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An Investigation of the Roles, Relationships and Experiences of Part-Time Placement Tutors in their Supervision of Student Teachers on School Placement

Patricia Fitzpatrick

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, School of Education, National University of Ireland, Cork.

June 2021

Supervised by Dr Dan O'Sullivan, Dr Tracey Connolly, Professor Kathy Hall

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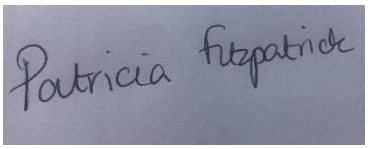
Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: 

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Dedications

For my deceased parents, William and Nora Fitzpatrick, *le buíochas*.

For my deceased brother John Fitzpatrick, s*uaimhneas síoraí sa bhogha báistí*.

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Acronyms

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

CSL - Centre for School Leadership

CT - Co-operating Teacher

DE - Department of Education

DES - Department of Education and Skills

HEI - Higher Education Institute

ICT - Information Communication Technology

JCT - Junior Cycle for Teachers

MOTE - Models of Teacher Education project

NCCA - National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

NCSE - National Council for Special Education

NIPT - National Induction Programme for Teachers

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PDE - Postgraduate Diploma in Education

PDST - Professional Development Service for Teachers

PME - Professional Masters in Education

PT - Placement Tutor

SAR - Student Assessment Rubric

SEEC - Social Research Ethics Committee

ST - Student teacher

SUPE - Pseudonym for the initial teacher education programme in the research study

VELOC - Flemish Association of Teacher Educators

VELON - Dutch Association of Teacher Educators

Glossary of Terms

Community of practice: A group of people who have a particular interest in a common area or domain, coming together to share their knowledge and practices in order to promote growth and learning. Communities of practice have existed for many years, as evident in communities that have collaborated to share ideas, knowledge and practices in order to find solutions to problems. The concept was first introduced as a theoretical construct by cognitive anthropologist Jean Lave and educational theorist Etienne Wenger in their seminal text *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation* (Lave & Wenger 1991). They claim that the key to a community of practice is the belief that knowledge and learning occur as a result of social activities and cultural practices (Lave & Wenger 1991).

Continuing Professional Development: The learning activities in which professionals engage in order to develop and enhance their abilities, and so ensure their knowledge and practices remain relevant and up to date.

Co-operating teacher: The school-based teacher who supports and guides the student teacher during their school placement experience, also acting as the point of contact for the placement tutor in the placement school (Teaching Council 2013). Recently, the term co-operating teacher has been replaced with the term 'Treoraí' (meaning guide), as a more accurate reflection of the role of the co-operating teacher (Teaching Council 2020).

Greenway University: A pseudonym for the university in which I first began my role as a part-time placement tutor.

Higher Education Association: The statutory planning and policy development body for higher education and research in the Republic of Ireland. It has responsibility for the effective governance and regulation of higher education institutions and the higher education system, including the allocation of funding to universities and other higher education institutions.

Higher Education Institution: An organisation for higher learning such as; universities, technological universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and colleges of specialist education in fields such as art and design, medicine, business studies, rural development, theology, music and law.

Initial teacher education: The foundation stage of learning to teach when student teachers are engaged in a teacher education programme provided by a Higher Education Institution (Teaching Council 2013, 2020). It is recognised as the formal beginning of the continuum of teacher education; and as such it is where student teachers take their first steps in the journey of learning to teach.

Placement tutor: A person employed by a university to support student teachers and evaluate their practice while on school placement (Teaching Council 2013).

Post-lesson conference: The meeting between the placement tutor and student teacher that occurs after the lesson taught by the student teacher during the school placement supervision visit. The purpose of the meeting is to allow for a review the lesson. Best practice recommends that the co-operating teacher is also present at this meeting. However, in the Republic of Ireland, the post-lesson conference is generally a dyadic event, involving the placement tutor and student teacher only.

Proforma feedback document: The feedback document used by the placement tutors in the SUPE school placement programme to provide feedback to the student teachers. The Proforma has been co-created by the SUPE team of placement tutors and the co-ordinator of school placement in order to provide explicit and constructive feedback to student teachers.

Rosemount University: A pseudonym for the university setting for this research study.

Schools Direct: A school-led teacher education programme, run by a school or group of schools who work closely with a university. The programme operates as a partnership between the school and university, whereby student teachers learn 'on the job' by assisting in school as an unqualified teacher, while also being released to study in the university. The university works closely with the school to develop an appropriate programme of study for the student teachers. Schools Direct programmes are one year in duration and are offered in Wales, England and the United States.

School placement: The part of an initial teacher education programme which occurs in school settings and provides student teachers with the opportunity to teach, and to observe teaching.

Student Assessment Rubric (SAR): A rubric, co-created by the SUPE team of placement tutors and the co-ordinator of school placement, indicating the criteria for success for student

teachers related to the assessment of school placement. The SAR is provided to both student teachers and placement tutors.

Student teacher: A student engaged in a programme of initial teacher education (Teaching Council 2013, 2020).

Supervision visit: The term given to the visit conducted by placement tutors to student teachers while they are on school placement. The visit affords placement tutors the chance to observe their student teachers teach, discuss and assess their teaching practices, and meet with members of the school community such as the school principal and/or deputy principal, and with the co-operating teacher.

SUPE: A pseudonym for the initial teacher education programme in this research study

Teacher Educator: A person who facilitates the formal learning of student teachers and practising teachers (European Commission 2013). Teacher educators can be university-based or school-based and include placement tutors who supervise student teachers in school placement; cooperating teachers who support student teachers in schools; tutors (counsellors, coordinators, mentors, guides) and other support networks who support newly qualified teachers, higher education academic staff who teach education, school subjects, didactics or general courses and education researchers (European Trade Union Committee for Education 2008 cited in European Commission 2013).

Teach First: A school-based teacher post graduate teacher education programme completed in schools that experience high levels of poverty or underachievement. Participants are placed in the same school for two years. They complete an intensive five-week summer training programme before entering the classroom, and they obtain a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) after the first year of the programme. In the second year, participants are regarded as fully fledged newly qualified teachers.

Teach for America: A school-based teacher post graduate teacher education programme which shares many similarities with the Teach First model. The programme offers recent college graduates and professionals an opportunity to teach in public schools in urban and rural areas throughout the United States. Participants, called 'corps members', must commit to teaching for two years in their appointed schools. They undertake an intensive summer teacher training programme before commencing in their schools and receive ongoing continuing

professional development support throughout the two years. Upon completion of the programme, the corps members receive teaching certification.

Teaching Council: A statutory body that regulates the teaching profession and promotes professional standards in teaching in the Republic of Ireland. It has many roles and is involved in all three stages of the continuum of teacher education. In the first phase of initial teacher education, the Teaching Council advises the Minister of Education on the entry requirements to initial teacher education programmes and is responsible for reviewing and accrediting all initial teacher education programme providers. *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education* (Teaching Council 2020a) outlines the requirements for accreditation of initial teacher programmes which will come into effect from January 2023. With reference to the second phase of induction, the Teaching Council has established *Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework* (Teaching Council 2017), a professional induction framework for newly qualified teachers. *Cosán: Framework for Teachers' Learning* (Teaching Council 2016a), provides a frame of reference for the third phase of continuing professional development for teachers. The Teaching Council administers the registration of teachers and provides a code of professional conduct for teachers. It is also responsible for the fitness to practice process for teachers.

Treoraí: The new term for co-operating teacher in the Republic of Ireland. Based on the Irish word for guide, it is proposed that this term reflects the nature of the role more accurately, emphasising the supportive nature of the work of the Treoraí (Teaching Council 2020).

Abstract

Initial teacher education represents the beginning of formal study for those who wish to pursue a career in teaching. The issue of teachers and teaching has become an important part of governmental policy in many countries, and the preparation of teachers has received much attention in recent years. Key to the preparation of future teachers is their experience of school placement; the opportunity afforded to them to gain real-life experience of teaching in a range of school settings. The student teacher, supported by the school-based cooperating teacher and the university-based placement tutor represent the school placement 'triad' (Macintyre and Morris 1980); the central figures in school placement. Many research studies have been conducted on the experiences and perspectives of student teachers and co-operating teachers. By comparison placement tutors, especially part-time placement tutors, have received considerably less attention. Yet this latter group of placement tutors are the mainstay of many initial teacher education programmes where fulltime staff, already stretched to capacity with teaching and research duties, are often unavailable to fulfil the role of placement tutor.

The setting for this doctoral study was the final year school placement module of an undergraduate initial teacher education programme, in a university in the Republic of Ireland. The goal of the study was to explore the experiences, roles and relationships of part-time placement tutors in school placement. A multiple case study of six part-time placement tutors during a year of school placement was conducted. A tripartite theoretical framework using the constructs of Identity (Holland et al. 1998), Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010) and Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) was employed to inform the study. Data collection methods included individual interviews with the participants, observations of their practice and a researcher diary. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) was used to analyse the data.

Three themes were identified in the data analysis. The findings in Theme One: *Becoming a part-time placement tutor in initial teacher education* indicate that part-time placement tutors come with a biography of 'once a teacher' which informs their practice. Commensurate with this fact, they continue to embrace a teacher identity in their role as teacher educators. Theme Two: *The lived experiences of part-time placement tutors in initial teacher education* provides

substantial evidence that part-time placement tutors enact a multifaceted, complex and 'dual role' of both assessor and assistor (Slick 1998) for student teachers. The importance of induction to the role, access to ongoing continuing professional development and structured support, and the use of established assessment guidelines emerge as key elements necessary to facilitate part-time placement tutors to fulfil their roles effectively. The findings in Theme Two also offer significant insights into the challenges that part-time placement tutors encounter in the current informal university-school partnerships in initial teacher education. Despite this, the evidence demonstrates that part-time placement tutors are highly motivated, committed and supportive teacher educators who enjoy their role. Theme Three: *Part-time placement tutors in the landscape of school placement* reveal that part-time placement tutors operate on the fringes of two communities of practice, the school and university, acting as valuable liaisons between both communities. Findings on Third Space learning in this theme indicate that the prevailing school placement system does not support Third Space professional practices, though participants testify that introducing a Third Space in school placement would greatly assist student teachers in their journey of learning to teach. In addition, while part-time placement tutors enjoy positive professional relationships with student teachers and co-operating teachers, the landscape of school placement does not facilitate the formation of established relationships between part-time placement tutors and these other two members of the school placement triad.

In light of the paucity of research on part-time placement tutors, this doctoral study is a unique and original addition to the field of teacher education. Furthermore, given the recent establishment of the School Placement Working Group in the Republic of Ireland in 2018 coupled with the subsequent publication of the *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a), the conclusions and recommendations of this study are timely and provide a significant contribution to policy, practice and future research directions regarding the role of part-time placement tutors in initial teacher education.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Teacher educators are deemed to be all persons who play a role in teaching or coaching teachers, and student teachers, in order to contribute to their formal learning and professional development (European Commission 2013; Lunenberg et al. 2014). Research conducted by the European Commission's Thematic Working Group on 'Teacher Professional Development'; a national group of experts from 26 countries, indicates that the profile of teacher educators varies widely (European Commission 2013). This doctoral study focuses on the experience of teacher educators who supervise student teachers in the school placement component of initial teacher education programmes. In the past, the term university supervisor, or teaching practice supervisor, has been used to describe this group of teacher educators. In the Republic of Ireland currently, the term 'placement tutor' (Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2020) replaces these traditionally used terms; hence this the term placement tutor is employed in my research study.

The literature reveals that placement tutors are the most neglected and under researched cohort of teacher educators (Slick 1997; Feiman-Nemser 2001; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Basmadjian 2011; Ievers et al. 2013; Meegan et al. 2013; Mauri et al. 2019). In light of their neglected status, research on the broader teacher educator group will be utilised when relevant to placement tutor teacher educators in this study. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that, within the group of teacher educators called placement tutors, my research study focusses exclusively on those placement tutors who are employed by universities on yearly, part-time, contracts. These teacher educators represent the 'disenfranchised outsiders' identified by Slick (1998); visitors to both universities and schools but marginalised members in both communities (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Cuenca 2011; Izadinia 2014; Rose and Kenny 2014).

The centre of the placement tutor's world is the school placement element of initial teacher education programmes. There are three key figures in this setting; the placement tutor, the student and the co-operating teacher. Together these three figures constitute the 'triad' (Macintyre and Morris 1980) of school placement. The co-operating teacher is the teacher who

supports and guides student teachers on school placement (Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013). In the Republic of Ireland, the term 'Treoraí', the Irish word for guide, has recently replaced the term co-operating teacher (Teaching Council 2020). However, in the interests of clarity, the term co-operating teacher will continue to be used in this research. Although in England and the United States, organisations such as Teach First provide a corporate route to learning to teach (Darling-Hammond 2006, 2010, 2017; Jackson and Burch 2016; Menter 2016; Murray and Mutton 2016; Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2020), most teacher education programmes around the world are based in third level institutions. In the literature, terms such as 'college' 'university' and Higher Education Institution (HEI) are used to describe these third-level settings. The initial teacher education programme in my research is located in a university; therefore the term 'university' will be employed.

This introductory chapter introduces key elements of the research which include my biography as a placement tutor; my motivations for conducting the research, the research question; the research conceptual context, the research setting and the research design and methodology.

1.1 My journey from teacher to teacher educator

Having graduated as a teacher of Physical Education and English from an undergraduate programme in Greenway University (pseudonym) in the Republic of Ireland in 1982, I embarked on a journey of teaching the dance component of Physical Education in a wide range of primary and post primary schools. At the same time, I was also involved in teaching dance in education to student teachers, and in continuing professional development programmes for both primary and post-primary school teachers. Some seventeen years into my teaching, an opportunity presented itself to become involved in supervising Physical Education student teachers. During a chance encounter with a teacher educator from my former undergraduate programme, it was communicated to me that my rich experiences of teaching in diverse Physical Education settings made me a suitable candidate for the task of supervising Physical Education student teachers on school placement. I was offered the job of supervising six student teachers who were about to commence a ten-week school placement. I decided the experience would be an interesting opportunity to help me grow as a teacher, and so I accepted

the offer. It is interesting to note that my appointment as a placement tutor embodies the claim by Lunenberg et al. (2014, p.2) that "One becomes a teacher educator by being appointed as such".

I received no official professional development for my role, apart from attending a half-day induction with my new placement tutor colleagues at Greenway University. The university teacher educator who had offered me the job provided me with an overview of the logistics of the school placement programme. I was also furnished with a list containing the names of my initial student teacher cohort and requested to complete some forms for administrative purposes. I then met with each of the six student teachers I was about to supervise, in order to introduce myself to them and to ascertain if they were adequately prepared to begin their school placement experience. Over the next 10 weeks I visited each of my student teachers three times, armed with an evaluation form which was to be completed during each visit.

My experiences as a novice placement tutor concurred with the research of Murray and Male (2005) and Kosnik and Beck (2008) who found that many new teacher educators rely on their own past experiences of teaching to help them negotiate the challenges of their new role. In my case I relied on the insights and practices I had accumulated as a teacher of Physical Education, as well as memories of my student teaching days, to help me cope with the task of supervising my student teachers. In this regard, I operated from the position of 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie 1975 cited in Burns and Badiali 2015) practising my supervision of student teachers in a manner which closely emulated my experiences as a student teacher. During the eight years I worked as placement tutor in Greenway's school placement programme, I learned 'on the job' to develop an approach to supervising student teachers that seemed to work for both myself, and for my successive cohorts of student teachers.

1.1.1. My experience of being a university teacher educator

My supervisory role was exclusively conducted in the placement schools, and as an infrequent visitor to the campus, I had no connection to what occurred in other aspects of the initial teacher education programme in the university. During my time as placement tutor I attended two 'on campus' days each year. The first of these days took place a week before the student teachers commenced their school placement. Approximately 40-50 placement tutors, from many different parts of the Republic of Ireland, attended the day, along with some full-time staff members of Greenway's initial teacher education programme. Over the years I got to know two or three placement tutors quite well, but for the main part the rest were strangers to me.

The initial part of the first 'on-campus' day consisted of a session focused on professional development for placement tutors. Since the session was aimed at placement tutors from a wide range of school subjects, the focus was on general issues such as the importance of formative assessment, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) by the student teachers, or the criteria for judging an 'A grade' standard student teacher. Helpful as these sessions were to me, I was often left with the feeling of being unseen in the big group of placement tutors who attended the professional development session, as there was no time set aside for placement tutors to receive any individual support or guidance. Following our professional development session, we met briefly with our student teachers. The meeting with each student teacher was scheduled to be twenty minutes in duration. In reality, I generally spent at least forty-five minutes with each student teacher, thus resulting in a backlog of meetings which often lasted for three to four hours. Apart from occasional email contact, the only other interaction I had with my student teachers occurred during the three supervision visits I conducted with them in their schools.

The second 'on campus' day was timed to occur the week after the block of school placement had concluded. On this occasion, placement tutors visited the university to meet their student teachers, and to meet with the Arts Specialism 'opposite' tutor who had supervised the particular cohort of student teachers in question. (These student teachers taught both Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject; Irish, English, Maths, Geography or Science. The

'opposite' tutor had responsibility for supervision of these Arts Specialism subjects). The purpose of the meeting between the Physical Education and the Arts Specialism placement tutors was to decide together on a provisional grade for each student teacher. Due to time limitations, these meetings were generally very rushed and not very productive. Since some of the Arts Specialism tutors were unavailable to meet me during the time allocated, we were frequently left with no other option but to substitute our meeting with a brief phone call conversation during the following week. All in all, the day was a stressful experience, and one which often left me feeling uneasy about the quality of assessment being provided for each student teacher.

1.1.2 Moving to another university; different but the same

In 2011 I moved from Greenway University to continue my work as a part-time placement tutor in one of the initial teacher education programmes, SUPE (pseudonym), in Rosemount University (pseudonym), closer to home. By now, having worked as a part-time placement tutor for eight years, I felt more confident in my role. I had a better understanding of student teachers, and I had established connections in many schools with co-operating teachers, school principals and deputy principals. But the part-time nature of my position in the SUPE school placement programme continued to present its own challenges.

The SUPE school placement programme consisted of a small team of five Physical Education placement tutors (including myself) and seven Arts Specialism placement tutors. In addition, the programme had a school placement coordinator, whom I could contact by phone or email as the need arose. Despite the smaller numbers, I continued to have little contact with my Physical Education placement tutor colleagues. Unlike my experience at Greenway's school placement programme, I had no contact at all with my 'opposite' Arts Specialism placement tutor in the SUPE school placement programme. Limited as the meetings with the Arts Specialism placement tutor in Greenway University had been, they provided me with the opportunity to dialogue with another placement tutor, about the progress of a shared student teacher. By contrast, in the SUPE programme in Rosemount University, each placement tutor was responsible for submitting a grade allocated to the student teacher for their respective

subject areas only. We were not part of the process which determined a combined grade (Physical Education and the Arts Specialism subject) for school placement. As a result, we had no way of knowing how our student teachers fared in terms of their overall assessment for school placement.

Unlike the ten-week school placement programme in Greenway University, fourth year student teachers in the SUPE school placement programme spent a full academic school year on school placement. Despite this, my contact with my student teachers during this time was limited to three visits conducted over an eight-month timespan. In this school placement programme, placement tutors did not get to meet their student teachers before, or after, they began their school placement. I received weekly emails which contained student teachers' planning and reflective portfolios, to which I responded with electronic feedback. So, while I had moved to a different university, I continued to feel disconnected in my new workplace.

1.1.3 The 'expert inspector' in the school

During my supervisions, I visited several host schools where the student teachers conducted their placements. I was always made feel welcome in the schools, and over the years I built up a cordial relationship with staff and school management. Despite this and concurring with the research (Ongel et al. 2002; Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan 2018), I always had the sense that I was received in the school as the 'inspector', the 'expert' on teaching Physical Education. This could be seen in the polite glances in the staff room, the sympathetic looks given to the student teacher as we walked through the school corridors, the occasional good-natured banter by some staff members such as 'don't be too hard on her/him now'. It was best epitomised in a conversation I had with one co-operating teacher who declined to give her viewpoint on the student teacher's progress. She expressed that I was best positioned to make the judgement since I was the 'expert inspector', and it was my job to 'make the call' on the student teacher's competence.

It was difficult in many schools to have access to more than a hurried five-minute, general conversation with either the co-operating teacher, or the school principal/deputy principal. This was understandable since schools are very busy places, and staff had little free time, and no scheduled time set aside to meet with me. Currently, co-operating teachers in the Republic of Ireland are unpaid for the role. School placement programmes continue to be dependent on the tradition of goodwill and generosity extended by schools (Cannon 2004; Teaching Council 2013) for teachers to take on the role of co-operating teacher, along with all their other school duties, while receiving no extra payment. In my experience as a part-time placement tutor, apart from greeting the school secretary and signing the 'visitor' book at the school office, I had very little contact with any member of the school community.

1.1.4 The 'disenfranchised outsider'

As a part-time placement tutor, my limited contact with student teachers and with other placement tutors, my lack of knowledge of the other components studied by the student teachers in the university site, my infrequent visits to the university campus and my limited interactions in the school settings contributed to a growing sense of being outside the system looking in (Murphy 2010). I did not feel I belonged to a community which provided support for me in my endeavours to supervise my student teachers. The resulting isolation led me to identify strongly with the research findings of Slick (1998) who concluded that placement tutors are frequently 'disenfranchised outsiders' in school placement, unsupported by the university and perceived as an outsider in the school.

As a 'disenfranchised outsider' tasked with determining the competency of student teachers, with a limited network of support, operating in a space somewhere between the university and the school, I had many questions to ask. How could I best fulfil my role of assessing and supporting the student teachers in my care? Did I really know each individual student teacher in my care, given the short duration of time I spent with them, and the lack of previous knowledge I had of them? Was my grading of the student teachers on a par with other placement tutors on the programme? Did I give sufficiently constructive feedback? Was I effective in the role I had undertaken?

1.2 Motivation for my research

In 2012 I was appointed to my current position of lecturer and coordinator of the SUPE school placement programme, where I had worked for the previous year as a part-time placement tutor. In my new role, I was responsible for student teachers, placement tutors and the university-school partnership between the SUPE school placement programme and approximately sixty host schools. As a direct result of my personal experiences of being a placement tutor myself, I was left with the strong belief that that the quality of the school placement programme is determined to a considerable degree by the quality of placement tutors who supervise the student teachers. By 2012, the team of placement tutors in the SUPE school placement programme had grown to include six Physical Education placement tutors and eight arts specialism placement tutors. Except for one person, all were part-time staff. From personal experience, I was fully aware of the challenges of being a part-time placement tutor, negotiating the challenges of being the 'disenfranchised outsider'.

The profile of the team was consistent with the research, nationally and internationally, which states that most placement tutors on initial teacher education programmes are part-time, drawn from the ranks of retired and practising teachers (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Cochran-Smith 2003; Rodgers and Kiel 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Davy 2013; Rose and Kenny 2014; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019). From the beginning, I was anxious to ensure that these placement tutors were well supported, so that they, in turn, could provide support for the student teachers in their care. As the school placement coordinator, I believed this was the key to striving for "consistency in the school placement experience for all student teachers" (Teaching Council 2013, p.3).

In light of the above, the motivation for my research emerged, and I decided to focus my doctoral study on the role of part-time placement tutors in their supervision of student teachers on school placement. I was confident that this was a significant topic, with the potential to contribute to understanding and practice (Cohen et al. 2011), not just for myself and my team of placement tutors, but for the wider community of initial teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland and internationally. At this stage of my research study, the Teaching Council (2011a,

2011b; 2013) had published several documents on matters related to school placement. Thus, I believed the time was ripe for a research study on part-time placement tutors in the Republic of Ireland. As a result, my research is grounded in both the micro, and macro level developments in initial teacher education; investigating the world of part-time placement tutors in a particular Irish university school placement programme, informed by national and international initial teacher education programmes.

1.3 The main and subsidiary research questions

All research begins with a purpose and a question (Thomas 2011). Research questions identify the pathway in the research journey (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittaker 2013). They serve two purposes; to focus the study in relation to the research goals and the conceptual framework adopted, and to provide guidance on how best to conduct the study (Maxwell 2008). Generating research questions involves an interrogative and reflective approach and "the processes of generating and refining questions are critical to shaping all phases of a qualitative study" (Agree 2009, p.431). Little research has been conducted to date, either in the Republic of Ireland or internationally, on placement tutors in initial teacher education (Slick 1997; Koerner et al. 2002; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Steadman and Brown 2011; Elfer 2012; Ievers et al. 2013; Meegan et al. 2013). This gave me the scope to generate research questions which are relevant and original (Braun and Clarke 2013) and can fill a gap in the research (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls 2014) by beginning to address the scarcity of research regarding part-time placement tutors.

After several cycles of reading and reflection, my initial research question, "How can placement tutors be supported in their supervision of Physical Education student teachers in initial teacher education in the current school climate of Teaching Council requirements and varied school responses?" was repeatedly revisited and revised. This iterative process was enhanced by the development of a theoretical framework to guide my study. The framework was derived by investigating a number of key concepts that were pertinent to my study. Accordingly I decided upon a tripartite theoretical framework of Identity (Holland et al. 1998),

Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) and Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010). After five different iterations, the final research question emerged as follows:

What are the experiences, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of Physical Education student teachers in school placement?

