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The Rise and Demise of the 14-19 Diploma

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Abstract

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The introduction of the 14-19 Diploma into the English Qualifications framework was the most developed attempt at creating a vocational qualification which advanced beyond mere job training. The Diploma offered vocational education with occupational capacity, underpinned by functional skills and academic subject content. It was truly the first hybrid qualification that attempted to combine the hitherto separate vocational and academic curricula.

This study examines the educational policies that led to the introduction of the Diploma and the reasons behind its ultimate failure and demise. The study comprises two parts. The first is an investigation into the continuing professional development needs that this new initiative created for teachers. This led to the publication in 2010 of a book, *The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas,* a description and account of which is presented in this thesis. This book was the first of its kind aimed at supporting teachers working with the Diploma. The key research findings addressed were the need to understand the structure and constituent elements of the Diploma and to provide practical advice on how to deliver effective Initial Advice and Guidance (IAG), Personal Thinking and Learning Skills (PTLS) and Functional Skills.

The second part of the study is concerned with the aftermath of the Diploma. This involved an examination of the professional ethos and standing of vocational subject teachers within the author's consortium of colleges and schools involved in teacher training, and their reactions to the withdrawal of support for the qualification following the change of government in 2010. The study concludes with an analysis of a series of semi-structured interviews or 'conversations' with leading educationalists concerning their attitudes to, and involvement with, the development of the Diploma and any 'lessons for the future'. The key findings from the second part of the study are there were several issues in the development and implementation of the Diploma that were critical factors leading to its demise.

The first issue that arose from both the initial and final phases of the research was that the vocational Diploma was introduced very quickly following the rejection of Sir

Mike Tomlinson's proposals for linking academic and vocational learning. The qualification that was developed, the Vocational Diploma introduced in 2008, later renamed as the 'Diploma', only went part way to achieving the proposals put forward by Tomlinson. This was due to the complexity of collaboration between three sectors, pre- and post-compulsory education and employers, plus the complexity and breadth of the component parts of the qualification. Also arising from the research is that the rushed introduction did not allow the developers to pilot, review or consult effectively with the major stakeholders.

The second issue, which is a thread throughout the research, is that the rush to implementation, coupled with the complexity of the qualification, demonstrated that there was a clear need for professional development within the teaching profession tasked with implementing the qualification. Indeed, the initial phase of the research highlights clear areas that teachers were unfamiliar with and were anxious about.

The third issue that arises focuses on the demise of the qualification and the impact that it has had upon the teaching profession tasked with delivering it. The demise has created a certain disillusionment and loss of professional identity amongst the Diploma teachers and the teachers of vocational curriculum. There is now an uncertainty and mistrust in new vocational qualifications and there are real questions as to whether the Technical Baccalaureate, introduced in 2013, and the new 16-19 vocational study programmes are fit for purpose.

The final issue is whether we should be looking back at the original proposals put forward by Tomlinson or whether we should be looking at a return to job-specific training.

In conclusion, the common theme that arose from both sets of participants in the final stage of the study was of lost opportunities and the recognition that, after the demise of the diploma, there is a continuing state of policy confusion and that any new development needs to be from the 'bottom up'.

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Glossary of Terms

ASL	Additional Subject Learning
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education
BTEC	British Technology Education Council
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPVE	Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education
DDP	Diploma Development Partnerships
DFE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ECM	Every Child Matter
EMCETT	East Midlands Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training
FE	Further Education
FLT	Foundation Learning Tier
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education
GLH	Guided Learning Hours
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
IAG	Initial Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IfL	Institute for Learning
IFP	Increased Flexibility Programme
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
IT	Information Technology
KS4	Key Stage 4
LLITT	Life Long Learning Initial Teacher Training
LLUK	Life Long Learning UK
LSN	Learning Skills Network
NCVQ	National Certificate of Vocational Qualification
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PLTS	Personal Learning and Thinking Skills
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QTLS	Qualified Teacher Learning Skills
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SVUK	Standards Verification UK
TDA	Teacher Development Agency
TVEI	Technical Vocational Education Initiative
UKCES	UK Commission for Employment and Skills
UTC	University Technical College
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WBP	Work-based Project
YOP	Youth Opportunity Programme
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

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Chapter 1: Introduction: The Theoretical and Policy Background to the 14-19 Diploma

The Problem

Throughout history, there has been constant debate and discussion around the education and skills that should be passed on to future generations. At the end of the nineteenth century, this took the form of a specific debate about what education and training were necessary in the modern industrial society. This debate became a discussion about the education and skills needed for economic development and competitive success. Over the last few decades, vocational education has continued to be the subject of both discourse and constant change within educational policy as the UK has slipped down the economic and educational league tables. The main focus of the debate within the UK has lain with parity of esteem between vocational and academic qualifications, where many of the vocational initiatives are perceived as training rather than education, and as such not of equal standing.

The idea of a 14-19 age phase and attendant qualification became the focus of educational policy in the early 2000s. This was perceived as a solution to the problem of parity: introducing vocational options into school alongside the more traditional academic qualifications would bridge the perceived vocational-academic divide. Following the rejection of proposals advanced by Sir Mike Tomlinson (2004a) to create an overarching qualification combining both general and academic education, alongside phasing out and ultimately removing the existing General Certificates in Secondary Education (GCSE), A-Levels and British Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualifications, the hasty introduction of a 14-19 Diploma in 2008 as the keystone in this bridge created even more confusion around vocational education. The speed at which the qualification was developed and introduced left school and college teachers without any proper understanding of the complexity of the Diploma qualification and its constituent parts, reflective practice, mentoring, personal learning and thinking skills and functional skills. In addition, many teachers struggled to understand the pedagogical approach required to teach it effectively.

The concept of a 14-19 sector and age phase linked to vocational education has within it the hidden hand of Dewey (1916), who in opposition to the narrow trade-learning evidenced in traditional academic education, instead argued for:

> An education which acknowledges the full intellectual and social meaning of a vocation would include instruction in the historic background of present conditions; training in dealing with material and agencies of production; and study of economics, civics, and politics, to bring the future worker into touch with the problems of the day and the various methods proposed for its improvement. Above all, it would train power of re adaptation to changing conditions so that future workers would not become blindly subject to a fate imposed upon them. (Dewey, 1916:318-319)

Despite some critics claiming that Dewey was arguing in favour of training, his work was predicated on vocational education being unified with general education. Indeed, he thought that anything different would create a class division. Dewey argued for 'an education built around occupations in the hope of building genuine curiosity for intellectual matters' (Bosivert, 1998:101).

It could be argued that the Diploma was built upon Dewey's principles because it was developed around specific occupations. It also contained within it a mix of theoretical underpinning in the form of principal learning, general education in the form of functional skills, alongside personal, learning and thinking skills and a large element of work experience and work-based learning.

14-19 Background and Policy in the UK

Educational reforms and changes over the last thirty years within the vocational qualifications framework have created a situation of constant flux for teachers working within both pre- and post-compulsory education. From 1978 schemes such as the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI), the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE), British and Technology Education Council (BTEC), the General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ), the Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education (AVCE) and others have been initiatives that have come and gone over the last few decades, with few in existence today. More recently, UK education has seen the introduction of BTEC qualifications within schools, as opposed to the traditional venue of post-16 establishments.

As noted above, one of the more recent attempts at reforming the vocational agenda was the commissioning, in 2004, of the final report of the working of group on 14-19 qualifications and curriculum reform, more commonly referred to as the 'Tomlinson Report'. This report had at its core an overarching qualification, the 14-19 Diploma, combining both academic and vocational qualifications, with the aim of raising the standard and esteem of vocational

education within the UK. The report recognised that all children should be given the opportunity to achieve and that no 'one size fits all' in education:

> Every young person is different, so they should not all have to study the same mix of subjects at school or college. We propose up to 20 different subject mixes through which young people can gain their diploma. Young people could choose an 'open' diploma with a mix of subjects similar to those taken by many GCSE and A level students today. Alternatively they could choose a diploma specialising in an employment sector or academic discipline. Students might opt for an engineering diploma, a language and literature diploma or a science and mathematics diploma, for example. 14-16 year olds would continue to study National Curriculum subjects, though their diploma would not depend on achieving a specific grade in those subjects. All students under 16 would take open diplomas to avoid narrowing their options too soon. (DfES, 2004a: 4)

This proposal was the first of its kind. As a concept, the proposal for an overarching 14-19 Diploma was unique because it straddled two sectors of education: 14-16 and 16-plus.This created a need for collaboration between schools, colleges and employers in order to implement the qualification effectively.

The report proposed that the new qualification should replace the existing qualifications of GCSE, A and AS Levels plus the range of BTEC and AVCE qualifications available. However, despite support from many in education, the government response to the report was to reject the proposal of an overarching qualification and reform the existing qualifications.

In 2005, the *14-19 Education and Skills* bill announced a diluted version of the proposals put forward by Tomlinson. The bill announced the introduction of a new 14-19 vocational diploma, later to be renamed the Diploma, which would sit alongside existing qualifications. The first five Diploma subjects were introduced in September 2008 in both schools and colleges and were followed by a further ten by 2010.
However, even in the introduction phase of the qualification there appeared to be problems. Mansell reported that: 'The numbers have fallen short of expectations: initial predictions were for 50,000 learners by September 2008. Even by September 2009, only 36,000 were enrolled' (Mansell, 2010:16).

Following the introduction the first three phases of subjects, the Coalition government formed in 2010 removed all support and funding for the Diploma. At the time Diploma champions still hoped that the qualification would survive. Sir Mike Tomlinson, the original architect of the qualification, was quoted saying that: 'The Diplomas will endure, if only where schools, colleges and employers see a role for them' (Mansell, 2010:17).

Michael Hatfield, assistant principal at Trent Valley Academy, Lincolnshire, said that: 'Educationally the diplomas are brilliant - just the sort of experience we should be delivering for our pupils' (Mansell, 2010:17). Other supporters of the diplomas expressed anger that the new qualification was being 'left to wither on the vine'. (Mansell, 2010:17) In contrast, Diploma critics believed that the withdrawal of support would ensure that the qualification declined. For example, one critic commented: 'I think they will decline quite rapidly now, because I don't think there is a genuine desire or need for them' (Mansell, 2010:17).

These later fears surrounding the government's withdrawal of support for the qualification were justified. However, this was followed by a review of all vocational education, undertaken by Alison Wolf (2011), which effectively signalled the beginning of the end for the Diploma.

Research Question:

Research Question

To explore the CPD requirements of teachers following the introduction of the14-19 Diploma and subsequently identify the main reasons behind the ultimate failure of the Diploma with a view to identifying the way forward for work-related training and education.

In order to examine this questions this study has the following objectives:

1. To examine the underlying philosophy of vocational education within the UK that led to support for a new qualification:
2. To identify the policy decisions supporting the introduction of the Diploma;
3. To examine the impact of the Diploma on the professional identity of the Diploma teacher and their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs;
4. To explore and discuss the factors leading to the Diploma's demise at local and national level;
5. To consider in the light of this study the future trajectory for work-related training and education in the UK.

The Study

The study is presented in two phases, with a transitional link between the two parts. The first phase is concerned with the pedagogical and theoretical requirements involved in teaching the Diploma and the professional development needs of the teachers and lecturers involved in its delivery. This initial phase commenced in 2007 and involved surveying a range of Diploma teachers and trainee teachers across both pre- and post-compulsory phases of education. A questionnaire was used to elicit responses to specific questions around individual development needs and how any development or training packages should be delivered.

This phase culminated in addressing these needs through the development of a CPD package and several resources to support Diploma delivery and the writing and publication of a textbook, *The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas* (Senior, 2010), aimed at supporting teachers of the Diploma. A summary of this book and the other resources is provided in Chapter 4: Findings from Phase One and Overview of teaching 14-19 Diplomas.

The second phase of this study lies in two parts. The first part examines the perceptions of Diploma teachers following the removal of support for the Diploma by the Coalition government in 2010. Interviews and focus groups were used to explore teachers' feelings around the impact that the removal of the qualification had on their professional identity in the workforce and their thoughts on what any new vocational qualification should look like post 2010.

The final part of phase two explores the aftermath of the demise of the Diploma through a series of conversations with leading figures in vocational education in the UK. The second phase uses interviews as a method of collecting information.

Interviewing as a research method, or rather *methods*, elicits the reflective understanding of the interviewee and through further questioning their unreflective understanding. Interviewing was chosen both to hear the professional perceptions of lecturers and to hear 'data' for this study. There are ethical issues in turning fellow professionals into subjects for study but the objective of my research, and one clear outcome was to meet professional needs that built on my respect for individuals rather than a desire for personal advancement. A subjective element in making this choice was a personal interest in people and their lived experiences and a desire to hear their voice. 'Anthropological' sensitivity was achieved as I was a member of the teaching profession. In the first series of interviews the interviewees were

professionals of a similar status and standing and were undertaken in a collegiate and collaborative way. The second series of interviews were with a small sample of experts, all nationally and internationally known figures in 14-19 education and collegiality and collaboration. The sample was possible because of my professional standing and publications which had developed since the commencement of this study.

The analysis of the findings from this phase identified two opposing views of the way forward. Firstly, that an overarching qualification as proposed by Tomlinson should be reconsidered and, secondly, that vocational and academic qualifications should be discrete and offered independently of each other.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: The Debate about Vocational Education; The 14-19 Diploma and its Characteristics and the Challenges for the Workforce

This chapter reviews the relevant literature surrounding vocational education in relation to the 14-19 Diploma and its underlying philosophy. It considers the policy initiatives leading up to the introduction of the Diploma qualification and whether these initiatives and the subsequent policy surrounding 14-19 vocational education try to accommodate vocational education to what Dewey terms 'traditional education'. It examines whether this was, in part, responsible for the failure of the qualification. The chapter also explores the challenges that the Diploma created for the workforce in relation to professional development and professional identity.

Vocational Education

Vocational education as a concept is not new for the UK. Vocational education can also be referred to as 'career' or 'technical' education that provides formal training and instruction for a specific job or career. Maglen, (1996) defined vocational education as:

> All educational and instructional experiences be they formal or informal, pre-employment or employment related that are designed to enhance the skills, knowledge and competencies of individuals…whether these experiences are provided by schools, higher education, private training providers or by employers. (Maglen, 1996:3)

Whilst this definition can be applied to all educational experiences, central to it as a definition for a vocational qualification is the notion of functionality in the workplace. Regardless of the site of delivery, the learning experience prepares the learner for the world of work through a much closer link between the classroom and the work environment. Winch and Clarke (2003) argue that vocational learning is akin to lifelong learning with vocational expertise growing over an individual's lifetime. The authors add that the initial period, or first stage qualification, within vocational education is the most important for any learner to enable 'success in those occupations that require skill, knowledge and judgement' (Winch and Clarke, 2003:239) and that failure to provide an effective initial vocational experience 'seriously compromises young peoples' ability to develop their lives in the working environment' (Winch and Clarke, 2003:239).

Pollard, Purvis and Walford (1998), Ball (1994) and Grubb (1996) all posit that within education, a vocational agenda is essential to ensure the economic prosperity of any given government. This is supported by Winch and Clarke (2003), who state:

> In economic terms, failure to attend to the initial period of vocational education compromises attempts to run the economy as high-skill equilibrium that uses skilled labour to satisfy a demand for high quality goods and services. (Winch and Clarke, 2003:239)

There is also evidence that productivity is closely linked to the concept of vocational education and that increased and better training can increase productivity, with a properly trained workforce being more autonomous, committed and capable of undertaking the tasks requested of them (Bainbridge and Murray, 2000).

In addition to initial skill formation, the concept of vocational education encompasses an element of applied learning, which includes the application of vocationally subject specific skills, taught in the classroom, which can be transferred into the workplace. However, despite this and the perceived effectiveness of closer links between education and the workplace, the links themselves have also been the subject of much discourse over the last few years with debates around the effectiveness of the vocational teacher in providing the applied learning and underpinning theoretical elements within the classroom. Marsick and Watkins (1990), Senge (1994) Garrick (1998) and Boud and Solomon (2001) suggest that within any country, the economic performance of said country is ultimately connected to the skill level of the workforce, which in turn is connected to the skill level of the teachers responsible for the academic standards. The issue of the mix between the applied learning and work-based simulation together with the underpinning theoretical elements of vocational education represents a question of whether the Diploma was an appropriate qualification to provide a vocational agenda.

As a topic vocational education has been a prominent topic of discussion amongst governments and educators as politicians attempted to address the needs of the workforce. This was evident in the early twentieth century as the UK was moving into an industrial era and required a workforce that could provide the industrial knowledge needed to enhance competitiveness and create an economy fit for global markets. Revisionist studies also believe that vocational education during this era was aimed at creating "a school system that socialized youth for their new economic roles and sorting them into their appropriate niches in the expanding capitalist division of labor" (Kantor, 1986: 402).

According to the Institute of Education, vocational and technical education can be traced to the medieval practice of apprenticeships where a child would be trained and educated in a trade by working alongside their employer. Though various attempts were made to develop vocational training models, by and large the apprenticeship system continued to be the only form of technical and vocational education until the mid-nineteenth century (IoE 2010).

However, in 1867 the Schools Enquiry Commission published a report titled Report Relative to Technical Education, which discussed the lack of technical training offered in the UK as highlighted by the Great International Exhibition of manufacturers at Crystal Palace in 1851. The report noted that the lack of technical education in the UK was creating a division between standards across Europe and potentially creating a disadvantage for UK industries. This report led to extensive dialogue on the nature of technical education, and experimental models in the provision of it.

In 1889 Technical colleges were created offering a range of technical programmes and training, followed by the development in 1905 of Junior Technical Schools (JTSs). The Education Act of 1944 saw the JTSs renamed as secondary technical schools and the Spens Report (1948) supported technical schools and recommended their conversion to Technical High Schools, also suggesting widening the curriculum in secondary schools to include more vocational aspects.

School-based technical education, 1918– 1945

During the 1920s, patterns of employment and in-company training diversified according to the need of the workforce. This diversification created the educational organisational reforms and the government interventions experienced since then. Throughout the 1970s, as employment fell the UK government intervened increasingly in the comprehensive school curriculum, culminating in the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), from 1983 (England, Wales and Scotland) and the National Curriculum, from 1989 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

Post war reform in vocational education

Following the end of World War II the social and economic problems it had created in British society gave way to further debate and reform around vocational education. Many programmes aimed at providing a broad base curriculum interrelated with vocational education and work experience was developed. However, post war thinking on vocational education had started to create a perception of academic /vocational divide with the

condemnation of “any attempt, regardless of format, to dilute academic content with occupational training (Bestor 1956: 16).

Vocational Education and the Economy 1972 – 2015

To some extent discussions of vocational education reflect the needs and state of the economy (Armitage *et al*. 2007, Hayes, Marshall and Turner 2007). In the 1960s, the era of comprehensive education, there were real demands for some form of ‘Liberal Education’ for all and for its inclusion on training programmes. This consensus was achieved in a period which was characterised by a relatively dynamic UK economy. From the 1970s onwards vocational education, like the UK economy suffered crisis after crisis and this was reflected in numerous policy papers and academic works which advocated a variety of new visions for further and adult education and training (see Dale 1985, Elliott 1996, Green and Lucas 1999, Hyland and Merrill 2003). After the period of post-war consensus demands for a more integrated vocational education were challenged from a policy perspective that was reactive to economic crises. Prime Minister James Callaghan’s Ruskin College speech on 18 October 1976 which invited industry and business leaders to help direct the future of education through a ‘great debate’ was the turning point which marginalised academic influence on education policy. Academic debate became both defensive, attacking the effects of mass youth unemployment and training that was not related in any meaningful way to work or education (FEU 1979, Armitage *et al.*, 2007: 25-31 and 242-244; Dale, 1985). The Thatcherite period left many radical educationists in further disarray as the post-war consensus on education was dismantled. Things changed in a period of economic stagnation in the mid 1990s with the belief that education or ‘lifelong learning’ was the key to transforming economies and benefiting from technological innovation. 1996 was the ‘European Year of Lifelong Learning’ and Michael Barber wanted to see the DfEE ‘change its name – symbolically but importantly – to the Department for Lifelong Learning. It could even be called DOLLY for short. Goodbye DfEE, as it were, Hello…’(cited in Armitage *et al*., 2007: 259-260). The plethora of works with this new focus on what became known as the ‘learning age’ with titles like ‘FE and Lifelong Learning: Realigning the sector for the 21st Century’ showed a renewed and more active engagement of academics with was once called vocational education sponsored, of course, by the New Labour government and powered by new millennium hopes.

The claim, made above, that discussions of vocational education ‘reflect’ the needs and sate of the economy does not mean that writers on vocational education have a strong grasp of economics. It would be better if they did and were less reactive or rather stubbornly intellectually inactive, holding to opinions and positions appropriate to previous decades or to the views of thinkers from previous centuries (for the example of Dewey in this stubbornness

see Chapter 8). This thesis covers the rise of the 14-19 Diploma in the “noughties” a period characterised by an abundance of finance that could potentially be used to revitalise the productive economy but in the words of economist Daniel Ben-Ami was held back by ‘The fear of risk in finance or “cowardly capitalism”…’ (Ben-Ami 2001: 3). We are living according to Ben-Ami in a ‘specific period’ in which even capitalist are fearful of taking the necessary risks they must take to ensure economic growth and their own profits (Ben-Ami 2001, Ben-Ami 2010, Mullan 2015). In a period when capitalists fear to be capitalists and growth is restrained it is impossible to identify appropriate training, never mind, ‘vocational education’ could mean. This specific period requires a new approach which is approached here in the discussion of the reasons for the demise of the 14-19 Diploma. If writers on vocational education do not try to understand why in this specific economic period requires fresh thinking that promotes a growth-based productive economy the Diploma will re-appear in another guise not as a tragedy but a farce.

The Diploma: The Confused Qualification

In 1916 John Dewey discussed Vocational Education as a ’Vocation’:

> A vocation means nothing but such a direction of life activities as renders them perceptibly significant to a person, because of the consequences they accomplish, and also useful to his associates. The opposite of a career is neither leisure nor culture but aimlessness, capriciousness, the absence of cumulative achievement in experience, on the personal side, and idle display, parasitic dependence upon the others, on the social side. Occupation is a concrete term for continuity. It includes the development of artistic capacity of any kind, of special scientific ability, of effective citizenship, as well as professional and business occupations, to say nothing of mechanical labor or engagement in gainful pursuits. (Dewey, 1916:307)

For Dewey, all education is fundamentally vocational. The underlying principle of education is to equip young people with the skills and experiences they need to be successful in life. However, the flaw in Dewey’s argument is that it makes the assumption that all education is progressive and that the educational exchange is that of knowledge transmission through experience and practical activity. Dewey criticises education that transmits knowledge in a traditional sense, where young people know and understand facts without any application of those facts to the real world. The commonplace view is that vocational education should include a mix of traditional and progressive elements rather than an ‘either/or’ approach. Young people, according to this viewpoint, need to understand the underpinning theory that supports the practical elements linked to the workplace.

Many extant vocational qualifications are predicated on a corruption of what Dewey calls the 'progressive', with an emphasis on the ability to perform tasks, rather than the underpinning knowledge of the problem defined by Dewey as the intellectual element (Ryan, 1995). For example, the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), introduced in 1986, has at its core a competence based approach where the learner demonstrates his ability to perform a set of pre-determined activities within the workplace. Whilst this qualification is still in existence within the UK framework, there are several writers who believe as a vocational programme the NVQ has contributed to the perception that vocational education is of less value than traditional academic education. I would agree that these types of qualification are not educational but rather training for a set purpose and are as such are true vocational qualifications.

In addition, within these types of qualification the use of terminology such as *competency*, *skill* or *training* has contributed to vocational education being perceived as inferior to traditional education, and as an educational concept has led to vocational education being traditionally viewed in 'class terms' (Lewis,1991:96) . Hickox (1995) is similarly concerned that vocational education creates a tension between the ideology of academic and vocational practices, with the tension reflecting the divisions between middle class and working class within the UK. Winch and Clarke believe that 'it has become fashionable in the UK to disparage vocational education' (Winch and Clarke, 2003:239), echoing Stevenson who wrote that 'wherever one looks, the place for vocational appears to be similar- the vocational is at the bottom of a hierarchy of knowledge and value' (Stevenson, 2001:335). This view reflects the class-based nature of UK vocational education.

This is further corroborated by the Nuffield review of 2009, which refers to the 'bottom half' of education. The 'bottom half' being the young people who leave school and enter into the 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) group. The Nuffield Review discusses the 'plethora of "vocational" options, the reform of apprenticeships, the introduction (and continuous revision) of a national curriculum 'all designed to improve the education of these young people and prepare them for employment or further study' (Pring, Haywood, Hodgson, Johnson, Keep, Oancea, Rees, Spours and Wilde, 2009:5). The Nuffield Report concludes that young people fail at the traditional academic route, which perpetuates the perception of a divided system of education for some and training system for others. As a concept the Diploma could not be classed as a training qualification as it offered both theoretical and the applied elements of education. However, taken at face value the Diploma was truly vocational in the Dewey sense.

Historically vocational education has been perceived as being de-centralised and market driven, provided by the employers who would be using the skills created, rather than by the state through formal education institutions. Foreman-Peck (1994) believes that this 'creates a challenge for measurement; there are no obvious standardised units, such as years of schooling (by which investment in human capital more generally is often measured)'. This is not the case for the Diploma, whereby the qualification was provided by the state and was measured through numerous performance and assessment measurements. It is clear that the term vocational is confusing with Dewey's 1916 definition defining the Diploma as vocational and Foreman-Peck's definition defining it as non-vocational. Foreman Peck continues his debate by concluding that, "At all levels of British industry there was a reliance upon education and training 'on the job'

The class-based nature of vocational education is reflective of its function within society in general and as a noticeable feature of British society in particular. Chappell rightly suggested that vocationalism mirrors the 'contemporary socio-economic environment in which it finds itself' (Chappell, 2004:26). This implies that as a concept, vocational education does not have one single purpose but changes its function based upon societal needs. This reading resonates with the work of Hickox, who argues that vocationalism and the vocationalists' viewpoint is that 'education should be more relevant to the needs of the economy', as opposed to 'an end in itself' (Hickox, 1995:153). In retrospect it could be questioned whether the Diploma as a qualification does actually fit into the vocational definition, being relevant to the needs of society.

Since the Industrial Training Act of 1964, British vocational education was predicated on the need to improve British economic competitiveness. The Act embodied the employers' need for a supply of skilled workers, rather than letting political parties make decisions about employer need. There is a constant conflict between employer-led demands and the political viewpoint of what is needed to improve society. For example, the Leitch review of 2006 was strongly in favour of the supply theory, whilst later reports (UKCES, 2010; Wolf, 2011) criticised the supply theory and favoured the demand-side of employer need.

This brief discussion of vocational education, its meaning and it application to the Diploma has shown that the Diploma was a confused qualification and whilst initially badged as vocational , there were many questions about its exact nature and fit within the UK qualifications framework. The following section discusses the policy context leading up to the introduction of the Diploma in 2008.

The Policy Context and the Introduction of the 14-19 Diploma

The latter half of the twenty first century has seen many vocational initiatives and qualifications appear and disappear in the UK qualifications base. The following discussion explores some of the policy initiatives and government reports that have been introduced, removed or side-lined from policy since the mid-1970s.

The chronology leading up to the introduction of the Diploma can provide insight into the debate around vocational education within the UK. Whilst some researchers explore VET post-war (Stanton and Bailey, 2004), this study is more concerned with changes over the last three decades and how they have influenced the development of the Diploma.

I argue that the current thinking around vocational education can be traced back to the 'Great Debate' of 1976, where concerns around specialisation at A-Level and lack of skills within the curriculum were initially raised by the then Labour government. This debate echoes the arguments of Dewey by stating that the goals of education were 'to equip children to the best of their ability for a lively, constructive place in society and also to fit them to do a job of work' (Armitage, Bryant, Dunhill, Flanagan, Hayes, Hudson, Kent, Lawes, and Renwick, 2007:37). As such, it sets the scene for a return to Dewey's vision for 'ending the division between mental and manual labour' (Dewey, 1916:86-88) plus the necessity in an industrial society for an 'educational reorganisation' (Dewey, 1916: 316), with education comprising of socially relevant activities or occupations within the classroom.

However, whilst the 1976 debate was a move towards a more vocational agenda to end the division of a class society by creating a vision for parity in vocational and academic education, it was not without its critics who felt that the vocational agenda was a purely economic agenda rather than a skills-based agenda.

Several initiatives followed the 1976 speech: The Holland Report (1977); A New Training Initiative (1981); 17+ Anew Qualification (1982); TVEI (1982): YTS (1983); the 1984 Training for Jobs whitepaper and the establishment of the National Certificate in Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) in 1986, which introduced the competence-based NVQs that were qualifications based in the workplace. These initiatives were designed to build a better workforce and provide skills and training to prepare young people for the world of work. In the mid-1970s, a pilot scheme of vocational preparation was launched aimed at 16-year-olds entering into employment without training. This initiative was the precursor to the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) that was introduced by Margaret Thatcher's

Conservative Government in 1983 to '…provide a full time programme, offer a progressive four-year course combining general with technical and vocational education, commence at 14 years; be broadly based; include planned work experience; lead to nationally recognised qualifications' (MSC, 1984, quoted in Dale, 1990:13). From this description it could be suggested that the Diploma qualification introduced in 2008 was an extension or even a repetition of the TVEI. The Diploma included both technical and vocational elements with work experience as a key element and was available from the age of 14 and not 16 as most previous vocational qualifications. The TVEI initiative represents the first time that the concept of the 14-19 age phase is suggested in the UK discourse.

These initiatives were vocational and provided skills needed for the workplace. However, they were seen as providing training based on competency and skill-acquisition, rather than advocating a more rounded educational experience where the young person is able to develop as a person, gaining transferable skills and personal skills to equip them for living and working in society. This distinction between skill-based education and a more rounded approach may have added to the perceived disparity between vocational and academic qualifications.

Two reports, *A British Baccalaureate: Ending the Division Between Education and Training* (Institute of Public Policy, 1990) and *Education and Training for the 21st Century* (DES, 1991), focused on an attempt to bridge the gap between vocational and academic education and qualifications. The former report proposed a unitary advanced diploma that would be delivered through the tertiary colleges, whilst the latter argued that 'young people should not have their opportunities limited by out of date distinctions between qualifications' (DES 1991: 58). These two reports were quickly followed in the early 1990s by a further series of initiatives centred on the VET and the skills agenda, for example the introduction of GNVQs in 1992 based in colleges and not the workforce. This qualification was designed to relate to occupational areas rather than specific jobs and was an attempt to combine work-based learning with a core academic curriculum to provide the underpinning knowledge of the broader occupational base. It was offered in both schools and colleges, but more commonly in colleges or as post-16 one-year courses for students who wished to continue post-GCSE but were not A-Level standard. It was introduced in 1992 and came to an end in 2007. Other examples include the announcement of the Modern Apprenticeships in 1993, an initiative designed to revive apprenticeships within the United Kingdom, which combined NVQs with core skills and was aimed at young people in work who were learning on the job.

By the mid-nineties, three distinct qualifications were available to the 16-19-year-old student: A-Levels, NVQs and GNVQs. The widely held perception was that the A-Level was the academic route while NVQs/GNVQs were vocational qualifications, despite being fundamentally different in terms of content and place of delivery. For this study, this difference in vocational qualifications is important because it adds to the confusion surrounding what constitutes vocational education.

The Dearing Review in 1996 recommended that the three qualifications be combined or replaced to provide a unified system of education for the 16-19 year old student. This proposal echoes the British Baccalaureate proposal in 1990, which recommended a unified system of qualifications with a single Diploma delivered in post-16 colleges. This was followed in 1997 by the publication of Dearing (III), which stated that 'learning should be increasingly responsive to employment needs and include the development of general skills, widely valued in employment' (Dearing 1997, summary report, 5). This was a return back to the need for employers to be involved in work-based qualifications alongside the idea that any new developments should be employer-led on a demand basis.

Moving into the new millennium, several more papers were published with a focus on the skills agenda: *Learning to Succeed: A new Framework for Post 16 Learning* (1999*); Bridging the Gap: New opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training* (DfE1999); *The Introduction of Foundation Degrees* (2000), a work-based undergraduate programme for those in the workplace wishing to gain higher qualifications and the 2002 Green Paper *14-19 Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards*, whose intention was to free up the curriculum to allow students to follow work-related courses from the age of 14, and to remove the word vocational from the qualification terminology in an attempt to create more parity with academic qualifications. This was followed by the *14-19 Opportunity in Excellence* (DfES, 2003), which proposed the creation of a more coherent 14-19 phase, the first time this had been raised since the TVEI initiative.

In 2004, the working party on 14-19 qualifications and reform, led by Sir Mike Tomlinson, published its report, referred to as the 'Tomlinson Report'. This report proposed the replacement of GCSEs and A-Levels by a single overarching Diploma that combined both academic and vocational elements and was a hybrid qualification that would overcome the vocational/academic divide. It was intended that the Diploma would be available for 14-19 year old students and would prepare them for work:

> Our aim is a system of 14-19 education matching the best anywhere; a system where all young people have opportunities to learn in ways which motivate and

> stretch them and through hard work qualify themselves for success in life; one where educational opportunity and chances do not depend upon accident of birth, but are uniformly available to all young people (DfES, 2004a: para. 1).

This is supported by Hillmert and Jacob (2002), who seconded the notion of a combined curriculum rather than a curriculum of discrete vocational and academic qualifications. The argument for the combined approach is that it can be used to support students who are weak in terms of their academic ability and struggle with higher level academic qualifications, but conversely have strengths in the application of their learning to the workplace environment. The inference is that whilst an academic route may be perceived by some as having a competitive advantage over a vocational route, the combined vocational/academic elements incorporated into these new qualifications can compensate for the lack of theoretical skills gained at higher levels, whilst still producing the skills needed for industry. This notion is supported by Prais (1995), who considered that the failure and reluctance to develop vocational education compromised economic development within a country. It is further supported by other authors including Marsick and Watkins (1990), Senge (1994), Garrick (1998) and Boud and Solomon (2001). Bond and Wilson suggested that a model of education that provided a qualification combining both vocational and academic learning was the most appropriate way forward for UK policy. The authors take the educationalist view that a pure vocational qualification cannot be academically robust since 'propositional knowledge is prior to and superior to procedural knowledge' (Bond and Wilson, 2000:136). This stance echoes the notion of a lower class of qualifications as discussed previously. The authors further posit that a pure competence-based approach to education is no more than a means of reducing professionalism to something that can be measured, with competency being the standard to achieve.

