw on your own microteaching experience in order to discuss the two aspects chosen;
- provide an overview of WHAT these aspects are;
- explain WHY these aspects are significant for learning and teaching (you need to draw on your reading of relevant policy documents and academic texts); this is the most important part of your essay – understanding the rationale for the choices you have made and then evaluating these in the light of your reading;
- reflect on HOW you might improve on these aspects in future;
- it is important that you should also make reference to a good range of appropriate reading so that you link your practical experience to some theoretical perspectives;
- ensure presentation (including layout, grammar, syntax and spelling) is satisfactory;
- it is important that you carefully follow the referencing conventions required – these are outlined later in this booklet.