Subsidiary research questions include:

1. How do part-time placement tutors define their professional identities in their role as teacher educators?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by part-time placement tutors in two communities of practice; the university and the school?
3. Do part-time placement tutors have a role to play in the Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) between the university and the school?
4. Does fulfilling the dual role of assessor and advisor impact upon the task of supervising Physical Education student teachers?

1.4 The conceptual context of the research

There are three stages in teacher education; the education of student teachers, the induction of newly qualified teachers, and the continuing professional development of probated teachers (OECD 1995; Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2016a, 2017, 2020; European Commission 2015). My research is set in the world of initial teacher education where student teachers take their first steps in the journey of learning to teach (Coolahan 2001; OECD 2005; Musset 2010; Teaching Council of Ireland 2011a, 2011b; 2013, 2020; European Commission 2015).

It is widely recognised today that "quality education is essential if societies are to be in a position to meet the many new challenges and changing socio-economic circumstances of this new era" (Coolahan 2007, p.23). At the heart of a good education system are well prepared and highly qualified teachers. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report, *Teaching Matters: Attracting Developing and Retaining Teachers* (OECD 2005), highlights the centrality of teacher policy on the national government agenda of many

European countries. From their research on teacher education policy and practice in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Finland, US, Poland, Singapore and New Zealand, Conway et al. (2009) suggest that teacher education has become a key policy focus for national governments, transnational agencies and inter-governmental organisation in these countries. In the United States, teachers are seen by many as the 'lynch-pin' of educational, economic and social reform (Cochran-Smith 2005, 2008; Cochran-Smith et al. 2012). While there is no consensus on what is meant by 'teacher quality', nor how it should be measured (Cochran-Smith et al. 2012), teacher education and teacher quality "are among the hottest topics in education research and policy nationally and internationally" (Cochran-Smith 2012, p.108).

1.4.1 The school placement component of initial teacher education

The practice of school placement is a long-established component of initial teacher education programmes (Coolahan 2008) and considered to be the 'capstone' experience of students teachers' education (Schwartz et al. 2018). In short, school placement is an essential element of learning to teach (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Cobb 1999; Zeichner 2002; Darling-Hammond 2010; Rozelle and Wilson 2012; Wright et al. 2012; Conroy et al. 2013; Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2020; European Commission 2015; Hall et al. 2018; Mauri et al. 2019). Several terms have described the practice of student teachers undertaking field work in schools; school practicum, field experience, teaching practice and, latterly, school placement (Teaching Council 2013, 2020). Whatever the title, it is commonly agreed that the opportunity for students to enter the school community and begin the practice of teaching is seen by student teachers as the most important part of their teacher education programme (Koerner, et al. 2002; Smith and Ari 2005) and "carefully designed student teaching experiences" are fundamental to such programmes (Darling-Hammond 2016, p.87). For most student teachers, school placement is "the space where theory and practice meet" (Hall et al. 2018, p.14). Today, the practice of school placement has been given increasing significance in initial teacher education programmes across the world (Cobb 1999; Darling-Hammond 2006, 2016; Maandag et al. 2007; Albasheer et al. 2009; Conway et al. 2009; Ronfeldt and Reininger 2012; Rozelle and Wilson 2012; Ibrahim 2013; Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2020, 2021a, 2021b, Caena 2014, Hall et al. 2018). It is this component of initial teacher education which forms the

backdrop for my study, and specifically the role played by placement tutors who supervise student teachers on school placement.

1.4.2 The placement tutor in initial teacher education

The school placement 'triad' (Macintyre and Morris 1980) of student teacher, co-operating teacher and placement tutor is recognised as the key to a successful school placement. Much research has been conducted on the experiences of student teachers, and the co-operating teachers who mentor them (Furlong and Maynard 1995; Kyriacou and Stephens 1999; Hargreaves and Fullan 2000; Zeichner 2002; Korthagen et al. 2006, Rajuan et al. 2007; Gareis and Grant 2014; Young and MacPhail 2014; Young et al. 2015; Fives et al. 2016). Placement tutors, by contrast, receive little recognition and very little scholarly interest (Slick 1997; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Basmadjian 2011; Ievers et al. 2013; Meegan et al. 2013; Mauri et al. 2019). Basmadjian (2011) asserts that lack of scholarship on the role of placement tutors can be attributed to the fact that the part-time personnel who conduct the role are generally not interested in engaging in research. Steadman and Brown (2011, p.53) claim that in many universities in the United States "the work of the university supervisor has largely been ignored". Since the work of placement tutors is mainly carried out by part-time staff, these teacher educators are "often considered an aside to campus-based teacher education" (Cuenca et al. 2011, p.1069). Nonetheless, expert and well-prepared placement tutors are central to an effective initial teacher education programme (McCarthy and Quinn 2010).

Evidence in the Republic of Ireland, England, and the United States suggest that many teacher educators in universities struggle in an environment where research and publishing is considered more valuable than the day-to-day work of teacher educators (Murray and Male 2005; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Martinez 2008; Cochran-Smith 2011; O'Doherty et al. 2017; MacPhail and O'Sullivan 2019; MacPhail et el. 2019). Many teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland have seen a 'dual economy' develop where some academic staff members are primarily teacher educators and others are mainly researchers (MacPhail and O'Sullivan 2019).

1.5 The research setting

This research is situated in an undergraduate initial teacher education programme (SUPE) in Rosemount University in the Republic of Ireland. SUPE is a four-year concurrent undergraduate programme which leads to a Bachelor of Education (Honours) in two subjects - Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject. The programme offers three different school placement opportunities. Respectively, these occur during the second, third and fourth years of the programme.

The study is set in the fourth-year school placement programme. Specifically, the study focuses on the experiences of six part-time Physical Education placement tutors on this programme during the period 2018-2020. A purposeful sampling approach (Maxwell 2008; Cohan et al. 2011; Palinkas et al. 2015; Bradshaw et al. 2017) was employed. Accordingly, participants were chosen to best represent the profile of the overall team of placement tutors.

1.6 Research method and design

In choosing a research method "there is no 'one right' direction to take" (Denscombe 2010, p.3) since the research focus, and the research questions therein, determine which method is best suited to generating the knowledge the researcher seeks. For the purposes of my study I chose a multiple case study approach. I believed this approach provided me with the best option of studying placement tutors in detail, within their worlds (Stake 2005). Using the case study method enabled me to 'delve deeply' (Denscombe 2010) and 'drill down' (Thomas 2011) into the interconnected relationships, and the interrelated processes which occur for placement tutors in their supervision of student teachers.

Primary data for the study came from interviews conducted with the six part-time placement tutor participants, as well as observations I conducted of their practice in the field. Other data sources included my researcher diary. Following the typical case study approach, data collection and data analysis occurred iteratively (Morse et al. 2002; Patton 2002; Yin 2009; Braun and Clarke 2013; Flick 2014b; Miles et al. 2014) since insights gleaned from the analysis of each set of data gathered informed my approach to collecting and analysing the next set of

data. This approach concurs with the advice of Miles at al. (2014, p.70) who suggest that when data analysis occurs concurrently with data collection, it enables the researcher to "cycle back and forth between thinking about existing data and generating strategies for collecting new, often better data".

Chapter 1 has 'set the scene' of my research study. The next chapter provides a critical interrogation of the empirical and theoretical literature pertaining to the focus of my research study. Literature from both national and international contexts will be discussed in order to appraise the reader of the broader research context surrounding my study. I will also outline the theoretical framework which underpins my research, and which helped to provide structure and shape to my doctoral study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

I begin this chapter with a detailed discussion of initial teacher education, both internationally and in the Republic of Ireland. A critical appraisal of the commentary and empirical research pertinent to placement tutors in initial teacher education programmes is then presented. This is followed by an overview of the theoretical framework which informed my research. Questions and concerns that emerge in relation to placement tutors in initial teacher education are considered and examined through the lens of my theoretical framework. In conclusion, I offer an analysis of why recent developments in initial teacher education provide a challenging environment for placement tutors to enact their roles in the supervision and evaluation of student teachers on school placement.

2.1. Initial teacher education: an overview

Initial teacher education is the first 'crucial' step in the journey of learning to teach (European Commission 2015). In the last three decades, a growing volume of research has been conducted into the systems and structures of teacher education, and the teachers produced therein (Furlong 1996, 2002; Cobb 1999; Furlong et al. 2000, 2006, 2009; Coolahan 2001; Cochran-Smith 2004, 2005, 2008; Zeichner 2002, 2010; Wang et al. 2003; Darling-Hammond 2006, 2010, 2016; Korthagen et al. 2006; Brennan and Willis 2009; Harford 2010; Menter 2010; Sahlberg 2010, 2012; Niemi and Jakku-Sihvonen 2011; Smith and Tinning 2011; Snoek 2011; Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2020; Zuljan and Vogrinc 2011; Clarke and Killeavy 2012; Cochran-Smith et al. 2012, 2015, 2016; Hyland 2012; Sahlberg et al. 2012; Caena 2014; European Commission 2013, 2015; Hökkä and Eteläpelto 2014; Lunenberg et al. 2014; O'Doherty 2014; Cochran-Smith and Villegras 2015; Hulme et al. 2016; Hall et al. 2018). The issue of how to best prepare and educate potential teachers has become the subject of much debate since teacher education is responsible for preparing teachers, who, in turn, help prepare the future generation to come (Clark et al. 2012; Smith 2016). This section presents an overview of the complexities of policies and practices relating to initial teacher education worldwide, while also addressing the issues of provision, university-school partnerships and school placement. A discussion of significant developments in initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland, informed by international practice, will then be presented. It is hoped that

the overview and critical discussion will provide a clear and detailed picture of the teacher education context within which this research study is undertaken.

2.1.1 The politicised issue of initial teacher education

Teaching and teacher education are fundamentally political in nature since they are influenced by conflicting opinions regarding objectives, values and approaches in teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith 2005). In their review of 12 papers from leading international teacher education academics, Furlong et al. (2009, p.2) conclude that "governments in all of the countries we considered aspire to intervene in order to have greater influence, if not control, over the structure and content of initial teacher education more directly than in the past". Cochran-Smith et al. (2012) claim that teacher education, and questions about teacher quality, have been the main focus of educational debate in the United States for the past twenty years. More recently, teacher education in the United States has become a 'policy problem' with the goal of establishing policies for teaching and learning that will lead to producing an educated workforce to maintain a nation's position in the global economy (Cochran-Smith 2004, 2005, 2008; Cochran-Smith et al. 2016).

In countries such as China, Finland and Korea, who enjoy high performing education systems, teacher education is a national priority (Sahlberg et al. 2012). A report on teacher education commissioned by the European Commission (2015) echoes the research of Cochran-Smith and her colleagues in the United States. This report emphasises that improving the quality of teacher education is an important goal for education systems across Europe in order to help the European Union to "increase its competitiveness in a globalised world" (European Commission 2015, p.10). Research conducted on the initial teacher education systems across the five nations of England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, indicates that "education and economy are inextricably linked" (Hulme et al. 2016, p.222). As a result of this, teacher education has become increasingly politicised in countries across the world (Menter 2016).

2.1.2 Initial teacher education systems

In an international context, there are currently multiple providers of, and many routes into, initial teacher education. Research into the policies and practices of individual countries reveal much variation in this regard. Initial teacher education in England is in the hands of central government, with the school sector being given most input, resulting in a corresponding decline in university influence (Murray and Mutton 2016). The government exerts a tight control over programmes of teacher education through agencies such the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), which funds and manages courses of teacher education, and Ofsted, the government inspectorate with responsibility for monitoring schools and teacher education programmes (Furlong 2002; Murray 2008a, Menter 2016; Whiting et al. 2018). In a paper examining the provision of initial teacher education in England, Whiting et al. (2018, p.69) contend that the number of reforms which have occurred in teacher education since the 1990s has resulted in "a very complex set of arrangements and [led to] to the fragmentation of a national system". These researchers provide evidence of eight different routes into teaching during the academic year 2015-16. These range from traditional university-based teacher preparation programmes to alternative school-based programmes such as Teach First and Schools Direct (Mutton 2016; Whiting et al.2018).

Scotland has had its own education legalisation since 1984, and, in contrast to England and Wales, the central role of the university in initial teacher education is endorsed by the Scottish government (Menter 2016). Unlike its neighbours, Scotland has managed to resist the interference of national government due to the work of the General Teaching Council for Scotland, a self-regulating body for teaching (www.gtcs.org.uk). Initial teacher education programmes in Scotland, traditionally based in colleges of education, went through a process of 'universitisation' in the 1980s and currently all programmes of initial teacher education are located within university sites (Hulme and Kennedy 2016).

France, Germany, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and Singapore all operate a centralised system of teacher education and teacher certification, with both undergraduate and post graduate programmes of varying durations being offered to prospective teaching candidates. (Cobb 1999; Furlong 2002; Wang et al. 2003; Snoek 2011; Clarke and Killeavy

2014; Darling-Hammond 2017). Finland is considered, internationally, as having one of the most successful education systems in the world (Tryggvason 2009; Sahlberg 2011; OECD 2012; Clarke and Moran 2012; Hokka and Etelapelto 2014). Initial teacher education in this country is university based, leading to a Masters level qualification (Sahlberg 2010). Government driven reforms in New Zealand has led to the merging of colleges of education into universities with the intention of improving the quality of teaching (Smith and Tinning 2011). Initial teacher education programmes include four-year undergraduate, and one-year post graduate courses (www.//educationcouncil.org.nz).

Since the 1990s, all 400 teacher education programmes in Australia are now located within federally funded universities (Brennan and Willis 2009) but teacher education is a state responsibility (Wang et al. 2003). Initial teacher education programmes vary considerably in China with different qualifications required for different kinds of teaching (OECD 2016). Special upper secondary schools offer a two-year certification for pre-school and primary school positions. 'Normal colleges' (junior colleges) provide a further two years training to enable candidates to qualify as junior cycle secondary school teachers, while 'normal universities' offer a four-year undergraduate degree programme for teachers of upper secondary school (www.ncee.org).

The United States has a decentralised system of teacher education, with each state being responsible for its educational systems, including routes into initial teacher education. There is considerable variation in the initial teacher education programmes offered, with some four or five-year undergraduate courses (Wang et al. 2003), as well as a range of other market driven routes such as Teach First and Teach for America (Darling-Hammond 2006, 2010, 2017). In this approach, candidates are recruited to teach in high-needs schools with a few weeks of pre-service training and serve a further two years of apprenticeship in order to secure a first teaching job (Darling-Hammond 2006, 2010, 2017). There are also several online/distance programmes of study through which one can become a teacher in many universities in the United States. The debate on teacher education in the United States has increasingly focused less on curriculum, training or learning and more on the responsibility of the education system for improving the economy of the nation (Early 2008, Cochran-Smith 2008, 2012, 2016).

A highly centralised system of teacher education operates in the Republic of Ireland (Clarke and Killeavy 2013). For the main part, the number of entrants to initial teacher education programmes is determined by the Department of Education and Skills, with the exception of the privately funded Hibernia College (O'Doherty 2014). This institution was established in 2000 and offers a programme of blended online and face-to-face tuition for potential primary and post primary teachers (www.hiberniacollege.com). The establishment of the Teaching Council of Ireland in 2006 has resulted in a number of structural and curricular changes arising from an accreditation process imposed upon all teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland (O' Doherty 2014; Gleeson et al. 2017).

2.1.3 Partnerships in initial teacher education

University-school partnership is a "pervasive theme" (Brady 2002, p.1) in the teacher education literature, and the nature of that partnership is an issue that influences policy discussions and models of practice in initial teacher education programmes worldwide (Smith et al. 2006). There is universal agreement on the value of university-school partnerships (Furlong and Maynard 1995; Brady 2003; Caires & Almeida 2005; Smith et al. 2006; Darling-Hammond 2010; Zeichner 2010; Hutchinson 2011; Teaching Council 2013, 2020; Mutton 2016; Hall et al. 2018). Such partnerships can assist student teachers to connect the theory and practice of teaching, and they can provide valuable opportunities for professional development for both teachers, and teacher educators (Burton and Greher 2007; Smith 2016; Hall et al. 2018). And yet, close examination of initial teacher education programmes reveals that there are several versions of university-school partnerships (Mauri et al. 2019), with many alliances merely focusing on the practical arrangements of school placement (Mutton 2016).

2.1.4 Models of university-school partnership

Effective university-school partnerships are only possible when both parties are willing to go beyond rhetoric and strive to work together towards a shared goal of improving education for all (Burton and Greher 2007; Smith 2016). The efficacy of partnerships depends on the development of 'professional trust' between partners (Murray et al. 2011). Equally important is the process of establishing clear guidelines for the conditions of collaboration, recognising

and accepting different work patterns of each partner, and allowing time for collaborative practices to develop (Bain et al. 2017 cited in Hall et al. 2018). A five country, cross-national study of university-school partnerships conducted by Maandag et al. (2007) in England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, provides a valuable overview of the range of partnerships in existence in these countries. These researchers conclude that there is a "substantial variation between countries on matters of integration between the institution and the school", with partnerships operating along a different continuum of differing practices (Maandag et al. 2007, p.151).

The five variations of university-school partnerships identified by Maandag et al. (2007) are outlined in Table 2A. These models provide a valuable framework for reviewing the partnership models which currently characterise teacher education programmes internationally. At one end of the continuum there is the Work Placement Model, with minimum collaboration between university and school, and at the other end there is the Training School model, where the school assumes full responsibility for the student teacher (Maandag et al. 2007).

Table 2A: Models of university-school partnership

Model	Structure of collaboration
Model A Work Placement Model	The school is the workplace where the student teachers gain practical experience. They are supervised by experienced teachers. All other education take place at the teacher education institution. The supervising teachers are trained by the training institution.
Model B Co-ordinator Model	A variation on Model A, the school appoints an experienced colleague to act as a central supervisor, co-ordinating and streamlining teacher education by providing some of the actual supervision of the student teachers, coaching other student teacher supervisors and co-ordinating their supervision.
Model C Partner Model	The school is partially responsible for the course curriculum. As well as supervising the student teachers, the school also provides some of the training of the other supervisors. The initial teacher training institution provides instruction in the subjects to be taught and the more conceptual themes in the course.
Model D Network Model	Once again, the school is partly responsible for the course curriculum. The school has a training team of one or more trainers at school who are instructed in teaching methods and the initial teacher institution takes care of the more conceptual sides of the course and aspects that go beyond the walls of the school. Collaboration between the training teams and the training institution is very strong.
Model E Training School Model	The entire training course is provided by the school. The institution is tasked with being a 'backup institution' and works closely with the trainers in the schools, helping to develop training and teaching methods. Hence, the school is the main site for teacher education and the institution plays a secondary, supportive role.

(Adapted from Maandag et al. 2007, p.153-154)

A review of the literature on university-school partnership (Furlong 1996; Zeichner 2002; Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Smith et al. 2006; Furlong et al. 2006; Maandag et al. 2007; Mentor et al. 2010; Conroy et al. 2013; Mutton 2016) indicates that, in many cases, the school is seen as the workplace for the student teacher and the university takes the lead in the partnership. This is evident in how the university assumes responsibility for the school placement curriculum, the teaching hours required of student teachers, and the method of supervision and assessment. This HEI-led Model of university-school partnership (Furlong et al. 2000) functions as the Work Placement Model identified by Maandag et al. (2007), and it predominates in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland (Mutton 2016), France, Germany and Sweden (Maandag et al. 2007).

Other countries show evidence of a more diverse system of university-school partnerships. In the Netherlands, there has been an increased level of school involvement in initial teacher education programmes, and official policy deems that part of the initial teacher education curriculum can be taught in schools (Maandag et al. 2007). Three types of university-school partnerships exist in Norway; practice schools align with the Work Placement Model (Maandag et al. 2007), partner schools reflect tenets of the Partner Model (Maandag et al. 2007), and, more recently, university schools, similar to the Network Model (Maandag et al. 2007) have been emerging in some parts of Norway (Smith 2016).

The Network Model of university-school partnerships has been the backbone of teacher education programmes in Finland for many years, where school placement occurs in Teacher Training schools, governed by the universities (Sahlberg 2010; European Commission 2015; Darling-Hammond 2017). These schools work in joint research programmes with the university and have education faculty staff who teach part of the curriculum to student teachers (Sahlberg 2010; European Commission 2015; Darling-Hammond 2017). Municipal, or regular public schools, are also involved in initial teacher education programmes, and these schools work closely with universities in facilitating school placements which are supervised by trained co-operating teachers (Niemi and Jakku-Sihvonen 2011; Darling-Hammond 2017).

Singapore has one national teacher education centre, the National Institute of Education, and it operates a Partnership Model (Maandag et al. 2007) with its school placement schools whereby the Institute and schools share decision making about student teachers, and staff in both communities are encouraged to share teaching responsibilities (Darling-Hammond 2017). In the larger countries of Canada and Australia, both the Partnership Model and the Network Model (Maandag et al. 2007) are employed in different states, with a growing trend towards greater links between schools and universities in the preparation of student teachers, and in jointly shared research projects (Darling-Hammond 2017).

Since the United States has a proliferation of routes into teaching, a wide range of partnership models are employed in initial teacher education (McCarthy and Quin 2010; Zeichner and Bier 2015). These include the traditional university-led Work Placement Model (Maandag et al. 2007), as well as Professional Development Schools (PDS) (McCarthy and Quin 2010, p.617) which are similar to the Network Model (Maandag et al. 2007), and corporate routes into teaching such as Teach For America and Teach First (Darling-Hammond 2006, 2010, 2017) which closely resemble the Training School Model (Maandag et al. 2007).

Partnerships between universities and schools have been a mandatory part of initial teacher education in England since the 1980s. The Models of Teacher Education (MOTE) project conducted an in-depth review of teacher education in England and Wales between 1991 and 1996 (Furlong et al. 2000). The research indicated that there were several types of university-school partnership in evidence (Furlong et al. 2000). This is not surprising given the range of both university-based and school-based teacher preparation programmes available in England. That being so, it can be concluded that the traditional Work Placement Model (Maandag et al. 2007) of university-school partnership is now only one of a variety of other partnerships in existence in the initial teacher education system in England.

2.1.5 School placement in initial teacher education

There is widespread consensus on the importance of school placement (Cobb 1999; Darling-Hammond 2006; Maandag et al. 2007; Albasheer et al. 2008; Ronfeldt and Reininger 2012; Rozelle and Wilson 2012; Conway et al. 2009; Ibrahim 2013; Teaching Council 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2020; Caena 2014; Hall et al. 2018). However, the implementation of programmes of school placement varies from one country to the next (Caena 2014). This is most evident in the duration of time student teachers spend on school placement and the approaches taken to the supervision and assessment of student teachers.

2.1.5.1 Duration of school placement

A study of the teaching policies of eight different countries (Australia, England, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Singapore, and the United States) conducted by Wang et al. (2003) indicated that the time student teachers spent in schools varied considerably. The duration of school placement ranged from three to four weeks in Japan, to 12 to 18 months in the Netherlands. In the United States the length of time varied from one state to another, with six weeks in Louisiana as compared to one or more semesters in Minnesota and Wisconsin (Wang et al. 2003).

More than a decade after the research conducted by Wang et al. (2003), the duration of school placement continues to vary in initial teacher education programmes throughout the world (Ronfeldt and Reininger 2012; Caena 2014). The minimum recommended length of 20 hours in Hungary contrasts strikingly with 1,056 hours in the United Kingdom (Caena 2014), where students spend two thirds of their study year in schools (Menter 2016). In many countries, 200 hours is allocated to school placement, but in 8 countries in the EU it is less than that figure (Caena 2014). In the United States there is "huge diversity in provision, regulation and achievement across a country where each state sets its own standards" (Conway et al. 2009, p.56). The length of school placement experiences in the United States varies from an intensive 5-week summer programme offered in the Teach For America initiative, (a fast track teacher education programme) to a yearlong placement offered by many of the graduate teacher education programmes (Ronfeldt and Reininger 2012).

In the Republic of Ireland, Teaching Council regulations dictate that school placement must occupy 25% of student time in a four-year undergraduate programme, and 40% of time in a two-year post-graduate programme. This equates to direct teaching experience of 200 - 250 hours (Teaching Council 2013, 2020). In a study drawing from data on over 1000 student teachers, Ronfeldt and Reininger (2012) posit that the quality, rather than the quantity of school placement experiences is what matters most. In truth, the amount of time student teachers spend in school settings is far less important than the match between the educational philosophies and practices of both university and school settings (Cochran-Smith et al. 2015; Hall et al. 2018).

2.1.5.2 Supervision and assessment of student teachers

The approach to the supervision and assessment of student teachers during school placement also differs between countries. In most cases, a school placement tutor from the initial teacher education institution is given this responsibility. While the co-operating teacher may discuss the student teacher's progress, he or she is not responsible for allocating a grade. In some initial teacher education programmes in England, and in countries such as the Netherlands, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, and Australia, assessment of student teachers is carried out in the school by a combination of experienced co-operating teachers and school principals (Wang et al. 2003; Menter 2016). The decision on whether placement tutors or co-operating teachers conduct the supervision and assessment of the student teacher is closely linked to the partnership which exists between the initial teacher education institute and the school. In the Republic of Ireland, where the Work Placement Model (Maandag et al. 2007) of partnership predominates (Conway et al. 2009), the responsibility for supervision and assessment of student teachers lies exclusively with placement tutors (Teaching Council 2013, 2020; Young et al. 2015; Hall et al. 2018).