I argue that this viewpoint could be one of the reasons that vocational qualifications are deemed inferior to knowledge-based qualifications since the learner achieves functional rather than higher-level thinking skills. However, I would also argue that the functionality of the vocational element of a qualification could improve the NEET figures as discussed by Pring *et al*. (2009). To further support the effectiveness of a combined curriculum, Winch and Clarke (2003) remark that within VET there are two main methods of skill formation: firstly, apprentice training within the workplace and secondly, professional education coupled with block release into the workplace. The authors argue that whilst apprenticeship training is the basis for specific skill or organisation skill acquisition, the educational route provides a greater opportunity for broadening skills as it constitutes preparation for entry into employment.

The Tomlinson Report was ultimately rejected in favour of a new qualification to sit alongside the existing A-Level and BTEC qualifications, initially titled the 'Vocational Diploma', the term *vocational* being dropped early in its development. In its development and inception Harkin argued that:

> The Diplomas should be vehicles for general education, and for functional knowledge and skills, as well as for proto-occupational knowledge and skills. Only if this becomes so will learners of all abilities be attracted to Diplomas, and employers, parents and higher education regard them highly. Therefore, much must be done nationally and locally to shape and deliver an appropriate curriculum and pedagogy for each of the Diploma lines. (Harkin, 2008:11)

One prominent question about the Diploma is what type of qualification it actually was. Its original conception was of a 'Vocational Diploma', the term *vocational* being dropped relatively early in development and before the introduction and delivery of the first lines of learning or subjects were introduced. However, despite the removal of the term *vocational* there was still confusion about the Diploma's place and status within the qualifications framework. This was because much of the content of the Diploma relied upon practical experience in the work places and for many practitioners this made it a vocational qualification. This confusion, in turn, reflects a general lack of clarity about the concept of vocational education and its meaning.

Whilst this chronology only considers some of the key elements over the last three decades, what is clear is that the educational system in the UK over the last few decades has been a two- tier system, with 'education and training' being the terminology favoured in policy terms and all attempts to combine the two dismissed. In the UK there has also been a trend for policy makers to return to the tried and tested, as evidenced in the dismissal of Tomlinson. This trend, according to Lewis, echoes vocational education in the USA, where ' interesting curricular challenges in vocationalism have been lost as advocates of vocational education have so completely capitulated in the face of perceived threats to the demands for basics in education' (Lewis 1991:106).

The 14-19 Phase and the Diploma

The Diploma was developed as a qualification that spanned the two traditional educational phases within UK education, compulsory education up to the age of 16 and post-compulsory education post-16. In exploring the Diploma development and concept in light of the

chronology, the 1982 TVEI initiative would appear, as previously discussed, to be a precursor to the Diploma concept with a similar mix of vocational and academic components. In addition, the TVEI announcement was the first time that the concept of 14-19 as a learning phase was suggested and considered within a government initiative. Unfortunately for VET, the TVEI programme was only in place until 1997, while the introduction of the National Curriculum reduced the focus on 14-19 as an educational phase. Despite the TVEI initiative in 1982, it was only in 2002 that the concept of 14-19 phases started to re-emerge in UK education as a policy initiative with New Labour seeking to re-establish the concept through a series of policy documents (DfES 2002, 2003, 2005a, b).

This stronger policy focus on 14-19 education was maintained throughout the early years of the 21st century with a rationale that behind 14-19 education and vocational education within the UK is a 'perceived need for education and training systems to have closer and more explicit links with the contemporary requirements of society' Chappell and Johnston, (2003:22). New Labour saw the initiatives introduced between 1992-2008 as being fundamental to raising standards and improving participation levels post-16. Curriculum 2000, which had a major focus on broadening the advanced level curriculum, was premised by generous credits for attainment which it was hoped would in turn further encourage schools and colleges to continue onto higher level qualifications. It could be argued that the student participation in VET within the UK grew rapidly following the introduction of the Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) in 2002. This programme was introduced with the aim of 'creating enhanced vocational and work-related learning opportunities for 14-16 year olds of all abilities' (DfES, 2004:3) and furthermore enabled 14- to 16-year-olds to study vocational courses within a post compulsory setting for part of their school week. In addition to the reforms in the early 2000s, the re-introduction and expansion of the Modern Apprenticeship programme to include foundation and advanced level qualifications also led to students progressing onto further and higher education courses within their subject area. This in turn led to a melee of age groups and abilities studying at both compulsory and post-compulsory settings, depending upon the subject and work related skills being accessed.

The DfES defined the 14-19 educational changes as 'a once in a generation opportunity to transform education within the English framework' (DfES,2005a:10), whilst Hyland (2002) provided an underlying message that vocational education and therefore the new agenda and its practices were 'crucial in terms of human survival and progress' (Hyland, 2002:78).

The Diploma and its Characteristics

The 14-19 White Paper also set out the vision for the new specialist Diploma, later to change its name to the 'Diploma'. This new Diploma was to be introduced in four phases, with a total of seventeen subjects (or lines of learning) being available by 2013.

Phase	Line of Learning	Year of introduction
1	Creative and Media, Engineering, IT Construction and the Built Environment, Society, Health and Development	2008
2	Environmental and Land Based Studies Manufacturing and Product Design Hospitality, Hair and Beauty Studies Business, Administration and Finance	2009
3	Public services, Sport and Leisure Travel and Tourism, Retail	2010
4	Humanities, Sciences, Languages	2011

Table 1: Diploma Lines of Learning (Senior, 2010:6)

Each of the subject lines were to be introduced at three levels: Level 1 – foundation (equivalent to 5 GCSEs D-G); Level 2 – Higher (equivalent to 7 GCSEs A*-C); and Level 3 – Advanced (equivalent to 2.5 A levels). In accordance with themes presented by Tomlinson (2004), each diploma was designed to enable progression into either higher level qualifications or employment.

The full qualification was formed from three distinct components, as shown below.

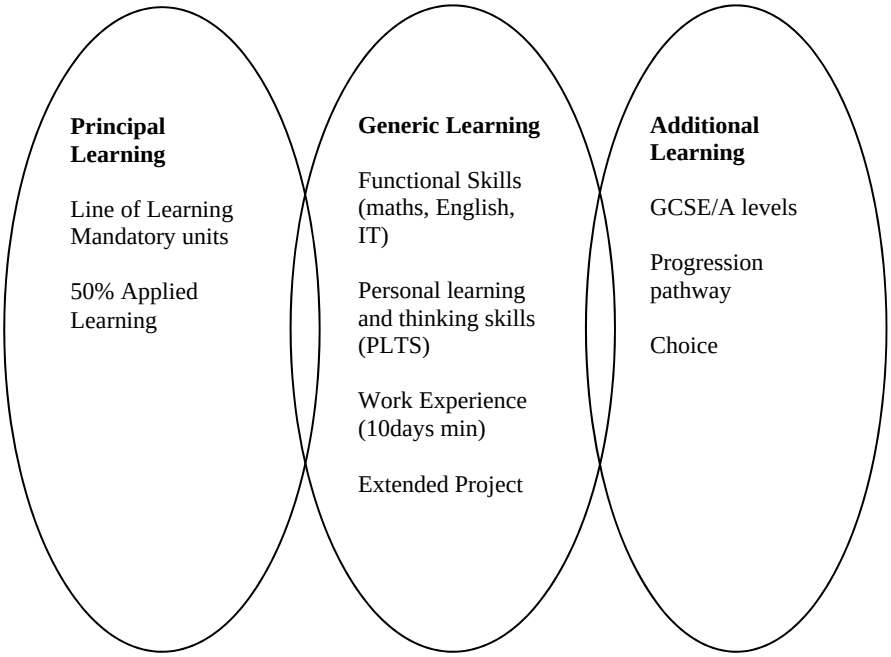

Fig 1: Diploma Qualification Components (Senior, 2010:7)

These distinct components can be broken down further as:

- Principal learning, developing knowledge, understanding and skills in the context of a particular sector.
- Generic learning, including functional skills in English, Maths and ICT, and personal learning and thinking skills.
- Additional/specialist learning, which offers young people the opportunity to study a particular topic in more depth or broaden their studies through complementary learning. This element will also allow a young person to create a qualification that is unique and individualised to their own specific career choice.
- Work experience as a key feature of all diplomas, with a minimum of 10 days needed.
- Extended Project; the Diploma at Level 3 will include an extended project to allow individuals to plan and organise their own learning and demonstrate project management, synthesis and other higher skills that universities and employers need.

Harkin (2008) describes the Diploma as a qualification whereby:

> - Students are challenged to think, to develop in-depth understanding, and to apply academic learning to important, real-world problems.
> - Pedagogy must include connections to the World beyond the Classroom.
> - Assessment Tasks must include problems connected to the world and an audience beyond the School. (Harkin, 2008:17)

As a qualification, the Diploma was promoted as being suitable for a wide range of students of all ability levels:

> The Diplomas are intended to serve different groups of learners – those disaffected from education; those who have failed to reach the 5 GCSE A*-C benchmark at 16; those wanting to pursue a high-quality employer recognised qualification and those wanting to prepare for entry to HE. (Spours, Hodgson and Keep, 2007:4)

In their discussion series, the Institute of Education challenges this promotion to all abilities and infers that the entitlement may not be appropriate for all types of learning. This factor could have made a significant contribution to the ultimate failure of the Diploma:

> However this has meant that there is no clear understanding of which groups of student it can benefit most. The raising of the age of participation and the promise of an `entitlement` will produce a need for a wider range of less academic courses at Level 3 and (particularly) Level 2 post-16. Yet it is far from clear that the Diploma in its current form will meet this need for many young people. In some areas it already risks becoming stigmatised at KS4 as a programme for challenging or lower achieving students, which is likely to have a knock-on impact on its perception as an option post-16. At the same time there are signs that it may prove too challenging for the most disadvantaged learners commonly found within the NEETS group. (14-19 Alliance, 2010)

In summary, the Diploma was designed to be a qualification that combined both theory and practice to provide students with the necessary skills required to progress in their specific subject or to enter the world of work. It did not take on all of the recommendations from Tomlinson and it could be argued that this was part of the reason behind its failure in the workplace, since it still had to compete with the known and trusted qualifications. As one of its key components the Diploma included additional qualifications in the form of functional skills in English, Maths and ICT, successful completion of which were a requirement of the qualification. These in themselves were also a new concept and were not a compulsory element of the gold standard qualifications, albeit there were plans to include them following the pilot. This added complexity of a new functional element of core skills. The pedagogy surrounding the new qualifications could have also been a major part in the failure of the Diploma. Furthermore, all students were required to participate in work placements, which added an additional level of complexity in obtaining relevant work places.

The blurring of the boundaries between academic and vocational elements within the Diploma was further complicated by the inclusion of additional GCSE or A-Levels within the qualification as specialist or additional learning. This strategy may have been the reason why there was an 'increase in aspirations to study general education beyond the age of 16 in a landscape dominated by A-Levels' (Hodgson and Spours (2011b:2008). However, even in its initial stages concerns were being raised about the ability to attract the correct staff with the appropriate knowledge to be involved in subjects such as engineering (Stanton, 2006).

In addition, one of the main criticisms levelled at the qualification through the various reviews (Wolf, 2011) is that teachers do not have the necessary work experience to provide skills in the classroom, while the work-based element of the programme is not sufficient to gain any meaningful practice.

The Challenges of Teaching the Diploma

As can be seen from the previous discussion, the Diploma was the first qualification aimed at 14-19-year-old learners, which was a new educational phase in the government's thinking, with all previous qualifications aimed at pre- or post-16. Pring *et* al., (2009) discusses the carving of learning into these two phases: 'the age of 16 is the age at which compulsory schooling ends. Hence, the division of 'secondary' into two further phases: 11-16 and 16-18' (Pring *et al.*, 2009:30).

Pring *et al*. (2009) continues the discussion through the critique of these two phases and the suggestion that there should be a new phase within the organisation of education.

> However, the tide is in full flow by the age of 14. The national curriculum in England has been partly dismantled for students of this age, who are allowed to dispense with the arts and humanities and opt for 'vocational subjects' instead. The run-up to GCSE has begun in earnest, and careers advice has assumed an importance as the learners start to consider their progression into the adult world. At the same time, education and training are being extended in one form or another to 18. Therefore, continuity of progression from 14-18 would suggest a new phase in the organisation of education. (Pring *et al*., 2009:30)

At the time of the introduction of the Diploma qualification in 2008, as part of a 14-19 curriculum, the qualification straddled Pring *et als.* original two phases with the 11-16 year age group and their teachers being overseen by the then Teacher Development Agency (TDA) and the post-16 sector working with a sector skills council, Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK). This skills council was introduced in 2007 as part of the attempt to include

employers in the development of qualifications. LLUK was responsible for the all post-16 provision, termed the Lifelong Learning Sector: Further Education Colleges; Training Providers; Museums; Libraries; Adult and Community Education; Emergency and Public Service; Sixth Form Colleges and the Voluntary Sector. It also oversaw the Lifelong Learning Sector workforce and students. It is worth noting here that whilst the 14-19 phase had been discussed as a new educational phase and the Diploma was titled '14-19 Diploma', as a recognised phase 14-19 was not acknowledged within UK education.

This lack of recognition and division of age phases was problematic for the workforce involved in the 14-19 Diploma since the teaching qualification requirement for each of the two key sectors was different, with the compulsory sector staff requiring degree status and Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and the post compulsory workforce requiring Qualified Teacher Learning Skills (QTLS). There was no requirement for post-16 staff to hold degree status as industry experience was recognised as being as valuable for students within this sector. This difference in staff base and qualifications could also be a contributory factor to the perceived academic/vocational divide discussed previously in this chapter. I would argue that it also corroborates the suggestion put forward by Pring *et al.,* (2098), that a new 14-19 phase should have been further considered within educational circles.

Further to the issues surrounding teacher identity, the effective implementation of the Diploma required that a number of different partners and stakeholders worked together to provide all of the opportunities and learning experiences that the new qualification promised. This concept of collaboration and consortia was one of the key foundation bricks upon which this educational reform was founded. However, as a key concept it was fraught with challenges, one being whether any one institution would have the expertise or equipment to deliver all the Diplomas. Furthermore, recent reviews of the workings of these 14-19 consortia have identified that the promotion of collaboration between schools, colleges and work-based learning providers may have led to 'weakly collaborative 14-19 local learning systems' (Hodgson and Spours, 2010:15), which could in turn lead to questions surrounding the limits of such systems to 'facilitate effective progression for all learners' (Hodgson and Spours, 2010:15). The first phase of subjects were developed within Diploma Development Partnerships (DDP), with employer-led steering groups that were chaired by people well respected within the relevant sector. This required employers to be involved from the beginning of the development of each qualification, with input on employer vision, skills requirements, competencies required by organisations. These employers were able to input ideas into the content of the qualification and provide feedback on materials and progress as the qualification developed. Indeed, initial reflections on the introduction of the Diploma

would suggest that the early subjects introduced in 2008 were much better received because they engaged employers from the outset (Laczik and White, 2009).

It is my belief that this is also evident in current government thinking, following the cull of more than 3,000 vocational qualifications in the UK curriculum by ending their recognition in school league tables in February 2012. In announcing the cull, the Coalition government has inadvertently confirmed my view that when developed and delivered by subject experts, vocational qualifications and the 14-19 diploma can be effective in engaging young people into learning an providing a springboard for entry into further study or employment. This confirmation lies with the list of subjects that will remain within the league tables, which includes all of the Diploma lines that were developed and launched in the first tranche of subjects in 2008: Level 2 Principal Learning in Construction and the Built Environment, Level 2 Principal Learning in Creative and Media, Level 2 Principal Learning in Engineering, Level 2 Principal Learning in IT, Level 2 Principal Learning in Society, Health and Development. Subjects developed for later delivery are all subject to review. Comments from staff involved in teaching the engineering diploma, found within the discussion of results chapter, include the fact that the qualification is 'up-to-date, relevant and provides a range of skills needed by someone who wished to pursue a career in engineering'. The fact that these first Diplomas were employer-endorsed confirm that the Diploma is perceived as a qualification that provides quality education.

The continual educational reforms and initiatives within the 14-19 qualifications framework have created a situation of constant change for teachers working within the 14-19 sector. Despite this flux, the sector and the ensuing qualifications that have surrounded the 14-19 agenda in the UK over the last ten years have been described as being a unique phase in educational policy and development (Lumby and Foskett, 2005). It could be argued that part of the uniqueness is caused by the concept of 14-19 as an educational phase within the UK, where previously education had been seen as compulsory education up to the age of 16 with post-compulsory defined as 16-18. In addition, the two main sectors, schools and colleges, had a joint ownership of the student and the student's journey through the qualification from the initial advice and guidance through to completion of the programme. This was not without its challenges and several head teachers were deterred from taking up the qualification as they perceived that they 'would have less grip over them [students] and I cannot push them over the hurdle of five A*-Cs including English and maths' (Mansell, 2010:16). This issue is also reflected in the 'Diploma Discussion Paper' one of the series papers published by the Institute of Education: 'The importance attached to school and college performance tables as a measure of success inevitably leads institutions to offer

those programmes likely to deliver good results in terms of student outcomes' (14-19 Alliance 2010:5).

This notion of joint ownership of learners also places the 14-19 year old student in a unique position, studying within both traditional 11-18 schools and the less traditional Further Education College. This dual place of study also created challenges and questions surrounding the learning environment that the students were in and the ability of teachers to deal with students to whom they would not normally be exposed. Edward (2007) explored the shifting boundaries of 14-19 education with a discussion of the Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP). This programme was one of the first to embrace widening participation strategies and partnership working (one of the key concepts within the 14-19 framework), with the introduction of 14-16 year olds into a college environment. These young adults were released from the traditional academic classrooms to study vocationally related subjects and take vocational qualifications. The programme itself raised many issues and questions as to the viability of the experience both for the learner and the educators. Indeed, at the time Edward, Coffield, Steer and Gregson (2007) raised concerns that the programme had a major impact upon the teaching staff, within Further Education and that the change from the traditional FE client group to a younger learner the staff working in FE now faced:

> …new difficulties of coping with challenging behaviour in the classroom from students who, after an unsuccessful school career, were often lacking in confidence, unfocused, disruptive or weighed down by difficult home circumstances and/or health and/or financial problems. (Edward et al, 2007:111)

Cochrane and Straker (2005) also explored the 'cultural clashes between those who have opted to work in FE in order not to teach – or, in some cases, even to see people from the 14-16 age group' (Cochrane and Straker, 2005:11). The authors also acknowledged that whilst some of the issues of cross boundaries teaching are similar, vocational learning within a college setting cannot be seen as a true comparison to vocational learning within the school.

Cochrane and Straker (1995) considered the learner within post-compulsory settings and their experiences and perceptions of vocational education. Previous experience of teaching in vocational education would lead me to suggest that to be effective, the 14-16 year old learner must have a positive view of vocational education and that their perceptions are paramount to vocational success. Cochrane and Straker (1995) also argue in addition that a negative experience creates learning barriers for the student, whereas a positive experience helps their learning and motivates them within the classroom. The authors conclude their research with the suggestion that the students' perceptions of vocational education in the

traditional post-16 environment is more positive than their perceptions of school based vocational learning. It is important to note here that the positivity they experienced was attributed to the subject knowledge of the teachers and the ability to apply this to learning in practical situations.

In addition, the learners believed that their personal skills, keys skills, e.g. literacy and numeracy, and their self-esteem and confidence improved through attending post-16 environments rather than pre-16 environments. The reason for this was that learners were treated in a more adult way and had more freedom with regards to their learning choices. From this it can be argued that vocational education experiences are more positive in a post-16 establishment compared to schools. This argument can be supported by the DfES evaluation of the Increased Flexibilty Programme (IFP) (DfES, 2002). This evaluation highlights that students choosing to study in FE colleges chose to participate in order to learn away from school and because the course reflected a career interest. They concluded that the IFP provided an opportunity for certain students, who may not be suited to school and the learning styles in school, to learn in an alternative environment. However, in introducing a more vocational curriculum Bathmaker (2005:98) reminds us that it is not a 'magical elixir' that automatically motivates those unmotivated by a traditional academic curriculum.

The other major stakeholder within 14-19 vocational education is the learner himself, who is also affected by changes in 14-19 policy and the introduction new initiatives. Hodkinson, Biesta, Gleeson, James and Postlethwaite. (2005) are concerned with the importance of the tutor-learner relationship. The authors' (2005) perception is that from the learners' perspective, policy-making is irrelevant and unseen, while a committed effective teacher will be key to their success. Conversely, it can be argued that if teachers are not enthusiastic, committed and effective in the classroom, the ultimate losers in any policy change will be the learners themselves.

Other challenges that have faced both teachers and students involved in vocational education have concerned the environment in which the learning has taken place. Edward et al. (2007) express concerns about the changes that have taken place within 14-19 education. One example is the development of sixth-form provision in schools where previously none has been available, plus the direct competition that these sixth forms have had with post-compulsory settings. The authors (2007) also express concerns about the inclusion of vocational programmes within traditionally academic environments, and the negative impact that this has on teachers within the compulsory sector, because:

> Whilst some teachers of traditionally academic subjects at a secondary school may have a partial involvement in vocational education as part of their workload…it is seen as peripheral and somewhat alien, not highly valued, and may even be seen as an irritant. (Edward et al., 2007:160)

It could be argued that these concerns will be addressed through the post-2010 development and expansion of University Technical Colleges (UTCs), which have been developed to deliver the vocational part of the curriculum. However, changes to the physical location of teaching does not necessarily address concerns about skills and knowledge. Frykolm and Nitzler (1993) suggest that teachers in compulsory settings are constrained in how they address the vocational element by a 'structural Influence that forces the teacher to adjust his or her teaching to the dominating structures of thought' (Frykolm and Nitzler, 1993:442). Furthermore, the authors (1993) suggest that within the school environment, vocational education 'is more a question of transmitting dispositions and attitudes, than of giving the knowledge and skills required for specific tasks' (Frykolm and Nitzler, 1993:343). This is further supported by work from Dalton and Smith (2004), who posit that VET teachers within a school setting have little or no opportunity to make contact with industry and that this is not a perceived part of their role.

In addition to input from employers, teaching staff, whether pre- or post-compulsory, are also major stakeholders within the 14-19 policy arena and as such should have been pivotal in the effective implementation of policy change surrounding vocational qualifications.

However, the reality is that they are often viewed as the last link in the policy chain (Edward, Coffield, Steer and Gregson, 2007). The Nuffield Review of Education and Training in England and Wales (2007) supports this in its Issues Paper *What is the purpose of the new 14-19 Diplomas and how will they improve learning and performance in 14-19 education and training in England*?*,* a paper which was one of a series designed to explore concerns in Vocational Education:

> Practitioners, who have considerable experience of both curriculum development and teaching vocational qualifications, were excluded almost entirely. This is problematic for at least two reasons – practitioners will ultimately be responsible for delivering the new awards and, therefore, need to be brought on board at an early stage; they also have the expertise to point out practical design faults that may otherwise go unnoticed until the implementation phase. (Nuffield Foundation, 2007:6)

From this it could also be asked whether teaching staff 'are simply reduced to responding to change' or if they still find the energy to be 'innovative in their own teaching' (Nuffield, 2007:165). In turn, this suggests that rather than being pivotal in changes, 'teaching staff

may be seen as the victims of change, obliged to react to dictats from above, even if this conflicts with their own assessment of their learners' needs' (Edward et al., 2007:158). In support of this, several other studies (Lumby, 2005; Frykolm and Nitzler, 1993) have shown that many teachers struggle to cope with change, become weary and de-motivate, or leave the sector.

Many other researchers (Cochrane and Straker, 2005, Jephcote and Abbott, 2005) also question the ability of a school to deliver effective vocational education and work-related learning, and suggest there is a need for effective and appropriate training for vocational teachers within the compulsory setting. This training need is further supported by Ofsted, who examined the problem of sufficient and appropriate vocational teachers within schools and the 'deployment of teachers to teach (students) without adequate or relevant preparation or qualifications' and that within schools, lessons are unsatisfactory as teachers 'lack knowledge of relevant industrial and commercial practices' (Ofsted, 2004:3).

Harkin, in his conference address at the University of Warwick (2008), also recognises that teaching and learning is never simply about transmitting information from one person to another but rather the pedagogical approach required for the Diploma is that the students have an active engagement with subjects, teachers, other learners and the world beyond. He continues this theme by stating that:

> Young people look to teachers for positive regard and respect, as well as for subject expertise. Diploma teachers should be able to relate positively with young people and their aspirations; be willing to help young people shape their own learning and their own futures. It is a role that is as much about general support and encouragement as it is about subject-specific expertise. (Harkin, 2008:6)

Ofsted (2005) and Beckett and Hagar (2002) discuss the teaching methodology that takes place within schools and argue that the approach should be more contextualised to the workplace. In addition, teaching methods should be driven by the learner and not the teacher. Harkin (2006) adds to this argument by positing that, within the further education sector, teachers are familiar with different assessment strategies for different learning experiences, whilst teachers in schools are less familiar with the concepts of vocational and applied learning. He continued the argument through the discussion of the "active engagement" that is needed to deliver specialised diplomas effectively and suggested that the school teacher may struggle with the autonomy that the diplomas created.

New Diploma: Old Issues

Although the increased focus on a 14-19 phase and the 14-19 Diploma was a new development, it still contained the old issue concerning a vocational/academic tension. From an historical perspective it would appear that the development of the Diploma was a further example of the 'back to the future' approach that seemed to dominate the policy making and policy initiatives in the late 21st century. For the Diploma, the literature would suggest that one of the main issues surrounding its implementation was the complexity of the components of the qualification. In addition, a confusion around its status and role within the curriculum framework and whether it was a vocational qualification or a hybrid of academic and vocational also appears as an area the literature highlights as being problematic. The following section will consider the challenges of creating a professional identity for the 14-19 workforce and the way forward for professional development for the Diploma teacher.

Professionalism and Professional Identity: The Concept of Professional Development for the 14-19 Diploma Teacher

Professional development for the teaching profession is a continual process involving updating subject and qualification knowledge. Day suggests that:

> Professional development is the process by which alone, and with others, teachers', review, renew and extend their commitment to the moral purposes of teaching, and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and practice. (Day, 1994:4)

Evans considered it to be 'the process whereby people's professionality and/or professionalism may be considered to be enhanced' (Evans, 2008:15). Hoyle explained professionalism as 'those strategies and rhetoric employed by members of an occupation in seeking to improve status, salary and conditions' (Hoyle, 1975:315). My interpretation of CPD is that it is a means of supporting people in the workplace to understand more about the environment in which they work, the job they do and how to do it better whilst maintaining their professional status and identity. This resonates with Sockett, who believes that 'professionalism is about the quality of practice' (Sockett, 1996:23). Within educational circles, teachers within the post-compulsory sector are perceived as having a dual professional role, combining teaching and subject discipline. This concept of a dual professional was first recognised by the Institute for Learning (IfL) in 2007.

According to Kennedy, 'the concept of professionalism is a difficult one to define' (Kennedy, 2007:96) since it is used in many different senses, from a definition relating to an occupation/activity to the respective status of an occupational group. Professionality should provide the teacher with autonomy within the profession. However, the term *professionalism* is increasingly used in teaching to empower or to control teachers. Knowles (1992) and Nias (1989) relate professional identity to teachers' self-image, whilst other research locates professional identity in the teacher and teaching role (Goodson and Cole, 1994; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998). Other studies consider professional identity to concern societal perceptions and expectations of what knowledge teachers should have and what their personal and practical experiences have been (Tickle, 2000). It could be argued that professional identity can be described as 'a set of attributes that are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching profession themselves' (Tickle, 2000:45) and, thus, is a juxtaposition of professional autonomy and prescription.

Wenger (1988) identifies five dimensions of identity: 'identity as negotiated experiences; identity as community membership; identity as learning trajectory; identity as nexus of multi membership; and lastly identity as a relation between the local and the global' (Wenger,1998:149). Furthermore, he argues that 'there is a profound connection between identity and practice' (Wenger, 1998:149). Consideration of the 14-19 teacher and these five dimensions of identity would suggest that professional identity construct requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as professionals within their own right. However, in the current political climate and the uncertainty surrounding 14-19 education and its and multiple educational settings, the identity of 14-19 teachers is more complex than Wenger's five dimensional model would suggest. The identity of a 14-19 teacher is multifaceted, with many external and internal influences impacting its construction. In further exploring the teaching profession and professional identity, seminal work by Hoyle (1975) discusses two distinct aspects of teachers' professional lives that have a bearing on their perception of identity. The two aspects are defined as *professionalism* and *professionality*, where professionality is 'an ideologically, attitudinally and epistemologically based stance' which dictates the skills element of the job; whereas the professionalism element is based on 'attitudes to working'. (Hoyle, 1975:175).

Later work by Boyt, Lusch and Naylor (2001) also discusses the concept of professionalism as being linked to the attitudes and behaviours of the profession itself. This is an interesting contention, as 14-19 education and 14-19 policy change in the UK have been victims of negativity and negative perceptions within both pre- and post-compulsory sectors. Lumby

and Foskett (2005:73) describe the 14-19 changes as a battlefield and further describe the 14-19 stakeholders as being a melee of ‘contradiction’, ‘contests’, and ‘confusion’, reactive rather than proactive within the changing educational arena. If this is still true of the 14-19 teacher over a decade after the initial changes, it raises the question of whether teachers in the sector perceive their role as a profession and themselves as professionals within it.

Earlier research suggested that professional identity was stable and not affected by context or biography (Cooley, 1902). This is further supported by Mead (1934) who believed that identity was a generalisation of how people created themselves through social experiences. This early research into identity was the first indication that a person could construct a different identity depending upon the situation they found themselves in. Goffman (1959) presented the concept of an individual having a number of identities, each one being unique to the time and situation within which they were located. Day, Stobart, Sammons and Kington (2006) take this view further and argue that identity is constructed through multifaceted experiences, both professional and personal (Day et al., 2006:602), whereas research by Nias (1989) and Knowles (1992), relates professional identity to a teacher’s self-image. Peel (2005:125) claims that professionalism is a ‘socially constructed concept’ and as such is reliant on the social experiences of the workforce, whereas Friedson (1994), Becher (1996) and Callahan (1998) believe that learning professionals need to develop their professional skills over a period of time. This suggests that CPD, defined and structured by the autonomous teacher, is central to the notion of professionalism. Indeed, Carr (2000) identifies training as one of the five defining elements of professionalism. In addition, he discusses the significance of licensing and regulation of professional practice. Despite the above, it is apparent that the only agreement is that, in education, the terms ‘professional’ and ‘professionalism’ are slippery and contested.

There is a wealth of literature on the question of whether teaching can be classed as a profession. Etzioni (1969) describes teaching as a semi-profession whilst Haralambos and Holborn (2000) consider it a lower profession, suggesting it has less status than other occupational groups. Kennedy (2007:98) believes that the definition of professionalism, and therefore professional identity, is ‘indicative of the interplay of power among stakeholders’. Thus, in relation to this research, it can be argued that the relevant question is how the perception of professionalism and professional identity is constructed amongst the 14-19 workforce.

Many researchers, (Ball and Goodson, 1985; Goodson and Hargreaves, 1996; Nias, 1989) recognise that past experiences are a crucial element in identity construction and that these

experiences, coupled with the social experiences, combine to form a notion of self-identity. However, whilst this combination of self and experience is broadly accepted in much educational research (Day et al., 2006), it can also be argued that the relationship between them can cause tensions which impact upon the individuals' perceptions of their own professional identity. For example, an individual's motivation and commitment to a profession may often be affected by their job satisfaction and how effective they perceive themselves to be in their role.

The first career teacher has, by definition, always been a teacher and, consequently, their past identity is likely to be dominated by their experiences of education, from school-based experiences to university and teacher training. In contrast a second career teacher, whilst still having gained experiences from their schooling, may not have a further education experience. Second career teachers are more likely to have a broader experience of working in a particular vocation. Ball (1994) discusses situated and substantive identities, the former being a presentation of self that differs in different situations and the latter being the stable image that an individual has of themselves. This concept is pertinent to the discussion of second career teachers' professional identities as it suggests that, rather than the individual being moulded through experience, they can take on the persona of the teacher but also maintain a different self-perception.

According to Orr and Simmons (2010), FE teachers prioritise their former professional identity over that of being a teacher, as this provides them with the credibility they require in their new work environment. In addition to this, Heikkinen (1997) believes that within the framework of vocational education, the vocational practitioner is a professional in their own right with their own distinct identity and importance.

For the Diploma teacher, the *P* element of CPD becomes much more important, as Eaton and Carbone suggest that it is beneficial to continue to update subject knowledge throughout a teaching career' but they also recognised that the subject knowledge is much broader than one single subject and suggest that it is 'knowledge in practice' (Eaton and Carbone, 2008:263). Beijaard*,* Verloop, and Vermunt (2000) suggest that 'teachers derive their professional identity from (mostly combinations of) the ways they see themselves as subject matter experts, pedagogical experts, and didactical experts' (Beijaard*,* Verloop, and Vermunt ,2000:751). The authors further suggest that these three concepts are commonly used in Europe to indicate what teachers should do and know. If we examine these three areas in relation to the 14-19 teacher, we find that within subject matter, the ability to transform knowledge into something that is teachable and a deep and full understanding of the subject

area provides the professional base (Calderhead, 1996). The authors would argue that within the 14-19 sector many of the first career teachers are not subject experts but instead have taken on additional teaching outside of their main subject area in order to meet the needs of the institution as described by Spours, Coffield and Gregson (2007). One example would be the first career geography teacher who has taken on the role of the Travel and Tourism expert and their perception of their location and status in terms of their professional identity.

Furthermore, when we examine the pedagogical element of professionalism, we need to consider the teacher's engagement with the students, as evidence from earlier research suggests that many teachers find the pedagogical element of their profession more important than the knowledge of the subject. (Beijaard and De Vries 1997). Research evidence also indicates that effective pedagogical approaches contribute to increased success rates within 14-19 education on a national level. As the 14-19 agenda has been the subject of many debates regarding its robustness and quality, I would suggest that the 14-19 teacher should possess heightened pedagogical skills, which in turn could enhance the perceptions of the sector and its qualifications as a whole. The final concept of didactical expertise discussed by Beijaard et al. (2000) is concerned with the models of learning and teaching that take place within our classrooms. In recent thoughts about teaching, traditional teacher-centred conceptions of teaching are increasingly being replaced by more student-centred ones with greater emphasis on learning and less on teaching, with the teacher being seen as a facilitator. (Scales et al., 2011). This shift is crucial within vocational education as each student has an individual pathway. This shift in teaching roles is also an important element in the professional identity of the 14-19 teacher.

Many14-19 teachers involved in vocational education can be classed as second career teachers, having made the transition into teaching following a successful career within the workplace. They are often well established within their professional vocational area, with relevant qualifications and considerable industrial or commercial experience. It can be argued, therefore, that this move from one career to another entails a change in psyche and the development of a new identity as a teacher. However, this would suggest that to be effective, the 14-19 professional needs to have a dual identity and a dual professionalism: the subject specialist first and foremost and the professional teacher second.

Gleeson (2005) questions whether professionalism is an agent of policy reform and this notion is reflected in the work of Coffield (2007), who considers the concept of the 'wandering' professional with multiple professional identities and loyalties to previous

occupations. This is also considered by Bathmaker and Avis (2006), who identify previous work as a major factor in people's perceptions of their own professional identity.

This raises a number of questions about identity, professional development needs and whether these practitioners actually make the transition in terms of their professional identity. Furthermore, with the notion of dual professionalism and the need for explicit subject knowledge, coupled with the educational knowledge of teaching, where do the 14-19 teachers actually position themselves? Nixon (1996) perceives a 'crisis of professional identity' with teachers looking for their teacher identity from within the teaching profession and the subject specialism from the outside world within which the subject sits. The question here would be whether this dual identity can be sustained and be effective within 14-19 education or whether the 14-19 workforce needs to undertake professional development that develops them as 14-19 teachers with specific and unique identities.

Research has shown that teachers' identities are central to the beliefs, values, and practices that guide their engagement, commitment, and actions in and out of the classroom (Day et al., 2006; Hargreaves and Dawe, 1990). Cohen (2005) takes this view further and discusses role identities and the implications of these within education, positing that individuals need to understand their identity to understand their role in society. The discussion is continued through the assertion that: 'One is not free to perform any identity. Identity possibilities are constrained by normative beliefs and practices, as well as material conditions that functionally limit the range of possibilities for a given identity' (Cohen, 2005:83).

Day et al. (2006) believe that teacher identity is defined through past and current identities, whereas research by Nias (1989) and Knowles (1992), relates professional identity to a teacher's self-image. The first career 14-19 teacher has by definition always been a teacher and as such it could be argued that their past identity is dominated by their personal experiences of education, initially school, and culminating with university. In contrast, a second career teacher, who has entered the teaching profession after working in the vocational field in which they wish to teach, whilst still having gained experiences from their schooling, may not have a further education experience. In addition, a second career teacher often has a broader experience of working in a particular vocation and as such creates their identity through both education and work-based experiences.

In addition to the external influences from personal experiences, Tickle (2000) describes professional identity as being about society's perceptions and expectations of the knowledge that teachers should have and that therefore professional identity is as a set of attributes that

are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching profession themselves.

Wenger (1998) considers the 14-19 teacher and the five dimensions of identity and suggests that the identity construction requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as professionals within their own right. However, in the current political climate and the uncertainty surrounding 14-19 education and its and multiple educational settings, that the identity of 14-19 teachers is more complex than Wenger's five dimensional model would suggest that the identity of a 14-19 teacher is multifaceted with many external and internal influences impacting upon its construction.

In attempting to define identity for the 14-19 teacher it would be useful to consider whether a 14-19 teacher is a new type of professional working within a new career, i.e. 14-19 education. This is important since previous to the 14-19 reforms, the term 'teacher' was used to describe someone who taught in a school, whereas the term 'lecturer' was used more frequently in Further Education colleges. However, with the introduction of the 14-19 reforms the boundary between the two sectors and indeed the two professions is now blurred, with many 14-19 qualifications being taught across the two sectors. Furthermore 14-19 education is often delivered in collaboration between sectors, most commonly schools, FE colleges and more recently work-based training providers. In considering a possible new profession, Evans (2008) questions,

> Whether new professionalisms were consciously imposed upon educational professionals or whether they evolved as a direct or indirect consequence of prevailing circumstances they must, by definition involve change to professional practice. (Evans, 2008:21)

This would suggest that regardless of whether the 14-19 teacher is a first or second career teacher, and whether they are in the pre- or post-16 sector, the imposition of the 14-19 reforms will have affected the notion and perception of professionalism for the 14-19 sector. This would therefore indicate that the 14-19 teacher is in a new profession which will need to evolve to create and redefine its own specific identity. Indeed, building upon work by Evans (2008) it could be argued that the 14-19 profession and the concept of professionalism within the sector will evolve and change to serve different purposes and meet the needs of different stakeholders.

Further to the perception of professionalism that surrounds the teachers, Spours, Coffield and Gregson. (2007) argue that many institutions 'translate' the 14-19 policies into systems

that suit their local or administrative needs, adapted to suit the institution and not the stakeholder. They continue the debate by suggesting that the localised translation can then lead to internal conflicts which in turn further impact upon the perceptions of professional identity amongst teachers involved in delivering the curriculum. This is supported by Newman (2001) who suggests that many of these conflicts can be attributed to the internal conflict between an individual's own cultural and professional values and their job priorities, concluding that staff become compliant with changes rather that committed to them. This resonates with the notion that an individual's attitude towards working is integral to their concept of professionalism. Supporting this further, Senge notes that:

> Organisations intent on building shared visions continually encourage members to develop their personal visions. If people don't have their own vision, all they can do is 'sign up' for someone else's. The result is compliance, never commitment. (Senge, 1990:121)

Lumby and Foskett (2000) also warn of the dangers of change, which when applied to the changes within the educational reforms, support the notion of ensuring that the change is implemented effectively:

> Changing the way things are done…does not necessarily change either the outputs of the system or the underlying principles that characterise the sector. (Lumby and Foskett, 2000:27)

However, as previously discussed, teaching staff, whether pre- or post-compulsory are major stakeholders within the 14-19 policy arena and are pivotal in the effective implementation of policy change. These perceptions add impetus to the argument that the 14-19 teacher needs a professional identity. Sachs (2001) argues that, with the educational upheaval and changes that are taking place in the British 14-19 arena, the teaching profession is best placed to author its own identity.

Bathmaker and Avis (2005) study new entrants into the teaching profession within 14-19 education and determine that they did not feel part of a wider community of practice, while their personal ideals were at variance with actual practice. This experience of isolation contrasts the findings of Lave and Wenger (1991), who advocate the need for communities of practice in order to develop the professional identity of new entrants to the profession. Furthermore, Robson (1998) argues that second career teachers have little or no opportunity to develop a second professional persona. As a group, second career teachers often find that the routes available to them to gain professional qualifications and continue their own personal and professional development within the new career are fragmented and diversified, giving rise to confusion and lack of incentive to retrain (Robson, 1998). In

contrast, Friedman and Phillips (2004) advocate that CPD is a major part of being professional and creating a professional identity.

Beck and Young (2005) locate the driving force of professional identity as centred on the relationship that practitioners have with knowledge, a relationship characterised by inwardness and inner dedication. Within 14-19 education, it has been suggested by various sources, most notably Ofsted (2009) and Wolf (2011), that vocationally-based knowledge is missing from within the teaching workforce. This study will examine whether this is an issue for Diploma teachers and whether it should be addressed in any CPD offering. Fullan (2003) describes educational reforms of the 2000s as a 'top-down' reform that without the full participation of the profession is unlikely to succeed. He claims that what is particularly required is 'moral purpose, defined as making a difference in the lives of students' and 'reducing the gap between high and low performers at all levels' (Fullan, 2003:18). He further suggests that this type of approach may provide the missing teachers' knowledge.

For the Diploma teacher, the concept of 'knowledge in practice' is crucial. Whilst post-compulsory staff often have industry-specific knowledge which they continually update, the same situation cannot be attributed to the compulsory sector. This is because many teachers within that sector do not have work experience within their specific subject area, despite having the subject theory at or above at least undergraduate level. This is one of the factors behind the difficulty in defining the professional identity for the 14-19 diploma teacher, since teachers' identities and past experiences vary.

Evans (2002) identifies a further two main elements of professional development, attitudinal and functional, with altitudinal elements relating to motivation and intellectual elements and functional pertaining to process and procedures. These elements will be discussed further when considering the development needs of the 14-19 workforce.

CPD for the 14-19 Teacher

As a concept, CPD for the post-compulsory sector has experienced rapid growth in both interest and uptake over the last few years. This can be partially attributed to the introduction of a dual professionalism CPD model for teachers in the lifelong learning sector (normally, but not exclusively, post-compulsory education and training). This model has been introduced by the Institute for Learning (IfL), the professional body for the sector, who suggest that CPD for practitioners can be structured and organised in a number of different

ways, and for a number of different reasons. In addition, a further reason for the growth in uptake of CPD could be the attributed to the change in teacher training and workforce regulations for the sector. Initial Teacher Training for the Lifelong Learning Sector (LLITT), previously known as the post-compulsory sector, which traditionally was education post 16 has now been extended to include the 14-16 age group, has recently undergone a new reform. As part of this reform, Standards Verification UK (SVUK) the government body responsible for teacher training within this sector introduced for the first time a set of new professional standards that teachers must achieve. Furthermore, the government regulations for the LLITT sector now dictate that all practitioners are licensed and registered to practice, again mirroring the professional identities of the "higher" status professions. To maintain the licence, registration must be renewed each year through a programme of CPD. The requirement for CPD is further demonstrated by the IfL's dual professional model (Figure 2).This figure identifies the dual professional aspects of teaching, namely a combination of Subject Specialism and Teaching and Learning set within the work context. Their CPD model also suggests various topics that may be identified as CPD activities.

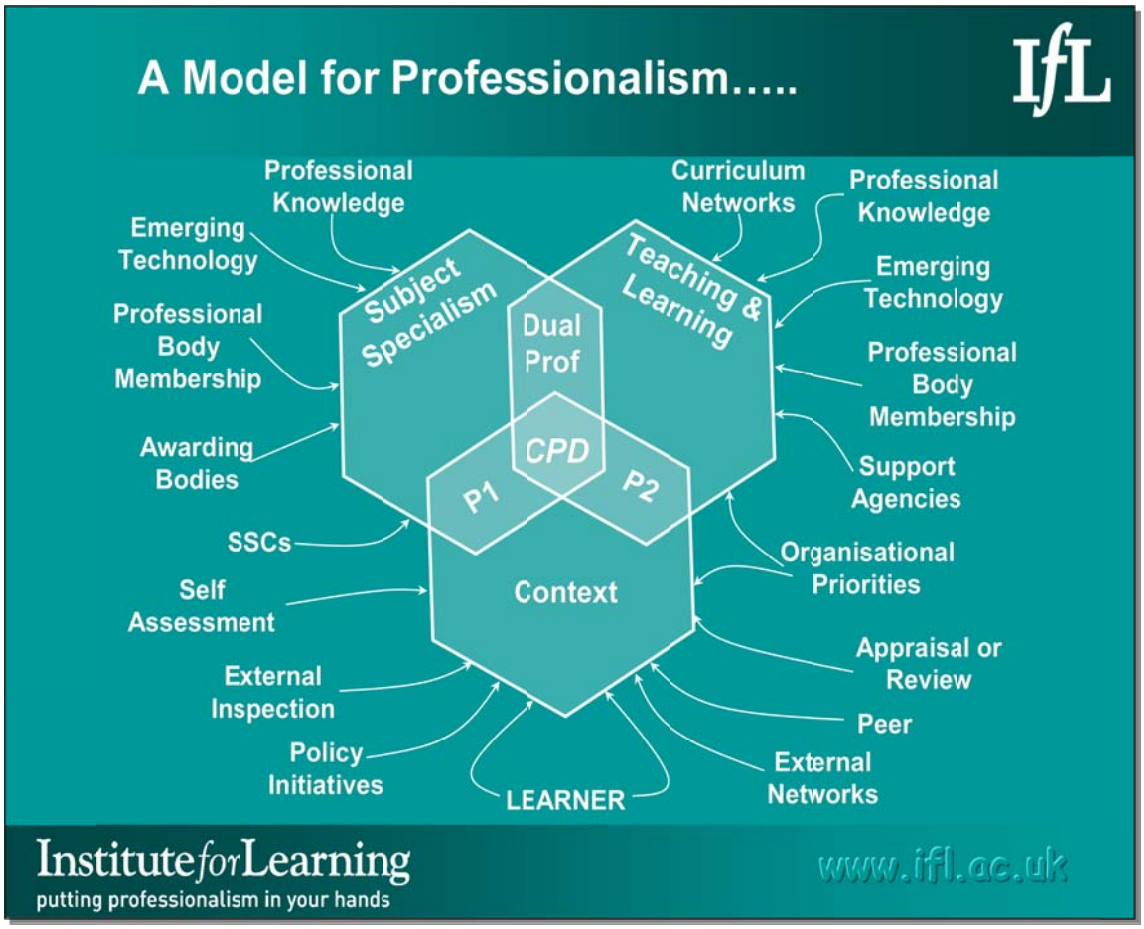

Fig 2: Institute for Learning Model of Dual Professionalism (2007)

Therefore, it could be argued that CPD is already a requirement for 14-19 practitioners and as such functions to construct the professional identity of this workforce.

However, it can be questioned whether the concept of CPD is appropriate and specific enough to enable the 14-19 practitioner and workforce to create an identity for itself. In examining the framework proposed by the IfL, it would appear that there are some inconsistencies in what the literature surrounding CPD says and what the IfL propose. The author would suggest from the model proposed by the IfL that the teacher takes ownership of his or her training, which is one characteristic identified by Peel (2005) as being integral to professionalism. However, much CPD is directed towards achieving institutional targets determined by external authorities and as a consequence, teachers' perceptions of ownership are diminished or perceived as of little value or significance as no recognition is placed on their personal professional needs (Eaton and Carbonne, 2008). Hargreaves (1998) argues that the traditional model of CPD does not take into account the teacher's needs and that a practising teacher should be more involved in the process of creating CPD requirements.

Patrick, Ford and McPhee (2003) acknowledge that CPD is viewed as an extension of initial teacher training, based upon competencies and giving rise to continued professional registration. This analogy would suggest that the authors perceive CPD as a "hoop" to jump through, which for the post-compulsory teacher would be essential in order to maintain their teaching licence. Hegarty (2000) challenged the notion of CPD being based upon competency, noting that over-reliance on competency can lead to impoverished teaching, lacking insight and creativity.

Grangeat and Gray (2007) develop this notion of professional competency in their discussion of two models of professional competency development and their use in developing innovative vocational curricula and CPD. These two models – the *didactique profesionalle* (DP) model, and the 'work process knowledge' (WPK) model – have both emerged from the 'new industrial landscape'. Within this landscape the DP model was originally developed to study processes of professional efficiency enhancement (Boreham , 2002). Whereas the WPK model was designed to demonstrate competency in an arena whereby work processes had changed. (Pastré, 2004). These two models have been discussed in relation to education with some researchers believing that education involves both types of professional competency, and that this is a new and emerging trend in education that teachers do not only provide knowledge but also encourage learning through the generation of activity. (Grangeat, 2004; McNally, Boreham and Cope., 2004; Robert and Rogalski, 2005). This

suggests that transmission of knowledge is not enough and that education needs to enable young people to apply their knowledge to particular experiences.

Boreham (2002) furthers this discussion by arguing that professional knowledge enhancement arises from efforts to resolve differences between theoretical knowledge, what the standard operating procedure tells teachers to do and what confronts them in reality. Samurçay and Vidal-Gomel (2002) discuss an example of electrical work to highlight that the model includes both standard electrical theory and previous personal experiences. Boreham (2004) notes that three types of knowledge are required for effectiveness: (1) personal professional experiences (of other agents, partners, users, machines, artefacts and previous problems); (2) all the resources and artefacts that exist in the work situation (procedure manuals, ICT, etc.); (3) theoretical knowledge from vocational curricula.

However, while an increasing range of literature focuses on particular aspects of CPD, there is a paucity of literature addressing the spectrum of CPD models in a comparative manner (Hoban, 2002).

Kennedy (2005) identified nine models of CPD and the knowledge areas attached to each one: training; award-bearing; deficit; cascade; standards-based; coaching/mentoring; community of practice; action research; transformative. I would argue that the CPD framework suggested by the IfL is that of a deficit model suggested by Kennedy (2005), designed for organisations or individuals to determine areas of weakness within the performance of the individual teacher. The framework attempts to remedy these weaknesses by identifying the areas of under-performance. However, Kennedy (2005) suggests that the expected level of effectiveness is unclear, so that in reality the model views CPD as a ‘means of remedying individual weaknesses, whereby collective responsibility is not considered’ (Kennedy,2005:239). Rhodes and Beneicke (2003) develop this notion further through the suggestion that poor teaching performance can also be attributed to organisational and management practices and the educational system itself.

It could then be suggested that the idea of CPD is integral to the development of the teacher and not something developed from the three specific areas as suggested by the IfL framework. For the 14-19 teacher, the entry point will vary from new entrant to the profession to existing qualified teacher and may even take into account the practitioner who provides specialist input to the programme, whilst still remaining in the workplace. It is also important to note that within the 14-19 arena the system and management practices also ought to be taken into account when designing effective CPD.

In examining the standards based model of CPD identified by Kennedy it could be argued that as a dual profession, teaching lends itself to a standards base. In particular, the introduction of a standards-based vocational curriculum would suggest that this model would be effective in ensuring that the teacher was competent in the areas needed to teach the 14-19 student. Building on the DP model of Grangreat and Gray (2007), the author would suggest that the arena of CPD is linked to the workplace, which in the case of vocational education is not just the teaching arena, but also the location in which the subject is situated. If therefore this model is concerned with professional efficiency enhancement, then any CPD needs to take into account both subject and generic pedagogy, with an emphasis on application of subject to the practice, coupled with external accountability. However, as early as 1991, Smyth (1991) argued that externally imposed accountability indicated a lack of respect for the teachers' own professional learning and reflective enquiry. Beyer (2002) added to this argument by suggesting that the standards-based model of CPD within teacher education narrows the range of activities to focus on accountability and external scrutiny, whilst Adams (2005) posited that to be effective CPD is a result of the initiative of the teacher themselves and based upon their own motivations.

What then is the way forward for CPD within the 14-19 arena? I would suggest that a transformative model as identified by Kennedy (2005) would appear to be the most appropriate model as it has at its heart a number of processes taken from the other models of CPD and recognises a range of different conditions and situations within which CPD will occur. Hogan (2002) suggests that this model supports educational change and that what is needed for the sector is not a context-specific model, as suggested by the IfL, but rather a balance between the different stakeholders within the sector and an integration of the range of models available in short and individual approach. This approach would also provide the stakeholder perceptions needed to create the professional identity as discussed by Nias (1989).

Kennedy (2005) also suggests that when designing a CPD models a set of questions should be asked to identify the model most appropriate for those involved in its implementation. She suggested that the first question should regard the types of knowledge needed, procedural or propositional; the second should be whether the focus lies with collective or individual development. The third and fourth questions are based around professional autonomy and accountability, whilst the final questions relate to the perceived purposes of the CPD (Kennedy 2005). These final questions also link to work by Villegas-Reimers and Reimers (2000) who suggested that CPD models can be used to either provide people with the skills

needed to do what is required of them (usually by a third party) or to inform and contribute to development. Kennedy further purported that these two areas are distinct and therefore need different models of CPD. Evans (2002) also supported the concept that any CPD should be based around individual needs and believed that the attitudinal element of development is dependent upon the teacher recognising that his/her practice is unsatisfactory.

New Approaches to Continuing Professional Development

Many writers assert the centrality of CPD to teacher professionalism and development as well as to the improvement of learning and teaching in the further education and skills sector. Thompson and William (2007:2) plainly state that: 'We were led to teacher professional development as the fundamental lever for improving student learning by a growing body of research on the influences on student learning, which shows that teacher quality trumps virtually all other influences on students' (Thompson and Williams, 2007:2). Villeneuve-Smith, West and Bhinder (2009) quite simply believe that 'CPD changes everything'. Villeneuve-Smith, West and Bhinder (2009:17)

There is also a recognition that CPD is a professional responsibility of teachers in the sector and, indeed, is an essential component of their own lifelong learning (Coffield, 2008; IfL, 2009; Scales, Pickering, Senior, Headley, Garner and Boulton., 2011). In addition to the lifelong learning aspect, Coffield (2008) points out that CPD is also a "right" for professionals: 'CPD is a responsibility for all professionals but it is also a right. If "personalised" learning is the new government aim for all students, then it should apply equally to staff, who have their own learning needs, gaps and aspirations' (Coffield, 2007:726 Further, if we believe that teachers in the sector should be helping students to become 'independent enquirers'; 'creative thinkers' and 'self-managers', as suggested in the Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills Framework (QCA, 2007), then it seems appropriate that teachers should themselves develop these skills and abilities as part of their CPD.

This personalised approach to CPD is contrary to many existing models of 'best practice', for example the 'Gold Dust' resources which now gather dust on many staffroom shelves. Such 'best practice' materials and the implication that they are suitable for all students across a range of settings have been criticised (Scales et al., 2011) in that they appear to have been produced in 'context-free' environments and, therefore, have limited reference to, and use in, specific contexts. This recognition of the limited use of 'best practice' materials and methods

underpins James and Biesta's (2007) 'cultural approach' to learning. The authors suggest the development of a cultural approach to understanding learning and argue for the transformation of 'learning cultures' in further education. They conclude that all places of learning are particular and located in their own contexts and, whilst there will be similarities, are all unique. Rather than simply accepting imported 'best practice', '…the cultural approach helps us to see that the improvement of learning cultures always asks for contextualised judgement rather than for general recipes' (James and Biesta, 2007). Such general recipes and best practice solutions have often been delivered to teachers in attendance at large-scale staff development events in a 'sheep-dip' approach to CPD (Scales et al., 2011).

A move away from 'best practice' approaches and a cultural approach to learning and CPD implies a move to more localised and contextualised solutions to learning, alongside the development of individual teachers and groups of teachers researching and developing their own practice and, as appropriate, forming communities of practice in which they can experiment with new ideas and methods (Wenger, 1998). This 'teacher as researcher' approach has, possibly, been neglected the prevailing atmosphere of audit, managerialism and best practice, but it does have some interesting antecedents. Wiseman (1948), writing about the teacher and research in the context of the birth of the national Foundation for Educational Research, recognises the importance of large-scale research 'planned and controlled by expert and experienced research workers' but, more importantly suggests that such large-scale research:

> ...does not mean that no other problems exist, problems which, while not urgent and pressing at the 'policy level', are nevertheless urgent and pressing at the classroom level. And in the gradual solution of such problems the individual research worker has an essential part to play. (Wiseman(1948) cited in Robinson 2014:116)

Further to this, Stenhouse (1975) writes of the 'extended professional' who is characterised by 'a capacity for autonomous professional development through systematic self-study' and 'testing of ideas by classroom research procedures' (Stenhouse, 1975:144).

Wells (1986) suggests:

> Every teacher needs to become his or her own theory builder, but a builder of theory that grows out of practice and has as its aim to improve the quality of

> practice. For too long, 'experts' from outside the classroom have told teachers what to think and what to do. (Wells, 1986:221)

Teachers teach; researchers research. For many teachers in the sector, this proposition remains axiomatic and the notion of themselves as researchers seems alien, something arcane and complex that academics do to produce conclusions and propositions which may, or may not, filter down to teachers. Teachers are frequently the subjects of research, less frequently the initiators of it. Stenhouse suggests, 'It is not enough that teachers' work should be studied; they need to study it themselves.' (Stenhouse, 1975:143).

There is a significant amount of literature concerned with action research and practitioner researchers (Bell, 2005; Denscombe, 2007; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). This kind of practitioner research, carried out by teachers who encounter learning and teaching problems or a need for change, is particularly aimed at providing solutions at a local level which may also have wider application, and as McNiff and Whitehead state:

> Action research is a form of enquiry that enables practitioners everywhere to investigate and evaluate their work. They ask, 'What am I doing? What do I need to improve? How do I improve it?' Their accounts of practice show how they are trying to improve their own learning and influence the learning of others. (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006:7)

Denscombe (2007) clarifies that action research is central to the notion of being a professional and to professional self-development involving 'a continual quest for ways to change practice for the better' (Denscombe, 2007:125). Ecclestone (2010) proposes a 'problem-based methodology' for CPD in which teachers formulate their own problems and questions and undertake 'trial and error' approaches to resolving them.

Within the14-19 education sector it has been suggested by various sources, most notably Ofsted (2010) and Wolf (2011), that vocationally-based knowledge is missing within the teaching workforce. I would suggest that this knowledge gap may be a factor in perceptions of identity. Fullan (2003) describes the educational reforms if the 2000s as being 'top-down' reforms that without the full participation of the profession are unlikely to succeed, claiming that what is particularly required is 'moral purpose, defined as making a difference in the lives of students' and 'reducing the gap between high and low performers at all levels' (Fullan, 2003:18).

As discussed previously, 'teachers derive their professional identity from (mostly combinations of) the ways they see themselves as subject matter experts, pedagogical experts, and didactical experts' (Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt, 2000:751). It is further

suggested that within Europe these three concepts are commonly used to indicate what teachers should do and know. If we examine these three areas in relation to the 14-19 teacher, we find that within subject matter knowledge, the ability to transform the knowledge into something that is teachable and that teachers should have a deep and full understanding of the subject area provides the professional bias (Calderhead, 1996). This again will be tested through the initial phase of research.

From this literature, I would suggest that the recognition of 14-19 educators and the value of 14-19 vocational education and its workforce is essential to ensure that the perception of vocational/academic divide is reduced within educational fields.

The Way Forward

It was apparent at the start of this study that the Diploma qualification was multifaceted in terms of content and straddled two recognised educational phases and therefore two government offices with the responsibility for each respective sector, the TDA and LLUK. In 2010, the Coalition government disbanded both of these quangos and the responsibility for 14-19 education was absorbed by the new Department for Education. However, it is important to note that teaching qualifications for the lifelong learning sector were, in 2010, still overseen and managed by the Institute for Learning (IfL).Furthermore, teaching qualifications that have traditionally been seen as post-16 qualifications and not equivalent to the school QTS system gained equal status in 2012. This may alleviate some of the problems facing the existing 14-19 workforce. However, it is my opinion that these changes do not go far enough for the vocational workforce to create and maintain its own identity within UK education. It is my belief that to be effective and to reduce some of the stigma of vocational education discussed earlier in this chapter, professional development initiatives must match the perceptions' of need held by the workforce itself and not just imposed without any regard for perceived need. They should also be framed within a framework for professional identity that fits with the ethos of the vocational teacher.

Based upon findings from the literature the author would suggest that a CPD model for the workforce should be based upon the following model. The model is an individual model based upon personal and professional autonomy, transformative in its approach and not based upon specific standards and competencies, but allowing the individual to contribute to both their own and learners' development through a range of different options. The rationale is that it is personal development for the teacher, designed to allow them to be creative

rather than simply functional. As an individual model, it should be recognised that everyone has different starting points, in particular when applied to first and second career teachers. However, what is important for the 14-19 teacher is that prior to taking on the role there must be a work-based experience, whether this is from a previous career or on a secondment, day release or block. From that point, the individual chooses the pathway they need, either teacher training, subject-specific CPD or 14-19 specific CPD. It is important to note at this point that the author believes that a 14-19 teacher will ultimately need all three areas to be effective, and so the proposed model is shown as a cyclical model.

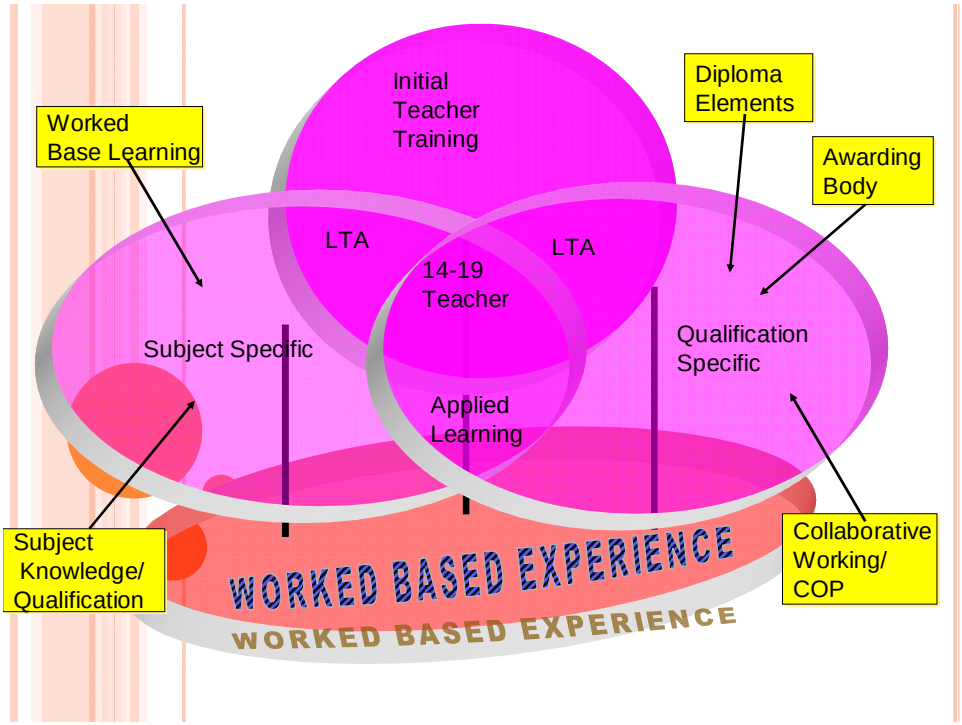

Fig 3: Conceptual Framework for CPD for the 14-19 Diploma Teacher

This conceptual framework will be tested through the findings of what professional development 14-19 teachers feel that they need.

Concluding Remarks

This review of the relevant literature has considered the development and trajectory of vocational education and related qualifications within the 14-19 phase, tracing its development from the early 1980s and the increased focus on 14-19 as a specific and important age range within education. There were several themes arising from the review of

the literature that link to the aim of this study. The key theme suggests that the failure of the Diploma is in part a result of a confused debate surrounding vocational versus academic education and an understanding of what vocational education should look like. This will be tested through the second phase of the study. Other main themes that emerged from the literature review were the challenges around the complexity of the Diploma and the need for collaboration between pre- and post- compulsory sectors. The concerns around this will be explored through phase one of the research. The literature review also gave rise to an emerging theme of the impact on the professionalism and professional identity of the 14-19 vocational workforce of the implementation and withdrawal of the Diploma.

In retrospect, writing in 2014, it is difficult to recognise what a seeming advance the 14-19 Diploma was. Although it arose in a theoretically and developmentally confused way it was held to be a unique qualification that would end the vocational and academic divide once and for all. Although the hope and the subsequent disillusionment have faded in a relatively short time, they are documented in this study.

The next chapter outlines the methodological framework used to collect the data for the research and includes a rationale for the research methods used.

Chapter 3 : METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces the purpose of the study and discusses the research methodology aligned to the research question, the methodology used, the paradigms of research and methods chosen for the study itself. For the purposes of this study the term methodology will be used to identify the approaches to research and the term method used to denote the instruments used to collect the data (Cohen, 2004; Manion and Morrison, 2007; Henn, Weinstien and Foard, 2006; Strauss and Corbin, 1998)

Sampling approaches and data analysis techniques are identified and discussed in detail with an analysis and justification of the choices in light of the research undertaken.

As previously discussed this study has been conducted in three separate phases and is concerned with the development of the 14-19 Diploma and the impact its development and ultimate demise had on the 14-19 workforce.

Locating the study within a wider framework of research

The following discussion will justify and support the methodological approaches undertaken for the original study. In order to do this the concept of research must first defined, before any evaluation of the individual components of the research process can be completed. From the plethora of research literature that is available, (Clough and Nutbrown, 2007; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007;Henn, Weinstien and Foard, 2006; Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2004; Strauss and Corbin, 1998)it is evident that many different definitions of research exist.

Research has been described as a systematic investigation (Burns, 1997) or inquiry whereby data are collected, analysed and interpreted in some way in an effort to 'understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon or to empower individuals in such contexts' (Mertens, 2005:2).

Cohen *et al* (2007) believe that research is the means by which the truth or finding truth is discovered. Gill & Johnson take this notion of truth finding further by purporting that as a concept research is 'the means of advancing knowledge (Gill & Johnson, 1997:3), whereas Bell considers research to be, 'an on the spot procedure designed to deal with a concrete problem located in an immediate location' (Bell,2005:6). McNeill further suggested that

research was ‘The result of human curiosity about phenomena of some sort’ (McNeill, 1990:116).
What is clear from the many differing definitions of research is that, regardless of the definition being evaluated, research is perceived to be the way in which the population identify solutions to problems, and through this identification provide and apply new knowledge to the subject area being studied. In essence research is a social entity, focused on the behaviour of humans (Henn, Weinstein and Foard, 2006) and therefore for the purposes of this work based project research can be defined as the foundation upon which, questions are posed, knowledge is founded and solutions are suggested.