2.2 An overview of initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland

In recent years, the cumulative effect of a period of economic crisis, the increasing influence of European Union policies, and the publication of a range of OECD reports, has resulted in a period of unprecedented turbulence in teacher education in the Republic of Ireland (O' Doherty 2014). Over the past fifty years, the system has been the subject of much review and development (Drudy 2006; Coolahan 2007). During the 1960s and 1970s, a number of significant policy reports were published, including *Investment in Education Report* (1966), *Commission on Higher Education Report* (1967), *Report on Teacher Education* (1970) and *Report on An Chomhairle Mhúinteoiréacht* (1974). These reports led to many structural and programmatic changes in initial teacher education (Coolahan 2007). Former primary school teacher training colleges became colleges of education, and the National College of Physical Education was opened in 1973 (Coolahan 2007). Three years later a number of other subjects (woodwork, metalwork, science) were added and it was renamed Thomond College of Education. In the context of this research, this was a particularly significant event, since for the first time in the Republic of Ireland an initial teacher education programme for the teaching of Physical Education was now available. In 1974, the two-year diploma for primary school teaching was replaced by a three-year undergraduate degree (Coolahan 2007).

The OECD published a review of Irish education in 1991. The report introduced the concept of teacher education as a continuum spanning initial teacher education, induction of newly qualified teachers, and in-career development for qualified teachers (OECD 1991). It also emphasised the need for closer contact between training institutions and schools in initial teacher education programmes and the establishment of a National Council which could "address the issues of teacher selection, initial training, credentialing, induction and in-service education" (OECD 1991, p.107). These recommendations were echoed in *Education for a Changing World*, a government discussion document (DES 1992), and *Charting our Education Future***,** a government policy document or **'**White Paper' (DES 1995). The Teaching Council Act was enacted in 2001, and five years later, in 2006, the Teaching Council of Ireland was subsequently established.

2.2.1 The Teaching Council of Ireland

The establishment of the Teaching Council was a landmark development for teaching and teacher education in the Republic of Ireland since, for the first time in its history, the profession now had a statutorily established regulatory body. As the professional standards body for teaching, the Teaching Council seeks to enhance and uphold standards in the teaching profession. To this end, the organisation is responsible for reviewing and accrediting programmes of initial teacher education, and for assessing the teaching qualifications of teachers paid by the Department of Education and Skills (O'Donoghue et al. 2017). In addition, the Teaching Council is an authorised body for the vetting of teachers in the Republic of Ireland and, since January 2014, all teachers working in state schools must be registered with the Teaching Council (www.teachingcouncil.ie).

2.2.1.1 Teaching Council accreditation of initial teacher education programmes

Between 2011 and 2013 the Teaching Council met with the providers of initial teacher education programmes in order to review and accredit their programmes. Several structural and curricular changes have occurred in these institutions as a result of these consultations (O'Doherty 2014; Gleeson et al. 2017), including extending the time spent in school placement in all initial teacher education programmes. This development is in line with good practice internationally, where it is recognised that extended time spent in schools is essential in order to allow student teachers explore and apply concepts encountered in their courses (Darling-Hammond 2010). Undergraduate teacher education programmes, at both primary and post primary level in the Republic of Ireland, are now of four years' duration, while a two-year post graduate Professional Masters of Education (PME) has replaced the former one-year Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PDE) (www.teachingcouncil.ie).

2.2.1.2 Teaching Council publications

Since its establishment, the Teaching Council has engaged with schools and teacher education providers in order to research and shape its policy for teacher education. In 2011 three documents, directly related to initial teacher education, were published by the Teaching Council. *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education* (Teaching Council 2011a) provides guidelines for re-framing teacher education across the continuum of initial teacher education,

induction of newly qualified teachers and continuing professional development (CPD) for probated teachers. *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers,* (Teaching Council 2011b) outlines a framework for Higher Education Institutes in terms of policy and practices necessary for approved initial teacher education programmes. *Initial teacher education: Strategy for the review and professional accreditation of existing programmes* (Teaching Council 2011c) sets out the Teaching Council's strategy for its proposed review of all programmes of initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland.

In 2013, *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013) was published. This document was a significant step forward for school placement programmes in the Republic of Ireland with its goal of promoting "greater consistency in the school placement experience for all student teachers, given the centrality of that experience to the formation of the teachers of the future" (Teaching Council 2013, p.3). In October 2020 the Teaching Council (2020, p.2) published a further "keystone document in the continuum of teacher education". *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education* outlines revised standards for programme providers of initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland. These two teaching Council documents are particularly relevant to this study, and an overview of each is included in the next section which reviews recent significant publications related to initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland.

2.3 Recent landmark publications on initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland

The 2012-2020 time period witnessed the emergence of a number of significant documents related to initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland. In addition to the two aforementioned Teaching Council documents, three reports on initial teacher education and one report and action plan specific to school placement have been published. Consideration of each of these publications provides valuable insights into the research context for my doctoral study.

2.3.1 Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland (Sahlberg et al. 2012)

In 2012, a team of international experts, Professor Pasi Sahlberg (Finland), Professor Pamela Munn (Scotland) and Professor John Furlong (England) were commissioned to undertake an intensive review of the structures of initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland. Preparation for the work of the research panel included the provision of a background paper on teacher education in the Republic of Ireland prepared by Professor Áine Hyland (2012), meetings with a number of relevant stakeholders and submissions to the Higher Education Authority from the Higher Education Institutions involved in initial teacher education. It is fair to conclude that the 2012 review conducted by Sahlberg and his colleagues was the most extensive audit of initial teacher education conducted in the state to date.

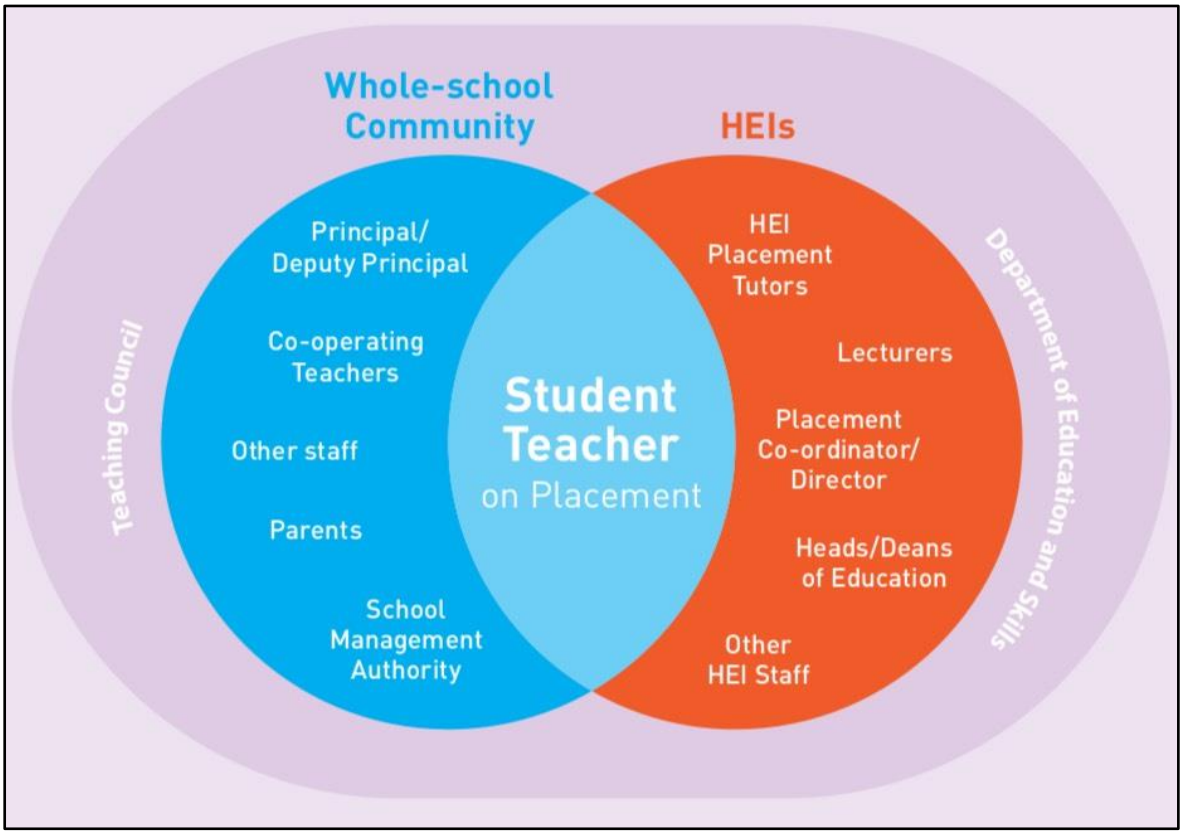
The recommendations made in the *Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland* (Sahlberg et al. 2012) were based on international best practice in initial teacher education, practices which provide "high quality instruction on both pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge, a strong focus on research as a basis of teaching and learning, a close and systematic engagement with schools and a real internationalisation of the institutions providing initial and continuing teacher education" (Sahlberg et al. 2012, p.25). Three of these recommendations are particularly pertinent to the focus of my doctoral study. Firstly, it proposes that the current separate providers of ITE programmes should be merged into larger, and connected, organisations to be placed in a university setting in order to allow for "a critical mass of staff and students to conduct research at a high level" (Sahlberg et al. 2012, p.18-19). In its second recommendation, the review panel advises that all teacher education institutions should be resourced with full time staff. The panel notes that, currently, most institutions are very dependent on part-time personnel to staff their programmes of initial teacher education, particularly in the area of school placement. The third recommendation highlights the need for stronger university-school partnerships in all initial teacher education programmes (Sahlberg et al. 2012).

The recommendations made by Sahlberg and his colleagues (2012) were accepted as national policy in the Republic of Ireland, but no additional funding was provided to either schools or universities to implement these guidelines (Sugrue 2015; O'Donoghue et al. 2017). In practical terms, the legacy of the *Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland* (Sahlberg et al. 2012) was the emergence of a new landscape in the structure of initial teacher education programmes caused by mergers and alliances between providers and universities (O'Doherty 2014). At a time when major banking failures in the country had led to a host of austerity measures being imposed unilaterally, these reforms proposed by the review panel had to be implemented by initial teacher education institutes within existing resource provision (O'Donoghue et al. 2017; Sugrue and Solbrekke 2017). Despite the review panel's call for a reduction in the use of part-time staff in the institutes of initial teacher education, the lack of additional resources meant that the providers of initial teacher education continued to be more dependent than ever on a body of part-time staff (Gleeson et al. 2017). It should also be noted that the "National Centre for Excellence for Teacher Education" proposed by Sahlberg et al. (2012, p.26) which would act as a satellite or hub for university research programmes, and their call for the establishment of a National Policy for Research on teacher education, did not materialise.

2.3.2 Guidelines on School Placement (Teaching Council 2013)

In terms of initial teacher education, and in the context of this research study, *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013) is the most significant Teaching Council publication to date, since it provided the first blueprint to assist Higher Education Institutes in their delivery of the school placement component (or components) of initial teacher education programmes. For the first time in the history of initial teacher education in Ireland, this document clearly identifies the key stakeholders in school placement (Table 2B). Of equal significance is the outline provided of the roles and responsibilities of each of the key stakeholders in school placement; university programmes of initial teacher education, school management, student teachers, co-operating teachers and placement tutors. This is an important step forward in terms of attempting to reconfigure school placement experiences of the past in order to provide a more structured, coherent and consistent school placement experience for student teachers.

Table 2B: Key partners in school placement



(Teaching Council 2013, p.17)

Guidelines on School Placement (Teaching Council 2013) is also noteworthy for its use of new terminology pertaining to school placement. The more traditional term of 'teaching practice' has been replaced by the term 'school placement' since the Teaching Council believes this term promotes a richer and broader school-based experience for student teachers, to include "both teaching and non-teaching activities" (Teaching Council 2013, p.6). The term 'teaching practice supervisor' has also been replaced by the term 'placement tutor' since it was felt that this term was a more accurate representation of the nature of student teacher supervision (Teaching Council 2013).

In terms of the focus of this research study, the use of this new term of 'placement tutor' is particularly significant. Research suggests that many student teachers view their placement tutor as a person in authority who has to be impressed at all costs (Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Andrew 2007; Basmadjian 2011; Clarke et al. 2011; Burns and Badiali 2015; Hall et al. 2018). Adopting the term 'tutor' suggests that the Teaching Council views the school placement supervisor as less of an authority figure, and more of a facilitator of student teacher learning. This reflects a definition of supervision provided by Hoover and Nolan (2013), discussed later in this chapter, whereby the focus is less on evaluation and more on promoting growth and development in the individual. The term 'tutor' suggests that the role of placement tutors goes beyond simply evaluating student teachers' performances and assigning grades (Walsh and Dolan 2018). Cuenca (2010a, p.274) emphasises that placement tutors must help student teachers to make the transition from student to teacher, through establishing a relationship with them governed by "care, thoughtfulness and tact". Using the term 'placement tutor' and providing an overview of the roles and responsibilities of placement tutors, is a positive step forward for school placement in the Republic of Ireland.

2.3.2.1 A special note relating to recommendations on university-school partnerships

Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland (Sahlberg et al. 2012) was published at a time when the Teaching Council had begun its review and accreditation of initial teacher education and was preparing for its publication of *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013). Common to both publications is the emphasis placed on the cultivation of university-school partnerships, but the guidelines for

implementation of same is quite different in each document. Sahlberg and his colleagues (2012) promote the university-school partnership in initial teacher education as one of "shared responsibility between the school and university for the assessment of student competence" (Sahlberg et al. 2012, p.2). This viewpoint suggests a model of partnership based on the Co-ordinator Model and the Partner Model, identified by Maandag at al. (2007). In promoting this partnership, Sahlberg and his colleagues appear to echo the recommendations made several years earlier by Coolahan (2007) and Conway et al. (2009) that formal partnerships be established between schools and higher education institutions in order to provide structured support for student teachers. In contrast, *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013) continues to perpetuate the traditional system of university-led partnerships.

In this system, evaluation is seen as the responsibility of placement tutors, the university is tasked with the responsibility of designing, implementing and overseeing school placement, and the schools (school principal/deputy principal, and co-operating teacher) provide informal support for the student teachers in their day to day teaching, and other school related activities. Hence, the partnership between universities and schools is one focused on the organisational aspects of school placement and "the processes, structures and arrangements that enable the partners involved in school placement to work and learn collaboratively" (Teaching Council 2013, p.6). Furthermore, there is no mention made in *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013) of how co-operating teachers should be selected, and neither is there any reference made to the provision of professional development for either co-operating teachers or placement tutors (O'Doherty et al. 2017).

2.3.3 School placement in initial teacher education (Hall et al. 2018)

In 2014 the Teaching Council decided that further research was needed to assess the effects of implementing the recommendations for school placement made in *Guidelines for School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013). Thus, a group of external researchers in the Republic of Ireland were commissioned to collect evidence with regard to practices in the Irish school placement system (www.teachingcouncil.ie). The remit of the study was "to document how new policy is being enacted, to track how HEIs, in collaboration with schools, are giving STs

access to high quality professional learning opportunities" (Hall et al. 2018, p.10). The report took four years to complete and involved six different initial teacher education institutions; three primary schools and three post primary schools. *School placement in initial teacher education* (Hall et al. 2018) is both opportune and significant, since it details the experiences and perspectives of the main stakeholders in school placement, including student teachers, placement tutors, co-operating teachers and school principals. In terms of the context of my research study, I wish to consider a number of insights provided by the report into university-school partnerships in the Republic of Ireland.

2.3.3.1 The nature of university-school partnerships in the Republic of Ireland

Following in the footsteps of the *Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland* (Sahlberg et al. 2012) and *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013), the report produced by Hall and her colleagues (2018) strongly endorses partnership between the university and school as fundamental to student teachers' success in school placement. Currently in the Republic of Ireland, schools act as the hosts for student teachers' school placement experiences (Conway et al. 2009; Young et al. 2015). Consequently the 'wobbly bridge' of informal partnerships (Heinz and Fleming 2019) between providers of initial teacher education programmes and schools continues to operate in the Republic of Ireland today (O' Doherty and Hartford 2017; Hall et al. 2018; Heinz and Fleming 2019).

The research of Hall and her colleagues (2018) indicates that, in recent years, many universities have demonstrated increased levels of communication and sharing of documentation with their partner schools. There is also evidence of some universities providing continuing professional development for staff of their partner schools in return for support of their school placement programme (Hall et al. 2018). Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that in her 15-year study of university-school partnerships in Australia, Mockler (2013) cautions against the dangers of universities becoming short-term providers of professional development for teachers, rather than learning partners in initial teacher education. Meaningful and genuine collaboration is a key prerequisite if schools and universities are to establish a mutually beneficial partnership (Lillejord and Børte 2016).

2.3.3.2 The challenges of university-school partnerships in the Republic of Ireland

School placement in initial teacher education (Hall et al. 2018) concludes that university-school partnerships in Irish initial teacher education programmes are hindered by two pressing issues. Firstly, securing school placements for student teachers has become an increasing challenge, given the growth of initial teacher education programmes in the country. As a result, leaders of initial teacher education programmes and directors of school placement programmes are left with little time to build partnerships with schools (Hall et al. 2018). Currently, schools in the Republic of Ireland take part in school placement programmes on a voluntary basis (O'Doherty and Hartford 2017; Heinz and Fleming 2019). Hall and her colleagues make an interesting suggestion in this regard, recommending that all state schools would be required to play a role in accommodating student teachers. This would reduce the burden of securing school placements, and enable the university to invest more resources in building collaborations with schools (Hall et al. 2018).

The second barrier to the development of effective university-school partnerships identified by Hall et al. (2018) is the lack of professional development opportunities provided for co-operating teachers, which, in turn, impacts upon their ability to effectively mentor student teachers and engage in professional dialogue with placement tutors. Schools in the Republic of Ireland accept student teachers on a voluntary basis and currently there is no formal training provided for co-operating teachers (Young et al. 2015). In line with this *School placement in initial teacher education* (Hall et al. 2018) presents evidence that attests to a diversity of practices and variation in the extent to which teachers in schools are willing to assume the role of co-operating teacher. The conclusion in the report is unequivocal, "If CTs are to be effective supporters of STs on placement, they need appropriate training and ongoing opportunities to share their practice in this regard" (Hall et al. 2018, p.15). One possible means of addressing this need would be the clustering of schools together for a continuing professional development day (Hall et al. 2018). But the ultimate solution identified in the report, regarding the enhancement of co-operating teachers' contributions, would be to provide them with the equivalent of one lesson period per week to meet with their student teachers and their placement tutors, and so engage in a three-way dialogue (Hall et al. 2018). In this respect, Hall and her colleagues are to be applauded for endorsing the value of establishing a Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) where all members of the school placement triad work to improve the

student teacher's professional practice. This will be discussed in greater detail in Section 2.4 of this chapter.

2.3.3.3 Moving towards a formalisation of university-school partnerships in the Republic of Ireland

In recent years there has been a growing support in the Republic of Ireland for the establishment of formal university-school partnerships whereby universities and schools would share equal responsibility for implementing programmes of school placement (Coolahan 2007; Conway et al. 2009; Sahlberg et al. 2012; O'Donoghue et al. 2017). The Teaching Council (2013, p.3) also indicated its support for partnerships where universities and school 'actively collaborate' in order to provide a positive school placement experience for student teachers. However, while well-intentioned, the Teaching Council guidelines have been mainly 'aspirational' with little or no indication of how a successful university-school partnership is to be "realised, operationalised, or resourced" (O'Donoghue et al. 2017, p.189). Effective teacher education programmes need more than student teachers spending prolonged periods of school placement in schools. Crucially these programmes require the cultivation of "university-school relationships and knowledge networks strong enough to connect research and theory to practice and vice versa" (Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019, p.26).

While commending positive elements of the traditional informal university-school partnerships established in the Irish school placement system, Hall et al. (2018, p.190) emphasise that "it is vital that the partnerships enacted are genuinely meaningful to and 'owned' by both parties in the partnership". The researchers acknowledge that establishing a more formal partnership arrangement will take time and resources, and intent on the part of all stakeholders, principally the Teaching Council, the Department of Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority. They recommend that a Working Group be convened in order to address this matter, and other issues raised in their report, with specific focus on "roles, responsibilities, resources, and CPD" (Hall et al. 2018, p.17, 191).

2.3.4 The structure of teacher education in Ireland: Review of progress in implementing reform (Sahlberg 2019)

In May 2018, Professor Sahlberg returned to conduct a second review of initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland focused on assessing the extent to which the recommendations of the first report (Sahlberg et al. 2012) had been implemented in the sector. A background report on the developments to date was once again provided by Professor Hyland, and Sahlberg visited the six centres of excellence in teacher education which had developed in the interim. *The structure of teacher education in Ireland: Review of progress in implementing reform* praises the positive steps undertaken to merge previously separate providers of initial teacher education into central systems of excellence, acknowledging that the original recommendation of six centres of excellence should now be extended to seven (Sahlberg 2019). It welcomes the stronger emphasis placed on extended periods of school placement in all teacher education programmes but notes that this had led to difficulties for many institutions in securing placement schools for student teachers (Sahlberg 2019). Addressing this problem through the establishment of a national database for school placement schools, as well as the development of clinical teacher training schools affiliated to the centres of excellence is endorsed in this report (Sahlberg 2019). In addition, continued emphasis on the role of research in teacher education is recommended, for both student teachers and the teacher educators who lead them (Sahlberg 2019).

2.3.4.1 Promoting the 'research active' teacher educator

Since the early 1990s, many European countries have been increasing the role played by universities in the education and training of teachers (Judge 1991; Michaelsson, 1995 cited in Coolahan 2001). In recent years publication of the *Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland (*Sahlberg et al. 2012) and *The structure of teacher education in Ireland: Review of progress in implementing reform* (Sahlberg 2019) have led to a complete restructuring of the initial teacher education system in the Republic of Ireland, whereby all former college of educations are now allied to universities. These mergers have resulted in the 'universitisation of teacher education' in line with best practice internationally (O'Donoghue et al. 2017). This development has had important implications for the work of teacher educators. Participants in research conducted on teacher

educators in the Republic of Ireland, Norway and Israel claim that "the main way to progress as a teacher educator in the university sector was to pursue research-related activities and not to rely solely on teaching" (Guberman et al. 2020, p.477). Evidence in this study also indicates that promotion and professional recognition are closely linked to research and publication (Guberman et al. 2020).

The promotion of research-informed teaching in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (Hunt 2011), the *Report of the international review panel on the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland (*Sahlberg et al. 2012), *School placement in initial teacher education* (Hall et al. 2018) and *The structure of teacher education in Ireland: Review of progress in implementing reform* (Sahlberg 2019) have challenged all teacher educators to become more research active. A research survey conducted by Gleeson et al. (2017) on teacher educators' attitude to the importance of research concludes that many of the research participants found the dual demands of teaching, while being research active in order to secure career advancement, has become a source of great stress. Gleeson (2017) also asserts that a 'dual economy' is emerging in initial teacher education institutions; a dichotomy between teaching and research, where many staff see their primary role as the 'craft' of teaching, as opposed to the pursuit of research.

The research of O'Doherty et al. (2017) support this claim, indicating that two types of teacher educators are emerging; those whose focus is to generate research and undertake little teaching, and those who have heavy teaching and school placement supervision schedules, leaving little time to engage in research. Research conducted by MacPhail and O'Sullivan (2019) on ten teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland as users and producers of research, provides further insights into the 'dual economy' in initial teacher education. The researchers found that, while these teacher educators valued the link between research and teaching, the more established participants reported a shift in their teacher education institutions from "prioritizing and valuing teaching and supporting students to attracting research funding and undertaking research" (MacPhail and O'Sullivan 2019, p.8). Many participants in this study struggled to manage the demands of teaching with the time needed to be research active (MacPhail and O'Sullivan 2019). Another cross-national study (the Republic of Ireland, England, Israel,

Norway, Scotland and the Netherlands) of sixty one teacher educators conducted by MacPhail et al. (2019, p.857) emphasised that "pressure towards research made it difficult to focus on teaching as much as many of the teacher educators wanted to".

Given that generating research is linked to career promotion, I concur with O'Donoghue et al. (2017, p.223) who argue that alternative routes for career advancement should be made available to "those teacher educators engaged primarily in exemplary work" in teaching, mentoring and supervising student teachers. The focus on research which dominates university discourse promotes a dichotomy between theory and practice which, in turn, can lead to "polarise distinctions between learning and doing" (Lave 2008, p.12). In such an environment there is a danger that 'knowledge creation' is prized above knowledge gained through participation and practice (Lave 1996, 2008). In their book, *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*, Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that learning involves participation (practice, doing) in communities of practice, thus positioning the act of learning "squarely in the processes of coparticipation, not just in the heads of individuals" (Hanks 1991, p.13). Accordingly, I believe that both theory-orientated and practice-orientated activities of teacher educators who teach, and supervise the teaching of student teachers, have valuable contributions to make in initial teacher education.