Clough and Nutbrown (2007) argue that social research should be predicated on a starting position that almost always is persuasive, purposive, positional and political. Within the review of literature surrounding the 14-19 agenda and the professional identity of its workforce it was identified that the 14-19 agenda, and in particular the vocational element to this is perceived as being inferior to the traditional academic route , which has been prevalent in British educational systems over the last few decades. In addition the literature on professionalism and the professional identity of the 14-19 workforce indicated that a dichotomy of professionalism existed within this subset of the teaching profession.

Habermas (1971) discussed three kinds of research within a hierarchical typology, ranging from technical to emancipatory. This study falls between a practical approach and an emancipatory approach, whereby the purpose is to critically reflect upon the question, whilst trying to understand the relationships between the actions.

In addition the study follows the framework identified by Wallace and Poulson (2003) in that it is knowledge for action study, developing knowledge that has a practical application to inform future development and the way forward for the Vocational agenda within the UK.

Philosophical Approach

The term 'paradigm' may be defined as ‘a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research’ (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998:.22)

Pansiri (2005) asserts that there are two major social science paradigms – positivist/functional and interpretative approaches to research, and that within these two dichotomies there are different views of the social world based upon different assumptions.

Morgan identifies four basic versions of the paradigm concept with 'shared belief systems that influence the kinds of knowledge researchers seek and how they interpret the evidence they collect' (Morgan, 2007:4). Whereas Bryman defines a paradigm as a 'cluster of beliefs that dictates what should be studied, how research should be done and how results should be interpreted' (Bryman, 20044:4). Research paradigms are often also referred to as quantitative and qualitative, these terms being taken from the associated methodologies and methods that can be used to collect data (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 1998). However, this description of paradigms can be misleading and confusing for the researcher as both qualitative and quantitative methodologies and methods can be used as approaches in both paradigms. Several researchers suggesting that 'a false dichotomy exists between qualitative and quantitative paradigmatic approaches and that researchers should make the most efficient use of both [approaches] in understanding social phenomena' (Cresswell, 1998:176) In considering the context of educational research and the process by which it is undertaken, Cohen *et al* suggest that the world of education is 'full of contradictions, richness, complexity, connectedness, conjunctions and disjunctions' (Cohen *et al,* 2007:167) and further suggest that as a process it is not "easily susceptible" to the quantitative paradigm. Cresswell (1998) supports this suggesting that, within educational and social science research, the very essence of a study cannot be easily quantified by empirical data as it is concerned with the study of humans and therefore subject to human feelings and emotions. This is certainly true when examining training needs and perceptions of identity as perceptions are subjective and may change over a period of time raising the questions of validity and reliability of any findings. In addition training and development needs will change as external drivers and changes within 14-19 education are implemented.

The following table adapted from Mertens (2005) highlights the differences between the four major paradigms and when examining the language associated with the pragmatic paradigm it can be seen that this is the most appropriate for the study.

Positivist/ Post positivist	Interpretivist/ Constructivist	Transformative	Pragmatic
Experimental Quasi-experimental Correlational Reductionism Theory verification Causal comparative Determination Normative	Naturalistic Phenomenological Hermeneutic Interpretivist Ethnographic Multiple participant meanings Social and historical construction Theory generation Symbolic interaction	Critical theory Neo-marxist Feminist Critical Race Theory Freirean Participatory Emancipatory Advocacy Grand Narrative Empowerment issue oriented Change-oriented Interventionist Queer theory Race specific Political	Consequences of actions Problem-centred Pluralistic Real-world practice oriented Mixed models
Adapted from Mertens (2005)			

Table 2: Paradigms: Language commonly associated with major research paradigms

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Research Philosophy

This section is concerned with how pragmatism as a research philosophy can be used in the study of vocational education. For the purposes of this study in question several issues are raised as problems, the professional development needs of the teaching workforce, the effective development of vocational education and relevant qualifications pertaining to the vocational curriculum. Kaplan believes that the most 'important contribution that methodology can make is to block the roads to inquiry (Kaplan, 1964:24). In other words the philosophy of pragmatism is about the world of practice and as such 'resonates with practitioners; capturing their voice and experiences' (Siegfried ,1996:39).

Glasgow defines the key features of a pragmatic methodology as being that 'the questions, perspectives taken, and outcomes studied are those that are important to stakeholders such as policy makers, practitioners' (Glasgow, 2013:260). For this study this is important in that the practitioners involved in Diploma delivery required a response to their initial CPD needs and the policy makers need to be aware of what went wrong with the Diploma to avoid duplication of error in the future.

Whilst pragmatism as a philosophical position is fairly new compared to the other philosophical positions, it has positioned itself as a contending paradigm. Powell argues that:

> The pragmatist epistemology stands in contrast to prevailing positivist and anti-positivist views of scientific discovery. Whereas positivism emphasizes the objective, law-like properties of a brute reality independent of observation (Donaldson, 1992; Wicks and Freeman,1998), anti-positivism emphasizes the creative role of active, subjective participants, none of whom owns a privileged claim on truth (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; Astley, 1985;Martin, 1990). Pragmatism, on the other hand, rejects positivism, on grounds that no theory can satisfy its demands (objectivity, falsify-ability, the crucial experiment, etc.); and rejects anti-positivism, because virtually any theory would satisfy them. As such, the pragmatist proposes to reorient the assessment of theories around a third criterion: the theory's capacity to solve human problems (Rorty, 1989; Stich, 1990). To a pragmatist, the mandate of science is not to find truth or reality, the existence of which are perpetually in dispute, but to facilitate human problem-solving. According to pragmatist philosopher John Dewey, science should overthrow 'the notion, which has ruled philosophy since the time of the Greeks, that the office of knowledge is to uncover the antecedently real, rather than, as is the case with our practical judgments, to gain the kind of understanding which is necessary to deal with problems as they arise (Powell, 2001: 884).

Morgan (2014) defines pragmatism as:

> a new paradigm, pragmatism disrupts the assumptions of older approaches based on the philosophy of knowledge, while providing promising new directions for understanding the nature of social research (Morgan, 2014:1045)

As a philosophy pragmatism has been described as the 'Philosophy of common sense' (Shields, 1998:197), in that uses qualitative inquiry as a means of solving problems through human experience. Dewey defines inquiry as 'the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is determinate'(Dewey, 1938:104) In summary as a philosophy pragmatism emphasizes the practical problems experienced by people, the research questions posited, and the consequences of inquiry. The pragmatic researcher is sensitive to the social, historical, and political context from which inquiry begins and considers morality, ethics, and issues of social justice to be important throughout the research process. Furthermore pragmatists often use pluralistic methods during multiphase research projects. (Giacobbi, Poczwardowski and Hager,2005).

One of the major founders of pragmatism as an educational philosophy was John Dewey, who throughout his work continually argued that education and learning were social and interactive processes. This argument resonates with the need to develop a research strategy that includes social interaction with the participants. Although many of his writings around pragmatism and education were based upon the school it is my opinion that his beliefs are also relevant in any educational research, with the participants becoming the students and the study becoming the social institution to create social reform and change.

In addition to Dewey's ideas regarding what education is about and what effect it should have on society, he also had specific notions regarding how education should take place within the classroom. Within this notion he talks about teaching methodology and the role of the teacher within the classroom. This study is concerned with the vocational curriculum and the role of the teacher in vocational qualifications and as such holds firm to the belief that the teacher's role should be that of facilitator and guide. This belief is central to the research methodology used for this study in that it is concerned with the ability of "traditional" teachers to take on this role effectively.) The use of pragmatism as an approach to research embraces mixed-method approaches to research questions. With its origins in the work of Dewey (1931), and contemporary support from Rorty (1982, 1990,1991), pragmatism emphasizes the practical problems experienced by people. As philosophy pragmatism is a relatively recent addition to other more established paradigms of positivism and anti-positivism approaches, however it has positioned itself as such.

Cresswell (1994) supports this suggesting that, within educational and social science research, the very essence of a study cannot be easily quantified by empirical data as it is concerned with the study of humans and therefore subject to human feelings and emotions. This is certainly true when examining training needs and perceptions of identity as perceptions are subjective and may change over a period of time raising the questions of validity and reliability of any findings. In addition training and development needs will change as external drivers and changes within 14-19 education are implemented.

Here again the notion of pragmatism as a research methodology is important when we consider the work of Putnam (1995) who sees pragmatism as also being a position of realism, a fact the original pragmatists would actually have agreed as they believed that human life requires us to accept some sort of philosophical 'illusion', but they did not believe that it was impossible to escape the particular philosophical positions that have shaped our thinking so far. They thought that reconstructive reflection could produce new philosophical assumptions which would make us more at home in the world, and lead us into fewer errors, than the ones we have now, even if those philosophical assumptions were not "the truth" in the realist sense. Furthermore, the use of a critical-realist perspective can provide a coherent framework upon which triangulation of data can take place.

The primary role of the approach used is to highlight and provide solutions to resolve the status quo that exists at any one point in time. Pragmatic approaches acknowledge and embrace all variables and the effect that they have upon the individual within that time. . For this study the use of realism is pertinent to researching the perceptions of professional

development needs and identity as the research question is reliant on each individuals own construction of his or her social identity and the recognition of development needs. However, it must be noted that, as a consequence of human thinking there is no objective reality. In essence any discoveries or findings cannot be replicated by others nor can they be replicated at a future point in time, as they are subjective and affected by the individual's interpretation of the world around them. (Walsham, 1993).

Badley also explores how a pragmatic approach may help us resolve some of the difficulties identified and asserts that:

> Pragmatists would not privilege any one paradigm or methodology over another but would argue that both science and constructivism offer different sets of tools for investigating different aspects of the world (Badley, 2003:295).

He also describes pragmatism as 'a working point of view or a perspective which is admittedly modest and, so pragmatists think, appropriately fuzzy' (Badley, 2003:295)

Onwuegbuzie and Leech believe that pragmatism as a philosophy offers a myriad of advantages for individuals:

. First and foremost, it enables researchers to be flexible in their investigative techniques, as they attempt to address a range of research questions that arise. Pragmatic researchers also are more able to combine empirical precision with descriptive precision Also, armed with a bi-focal lens (i.e. both quantitative and qualitative data), rather than with a single lens, pragmatic researchers are able to *zoom in* to microscopic detail or to *zoom out* to indefinite scope. As such, pragmatic researchers have the opportunity to combine the macro and micro levels of a research issue (Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005:10).

Morgan discusses Pragmatism as how an individual's world view can influence the research undertaken:

> Instead, it is we ourselves who make the choices about
> what is important and what is appropriate, and those choices inevitably involve aspects of our personal history, social background, and cultural assumptions. (Morgan, 2007:70)

From my personal perspective as a vocational teacher, and then a teacher educator my world view and personal career history have influenced by research question and how I have undertaken the research and as such Morgan's words resonate strongly with my approach.

As an approach pragmatism has been linked with mixed methods and many academics believe that it is the most appropriate philosophy for mixed methodology. (Creswell, 1998; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004)
Pansiri (2005) hails pragmatism as being the foundation of mixed methods which can be adopted to provide the researcher with the best outcomes.

In line with the pragmatist paradigm discussed above, a mixed-method approach of survey and semi-structured interviews was used to conduct the two phases of research.

In exploring other possible research philosophies I looked at Henn, Weinstein and Foard (2006) who believe that paradigms are grouped into two opposing views, based upon the quantitative and qualitative strategies that they adopt. These two views being the positivist and the interpretive approaches, with the interpretive making use of predominantly qualitative strategies, whilst the positivists approach makes use of quantitative strategies supports Pansiri's assertion. In contrast, Wolcott argues that such opposing views "does a great disservice by detracting from the contribution to be made by each, including what each can contribute to the other"(Wolcott, 2002:99) . Demscombe suggests that the 'social researcher is faced with a variety of options and alternatives and has to make strategic decisions about which to choose' (Demscombe, 2007:3).

Within this particular study each individual stakeholder involved in 14-19 delivery and development will be unique, in terms of personal characteristic and situation. Therefore the information and analysis arising from the data collection will be constructed by each individual and defined by the situation in which the individuals perceive themselves to be at that particular point in time. This would suggest that the study is taking an interpretive approach within its given paradigm, a translation of the ideas and thought of each individual (Orlikowski and Baroudi: 1991). The interpretive approach seeks to use the participants' view of the situation as the answer to the research question; hence it constructs the reality of the situation through an interpretation of the data provided. As the researcher this paradigm is an appropriate methodology as the solution I provide will be based upon reality rather than assumption. As a methodology an interpretive approach it is often seen as being within the philosophy of social constructivism, in that it 'holds the assumption that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work' (Creswell, 2009: 8). However an interpretive approach takes things deeper with an understanding and solution thorough translation and interpretation of ideas. This translation and interpretation of ideas within social constructivist approaches traditionally uses qualitative methods as the main vehicle for data collection and makes the assumption that all knowledge is a result of human activity and social reconstruction which is formed through life settings, history and social interaction. Marshall and Rossman believe that: 'In the study of human experience, it is essential to know how people define their situations' (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:40). Within this study, this would make the assumption that for any teacher their responses would be based

upon their individual situation and their perception of the situation. It is therefore important that methods used are sensitive to individual experiences

The primary role of the interpretive approach within any research is to highlight and provide solutions to resolve the status quo that exists at any one point in time. Interpretive approaches acknowledge and embrace all variables and the effect that they have upon the individual within that time. For this study interpretive methodology is pertinent to researching the perceptions of professional development needs and identity as the research question is reliant on each individuals own construction of his or her social identity and the recognition of development needs. However, within the interpretive approach it must be noted that, as a consequence of the human activity within interpretive thinking there is no objective reality. In essence any discoveries or findings cannot be replicated by others nor can they be replicated at a future point in time, as they are subjective and affected by the individual's interpretation of the world around them. (Walsham, 1993) In addition the epistemological viewpoint within interpretive studies assumes that all knowledge is a matter of interpretation and that the communication process is the key to interpreting the different perspectives and that the use of interpretive approaches provides multiple realities and not just one response or solution to the problem.

For the purposes of this study I have chosen to locate my research in the pragmatic paradigm which is defined by Mackenzie and Knipe as 'not committed to any one system of philosophy or reality' (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006:11) Creswell suggests that 'Pragmatist researchers focus on the 'what' and 'how' of the research problem and that the pragmatic paradigm places "the research problem" as central and applies all approaches to understanding the problem (Creswell, 2003.11).

Tashakkori and Teddilie (2003) believe that the pragmatic paradigm is the underpinning philosophy for mixed methods research.

Rationale for the Research

The Policy Context

The introduction of the Vocational Diploma in September 2008 followed the government's rejection of the Tomlinson review and the subsequent white paper *14-19 Education and*

Skills: Implementation Plan, the core part of which was an “entitlement for all young people to access high quality vocational education”.

As a concept the Vocational Diplomas were designed to bring together a collaboration of pre and post compulsory education and employers working in 14-19 partnerships to deliver and manage the programmes. In addition the whitepaper set down the plan for 200 Vocational Specialist School and 12 National Skills Academies by September 2008.

The rationale for the research is two-fold, firstly the Diplomas spanned two specific age ranges 14-16 and 16-19, one traditionally delivered in schools one in colleges and schools, and secondly the complexity of the qualification and its components, together with a very short lead in time from inception to delivery meant that staff involved would need professional development.

The initial research question and phase of the study was “What are the professional development needs of teachers involved in the 14-19 Diploma.”

This phase made use of the key elements that existed within the Diploma qualification;

- Teaching and Learning for Vocational Education
- Assessment
- Information, advice and guidance
- Subject knowledge
- Personal Thinking and Learning skills
- Functional skills
- Collaborative working practices
- Subject knowledge
- Reflective Practice
- Mentoring in 14-19 education

These areas were specifically chosen as they were new concepts that had not been embedded within specific qualifications previously, and whilst as stand-alone concepts I felt that their inclusion as part of the Diploma and the requirement for Diploma teachers to have an awareness and knowledge of each area may have been problematic for the workforce. In addition my role as a teacher educator, working with both pre and in-service trainees across the post 14 sector had highlighted that staff were anxious about the perceived new

pedagogical approach that would be needed to implement and deliver the qualification effectively.

The Scope of the Research

The first phase of this research is a case study of a group of professionals within a teacher education consortium at the University of Derby, who were dealing with a specific problem, how to implement and teach the new 14-19 Diploma. Arsenault and Anderson (1998) argue that a case study approach strives to portray the reality of a particular situation through the experiences of the participants) Hitchcock and Hughes also consider the case study as 'focusing on individual actors, or groups of actors, seeking to understand their perceptions of events' (Hitchcock and Hughes,1995:317). However, critics of the case study (Shaugnessy, Zechmeister and Zechmeister, 2003) suggest that the researcher has very little control over a case study and that therefore it is difficult to draw effective conclusions. In relation to this research a case study approach would be problematic as the study seeks to identify the training needs of practitioners involved with 14-19 diploma delivery and as the diploma is a relatively new qualification it would be difficult to examine a group of individuals who have been through diploma training. Furthermore critics of the approach suggest that there is a potential for bias within the analysis of the findings

In contrast to the case study approach which examines a set of individuals and their experiences, surveys as a methodological approach gather data at a particular point in time. This data can then be used to describe and interpret a specific event. In this instance the implementation of the new 14-19 qualifications. Morrison suggests that a survey would gather data on a 'one-shot basis' (Morrison, 1993:38), and that they make use of both quantitative and qualitative data. Cohen and Manion (2007) consider four types of survey, exploratory, confirmatory, analytical and descriptive with the advantages of the approach being the ability of the researcher to "make statements which are supported by data banks" and the establishment of a 'degree of confidence in the findings' (Cohen *et al*,2007:207). As an approach it would be appropriate to consider as the research is linked to a specific event in a point in time.

The arguments for the use of a survey instrument were decisive. Phase one therefore adopts a survey approach rather than a more problematic case study.

After the demise of the Diploma it was thought necessary to consider the local effects on the 14-19 work-force and to seek views from a national perspective. As the 14-19 Diploma was a much contested experiment, a range of national experts were identified to provide their views on the Diploma and the reasons for its demise

Project Phases

The first phase of the project began in 2007 and was designed to identify the professional development needs of teachers involved in the 14-19 Diploma. This phase began with a questionnaire that was sent out to the University of Derby Consortium, which comprised of four Further Education Colleges within the East Midlands region who partnered the University to deliver the Post Graduate Certificate in Further Education and the Certificate in Education. The initial questionnaire was sent out through the Consortium leads to staff within the colleges who were teaching on the Diploma and also to students who would be involved in teaching one of the original fifteen subject lines. The student population was a mixture of pre-service trainees who were studying on a full time teaching programme with a placement for teaching hours and in-service trainees who in employment within either colleges, schools (post 14) or training providers. This sample was specifically chosen as my teacher educator role suggested that these were staffs that were the most concerned about the qualification. This phase of research culminated in the publication of a text book *The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas* (Senior, 2010). Shortly after this text was published there was a general election UK, which led to a change of Government. The newly formed government withdraw all financial and marketing support for the qualification and following a review of Vocational Education (2011) removed them from the Qualifications framework.

Phase 2 of the research follows this review in order to gather information on what went wrong and how could the Diploma have survived, with the initial part of phase 2 gathering views from teachers, involved in Diploma delivery, drawn from the sample who had responded to the first questionnaire. This phase was centred upon the perceptions and views of the teaching staff on the qualification, their role in it and what, if anything should replace it as a vocational curriculum. The final part of phase two was to conduct semi-structured interviews and conversations with leading academics involved in the design and development of Diplomas and the policy leading up to their introduction.

The Research Process: An Overview

In both phases of the research, two main methods of data gathering were employed: a questionnaire survey, based on the key areas of the qualification (see above); from this, emerging themes were identified and a text book was published addressing those themes. In the second phase of the research focus groups were set up with a small sample of respondents drawn from the first phase, involved in Diploma delivery and semi-structured interviews were undertaken with prominent academics and policy makers involved in vocational education to ascertain their views on the Diploma and its ultimate demise.

Overview of Phase 1

A questionnaire, based on the Diploma key areas, was designed. The questionnaire was piloted with colleagues on the Teacher Training programmes. Only minor amendments to the questionnaire were necessary. A total of 50 questionnaires were sent to teachers and trainee students within the University consortium who were engaged with diplomas or were going to be engaged with them. (Appendix 1) Whilst this number is relatively small it reflected the number of teachers or trainees involved or planning to be involved in Diploma delivery across the first two years of its introduction, 2008/9.

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The questionnaire elicited data about the background of the respondent; perceptions of their knowledge around the diploma components and what types of development they felt would be the most useful. The questions that I chose to ask were based upon the participants own perceptions of themselves, their qualifications and needs and their teaching practice itself .It also asked if respondents were willing to be interviewed by telephone. The initial questionnaire, which formed the basis for the first phase of study, was then circulated to a range of teachers and trainees across both compulsory and post compulsory education settings within the Derby consortium using Survey Monkey as the vehicle to circulate. Survey Monkey was chosen as it allowed a range of different questions types to be constructed and although not exact provided a means to collate the data gathered. Within Survey Monkey the questionnaire was constructed with both open and closed questions and also with the inclusion of one rating scale. This approach was taken for several reasons. Firstly to enable respondents to have the opportunity for free writing, without any response framework, and to enable me to identify any key themes within the responses. Secondly to provide specific responses to pre-determined questions, and finally the use of a Likert scale was included to provide data on the full range of viewpoints on the specific topic of training

support needs. The unstructured element of the questionnaire contained a series of open questions, which as previously discussed allowed the participants a voice. Open questions were used to gain a richer picture of the respondents views and to ensure that I obtained as much information as possible I also gave the respondents a further opportunity to add anything further that they felt was important to the research being undertaken. Furthermore the use of open questions allowed me to make use of any direct quotes that I felt were pertinent to the findings.

The structured element of the questions was designed to enable the identification of commonality, for example the qualification levels of the 14-19 teachers and the length of time that they had been teaching, which may have correlation with any development needs identified. Therefore a range of closed questions were constructed which did not allow the respondent any opportunity to personalize the response, but instead provide a rage of categories pre-determined by myself. It was important that this was included as the literature surrounding 14-19 and vocational education would suggest that these teachers are not as highly qualified as their counterparts in traditional academic subjects and in addition that many have been employed as a result of the introduction of the diploma in 2008. In addition the use of these types of questionnaires enabled me to obtain a large amount of data that was easily input into a spreadsheet to further analyse.

A total of 31 responses were returned from 50 questionnaires, a return rate of 62%.

Overview of Phase 2

The second phase of research fell into two distinct parts. The first element involved small focus group interviews with respondents from phase 1 who had indicated that they were happy to be interviewed further. This phase was designed to identify the reaction of Diploma teachers to the withdrawal of support for the qualification, following the change of government in 2010. It was designed to elicit thoughts from staff regarding the challenges and issues of the Diploma and whether they felt it was a good qualification that should be continued (at this point the Diploma had not been fully withdrawn). A semi structured interview sheet was developed to enable me to ask questions that would provide the respondents with the ability to give free opinion (Appendix 2).

The final part of the research was to interview key academics and policy makers involved in 14-19 vocational education to ascertain their views on the Diploma and why it failed. Interviews as a data collection tool can be categorised into two main types, individual and

collective (Newby, 2010). Within these two main types the actual process is ranged along a spectrum from the very structured to the completely free speech. This phase of the research made use of semi-structured interview schedules. The schedules were designed to allow the participants to develop their perceptions and thoughts around the14-19 phase, the reasons behind the introduction of the diploma and why they felt it failed. The use of an interview schedule allowed me to prompt and guide the interview, but also enabled the conversation to evolve as appropriate (Appendix 3).

In terms of sample for phase two of the research the aim of this phase was to Explore the impact that withdrawal of support for the qualification had on 14-19 practitioners and to consider some of the reasons behind its ultimate failure. In terms of sampling this phase also made use of a purposive sample framework in that the participants needed to have been involved in the Diploma, as either a teacher or as an expert.

For the initial phase of stage two the interviews were conducted in the participants' work place in order to create a more relaxed environment, as according to Elwood and Martin:

> For qualitative researchers, selecting appropriate sites in which to conduct interviews may seem to be a relatively simple research design issue. In fact it is a complicated decision with wide-reaching implications. (Elwood and Martin, 2000:649)

For the conversations with leading educationalists, for the most part these were conducted via Skype or telephone as the respondents schedules did not allow for face to face conversations. All interviews and conversations were tape-recorded and then transcribed prior to analysis. For the purposes of this study I chose to analyse the final phase of mini focus groups and semi-structured interviews using a thematic analysis approach.

Interview Process and Justification

Interviews as a method of data collection have been described as "being so widely used that we live in an interview society" (Atkinson and Silverman 1997). Building on ideas put forward in 1992 by Cohen and Manion who describe interviews as: 'A two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information'. (Cohen and Manion, 1992:307).

Fontana and Frey (2000) describe interviewing as a technique that has seen a return to the more pragmatic political movement, synonymous with Dewey and the need to find solutions to problems.

Shah (2004) considered interviewing to be participative in which the knowledge generated is part of a two way process between the participant and interviewer.

In-depth interviewing can follow two approaches, the one-to-one interview, that is designed to question individuals about a particular issue or the focus group approach, which is designed to discover a 'range of views, about some topic' (Fielding 1993:141). Within these two methods Silverman discussed two ways in which data can be used. Firstly as a "realist" view and secondly as a "narrative" whereby the respondents give their accounts of the reality in which they find themselves. For the purpose of this study a narrative approach will provide richer data that can be interpreted through using and identifying themes to provide an overview of perceptions and identity. As a critique of in-depth interviews it could be argued that the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee could influence the responses being made, leading to a subjective response. In contrast Burgess (1984, pp107) argued that the "relationship between the researcher and those who are researched is crucial" and that the rapport is essential in interview methods.

Fontana and Frey believe that the interviewer should 'play a neutral role 'with a "balanced rapport' (Fontana and Frey, 2000:20). They also acknowledge that even though a semi-structured interview should provide the interviewer with some confidence that the responses elicited will be meaningful that no two interviewees will behave in the same way. They go on to state that 'good interviewers will recognise this and be sensitive to how the interaction is affecting response' (Fontana and Frey, 2000:22) Rubin and Rubin talk about qualitative interviewing being much more than data collection, but as a 'way of seeing the world and learning from it' (Rubin and Rubin, 2012:xvii) They further describe qualitative interviewing ad "responsive interviewing" which follow a set of stages, introduction to oneself and the topic, initial easy questions, core questions and then a close that leaves an allowance for future contact.

To prepare for the interviews I created an interview guide with a list of topics to be covered. A list of starter questions within each topic was identified to provide guidance and themes for the respondents. This approach had several advantages for the study and also enabled the exploration of themes arising from the conversations.

As a data collection method there were several advantages in using interviews as a tool. It enabled me to enjoy extensive opportunities for asking questions and probing further if the responses required clarification. It also meant that the response rate would be 100% as

opposed to the questionnaire which had limited responses in its first circulation. The use of interviews in research marks a move towards regarding knowledge as being generated through interaction (Kvale, 1996) it is a professional conversation with structure and purpose. Interviewing is a powerful method for collecting and capturing peoples' experiences and using interviews within this study enabled the opportunity to develop a full understanding of each individual experience (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997).

The interview did have some disadvantages as identified by Cohen & Manion (2007) the first being the validity of the responses in that it relied on the interviewee being "sincere and well-motivated", the second being the extent to which the I as the interviewer influenced the response, which could have led to a to potential bias and invalid response. Gorden (1992) is also concerned with the interviewer as a potential issue stating 'Interviewing skills are not simple motor skills like riding a bike: rather, they involve a high-order combination of observation, emphatic sensitivity and intellectual judgement ' (Gorden,1992 :7) In contrast, Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) believe that any interviewer bias can be useful in that it can direct the direction of the research the use of an initial questionnaire would remove some of this bias in that partial responses have already been received and the interview element is a tool to support , or indeed deny, initial findings. In order to further negate this possibility, whilst still allowing the respondent the freedom to create their own reality and narrative the interviews were semi structured or non-directive in which according to Bryman,' The interviewer typically has only a list of topics or issues, often called an *interview guide or aide me moiré.*' (Bryman, 2004:113) This is further described by Moser & Kalton as a method where 'The informant is encouraged to talk about the subject under investigation (usually himself) and the course of the interview is guided by him' (Moser and Kalton, 1997:39).

Merton & Kendall (1946) in Cohen and Manion advised a focused approach to allow 'more interviewer control' (Cohen and Manion, 1992:326). As a data collection method interviewing does have its advantages in that it will allow the researcher to maintain some form of control and therefore focus, it is less intrusive than other forms of data collection, for example observation, and it can be repeated should I wish to continue with a longitudinal study or even to repeat the research in years to come.

Research Sample

Academic literature on sampling would suggest that several sampling methods exist. However, the initial aim of this study was to examine the professional development needs of teachers involved with the implementation and delivery of the qualification. Therefore the

sample selection could not be random, but needed to focus on a specific social situation, that required participants to have 'some characteristics and experiences in common' (Goodson and Sikes, 2001:23). As a characteristic participants needed to be working with or be involved in the implementation of the qualification in their setting. For this phase of the study the sample selection was purposive.

Purposive sampling strategies differ from probability (or random) sampling strategies and as such have implications for the results of the study in that the sample chosen may create a bias within the results. Jankowicz (1995) believes that the method in which a sample is chosen will reflect the constraints within which the project is operating; he then goes on to describe the use of samples as having an important bearing on the validity of the conclusions. (Patton, 1999; Yin, 1999; Cohen and Manion (1992) also believe that the sample should be taken through a purposive route as this would allow the researcher to. 'Handpick the cases to be included…..on the basis of judgement of their typicality' (Cohen & Manion, 1992:103).

With regards to the actual sample size Cohen and Manion believed that, 'There is, of course, no clear-cut answer for the correct sample size depends upon the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny' (Cohen and Manion, 1992:104).

Sandelowski described an adequate sample size for qualitative research as:

> One that permits, by virtue of not being too large, the deep, case-orientated analysis that is the hallmark of all qualitative inquiry, and that results in, by virtue of not being too small, a new and richly textured understanding of experience (Sandelowski,1995:183).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the sample size should be terminated when the researcher is not collecting anything new whereas Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) believed that data saturation, whereby new information makes little or no discernible difference to the results, is the most appropriate way of deciding sample size. Lincoln and Guba (1985) further believe that a dozen or so interviews should elicit the information for the point of redundancy to be reached. Whilst Guest *et al.* (2006) believed that the optimum number of interviews needed to provide an appropriate sample size is six interviews. For this study I made the decision to distribute 50 questionnaires, with a required response rate of 30. The sample was drawn from a range of 14-19 practitioners who were involved in the delivery or implementation of the 14-19 diplomas. This enabled a more reliable discussion of the findings as the research did not include practitioners involved with the other 14-19 qualifications, apprenticeships and the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT). This decision was taken as the FLT was delivered mainly within schools and the apprenticeships within

colleges, whilst the diploma spanned the two sectors and any differences in results allowed further comparisons to be drawn in terms of the perceptions and the pedagogical needs of both fist career school teachers and post -16 practitioners and those working in their second career.

The second stage of the research was to interview a range of key academics, both practitioners and experts involved in the development of vocational education.

Sampling technique

This study used a form of purposive sampling to elicit the data required to formulate a conclusion.

Purposive sampling can also be defined as non-probability sampling, sampling that does not involve a random selection of participants. One of the advantages of this as a method is that non-probability samples cannot depend upon the rationale of probability theory and as such may represent the population. However, in applied social research it could be argues that is not feasible, practical or theoretically sensible to do random sampling as we need to identify a sample that is familiar with the topic under discussion.

For example, a purposive sample is typically designed to pick a small number of cases that will yield the most information about a particular phenomenon, whereas a random sample is planned to select a large number of cases that are collectively representative of the population of interest. (Teddlie and Yu, 2007)

Another difference between purposive and random *sampling* concerns the use of sampling frames. Probability sampling frames are usually formally laid out and represent a distribution with a large number of observations. Purposive sampling frames, on the other hand, are typically informal ones based on the expert judgment of the researcher.

For the purposes of this study expert sampling was used as a non-probability purposive sample. Expert sampling involves the assembling of a sample of persons with known or demonstrable experience and expertise in some area, in this instance the Diploma as a qualification. The sampling frame chosen was that of an aide memoire for a conversation, designed to allow free speech around the area of research.

One of the advantages of expert sampling is that the opinions of experts are more easily respected by other people. Studies that report expert opinion are likely to benefit from a

reflected respect and so be more credible at least with an audience who unquestionably accepts those people as experts.

A key part of this is establishing the expertise of the people in the study. For this study experts were identified based upon their role and credibility within the 14-19 vocational sectors. All experts included in this study were chosen under a range of criteria, from involvement with the development of the Diploma and their role in its inception.

The Interview /conversation process

Hannan, (2007) believes that a great deal of qualitative material comes from talking with people whether it is through formal interviews or casual conversations. As previously discussed, the process of data collection with the sample of experts was to conduct conversations designed to elicit information around their perceptions of the issues surrounding the Diploma and vocational education. Hannan describes this technique as being unstructured, but with the researcher using an aide-memoire for discussion prompts if required. This approach facilitates a person-to person engagement with the topic enabling a richer data set than with a more rigid approach.

The interviews were conducted mostly through telephone and Skype due to the diary commitments of the experts. Two interviews were conducted face to face, Michael Young and Simon Bellamy. All interviews were audio recorded and the experts asked to waive their right to anonymity. This step was taken in line with the credibility gained from the expert views. The decision to audio record was partially based upon the fact some interviews were conducted by telephone, but more importantly to ensure that all detail was captured, providing a richer data set. Whilst this technique of recording was for the most part successful there were a few issues with sound transfer and noise which created some problems with transcription.

Data Analysis

The most serious and central difficulty in the use of qualitative data is that methods of analysis are not well formulated. For quantitative data, there are clear conventions the researcher can use. But the analyst faced with a bank of qualitative data has very few guidelines for protection against self-delusion, let alone the presentation of unreliable or invalid conclusion to scientific or policy-making audiences. How can we be sure that an “earthy,” “undeniable,” “serendipitous” finding is not, in fact, *wrong*? (Miles, 1979:591)

The data collected from the initial questionnaires was predominantly through the use of electronic collection, although some respondents chose to return completed questions via the post. In terms of data collection from interviews, the interviews were recorded a method which in itself could be problematic if respondents do not agree to be recorded or if the tape malfunctions as a back up to this notes of the interview were also taken. Recording interviews also raises ethical considerations of informed consent and confidentiality in that participants need to be confident that the recordings will be anonymous. Other issues that may arise from a taped interview could be the time needed to transcribe the information. Bryman (2004) suggests 5-6 hours for every hour of speech, and also the possible reluctance of respondents to give as detailed information as they may have done without a tape.
Whilst the term analysis is closely aligned with the quantitative paradigm, the purpose of analysis in this study was to make sense of the experiences of the participants (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983) Qualitative approaches are incredibly diverse, complex and nuanced (Holloway & Todres, 2003)

Seidel considered the qualitative approach to analysis to be noticing, collecting and thinking, of which coding and recording are important elements. He further asserts that this approach allows the researcher to identify patterns and relationships across groups and subgroups and further allows data to be compared and contrasted.
Analysis in any study involves a series of steps (Jorgensen:1989) In analysing the interviews the broad headings identified by Tonkiss (1998) were considered, selecting, sorting and coding, making use of key themes within the discourse. This constant comparative identification of themes allows us to identify categories that recur and thus make decisions as to the importance of the theme within the overall research question.

Barnard (1991) identifies fourteen stages of analysis for semi-structured interviews but warns that whilst all data in an interview transcript should be placed in a category or sub category that there will always be unusable data, referred to by Field and Morse as ‘dros’” (Barnard 1991:464). He also discusses the validity of using categorisation as a means of analysis as it is possible that the researcher may have his or her own bias.

Various methods of analysis were considered for the interviews and expert conversations, including narrative analysis as a means of constructing experiences. However, this method was discounted as the participants were being asked to discuss their thoughts and needs. Discourse analysis was also considered whereby the qualitative data would be coded into

themes to allow for analysis through the process of discourse analysis, which according to May , does not just provide data but 'constructs social reality' (May, 1993:138) This would indicate that the very process of data analysis cannot be taken at face value in that each document is a partial account which, when assessed will form the larger jigsaw of the reality. Discourse analysis examines the context in which language is used to construct meaning. Worrall describes it as, ideas, statements or knowledge that are dominant at a particular time among particular sets of people'(Worrall, 1996:30) Potter and Weatherall (1994) identify four areas in which discourse analysis can be useful. Braun and Clark (2006) believe that as a method of analysis, thematic analysis is a poorly demarcated and rarely-acknowledged, yet a widely-used qualitative analytic method. For the purposes of this study I chose to analyse the final conversations using a thematic analysis approach.

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Each interview was recorded and transcribed in order to allow common themes, ideas and vocabulary to be listed. A theme is a cluster of linked categories conveying similar meanings and usually emerges through the inductive analytic process which characterises the qualitative paradigm.

The next step to a thematic analysis is to combine and catalogue related patterns into sub-themes. Themes are defined as units derived from patterns such as "conversation topics, vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, feelings, or folk sayings and proverbs" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1989, p.131). Themes are identified by "bringing together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when viewed alone" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Themes that emerge from the interviews are pieced together to form a holistic and comprehensive view of their thoughts and perceptions The "coherence of ideas rests with the analyst who has rigorously studied how different ideas or components fit together in a meaningful way when linked together" (Leininger, 1985, p. 60). Constas (1992) reiterates this point and states that the "interpretative approach should be considered as a distinct point of origination" (p. 258). Thematic analysis is widely used, but there is no clear agreement about what thematic analysis is and how you go about doing it (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Boyatzis, 1998; Tuckett, 2005). According to Braun and Clark (2006)it can be seen as a very poorly „branded method, in that it does not appear to exist as named analysis In addition they go on to discuss the question of what counts as a pattern/theme, or what „size does a theme need to be to make it relevant for the study.

My approach to thematic analysis for Phase 2

In the final phase of the research I conducted conversations with leading academics and scholars within 14-19 education. Each conversation was taped and the transcribed. (Appendix 4). From the transcribed conversations, patterns of experiences were then listed. These patterns were drawn from specific quotes and common ideas and thoughts.

Once patterns had been identified from the six conversations I then looked at all of the interviews and grouped together the common data that I felt was linked to each pattern. This allowed identification of sub themes and recurring ideas and thoughts. Once sub themes had been identified it became clear that whilst not all of the conversations were in agreement around particular themes that the similarities that existed did paint a picture for further analysis and links back to literature.

The key patterns that emerged from the analysis were broken down initially into two key areas, Diploma strengths and Diploma weaknesses. From that initial pattern the data was cut and comments and thoughts attributed to each area.

Within strengths it was apparent that the concept of a unified award, linking vocational and academic learning was seen as being an emerging pattern and whilst not all of the conversationalists were in agreement there was still a pattern around this area. However, weakness themes were much more consistent across the conversations and provided a much stronger argument for why the qualification failed.

Triangulation, Reliability and Validity

In order to consider the experiences of the individual participants, to limit bias and develop a full picture of the findings, it was important that the research design considered how the data could be triangulated.

Triangulation as a concept is linked to the reliability and validity of the data collected. Validity within research is an important aspect and one which must be taken into consideration in both the research design and the data collection methods employed. It is a requirement of both qualitative and quantitative research and whilst it is acknowledged that it is impossible for 100% accuracy the quantitative data assumes an inbuilt measure of standard error and qualitative research acknowledges that the subjectivity of respondents can lead to a degree of bias, validity is seen as a matter of degree rather than an absolute state (Gronlund, 1981).

Much contemporary dialogue has centred on the difficulty of establishing validity criteria in qualitative research. Developing validity standards in qualitative research is challenging because of the necessity to incorporate rigor and subjectivity.

Maxwell (2004) describes five types of validity within qualitative research, descriptive, interpretative, theoretical, generalizability and evaluative. For the purposes of this study the data collected needs to be representative of the issue being researched. To ensure that I complied with this requirement I had to ensure that the sampling was a representative sample of the 14-19 workforces, hence the use of a random questionnaire distributed to schools and colleges teaching the 14-19 curriculum and the follow up purposive approach drawing upon the questionnaire responses. Furthermore to ensure that the findings are valid the data collected had to be complete in as far as the research question and aims would allow which within social science "explains more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour". (Cohen *et al.,* 2007:141) Again the use of follow up interviews enabled any omissions to be rectified. In addition the literature search and discussion also provided evidence and data to ensure that the findings were complete within the context stated.

To further ensure the validity of the findings the data collected was triangulated, which as defined by Cohen, Manion and Morrison simply means 'the use of two or more methods of data collection. (Cohen *et al.* 2007:141). Denzin (1978) identifies four major types of triangulation, data, investigator, theory and methodological. Here data triangulation refers to the mixed data collection approaches of questionnaire, interview and literature review as identified by Thomas and Nelson (2001) Cohen *et al* (2007),also support the notion of the data collection methods providing the triangulation and validity by suggesting that the multi method collection approach can provide a greater confidence in the findings. In this study the collection methods used are assessing the same phenomena at different levels and points in time and are therefore providing a more holistic view of the phenomena (Hyrkas and Paunonen, 2000). The use of two collection methods also corresponds to the complementary model of triangulation (Erzberger and Kelle, 2003 Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen 1993). Hassard suggests that the strength of data triangulation is that it results in a "thick description" (Hassard, 1993:109)of the phenomenon of interest that would not be possible if fewer data collection strategies had been employed, all the data being necessary but insufficient on its own to explain a phenomenon in a rigorous and credible manner.

Triangulation in this study involved a survey, discussion and a focus group and a sample of experts.

Ethical Considerations

Burton (2000) asserts that no area of life work is flee of ethical dilemmas. In constructing the framework for this study a considerable amount of attention was given to the ethical considerations, acknowledging that ethical issues may arise throughout the entire research process. McSkimming, Sever and King (2000) suggest that ethics can be categorised into two discreet areas; those that relate to human subjects and those that relate to research dissemination. As this project involves the investigation into the life and work of humans it is important to ensure that the research is ethical and that any harmful effects arising from the study are at best removed. It was important for the success of the study that all research participants were regarded as equal as the participation and contributions were vital to the compilation and completion of the project.

According to Burton (2000) there are two main ethical theories, deontological and consequentialist, duty and obligation versus value over disvalue. He discussed four main principles and rules, the principles being autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice, the rules therefore being veracity, privacy, confidentiality and fidelity. Burton (2000) was also concerned with the ethics surrounding human subjects these being issues of confidentiality, informed consent, privacy, deception or potential harm or risk to the respondents. For this research the main ethical considerations were the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents as the type of data required, attitudes and knowledge, could in the eyes of the respondent create a degree of sensitivity or feeling of threat (Sudman, 1976). Indeed, it became clear during the study that the participants required a significant level of assurance that the response that they provided would not be fed back to employers as individual weaknesses. The reasons for this insecurity ,whilst not clear, and open to my personal interpretation, appeared to be a genuine concern about who owned the information and whether it could be used to implicate them in any way. Whilst pure conjecture this may be a result of the feelings of inferiority that some vocational teachers have versus the academic teacher.

Reflecting upon the social and human issues within qualitative research Anderson and Arsenault (1998) suggested that there was a necessity to ensure that the participants feel at ease with the process. Whist it was recognised that there many have been a perceived in-balance in the power relationship between the interviewee and interviewer, I tried to overcome potential barriers prior to conducting the interviews, through providing respondents with my own teaching background to try and create a rapport and to ensure that I considered a “dress code match” rather than business type suits. Additionally the

environment in which the interviews were conducted was considered, and whilst most interviews took place in classrooms care was taken to avoid the “interview desk” scenario.

Other ethical issues that were considered were issues surrounding the consent of the sample. The sample, by virtue of their career was all adults over the age of eighteen which should not have raised any ethical questions over legal competency. However it was also my responsibility to ensure that the participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study and any potential risks and benefits. It was not anticipated that the study would create any risk to the participants and whilst it is recognised that this notion was my perception it was not felt to be a significant ethical issues.

As all participants from the consortium interview stage were over the age of eighteen I chose not to use a consent form as part of the introduction provided to them regarding the nature of the study. However, I did advise them that their identity would remain confidential to the study and that they were free to withdraw at any time, this was to ensure that all respondents were voluntarily taking part in the study and that they were not participants as a result of pressure or coercion.

As noted previously, all opportunities to identify the research participants have been removed from the study. This includes identification by gender or ethnicity, although this data does form part of the discussion as background information.

The conversations with the leading academics were treated differently as each contributor agreed to waive their right to anonymity.

The other main ethical area that I felt should be considered within this study was the dissemination of the results, and whilst plagiarism, falsification or fabrication of data is not the intention of the author, there are potential political issues surrounding the 14-19 agenda which needed to be considered, not least the requirement for staff within post compulsory education to engage in a minimum of 30 hours CPD per annum to maintain their teaching registration with the Institute for Learning, a requirement that did not exist within the guidelines from the then Teacher Development Agency.

Chapter 4 Findings: Phase 1 Results of Initial Questionnaire and Overview of *The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas*

The first phase of the research was concerned with the theoretical and pedagogical requirements needed by teachers across both schools and colleges to teach the 14-19 Diploma and concentrated on the CPD requirements of the research question.

This phase of the study explored both the complex components that made up the qualification and the need for a new way of collaborative working across the compulsory and post compulsory sectors. A questionnaire was distributed to staff working in both schools and colleges and the results analysed to produce the text.
The book was structured around the key issues arising from the research and provided teachers with hints and tips on how to teach effectively, together with examples of activities and paperwork that could be used.

The key issues identified were as follows:

- Teaching and Learning for vocational education,
- Assessment,
- Information, advice and guidance,
- Subject knowledge,
- Personal Learning and Thinking skills,
- Functional skills,
- Collaborative working practices,
- Subject knowledge,
- Reflective Practice,
- Mentoring in 14-19 education.

In addition to the textbook, the initial research was used to inform a project undertaken with Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire county councils, both of whom were introducing the Diploma into their schools and colleges and needed support in providing training and CPD for the staff involved in its delivery.

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Graphical Summary of Responses from the Initial Questionnaire

A total of 31 responses were returned from a sample of 50, distributed across a range of pre- and post-compulsory settings. A response rate of 50 would have been the optimum response as previously discussed although the findings appear to be consistent across these 31 respondents which provides the validity for the results.

Looking at the participant sample, only 67% (21) responded to the question about their personal academic qualifications. In analysing this further 6 % of these 21 (2) had level 8 PHD/Ed D qualifications, 27% (7) had masters level qualifications, 48% (10) were graduates to level 6 and a further 14 % (3) held level 3 or 4 qualifications .
Out of these 67% (21) all respondents held a teaching qualification and of these 85% (18) were members of a professional body related to their profession. Whilst this could raise some questions around the qualifications base of the ten non –respondents, I would argue that this did not create any issues around viability of response data.

Range of Diploma subject taught across respondents

The range of responses to the questionnaire correlated to the first two tranches of diploma subjects that were implemented in 2008 and 2009. These are namely, IT, Engineering, Construction, Creative and Media, Society and Health from the first phase of implementation and Business and Hospitality and Beauty from the second phase of subjects. There were no responses from any diploma teachers who would be part of the third phase of a subject implementation. This omission is significant to the study as the third stage of implementation of the diploma range was scheduled to take place in September 2010, following the election of the Coalition government. This will be discussed further in the analysis section of the study.

From these responses received it was apparent that all three levels of diploma, foundation, intermediate and advanced, were being delivered across the range of schools and colleges targeted. However, a higher percentage 25% (8) respondents were delivering level 1 diplomas with 40%, (12) teaching level 2, and 35% (11) teaching level 3.

Depth of Subject Knowledge

Respondents were asked to rate their subject knowledge on a scale of one to five, with five being excellent and one being poor.

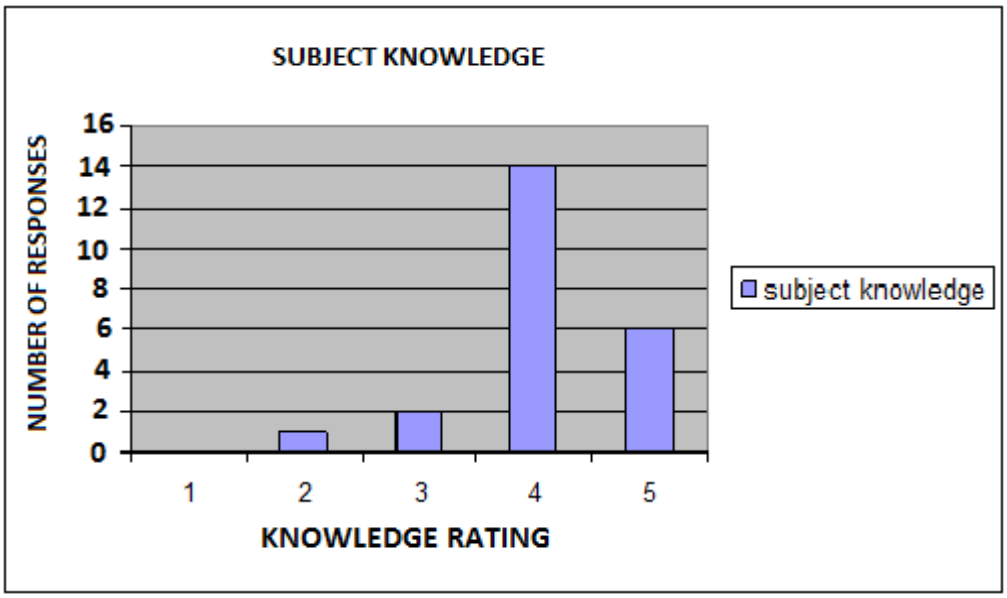


Fig 4: Perception of depth subject knowledge

In terms of specific development needs the respondents rated their subject knowledge as good, although only twenty three responded to this question, leaving some additional questions about subject specific needs, which would need to be addressed in any CPD package. When asked further questions regarding their industry background, 15 had not worked in the industry area within which they were now teaching , whilst 16 had. This would suggest that despite not having worked within the specific industry area that they were teaching in, respondents felt that their subject qualifications were appropriate for the role in which they were in. I suggest argue that some of the respondents who did not rank their subject knowledge, did not do so as they had not worked in the profession and so felt unable to do so. This resonates with literature on teachers in secondary schools feeling ill equipped to teach the applied learning required by the Diploma.

Respondents receiving any training for the 14-19 Diploma

The participants taking part in the questionnaire were all involved in the first two tranches of Diploma implementation, either teaching or preparing to teach the qualification. Tranche 1 in 2008 and Tranche 2 in 2009.

Despite the Diploma being a new qualification with a new pedagogical approach, only 25% of the respondents had received any training on the Diplomas. Further questioning identified that all respondents felt that some form of training or professional development would support them.

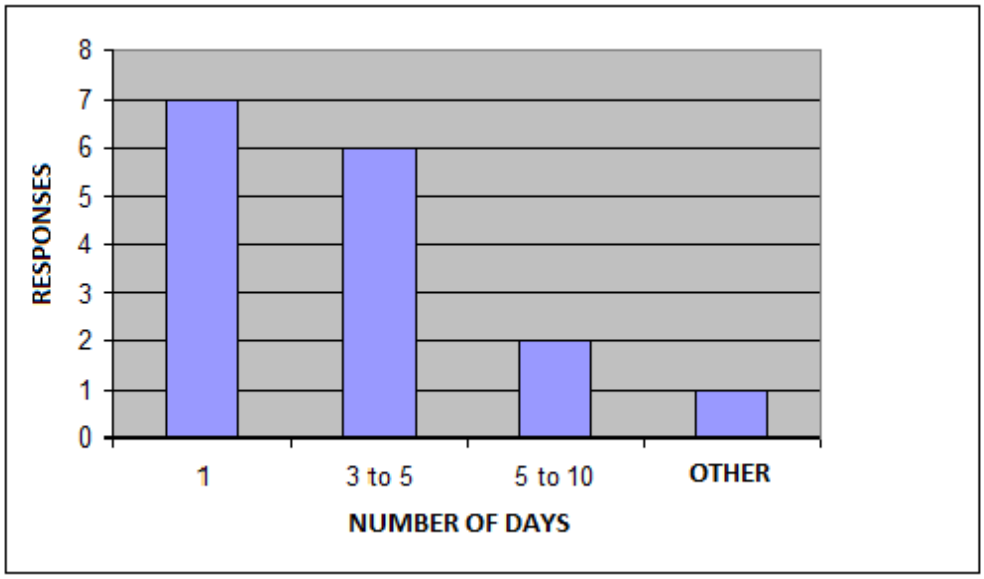


Fig 5: Number of Days Training Respondents felt appropriate

The graph shown above demonstrated the number of days training that the respondents felt they needed to be able to perform their roles effectively. Only sixteen from thirty one responded to this question. In analysing the actual respondent data the non- respondents were made up of schools teachers and staff working in training organisations. This could suggest that these staff do not have the same requirement for CPD as the FE sector staff through the IFL.

This information on length of training was used to inform the CPD packages developed following analysis of the results.

Diploma component knowledge

The following graph demonstrates the specific elements of the diploma and how the respondents rated their knowledge in relation to these elements. The results from this section confirm the findings of levels of subject knowledge in that respondents rated their knowledge being either good or excellent, with a very small minority rating their knowledge as average. The key areas that were highlighted as being weak in terms of respondent knowledge was PLTS, initial advice and guidance, generic learning within the qualification, functional skills, mentoring and individual learning plans. These areas were used as a basis to inform the textbook.

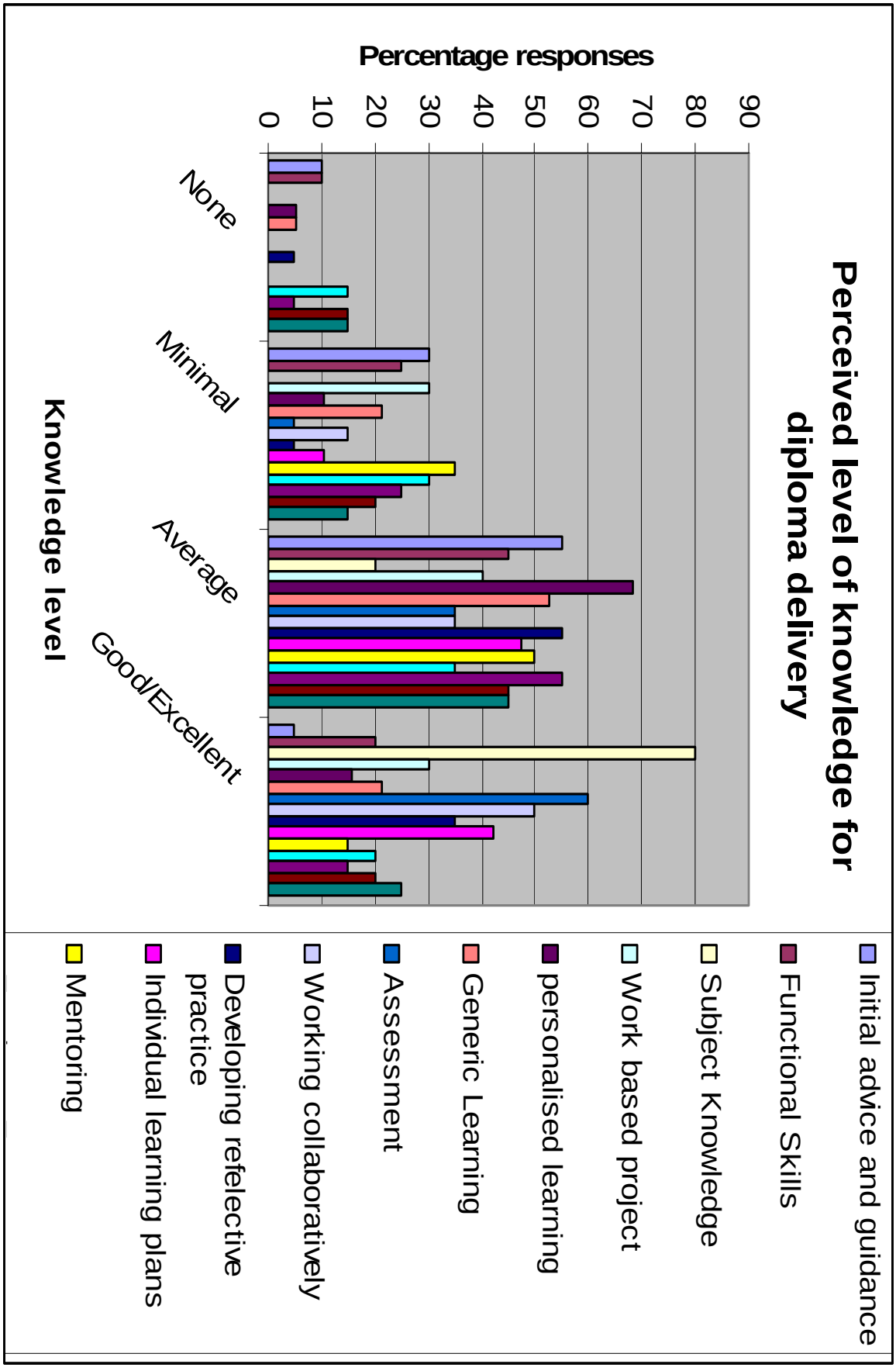


Fig 6: Perceived Level of Knowledge for Specific Diploma Elements

Having asked about their perceived level of knowledge within specific diploma elements, I then asked whether the participants felt training in these areas would be beneficial in order to correlate whether the levels of confidence would equate to a training need. The following chart (fig.7) reflects the responses to the questionnaire in terms of perceived knowledge and usefulness of training. The results from this question indicated that the respondents would find training in the specific Diploma components as being the most useful, with subject knowledge training being seen as the least useful. The top areas for training were identified as: PLTS, reflective practice, Individual Learning Plans, Functional Skills and Collaborative Working. This would suggest that the new pedagogy of the qualification was an area of concern within the workforce.

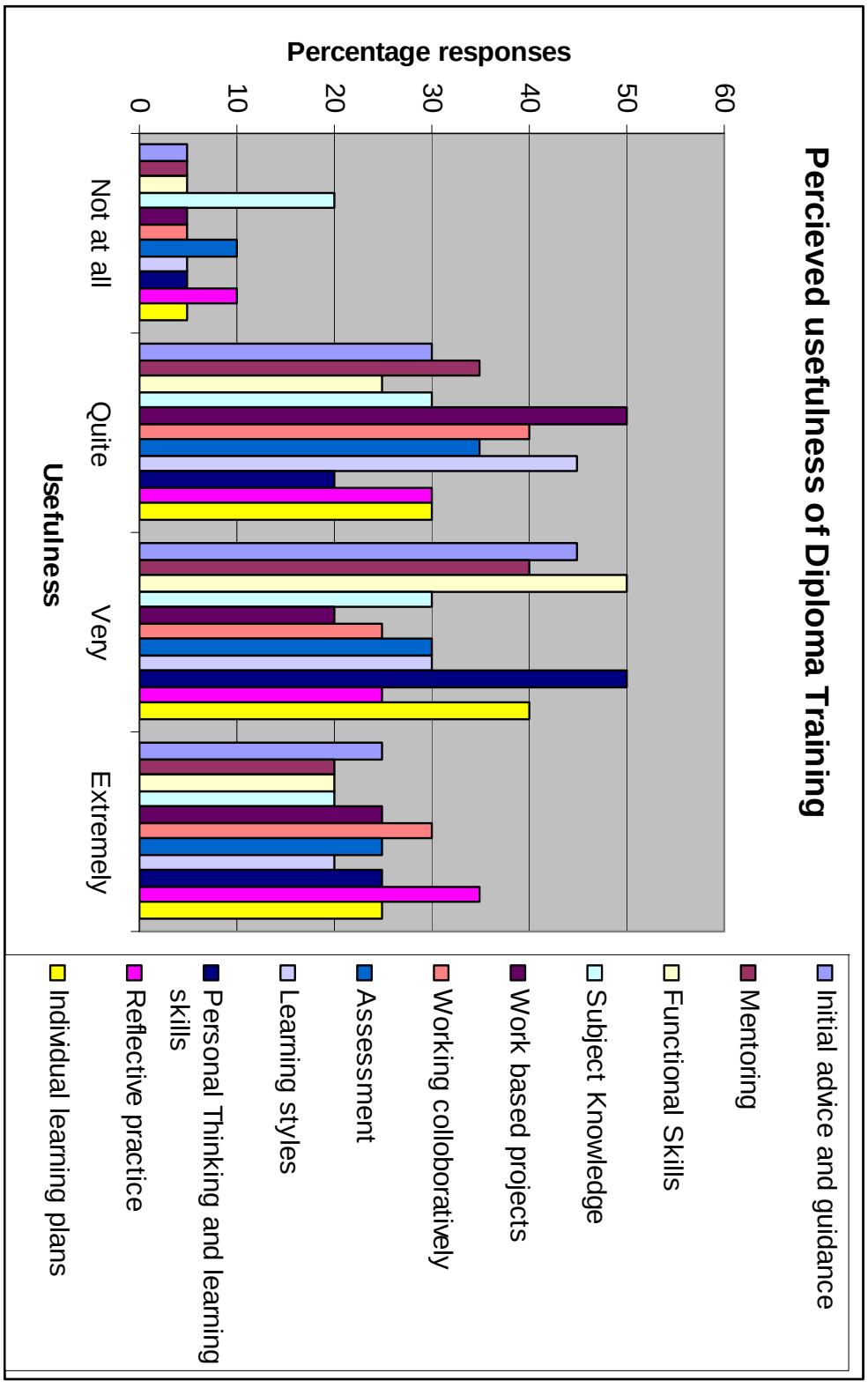


Fig 7: Perception of usefulness of training

All of the respondents, apart from the respondents from the compulsory sector were prepared to attend training to support their diploma delivery and the next two charts demonstrate the training type preferred

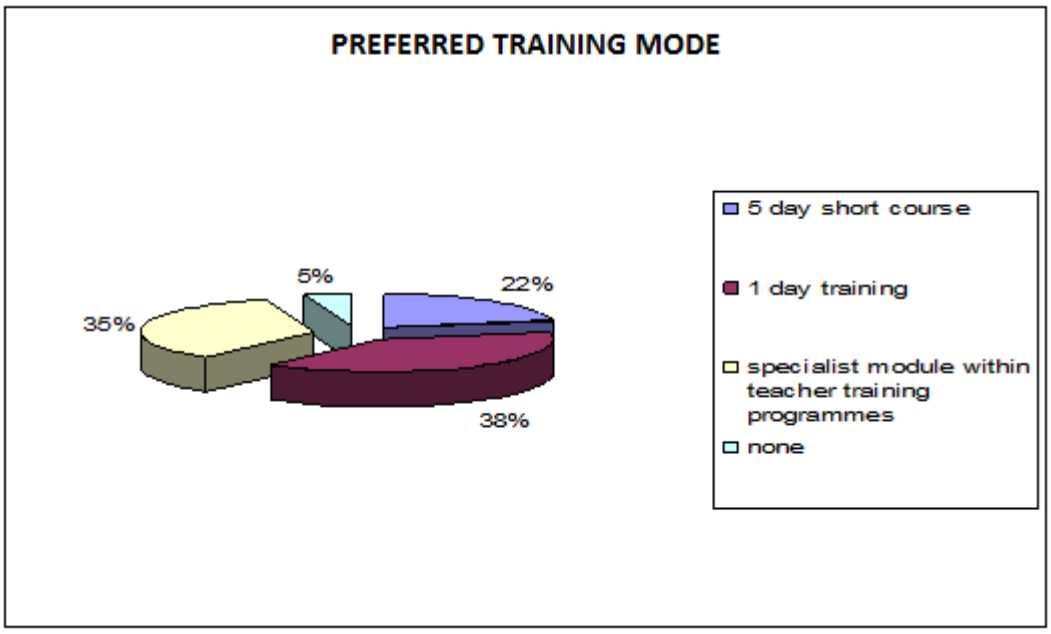


Fig 8: Training Modes

The lack of willingness to attend any training from the compulsory sector, could suggest that the school sector did not really buy into the qualification, whilst the overwhelming response from the post compulsory sector would suggest that these practitioners felt that the qualification was valuable in their sector. It also links to the literature around CPD and the requirement for all FE staff, to undertake a minimum of 30 hours training per annum, logged through the IFL. The modes of training identified also supported the development of the CPD packages discussed later in the chapter.

The final chart demonstrates the types of training that respondents felt would be most beneficial. Two-thirds of the responses indicated that any training should be accredited, which again can be linked back to the requirements of the IFL and the need for teachers in the lifelong learning sector to undertake a minimum of 30hours CPD per annum. It could also be linked back to the literature around the desire for the post compulsory sector to up-skill its workforce. This finding was used to inform the decision around the CPD packages being accredited at levels 5 and 6.

The final chart demonstrates the types of training that respondents felt would be most beneficial. Two thirds of the responses indicated that any training should be accredited,

which could be linked to the IfL and the need for teachers in the lifelong learning sector to undertake a minimum of 30 hours CPD per annum. It could also be linked to the desire for the post compulsory sector to up-skill its workforce. Regardless, this desire was also built into the CPD packages.

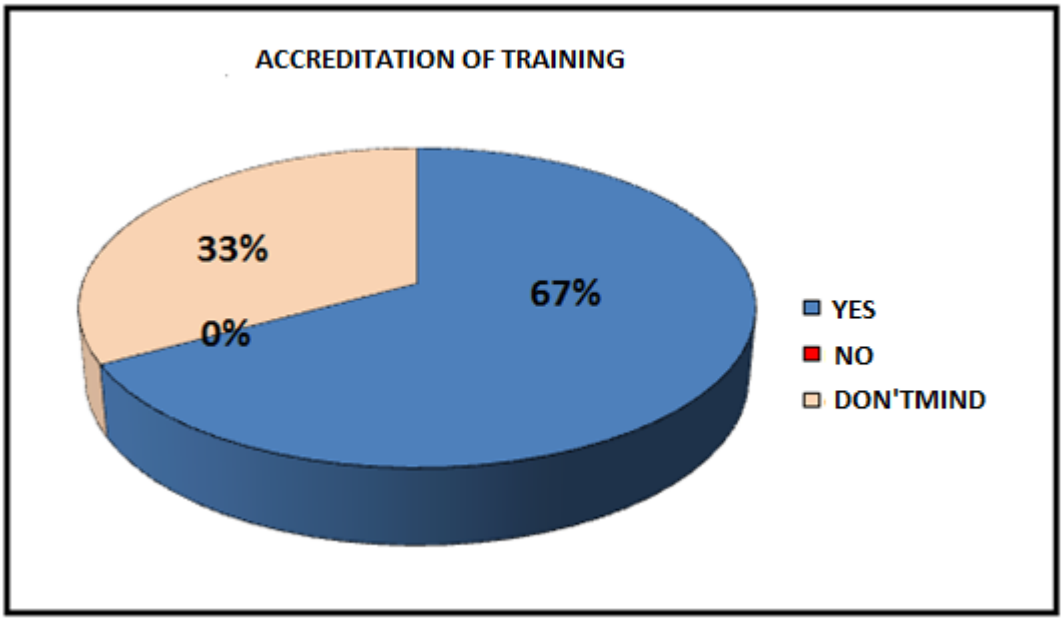


Fig 8: Accreditation of Training

Overview of Resources Developed from Phase One

The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas: Rationale for the Book Structure

The structure of the textbook follows a similar format for each chapter, starting with an overview of what the chapter will explore, so that the reader can see at a glance whether the information provided will be useful. It then follows with definition and theoretical underpinning where necessary, in particular chapters two and three which examine learning, teaching and assessment and are subjects that most teachers will already have knowledge of. The chapters continue with examples of how to the subject content applies to the Diploma with case studies, examples of useful activities and top tips for the reader. Each chapter concludes with a key ideas summary and links to further reading and information.