Finally, when emphasising the importance of teacher educators being research active, the implications for the part-time placement tutors must also be considered. As part-time university staff members, these placement tutors are employed to engage in the supervision of student teachers. Their contracts do not include remuneration for conducting research. In such circumstances engaging in research, while laudable, is not a mandatory part of part-time placement tutors' roles. Perhaps the best that can be hoped for in these circumstances is that they are research-informed. Therefore, the provision of ongoing continuing professional development for these teacher educators is an essential requirement to ensure that they are given access to up-to-date research in order to operate as informed and effective teacher educators. If they are to become research active teacher educators, the initial teacher education programmes which employ them has a responsibility for assisting them to become involved as active participants in teacher education research.

2.3.5 Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education (Teaching Council 2020)

Following the publication of *School placement in initial teacher education* report (Hall et al. 2018), a joint collaboration between the Department of Education and Skills and the Teaching Council resulted in the setting up of a School Placement Working Group in November 2018. The purpose of the group was to review the issues and challenges related to school placement highlighted in the report of Hall and her colleagues, and to consider how a greater alignment between policy and practice in school placement could be achieved (Teaching Council 2020). This working group provided the Teaching Council with insights for their most recent keynote policy document for initial teacher education published two years later. *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education* outlines revised standard of accreditation for all programmes of qualification for teaching in the Republic of Ireland. As such, it is a revision and development of the Teaching Council publication of *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013), setting out the guidelines for further accreditation processes planned for providers of initial teacher education programmes in 2021. In addition, it includes Standards for Graduate Teachers; a broad ranging list of "the skills, knowledge, understanding, and professional values expected of newly qualified teachers" (Teaching Council 2020, p.20).

In terms of the focus of this research study it is encouraging to note that *Céim* recognises school placement as "the fulcrum of teacher education" (Teaching Council 2020, p.7) and it provides comprehensive and detailed recommendations regarding the design and structure of school placement, including programme facilitates and resources. Given the emphasis which the *School placement in initial teacher education* report (Hall et al. 2018) places on the need for more established school-university partnerships and for continuing professional development programmes for co-operating teachers, it is disappointing to note that this latest publication from the Teaching Council makes no changes to the status quo with regards to these two important issues.

Céim posits that university-school partnerships can "support professional collaboration, foster innovation in pedagogical practice for all teachers, support engagement with and in research by all teachers" (Teaching Council 2020, p.17). Nonetheless, it goes no further than to repeat the statement issued nine years previously in *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and*

Guidelines for Programme Providers, (Teaching Council 2011b, p.15): "New and innovative school placement models should be developed using a partnership approach, whereby HEIs and schools actively collaborate in the organisation of the school placement". This statement was also issued in the *Guidelines on School Placement* (Teaching Council 2013, p.3), and it appears again in this document (Teaching Council 2020, p. 18). Furthermore, this most recent Teaching Council publication does not address the call by Hall et al. (2018) for schools and universities to share ownership of the school placement process. Assessment of student teachers continues to reside with the university, with no mention of the school contributing to the grading of student teachers, as recommended by Sahlberg et al. (2012) eight years previously. The only change regarding co-operating teachers within this new document is to give these school-based teacher educators a new name, 'Treoraí' (meaning guide) (Teaching Council 2020, p.6). While 'professional collaboration' in the university-school partnership is endorsed, providing continuing professional development to assist the Treoraí is not mentioned.

A final interesting development introduced in the *Céim* report is its recommendation of a staff-studio ratio of 15:1 in all initial teacher education programmes. Eight year ago, the *Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland* (Sahlberg et al. 2012) expressed concern that initial teacher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland relied heavily upon part-time personnel to staff their programmes. Continued budgetary cuts across all higher education institutions for the past decade have done little to change this situation. The impact of the recent worldwide Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in further financial losses for the seven universities in the Republic of Ireland and it is envisioned that "factors such as the collapse of international student fee income, rental of on-campus accommodation and commercial revenues will cost the universities €374m in the 2020 and 2021 financial years" (McMorrow 2020). Given these substantial challenges, it remains to be seen how initial teacher education providers will meet the recommendation for the staff-student ration suggested in *Céim* (Teaching Council 2020).

2.3.6 Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group (Teaching Council 2021a)

Concurrent with the developments which led to the publication of *Céim* (Teaching Council 2020), the School Placement Working group established in 2018 was also gathering evidence about school placement which resulted in a report and action plan produced in 2019. The *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) was not officially launched until March 2021. In their research for the report, the School Placement Working group was guided by the *School placement in initial teacher education* report (Hall et al. 2018) as well as consultations with a wide range of stakeholders in school placement such as initial teacher education providers, school principals, experienced and new-qualified teachers and student teachers. The working group concluded that there was a consensus of dissatisfaction with the school placement system amongst all stakeholders . It was perceived to be an 'as hoc' process which was both unsuitable and unsustainable (Teaching Council 2021a).

The *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a, p.8) identifies three main challenges:

1. Sourcing and administration of School Placement
2. Financial cost of School Placement for student teachers
3. Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders (with a particular focus on teachers who host student teachers)

Recommendations to address these challenges include (Teaching Council 2021a):

1. The creation of a central school placement system and integrated online portal which would bring more schools into the system and reduce the burden of finding school placement for student teachers. It is also suggested that such a system would reduce administration workload for universities and schools and create a national data base of placement tutors who could operate in different regions across the country.
2. The launch of a demonstration model programme of professional learning to support co-operating teachers/Treoraithe. This programme would be supported by the Teaching

Council and be coordinated by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT), and supported by organisations such as the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT), the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), the Centre for School Leadership (CSL), the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

3. The support, at national level, for the development of formal school-university partnerships. These partnerships would be focused on cultivating professional collaboration (including research opportunities) between colleagues in both organisations, promoting high quality pedagogical practice for both student teachers and practising teachers, and responding to the learning needs of both school students and all teachers.
4. The promotion of a 'Shared Vision' of school placement amongst all stakeholders "as a central feature of initial teacher education, where student teachers are welcomed and supported by HEI tutors, school principals, class teachers and the school community" (Teaching Council 2021a, p.7).
5. The use of the national data base system to provide greater geographic alignment of placement schools to student teachers' living area in order to reduce their costs of transport to their placement schools.
6. The piloting of three models of school placement; "a local model of school placement in a single school, a model of school placement between a number of schools and one HEI, and lastly a regional model of induction for both student teachers and newly appointed staff across fifteen post-primary schools" (Teaching Council 2021a, p.6).

It is suggested that three working groups be established in order to act upon the recommendations made above. These groups include a Placement System Working Group, tasked with developing the centralised system for school placement, a Treoraithe Professional Learning Group with responsibility for developing the programme of continuing professional development for co-operating teachers and a Communications Working Group with the focus of promoting the centralised school placement system and the integrated online hub (Teaching Council 2021a). But, due to the impact of COVID-19 on the current landscape of teacher education, there has been a delay in establishing these working groups (Teaching Council 2021b).

The *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) is a welcome development for school placement in the Republic of Ireland. It is a positive step towards addressing several issues in the current school placement system. In terms of this research, the reference to establishing a national system of continuing professional development for co-operating teachers, along with a national system of formal university-school alliances is particularly welcome. Such developments would enhance the school placement landscape for part-time placement tutors. Nevertheless, despite the consideration given to co-operating teachers and student teachers in the report, there is little reference to the third member of the school placement triad. Placement tutors, whether full-time university-based personnel, or part-time placement tutors such as the participants in this study, receive little or no consideration, apart from the recommendation that a national data base of placement tutors be established so that initial teacher education programme providers could share placement tutors across different geographical areas (Teaching Council 2021a). While this may seem like a laudable suggestion, it would require a lot of further consideration.

Sharing placement tutors across institutions would necessitate a national standard of assessment for student teachers, as well as associated continuing professional development for all placement tutors. In effect, this would be similar to the proposal made in the report for the development of national guidelines and continuing professional development programmes for co-operating teachers but focused on the needs of placement tutors (both part-time and full-time). This appears to be a lost opportunity since developing a national set of agreed guidelines for placement tutors would standardise the approaches taken to assisting and assessing student teachers in school placement. Such a development would enhance the quality of supervision provided for all student teachers. It would also ensure that part-time placement tutors receive the appropriate support and continuing professional development needed to fulfil their role effectively. It appears that, for now at least, this duty continues to remain the sole responsibility of each individual initial teacher education programme provider.

2.4 The placement tutor in initial teacher education

There is much evidence to suggest that student teachers regard school placement, and interaction with placement tutors, as the two most important components of their initial teacher education programme (Feiman-Nemser 2001; Clarke and Jarvis-Selinger 2005; Valencia et al. 2009; Cochran-Smith et al. 2012). Despite this, there is much ambiguity regarding the role of placement tutors, and the consequences it carries for both placement tutors and their student teachers (Gimbert and Nolan 2003). What is clear, however, is that placement tutors enact a multifaceted role, positioned at the heart of the university-school partnership, representing the university, supporting the placement school, supervising the student teacher and upholding the professional standard of teaching (Slick 1997; Koerner et al. 2002; Wilson 2006; Caires and Almeida 2007; Steadman and Brown 2011; Sharqawi and Jarwarneh 2012; Wright et al. 2012; Asplin and Marks 2013; Teaching Council 2013,2020; Burns and Badiali 2015; Burns et al. 2016b; Hall et al. 2018). Through reviewing key commentary and empirical research, an analysis of placement tutors as teacher educators is offered in the following subsections. Consideration is given to the induction and support provided for placement tutors, the biography of placement tutors, the roles and responsibilities undertaken by these teacher educators, the realities of operating in the Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) between university and placement school, the challenges of supporting and evaluating student teachers and the possibilities of supervising with 'care, thoughtfulness and tact' (Cuenca 2010a). In addition, the questions and concerns that emerge are addressed through the lens of the tripartite theoretical framework informing this research study.

2.4.1 Support and continuing professional development for the role of placement tutor

Recruitment patterns and entry criteria to become a teacher educator vary from one institution to the next (International Forum for Teacher Educator Development 2019) and many teacher educators are often appointed without any formal route or qualifications (Caena 2014). In addition, "professional development and guidance offered to university supervisors varies across the universities" (Schwartz et al. 2018, p.7) and most receive limited induction and little or no professional development opportunities (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Slick 1997; Koerner and O'Connell Rust 2002; Cochran-Smith 2003; Zeichner 2005; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Cuenca 2010a; Murphy 2010; Snoek et al. 2011;

Steadman & Brown 2011; Basmadjian 2013; Schwartz et al. 2018). In the research of Kosnik and Beck (2008), novice placement tutors testified to receiving a half-day continuing professional development session, followed by lunch. Ongoing professional development was confined to informal conversations with placement tutor colleagues (Kosnik and Back 2008). Placement tutors in research conducted by Murphy (2010, p.61) reported "specific formal training with regards to the supervision of student teachers was not received", hence they relied on their own teaching experiences, support from colleagues, and self-study opportunities such as attending conferences and professional development events. Cuenca (2010a, p.34) recalls that his introduction to the role of placement tutor was a discussion with the programme coordinator who "quickly outlined my duties in less than an hour" and then left him to his own devices.

Steadman and Brown (2011, p. 59) found that over 93% of faculty members in a teacher education department asserted that placement tutors were "essential members of the student teaching team", yet the researchers also noted: "Minutes from nine department meetings saw no need to discuss, define or document this aspect of teacher education". Placement tutors in initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland reported high level of dissatisfactions with accessing opportunities for professional development and self-study (Ivers et al. 2013). Burns et al. (2016a, p. 68) assert that the role of placement tutors "is becoming more sophisticated and increasingly complex ", yet their review of findings from sixty nine studies published between 2001 and 2013 reveal that research on placement tutors' engagement in professional development was 'sparse'.

2.4.2 The biographies of placement tutors

Being a teacher educator requires a specific set of skills and in this regard the background and experiences of placement tutors are of paramount importance (Cochran-Smith 2005; Cuenca 2010a). The research indicates that, as a rule, placement tutors come from the ranks of retired school principals, retired teachers, and graduate students in universities (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Cochran-Smith 2003; Rodgers and Kiel 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Davy 2013; Rose and Kenny 2014; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019). They are part of the

teacher educator groups in initial teacher education programmes who are "adjunct, part-time, temporary" (Cochran 2003, p.22). In many European countries teacher educator profiles are very varied, and while most teacher educators must have a teaching qualification, in several countries the initial teacher education providers have great autonomy in deciding the qualifications of those who work on their programmes (Cuenca 2014).

Evidence suggests that placement tutors are selected based on availability rather than suitability (Koerner et al. 2002, citing Synder and D'Emilio Gaston 2001; Chambers and Armour 2011; Hall et al. 2018). The converse of this is also true in some programmes where placement tutors are "selected on the basis of their pedagogical expertise" (O'Donoghue and Harford 2010, p.98). Part-time placement tutors have no other involvement in the initial teacher education programme in which they supervise. As a result, they have little or no knowledge of the course content studied by their student teachers. In addition, these part-time placement tutors have little or no direct contact with the student teacher they supervise, and no authority in the teacher education programmes who employ them (Zeichner 2002; Zeichner and Biel 2015).

Placement tutors who come from the ranks of doctorate students have limited experience of teaching themselves and often see supervision of student teachers as a source of financial support for their studies and make little or no effort to engage in self-study or familiarise themselves with teacher education research in order to improve their practice (Zeichner 2005; Zeichner 2010). While many retired teachers bring a wealth of teaching experience to the role of placement tutor, many have little knowledge or experience of the pedagogy of student teacher supervision (Rodgers et al 2007; Basmadjian 2011) and the skill set for teaching school students is not sufficient to successfully mentor student teachers (Kosnik and Beck 2008; Steadman and Brown 2010; Hall et al. 2018). In truth, good teachers do not necessarily make good teacher educators (Feiman-Neimser 2001). Extensive classroom experience does not, in and of itself, translate into knowledge about the "science and art of teaching" (Parker et al. 2019, p.7). It is not enough for placement tutors to simply model good practices of teaching (Dolan and Kenny 2014), rather they must be able to unpack the process of teaching (Loughran 2014) in order to support student teachers on their journey of learning to teach.

In supervising student teachers, placement tutors must consider the pedagogy of teacher education (Williams 2013) in order to assist student teachers to become reflective practitioners (Korthagen et al. 2006, Cuenca 2010b; Hall et al. 2018), and to develop enquiring dispositions (Darling-Hammond 2010). In addition, placement tutors need to understand the implications of supervision and evaluation which constitute two separate, though related, entities (Nolan and Hoover 2010) and which require different approaches (Burns and Badiali 2015). As teacher educators, they need professional development in order to develop the skills necessary to move beyond their experiences of being 'first-order' teachers of school students to become 'second-order' teachers of teachers (Murray and Male 2005). Consequently, the biographies of placement tutors, which may or may not provide rich experiences of teaching, are not in themselves a sufficient requirement to enact the task of student teacher supervision.

2.4.3 Inconsistences in placement tutors' practices

From their research into the practices of placement tutors in an initial teacher education programme located in a large university in the United States, Steadman and Brown (2011) concluded the range and variety of the practices of placement tutors was largely unexamined, and no induction or professional development for the role was provided. In research conducted by Ievers et al. (2013) on initial teacher education systems at primary level in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, placement tutors reported a very high level of dissatisfaction with the system of assessment of student teachers and urged that several issues be addressed. These included recognition of the significance of their role within the Higher Education Institutions, accessing opportunities for professional development and self-study, the need for internal and external moderation and clarity regarding the criteria for assessment of student teachers (Ievers et al. 2013). The lack of professional development and support for placement tutors often forces them to act on their own initiative. Furthermore, it can lead to great autonomy being given to placement tutors in the development of their own practice which may result in approaches to supervision that are based on individual decisions rather than university guidelines (Zeichner 2005; Andrew 2007; Steadman and Brown 2010; Cuenca 2012).

It seems reasonable to surmise that, in the absence of professional development for placement tutors, different approaches to supervision can lead to "very different kinds of learning opportunities for student teachers" (Steadman and Brown 2011, p.65). In a five-year study on the experiences of student teachers on school placement, conducted in five different initial teacher education providers in the Republic of Ireland, participants reported that in their experience, some supervisors required different approaches to teaching from student teachers. (Clarke et al. 2012). In a recent four-year study conducted by Hall et al. (2018), of school placement programmes in six different initial teacher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland, student teacher research participants reported a belief that not all placement tutors adopted the same approach in their supervisory practices, and in many cases, there was variation and inconsistency in the advice received from placement tutors. While complete uniformity of practice amongst placement tutors is not a desired outcome, the supervision of student teachers should be based upon "points of required consistency and acceptable points of divergence" (Steadman and Brown 2011, p.59). Zeichner (2005) supports this viewpoint, claiming that if teacher education is to be taken seriously in colleges and universities then the preparation of teacher educators must be given serious consideration.

2.4.4 Placement tutors' relationships within the school placement triad

As part-time members of the university community who receive little support or professional development (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Slick 1997; Koerner and O'Connell Rust 2002; Cochran-Smith 2003; Zeichner 2005; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Cuenca 2010a; Murphy 2010; Snoek et al. 2011; Steadman & Brown 2011; Basmadjian 2013; Schwartz et al. 2018), and visitors to the school community, placement tutors may often feel like an outsider (Slick 1997; Murphy 2010; Cuenca at al. 2011) in the school placement setting. This situation is compounded by the fact that relationships within the school placement triad can often be complex. It is frequently the case that due to their everyday interaction, the student teacher and co-operating teacher form a coalition which excludes the placement tutor (Murphy 2010). In most initial teacher education programmes, the placement tutor is an infrequent visitor to the school (Rikard 1990), while the co-operating teacher is *in situ* and can be accessed by the student teacher on a daily basis if necessary (Caires and Almeida 2007). Furthermore, since most teacher preparation programmes task placement tutors with the sole

responsibility of assessment of student teachers, "power dynamics can become a focus of practicum relationships" (Aspden and McLachlan 2017, p.23 citing Cattley 2007).

2.4.4.1 The placement tutor-co-operating teacher relationship

The relationship between the placement tutor and the co-operating teacher is affected by several factors. Firstly, it is important to consider how co-operating teachers are selected, and what support, if any, they receive for their role. In the United States, teachers are generally tasked with taking on the role of co-operating teacher in addition to a full teaching timetable, receiving little or no financial compensation for this additional role (Zeichner 2002; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Fives et al. 2016). This situation is paralleled in the Republic of Ireland where co-operating teachers fulfil their role on a voluntary basis and receive neither professional development, nor remuneration for the role (Young et al. 2015; Hall et al. 2018). Zeichner and Biel (2015) assert that attention must be paid to how co-operating teachers are selected and rewarded in order to recognise the professionalism and value of their work. This opinion is supported by Hall et al. (2018, p.11) who posit that co-operating teachers should be "carefully selected and trained for their roles" and these roles should be explicitly understood. While the Teaching Council (2013, 2020) provides clear guidelines regarding the role of the co-operating teachers, no guidance is provided on the selection or professional development of this group of teacher educators. In the Republic of Ireland many co-operating teachers "are either self-selecting or are selected by their school principal" (O'Donoghue 2017, p.174) and many co-operating teachers are chosen based on availability rather than suitability (Hall et al. 2018).

Co-operating teachers' perceptions of placement tutors as 'inspectors' or 'examiners' (Ongel et al. 2002; Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan 2018) is another factor which impacts upon the relationship between these two members of the school placement triad. This is particularly the case in the Republic of Ireland where the assessment of student teachers' competency and performance is decided solely by the placement tutor (Hall et al. 2018). In such circumstances, the relationship between the placement tutor and the co-operating teacher may be compromised by perceptions of power. Some co-operating teachers are happy to defer to placement tutors as experts in supervision of student teachers (Lot and Campbell 2010), while others are challenged by what they perceive as their unequal status when compared to that accorded to

placement tutors. Research centred on two co-operating teachers in a university-school partnership in the Republic of Ireland found that one co-operating teacher believed some placement tutors "come in and lay down the law and walk away" (Young and MacPhail 2014, p. 101). The other participant in this study established a good relationship with the placement tutor who welcomed his involvement in the supervision of the student teacher (Young and MacPhail 2014). However, since the grading of the student teacher was the sole responsibility of the placement tutor, this co-operating teacher felt he was positioned at the periphery of the school placement process. The response of a co-operating teacher in the study conducted by Hall et al. (2018, p. 108) reiterates this point of view, "In a way, we are kind of left out...the relationship is obviously between the student teacher and the tutor".

The third significant factor which impacts upon interactions between placement tutors and co-operating teachers is the different beliefs held by both parties with regards to the nature of teaching, the practices of student teachers and the roles and responsibilities within the school placement triad. In many cases student teachers experience a disconnect between the philosophies and practices of placement tutors and co-operating teachers (Chambers and Armour 2011). Research suggests that placement tutors focus on linking theory and practice in the school placement process, while co-operating teachers champion the practical day to day activities of the teaching in the lesson (Slick 1997; Talvitie et al. 2000; Borko and Maynard 2005; Albasheer et al. 2008; Murphy 2010). In other words, co-operating teachers look at the 'what' and 'how' of teaching, while placement tutors are more concerned with the 'why' (Hall et al. 2018). It is reasonable to surmise that such differences in approach may lead to an uneasy alliance between placement tutors and their co-operating teacher counterparts (Zeichner 1990; Slick 1997; Bullough and Draper 2004; Murphy 2010). Furthermore, many student teachers feel forced to serve two masters; the placement tutor who awards the grade, and the co-operating teacher who provides the daily feedback (Rikard 1990; Burns and Badiali 2015; Burns et al. 2016b).

As school placement coordinator I have spoken with some teachers who report that they were not consulted regarding their appointment to the position of co-operating teacher. Others demonstrate that they are very willing to take on the role, but find they are not timetabled to

observe their student teacher teaching, or to meet with placement tutors during supervision visits. When placement tutors attempt to meet with co-operating teachers during school visits, they are often unable to do so since the co-operating teacher is involved in school duties, therefore "the phrase 'hit and miss' seems to capture the communication between HEI tutor and CT during visits at post primary level" (Hall et al. 2018, p.100). In such circumstances it is very difficult for placement tutors to establish any genuine working relationship with co-operating teachers and this issue is regarded as a "glaring deficit" in initial teacher education programmes (O'Doherty and Hartford 2017, p.171). It comes as no surprise that lack of coordination and communication between placement tutors and co-operating teachers can be a source of stress for many student teachers during their experiences of school placement (Malik and Ajmal 2010; Hall et al. 2018).

2.4.3.2 The placement tutor-student teacher relationship

The relationship between placement tutors and student teachers is affected by two main factors; the part-time statues of the placement tutor and the issue of assessment.

Firstly, since most placement tutors are part-time members of the initial teacher education programme, with little or no contact with student teachers outside of the limited supervision visits, it is difficult to establish any meaningful relationship. In the main, student teachers are pleased with the support provided by placement tutors (Smith and Levi-Ari 2005; Caires et al. 2011; Hall et al. 2018). But limited contact with placement tutors impacts upon placement tutor-student teacher relationships (Borko and Mayfield 1995). Slick (1997) claims that limited interaction between placement tutors and student teachers results in many placement tutors having no previous knowledge of their student teachers, hence walking 'blind', into the school placement site. This situation, coupled with sporadic supervision visits, often requires that placement tutors perform a triage during post-lesson conferences (Slick 1997) with little or no opportunity to progress beyond discussion of classroom management issues (Cuenca et al. 2011).

In a study of relationships formed in school placement triads, Murphy (2010) found that the main form of communication between placement tutors and student teachers was through daily

journals and email, and it did not allow for close or comfortable relationships to develop between these two members of the triad. The research of Asplin and Marks (2013, p.6) indicates that student teachers "who had taken a class from their university supervisor perceived a more positive relationship with that supervisor". Furthermore, they conclude that student teachers are more likely to take on the advice given by placement tutors, if they had a prior relationship with them, while those with no prior relationship with their placement tutor were more inclined to follow the advice of their co-operating teacher (Asplin and Marks 2013). In many cases, student teachers are more influenced by their co-operating teachers' values and behaviours, to the extent that many student teachers attempt to reproduce the teaching style of their co-operating teacher (Rozelle and Wilson 2012; Burns and Badiali 2015; Burns et al. 2016b).

The second factor which impacts upon the relationship between the placement tutor and the student teacher is the issue of assessment. The grade achieved in school placement is very significant for student teachers since future employment prospects can be affected by the perception of teacher competence implied in the grade (Hall et al. 2018). Thus, many student teachers see the placement tutor as 'judge and jury' and readily agree with suggestions made by the placement tutor to avoid any possible disagreement or confrontation (Gimbert and Nolan 2003). The 'power of the grade' can result in student teachers who are willing to "do, or say, anything" to keep placement tutors happy (Andrew 2007, p.14), and they are reluctant to express their ideas freely for fear of displeasing their placement tutor (Clarke et al. 2012). Student teachers are often more focused on assessment and grades than on a relationship with their placement tutors (Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan 2018). The lack of an established relationship is exacerbated by student teachers' perceptions of the hierarchical nature of the supervisory encounter; placement tutors are perceived more as evaluators than supporters. Consequently, many student teachers provide responses which they believe their supervisor wants to hear (Basmadjian 2011) in order to please them (Burns and Badiali 2015). On the whole, student teachers believe different placement tutors favour different approaches (Clarke et al. 2012) and they must 'tune in' to the approach favoured by their placement tutor in order to secure a good grade (Hall et al. 2018).