Chapter 1

To locate the Diploma within the UK curriculum framework the text starts with an overview of vocational education and the development of the Diploma as 'the qualification of choice'. It defines vocational education and considers the problem of the vocational /academic divide to which it was anticipated the Diploma would provide a solution. It also explores the components of the Diploma and provides the reader with an understanding of the two core theoretical elements required to gain the full qualification: principal learning (subject), generic learning (functional skills, personal learning and thinking skills, work experience and project plus the additional learning that could be added alongside the core elements). This chapter concludes with a discussion of some of the pedagogical challenges arising from the introduction of the Diploma that were explored in later chapters within the text.

As an opening chapter, the content was designed to dispel some of the myths around the 14-19 phase that Lumby and Foskett described as 'unique' (Lumby and Foskett, 2005:16) and how the new qualification would impact upon the teacher on a daily basis, including the challenges of working in consortia and in different age phases. It also touches on the vocational /academic divide and the identity of the workforce.

Chapter 2

The second chapter draws upon the findings around the pedagogical approaches to learning and teaching. It starts with an overview of some of the learning theories and learning styles that are well documented in teacher education – behaviourism, humanism, experiential learning – and relates these to vocational learning. This approach was taken as it drew upon some of the concerns around the Diploma being a different pedagogy with traditional teachers needing to consider how best to develop applied learning strategies. In addition, as the text was aimed at both existing and new teachers the rationale for including the theory was to both reinforce and reintroduce elements of teaching that may have been studied several years prior, and to demonstrate that in reality this pedagogic approach built upon their prior knowledge. The chapter encourages teachers to explore and deconstruct their perceptions of a 14-19 learner, making use of discussions and activities around various learning styles, for example, visual, audio, kinaesthetic This was built in to dispel some of the myths around school teaching versus post-16 teaching, and to demonstrate that in reality there is little difference apart from the environment in which pupils are taught. The chapter concludes with an overview of work-related learning within the qualification and explores some of the legal aspects around using work related learning as a methodology. This was specifically chosen as the Diploma was a qualification that applied theory to practice without the student being in the work place, defined as work related learning. It enables teachers to consider, how, within a classroom concept, they could prepare young people for the world of work as defined by the DCSF (2008). It introduces F.A.T. (for, at , through work) as concept to teachers who may not have been involved in this type of pedagogical approach.
An example of work related activities that are provided for the practitioner can be found in Appendix 6.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 follows a similar format to Chapter 2, providing an overview of some of the concepts and principles of assessment and feedback. This format was used in discussion with the publisher, as although the initial research had been undertaken with practising teachers, it was likely that the text would also be of benefit to new entrants into the teaching profession, as discussed earlier. In particular the Diploma made use of practitioners from the workplace to provide some of the specialist input, many of whom would have had no formal teacher training. It was also clear from the initial findings that there was some anxiety around assessment of the Diploma, with 50% of the respondents rating their knowledge as average or below. The chapter aimed to provide all Diploma teachers with examples of how to assess

and also examples of paperwork that could be used to record and track student progress. It provided examples of effective feedback and introduced a feedback concept that could help motivate and inspire learners which was badges as a top tip:

> Top Tip
> When giving written feedback use the PIP method, positive, and improvement, positive. For example. Joe, you worked really hard in this piece of work and have clearly understood the key elements of health and safety. However, to improve your grade you need to link the theory to your work place to give examples that are relevant. Overall well done! (Senior, 2010:39)

Chapters 4-9

Chapters 4-9 concentrate on the unique elements of the Diploma that were new to all teachers, practising or new entrants: Functional Skills, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), Individual Learning Plans, Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS), Reflective Practice, mentoring and collaborative working. These elements were part of the main findings from the initial research and were the areas that teaching staff were more concerned about and felt that training and CPD would be of benefit to the workforce involved in Diploma delivery.

Chapter 4

This chapter introduces and explores functional skills and their place within the Diploma and provides the reader with examples of how to teach functional skills effectively, together with case studies and activities for use within the classroom. The chapter starts with a definition of functional skills, which were piloted in the UK in 2007. Originally, functional skills were designed to be taken in conjunction with GCSEs and students could only achieve a grade 'C' if they passed the functional element. In addition, this chapter considers the differences between functional skills and the other skills with which teachers may be familiar: key skills, basic skills, skills for life, core or common skills. During the initial research, functional skills were highlighted as something that would be beneficial to have development on, firstly as they were a new concept and secondly because of the different approaches to delivering them. The chapter considers the three skill lines and why they were developed:

> Functional skills are practical skills in English, mathematics (maths) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). They are defined as the skills that "enable everyone to work confidently, effectively and independently in life and at work". www.aqa.org (accessed 26/3/09). Functional skills have been developed following the 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper (February

> 2005), the Skills White Paper (March 2005), and in response to employment needs and employer requests to provide a work force that is competent and able to compete in an ever increasing competitive environment. Functional skills will be available at entry levels 1 -3, level 1 and 2 and they will exist as a standalone qualification, in addition to being an integral element of the diploma. Functional skills will eventually replace key skills at levels 1 and 2. (Senior, 2010:54)

This chapter hence provides practical examples of how to deliver functional skills in each of the three lines. It also provides some discussion of the pedagogical approaches for the teaching of them: discrete, embedded or stand alone.

The chapter concludes with an overview of the QCA standards for functional skills and some examples of possible activities that could be adapted in the classroom.

> *Case study – Embedding functional skills Heanor Gate Science College*
>
> *Heanor Gate Science College is an 11-18 school, working within a local diploma consortium, Ripley and Heanor Learning Community. They have partnered with a local tourist attraction to create resources which help fulfil the requirements of functional skills in English, Maths an ICT. The resource is functional skills trail that requires students to answer a series of questions, and gather information on the tourist attraction Groups of young people visit the attraction and are provided with a work booklet, that provides them with information that they need to complete the trail together with spaces for their answers.*
>
> *The teacher responsible for the development of the resource works on the IT Diploma and has added an additional tasks specifically for her learners which requires them to produce a presentation suitable to be sent to schools for school visits or to be displayed in local tourist information centres.*
>
> *The resource has been piloted across the schools in the local consortium and has proved to be a success with the learners*
>
> *What local attractions could you work with to develop similar materials*
> *What advantages and disadvantages might there be to embedding the skills in this manner.* (Senior, 2010:61)

Chapter 5

From April 2008, the responsibility for information, advice and guidance (IAG) was removed from the Connexions partnerships and devolved to the Local Authorities. As a result of this change, a set of 12 guiding principles were developed to ensure that young people were provided with consistently high and impartial advice and guidance regarding their learning and work choices. Information advice and guidance was an integral part of the 14-19 framework and the Diploma lines with teachers needing to be aware of the IAG standards

and their implications. For the Diploma, IAG included: provision of accurate and impartial information about learning and career opportunities; provision of information on progression; provision of specialist support to help young people develop new perspectives and make progress towards their individual goals. IAG was also linked to the Every Child Matters Agenda (ECM) and the achievement of the five ECM outcomes; be healthy, be safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

For the teacher, IAG was seen as a collaborative process in which the teacher, as *the subject expert*, was expected to provide information on career progression and progression into Higher Education.

This chapter also explores the Individual Learning Plan (ILP), which was initially developed for Skills for Life learners to enable them to monitor progress towards their final goal. However, one of the underpinning philosophies of the Diploma was around *personalised learning experience*s. ILPs were an essential tool for Diploma teachers. The chapter considers how ILPs should be developed to create unique learning plans for Diploma students and provides a model for effective ILPs. Both of these elements were again key areas that the initial phase of research highlighted as being important for staff working on the Diploma lines. This chapter again encourages the reader to reflect upon their own practice and provides them with examples of paperwork that could be used with the learner.

Chapter 6

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) believed that for young people to be successful they should develop skills essential for learning, life and employment. The PLTS framework, developed by QCA (2007), was designed to complement functional skills and to provide a range of skills that equip young learners for the future. Within the Diploma, students needed to successfully complete the PLTS to be awarded the full qualification. Whilst not a new concept, previously teachers had used the ‘common core’ as a guide to assess a learners personal skills. It should be noted that time for the application of PLTS within each line of learning was written into the respective units (i.e. as learning outcomes and associated content) within the guided learning hours (GLH).

Providers of each diploma line had to ensure that the diploma included the relevant opportunities to develop and apply all six personal, learning and thinking skills within principal learning with further opportunities offered in work experience and the project.

The chapter unpacks each skill, and identifies ideas for integrating them into the main learning, rather than treating them as standalone elements. Various pedagogical approaches and ideas are explored to provide the teacher with examples of embedding them effectively and examples of activities that could be used to assess each skill. For example:

> Activity
>
> Revisit a recent activity that you asked your learners to complete within the classroom situation.
>
> Task 1: Ask the learner to complete an individual SWOT analysis on their performance. Concentrating on the following areas:

Strength	Weakness (area for development)
What did I do well? Which areas am I strongest at? (knowledge/expertise)	What did I do badly? What are my weaknesses (knowledge/expertise)
Opportunities (for me)	Threats (to me and the performance)
What is my strength What else might I have done?	What were the problems? What could have affected me?

> Task 2: In small groups (non-threatening) encourage the learners to complete a SWOT for each other.
>
> Task 3: Allow learners to compare and contrast the results from the individual and peer SWOT.
>
> Task 4: Ask the learner to formally record the two SWOTS in whatever format they prefer. (Senior, 2010:90)

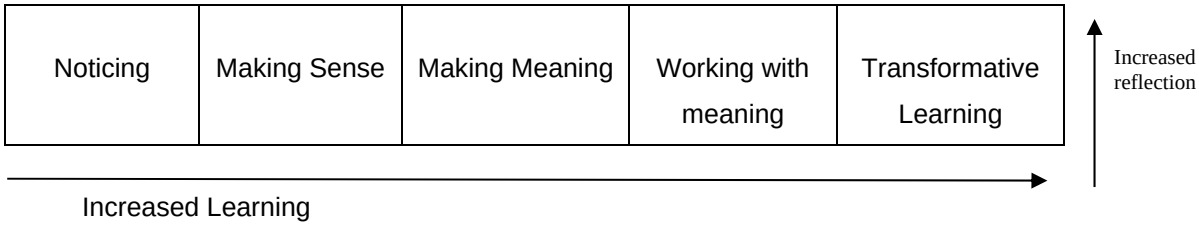
As with all of the textbook, this chapter concludes with key discussion points that could be used in staff development or initial teacher education sessions and points the reader to further reading to support them in developing their own ideas

Chapter 7

Within the teaching profession, reflective practice as a process is a professional requirement and all teachers, at some stage in their development, will have to provide evidence that they are reflective practitioners, usually in the form of a reflective journal or reflective log. Most introductory teacher education programmes, whether for primary, secondary or lifelong learning, include reflection as an integral part of the teachers' development. In addition, many of the professional bodies related to teaching require their members to reflect upon their practice for continuous improvement. Therefore, it was surprising that the initial research highlighted reflection as being a further area on which teachers felt they needed support.

For the Diploma, reflective practice was a key element in ensuring that students progressed effectively, with the underlying concept that teachers should encourage learner reflection to improve their individual practice and learn from reflection. Based upon the strong perceptions of the workforce that CPD on reflection was needed, the text aimed to answer: what is reflective practice, why is reflective practice important for the diploma teacher and student? Through enabling the reader to answer those questions, the chapter then explored models of reflective practice and the reflective practice process and provided examples of how teachers and learners could record their reflections. This was also the first chapter that made links to the other elements of the Diploma, specifically the Personal Learning and Thinking skills and provided ideas of how they could be linked in the classroom.

To provide an example the text drew upon a theoretical model adapted from (Moon 2004:85) to demonstrate how reflection could support learning.



(Senior, 2010:100)

This was followed by an activity to demonstrate the application of reflective practice to the Diploma.

> *Reflecting on Practice*
>
> *Consider the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment. In Level 2, Unit 1, Design the Built Environment; The design process. In this unit a learner needs to demonstrate that they can compare and contrast the way in which different service utilities are used within design.*
>
> *They are required to identify a range of primary service utilities (gas, electric, water etc.), describe how they are installed and how decisions are made to installation locations, and consider any impact on the environment.*

> *Taking the five elements that Moon discusses above explain the process a learner would go through when working towards when working towards this learning outcome.* (Senior, 2010:100)

The chapter also refers back to some of the key concepts in teacher education and teaching and learning to provide further ideas for reflection in action and reflection on action.

Chapter 8

Mentoring as a concept was an area that had an even spread of perception around the usefulness or training and CPD. However, as all Diploma teachers were required to mentor their students it was felt that a chapter should be included to remind teachers of the role of mentors and to enable them to explore their own skills in the mentoring process.

This chapter defined and discussed the role of tutoring, mentoring, coaching and counselling within a classroom context through the comparison of the roles, the key qualities of each role and their application within the workplace.

It provided the reader with suggestions of how to be aware of their own competence when providing support and gave advice on signposting to other agencies for specialist advice and support.

It also explored the concept of mentoring and the benefits of mentoring, linking back to the reader's experiences as a mentor to trainees or NQTs, before considering what it meant for the teacher in a diploma classroom. This chapter has at its heart the underpinning theory of mentoring and the areas and dimensions that mentoring can take, with activities designed to allow the reader to reflect upon their own skills and abilities and how they could best use them to support the Diploma learner.
An example of an activity is provided below.

> Looking at the list of skills and attributes provided above, plus any others that you have identified, rank in order of importance, which skills you would need in each of the 4 quadrants of the and the Klasen and Clutterbuck (2002) figure.
>
> Reflect upon these skills and attributes how do they compare to your own skills and attributes?
>
> What are your professional development needs in order to be an effective mentor? (Senior, 2010:115)

Chapter 9

The penultimate chapter of the textbook considered the concept of working in collaboration, one of the key concepts of the Diploma, and one that needed to be effective for the Diploma to be successful. It discussed:

- The background and history of collaboration in the14-19 arena,
- Key issues surrounding effective collaboration,
- Examples of collaborative working practices in place,
- Features of effective collaboration,
- Funding and Commissioning of provision for 14-19 education.

The inclusion of collaborative working as a separate chapter was influenced by both the initial research and the literature around the Diploma development. In particular, it was influenced by the 14-19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan published by the Department for Education and Skills in December 2005 that made it clear that the National Entitlement Curriculum could only be offered through collaborative delivery as no single school will be able to deliver the full entitlement. And, whilst collaboration as a process was not a new idea, having been in existence in the British educational system for several years with initiatives such as the 14-19 pathfinders and the Increased Flexibility Programmed (IFP), Tomlinson (DfES, 2004) stated that for the diploma that 'collaboration would need to happen more systematically if all learners are to have access to a range of options, delivered in institutions with appropriate facilities and expertise' (DfES, 2004:51).

The chapter also drew upon existing practice in collaboration and provided the reader with case studies of effective partnership working and tips for success in their own partnerships.

Chapter 10

As a method of unifying the previous chapters, the final chapter re-examined some of the issues surrounding the Diploma and its introduction into the English educational system against an ever-changing political scene. At the time of writing, it was possible that the UK would see a change in government for the first time since 1997. The chapter explores what that change could mean for the diploma and the wider remit of vocational education. It discusses then recent articles in the educational press that had been critical about the Diploma, exploring arguments based on the how the Diplomas had been delivered in some schools and their perceived lack of support from some universities.

This chapter also considers the concerns that had been documented about the implementation of the qualification itself, and the downscaling of the number of learners taking the qualification.

In re-visits some of the themes that were outlined as being key problems and issues surrounding the diploma:

- The vocational/academic divide and the perception that vocational education is subordinate to that of traditional academic.
- Lack of a national system involving all stakeholders in the diploma development, leading to issues of collaboration within consortia.
- Levels of employer engagement and the state of the UK economy.
- Personalising the learning for each individual and providing the correct motivators for them to succeed.
- Training and development needs of the stakeholders involved with the delivery of the vocational qualification.
- The 14-19 sector: where does it sit?

This chapter could also be identified as the initial thoughts surrounding the second phase of research for this project. It begins to examine the concept of the Diploma and vocational education as a whole, making claims that without a firm home and clear purpose, the qualification will remain peripheral to the British educational system as opposed to being a major player in the comprehensive educational system. It also starts to consider a way forward for vocational education by examining some of the published literature and linking it to potential future policy:

> Hyland and Winch (2007) refer to an imagined Education and Training Act that would go part way in tackling vocational courses and qualifications proposing:
> - The removal of NVQs from mainstream education by 2012 and their return to the work place
> - All vocational qualifications to include theory underpinning general practice.
> - A licence to practice, at a minimum level 3 for skilled workers. (Senior, 2010:138)

This final chapter is also aligned to the latter part of the project because it starts to discuss some of the perceived challenges surrounding the qualification. These include the lack of a

national system involving all stakeholders in the Diploma's development and the issues of collaboration within consortia and the levels of employer engagement.

It concludes with the following:

> …regardless of what happens history has shown us that there is a need for a vocational qualification framework within the British system, whether the diploma is the qualification of choice or not. It is also clear that for any vocational qualification to work effectively the government, whoever that may be, needs to implement a system that encourages stakeholders to work together to ensure that we are providing the best education for our young people. (Senior, 2010:139)

The textbook was well received by teachers of vocational subjects and leading academics. The following quotes are samples of the reviews received:

> This is by far my favourite teaching book to date. It may be compact but it has plenty of sensible advice and explanations. I teach 16 - 19 yr olds and am currently studying DTLLS, this book is good from both an academic and practically point of view. It would also be a good investment for those doing teacher training, PTLLS or CTLLS.

> This book does precisely what it says on the cover - that is, provides and essential guide to teaching 14-19 Diplomas.
> The book is well-organised with clear and unambiguous chapter headings and summaries.
> Chapter 1 provides a very useful overview of the development of 14-19 and vocational education.
> The chapters on learning and teaching strategies; assessment; Functional Skills: information, advice and guidance and individual learning plans provide concise introductions and practical ideas. The remaining chapters consider the big picture and include mentoring, reflective practice and future developments.
> If you're new to teaching 14-19 this book is an excellent starting point.

CPD package for Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire

As indicated at the start of this chapter, the research was also used to inform a bespoke CPD package for Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire county councils who were concerned with implementing the Diploma with the appropriate support for staff. Following the analysis of the initial findings and in discussion with the 14-19 leads in the foresaid councils, a package of support was developed through the University to provide support for staff across a range of schools who were involved in the first phases of Diploma delivery. To provide opportunities for further CPD, the package was designed as a Level 7 module that could either stand alone or be used as part of a Level 7 award. This decision was taken as the responses to the initial questionnaire indicated that 67% of staff would prefer accredited training whilst the remainder did not mind. No respondents identified the need for the CPD not to be accredited. It was also decided that a short course, rather than one of would be more appropriate based on the 57% who requested that any training be either a module or short course. The programme designed can be seen below:

Week	Topic	Staff	Proposed activities
1	Introduction to course. UOD library induction/Athens accounts etc Discussion of skills shortage within vocational education Brief History of Vocational Education Range of qualifications available, progression routes and careers Funding and achievement 14-19 framework, section 96/7	Lynn	Discussion Lecture key points Discussion and research
2	The awarding bodies Differences and similarities between qualifications The basis for choice Interpreting awarding body requirements Teaching and learning – the vocational way What makes it vocational? T&L styles of the vocational student Skills scan and needs analysis	Lynn	Discussion and activity Informal group presentation
3	CPD and keeping it relevant (EBP) Schools links and partnerships Developing vocational partnerships The role of the ambassador -Trip planning	LSDA / EPB	Group activities and discussion
4	Health and safety Risk assessment and WRL WRL and the law Skills scan and needs analysis	Lynn/ LSDA	Group activities
5-8	Industrial/commercial placement (EBP)	Lynn	Group activities Lecture
9	Schemes of work and Lesson planning the vocational way Skills development Industry resources and links Key skills integration	LS/AST	
10	Enabling the learner to achieve Assessment requirements Writing challenging, vocational assessments Use of WBL in assessment How do I grade? Standardisation of the assessment – the process The quality process	LS	
11	Strategic Issues Costing and delivery The school structure and vocational education Planning for COVE/SST	Janice	
12	Negotiated session Subject specialist	Various	

Fig 9: CPD Package for Local Authority

The structure of the Diploma closely resembles the structure of the textbook and its delivery also drew upon expertise within the local councils and the Educational Partnerships that were in existence at the time.

The programme ran for two years, with four cohorts across Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire completing the study. In addition to the programme, a paper was presented at the East Midlands Curriculum conference entitled *Vocational CPD: A Regional Response to Teacher Skills Needs.* This paper was delivered in conjunction with the Learning and Skills Development Agency regional coordinator and was designed to showcase the need for specific vocational training in the light of the new Diplomas (Appendix 7).

Linked to this CPD, the University bid for specific ITT training places with LLUK in 2008 (Tender request and bid: Appendix 8). This resulted in the development of a 14-19 module which was put into the LLUK database and that could be included in Post-Compulsory Teacher Education programmes.

The study also informed work that was completed with East Midlands Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (EMCETT). This concept was introduced in 2008 by the Sector Skills Council to improve Learning and Teaching within Teacher Education across the post-16 sector. This work was the development of a database for vocational teachers involved in the Diploma which would provide them with key links to subject specific organisations and resources. The project was completed in three phases and covered the first three lines of learning. In addition, it also covered resources and information that was in the public domain from the following organisations; Teacher Development Agency (TDA); Institute for Learning (IfL; Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK); Learning Skills Network (LSN) and other relevant bodies. The resource was covered information on the provider, the potential end user, a brief synopsis and a rating as to how useful it was perceived to be. An example can be found in Appendix 9.

Upon completion, the database was uploaded on to the EMCETT virtual learning environment as a resource for any organisation involved in teacher education across the country.

In conclusion, the findings from the initial phase of research led to the development of several teaching resources designed to help practitioners involved in 14-19 Diploma delivery: the publication of a book, a CPD package and several resources (see Appendices 6-9).

Chapter 5: The Demise of the Diploma: Thoughts from the Consortium, a Focus Group and a Diploma Champion

The initial part of the second phase of research was to conduct a small scale focus group with ten members of the University consortium who had responded to the initial questionnaire and who were involved in the delivery of the Diploma. In addition, I also ran a mini-focus group with three teachers in a local college that was not part of the consortium at the time, but was in the process of joining. This phase functioned to gather the views of teachers to the demise of the Diploma and their feelings around their future identity as 14-19 teachers. It also was used to further consider any future training and development needed. Interviews took place with a range of Diploma teachers working across both the pre- and post-compulsory setting. All interviewees were involved in teaching the Diploma at various levels.

All of the interviews were anonymous and for that reason the participants are identified by number only. The sample chosen was very varied in terms of experience as can be seen in the following table.

Participant 1 had been teaching in a post-16 establishment for seven years and classed themselves as a first career teacher, indicating that they had not worked in industry prior to joining the teaching profession. Participant one taught across a range of levels in their subject area.
Participant 2 had also been teaching for seven years, but in a school setting. This individual had joined the teaching profession following a first career in industry and can be classed as a teacher employed specifically for the vocational education.
Participant 3 had not been in industry prior to joining the teaching profession and had been working as a vocational teacher for two years.
Participant 4 was a first career teacher in a school, not having been in industry prior to teaching. They had been teaching for over seven years.
Participant 5 was involved in Teacher education and had been teaching on post-14 teaching qualifications, working with staff in both schools and colleges.
Participant 6 worked in a post 16 college and had been in industry prior to joining the teaching profession.
Participant 7 was a Diploma champion working within a local consortia and based in an FE college.
Participant 8 worked in a school setting and was a first career teacher.

Participant 9 had recently joined an FE college to teach on engineering, working mainly with 14-16 year olds. This individual had industry experience. **Participant 10** had over forty years teaching experience in both schools and colleges and was currently involved in vocational subjects in an FE college.

Table 4: Overview of the Characteristics of the Respondents

The mini focus group was undertaken with a group of FE lecturers working in one of the colleges within the University's consortia. The lecturers involved in the focus group were all second career teachers, having moved from industry to teach within a vocational department, across a range of levels. It was decided to undertake a mini focus group as the participants were unable to find time to dedicate to individual interviews.

The participants were asked a range of questions around their perceptions of the Diploma and their reactions to its impending demise and the implications for their identity as vocational teachers.

Overview of Thoughts

Participant 1

Participant one had been teaching for more than seven years, and had been in their current role for up to three years. They classed themselves as a first career teacher and held a Level 7 qualification. They worked in a post -16 establishment.

They believed that the diploma was a vocational qualification that prepared students for the world of work and an excellent alternative for students who struggled with the traditional academic subjects. They believed that the withdrawal of support for the programme was short-sighted and that as a qualification it had helped to stimulate and motivate students. They believed that any replacement should be practical in nature and raise aspirations. They did not believe that the new 14-19 UTC was a natural home for either the diploma or any subsequent replacement. In terms of training and development this respondent believed all of the ten elements identified to be very important.

Participant 2

This individual had also been teaching over seven years in a school and was an undergraduate, who had entered the profession following a career in industry. As a teacher of the engineering diploma, this respondent classed the qualification as a combination of both academic and vocational with the reason being identified as,
"Although we try to facilitate applied learning in units as much as possible. I think it's important to prepare students for university and university type lectures, so there is some deliberate chalk and talk built in".

This individual liked the Diploma as a qualification as it provided a viable alternative to traditional academic routes, whilst also providing a good development opportunity for their own professional development, having a broad approach and experiences of all facets of engineering. However, they did feel that they were perceived differently to the academic teacher, with "lack of understanding being a big hurdle" and perceptions of the subject being "the grease monkey trade". They did not believe that the UTC was the natural home for such a qualification.

In terms of importance of training and development the element perceived to be very important was functional skills, with the comment "functional skills are a real pain, the sooner they are brought into KS4 as a compulsory element the better – it's just a hoop to jump through that has no real value as an exam when you look at where its embedded within the course". Areas perceived to be important were: subject knowledge, initial advice and guidance, applied learning strategies, and reflective practice. PLTS, collaborative working and assessment were seen as quite important with behaviour management being described as not important.

When questioned about any other issues that they would like to raise about the diplomas and withdrawal of support, the response was that numbers were high, indicating a definite market and a genuine interest in the subject (engineering). In particular the project was seen as a fantastic way of enriching and broadening the student experience. There was a real feeling of devastation of the possible demise "devastating, breaking down to option choices for A-Level would diminish the importance as a profession" but at the same time they felt it was "inevitable" and that the stronger link with employers would have been more attractive.

Finally, when asked about an alternative or replacement for the diploma the interviewee felt that there should be a replacement, as although there was a BTEC qualification on the

market it was not as broad and the project and ASL should be an integral part moving forward.

Participant 3

This participant was also a teacher of the engineering Diploma, working within a school and had been in the role for two years, having been in teaching for six years. In contrast to participant two, this individual had not been in industry before becoming a teacher and classed themselves as a first career teacher. Further into the discussion when asked whether the withdrawal of the diploma would affect them, the response was “No effect, as to be honest I would run a different course if need be, i.e. BTEC”. Again, in contrast to participant two, this respondent perceived the Diploma as being an academic qualification, with a strong theoretical element and lack of practical activities. In addition, apart from being heavier on assessment, the interviewee could not see a difference between the Diploma and the traditional academic qualification. This dichotomy will be discussed further in the analysis section.

Furthermore, this teacher of engineering did not believe that they were perceived differently to the traditional academic teacher. They did believe that an alternative to the Diploma should be introduced that would be a pure practical subject to remove what they saw as the main issues of the qualification, “too much theory and not enough practical”. However, they did concede that there should be some element of course-work.

In addition, this teacher identifies the withdrawal of support being even more of a struggle for a school that was already struggling for resources, and “making do”. Conversely, despite the lack of resources for practical activities the UTC was not seen to be a more natural home for the subject or the diploma qualification.
In terms of diploma support assessment was seen to be the most important, with IAG, applied learning strategies, collaborative working and reflective practice being important and subject knowledge, functional skills and PLTS being less so.

Participant 4

Participant four had been teaching for over seven years and had always been a teacher, holding a Level 7 qualification. They perceived the Diploma as a combination qualification.

They said it was a qualification designed to “Provide vocational experience in a chosen area with academic grounding at the higher levels. It was originally introduced as alternative to A-Level with less academic focus and a vocational experience”. This participant also believed that the Diploma was a viable alternative to A-Levels since it recognises that not all students are academic and it provides a relevant qualification option for particular for career paths.

In terms of the withdrawal of support, this individual felt that it hadn’t been given a chance to succeed and that withdrawal of support would be a mistake as it would “alienate” the less academic students. Whilst the teacher also highlighted that an alternative should be introduced, they also felt that given the time and money that had already been invested a more viable option was to “iron out” the problems within the existing system. Furthermore, the UTC was seen as a more natural home as it could provide a more suitable environment for the practical activities and training.

All elements of the training were deemed to be important with subject knowledge, IAG, PLTS, behaviour management and WBP being seen to be the most important as they provided the specific subject element needed for students to succeed.

Participant 5

The fifth participant was involved in teacher training, having originally taught on vocational business courses. Her responses are from the perspective of her experiences with schools and trainees teacher the diploma and from her own perceptions of the qualification in the educational framework post-14.

Her responses are reported verbatim:

“Having been involved with a school that delivers Diplomas the key subject areas were of vocational subject areas, i.e Engineering and Construction. The focus in the educational institution was to focus on diplomas being a totally different educational route to the previous one-option academic route. However, there still appears to be some concern over the value of the qualifications with restrictions on the number of progressions routes available, e.g. a limited amount of apprenticeships available in the vocational subject specialisms.

From what I have seen, teachers of vocational subject areas appear to be deemed to be unqualified, i.e. some have excellent subject knowledge but because they do not have degrees, they are not deemed to be at the same level, i.e. at QTS level.

It is essential to engage students in areas that stimulate their interest. From the evidence I have seen of Diplomas being taught, vocational subjects can inspire individuals to want to succeed, i.e. something they see can be of value in the future. This is in contrast to some areas that have been compulsory, e.g. science and language.

It is important to have the right balance between academia and vocational qualifications, providing a well prepared workforce that will improve the national economy. By engaging learners in a range of qualifications, including Diplomas, you can transform the attitudes of some individuals, i.e. those not interested in studying subject that have traditionally been seen to be of more value. There needs to be more credibility in the delivery of vocational subject areas Vocational qualifications are essential to prepare a workforce for the future with skills that are fundamental to the running of the country. The focus on academia being the only positive side of education is one-sided.

The experience of seeing how alternative education and training routes, i.e. Diplomas, can impact on learners has made my views objective, not solely subjective. It will be hugely disappointing to restrict the future for many individuals.

I think some students will be disappointed if diplomas are withdrawn and it will adversely impact on their confidence and they vision for the future, i.e. they may not be able to see a way forward

UTC would be a natural home as it is a huge investment to go down the route of delivering high quality vocational qualifications. In order to invest this amount of money there needs to be specialist training establishments that can be invested in and get value for money."

Participant 6

This participant had been teaching for over seven years and had been in the present role for the last four years. This respondent believed that the diploma was a combination qualification, since "Academic core skills and knowledge are embedded in a programme using vocational areas to develop the practical skills and knowledge". They also felt that it was more suitable for some students than others and provided students with aspirations that traditional academia didn't, as it provided preparation for employment by teaching transferable skills. When asked about the response to the potential demise if the qualification the response was "pants" and that the government did not know how such a programme fit

into the broader educational framework. Any replacement should have WBL at the heart of it with strong links to industry. The natural home was seen to be the UTC for two reason: to allow seamless progression to higher qualifications and/or work and because a UTC may have better investment in resources.

Participant 7

Participant seven was part of a lead institution delivering a number of diplomas but was specifically involved with the Creative and Media. The responses are verbatim.

“There is still a large quantity of academic work in the Creative Media Diploma the only difference is that it is linked directly to vocational practice. However, even though there is vocational work within the Diploma the syllabus is still very academic and vocational opportunities are limited. Having taught the BTEC diplomas for many years the vocational experience that the diplomas offer does not compare to the BTEC and in my opinion the diploma is very much more an academic qualification than a vocational one.

I personally feel that vocational courses are stigmatised and do not have the same high regard, by parents and HE, as traditional academic qualifications. It seemed from my perspective that there were a number of issues with the diploma, which I highlight below. Personally it was rushed through and it seemed to happen all of a sudden without any training provided or limited opportunity. As lead institute it was impossible to work with schools as a consortium – and I can imagine they thought the same of us – as each institute had its own agenda – some didn’t want lose their students to rival centres, nobody had the space to accommodate the new course etc.

Furthermore, it was impossible to find all of our learners an opportunity of work experience in a related field, which was a major problem – industry didn’t seem to know about it. Senior management didn’t take a lead on it and it was left to teachers and lecturers to organise and provide provision, which in some instances was impossible, as they didn’t have the authority. Most importantly, the learners that decided to undertake the diploma, who would have normally taken AS-Levels or the BTEC equivalent found the course to difficult and most dropped out and returned to the BTEC or AS-Levels.

Functional skills was also an issue as only 10%. To be honest I’m not surprised as the Creative and Media Diploma wasn’t really that vocational, which meant that it didn’t satisfy

the learners that wanted to do a vocational course and it also wasn't that attractive to AS learners' as it was vocational.

In my view, the current vocational qualifications (BTEC) need to be looked at (which they have been and improvements have been made), as they are not perfect and could be adjusted further. We will not be offering the Creative Media diploma as there is little interest, the qualification is too complicated, logistically the consortium doesn't work and isn't really that vocational. Therefore, I will be going back to delivering BTEC's

To summarise, my institute decided not to offer the creative and media diploma after one year as there was a large majority of learners who would not achieve the full qualification due to poor functional skills results, a large percentage of students withdrew, lack of up-take, industry where we were based had no knowledge of the award and also there were limited opportunities for learners and the general logistics and housing of the award were very difficult to facilitate. Therefore, we will only be delivering the BTEC awards and the traditional AS and A2 qualifications in media."

Participant 8

Participant eight identified the Diploma as a combination qualification with the application of theoretical knowledge being applied to practical situations. They believed that it was a worthwhile option for students. As a teacher, they felt that it was disappointing that this qualification option had been created and there were now concerns about it. For this participant the potential demise of the Diploma would reduce their teaching hours. This participant also felt that students would suffer as "not everyone can do academic routes" This teacher felt that the qualification should be retained with a consultation and improvement process rather than replacement and felt that schools and colleges were suitable places to deliver such qualifications.

Participant 9

The ninth participant was involved in the Level 1 Diploma and much of his teaching was working with 14-16 year olds within a college setting and also working with groups of NEET (not in employment, education or training). He was a second career teacher, having worked in industry prior to joining the teaching profession, but despite having good success rates still perceived themselves to be "crowd control" and not a teacher.

The Level 1 qualification was perceived to be vocational with little academic status that provided good progression for students who otherwise would struggle to achieve. The interviewee believed the potential withdrawal of the qualification would be a huge loss and that a replacement qualification should be introduced, with the emphasis on student achievement. However, the project and portfolio elements were deemed to be problematic within the qualification as they could potentially allow students to use each other's work rather than learn.

When questioned further about this, the perception was that "students didn't like self-directed but preferred more direction", with applied learning strategies being singled out as being the most important element for qualifications of this nature. This was also apparent in the response to the growth of UTC, in that the interviewee thought that although a threat to his own institution the UTC would be fantastic for students as it would enable them to experience the real work environment and put into practice what had been learnt, whilst still in a safe environment.

Participant 10

The final participant in the consortia group had been teaching for nearly forty years. Whilst they had always been a teacher of traditional academic subjects, they saw the Diploma as a viable alternative to traditional academia as it provided access to employment and also HE. Participant ten saw the qualification as a combination of academic and vocational skills with the application of theory to practice being identified as the key element of the qualification. However, they also felt that some employers were not as involved as they should be with the programme citing "Health and Safety" as being a barrier, especially in engineering. The response to the withdrawal of support was seen as narrowing the student choice and potentially reducing participation rates, and again this individual felt that an improvement process rather than a replacement qualification should be undertaken.

Focus Group: Non Consortia

This discussion took place within a local college and was undertaken with three respondents present. All three worked in a vocational department within a college and classed themselves as second career teachers, having entered the profession from industry. All three classed the Diploma as a combination qualification, citing the fact that it was too

academic with too many assignments to be truly vocational. However, as a qualification they felt that because of the combination nature of the programme it allowed progression into both a career and into Higher Education. They also felt that there was a benefit in the programme being modular as students could choose to take a break from study if their circumstances changed. This was tempered with the comments, “as long as it doesn’t affect my retention rates”. There was a general feeling that there was a good range of subjects and options, although one of the respondents felt that the choice was narrowed as it was the college itself that made the option choices for viability reasons and to fit the specialisms of the staff.

When asked about their perceptions of being a Diploma teacher, all felt that they were isolated from the rest of the college and as a department treated very differently, the example given was that as a team they were constantly being inspected by the management, as if they were not “real teachers”. With regard to any issues that they had about the Diploma, the main concern was the speed in which it had been implemented when other good and comparable qualifications existed.

There was a belief that employers were confused about the qualification and because of that there was very little support. In addition, they felt that the qualification was too short to provide any real skills as tradesmen in the real world.

This discussion led onto their perceptions around the possible withdrawal of the Diploma and the impact that this would have upon the department and the students. Here the conversation was of mixed opinion. All felt that it wouldn’t be a loss as they could go back to the original qualifications with which employers were familiar. However, one of the respondents felt that the loss of project work and return to exams, which the original qualification would provide, could affect achievement and that the portfolio and project work was hugely beneficial for students.

Interestingly for me, this group of teachers had not heard of University Technical Colleges and the government announcement to double the numbers. Having explained the concept behind them, again the view were mixed. All felt that they would threaten the traditional FE college and their department, but they also believed that as an institution it could be better for the learner as they envisaged that the resources that a UTC could provide would be far superior than funding within FE allowed.

Regarding Diploma training needs, subject knowledge, IAG and applied learning strategies were perceived to be the most important, with behaviour management and collaboration with employers being seen as the second most important. When asked about assessment and reflective learning elements of the Diploma, there was a perception that they couldn't change assessments as it was fixed by the awarding bodies and that although reflection was important there was not time to do it justice. When questioned further on these two elements, it would appear that the staff did not fully understand the use of reflection in the qualification and felt that it only applied to them as teachers, and that assessment was only referring to the summative and not formative methods.

Analysis and Discussion 1: The Demise of the Diploma, Perceptions and Thoughts from the Workforce

The initial question asked of the workforces was to ascertain what type of qualification those tasked with its delivery believed it to be. The responses to this were mixed, although six of the participants were of the opinion that the Diploma was a hybrid qualification that combined both academic and practical elements. Two participants believed it to be vocational, one of these working with Level 1 only and the other giving no real reason, other than that it prepared students for work. This respondent was a first career teacher and I would question how they defined vocational education. The focus group also felt that the qualification was a hybrid as it "had too many assignments to be truly vocational". This would indicate that the focus group saw vocational qualifications as practical rather than theoretical. This links with definitions of vocational education set out in chapter one but could be argued is at odds with Dewey in that he saw the occupation as leading to an interest in more general education. This will be explored further in the concluding sections.

Participants were then asked about their reaction to the demise of the qualification. Most participants felt that it was "short-sighted" and there was a real feeling of "devastation and a diminishing of the importance of professions", although most also described it as "inevitable". Other responses included perceptions that the Diploma hadn't been given time to embed itself and to succeed. The focus group believed that the withdrawal of the qualification wouldn't be a real loss to their department as they would revert back to the qualifications with which employers were familiar.

These responses suggest that the introduction of the Diploma was rushed and that the employers had not been involved in their design, contrary to the concept of employer engagement and sector skills councils being the broker between the employer and the

qualification designers. This can also be linked back to the work by the 14-19 Alliance (2007), who also argued that the government's idea of involving employers in the design was flawed in the design and implementation of the qualification.

Upon questioning the teachers about the actual qualification itself and why they felt it had failed, the overwhelming response was that it was complicated and had been rushed in with very little training for the teachers. They also believed that the work experience element was a challenge and that industry did not seem to be aware of the Diploma and its requirements. In addition, most cited the need to work within consortia as being difficult:

> "As lead institute it was impossible to work with schools as a consortium – and I can imagine they thought the same of us – as each institute had its own agenda – some didn't want lose their students to rival centres, nobody had the space to accommodate the new course".

This also resonates with earlier literature that discusses the complexity of the award.

The focus group also had as one of the concerns the speed with which the Diploma had been implemented when other good and comparable qualifications existed. They also believed that employers were confused about the qualification and because of there was little support, citing the difficulties around work placement but in addition they felt that the qualification was too short to provide any real skills for tradesmen in the real world.

The final questions concerned the replacement for the Diploma, or what should happen next. Responses to this were unanimous: teachers reported that any replacement needed to be practical, with the work-based learning at the heart as the Diploma having too much emphasis on the academic side. There was also a perception that vocational and academic qualifications could be discrete and that there should be two routes available, although credibility was raised as a potential concern.

> "It is important to have the right balance between academia and vocational qualifications, providing a well prepared workforce that will improve the national economy. By engaging learners in a range of qualifications, including Diplomas, you can transform the attitudes of some individuals, i.e. those not interested in studying subject that have traditionally been seen to be of more value. There needs to be more credibility in the delivery of vocational subject areas Vocational qualifications are essential to prepare a workforce for the future with skills that are fundamental to the running of the country. The focus on academia being the only positive side of education is one-sided.
> The experience of seeing how alternative education and training routes, i.e. Diplomas, can impact on learners has made my views objective, not solely subjective. It will be hugely disappointing to restrict the future for many individuals"

From the interviews and mini focus group it was evident that the teachers of the qualification had mixed views around the identity of the Diploma, with participants of the groups failing to agree on whether it was vocational, academic or a hybrid qualification. This resonates with the definitions provided by Dewey (1916) and Magalen (1996) and the confusion around terminology as identified by Lewis (1991). This confusion over identity will be discussed further in the final part of the thesis. The discussion also questioned whether the qualification was being taught in the correct environment, with several participants believing the newly announced University Technical Colleges (UTC) to be a more appropriate home. This concern also adds to the identity of the Diploma.

Regardless of the location of 14-19 education, Cochrane and Straker (2005) and Heikkenen (2005) claim that if vocational education and training is to be effective then the status of the vocational teacher is of great importance. The authors further suggested that the confusion surrounding the role of the vocational practitioner within educational establishments has added to the perceived divide between the academic and vocational curriculum which is alluded to in the focus groups.

It was also clear from the discussion that whilst the participants were conversant with the elements of the Diploma, they felt there were still some areas that were still unclear, suggesting that the qualification itself was complex with too many elements.

Other areas that were common themes included the perceived lack of engagement from employers, both in terms of knowledge around the qualification and their reluctance to get involved and enable work placements.

Chapter 6: Conversations with Leading Educationalists- Analysis and Discussion 2: No Policy, No Plan. The Market, the State and the Vocational Education Vacuum

Conversations took place with a range of well-known and influential educationalists, who provide distinct perspectives on the rise and demise of 14-19 Diplomas and the future of vocational education in England. The data has been broken down into key strengths and weaknesses of the Diploma as a qualification.

Within strengths, it was apparent that the concept of a unified award, linking vocational and academic learning, was seen as being an emerging pattern. Whilst not all of the conversationalists were in agreement, there still saw a pattern around this area. However, weakness themes were much more consistent across the conversations and provided a much stronger argument for why the qualification failed.

For the purpose of this discussion I have chosen to label the educationalists in line with their role and thoughts around vocational education.

Professor Ken Spours, the Originator. Ken is the Head of the Department of Continuing and Professional Education at the Institute of Education in London. He has been active in the area of 14+ education and training for over 20 years, with a particular focus on 14+ reform - curriculum, qualifications, organisation, governance and policy development. He was involved in the original Tomlinson enquiry and provided the design for the Tomlinson Diploma. He was also involved in the review of 14-19 education in England and Wales and was one of the authors of the Nuffield Review (2009).

Professor Richard Pring, the Philosopher. Richard retired after 14 years as Director of the Department of Educational Studies at Oxford University in May 2003. Following his retirement he was Lead Director of the Nuffield Review of 14-19 Education and Training.

Professor Michael Young, the Sociologist. Michael Young is Emeritus Professor of Education with the School of Lifelong Education and International Development at the Institute of Education in London. His main research interests are in the sociology of knowledge and its application to the curriculum with particular reference to the post compulsory phase of education and training. He has a continuing interest in the role of qualifications and is a Research Advisor/Consultant to the City and Guilds of London Institute, the OECD and the Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh.

Toni Fazaeli, the Professional. Until recently, Toni was the chief executive of the Institute for Learning, the professional body for individual teachers and trainers across further education and skills in England. IfL's members work across adult and community learning; emergency and public services; FE colleges, the armed services; sixth-form colleges; the voluntary sector and work-based learning.

Sue Clark, the Insider. Sue started off her career in 14-19 education as the Principal of an FE college. In 2010 she was the Head of Policy and Strategy and the Qualifications and Curriculum Development agency, responsible for 14-19 qualifications. From 2010 she has been working with the Department for Education as the Qualifications lead, implementing the recommendations from Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education. Sue was working in the FE sector when the Diploma was launched and led on the first gateway applications prior to being recruited to the QCA to sell the concept of Diplomas to the general public.

Simon Bellamy, the Diploma champion. Simon currently works in Initial Teacher Education post-14 at a local University. His previous role was working with Lifelong learning UK, where he was the 14-19 Diploma champion, working with sector skills councils to produce the Diploma specifications. He was also involved in the design and development of 14-19 ITE qualifications, that were a hybrid of QTS/QTLS and I worked with him on CPD programmes for FE staff teaching Diplomas.

Professor Alison Wolf, the Newcomer. Alison is a British economist, and the Sir Roy Griffiths Professor of Public Sector Management at King's College London. Professor Wolf has been a specialist adviser to the House of Commons Select Committee on education and skills; and in March 2011 completed the *Wolf Review of Vocational Education' for the Secretary of State for Education (England)*. This included recommendations for the teaching of mathematics and English in post-16 education, and has been accepted in full by the government.

My own role in the conversations was as a vocational teacher turned teacher educator, involved in both initial teacher education and CPD for existing teachers across the post-14 sectors. As such my involvement was twofold. Firstly, I was a practitioner who taught across a range of vocational programmes, including BTEC, GNVQ, AVCE and with a background in industry I had the necessary knowledge to develop an appropriate pedagogical approach to the practical elements. Secondly, I was a manager in Teacher Education, I was constantly being approached by our consortium to provide CPD for the new Diploma.

The Diploma: Development and Strengths

The Originator, Ken Spours describes his involvement in 14-19 as being one of designer:

> I wasn't directly involved in the development of the diplomas because I had been involved in the Tomlinson enquiry and Anne Hodgson and I had provided the design for the Tomlinson diplomas so the enquiry over the two years we were involved did adopt in effect an English baccalaureate system view, very different obviously from Gove's English BACC, but this is multi-level baccalaureate system, so we did a lot of development work prior to the enquiry and in the years preceding Tomlinson and then we were involved in Tomlinson itself. So at the end of 2004 we realised that Tomlinson was not going to be adopted, instead that there would be a compromise offered and that the diploma designed to some degree on some of the internal features of the Tomlinson type diplomas. They would coexist with A-Levels. We characterised them not as a unified award but as a linkages based award. I wasn't involved in the design at all, in fact we were basically *persona non grata* with Ruth Kelly and others as we obviously said that they were not good enough and we predicated a lot of the problems that were eventually to emerge with diplomas.

Spours identifies the Diploma as a compromise, since "the Diploma [was] designed to some degree on some of the internal features of the Tomlinson type Diplomas but that they would coexist with A-Levels and with vocational qualifications". He believes that the Diploma was a "linkages award" and not a "unified award" that united vocational and academic education. He also hints at the obvious hostility between politicians and the fear the removing the A-Level as a "gold standard" would antagonise voters. Highlighting that, not for the first time, a well-considered and clear educational innovation was side-lined and academics became "persona non grata" in the policy making and policy implementation world. His earlier writing on education and training also confirm his view that the failure to remove the competition of A-Levels and BTEC Nationals was part of the problem:

> Because the original 14 Diplomas occupy this same middle-track position, the question arises as to which learners will choose them. While the inclusion of new general education lines within the Diploma suite could take the Diploma brand out of the middle-track vocational trap, history suggests that the retention of GCSEs and A-Levels, which have historically been accepted as the most prestigious route of study for 14-19 year-olds, may mean that the most able learners (and their parents) will continue to opt for these qualifications. Moreover, if Diplomas co-exist with 'tried and tested' vocational qualifications, such as BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) Diplomas, CGLI(City and Guilds of London Institute) and OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations) awards, their popularity is not assured even among those learners wishing to take more applied or vocational study. (Spours, Hodgson, Keep. 2007:63)

In contrast to Ken's misgivings around the compromise, Richard Pring, the Sociologist, describes the Diploma concept as "admirable" in that it "sought to create a common framework across the myriad of courses and pathways available". As a qualification he believes its main merits were that:

> It was taken seriously in a way that we have rarely done as part of general education, so taking it seriously the practical engagement, prominently in engineering, in other words one ought to be able to see a general education, many young people could be developed through practical activities, through technology, through engineering, through the service industries and so on, an interrelationship between the world of work and if you like general education.

It would appear therefore that from the sociological perspective, the Diploma could answer the question posed to the Nuffield review and that the combination of practical and academic would provide for an educated 19-year-old in today's society.

Michael Young, the Philosopher, describes the actions of the current government towards vocational education and the Diploma:

> I don't get the impression that the coalition government has actually been very interested or put much of a focus on if you like the vocational routes, I mean apart from the apprenticeship thing.

He continues his comments by inferring that vocational education as a concept is best suited to the workplace as employer led and not as a centrally driven qualification.

> It seems to me particularly round the apprenticeship side of that, you have got two crucial issues that you have to focus on, one is the demand issue, that in fact because in a sense it is always going to be a voluntary involvement by employers, they have got to see that they have got an interest of a particular kind for a particular kind of person, and in fact that's not in the last 21 years been a very substantial, you know, route, it's potential demand element.

Therefore, philosophically the concept of vocational education involves being in the workplace and being something that professions request. The implication is that the Diploma was not a qualification asked for by the workplace, an implication supported by Ken, who early on states that "we realised that because the profession hadn't asked for them, in so far as they had expressed an opinion for an overarching framework".

Michael also refers to the academic vocational divide and perception of gold standard qualifications being academically biased,

> There is nothing un-proper about vocational subjects depending upon how they are constructed…there is nothing Mickey Mouse in principle about these areas, they have become treated assumed to be like that, but they are not intrinsically.

Toni Fazaeli, the Professional holds similar views to the Originator, Ken describing the development of the Diploma:

> The analogy at the time very much was the gold standard and the A-Level, that's not something that the Prime Minister at the time, Tony Blair, wanted to touch, and you know that the advice he was given, presumably from some quarters and the parent vote I'm presuming was very much part of that, and so then the emphasis was on vocational diploma, so that was an absolute body blow to

> educationalists who had worked so hard and Mike Tomlinson who had done so much to build all the support and arrangements about how it would work. And as I say there was very widespread support, but it was the political decision at the top, beyond Education that changed that.

As a professional working in the sector, Toni's views also suggest that the original Diploma qualification was a political pawn and the design was to appease politicians and voters, and not a decision that was for the benefit of young people.

Sue Clarke describes her involvement in the development of the Diploma:

> Well I was still in the sector when the initiative was launched, so I was still a manager in a Further Education college and I led on behalf of my region a bid to go through the first gateway…in those days we were encouraged to work collaboratively in partnership…I tried to take the strategic approach so that we would have a phased implementation and success in our bid…Met some people at the QCA looking to recruit practitioners to help develop and really sell the concept of Diplomas…I had the remit from the Department of Education to run what they called the triple lock, which was the link between the employers and the sector skills councils to develop the principal learning.

Sue identifies the Diploma development as being;

> Quite an interesting scenario, the way that the QCA was set up, there was a sort of Chinese wall between them, on the one hand you had got the development team side, which was our team and then you would hand them over to the regulator who would determine whether the qualifications were accredited or not.

In her words, upon arrival she was surprised to "find challenges around working with awarding bodies and employers to write the qualifications" having arrived at the end of phase one with the "awarding bodies up in arms and confusion over who was in the driving seat".

Whilst not directly an attack on the political decisions around the qualification. this would seem to suggest that government departments were not working in harmony with employers or each other to continue to develop a qualification reviewing and building upon the first phase of implementation and ensuring buy in and understanding from all stakeholders. It could also be argued that the government hadn't really bought into the Diploma concept and that it was as described by Ken "a half-way house".

Simon Bellamy, the Diploma Champion identifies the Diploma development as not:

> …fitting the report model because you only had a vocational Diploma, you didn't have an academic Diploma and that has always been a political point in that you don't mess with the gold standard that is A-Level. So the Diploma was really an attempt to turn national occupational standards into post-16 school based A-Level qualifications, but because you had A-Levels up against it, it was never going to be seen as equal.

Alison Wolf, the Newcomer, describes her involvement in Diplomas as minimal:

> I wasn't part of the you know, inner circle that decided it, but it is sort of assumed that because I was then called to do the review. I was on the assessment group at the beginning, I resigned through pressures of work. I didn't really keep up to date with it. I was not wildly optimistic, but that didn't have anything to do with the way it was being introduced and everything to do with the design. It just struck me that anything that was that complicated was going to face problems.

From her work on the vocational review, Alison's belief is that the new government in 2010 did not start off with the intention to "cast Diplomas to the wind", but rather there was an "embarrassed silence around them" with ministers knowing "nothing about Diplomas one way or another". The implication is that it would be easier to shelve the unknown, rather than something that had ministerial 'buy in'.

When I began this research I was very much the vocational practitioner, having moved from working in the Travel and Tourism industry into teaching at a Further Education college. I was initially involved in BTEC Diplomas and the GNVQ qualifications but then moved into a role whereby I was working with teachers to provide both CPD and Initial Teacher Education. When the Diploma was first introduced I was initially of the opinion that this could be the hybrid qualification that could bring a parity of esteem to vocational education within the UK. In my role as teacher educator it soon became clear that the practitioners at the front line had not been given sufficient professional development to deliver the programme effectively. My initial research around the CPD needs of the vocational practitioner chime very much with the thoughts of Sue Clarke, the insider, in that the qualification was introduced to quickly and with those of Ken, The Originator, who believed it to be a new pedagogy .

Diploma Problems

All of the conversations from this research phase identified problems with the Diploma that may have contributed to its downfall. However, whilst some of the issues raised from the conversations are comparable other perceptions vary depending upon the role that the speaker had in the development, implementation and delivery of the Diploma..

One of the key issues that threads throughout all of the discussions is the competition with the A-Level or the 'gold standard', which is clear from the discussion around the development of the Diploma and the lack of engagement from the student body.

Ken, as the originator states that he:

> …predicated a lot of the problems that were eventually to emerge with Diplomas and that there would not be a great take up because they were up against A-Levels, even though you could A-Levels inside a Diploma that A-Levels would dominate and besides which they are also critically up against BTEC National and so we predicted that the government would have to drive very hard from the centre to get any uptake.

Alison corroborates this "what actually went wrong is that nobody took them", whilst Michael,

> …couldn't see how the plans would work because in a sense they were trying to somehow add a bit of Tomlinson where A-Levels stayed, but what they didn't want to do, what they didn't have the political tout to do, they should have said to Pearsons, BTECSs it's the end for you but they couldn't do that because BTECs have quite a status in the employer community.

This element of competition from the academic and vocation gold standard qualifications all served to create a confusion and lack of branding for the Diploma. Ken describes it as:

> …a middle track qualification pulled in various directions by stronger forces either side trying to situate itself between dominant A-Levels and the strong brand of BTEC National….I don't think the identity was strong enough.

Richard takes this thread further and describes one of the reasons the Diploma was set up to fail being that "it hadn't been sold to the wider public and it hadn't been sold properly to schools. This is despite the cost of introduction, which suggests poor marketing and market research by the centre".

In my discussions with the teachers of Vocational qualifications it was clear that the post-16 sector embraced the qualification, despite its competition with the BTEC. However, school staff were more reticent in that they didn't really understand the underlying principles of design, nor had they been give the development they felt they needed to be able to teach it effectively.

The second issue identified through the conversations was the design of the qualification, described as "over-complicated with a problem between the understanding and the expectations of the role of principle learning and the additional and specialist learning".

It is possible to diagnose a certain confusion around how to define the Diplomas as a qualification. Initially marketed as a vocational qualification and pitched against academic A-Levels, the complication of the elements with the Diploma created confusion as the theoretical elements were effectively separated from the practical, with theory being located in the principle learning and the practical in the additional and specialist, creating a hybrid qualification that wasn't fully understood by employers, for whom the qualification was designed to reach. Here again, it can be seen that employers were side-lined in the design,

rather than being central to it. This over-complication also served to create inconsistency across the qualification as different subject groups and lines of learning, were not consistent in their approach to the development of the qualification. Sue talks about “areas being laissez-faire” in their approach and “no shared understanding”. She highlights the use of consultants to develop the qualification in some areas “who were extremely variable in their capability and commitment to delivery really and so it became very, very patchy”. This inconsistency would also account for the depth and breadth of some of the principle learning, with some subjects including everything as the pathway into the profession, without any real understanding of the actual skills needed. Sue talks about some sector skills councils “just undermined the role and responsibility that we were placing in their hands” by adding anything to the list, and gives the example of the Creative and Media Diploma.

I would suggest that the over complication was compounded by the inclusion of IAG and ILP, which for school staff was a totally alien concept, although ILPs had been used in post-16 previously.

Linked to the complication and lack of understanding from employers the question of employer engagement and involvement was highlighted as the third area of concern. Richard discusses the development of any new qualification:

> You’ve got to be very, very careful to make sure that it suits all purchases of qualifications, employers, universities, and training facilities and so on. Because however good in theory, in practice there is real complications if employers don’t quite understand what it is all about.

For the Diploma, employer engagement and involvement took place through the Sector Skills Council. Simon describes his involvement in writing the Diploma in Public Services, which was one of third gateway subjects, due to come on line in 2010, as predicated on the Skills for Justice national occupational standards with no links to employers. He describes the development as “all done through the sector skills councils because they were the representative body...all fighting to get them as there was money involved”. He also says that “I have never been altogether sure of how representative of employers the sector skills councils actually were, some of them didn’t seem to be that representative”.

This echoes comments by Ken, the Originator, that “the profession hadn’t asked for them” and creates a feeling that whilst the ‘political spin’ was that the Diploma was developed with and for employers in reality they had very little input and as Sue identified “the sector skills councils needed to broker employer involvement and engagement”.

Michael is also of the opinion that the employers needed to be involved:

> My absolute starting point for anything about vocational education is two things, one is that you…whatever model you have it has got to hold on to the demand of the supplier, and on the whole if you look back to the reforms of vocational education since the eighties, they have always been supply led and they have said we have discussed with employers and they want this, but they haven't actually involved employers, and therefore they have generated lots and lots of things, that in the end didn't leave students anywhere, because they failed at the starting point of making, of actually making sure that they were vocational, not just in the curriculum terms, but in this is leading to what?

To further add to the issue of employer engagement, Sue states "that it had been made very clear to groups of employers that this was centrally driven and that they were in charge" and that they would work with the QCA and the Sector Skills Councils to develop the principle learning. However she then goes on to describe the "Chinese Wall" between the development team and the regulator and describes "QCA being in the driving seat".

This resonates with the findings from the Nuffield review who also state:

> Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), who were appointed by the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC), were in charge of 'populating' the Principal Learning component. However, they did not necessarily have the curriculum expertise required for this task. Furthermore, their credibility to represent the views of employers, particularly small and medium enterprises, has been questioned by employers themselves. It is difficult, therefore, to see how the government's idea of involving employers in order to ensure their acceptance of the new Diplomas is going to be served by this design process. Meanwhile, awarding bodies, which had the expertise to contribute to the Diplomas, were only allowed to play a marginal role in the initial design, even though they were later charged with turning the content specifications into qualifications. The final stage in the design process was fulfilled by QCA. As the national regulator, it had overall control of the eventual shape and assessment of the Diplomas. (Pring et al., 2007:5)

Therefore, it could be argued, as stated by Richard, that the Diploma was set up to fail, even before its inception. The development was flawed in that it was driven from the centre and did not involve employers, and where the employer voice was heard it was only through the Sector Skills councils who wanted to access the government funding. In addition as a new qualification it was entering a market where the existing qualifications were strong and well known by employers and parents, which meant that it could not achieve a strong brand identity. Alison believes that people didn't take the Diploma as the UK "just had too many of them [qualifications]" .This also resonates with the findings from the Nuffield Review:

> Moreover, if Diplomas co-exist with 'tried and tested' vocational qualifications, such as BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) Diplomas, CGLI (City and Guilds of London Institute) and OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA

> Examinations) awards, their popularity is not assured even among those learners wishing to take more applied or vocational study. (Pring et al*.,* 2007:3)

If we examine the implementation of the Diploma the conversations centre around the speed Sue describes her experiences:

> It was a very, very big thing to try and introduce without piloting, we were never allowed to pilot and tweak, there was never any time to address the lessons learned from the first phase and the preparation and I also think that there were an awful lot of politics at the time, the awarding organisations were big players.

Richard also alludes to the need to take time when introducing a new qualification:

> It is no good really very quickly establishing something, you really need to stand back. Rather like they did when the Waddle committee for GCSEs in 1978, or the reform of vocational work by the Crowther report, or the Higher Education by Robins, They produced reports, consultations. After about two years of deliberation, cross party everybody concerned…when it finally came out it had universal agreement.

In addition, one of the main concerns expressed by the teacher and lecturers in the first stages of this research was the speed in which the timetable for reform was set out without sufficient attention being paid to professional development.

It is concerning that the developers were not able to pilot a qualification that was being heralded by the then government "as the qualification of choice". Whilst the qualification was rolled out quickly, Alison does not think that this is one of the main reasons for its failure. She comments:

> If you look back at the GNVQ, they were introduced even faster, with less support and people signed up to then. They were very successful for the first few years and then they were sort of swept away. I wonder whether that isn't something that lurked in parents memories, that they thought it's all very well them saying this is new and exciting and here to stay, but they've said that with other things My feeling is that you know, parents may have been willing to go for a while, but by now, they are getting, they just don't believe the government.

Here again there is a real feeling that the Diploma was never meant to succeed, and that it was a 'knee-jerk' reaction to the original Tomlinson report, an attempt to show that the government were listening. However, one could also argue that the government introduced it quickly as alluded to by Sue, who comments: "I don't think anyone had taken into account where we would be in the political cycle and the potential change of regime". The implication is that the government had to do something, but because of the looming General Election went ahead without the checks and balances needed to ensure success.

Other discussions around the development lead me to suggest that many of the decisions around the qualification and its constituent parts were dominated by the awarding bodies, who were providing the accreditation to the award. Both Alison and Sue do not believe that driving development from the centre is effective and that the development of the Diploma was:

> …focused on the bottom line and the product development opportunity and not always making the right decision with respect to the assessment framework because of the cost of implementation.

Sue also alludes to this following the introduction of phase one, when the QCA discovered that delivery centres were waiting for:

> Moderators and verifiers, who simply did not turn up and simply did not ask for stuff. I can only assume, I don't have the evidence but this was expensive.

My own experiences of the development of the Diploma, arise mainly from the requests from teachers across the pre- and post-16 sector for staff development around vocational education and teaching and in particular around specific Diploma elements that were alien to both school and Further Education.

I was involved in designing a database for one of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching, which provided a range of advice and information for Diploma teachers. I would therefore concur with the perception that the qualification was introduced too quickly without the checks and balances. However, I would argue that, despite it being yet a new qualification, it was for the most part welcomed by the teachers, who felt cheated when it was culled. This is demonstrated through the previous chapter examining the thoughts of the professionals involved in the qualification.

If we now consider the actual qualification and its components, the Diploma was originally marketed as a vocational qualification that would provide young people with the skills they needed to gain employment. This description is disputed across the conversations. Ken describes it as, "The Diploma shifted its identity over time. It started off as a vocational award, then became a general award". He continues by describing it as a "middle track qualification". Alison identifies Diplomas as "more quasi vocational, and very much like BTECs, in a middle spectrum". Sue discusses the topic of the work experience that was an essential part of the qualification and upon its inception was intended to provide practical experience and the opportunity to learn practical skills. Sue describes the work experience element as "high level visioning which consistently had to be watered down to get into

delivery mode". She further discusses the concept in relation to the FE sector "the FE sector can't get their heads around work experience and what it means and why it is there". Surprisingly, she doesn't mention the schools sector and their approach to the work experience element of the Diploma. Richard does comment on the school system and their role in the Diploma:

> The majority of schools really did not have and could not have the expertise and the facilities to meet the wide range of people with different aspirations and expertise, nor indeed would the teachers in those schools have the knowledge about the wide range of occupation, employment opportunities subsequent to school."

Both of these comments would suggest that the academics involved in the conversations did not feel that the school environment was an appropriate place for the Diploma to be delivered. Michael also believes that the school is not appropriate for vocational education:

> A school is not set up to be a vocational provider, and that schools are never I think quality providers, they offer lots of routes, but when you look back on them they were really were a kind of sort of quasi vocational, general education.

Michael takes his thoughts around the learning environment further and talks about the need for schools and FE colleges to have a "clearer division of purpose". From my perspective, the idea of a school providing the vocational experience is flawed in that the school cannot provide a curriculum that is truly vocational with the mix of traditional and progressive elements. They do not have the facilities, nor as the initial research suggest staff with appropriate industrial experience.

This resonates with the original literature where the discussion around where the 14-16/16-19 and 14-19 division lies and for a 14-19 phase to be effective, schools and colleges need to have genuine partnerships. Richard doesn't believe that this was the case with the Diploma, despite the development requiring partnerships between schools, FE colleges and employers. He feels that in some cases "it was a bit of a shock and very reluctantly done", although he does acknowledge that the financial motivation for schools and colleges to work together was a start to breaking down silos and the notion of the "school being an island in itself". He feels that the demise of the Diploma and the requirement for partnership working means that the UK "has gone back very much to a fragmented system from which a lot of young people are being badly serviced".

Despite the debate around schools and colleges, what is clear is that academics saw the Diplomas as a "new pedagogy" and Ken believes that "everyone had to be retrained, It was almost as if it was a new device from scratch shifting its identity on an almost annual

basis…extremely complicated and I think lecturers and teachers had a problem getting their heads around it". This statement corroborates the findings from the initial research on the CPD needs of the Diploma teacher. Sue also feels that the teaching sector was not ready for the Diploma and in her words they had not been "warmed up". Simon discusses a series of standards that were developed for the Diploma teacher but acknowledges it was not "widely available" outside of the Northampton area.

In 2010, under the new regime, the Diploma was effectively pulled from the QCA framework as all funding was removed. Simon feels that this decision was "a missed opportunity, and that the amount of money that was spent on Diplomas something could be salvaged" and that "Gove and his ilk do not have much interest in vocational qualifications". In contrast, Alison does not believe that the Coalition government:

> …came in determined to cast Diplomas to the wind, although I suspect they would never have gone with the academic ones, they basically came in and said these things are costing a fortune and nobody is taking them.

She also feels that despite the fact most of the Coalition were in opposition when the Diploma was introduced, that due to the speed at which they were introduced "most of whom I guess had never heard of them until they arrived" and that there was an "embarrassed silence around Diplomas". She also firmly believes that the decision to withdraw funding was around the austerity measures and the desire to fund "the pupil premium". Sue is also of the opinion that the cost of the Diploma, coupled with poor take up, was a major factor in its demise. Ken believes that the demise was inevitable and describes it as "like kicking a corpse", although he feels that had there been a different outcome to the election the decision may have been to retreat and move fully to the Tomlinson recommendations.