2.4.4 Placement tutors' roles and responsibilities

Research indicates that there is no universal agreement, on the perceived role, and related responsibilities, of placement tutors in initial teacher education (Gimbert and Nolan 2003). If anything, there appears to be inconsistencies and limited attempts to define the role of placement tutors (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Steadman and Brown 2011). While there is consensus that the role of teacher education is to enable student teachers to make the transition from student, to teacher (Talvitie et al. 2000; Teaching Council 2011a; 2011b; 2013; Burns and Badiali 2015; Burns et al. 2016a), there are varied opinions on how placement tutors can best facilitate this transition.

The literature emphasises that placement tutors are key to enabling student teachers make connections between the theory and practice of teaching, develop enquiring dispositions and become self-reflective teachers (Zeichner 2010; Cuenca 2010a; Darling-Hammond 2010; Hall et al. 2018; Schwartz et al. 2018). Slick (1997) contends that placement tutors need to be an advocate for student teachers; but also, for co-operating teachers, so the latter are enabled to support the former. The concept of the placement tutor as a liaison (Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Wilson 2006), or bridge (Wright et al. 2012; Asplin and Marks 2013), between the university and the school is a popular one in the literature. In this regard the placement tutor has also been called a 'gatekeeper' (Slick 1997), a 'go-between' (Koerner et al. 2002), an 'interpreter (Caires and Almeida 2007), a 'link' (Sharqawi and Jarwarneh 2012; Burns and Badiali 2015), and a 'mediator' (Steadman and Brown 2013). Burns and Badiali (2015, p.420) suggest "all of these terms are encompassed by the broader term of 'hybrid educator', who is required to "transverse school/university boundaries".

Reynolds et al. (2013) suggests that the work of teacher educators involves 'dancing in the ditches', between the fields of the university and the school, in order to bring all three sides of the school placement triad together. Placement tutors are central to enabling communication by all members of the school placement triad; by acting as mentors, professional sources and interpreters (Enz and Freeman 1996) and are responsible for building good relationships with schools (Moran 2008). Placement tutors are required to fulfil a 'multi-dimensional' role, working with an array of personnel in school placement (student teachers, co-operating

teachers, school management) as well as staff from the university (Hall et al. 2018). Therefore, they are tasked with managing "a range of circumstances, responsibilities, relationships and institutional demands" (Hall et al. 2018, p.34). The multi-functioning aspect of the role of placement tutor is also emphasised by Asplin and Marks (2013, p.2) who assert that placement tutors must be, "expert on course content, a learning facilitator and curriculum developer, a mentor and a role model, a supporter and nurturer of students".

The importance of placement tutors providing support for student teachers is highlighted by Cuenca (2010b). He suggests that placement tutors should act as 'teacher pedagogues' walking beside these novice teachers as they negotiate the challenges of learning to teach, employing an approach to supervision guided by 'care, thoughtfulness and tact'. And so, placement tutors, move away from being a technician entering the school placement experience with a checklist of activities to which the student teacher must conform, and become caring educators who have "a personal commitment and interest in students' education and in their growth and development" (Cuenca 2010b, p.268). This model of practice is supported by Fernadez and Erbilgin (2009) who posit that placement tutors should be 'educative' supervisors who focus on student teachers' individual experiences in school placement, using a range of pedagogical approaches to move them beyond issues of classroom management towards a more reflective practice.

Upon reflection, this account highlights that the role of placement tutors in initial teacher education is a complex, multifaceted one, with numerous and varied responsibilities. The research of Higgins et al. (2013) emphasises that the placement tutor's role is a complex one. Slick (1997) contends that, ultimately, the inherent dilemma is that while placement tutors may strongly desire to support student teachers, they are also aware that they must act as 'gatekeepers' of the teaching profession in order to ensure that student teachers meet the criteria of good teaching. The responsibility for evaluating their performance lies with the placement tutor in most countries (Coolahan 2002). In the Republic of Ireland, placement tutors are expected to support, mentor and assess student teachers "in accordance with the HEI's requirements" (Teaching Council 2013, p.18). The research study of Hall et al. (2018) provides evidence that Irish placement tutors are solely responsible for assessment of their student

teachers, but also keenly aware of their role of support and guidance. Indeed, some of the placement tutor research participants in the study conducted by Hall and her colleagues expressed concern regarding the impact of assessment on the mental wellbeing of student teachers (Hall et al. 2018). In this scenario the significance of the duality of the placement tutor as assessor and assistor (Slick 1997) or supporter and judge (Smith 2005) cannot be underestimated.

2.4.5 Placement tutors' dual role of assisting and assessing

One of the greatest challenges for placement tutors is to enact the dual role of supporting and evaluating student teachers (Slick 1997; Walsh and Dolan 2018) since there is an inherent dilemma in "separating the functions of assisting and assessing" (Gimbert and Nolan 2003, p.373). This is compounded by the fact that student teachers are greatly influenced by the evaluative/authoritative role of the supervisor (Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Borko and Mayfield 2005; Andrew 2007; Murphy 2010; Clarke et al. 2012; Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan 2018).

In researching the identities and perspectives of seven placement tutors, Walsh and Dolan (2018, p.6) reported that all participants experienced a tension between the role of advisor and assessor, and many found it challenging to find a balance between these two roles. A few years previously, Burns and Badiali (2015) explored this challenge in their study of the experiences of a novice placement tutor (and recent teacher) in her first year of supervising student teachers. They utilised Nolan and Hoover's (2011) dimensions of supervision and evaluation to examine the duality of support and assessment, identifying moments whereby the research participant operated from the position of evaluator (an assessment-focused hierarchical position) and supervisor (a supportive colloquial position) in her work with student teachers. I believe understanding the difference and interconnectedness of these two concepts is fundamental to addressing placement tutors' dual role of assisting and assessing. In examining Hoover and Nolan's (2011) dimensions of supervision and evaluation, it is important to qualify that I am adopting their use of the term 'supervisor' as a supportive, affirming role, cognisant that in the Republic of Ireland the term supervisor generally has connotations closer to that of assessor

and evaluator. Despite these differences in interpretation of title, I believe Hoover and Nolan's (2011) distinction between supervision (support) and evaluation is a very useful one to consider when addressing the dualistic nature of placement tutors' roles.

2.4.5.1 Supervision and evaluation - separate but connected

Nolan and Hoover (2011, p.1) assert that, currently, "teacher supervision and evaluation lack precise descriptions of the relationship between teacher supervision and evaluation". They posit that supervision and evaluation serve two essentially different functions; separate, but complementary (Nolan and Hoover 2011). Supervision works as "an organisational function, concerned with promoting growth, leading to improvement in teacher performance and greater student learning" (Nolan and Hoover 2011, p.6). Emphasis is upon the individual teacher concerned, assessing his or her needs and providing a platform and support where these needs can be addressed and supported (Nolan and Hoover 2011). In this approach, there is no concern with making judgements regarding a teacher's competence and teaching performance. Evaluation, by contrast, seeks to make judgements concerning performance and competence in order to ensure each teacher is performing, at a minimum, in a competent manner (Nolan and Hoover 2011). The task of supervising and evaluating teachers is usually carried out by different personnel, the latter is a "state-mandated function" (Nolan and Hoover 2011, p.6), while the former can be carried out by multiple personnel in the school setting, including by the teachers themselves (Nolan and Hoover 2011).

If we are to subscribe to Nolan and Hoover's model of supervision and evaluation, there are two concerns when it comes to working with student teachers. Firstly, placement tutors are called upon to enact these two different, yet inter-related, roles simultaneously (Nolan and Hoover 2011), which, in turn, often leads to tension, confusion and ambiguity for both placement tutors and student teachers (Burns and Badiali 2015; Walsh and Nolan 2018). Given the tenuous relationship between placement tutors and student teachers, the inherent tension of assister and assessor can be particularly challenging for many placement tutors in their part-time capacity. Secondly, the case of supervising and evaluating student teachers is different from that of qualified teachers, since student teachers are looking at a classroom through the eyes of a student on one hand, and the lens of an aspiring teacher on the other hand (Nolan and

Hoover 2011). In other words, student teachers are both "learners of learning and learners of teaching" (Korthagen et al. 2006, p.1026).

Fundamental to this experience, is the lifelong journey of learning to teach (OECD 1991; Conway et al. 2009; Teaching Council 2011a, 2013; Snoek 2011; European Commission 2015; Holme 2016; Smith 2016; Hall et al. 2018) which student teachers embark upon when they begin their first school placement. A model proposed by Fuller (1969), suggests that student teachers embark on an 'outward' journey, beginning with their concerns with self (how will I manage?) to concerns with tasks/situations (how will I best teach this subject?), to concerns for learners (how will I best teach this student?). Conway and Clarke (2003) revise and extend Fuller's model, proposing that while the outward journey described by Fuller (1969) occurs, there is a corresponding 'inward' journey occurring for student teachers as they become 'reflective practitioners' (Schön 1983), learning to reflect critically on themselves as teachers.

Nolan and Hoover (2011) opine that one of the greatest challenges for placement tutors is to fulfil their role in a way that enables student teachers to manage the transition from university student to classroom teacher. They suggest that this is achieved by placement tutors through "modelling effective teaching, providing scaffolding or developmentally appropriate feedback and support when necessary, fostering a climate conducive to inquiry and reflection" (Nolan and Hoover 2011, p.218). Burns et al. (2016a) concur with this advice, emphasising that the supervision of student teachers should involve tasks and practices that support student teachers in their journey of learning to teach. Basmadjian (2011) also provides support for the model of supervision suggested by Nolan and Hoover (2011) when he suggests that placement tutors should use a supervisory-informed pedagogy of questions, comments, suggestions that open the door for collaboration with student teachers, thus achieving the necessary balancing of support and assessment. Similar advice is advanced by Cuenca (2010b) when he suggests that placement tutors should operate with care, thoughtfulness and tact when supervising student teachers.

2.4.5.2 The challenge of duality

While placement tutors may strive to be supportive supervisors, the reality is that they are also tasked with evaluating student teachers. As evaluators, they make judgements about student teachers' competencies and performances. In consequence, placement tutors are challenged with providing a safe space for student teachers to be free to take risks and explore possibilities, while all the while making "summative decisions about whether these preservice teachers are attaining professional standards of performance" (Nolan and Hoover 2011, p.228). Furthermore, to ensure student teachers receive maximum support in their developmental journey, placement tutors must work in tandem with co-operating teachers who support them in this endeavour (Nolan and Hoover 2011). As discussed previously, placement tutors' relationships with co-operating teachers can vary from school to school, and often the best that can be hoped for is a sometimes-uneasy alliance (Zeichner 1990; Slick 1997; Bullough and Draper 2004; Murphy 2010). In a study of the interaction of a placement tutor with a student teacher, and a co-operating teacher in a school placement triad, Slick (1997) discovered that the placement tutor was caught in a triangle of conflict as a result of trying to support the student teacher, maintain a respectful relationship with the co-operating teacher, and adhere to appropriate professional teaching standards.

Confusion regarding the difference between supervision and evaluation is often a problem for placement tutors. An example of this occurred in Burns and Badiali's (2015) research on a novice placement tutor's practice on school placement; the result of which led to the placement tutor adopting an approach which was one of evaluating, rather than supervising (supporting) student teachers. The researchers attributed this problem to the placement tutor's lack of experience, and the lack of professional development or support received for her role.

2.4.5.3 Reconciling the roles of assistor and assessor

In order to reconcile the challenge of assessing and evaluating student teachers' competencies, while maintaining the stance of a supportive supervisor, placement tutors need professional development opportunities in order to understand the fundamental differences between supervision and evaluation (Burns and Badiali 2015). They also need to be provided with strategies to implement appropriate approaches, in a fair and effective manner. For their own

part, placement tutors need to examine their models of practice for working with student teachers, in order to nurture their professional development, while also calling them to account in order to achieve professional teaching standards (Nolan and Hoover 2011). It challenges placement tutors to embrace a fundamental shift from teacher, to teacher educator, and from the position of 'evaluative', to 'educative' supervision (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009).

The 'educative' placement tutor (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009), acts as a 'teacher pedagogue' who supervises student teachers with 'care, thoughtfulness and tact' (Cuenca 2010b), in an approach which reconciles the separate, but connected, roles of assisting and assessing student teacher. This model of supervision promotes student teachers as co-constructors of learning (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009), encouraging them to build upon their practice, through supported dialogue and reflection, including assessment of their performance against an accessible set of criteria of best practice. As 'teacher pedagogues' (Cuenca 2010b), placement tutors recognise that student teachers begin teaching at different entry points. As 'educative' supervisors (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009), placement tutors operate along a continuum of director, and facilitator of learning, depending on each student teacher's individual abilities and experiences. Assessment by placement tutors, done with, rather than of, student teachers, ultimately becomes an integral part of assisting them to learn. In this approach, student teachers are empowered to take ownership of teaching dilemmas and make informed decisions without fear of the evaluation process (Nolan and Hoover 2011); and the dilemma of separating assisting from assessing (Slick 1997; Gimbert and Nolan 2003) is addressed for placement tutors.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

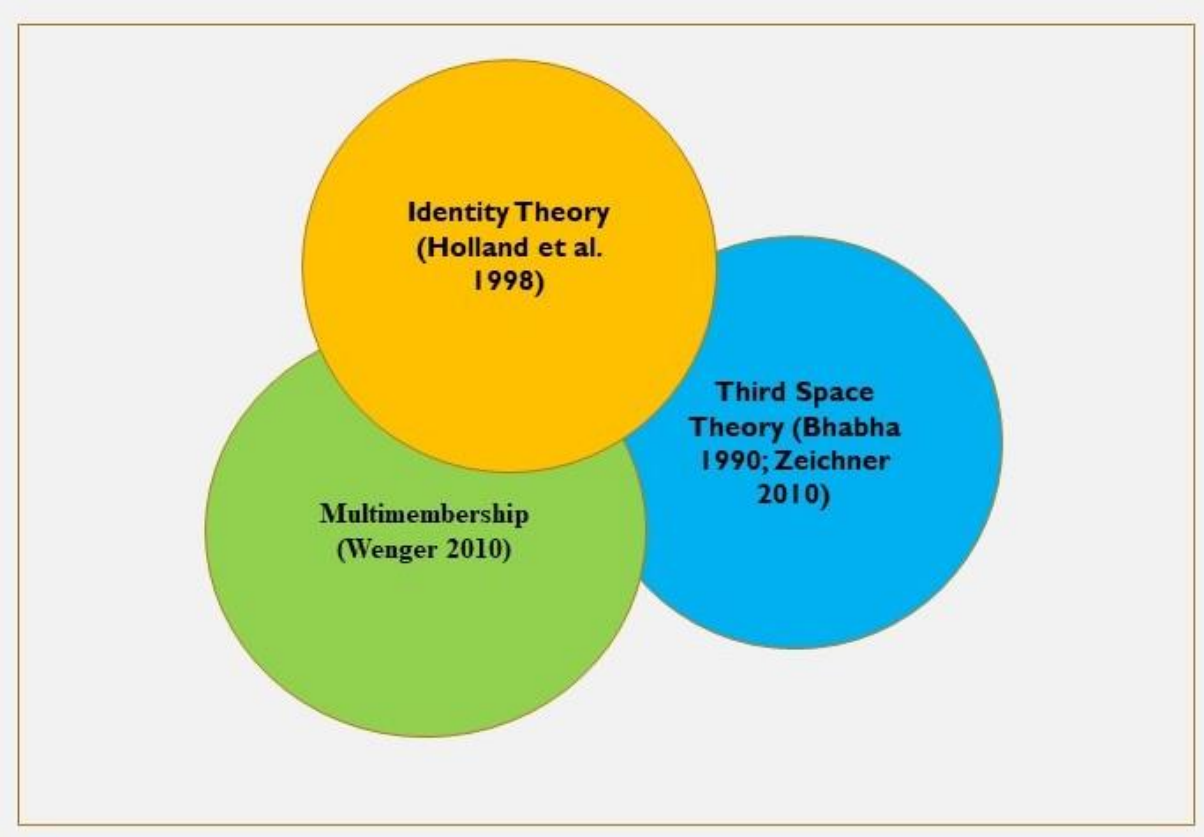
The theoretical framework used to inform and guide my study consists of three interrelated constructs; Identity (Holland et al. 1998), Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010), and Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010). These constructs belong to the school of sociocultural theory, which proposes that human development is a socially mediated process where "learning is thought to occur through interaction, negotiation, and collaboration" (Scott and Palincsar 2013, p.5). The emergence of sociocultural theory is attributed to the work of

Vygotsky (1898-1934) who claimed that social experiences shape the way in which we think about and understand the world around us. This viewpoint endorses learning as a socially constructed activity, in which individuals interact with one another, through problem solving activities, in order to negotiate meaning in the world (Jaramillo 1996).

Taken individually, each of the three constructs of Identity (Holland et al. 1998), Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010), and Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) is a valuable sociocultural paradigm for framing the research. Together, they interconnect and intersect to offer a rich foundation for this inquiry. Identity is socially constructed (Holland et al. 1998), developing and transforming as we interact in the communities we inhabit (Holland et al. 1998; Rodgers and Scott 2008; Verhaeghe 2012). Likewise, multimembership (being part of several communities of practice) is strongly linked to identity formation (Wenger 2010). In the domain of Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010), individuals bring knowledge and practices from former separate individual spaces to a new shared space in order to create and co-construct new knowledge. As a result, Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) can lead to a new community of practice, added multimembership opportunities and further shifts in identity.

Adopting a tripartite theoretical framework for the study (Table 2C) afforded many angles from which to view my research, many points of entry for structuring my data, and many sources to support me in the analysis of my data.

Table 2C: A Tripartite Theoretical Framework



An overview is now presented of each individual construct, in order to provide insight into the different, though complementary concepts, perspectives and hypotheses offered in the tripartite theoretical framework.

2.5.1. Identity

How we behave in any given situation is directly influenced by the 'kind of person' we are, and Gee (2000) suggests that multiple identities are revealed in that moment. This section explores the meanings attributed to identity, the ways in which we construct our identities, and the contribution of the work of Holland et al. (1998) on identity formation.

2.5.1.1 Defining identity

Providing a definition of identity is a difficult task. Fearon (1999) emphasises that, while people have a general sense of how to use the word in everyday discourse, it is challenging to offer a definition which fully captures the range of meanings inherent in the word. In reviewing a wide range of definitions offered in the literature, he concludes that the term identity employed in everyday discourse is used in two interlinked senses, social and personal (Fearon 1999). Social identity comes from our membership of a group or social category which has certain rules, procedures and attributes, while personal identity is related to the personal traits or characteristics we possess, and which distinguish us as individuals (Fearon 1999).

A useful definition, which clearly elucidates the central tenets of identity, is provided by Holland et al (1998, p.3); "People tell people who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as though they are who they say they are. These self-understandings …are what we refer to as identities". This definition emphasises the two core features of our identities; they are socially constructed and occur "in and through activity" Holland et al (1998, p.5). Identity is shaped within multiple contexts which result from the influence of social, cultural, political and historical factors (Holland et al. 1998; Sloan 2006; Rodgers and Scott 2008; Mc Keon and Harrison 2010; Akkerman and Meijer 2011).A significant part of the social process of identity occurs in the relationships we form with other

people, which, in turn, means that we are recognised as a particular kind of person by our family, friends and colleagues (Rodgers and Scott 2008). As such "the flickering screen of the outside world…acts as a constant mirror of identity" (Verhaeghe 2012, p.7).

Beijaard et al. (2004, p.108) suggest that, while the concept of identity may have different meanings in the literature, there is a consensus "that identity is not a fixed attribute of a person but a relational phenomenon", and it is something which one develops over a lifetime. Our identity can change from moment to moment; it is ever evolving, and it is always in the process of becoming (Holland et al. 1998; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Akkerman and Meijer 2011; O' Brien and Furlong 2015). The formation of an identity is an ongoing process rather than a fixed and finished product (Wenger 1998). Our identity shifts and reshapes constantly (Beauchamp and Tomas 2009), depending on our storyline and how we search to find meanings within it. Hence the development of identity is not a linear experience, but one which involves revisiting the past and looking into the future, in order to make sense of the present (Wenger 1998). In relation to the focus of this research, this is evidenced in how teacher educators use their teacher identity of the past, their once-a-teacher identity, to inform their teacher educator identity of the present (Murray and Male 2005; Murray 2008b, 2014; Murray et al. 2011; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Dinkelman 2011; Williams 2013; Hökkä and Eteläpelto 2014; White 2014; O' Brien and Furlong 2015).

2.5.1.2 Constructing an identity

Identities developed though social practice and dialogue with others play a significant part in how we see our identity, and in terms of how others see it (Beijaard et al. 2004). Discourse and stories are powerful tools for developing our identity and sense of self (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). Identity formation involves continual construction and reconstruction of stories, using a storyline from which we draw upon to make sense of ourselves and our world (Rodgers and Scott 2008). In this way, our identity is "formed and reformed by stories we tell, and which draw upon our communications with others" (Beijaard et al. 2004, p.123). The way in which we communicate with another person not only conveys a message, it also provides a statement about who we are in relation to the other (Holland et al. 1998). Our identity is

constantly emerging through our discourse. Therefore, identity is both formed and framed, by language.

2.5.1.3 Inter-related aspects of identity

Holland et al. (1998) propose that there are three aspects of identity which can contribute to identity formation; positional identity, figured identity, and authored identity. These facets of identity exist simultaneously and come to the fore at different times as we negotiate everyday life and living (Holland et al.1998).

Positional identity is the identity we inhabit in our everyday life and living. It is related to our sense of place in society and the entitlements that come with that, "a person's apprehension of her social position in a lived world" (Holland et al. 1998, p.128). Put simply, positional identity is about our place in the world, incorporating our work or school life, our position in society, in the community, amongst our family and friends. In this regard, positional identity is played out in the ongoing daily activities of our lives. The construct of positional identity offered by Holland et al. (1998), shares similarities with the concept of 'I-Identity' proposed by Gee (2000), where identity is seen as being dependent upon the position we hold in society and the roles we play therein. Positional identity is evident in "the way in which we live day to day" (Wenger 1998, p.151); how we dress, talk, work, even the places we go and the dialect we adopt. It is manifested in the "social-interactional, social-relational structures of the lived world" (Holland et al. 1998, p.151).

Our *figured identity* emerges as we try to understand and operate in the 'figured world' we inhabit; the "socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognised" (Holland et al. 1998, p.52). If positional identity is ascribed to us as a result of our place in the world, our figured identity develops as a consequence of the stories, actions and characters that are part of our cultural worlds. We become drawn into, and formed, in these worlds, learning to figure out the best way of relating to others over time, and in different places and contexts (Holland et al. 1998; Urrieta 2007). Figured worlds are part of everyday social activity. These worlds are "peopled by the figures,

characters and types who carry out its tasks" (Holland et al.1998, p.51). Our figured identities develop as we participate in the activities and practices of the figured worlds we encounter. Different types of people inhabit figured worlds, interacting in specific ways with others in that world. They share meaning, discourse and a perspective particular to that figured world. Whether or not individuals are drawn into a figured world, is dependent on who they are and their own personal story (Urrieta 2007).

As we develop a more confident figured identity, we may choose to extend the boundaries of our figured world and thenceforth, an *authored identity* emerges (Hall et al. 1998). This process requires that we move beyond reproducing the figured world, to a space where we become agents of change as we form, and reform, our own practices (Holland et al. 1998). Authoring our identity occurs as a result of our response to a particular situation at a given time (Holland et al. 1998) in terms of our "personal, social and cognitive response" (Flores and Day 2006, p.220). The degree, to which we can become an agent within any cultural system, or figured world, is dependent on how we identify with that world, and our level of expertise within it (Sloan 2006). This heightened awareness of our identity increases our agency, providing us with a confidence to "move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context" (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009, p.183). Key to developing a professional identity is the act of agency; actively pursuing professional development and learning in our sphere (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). Through agency we develop an Integrated Identity (Nyström 2008); the professional identity we form when we reach a level of maturity and experience in our profession which enables us to negotiate the spheres of professional, personal and private life in our work practice. In this way we enter "the space of authoring" where we are enabled to give a personal response to encounters, practices and response from others in our figured worlds (Holland et al. 1998).

2.5.1.4 The identities of placement tutors

The literature reveals that, fundamentally, there is a close link for teacher educators between their former teaching identity, and their current teacher educator identity (Murray and Male 2005; Murray 2008b, 2014; Murray et al. 2011; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Dinkelman 2011; Williams 2013; Hökkä and Eteläpelto 2014; White 2014; O' Brien and Furlong 2015). Given

the lack of professional development and support provided for placement tutors, they rely on previous teaching experience and their past identity as a teacher, 'clinging to the life raft of school' (Murray and Male 2005), in order to inform their practice as teacher educators. The research of White (2014) reveals that many teacher education programmes employ placement tutors who continue to teach on a part-time basis in school settings; consequently combining a dual role of teacher, and teacher educator. This duality of roles makes it challenging for these placement tutors to establish their professional identities as teacher educators, rather than teachers who occasionally teach or supervise student teachers (White 2014). Murray and Male (2005) assert it may take up to three years for teacher educators to establish an identity. This viewpoint is supported by Dinkelman et al. (2006, p.6) who suggest "one's professional identity as a teacher educator is constructed over time".