In summary, the Diploma whilst heralded as the "qualification of choice". It was described as a better curriculum experience but deemed to be "too much of a half-way house". It was neither vocational nor academic, but a hybrid qualification, which could have led to greater parity between vocational and academic qualifications. It was a radical, new pedagogical attempt to create a 14-19 sector involving multiple partnerships to share expertise, resources and facilities. However, the speed at which it was introduced, without employer involvement and being driven by the government and awarding bodies, a qualification developed that was complex and misunderstood. Instead of being embraced as a new pedagogical experience, the cost of training and re-training meant that teaching staff were unsure of their role in delivery and their responsibilities around partnerships, and the continuation of the existing, known qualifications meant that both staff, parents, employers and students took

the familiar route. Alison also feels that the lack of trust in the government also created a culture of non-take up , whilst Ken feels that the government policies around vocational education is creating “an overlooked middle”, “half served by New Labour and overlooked by the Coalition”.

Chapter 7: 14-19 Vocational Education: Where are we now?

Following the Wolf Review, Vocational Education was left somewhat bereft as many qualifications were removed from the UK database. Furthermore, conversation and dialogue appeared to have reverted back to post-16 and pre-16, rather than the 14-19 phase created by the Diploma development. Alison justifies this shift as:

> Doing vocational pre-16 is something that nobody does very successfully and we know that people don't go into a job at 16 or 17 so pre-16 is really a form of general education.

This would suggest that current thinking still assumed that academic and vocational education were split rather than unified as the Diploma attempted to achieve.

In examining current policy surrounding vocational education, the conversations undertaken during this research suggest that a policy vacuum now exists in relation to vocational education in the UK. Ken believes that the "current state is highly fragmented and polarised" and that the Coalition's focus on academic excellence since the demise of the 14-19 Diploma has created a "general education that has become more academic and more narrow". He identifies vocational education as "more occasionally apprentice focussed" and as a concept "half served by New Labour and overlooked by the Coalition. People in the middle missing out".

Toni describes the current qualification offer as being "a collection of performance measures" and does not believe that the government is making things easier or whether the current approach will help remove or reduce the academic/vocational divide. She also refers to the confusion around assessment in apprenticeships which is identified as "treating vocational qualifications like academic ones" Other comments around the current state of 14-19 education and the study programmes introduced following the Wolf review include "it could turn out to be just the same old" and "I'm not sure how familiar people are with the study programmes". This is illustrated through conversations around sixth form teachers not being prepared, or not knowing about the delivery, or in the case of one teacher "the people upstairs are dealing with that". This comment has within it echoes of some of the issues identified in the Diploma's development and implementation inferring that the new curriculum ideas are being driven by the managers and the policy makers and not being driven from the bottom up as suggested by both Sue and Alison. Work experience as part of the study programmes is also challenged since not all experiences count towards the programme. This again is alluded to as being a central decision about appropriateness, "modelled from DFE and modelled a lot on the schools context". This resonates with the experience of the

Diploma, that should have had at its heart real practical work experience in the subject area, but more often than not was work experience anywhere, as the schools did not have the resources for the genuine work experience that didn't involve "helping out in the office".

Even more worrying is the lack of professional development opportunities available to support the implementation of the programmes, attributed to "we couldn't afford to deliver within the envelope of funding from the DFE", again echoes of the Diploma and lack of support for front line delivery staff.

It is my view that the policy shift towards a more academic education base has created a vacuum and that policy around vocational education is misleading and confusing leaving vocational education to the market where there are some accidental and often local success stories involving business and educational collaboration. But vocational education needs policies and plans to be successful. The indications are that what is happening currently is not really any different to what was happening with the Diploma, confusion, steer from the centre and also lack of funding to provide appropriate and adequate professional development for those involved in the actual implementation. The conversations undertaken with the leading educationalists all provided very different ideas of what the future should look like, with seven possible scenarios being identified.

14-19 Vocational Education: What is the Future?

The Originator, Ken Spours, identifies the fact that the Diploma was not an over-arching award as being one of the key issues. He advocates the need for a move to an over-arching framework as being the way forward, although he is cautious around whether that will happen under the coalition, or indeed a new Labour government. He believes that "the Husband review is still holding back on whether the 14-19 curriculum for Labour will still have Tomlinsonesque features, I think they are fundamentally split on it".

Ken is very clear about his vision for the future of Vocational Education:

> It is a unified system that we need, we need an award of a Baccalaureate type award at 18/19, a multi-level award with the intermediate or GCSE being a progress check…We have the technical understanding now to be able to do that, you know in a sense it looks like an International Baccalaureate adapted to the English system.

Within this "Baccalaureate" type qualification Ken would also include strong vocational pathways and overarch apprenticeships, which he describes as being "end on to Upper

Secondary 14-19". He also advocates a need for Level 3 qualifications to be completed over three years, rather than the traditional two and that some sort of training part time within the educational system should be offered in addition to full time apprenticeships. The Originator is the only educationalist who suggests the possibility of developing a new overarching qualification and refers to the 14-19 phase. His view is a return to Tomlinson following the experiment of the Diploma and it is very clear throughout his conversation that he believes the Government made a mistake when they chose not to adopt the original Tomlinson recommendations in full but instead offered the Diploma as a compromise. His vision would suggest that he would champion a new qualification to replace all existing qualifications and take into account the pre Tomlinson development work that he was involved with. A 'back to the future' type approach.

Richard Pring, the Philosopher, also believes that we should be offering a "unified framework within which there can be different pathways, but pathways that are broad enough to embrace a good general education". He advocates a pedagogical approach whereby general educational subjects are applied to the practical subjects and used to engage and provide case study material tying them to the practice elements. This is an approach that was identified as being needed during the initial research phase, in particular aligned to the functional skills elements within the Diploma lines. He does not suggest the need for a new type of qualification but rather suggests that whatever decision is taken the resulting offer should be:

> ...internally coherent, really meets the requirements of what you might call an education, that seems both relevant to young people, but is also educationally respectable, balanced, liberal education.

Michael Young, The Sociologist, is possibly the most radical in his views around the future of Vocational Education in the UK, or indeed general education. He believes that the entire pre post-16 curriculum is wrong and that we should have a 13-19 phase. He believes that children should not move to the current secondary phase until the age of 13, and that this shift would alleviate "real problems". He also states that testing at 16, i.e GCSE, is "left over from an earlier era, I would scratch GCSEs, I would go for 18+". His thinking is based upon the success in France whereby his vision would be three strands, general, technical and professional with work experience in the vocational and common components across the strands and an exam at 18. This is not dissimilar to the Philosopher, with the unified framework and pathways, albeit at slightly different ages.

Toni Fazaeli, The Professional, thinks that an overarching curriculum is still contentious and that there is not the appetite for any more new qualifications. She also feels that there is still

a lot of confusion over the way in which existing qualifications are being badged as Tech Bacs but is not very forthcoming about what the future should look like apart from there should be real genuine work experience.

Simon Bellamy, The Diploma Champion's vision is that the UK should have a two track qualification as they do in most of Europe. He says, "You are either in the Vocational system or the academic system". He refers to the perceptions of vocational education in Europe as being "highly thought of" and feels that in the UK we have:

> …a school system that is producing the movers and the shakers, the captains of industry, the young entrepreneurs, the civil servants, the other teachers and all that sort of thing. So you have this enclave and you have the other enclave, who are the ones that are going to service your cars, cut your hair all that sort of thing.

In addition, Simon is also an advocate for vocational education to take place within a college environment rather than a school. He refers to the current policy as "a right wing dichotomy, not very egalitarian in its approach". Simon's vision is a half-way house, whereby he still sees a future for the FE college in vocational training. Moreover, he doesn't discuss employer involvement *per se* but does comment on the plan being what the market decides, what the market demands and how much demand is in place for vocational education and courses, rather than the road map being a political road map as it was under the Labour government. His argument is for the UK to have a clear two track system, that has parity and equity and that provides effective education for both enclaves.

Sue Clark, The Insider, is insistent that the new administration did not "throw the baby out with the bathwater". She also talks about the challenge of embedding change within a democratic cycle, suggesting that whoever gets into power will change the focus in education and that sustainability is needed to create an effective curriculum. She identifies work experience as a key factor and the need for employers to be in the driving seat. Her view is that we "need to set the direction, have the vision and put enablers into make it work". Her key policy is that it needs to be a "bottom up approach" driven by employers and not top down.

Alison Wolf, The Newcomer, has not surprisingly a vision predicated upon the findings of the review. She firmly believes in the study programmes post-16 and is "mildly optimistic" about post-16 education, despite the fact that 16-19 funding has been slashed "because of the damned ring-fence". She thinks that the responsibility and freedom afforded to colleges and schools is providing for autonomy and allowing them to drive the agenda without a top down initiative. With regards to the vocational agenda her vision is:

> …that we have a revived apprenticeship system, but we do have a number of specialist centres, both elite colleges and University Technical colleges for those people who have made a clear vocational choice and for most 16-18 a programme in which they have one decent qualification, that may be technical, that may be applied, which has some good general education that has been lacking up to now…which above all gives them some experience of the workplace. It's the lack of work experience that is actually the single biggest cause of youth employment.

Alison is adamant we do not need a new qualification and is sceptical about good non-academic subjects in schools dealing with 14-16 year olds: "We are about the only country really trying with 14-16 year olds to put major bits of vocational into the curriculum, no one else does".

Like Sue and to some extent Toni, Alison's vision is for a return to job-specific education and training developed in real co-operation with employers and often employer-led, but post-16. The forms of training vary from apprenticeships and basic skill training to vocational education modelled on the best agricultural colleges. What these scenarios suggest is a return to vocational education and training that existed before the introduction of the New Training Initiative and the Youth Training Scheme of the 1970s. It is also clear that apart from the Sociologist and the Originator there is no real appetite for new qualifications to be introduced as what is in existence could work if approached in a different way, whether that be by location or by ability.

Summary

As previously discussed, my original involvement with the Diploma arose from my initial vocational teaching and background and subsequently my role with Teacher Education and CPD needs of the workforce. However, following the change of government in 2010 my research moved more towards the perceptions of the 14-19 vocational teacher towards 14-19 education and qualifications and also that of leading academics. It touched on the Professional identity of the Vocational Teacher and their thoughts following the demise of the Diploma.

In analysing and evaluating the comments and conversations with the seven leading educationalists, what appears to be central to the failure of the Diploma is the lack of 'buy in' from the government, which then cascaded to lack of engagement with employers and the student body. As a researcher I would suggest that the move to Diploma was the Labour government's attempt to appease its voting public whilst also trying to appease key academics that felt that the existing qualifications needed an overhaul. I would further

comment that the Diploma was the Labour government refusing to rock the boat and take full responsibility for a qualifications overhaul so close to an election and that the experiment that was the Diploma could be written off when it failed, as the new administrations fault.

It is my argument that for vocational education to work effectively it needs to be placed in the hands of the employers, and whilst not decrying the need for Further Education colleges to support vocational routes the employers and the demand side of the equation needs to be in the driving seat and not the government or the administration.

In terms of the route, identified through the conversations, I would argue that the way forward is a two track system and would champion the comments made by The Diploma Champion, Simon. There are two enclaves, academic and vocational, and that qualifications and curriculum should reflect that to provide the best route for all, without the added complication of one being held in greater esteem than the other. I would advocate a good general education in schools, with work experience being integral but not tied to a specific career path. Instead work experience should allow our young people to gain meaningful life skills for the world of work, somewhat akin to the intention behind the personal thinking and learning skills advocated in the Diploma. At 16+, I would like to see the opportunity for students to specialise and to have the opportunity to take either a vocational or academic route, with the true vocational routes being housed in the workplace as apprenticeships.

Chapter 8: Conclusions: Vision for the Future

This study has been through several incarnations since its original inception in 2006 when I started the journey to explore the 14-19 Diploma and the implications of implementing the new qualification for the workforce.

The original aim, subsequently changed, was to examine the professional development needs of staff teaching the 14-19 Diploma that was introduced into the UK qualifications framework in 2007. However, given the pace of change in education and qualifications over the last five years and the change of Government in 2010 the results of the original research, whilst published and at the time well received, are now outdated in relation to the Diploma and the original study aim. The results in themselves are still of value to the professional development of the 14-19 workforce and will be utilised to inform a new textbook recently accepted for publication by Routledge: *14–19 Education: A Teacher's Guide to Policy and Practice.* This text is due to be published in the summer of 2015. In addition, following the first stage of research and publication of the original textbook, several papers have been submitted to refereed journals that explore the 14-19 phase and the new Vocational routes that have been established since the inception of this study.

Following the initial phase of research, which culminated in *The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas (2010),* the emphasis and focus of the research changed to examine the Rise and Demise of the 14-19 Diploma and the reasons behind its introduction and ultimate failure through an examination of the following areas?

- The underlying philosophy of vocational education within the UK,
- The policy decisions surrounding the introduction of the Diploma,
- The factors leading to its demise.

The study also had as one of its main goals an intention to consider what the vocational agenda and training should look like post-2012.

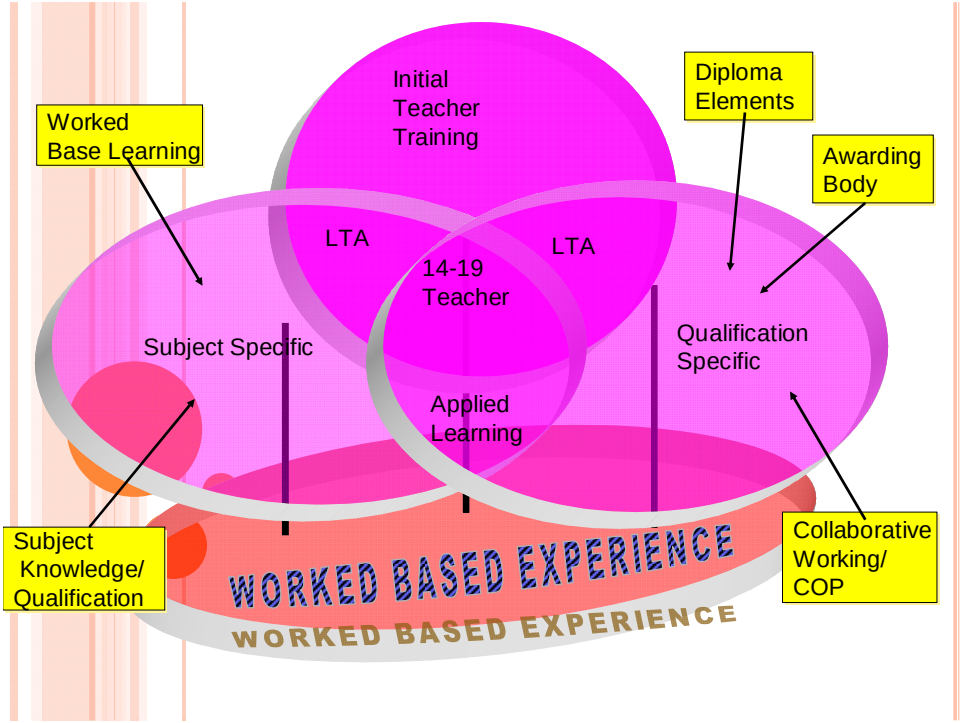
The research sample in the second phase included staff working and teaching on the Diploma until its demise and leading educationalists with various degrees of involvement in its design and development.

In this chapter I will reflect upon the three phases of research and summarise my arguments for vocational education and training post 2012.

Phase 1

Phase one was predicated on the CPD needs of teachers working in the 14-19 sector, whether that be school or post-16 settings. It began with a conceptual figure of my suggestion for CPD. This figure was based upon the dual professionalism model devised by the Institute for Learning. However it also used the literature surrounding 14-19 vocational education, together with the key elements of the Diploma qualification to inform it.

Figure 3 is a diagrammatic representation of my model. It was based upon the concept that all teachers involved with the 14-19 Diploma should have work experience in the subject area, or indeed be a second career teacher, following a first career in the subject area. The model then proposed an interlinking set of CPD requirements with Learning, teaching and assessment strategies being core to the requirements of a 14-19 teacher.



Continuing Professional Development Needs for the 14-19 Diploma Teacher

The findings from the initial questionnaire highlighted that the key areas of support needed were in: learning, teaching and assessment, applied learning pedagogy, subject knowledge and the Diploma concept and characteristics.

These findings support the perception identified through the conversations that vocational learning, or applying theoretical knowledge to practice is a new pedagogical approach that teachers in the UK are unfamiliar with and have anxieties about. It would also support the initial conceptual model of CPD that work experience for the practitioner is critical in enabling staff to provide effective learning and teaching.

The findings from this phase enabled me to re-evaluate the model and to develop a further model designed for the Diploma teacher and their specific needs. This model is more specific to the Diploma and demonstrates the key areas where CPD was felt to be beneficial. The model shown below in figure 10 has at its very core the need for vocational experience, whether that be industrial updating as a form of CPD or as the first career of the teacher. In terms of subject specific knowledge for the qualification, which was rated good or very good in the initial questionnaire, I would suggest that the Diploma teacher needs subject specific qualifications and membership of a subject specific professional organisation. The IAG element within this section is in relation to knowledge surrounding specific careers within the subject area. The model further suggests that reflective practice and mentoring knowledge comes from either the initial teacher training qualification, the NQT year, (if appropriate) or the CPD undertaken. The Diploma specific elements within this conceptual model are mapped to the textbook produced from this initial research and enables staff to create their own CPD based upon individual needs analysis.

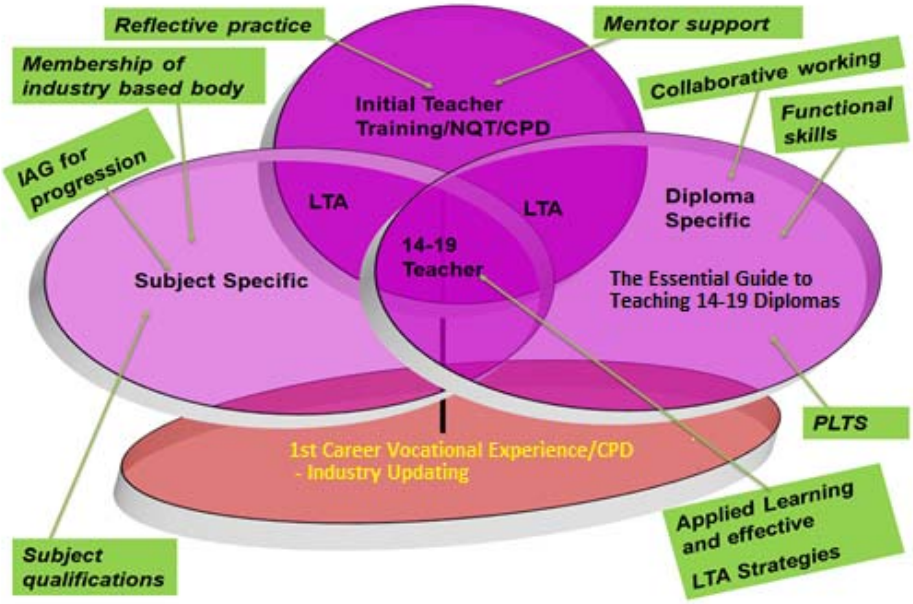


Fig 10: New Model of CPD for the 14-19 Diploma Teacher

Professional Identity within 14-19 education

The semi-structured interviews and the focus group with practitioners were the initial stage of the second phase of the research. This phase aimed to examine the perceptions of Diploma teachers following the demise of the qualification. It touched upon their perceptions of their identity as a teacher and what they felt were their CPD needs post-Diploma. It also considered their views regarding the Diploma as a qualification and what, if anything, should replace it moving forward. The practitioners chosen were staff who had been teaching on the qualification across the University consortia.

Whilst exploring what the practitioners views were on the Diploma and its place in educational circles, this stage of the research also touched upon the professional identity of the 14-19 teacher, an age phase that at the time of writing was not recognised as a specific phase in UK education. As discussed previously, the concepts professionalism and professional identity can be difficult to define (Kennedy, 2007:96), which has implications for a teacher in an educational phase which doesn't appear to have any foundation within the current government. This was apparent in the voice of the practitioner body. There was a perception that they were not seen as real teachers but rather as 'grease monkeys'. It is my

belief that this perception indicates that CPD is central to the notion of the professional teacher because it provides these teachers with credibility amongst the 'real' teachers.

However, in exploring the perception of status and image of the teacher, we do need to consider how the 14-19 teacher is creating their own identity. Kennedy (2007:98) believed that the definition of professionalism and professional identity is 'indicative of the interplay of power among stakeholders'. Thus, in relation to this study it can be argued that the relevant question is how the perception of professionalism and professional identity is constructed amongst the 14-19 workforce, the students, the employers and the wider teaching body.

Many researchers, (Ball and Goodson, 1985; Goodson and Hargreaves, 1996; Nias, 1999) recognise that one of the crucial elements in identity construction is the past experiences of the person in question and that these experiences, coupled with social experiences, combine to form a notion of self-identity. However, whilst this combination of self and experience is broadly accepted in much educational research (Day, Stobart, Sammons and Kington, 2006), it can also be argued that whilst these are integral to one another they can often cause tensions which can impact upon the individuals' perceptions of their own professional identity. For example, an individual's motivation and commitment to a profession may often be affected by their job satisfaction and how effective they perceive themselves to be in their role. For the teachers in the study, the perception of their identity was linked to their profession. Whilst "not being really understood by other teachers", they felt that they had something to offer. This resonates with the dual professional model discussed Chapter 2 and supports the claim that work experience is as essential part of being a Diploma teacher and an essential part of being a 14-19 vocational teacher.

This is further supported by Goffman (1959), who presents the concept of an individual having a number of identities, each one being unique to the time and situation within which they are located. This is further commented upon by Ball (1994), who discusses situated and substantive identities, the former being a presentation of self that differs in different situations and the latter being the stable image that an individual has of themselves.

I would suggest that from the findings, CPD as a concept is crucial in creating credibility and validity of the 14-19 workforce within the wider society. In addition I would further argue that vocational teachers who have migrated from industry into teaching are still constructing an identity for themselves and that the withdrawal of support for the Diploma impacted upon how they perceived themselves in the world of education

Comparison of practitioner and educationalists views

If we compare the responses of the Diploma Teacher to those of the leading educationalists, there are commonalities across the key themes.

Both the teachers and the educationalists demonstrate through the discussions that the Diploma never really had a clear identity or definition, with both teachers and learners confused whether it was vocational or academic. This was also compounded by the existing qualifications having very strong identities and employer confidence. Both sets of experts deemed the qualification over-complicated and argued it was rushed in with little training for the practitioners involved in its delivery. Both sets of experts expressed concerns about the employer involvement and engagement through content and work placement.

Where the practitioner and the educationalist differ is the future. Practitioners believe that the future for vocational qualifications is the provision of a practical qualification that provides real work skills for the student. Whilst Simon and to a certain extent Michael believed that vocational and academic qualifications should be separate, the other educationalists are still in favour of a mix of general and vocational education with work experience forming the educational element.

A Possible Future

As we moved post 2012, the Coalition government did not appear to support the 14-19 phase and following the 2011 Wolf Review of vocational education over 3,000 vocational qualifications were removed from the school performance league tables. Some academics noted that the ‘the piecemeal approach to 14-19 education and training appears to be back’ as discussed by (Higham and Yeomans, 2007:221).

To add further confusion to the idea of the 14-19 phase it was announced by the Skills Minister, Matthew Hancock in December 2013 that certain vocational qualifications had met the required standards to be included in schools and college performance tables and would be available from September 2014. In addition, he announced two new types of vocational qualifications for 16-19 year olds, those being Tech Levels and Applied General Qualifications, plus a range of 14-16 vocational qualifications designed and backed by businesses. This announcement appears to be repeating the problems surrounding the Diploma and its introduction. Firstly, the research has demonstrated that the introduction of new qualifications into a framework with the gold standard A-Level and BTEC creates issues

of completion and identity problems. Secondly, the range of qualifications designed and backed by business could also be problematic if the 'Chinese Wall' that existed between the businesses and the awarding bodies when developing the Diploma has not been effectively addressed.

To further add confusion to the issues surrounding Vocational Education, the Government issued information on reforming the Further Education system in 2013. This reform was designed to ensure that Further Education Colleges provided high quality vocational teaching and education leading to employment. As part of this initiative it introduced new funding for people aged 24+ studying at Levels 3 and 4 or for higher or advanced apprenticeships and in addition reformed the funding and content for 16-18 provision through the introduction of Study programmes. These programmes have now been introduced in both schools and colleges and include a mixture of general and vocational learning. The initiative also included proposals for improving and reforming the apprenticeship system and bestowed power upon colleges to enrol 14-16 year olds as part of its student population. This leads to further questions around the traditional educational phases, and potentially gives rise to further problems for the Further Education workforce as highlighted both in the literature review and in the initial findings of CPD needs for the vocational teacher. It suggests that maybe the Government are considering a post-14 phase, and with the rise in participation age to 18 there are questions as to whether there are plans to move towards the two phases identified by Pring (2007).

In addition, the fact of the further development and extension of University Technical Colleges, initially conceived during the Labour government, but which now appear to be an important initiative for Coalition Government, would suggest that a 14-19 phase is back in favour.

As a vocational practitioner and second career teacher, I had my own hypothesis when embarking upon this study and research. I initially believed that the Diploma, as a hybrid qualification, was the qualification that would bridge the vocational academic divide that exists within UK education and that its demise was a travesty. I was in favour of the mix of practical and theoretical elements and argued that the theory should underpin the practice. I was also in favour of the additional learning as I believed that this would allow the student to follow their own route and create a bespoke qualification that would best support their career aspirations.

However, in completing this project through the three phases my original beliefs have changed. Whilst I still believe that the Diploma could have bridged the divide if implemented differently, with proper employer involvement in the design and delivery, the issues around its development and inception have led me down a different route.

In returning to Dewey and the vocationalism of the curriculum, Ainley and Allen (2010) have re-asserted the need for a more inclusive form of general education for all (Ainley and Allen, 2010). As an argument this has been a constant, from Tomlinson's original ideas, the concept of the Diploma and even through to the Wolf report. It can be argued that even now the response to recent coalition government initiatives (see RadicalEd: http://radicaled.wordpress.com/) creates a radical position summarised by Allen as:

> …rather than trying to rebuild a vocational route, it would be better to provide a good general education for everybody with a school-leaving certificate at 18 providing entitlement to different types of learning, including learning about work as well as to work, plus major reforms to the delivery and assessment of 'academic' education to make it more relevant and accessible to all. (Allen, 2014:5)

It can be argued that Allen and Ainley take their idea for a general Diploma for all from a critical vocationalism in Dewey:

> All students have the right to learn particular occupational skills of their choice, but there must also, as part of any core curriculum, be an entitlement to a more general intellectual and critical understanding of the world of work. (Allen and Ainley, 2008:27).

This can be directly linked back to Dewey's original argument in 1916.

> An education which acknowledges the full intellectual and social meaning of a vocation would include instruction in the historic background of present conditions; training in dealing with material and agencies of production; and study of economics, civics, and politics, to bring the future worker into touch with the problems of the day and the various methods proposed for its improvement. Above all, it would train power of re adaptation to changing conditions so that future workers would not become blindly subject to a fate imposed upon them. (Dewey, 1916:318-319)

Allen and Ainley continue their support for a Deweyfication of the curriculum but also recognise that this would be an initial discussion through which curriculum ideas could be further developed: '"Deweyfication" of the curriculum would also require radical changes to other aspects of education, but it can still provide a starting point to mobilise around' (Allen and Ainley, 2007:303).

Whilst I initially argued in favour of a unified qualification, combining both theory and practice, based upon the findings of the research my viewpoint has changed. I would argue that for vocational education to be effective there needs to be a much stronger emphasis on practical skills and working with the employer. Many of the skills most need to compete in the global market of the 21st century are technical skills that fall into the technical/vocational area. The absence of excellence in many technical and vocational fields is also costing us economically as a nation. For this reason, I would suggest that true vocational education is best delivered by the employers in the workplace.

The initial phase of this project and to some extent the second phase, demonstrates that staff working within schools and colleges do not have the necessary skills, experience or resources to be able to teach practical skills effectively and to a standard that will enable the young person to move quickly into meaningful employment into employment.

In returning to Dewey, he identifies eternal dualisms in education:

> …a permanent division of human beings into those capable of a life of reason and hence having their own ends, and those capable only of desire and work and needing to have their ends provided by others. The two distinctions, psychological and political, translated into educational terms, effected a division between a liberal education, having to do with the self-sufficing life of leisure devoted to knowing for its own sake, and a useful, practical training for mechanical occupations, devoid of intellect and aesthetic content. (Dewey, 1926: 260-61)

I would suggest that the division referred to can be identified as the division between vocational and academic education, he continues by suggesting a way forward to remove the division:

> The problem of education in a democratic society is to do away with the dualism and to construct a course of studies which makes thought a guide of free practice for all and which makes leisure a reward of accepting responsibility for service, rather than a state of exemption from it. (Dewey, 1916:261)

But dualisms cannot be swept away by wishing them away and condemning those who suspect that the appeal to common interest and putting all young people into a process of learning through work:

> …the opposition to the recognition of the vocational phases of education (except for the utilitarian three R's in elementary schooling) accompanies the conservation of the aristocratic ideals of the past. (Dewey,1916: 319)

Is this true? Or did those who Dewey says support the old aristocratic liberal education suspect that in the time of intense industrial development before the First World War suspect

that it was nothing more than a romantic view of work that would when implemented turn out to be no more than a training for mechanical occupations?

The clearest example of Dewey's wish fulfilment is found in his claim that changing vocational education will alleviate exploitation in the work place: 'It would give those who engage in industrial callings desire and ability to share in social control, and ability to become masters of their industrial fate' (Dewey, 1916:320). He goes on to add that 'with the representatives of the more privileged portion of the community, it would increase sympathy for labour, create a disposition of the mind which can discover the culturing elements in useful activity, and increase a sense of social responsibility' (Dewey, 1916:320).

This has obvious appeal but is unconvincing. It is even more unconvincing now when there is a need to re-engage with industry specific skills and create a more productive economy.

The problems each society faces are different and those of the early nineteenth century are different from those of the industrially dynamic and productive after the Second World War period or from the length period of recession which informs Ainley and Allen's writings.

As this study shows, there have been no shortages in the range of initiatives that class themselves as vocational education. I would question whether they were the right type of initiative. It is clear from literature and from history the United Kingdom has in recent years slipped below its major competitors, with the government claiming a shortage of skills in specific industries. They also claim, and I would support the claim that for prosperity and economic growth in the UK we need to provide specialism in specific skill sets and that gives rise to the question of how this is best delivered.

According to Foreman-Peck:

> Vocational education and training (VET) contrasts with liberal education. In economic terminology, liberal education is consumption, worthwhile for its own sake; the student becomes better off, not because of access to employment or higher wages permitted by the education, but because of direct benefits conferred. On the other hand, VET is unambiguously concerned with investment in human capital, in preparation for work. It is a means to an end. In principle, VET may be undertaken at any level in industry – management, foreman, craftsman or shop-floor (Gospel, 1991). VET is broader than 'technical education', being concerned with the supply of professional services– medicine, law, religion, accountancy, among others. (Foreman-Peck, 1994:72)

Based on this and the findings from the research I would suggest that the key to Vocational education is not a hybrid qualification, such as the Diploma. This is despite work experience in general education providing a basis for young people to engage with the world of work and start to learn skills that become transferable within a workplace setting. I would advocate

that the UK employers identify the skills that they require to be effective in a globally economy and that these skills are provided by them in the workplace. As a nation we should not be concerned with all young people gaining traditional academic qualifications but should accept that there are two types of people needed for an effective economy. I would advocate a back to the workplace approach, as in the apprenticeship route. Whilst not decrying the value of an academic education, I would suggest that no one size fits all and for the economy and country to be competitive we need to have both sets of learners. I support Foreman-Peck (2004) who believes that VET should be provided by the employers who would be using the skills created, rather than by the state through formal education institutions.

This also resonates with the findings from the conversations in that we need to return to the bottom-up approach discussed by Sue Clark and remove the top-down approach which has dominated vocational education for so long. The Diploma as a qualification had some accidental success, in particular with the engineering line, but it is now time for stronger employer involvement, a market-led demand approach.

Ainley and Allen's views previously discussed appear, albeit superficially, consistently Deweyite in opposition to the proposal here for job-specific training which apparently runs counter to the framework of this thesis. There are two reasons why this is not the case. Firstly, and most importantly, Dewey's philosophy is based on problem solving and repeating his proposal from almost a hundred years ago is to abstract and universalise them rather than seeing that contemporary problems may be different. It is the case today that skills have been seen since the publication by the Further Education Unit of *A Basis for Choice* in 1979 as personal characteristics and have become completely detached from the world of work, therefore quite a different approach is needed to reconnect training and the world of work. Secondly, Dewey's original arguments and ideas are ambiguous and romantic and far from clear which is why they can easily be used as part of a 'critical vocationalism' whatever vocational offer there is on the table.

Finally my research has led me to support the return to apprenticeships and agree with the work of Foreman-Peck who advocates that:

> The apprenticeship system can be represented as a way of financing VET by a long-term contract, particularly to avoid the second source of market failure above. Apprenticeship allows an initially very low-productivity worker first to be paid more than they are worth to the employer in terms of extra output. Subsequently, as the training given takes effect, productivity rises above the wage so that the employer recoups the 'investment' or 'loan' to the worker. (Foreman-Peck, 1994:75)

Final Summary and Conclusion

The 14-19 Diploma failed primarily because of the lack of real employer involvement and engagement. In addition, the inclusion of schools in the experiment undermined the focus on work-based training. The Diploma itself was too complex and pedagogically challenging, which made it impossible for teachers to engage with its delivery effectively. My book *The Essential Guide to Teaching 14-19 Diplomas* was an attempt to address this latter failing. The subsequent demise of the Diploma created a disillusioned professional workforce and a unique policy vacuum for vocational education. As this study shows, lessons appear not to have been learned and the only way forward appears to be towards job specific work-based training.

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