Reflecting on her first year as a teacher educator, a research participant in a study conducted by Murray and Male (2005) recalls how she had to adopt a shift in thinking about how she taught in school to how she could teach students who were learning to teach. From their research conducted on two novice teacher educators, Dinkelman et al. (2006) discovered that these teacher educators also experienced a multiplicity of identities as, without support, they often relied on experiences and knowledge gained as a teacher in order to meet the challenges of the role of placement tutor. In reflecting upon her experience as a beginning teacher educator, Williams (2013, p.123) recalls writing journal entries which "showed evidence of continually shifting professional identities and the crossing and recrossing of boundaries between my thinking as a teacher and as a teacher educator". As a teacher, Williams understood that student teachers had to develop the ability to teach effectively. But as a teacher educator, she also recognised that learning to teach teachers was a complex process.

The experience of 'shifting identities' experienced by placement tutors, concurs with the work of Holland et al. (1998) who opine that our identity is always in flux, moving between positional, figured, and authoring domains of identity formation in response to the situations that emerge in our negotiation of everyday life. These categories of identity are separable but not separate and we move between them as we live our lives (Holland et al. 1998). The positional identity of placement tutors comes from the shared understanding conferred by the

role, including a knowledge of teaching and student teachers, and it is apparent in their daily 'living' of the role. The figured identity is manifested in how placement tutors negotiate the nuances of their role in the figured world of initial teacher education, particularly in terms of providing support for the student teacher in the school placement experience. Furthermore, placement tutors come in contact with two other figured worlds; that of the university and the school and it should be noted that in all figured worlds "significance is assigned to certain acts and particular outcomes are valued over others" (Holland et al. 1998, p.52). Part-time placement tutors are infrequent visitors to both figured worlds, and the importance of their contribution may be negatively impacted by this fact. This, in turn, impacts upon placement tutors' figured identities within both worlds.

The act of authoring identity occurs when placement tutors becomes agents of change, reflecting upon their practice in order to find an approach that allows for an individual response to particular contexts, within the structures provided for supervising student teachers. Teacher educators have "significant agency in constructing their role identity and practices amidst the multiple, complex, and variable settings in which their work takes place" (Dinkelman et al. 2006, p.7). Moving from classroom to university, however, with limited induction, support or professional development, placement tutors are expert teachers, but novice teacher educators. Fundamental to agency is the concept of a well-defined identity, since a strong sense of identity empowers us to "move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context" (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009, p.183). Despite this, becoming agentic in their practice may prove challenging for placement tutors since, with 'a foot in both camps' (Kosnik and Beck 2008), they are often forced to oscillate between the identities of teacher and teacher educator.

2.5.2 Multimembership

As established by the work of Holland et al. (1998), a significant part of forming our identity comes from our interaction with others. The way in which we respond to others, and how others respond to us, can contribute to our sense of who we are. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the practices observed in our everyday work, home and social communities. Lave and Wenger (1991) claim that identity formation occurs in communities of practice where members

bring together their collective domain of learning, and share practices, commensurate with agreed rules, norms and criteria, in order to advance their learning. Wenger (2010) contends that membership of any community is only part of our identity. He claims that we are members of many different communities of practice; hence we occupy a position of 'multimembership' of several communities, at home, in the local community, at work and in social/recreational arenas (Wenger 2010). Such multimembership is an inherent part of constructing an identity, since in each community we behave differently, presenting different aspects of ourselves and gaining different perspectives on ourselves (Wenger 2010). Since placement tutors operate in two different communities of practice, the university and the school, there is potential for a multimembership experience. The construct of multimembership will be examined in this section through exploring the concept of a community of practice and the multimembership that can evolve from being part of different communities of practice.

2.5.2 1 The concept of a community of practice

The concept of communities of practice proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) emerged from extensive research they conducted on systems of apprenticeship in many different fields, including Yucatec midwives, Vai and Gola tailors, US Navy quartermasters, meat-cutters, and non-drinking alcoholics in Alcoholics Anonymous. A community of practice is a process of social learning that occurs when people, who have a common interest in a subject, or area, collaborate over an extended period of time, sharing ideas and strategies in order to find solutions, and build innovations (Wenger 1998). Situated learning occurs in a community of practice as a result of taking up membership and participating in the practices of the community (Lave and Wenger 1991). Meaning is negotiated within communities of practice, through participation in the community, and through reification of the knowledge produced by the community (Wenger 1998). Communities of practice exists amongst groups of people "who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger et al. 2002, p.4).

Lave and Wenger are not the only researchers to use the term 'community of practice'. Hoadley (2012) suggests that the term can be traced back to research conducted by Constant (1987) on knowledge management and innovation, and by Orr (1990) on the work of Xerox

photocopy repair men, both of which provide examples of communities of practice sharing stories, ideas and solutions to solve problems. Key to the concept of a community of practice is the belief that knowledge and learning occur as a result of social activities and cultural practices (Chindgren and Tech 2005; Hoadley 2012).

2.5.2.2 Community of practice: a critique

Since it was first introduced in 1991, Lave and Wenger's concept of communities of practice has received much interest and attention in education, health, business, industry, governance, social sectors and the web (Wenger et al. 2002; Chindgren and Tech 2005; Roberts 2006; Resnick and Mejia 2007; Urrieta 2007; Amin and Roberts 2008; Storberg-Walker 2008; Wenger 2010, 2011; Hoadley 2012). However, Amin and Roberts (2008, p.365) posit that "the use of the term community of practice as a proxy for all forms of situated knowing is unhelpful". In their reading of the literature, Amin and Roberts (2008, p.356) discovered the term has been used for "craft workers, task specialists, public sector professionals, online communities, creative artists, scientists and technicians ". They caution on the dangers of using the term to describe any and every kind of community, asserting some groups who operate under the guise of community of practice have little in common with "the task or craft-based communities" originally studied by Lave and Wenger (Amin and Roberts 2008, p.365). They claim that the knowledge employed and produced, the type of social interaction that develops, the innovation attempted, and the interaction dynamics that occur in different organisation vary greatly from one group to the next, and a community of practitioners is not always a community of practice (Amin and Roberts 2008).

Storberg-Walker (2008) argues that there is a lack of consensus on what exactly is meant by the term 'community of practice', citing an array of terms which have been used to describe it. Some of these include 'a notion' (Diguid 2005; Handley et al. 2006 cited in Storberg-Walker 2008), 'a general scientific perspective' (Peltonen and Lamsa 2004 cited in Storberg-Walker 2008), 'a concept' (Cox 2005; Pemberton et al. 2007 cited in Storberg-Walker 2008), 'an approach' (Roberts 2006 cited in Storberg-Walker 2008) and 'a group' (O'Donnell et al. 2003 cited in Storberg-Walker 2008). This researcher believes that such different and differing

interpretations have “denigrated the concept to a point where academics are justifiably sceptical of its theoretical and analytical strength” (Storberg-Walker 2008, p.566).

Not all communities are communities of practice. A combination of three elements constitute a community of practice; a shared domain of interest whereby members show commitment to the domain through sharing their competence, sustained engagement in joint activities and discussions to help each other, share knowledge and learn from each other, and the development of a shared practice to address learning within the community (Wenger and Wenger-Trayner 2015). The concept of a community of practice involves problem solving, the quest for knowledge, revising assets, coordination and synergy of resources, discussions of developments, documenting of projects and tracing knowledge in order to identify gaps (Wenger and Wenger-Trayner 2015). Such a community of practice can be found in any community where knowledge is viewed as “a property lying somewhere between individuals and cultures, involving practices in context” (Hoadley 2012, p.290).

Over twenty years after he first introduced the concept with his colleague Lave, Wenger acknowledges that the term community of practice has been embraced widely by many people to mean many things (Omidvar and Kislov 2014). That being said, he emphasises that the variety of interpretation of communities of practice is not the significant issue, what matters to him is “Does it make a difference in the world?” (Wenger in Omidvar and Kislov 2014, p.270).

2.5.2.3 Placement tutors in communities of practice

The concept of a community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) can be applied to the two communities which provide the backdrop for the work of placement tutors, the school and the university. Each possesses the three characteristics fundamental to a community of practice. There is a mutual engagement by members in order to fulfil their task of scholarship and learning (Wenger 1998). Through this process each community becomes a social entity (Smith 2002, 2009), where members take part in a joint enterprise which is communally negotiated and which, over time, leads to a shared repertoire of resources (Wenger 1998). These resources include “experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems - in short, a shared practice" (Wenger and Wenger-Trayner 2015, p.2).

In many ways, a community of practice represents the figured world identified by Holland et al. (1998), where "activities, discourses, performances and artefacts" are produced by people who share meaning and perspectives particular to that world (Holland et al. 1998, p.51). Correspondently, schools and universities are both figured worlds and communities of practice. In light of the focus of this study, the question to be addressed is can placement tutors contribute to, and learn from, each of these communities of practice and figured worlds? I believe the key to answering this question lies in exploring the potential for placement tutors to harness the learning potentialities of their multimembership of school and university communities of practice.

2.5.2.4 The multimembership of placement tutors

Being part of several communities of practice involves different responses and different levels of practice, which, in turn, challenges us to construct an identity from a 'nexus of multimembership' (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010). The construct of multimembership offered by Wenger supports a concept of identity formation similar to that proposed by Holland et al. (1998). Wenger proposes that the negotiation of self, through words and actions, help individuals to construct their identity. That construction occurs within the individual self, and within the community of practice to which one belongs. Holland et al. (1998, p.57) concur with this idea, asserting that identities "become important outcomes of participation in communities of practice". It is significant to note that Wenger takes the notion of identity further, beyond the definition of who we are at a given time, to an exploration of the impact our identity has upon our learning. He proposes that, in fact, our identity is "crucial to social learning systems" (Wenger 2009, p.239), and forming identities in communities of practice enables us to develop competencies, to open up to different ways of being in the world, and to find ways of negotiating boundaries we encounter in our experience of multimembership (Wenger 2009).

Placement tutors move between two communities of practice (university and placement school), each of which presents a different 'landscape of practice' (Wenger 2010). While they are 'legitimate' members (Wenger 1998) of both communities, the extent to which placement tutors can become 'strategic' or 'transformative' members (Wenger 1998) is dependent on how

they are perceived in these different communities of practice. Thus, it is significant to note that, currently, placement tutors are often perceived as a marginalised member in both communities (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Slick 1997; Murphy 2010; Izadinia 2014), outsiders in the school (Slick 1997; Murphy 2010; Asplin and Marks 2013) and shadowy figures in the university (Kosnik and Beck 2008). Promoting practices of multimembership in the school and university settings has the potential to move placement tutors from the position of marginalised outsider in both communities of practice.

Adopting a position of multimembership acknowledges that there is potential for placement tutors to fulfil a 'brokering' role (Wenger 1998; Wenger 2000; Jackson and Burch 2019) through introducing elements of the practice of one community to the other. A broker or boundary spanner helps participants to take knowledge and practices shared and move them to a place of new knowledge and practice. Jackson and Burch (2019) suggest that the task of a broker is like merging two dance styles in order to create a new dance style guided by insider knowledge of the two previous dance styles. It also requires a platform or space where exploration, improvisation and creative vision is valued.

2.5.3 Third Space

The possibility of placement tutors as 'brokers' between two communities of practice resonates strongly with the call by Zeichner (2010) to create a 'Third Space' of learning in initial teacher education programmes. He postulates that doing so can help resolve the disconnection between theory (the academic knowledge of the university) and practice (practitioner knowledge of the school) often experienced by student teachers in school placement (Zeichner 2005, 2010). In light of this, an analysis of the origins of Third Space learning, its central tenets, its potential for initial teacher education and the contribution that can be made by placement tutors is now provided.

2.5.3.1 The origins and use of Third Space Theory

The concept of Third Space is attributed to Bhabha (1990), a leading figure in post colonialist studies (Meredith 1998; Gutiérrez et al. 1999; Moje et al. 2004, Hulme et al. 2009; Zeichner 2010; Martin et al. 2011). From his research on post-colonial communities, Bhabha (1990) suggests that culture and identity amongst colonised people is negotiated through the creation of hybrid spaces, positioned between the coloniser and the colonised, which give rise to a Third Space of new meanings (Meredith 1998). In Third Space ideology, different forms of knowledge and discourse are integrated or hybridised to produce new learning, understanding and practices (Cuenca et al. 2011)

Third Space theory has been adopted as a model of practice for teaching literacy. This approach is based on a belief that when discourse from the 'first space' of a person's home, community, and peer group is merged with that of the 'second space' of more formal settings, such as school or work, a Third Space of new understanding is achieved (Moje et al. 2004). From their research on literacy practices in an elementary school classroom, Gutiérrez et al. (1999, p. 286-287) concluded that when different and differing discourse occurs in the Third Space, there is the potential to "transform conflict and difference into rich zones of collaboration and learning which, in turn, leads to new and diverse activities, roles and practices".

Another example of Third Space learning is found in a project involving collaboration between a university in England and six regional authorities set up to respond to Every Child Matters - a UK government initiative set up in 2003 to reform policies relating to child welfare (Hulme et al. 2009). These researchers discovered that operating a model of Third Space learning provided a platform for professional learning across boundaries of different practices to emerge. In this way, participants were enabled to access a new area in which to negotiate meaning and representation, and so develop a shared language and common understanding (Hulme et al. 2009). Third Space theory attempts to redefine and redesign the binary relationships of separate spaces in order develop a new space in which innovative ideas and practices can emerge (Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Daza et al. 2021). Ultimately, operating in a Third Space supports a more democratic process of learning, where experiences from all parties are valued and welcomed as a potential for further learning (Jackson and Burch 2019).

2.5.3.2 Learning spaces in initial teacher education programmes

Most teacher preparation programmes favour a system whereby 'front loaded course work' is conducted in the isolation of a university campus with a 'dollop of student teaching' in classrooms that often do not model the practices learnt in the university programme (Darling-Hammond 2010). As a result, student teachers occupy two separate spaces; the space of the school and the space of the university (Cuenca et al. 2011; Beck 2020). The theory and practice binary is largely attributed to the disconnect which also exists between the two separate 'spaces' of initial teacher education; the space of the university where focus is on the 'know what' or theoretical perspective, and the space of the school which focuses on the 'know how' or practical perspective (Cuenca et al. 2011; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Beck 2020). Accordingly, a 'theory to practice' model (Korthagen et al. 2006, Zeichner 2010) predominates in initial teacher education (Cochran-Smith 2004; Darling-Hammond 2006; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Beck 2020).

The 'theory to practice' model of initial teacher education perpetuates a hierarchal epistemology where schools are seen to provide the practical knowledge, and the university provides the theory or academic knowledge (Zeichner 2010; Jackson and Burch 2016; Beck 2020; Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2020). However, acquiring knowledge about something "does not necessarily ensure that this knowledge is made a reality in one's classroom teaching" (Jackson and Burch 2016, p.516), and student teachers frequently experience great difficulty in applying the theory of teaching to their practice of teaching (Korthagen and Kessels 1999; Zeichner 2002, 2010; Korthagen et al. 2006; Korthagen 2010; Cuenca et al. 2011; Darling-Hammond 2010; Rozelle and Wilson 2012; Cochran-Smith et al. 2015; Jackson and Burch 2016; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Beck 2020; Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2020). When faced with the 'reality shock' (Korthagen et al. 2006) of school life, many student teachers abandon the constructivists theories of teaching learned in university in favour of the predominantly traditional methods employed in schools.

Since the start of the Millennium, researchers have been grappling with the "persistent disconnect between course-work and fieldwork components" of university based initial teacher education programmes (Cochran-Smith et al. 2015, p.113). Darling-Hammond (2010, p.40)

suggests that the most powerful and effective programmes of initial teacher education, are those which enable student teachers to "spend extensive time in the field throughout their program, examining and applying the concepts and strategies they are simultaneously learning in their courses". Zeichner (2002, 2005, 2010) concurs that school placement experience is a crucial part of student teachers' learning, but he argues that extended time spent in schools will have no impact upon improving the quality of teacher preparation programmes, unless the disconnect between theory and practice is addressed. Having conducted research on their own practices as university-based teacher educators, Martin et al. (2011, p.309) conclude that it is not sufficient to simply focus on creating sites for school placement to occur without an understanding "of how to construct and support, rich clinical contexts that serve as transformative settings for teacher education". Hall et al. (2018, p.26) support this viewpoint, emphasising that the integration of learning experiences provided in university and school settings is "vital for the professional competence acquired by the student".

2.5.3.3 Creating Third Space learning in initial teacher education

A Third Space-informed culture has the potential to promote an inquiry into the relationships between academic and practical knowledge in initial teacher education programmes, whereby the dialogue between two, formerly separate domains, can give rise to a new territory or learning space (Cuenca et al. 2011; Jackson and Burch 2016; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Beck 2020; Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2020). Third Space learning can promote democracy in university and school spaces and allow for "possibilities of collapsing hierarchies in clinical teacher preparation programs that are increasingly pervasive around the world" (Beck 2020, p.381). Zeichner (2010, p.486) advocates for a Third Space which brings together "school and university-based teacher educators and practitioner and academic knowledge in new ways to enhance the learning of prospective teachers". Learning to teach can only occur when three perspectives are present; the perspective of the student teacher, the co-operating teacher and the placement tutor (Ongel et al. 2002; Korthagen 2006 et al.). Teacher preparation programmes, informed by Third Space theory, can enable university and school personnel to work together to assist student teachers in their journey of learning to teach (Beck 2020).

In the United States, Klein et al. (2013) explored the practice of using a Third Space model within a teacher education programme in order to find new spaces which enabled placement tutors and co-operating teachers to have equal share in the teacher education process. The experience was a "messy and non-linear process" (Klein et al. 2013, p.29) which required a shift in thinking about the content of initial teacher education, the nature of teaching, the means of assessment of the student teacher, and the roles of each member within the project. The researchers concluded that a Third Space approach provided a means of addressing many of the criticisms of teacher education, ranging from "the theory-practice divide, to the unequal status of practitioner and academic knowledge, as well as teacher and learner knowledge, and to the nature of university-school partnerships" (Klein et al. 2013, p.51).

Higgins et al. (2013) were part of a pilot study in the Republic of Ireland where three placement tutors, who were full-time members of the university teacher education programme, worked closely with twenty partnership schools. A significant part of the study was that co-operating teachers in the school were renamed 'practice educators' and they worked closely with both student teachers and placement tutors during the school placement year, observing student teacher teaching and attending supervision visits and feedback sessions with placement tutors and student teachers. (Higgins et al. 2013). As such, a school placement triad was established in a 'hybrid' new space. These researchers found that the key to the success of this Third Space venture was that "each triad member's role and their knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning was respected" (Higgins et al. 2013, p.1114).

Promoting Third Space learning in initial teacher education is possible if school placement becomes a 'hybrid space' which promotes a non-hierarchical, dialectical relationship between university and school personnel (Zeichner 2010; Mauri et al. 2019; Beck 2020; Daza et al. 2021). The "hybridisation process" of Third Space can bring together the strengths of university and school practice (Jackson and Burch 2016, p.521). In this space genuine partnerships in initial teacher education may be cultivated, allowing "actors from both cultures to cross boundaries and develop new understandings" (Smith 2016, p.26). Ultimately, a new figured world (Holland et al. 1998), and a new community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) may be formed for the three members of the school placement triad.

2.5.3.4 The contribution of placement tutors to Third Space learning

As teacher educators, placement tutors work at "the interface between the academic world, the world of teacher education and the world of practicing teachers" (Reynolds et al. 2013, p.309). In both communities of practice, placement tutors may draw on positional, figured and agentic identities (Holland et al. 1998) to fulfil the role of teacher educator. In the Third Space of school placement, placement tutors can operate as agents of change, authoring their identities (Holland et al. 1998) to become boundary spanners, or brokers (Wenger 1998, 2010; Zeichner 2010) who facilitate the merging of two formerly separate communities into a Third Space of learning. In this space, placement tutors can help address the previously tenuous and ambiguous relationships within the school placement triad by establishing a collaborative alliance with co-operating teachers and working with them to create "spaces for student teacher learning that take advantage of multiple sources of expertise that can support high-quality learning" (Zeichner 2010, p.95). In doing so, placement tutors and co-operating teachers can make the theory and practice of learning accessible to student teachers in a "special landscape of shared practices, boundaries, peripheries, overlaps, connections and encounters" (Wenger 2010, p.130). Here, student teachers can be empowered to bring their practice of teaching to a place of praxis.

2.6 Reconceptualising the school placement setting

Reconceptualising the school placement world of placement tutors is made possible through applying practices embodied in the tripartite theoretical framework of Identity (Holland et al. 1998), Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010) and Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010). Taken together, these sociocultural constructs promote a school placement experience which is inclusive of all members of the school placement triad, working together in a democratic Third Space community of practice.

Teacher educators come with an array of past experiences which influence their practice (Izadinia 2011,) and for most teacher educators, their past experiences of teaching and their teacher identity is highly valued (Murray 2008b, 2014; Murray et al. 2011; Hökkä and Eteläpelto 2014; O'Brien and Furlong 2015). The figured world of placement tutors intersects

three other ‘figured worlds’; those of the school, the university and their past teaching positions. These intersections can be reconciled in a reconceptualised Third Space school placement programme, where each member of the school placement triad can contribute, and have their contribution acknowledged. As brokers between two communities of practice, placement tutors have the potential to become what Wenger (2010) has latterly identified as a ‘learning citizen’ across landscapes of practice. As learning citizens, placement tutors can use their unique experiences, perspectives and practices accrued from the figured worlds of previous teaching biography, the university and the school setting and share these in a Third Space school placement programme where all members of the triad meet.

Moving between university and school, placement tutors can promote school placement as a Third Space community of practice, uniting the student teacher, placement tutor and co-operating teacher in a shared enterprise of mutual engagement (Wenger 1998). In this space, they can forge new connections across different communities, coordinate and help align varied perspectives, and facilitate transactions in order to link practices (Wenger 1998; Wenger 2010). In order for this to occur it is important that placement tutors step out of the traditional ‘outsider space’ occupied by placement tutors in schools and cultivate a positive and interactive process for all member of the school placement triad (Higgins et al. 2013). Only then can school placement become a genuine community of practice in which placement tutors and co-operating teachers, the ‘old timers’ (Lave and Wenger 1991), support student teachers, the ‘newcomers’ (Lave and Wenger 1991), as they negotiate the challenges of learning to teach. .

Simply bringing diverse groups together in a Third Space is not, in of itself, sufficient for insights and new learning to occur (Jackson and Burch 2016, 2019). Integration of different perspectives has to be facilitated in order for learning to take place, and therein lies the potential of placement tutors’ role in the Third Space. Becoming facilitators of a Third Space enables placement tutors to push the boundaries of the figured worlds of the school and university in order to become agents of change (Holland et al. 1998) and foster a new community of practice “related to the communities of departure of the different members” (Mauri et al. 2019, p. 471). This community of practice can afford equal status for placement tutors and co-operating teachers and result in the development of a non-hierarchical relationship between both as they

support student teacher learning (Mauri et al. 2019). Such a relationship can lead to a genuine university-school partnership where goals and knowledge are shared, a collaborative approach to planning and pedagogy is adopted, and the expertise of both parties is respected (Nolan and Hoover 2011; Elton-Chalcraft 2020). Developing this partnership "requires a form of vision which requires an enhanced and deeper interpretation of working together rather than working with" each other (Jackson and Burch 2016, p.522). Ultimately, the Third Space partnership can enhance the school placement experience for each member of the school placement triad and offer an alternative to "haphazard… loosely selected placements with little guidance about what happens in them and little connection to university work" (Darling-Hammond 2010, p.40) which continue to be a feature of many initial teacher education programmes today.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 has provided a critical review of the national and international literature related to placement tutors, and the world of initial teacher education. A comprehensive overview has also been provided of the tripartite theoretical framework underpinning my research study, and specifically how it relates to the placement tutor research participants.

This literature review highlights that preparing future teachers is important work. Furthermore, the significance of school placement as an opportunity for student teachers to learn 'in situ' is regarded as the heart of initial teacher education programmes. This is the backdrop for the work of part-time placement tutors who act as supervisors of student teachers. There is much evidence to suggest that while these teacher educators enact a complex and multifaceted role, they are under researched and undervalued.

In the Republic of Ireland, the problem is compounded by the fact that the Work Placement Model of university-school partnership (Maandag et al. 2007) continues to operate in the initial teacher education realm. Despite many calls for reform of this structure, school placement programmes rely upon informal partnerships between universities and schools. While the Teaching Council (2013, 2020) sets out the roles and responsibilities of members of a

university-school partnership, participation by schools in programmes of school placement is completely voluntary. Consequently responsibility for the supervision of student teachers continues to remain firmly in the hands of the universities since co-operating teachers in schools fulfil their role on a voluntary basis, being neither remunerated nor (for the most part) prepared for the work of mentoring student teachers.

In this context, it is difficult for a system of Third Space learning to materialise in school placement. The potential of placement tutors as multi-members of two communities of practice cannot be realised, without the professional development and support needed to bring these communities together in any genuine and authentic manner. Furthermore, as outsiders in the school community and marginalised members of the university community, placement tutors continue to operate as 'disenfranchised outsiders', shifting between the identity of teacher and teacher educator in their supervision of student teachers.

Chapter Three will now detail the salient aspects of the methodological elements of my research study.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

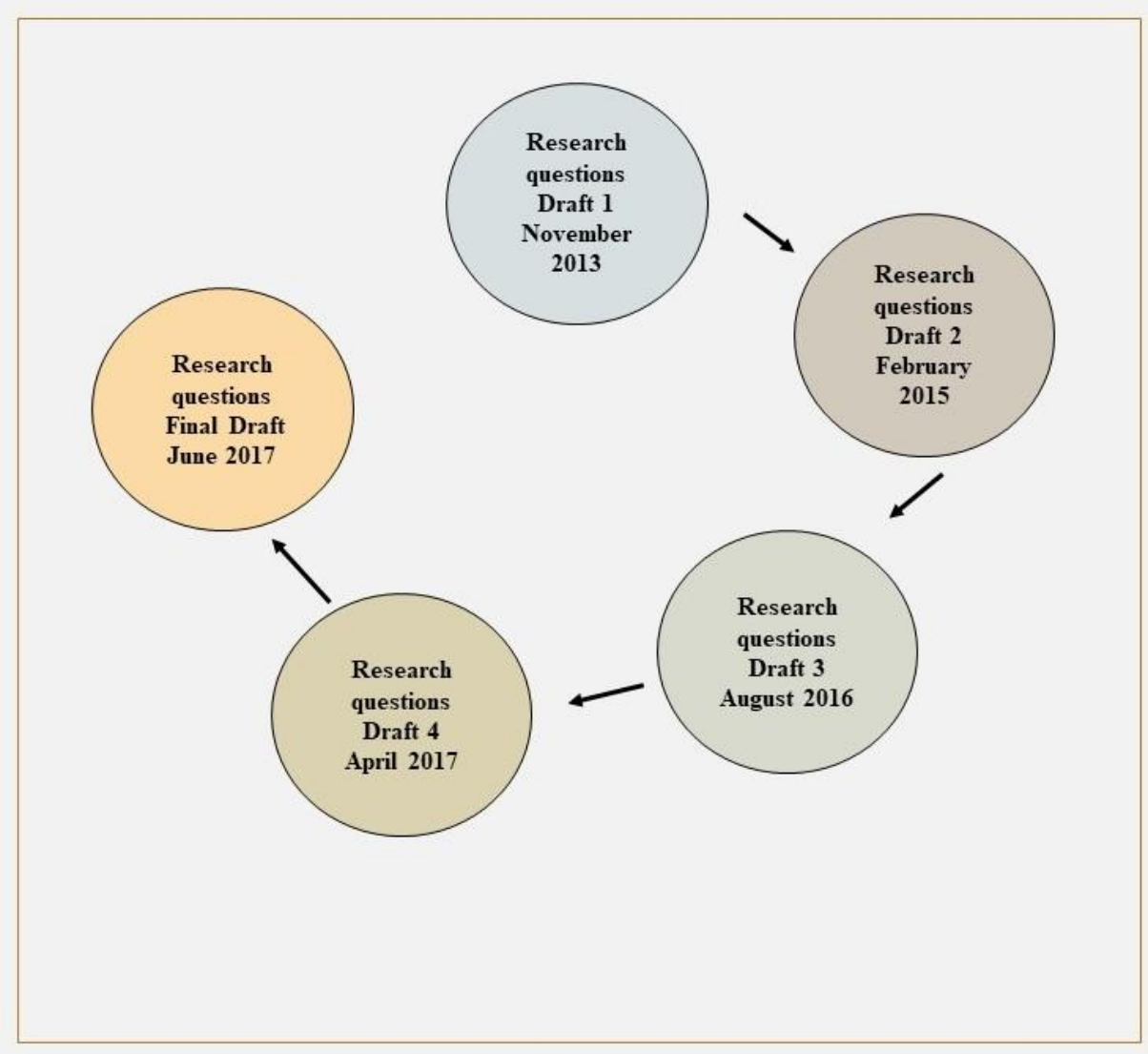
The goal of this research is to investigate the role of part-time placement tutors in school placement. This chapter provides an outline of the research design involved in fulfilling that goal. Accordingly, an overview of the research questions, research setting, and research participants is provided. The research paradigm is reviewed, along with the associated research method chosen for the study. Ethical considerations are addressed, and a discussion of the data collection and the data analysis methods employed concludes the chapter.

3.2 The research questions

All research begins with a purpose and a question (Thomas 2013), and "a sense of curiosity, and openness to discovery" (Salmons 2012, p.1). Research questions ask the 'what' and 'how' questions in order to identify the pathway in the research journey (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittaker 2013; Creswell 2014). Research questions are like a doorway into the field of study (Flick 2014). They serve two purposes; to focus the study in relation to the research goals and the conceptual framework adopted, and to provide guidance on how best to conduct the study (Maxwell 2008). Generating research questions involves an interrogative and reflective approach and "the processes of generating and refining questions are critical to shaping all phases of a qualitative study" (Agree 2009, p.431). Reflecting upon, and reformulating research questions is crucial to making informed decisions and appropriate choices in a research study (Flick 2014). Having reflected on my research topic, and conducted the initial stages of my literature review, it became clear to me that very little research had been conducted to date, in the Republic of Ireland, or internationally, on the role of placement tutors in initial teacher education (Slick 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Steadman and Brown 2011; Ievers et al. 2013; Meegan et al. 2013). This discovery gave me scope to generate research questions which were relevant and original (Braun and Clarke 2013) and could address a gap in my field of research (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls 2014).

Adopting a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm for my research meant that my research questions were not fully defined from the beginning; rather they evolved and changed as the study progressed (Mertens and Wilson 2012). This iterative process (Lewis et al. 2014) of constantly revisiting and reviewing my focus in the research, and the issues I hoped to address, enabled me to dig deep and identify the central questions behind my research inquiry. Arriving at my final, main research question and subsidiary questions involved five cycles of reflection and revision (Table 3A), concurring with the assertion of Brown (2010, p.173) that "dynamism and flux in the 'research questions' are fundamental features of the research process".

Table 3A: The iterative process of my research questions



3.2.1 Research Questions Draft One (November 2013)

The first draft of my research questions resulted from my initial tentative attempts to formulate a focus for my research. At this early stage, my questions were very general:

How can placement tutors be supported in the supervision of PE students in Initial Teacher Education in the current school climate of Teaching Council requirements and varied school responses?

Subsidiary research questions included

1. How are placement tutors recruited?
2. What is the perceived role of placement tutors?
3. What professional development is provided for placement tutors?
4. What ongoing support for/monitoring of placement tutors occurs during placement?
5. What is the relationship between placement tutors and student teachers?
6. What is the relationship between placement tutors and the co-operating teachers?

3.2.2 Research Questions Draft Two (February 2015)

A central concern I had experienced during the ten years I worked as a part-time placement tutor was determining how to balance the role of supporting student teachers in my position of 'disenfranchised outsider' in the initial teacher education system (Slick 1998). Hence, I revisited my research question with a desire to focus on placement tutors' dual role of evaluating and supporting student teachers, and the challenges they faced as they moved between two different communities; the school community and the university community. In addition, I decided that it would be useful to approach other key players in school placement (school principals/deputy principals, co-operating teachers and student teachers) in order to learn from their perceptions of the role of placement tutors in initial teacher education. Informed by these developments, my original draft of one main research question with subsidiary questions became four inter-related main research questions:

How can I?

1. Explore the possible tension caused by placement tutors' dual role of assessor and advisor in the school placement process, and how this impacts upon the supervision of Physical Education student teachers.
2. Examine the challenges faced by placement tutors in their position as "*disenfranchised outsiders*" (Slick 1998, p.821) in the Third Space (Bhabha 1998; Zeichner 2010) between the school and the university community.
3. Investigate the perceptions held by other stakeholders in school placement (school principals/deputy principals, student teachers, and co-operating teachers) of the roles and responsibilities of placement tutors in school placement.
4. Develop a template of best practice for the recruitment and provision of learning support of placement tutors, so that they may be enabled to provide equitable and effective supervision for Physical Education student teachers.

3.2.3 Research Questions Draft Three (August 2016)

As I journeyed further into my investigations, I realised that my insights as researcher would be greatly enhanced by bringing the 'voices' of my research participants (Hastie and May 2012) into my study. The focus of my questions now began to shift towards an investigation of the meanings attributed by my research participants to activities or events encountered in their supervision of student teachers, as well as the social or cultural factors they experienced which influenced these activities or events (Maxwell 2008). I was also cognisant of the need to utilise the 'who?', 'what?', 'where?', 'how?' and 'why?' questions (Yin 2009) of case study which allow for the process of the inquiry to unfold. As a consequence, my research questions became more inquiry focused in Draft Three:

1. Is there a tension caused by placement tutors' dual role of assessor and assistor in the school placement process, and does this impact upon their task of supervising Physical Education student teachers?
2. What are the challenges faced by placement tutors in their position as 'disenfranchised outsiders (Slick 1998,) in the 'Third Space' (Zeichner 2010) between the school and the university community?

3. What are the perceptions held by other stakeholders in school placement (school principals/deputy principals, student teachers, and co-operating teachers) of the roles and responsibilities of placement tutors in school placement?

3.2.4 Research Questions Draft Four (April 2017)

An important consideration for researchers using the case study method is to establish clear boundaries in order to focus on what is significant in the research (Creswell et al. 2007; Denscombe 2010; Silverman 2013). Draft 4 emerged from my decision to establish a boundary around who, in the context of my research focus, were the most significant research participants in my study. I determined that I needed to focus on the story of placement tutors and what they communicated about their lived experiences of being a part-time placement tutor:

1. Do placement tutors experience a tension in the dual role of assessor and advisor in the school placement process, and does this impact upon the task of supervising Physical Education student teachers?
2. What are the challenges, opportunities and dilemmas experienced by placement tutors in the school and the university communities?
3. What is best practice for recruiting placement tutors, and providing them with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to ensure that they may provide equitable and effective supervision for Physical Education student teachers?

3.2.5 Research Questions Draft Five (June 2017)

As my research took me further into the process of reflective and reflexive practice (Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007; Braun and Clarke 2013), I gained a more confident and coherent epistemological and ontological perspective. By now I concluded that the key to researching this under-represented group of teacher educators lay in exploring experiences the participants had in their roles as placement tutors, the challenges they faced in undertaking the role and the relationships that they encountered in the school placement setting. In addition, I decided that my research question needed to highlight the cohort of teacher educators at the centre of the study; those placement tutors who undertake their role in a part-time capacity since this part-

time status has implications for their position and practice as teacher educators. Accordingly, I arrived at my fifth, and final, iteration of the research questions for my study:

What are the experiences, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of Physical Education student teachers in school placement?

Subsidiary research questions include:

1. How do part-time placement tutors define their professional identities in their role as teacher educators?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by part-time placement tutors in two communities of practice; the university and the school?
3. Do part-time placement tutors have a role to play in the Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) between the university and the school?
4. Does fulfilling the dual role of assessor and advisor impact upon the task of supervising Physical Education student teachers?

3.3 The research setting

There are twenty-two placement tutors on the SUPE school placement team, of which ten placement tutors are responsible for supervision of the student teachers' Arts Specialism lessons, and twelve placement tutors are responsible for the supervision of the student teachers' Physical Education lessons (the number of placement tutors can vary slightly from year to year depending on the number of student teachers in the final year school placement programme). Apart from two full time placement tutors, the remaining twenty placement tutors are employed on a part-time basis. This profile of placement tutors is consistent with the research, nationally and internationally, which establishes that most placement tutors in initial teacher education programmes are part-time staff, consisting of retired and practising teachers and university graduate students (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Cochran-Smith 2003; Rodgers and Kiel 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Davy 2013; Rose and Kenny 2014; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019). Given that my own teaching and experience as school placement tutor was in the subject of Physical Education, I decided to focus on the cohort of Physical Education placement tutors.

Since joining the programme in 2012, I have established a strong system of support for placement tutors. Placement tutor meetings are held in September, January and April each year, allowing placement tutors the opportunity to engage in continuing professional development and professional dialogue on issues that present when supervising student teachers. A number of assessment and feedback supports have been developed with the team during the past seven years, including:

1. Proforma Feedback Document 1 2014-2015 (Appendix 1)
2. Proforma Feedback Document 2 2015-2016 (Appendix 2)
3. Proforma Feedback Document 3 2016-2019 (Appendix 3)
4. Proforma Feedback Document 4 2019-2020 (Appendix 4)
5. Student Assessment Rubric (SAR) 2019-2020 (Appendix 5)
6. SAR Prompt Sheet for Supervision 2019-2020 (Appendix 6)
7. Grade Rules for School Placement 2019-2020 (Appendix 7)

Induction for new placement tutors begins with an initial session introducing them to the role of placement tutor and an opportunity to meet the team of placement tutors, and the student teachers allocated to them for the placement year. They then shadow a more experienced placement tutor on a supervision visit and they are accompanied by either me or that placement tutor for their first supervision visit. All placement tutors can request a 'double visit' (two tutors conducting the supervision) if they feel they need a second opinion on assessing a student teacher. In addition to assessing the student teachers' teaching performance, placement tutors are responsible for grading all assignments related to school placement. Student teachers in fourth year receive a total of six supervision visits during the school placement year; three visits from their Physical Education placement tutor, and three visits from their Arts Specialism placement tutor

3.4 The research participants

Six Physical Education placement tutors were selected as research participants for my study. Each represented an individual component of the multiple case study research design which frames the study. I was aware of the need to select participants who could provide contrasting and comparable viewpoints (Gustafsson 2017) and "multiple perspectives" (Brink 2018, p. 224). To this end I used a purposeful sampling approach (Maxwell 2008; Cohan et al. 2011; Palinkas et al. 2015; Bradshaw et al. 2017). This sampling procedure enabled me to "capture elements of both similarity and differences, of both centrality and dispersion…essential to the task of generating new knowledge through the processes of comparison and contrast" (Palinkas et al. 2015).

Due to my role as school placement co-ordinator in the SUPE programme I was in the fortunate position of having ready access to participants for the study. Alan, Bob, Clare, Deirdre, Ellen, Frances (pseudonyms) were chosen in order to provide a good representation of the research topic (Morse et al. 2002) and to demonstrate a range of demographics in terms of age, gender, qualifications, and years of experience as both a teacher and placement tutor. The cohort consisted of both retired and practising teachers, thus aligning with the profile of part-time placement tutors identified in the literature and providing access to ideas and experiences of past teachers, and those currently teaching in schools. Alan and Bob are retired teachers, Claire and Deirdre have left mainstream teaching to pursue careers related to teaching and learning and Ellen and Frances are fulltime teachers.

Each candidate has experience of teaching Physical Education, ranging from fifteen to thirty-five years of practice. There is an interesting continuum of placement tutor experience within the group, ranging from Bob and Deirdre who, at the time of data collection, had been placement tutors for seven years, and Ellen and Frances who joined the programme as new placement tutors one year previously. Furthermore, the initial teacher education programmes where participants began their own journeys of learning to teach also varies. Two participants studied in the United Kingdom and the other four participants studied in the Republic of Ireland. In this way, student teacher experiences from participants in three different initial teacher education programmes provided another valuable perspective in the research. Further detailed information on each of the participants is available in Table 3B and Table 3C.

Table 3B: Research Participant Profiles (1)

Research Participant	Current Professional Profile	Teaching Experience	Placement Tutor Experience	Other University Work Experience	Other Relevant Work Experience
Alan	Retired Physical Education teacher. Part-time placement tutor and lecturer in Physical Education. Facilitator of continuing professional development for teachers of Physical Education.	Teacher of Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject at post primary school level (1981-2015).	Part-time placement tutor on the SUPE programme (2014-present). Part-time placement tutor in an initial teacher education programme in another university in the Republic of Ireland (2015-2018).	Part-time Physical Education lecturer on the SUPE programme (2014-present). Lecturer in Physical Education in another university in the Republic of Ireland (2001-2002).	Facilitator of continuing professional development for teachers of Physical Education (2016-current). Regional development officer for Physical Education (2003-2008). Co-operating teacher (1986-2015).
Bob	Retired Physical Education teacher and deputy principal. Part-time placement tutor and Education lecturer.	Teacher of Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject at post primary school level (1975-2006).	Part-time placement tutor on the SUPE programme (2011-present).	Part-time Education lecturer on the SUPE programme (2011-present).	Deputy principal of a post primary school (2006-2011) Chairperson of a school board and a charity organisation (1990-1999, 2011-2015). School boards' interviewer (1990-1999, 2011-2015).
Clare	Part-time placement tutor. Part-time coordinator of a national active schools' initiative. Part-time facilitator of continuing professional for teachers of Physical Education.	Teacher of Physical Education and an Arts Specialism at post primary school level (2002-2010).	Part-time placement tutor on the SUPE programme (2014-present).	Part-time coordinator of, and lecturer in practical areas on the SUPE programme (2019-20).	Coordinator of national Physical Education active lifestyle initiative (2010-present). Facilitator of continuing professional development for teachers of Physical Education (2014-present).

Table 3C: Research Participant Profiles (2)

Research Participant	Current Professional Profile	Teaching Experience	Placement Tutor Experience	Other University Work Experience	Other Relevant Work Experience
PT4	Part-time placement tutor Part-time lecturer in mentoring skills.	Teacher of Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject at post school level (1993-2008).	Part-time placement tutor on the SUPE programme (2012- present).	Part-time Education lecturer on the SUPE programme (2012-2014).	Co-operating teacher (1996-2008). Life coach (2008-current).
PT5	Part-time placement tutor. Teacher of Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject at post school level.	Teacher of Physical Education and an Arts Specialism subject at post school level (2002-present).	Part-time placement tutor on the SUPE programme (2017- present).	N/A	Cooperating teacher in a university initial teacher education programme in another university in the Republic of Ireland (2014-2017).
PT6	Part-time placement tutor. Teacher of Physical Education in Youth Outreach centre.	Teacher of Physical Education at post school level (2013-2019).	Part-time placement tutor on the SUPE programme (2017- present). Part-time placement tutor in an initial teacher education programme in another university in the Republic of Ireland (2018-2019).	N/A	Co-operating teacher (2015-2018).

3.5 The research paradigm

A research paradigm is a framework of assumptions, values and beliefs shared by a research community (Braun and Clarke 2013). It is their 'world view' (Patton 2002; Creswell 2014), or way of thinking about, and making sense of the world. The choice of research paradigm is influenced by ontological and epistemological perspectives, and by values and beliefs (Lincoln and Guba 2005; Maxwell 2008; Cohen et al. 2011). It is important that researchers connect with a paradigm in which they can situate their work (Maxwell 2008). Within qualitative research there are many 'mini' paradigms (Patton 2002) which "create the intellectual, theoretical and practical space for dialogue, consensus and confluence to occur in research communities" (Lincoln and Guba 2005, p.197). Each paradigm has its strengths and limitations (Patton 2002) and each researcher must choose the paradigm that best suits their ontological and epistemological perspectives and their "own assumptions and methodological preferences" (Maxwell 2008, p.224). In choosing a paradigm to guide research there can be a 'bricolage' or borrowing (Lincoln and Guba 2005) from different research traditions (Maxwell 2008). I decided to adopt the approach of the 'bricoleur' researcher (Denzin & Lincoln 2005) borrowing from two traditions, who share a similar research perspective. Thus, I chose an interpretivist-constructivist research paradigm to guide my research.

3.5.1 My choice of research paradigm

The interpretivist paradigm embraces a belief that knowledge is personal and unique (Creswell 2014). It is part of a school of thought interested in understanding and interpretation (Lichtman 2006), moving beyond mere description of what is occurring, into the space of interpretation which helps advance knowledge and practice. In this regard, the researcher demonstrates an interest in meaning and process, and adopts a critical and questioning approach (Braun and Clarke 2013) in an attempt to understand the research situation from the point of view of the participants (Armour and MacDonald 2012). The constructivist paradigm supports a belief that there are multiple, and ever-changing realities, constructed in the mind of the individual, and these are socially constructed through human activity (Cohen et al. 2011). In this setting, meaning is created through the interaction between individuals in an environment. In essence the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm marries the interpretivist ontological stance of

subjective interpretation, and the constructivist epistemological viewpoint of multiple realities, where knowledge is constructed by, rather than imposed upon, an individual.

As researcher I embrace the ontological and epistemological perspectives of the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm. I believe it supports the role of the researcher as an empathetic observer sitting within the research and working with the researcher participants to "jointly create (co-construct) findings from their interactive dialogue and interpretation" (Ponteretto 2005, p.129). Consequently, the subjectivity of the researcher is recognised as a necessary means of making sense of the research, rather than a weakness or a flaw (Braun and Clarke 2013). Given that my doctoral study had its origins in my personal experiences as a part-time placement tutor, and it is focused on the personal experiences of six placement tutors, this is an important consideration. Furthermore, from an interpretivist-constructivist perspective, the "dynamic interaction between researcher and participant" (Ponteretto 2005, p.131) endorses the interplay and exchange that occurred between myself and my research participants as a rich source of data. I viewed myself as a traveller who journeyed with my interviewees, listening to their stories, and interpreting them in order to create meaning (Kvale and Brinkman 2009). Therefore, knowledge was co-constructed between the interviewer and the interviewees, and I was an 'active player' in the data collection (Legard et al. 2003). My position as active researcher enabled me to align my interviewer stance with my interpretivist-constructivist research paradigm.

3.6 The research method

In choosing a research method "there is no 'one right' direction to take" (Denscombe 2010, p.3) since the research focus, and the research questions therein, determine what method is best suited to generating the knowledge sought by the researcher. Braun and Clarke (2013) provide useful questions to consider when choosing research methods. These include; What do I want to know? Why do I want to know it? What fits best with my theoretical position? What data will best answer my research questions and how will I collect this data? Answering these questions led me to my choice of case study as my research method since this approach offered me the chance to focus on a specific situation, and attempt to interpret the various interrelated

aspects at work (Bell 2015) through studying "real people in real situations" (Cohen at al. 2011, p.289), within their worlds (Stake 2005).

3.6.1 Case study method

Case study is a method which allows researchers to explore a "system (case) or multiple bonded systems (cases)" (Creswell et al. 2007, p.245). This research approach draws upon multiple perspectives of a specific context (Creswell et al. 2007; Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls 2014). Therefore, the focus of case study research is an in-depth exploration of a particular situation, issue or idea (Denscombe 2010; Creswell et al. 2007; Thomas 2010; Armour and Griffiths 2012; Green et al. 2012; Flick 2014) where voices of the research participants are encouraged and valued (Stake 2005). As such, a case study approach appealed to my interpretivist-constructivist stance as a researcher, commensurate with my ontological perspective of multiple realities, and my epistemological standpoint of research participants being constructors, rather than consumers of knowledge.

Using case study method facilitated me to thoroughly explore and analyse the experiences and practices of placement tutors in their supervision of student teachers. It provided me with a means of reflecting not only on *what* outcomes occurred, but *how* and *why* they occurred, (Lichtman 2006; Denscombe 2010). I discovered that case study is a valuable research method for generating knowledge about a particular situation which is of value in, and of itself. In this I concur with Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier (2013) and Bell (2015) who assert if researchers conduct their case studies systematically and rigorously, and report their findings accurately and critically, they can extend the boundaries of existing knowledge, and contribute valid forms of educational research.

I adopted a multiple case study approach in order to investigate the issues related to my research questions from a range of different perspectives (Creswell et al. 2007). My choice of multiple case study was strongly influenced by the claim of Yin (2009, p.53) that evidence from multiple

cases is often considered "more compelling and robust since it expands the external generalisability" of the study claims.

3.7 Research validity and verification in case study method

Validity in qualitative research is the extent to which the research conducted actually measures what was intended, enabling researchers to find out what they need to know (O'Leary 2004; Kvale 2007; Thomas 2011; Hastie and Hay 2012). Validity in research is linked to rigour, authenticity, honesty, depth and richness in research, and as such it is held in high esteem in all research circles (Morse et al. 2002; Cohen et al. 2011). While quantitative researchers can exercise control over anticipated and unanticipated threats to the validity of a study, this is a challenging task for the qualitative researcher since there are many variables, and unexpected outcomes in qualitative settings (Maxwell 2009). Focus on the 'criteriology' (Thomas 2011 citing Schwandt 1996) of samples, variables and statistics of quantitative research is neither appropriate nor relevant, since this is akin to trying to squeeze the "square peg validity, into the round hole of case study research" (Thomas 2011, p.63). Instead, when examining the issue of validity in qualitative research, it is more appropriate to focus on the verification process which occurs (Morse et al. 2002).

Verification refers to the mechanisms which ensure checking, questioning, confirmation and certainty are sought in order to achieve validity in research (Morse et al. 2002). In qualitative research these mechanisms are interwoven into the research approach, since the iterative nature of qualitative inquiry means that the researcher is constantly moving back and forth between the research literature, the research framework, the data collection methods, and the data analysis strategies in order to find answers to the research question (Morse et al. 2002; Patton 2002). This was my experience in my study. Each step of my data collection and analysis was informed by a constant ongoing review of my research questions and the knowledge I gained from conducting my literature review. I found myself involved in an iterative process of reflection and reflexivity (Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007) where verification became a natural and inextricable part of shaping my research. I identified strongly with the concept of "investigator responsiveness" identified by Morse et al. (2002 p, 17). This strategy challenges

the researcher to demonstrate "creativity, sensitivity, flexibility and skill in using the verification strategies" in a manner which promotes validity and reliability in the study (Morse et al. 2002 p, 17).

3.7.1 Strategies for validity and verification

There are multiple opinions on the best strategies to use for validating and verifying qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba 1982, 1985, 2005; Creswell and Miller 2002; Patton 2002; O'Leary 2004; Yin 2005; Maxwell 2008; Creswell 2009, 2014; Mertens 2009; Silverman 2013). There is a general consensus that "qualitative inquirers need to demonstrate that their studies are credible" (Creswell and Miller 2000, p.124). In addition, I was cognisant that validation of research "does not belong to a separate stage of investigation but permeates the entire research process" (Kvale 2007, p.123). Accordingly, throughout my research journey I employed a number of strategies in order to adhere to a rigorous and authentic verification process. The strategies I chose were informed by an extensive review of the relevant literature, but also by my commitment to a constructivist-interpretivist research paradigm and a belief in the value of the dual 'researcher lens' of the researcher and research participants (Creswell and Miller 2000; Creswell 2009). These strategies included:

1. Methodological coherence
2. Transparency in data collection and analysis
3. Triangulation of evidence
4. Clarifying researcher bias
5. Researcher reflexivity
6. Sampling sufficiency
7. Respondent validation or member checking
8. Prolonged engagement in the field

Each strategy will be considered in the following subsections:

3.7.1.1 Methodological coherence

It is important that there is coherence between the research question and the research methods employed (Morse et al. 2002). In other words, the methods employed by the researcher must serve as the best means of answering the research questions. They must produce data that can be investigated in order to shed light on the questions asked in the research. My choice of interviewing, observation and researcher diary were effective means of producing a range of varied data relevant to the focus of my study. These methods made it possible for me to establish a solid and dynamic relationship between the research questions, and the data collection and analysis. This relationship in turn promoted an authenticity in the research which was itself a valuable means of validation.

3.7.1.2 Transparency in data collection and analysis

I was careful to keep detailed records of all data gathered so that a chain of evidence was established and maintained throughout the study (Yin 2009). This 'audit trail' provided documentation of my research decisions and activities (Creswell and Miller 2000). Documentation included transcripts of interviews, observation fieldnotes and my researcher diary. In my data analysis, I offered 'rich thick descriptions' (Creswell 2009; 2014) of the context of the research settings, the participants involved and my stance as a researcher. Providing this information promoted transparency in my writing and it afforded the reader with an element of shared experience, along with critical and reflective analyses of the data. When analysing the data collected, I was careful to search for any 'discrepant evidence' that presented, to ascertain if it affected my interpretation of the data (Maxwell 2008). Being open to analysing 'disconfirming evidence' is an important means of supporting the credibility of an account (Creswell and Miller 2002). Given my belief in the existence of multiple realities, it also helped to validate my researcher stance.

3.7.1.3 Triangulation of evidence

A crucial component of transparency is the strategy of the triangulation of evidence, whereby data from a variety of methods and sources is utilised. Triangulation enables researchers to "map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint" (Cohen et al. 2011, p.141). It is a useful way of reducing

bias in a study (Maxwell 2012) and, as such it has received much attention in the literature on qualitative inquiry (Hastie and Hay 2002; Patton 2002; Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Gibbs 2007; Mertens 2009; Newby 2010; Cohen et al. 2011; Thomas 2011; Creswell 2014; Flick 2014). Furthermore, use of a variety of sources of data in case study research allows the researcher to develop "converging lines of inquiry" which lead to more convincing findings and conclusions (Yin 2009, p.115).

In keeping with the tenets of triangulation, I availed of three different methods of data collection. These included 18 individual interviews scripts with placement tutors, fieldnotes of five observations of placement tutors' practice, and my researcher diary. Using different sources of evidence enabled me to interrogate the case studies from different angles and vantages, and to explore any information that was at variance with generated themes (Maxwell 2008; Thomas 2011; Flick 2014).

3.7.1.4 Clarifying researcher bias

The issue of bias permeates our daily living, since the choices we make are undeniably affected by the biases that are an integral part of our make up as human beings. Every day we exercise choices which are affected by biases such as the taste of the foods we like, the clothes in which we feel most comfortable, even the movies we most enjoy since these "small and apparently insignificant details" have a major influence on our behaviour (Thaler and Sunstein 2008, p.3). Qualitative researchers play an active part in the research process (Lichtman 2006; Hastie and Hay 2012; Weber et al. 2014) and in doing so we bring our knowledge, experience and biases. As a result, a degree of bias in qualitative study is unavoidable, there is no completely 'neutral' or 'objective' knowledge given that qualitative researchers are involved in the research process (Ormston et al. 2014, p.22), bringing with them "histories, values, assumptions, perspectives, politics and mannerisms" which cannot just be 'left at the door' (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.36). While recognising the dangers of bias in qualitative research, I agree with Bogdan and Bilken (1997, p.8) who argue "The idea is NOT to be a "clean slate", but to be reflective and conscious of how "who you are" may shape and enrich what you study". This was my experience in my doctoral study and so, throughout my research I was careful to continually reflect upon my assumptions and examine any potential for bias that my particular stance might incur in my

research (Rowley 2012). When undertaking this study, I was aware that my personal knowledge and situated practice in the school placement programme, coupled with my position as the primary instrument for data collection, could contribute to the potential for bias and subjectivity. I was also aware that as a qualitative researcher it was difficult to avoid bringing my own "preconceptions, interests, biases" (Cohen et al. 2011, p.469). Hence, I employed a number of strategies to reduce the effect of my personal biases in this research.

In my reading I was careful to search for varying and opposing opinions on the issues pertinent to my research focus. I translated this into my writing by presenting and exploring both sides of an argument or opinion expressed. When conducting interviews, I was careful to use a format of 'open' questions which shifted the onus to the participants for response, and I avoided 'leading' questions (Yeo et al. 2014). While I offered my opinion and ideas during the interviews, this was never in a way that dismissed the opinions and ideas of my participants. I was aware of the dangers of "partial and selective" recording of events during observations (Ritchie et al. 2014, p.246). With this in mind, I maintained detailed notes and provided 'rich thick descriptions' (Creswell 2009; 2014) of the events I observed. When conducting data analysis, I was careful to remain open to the emergence of discrepant themes, or issues which I had not anticipated; duly reporting and reflecting upon same. Throughout the research I maintained a researcher journal in which I constantly reflected upon the issue of personal bias in order to minimise any threat this might bring to the authenticity of my study.

3.7.1.5 Researcher reflexivity

The subjectivity of the researcher is unavoidable in qualitative research (Cohen et al. 2011; Braun and Clarke 2013), indeed Braun and Clarke (2013, p.36) claim that our "humanness, our subjectivity, can be used as a research tool". However, these writers also caution that subjectivity must be balanced by reflexivity, "the process of critically reflecting on the knowledge we produce, and our role in producing that knowledge" (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.36). Researcher reflexivity can be likened to kind of transparency, where the researcher is willing to explain the reasoning behind decisions taken during the research process (Naveed et al. 2017 citing Rossman and Rallis 2010). A reflexive approach should involve both a 'functional reflexivity', whereby researchers consider how the research tools and methods may influence the research process, and 'personal reflexivity' which clarifies the researchers' role in the research, making them 'visible' to the reader (Braun and Clarke 2013). Reflexivity also

challenges researchers to consider their positionality within the research, the position of the 'self' (the researcher) in relation to the 'other' (the researched). "Reflexivity is crucial throughout all phases of the research process" in order to enhance the credibility of the study and the accuracy of its findings (Berger 2013, p.221).

Throughout my data collection and analysis, I strove to practise both functional and personal reflexivity. My researcher diary played a central role in helping me be reflexive in the research context; providing a means for critical reflection on the knowledge produced and on my role in that production (Braun and Clarke 2013). It provided a space for me to record and reflect upon events and experiences that occurred during the research process, and on my role, as researcher, in the process.

3.7.1.6 Sampling sufficiency

Purposeful sampling was utilised when selecting the research participants in this study and candidates were carefully chosen in order to provide "representativeness or typicality of settings, individual, or activities" (Maxwell 2008, p.235). I ensured that the research explored the stories of several placement tutors, providing multiple representations, rather than a singular individual viewpoint (Flick 2014). A central tenet of qualitative research is that there are many interpretations of reality, but subjective interpretation can be balanced by reference to quotations from participants in the research study (Bradshaw et al. 2017). In addition, the selected sampling method targeted participants who were situated in the field of study and could provide in depth information (Cohen et al. 2011).

Six Physical Education placement tutors were selected from the team of twelve Physical Education placement tutors, using the criteria outlined in Table 3B - (1) current professional profile, (2) school teaching experience, (3) placement tutor experience (4) university teaching experience and (5) other work experience. These criteria were employed in order to achieve 'maximum variation' of cases (Flyvbjerg 2006) which in turn led to findings representing the opinions and experiences of a varied group of research participants (Maxwell 2008). The research cohort provided a good representation of the profile of those who typically work as

Physical Education placement tutors in initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland and internationally. The predominance of part-time placement tutors (retired or practising teachers) in the group was in keeping with the findings of the research in this area (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Cochran-Smith 2003; Rodgers and Kiel 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Davy 2013; Rose and Kenny 2014; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019).

3.7.1.7 Respondent validation

Case study research involves a reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the research participants, since each influences the behaviour or response of the other (Lincoln and Guba 1982). Throughout my interviews I made a conscious effort to engage with my research participants to ensure that their views were being represented accurately. Thus, the second research lens of the participants (Creswell and Miller 2000) was utilised to check the data emerging from the interview process. Responsibility for validation shifted from me, the researcher, to my research participants, promoting authenticity and rigour. I shared the Research Participant Profile information (Table 3B) with each of the participants to ensure the information was accurate and acceptable to all. Each interview I conducted was transcribed by a professional scripter. The transcripts of the interviews were provided for the research participants. I also provided them with a copy of the observation fieldnotes I completed during each observation conducted. These documents provided an opportunity for the research participants to check the recording of each event, and ensure it was to their satisfaction. This 'respondent validation' or 'member checking' (Maxwell 2008; Creswell 2014) was an important means of validating my account of what had occurred.

3.7.1.8 Prolonged engagement in the field.

Due to my past experiences as a placement tutor, and my current position as coordinator of school placement, I was very familiar with the research setting. I had numerous opportunities of experiencing and observing the process involved in the supervision of student teachers. This process included the school settings, interaction with the school community, and the relationship between placement tutors and student teachers. Indeed, during the period I

accompanied my research participants in order to observe their practice as placement tutors, I was often performing the very same role myself a few days later when accompanying a placement tutor to provide a second opinion on a student teacher's performance. Such 'prolonged engagement in the field' (Creswell and Miller 2002) provided me with invaluable context knowledge. In addition, it gave me the opportunity to investigate my data in the realities of the research setting.

3.8 The issue of generalisability

Generalisability refers to the degree to which the findings in a study can be applied to a wider setting. Two approaches can be undertaken in research; one which aims to collect a considerable amount of data about an issue and then offer generalisations on said issue; and another which investigates particular issues in order to answer specific questions (Thomas 2011). There is much evidence to suggest that, due to the complex and sometimes unpredictable nature of human interaction, generalisation and theories of prediction and universality are of little value in the study of human beings (Flyberg 2006; Newby 2010; Thomas 2010). In this situation, "concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals" (Flyvberg 2006, p.224). Qualitative research does not lend itself to testing hypotheses or generalising beyond a specific situation (Lichtman 2006).

In the research of humankind, perhaps the only absolute that we can expect is that it is likely that something will happen (Newby 2010). Qualitative research deals with people, and as such it is open to the influence of a number of variables (Bassey 2001; Thomas 2010). It is rarely possible to predict exactly how people will respond in any situation. Since the subjective nature of people can impact upon the research findings (Thomas 2010), it is not feasible to provide scientific generalisations in qualitative research. In addition, the scientific approach of quantitative research can disempower educational research since it fails to take cognisance of the different issues that emerge in education (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittaker 2013).

Research is not merely about the pursuit of "a single gold standard" of evidence, proof and generalisation Denzin (2009, p.152), since these factors are not always prerequisites for "inspired and insightful" research (Thomas 2011, p.53). Case study research should be valued for the essence of what it offers, "a contextual relevance and richness unmatched by any other paradigm" (Lincoln and Guba 1982, p.235). The question is not whether case study findings can be generalisable, but "to which other setting and subject are findings generalizable?" (Bogdan and Bilken 1997, p.7). I agree with Denscombe (2010, p.54) who argues that a researcher can "illuminate the general by looking at the particular" since the insights and understanding derived from one case study can lead to learning which can be extended to other similar cases.

3.8.1 An alternative approach to generalisation

While recognising that the concept of generalisation employed in quantitative research is not suitable for case study research, an argument can be made for taking the findings of case study and applying it to a wider setting. Stake (2005) suggests 'naturalistic generalisation' can occur in case study research. Given the importance attributed to the experiences gained by participants in case study settings, and the meanings made of these experiences by these participants, it is fair to conclude that naturalistic generalisations are valuable ways of applying insights and understandings gained in one research setting to settings of a similar context. In this regard, I believe the findings of my research on the part-time placement tutors in my study may have resonance for part-time placement tutors in other similar initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland and internationally.

Bassey (2001) also questions the traditional approach to generalisation employed in quantitative research. He differentiates between a scientific generalisation (x in y circumstances results in z) and a 'fuzzy generalisation' (a result that is neither likely nor unlikely to occur in every case but may occur in some cases). Scientific generalisation is of little benefit in social research since it is not possible to predict all the variables that may affect an event in this research setting. But 'fuzzy generalisations' can give rise to 'fuzzy predictions' when the researcher takes the findings of one particular situation and extrapolates it to another

similar situation, and so this type of research can inform, though not determine, practice in the social sciences (Bassey 2001).

Lincoln and Guba (1982, p.237) suggest that qualitative research can produce "context-bound working hypotheses" which can also be of value in similar situations. They propose that 'transferability' (rather than generalisability) of research findings can occur between research settings. This, they argue, occurs when there is a 'fit' or similarity between the two contexts and the researcher provides a 'thick description' of the research and its findings in order to assist the reader to make the transference (Lincoln and Guba 2005). Mertens (2009) also supports the concept of transferability, suggesting that detailed, thick description provided for the reader acts as an external validation for the research.

3.8.2 Transferability of my case study research

The profile of the part-time placement tutor participants in my study is consistent with the profile of part-time placement tutors both nationally and internationally (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Cochran-Smith 2003; Rodgers and Kiel 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Davey 2013; Rose and Kenny 2014; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019). These placement tutor participants represent a range of demographics in terms of age, gender, qualifications, years of experience as a teacher, and years of experience as a placement tutor. It is reasonable to argue that the profile of these part-time placement tutors is similar to that of part-time placement tutors on other initial teacher education programmes. As such, a case can be made for the possibility of transferability of the findings from this research study to other similar contexts in initial teacher education. In this instance, analysis of the data provided by these six case studies has the potential to inform policy and practice pertaining to part-time placement tutors, in initial teacher education programmes both in the Republic of Ireland and the wider international stage.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics involve "a systematic reflection on morality, an attempt to clarify, and codify what is right and what is wrong" (Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007, p.58), and as such, are an integral part of all research procedures (Denscombe 2010; Cohen et al. 2011; Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013; Braun and Clarke 2013; Flick 2014; Mertens and Wilson 2012; Webster et al. 2014). Ethical research focuses not just on gathering data; it considers the rights, dignity and wellbeing of all who take part in the research (Hall et al. 2018). An ethical approach rests on careful consideration of four central issues, "informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and the role of the researcher" (Kvale and Brinkman 2009, p.68). Meeting the requirements related to these four issues ensures that the rights of research participants are protected and that researchers are honest and transparent in their collection, analysis and reporting of data.

Ethical review boards and committees act as 'gate holders' for research communities to ensure the highest of ethical standards are set and maintained (Kvale and Brinkman 2009; Flick 2014; Bell 2015). I sought and received approval for my research from the Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC) of Rosemount university during the early stages of my research (Appendix 8:SREC Application for Ethical Approval and Appendix 9:Receipt of SREC Ethical Approval). Being involved in this process was a useful exercise in orientating me towards the highest standards of ethical practice possible in my study. But it is important to note that neither "research governance nor ethical codes and guidelines" in and of themselves are enough to ensure ethical practice, and it is incumbent upon all researchers to develop a 'research conscience' in order to maintain an appropriate research stance (Webster et al. 2014, p.107). Ethics in research are not 'solved' at the beginning of a study and then forgotten about (Cohen et al. 2011). Researchers must remain constantly vigilant in the face of dilemmas, equivocations, and uncertainties which present throughout the process of qualitative research (Flick 2014; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). Even when presenting the findings and discussion in the final stages of this study I had to consider carefully the impact of writing about the biographical details of each participant might endanger their anonymity.

Nonetheless, is important that these challenges do not prevent researchers from the pursuit of inquiry. Instead they should help them to do so in a more reflective manner, keeping the views

of the research participants at the centre of the inquiry (Flick 2014). Two ethical dilemmas emerged for me in my study. The first concerned the anonymity of my research participants, and the second was linked to my role as placement coordinator for this group of placement tutors, and the implications this might have for the distribution of power between the participants and me.

3.9.1 The ethical dilemma of anonymity

Anonymity implies that information or data used in a study does not result in revealing the identity of an individual (O'Leary 2004; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). While Flick (2014) advises that researchers should try to guarantee that participants cannot be identified in a study, Saunders et al. (2014, p.617) claim that the "process of anonymisation is a complex, and far from water-tight process". O'Leary (2004) agrees that it is not always possible to guarantee full anonymity in qualitative research. She argues that in certain circumstances if the research is conducted in communities where the research participant is known, it may be possible for others to ascertain the identity of some research participants. Cohen et al. (2011, p.66) concur with this opinion, asserting that while the ethical researcher may do everything possible to ensure the anonymity of research participants, "there is no absolute guarantee of total anonymity as far as life studies are concerned". Therefore, researchers are faced with balancing two priorities, "maximising protection of participants' identities and maintaining the value and integrity of the data" (Saunders et al. 2014, p.617). This becomes even more challenging in small scale research projects.

My research is set in an initial teacher education programme in the Republic of Ireland. Given that the SUPE programme is one of only three such initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland, the issue of anonymity for the research participants was a serious ethical issue to consider. O'Brien and Furlong (2015) highlight a similar issue in their study of the professional identities of nine teacher educators based in a primary school initial teacher education programme in the Republic of Ireland. The researchers found that the small community of teacher educators in this sector made it 'extremely difficult' to protect the privacy of both the research participants and their institution. Given that that my research was

conducted in a small community of practitioners, it was essential to ensure that my research participants remained unidentifiable (Fraser and Alexander 2006). It was important to me that my research did not impact upon any participants in a negative way by causing 'undue intrusion' (Webster et al. 2014) or impacting their privacy.

After much consideration of the issue, I decided to follow the advice of Flick (2014) who asserts that ethical dilemmas in research should not prevent researchers from conducting their research. He contends that it is more appropriate that researchers consider the ethical dilemma from the perspective of the participant and adopt a reflective and sensitive approach in order to find a solution. Hence, researchers are required to walk in the shoes of their participants and look at the research through their eyes so as to consider any questions, fears or uncertainties they may have about their participation in it (Flick 2014; Webster et al. 2014). In doing so, researchers "remain open to the dilemmas, ambivalences and conflicts that are bound to arise throughout the research process" (Kvale and Brinkman 2009, p.69).

When considering the ethical dilemma of anonymity, I had to reflect upon how taking part in my study might impact upon my research participants. I was aware that collecting data in qualitative research makes anonymity a "highly challenging concept" and it was my responsibility as a researcher to do all I could to safeguard each research participant (King and Horrocks 2010, p.120). The principle of 'beneficence' proposed in the literature (Flick 2009; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Cohen et al. 2011) helped me to address my concerns. Beneficence involves examining the pros and cons of a research study in terms of assessing the potential risks and potential benefits to the participants. The goal of beneficence is to minimise risk and maximise benefit.

Reflecting on the dilemma of ensuring anonymity for all my research participants led me to question the consequences for them of taking part in my study (Kvale and Brinkman 2009). There is often a tension between the desire to conduct research which can lead to generalisations for the greater good, and the need to protect research participants' privacy (Orb et al. 2001). It is reasonable for researchers to be concerned that taking part in a study might cause 'undue intrusion' on the participants' lives (Webster et al. 2014). Thus, it is incumbent

upon researchers to carefully consider the principle of 'beneficence' by assessing the potential risks to, and benefits for, the participants involved in a study (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Cohen et al. 2011). Upon reflection, I agreed with the claim made by Kvale and Brinkman (2009) that it is ethically sound to proceed with a research study if the risk of harm to participants is outweighed by potential benefits for them, and by the opportunity for the production of new knowledge. I concluded that participation in my research study would benefit the six research participants by providing them with the chance to reflect on their practice as placement tutors. They would have a chance to be listened to, to reflect upon their experience as placement tutors and perhaps improve upon their practice (Miles et al. 2014). In addition, I believed that my study would address the lack of research on this marginalised group of teacher educators and highlight the very valuable work they undertake in initial teacher education.

3.9.2 Maximising confidentiality and anonymity

I took several actions to maximise the confidentiality and anonymity of my research participants. I provided them with a detailed Participant Research Study Information document (Appendix 10). This document outlines the purpose and the focus of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the commitment of the researcher to observing confidentiality with regards to participants' involvement in the study, and any information they might provide therein. It highlights that each participant would be identified by a pseudonym only and that participants could, at any stage, withdraw from the study and their information would be deleted from the data set immediately. I ensured that all participants received the document well in advance of any data collection in order to allow them time to reflect upon their participation in the study. All participants returned a signed copy of the Participant Research Consent form (Appendix 11) prior to commencement of interviews.

Prior to interviewing my participants, I advised them that transcripts of the interviews would be made available to them, and they could highlight any sections which they would rather not be included as data for the study. I also requested they would not identify themselves, or any person, organisation or place during the course of the interview. Furthermore, in providing the

participants with a copy of each interview transcript and observation fieldnotes I was able to check if there was any information they wished to be withheld from my write up. In line with ethical research procedure, hardcopy information related to all participants was stored in a safe and secure place, and electronic data was kept in password protected files (Cohen et al. 2011).

3.9.3 The ethical dilemma of being the researcher in the research process

As previously mentioned, a significant feature of qualitative research is the central role played by the researcher (Flick 2009; Hastie and Hay 2012; Weber et al. 2014) since it is "through his or her eyes and ears that data are collected, information is gathered, settings are viewed and realities are constructed" (Lichtman 2006, p.12). Qualitative researchers "are firmly in all aspects of the process and essential to it" (Dwyer and Buckle 2009, p.61). They are active agents in the research process (Bonner and Tolhurst 2002; Thomas 2010). In addition, effective communication between the researcher and the research participants is a key component of data collection; hence the researcher cannot adopt a neutral position (Flick 2014). They have a significant impact upon each stage, in terms of deciding the purpose of the study, generating the main and subsidiary questions, choosing the methods to be used for data collection and analysis, interpreting the data, and reporting back on the findings of the research (Denzin 2009; Mertens 2009). I concur with Gibbs (2007, p.91) who asserts that no researcher can claim to be an "objective, authoritative, politically neutral observer standing outside and above the text of their research reports". It would seem that since all research is initiated by a person or persons rather than a machine, then all research is impacted to some degree by the choices made by researchers.

Given that the research grew out of my previous experiences as a part-time 'disenfranchised' (Slick 1998) placement tutor, I was invested in my research from the beginning. My personal biography as a placement tutor and my current role as coordinator of school placement, were the springboards for the focus of my research, and for the questions I sought to address. Furthermore, in undertaking the research, I had a vested interest in increasing my knowledge and understanding, in order to inform and enhance my practice as the coordinator of a team of placement tutors, and a body of student teachers. Ultimately my position in the research was

inextricably linked to the fact that I, the researcher, was the means of facilitating it. As the 'researcher in the middle' (Breen 2007), I had to maintain an 'insider-outsider' perspective (Dwyer and Buckle 2009) which allowed me to take advantage of my in-depth knowledge of the research situation, while ensuring that I maintained the necessary degree of objectivity. I operated in a middle space, the 'space between' objectivity and subjectivity (Dwyer and Buckle 2009). In addition, I had to ensure that throughout my research study I operated from a position of integrity, honesty and fairness in maintaining an ethical and responsible approach (Flick 2009).

3.9.4 Power dynamics in the researcher-participant relationship

The quality of data collected in qualitative research is inextricably linked to the quality of the relationship established between the researcher and the participants (Newbury 2001). I was extremely fortunate that I enjoyed a positive relationship with the placement tutors and student teachers involved in this study. However, as the coordinator of the SUPE school placement programme, I was also aware that there was a certain power dynamic at play in the research setting, since my position meant I had a hierarchical relationship with my participants (Braun and Clarke 2013).

There was a possibility that the placement tutor participants might not feel comfortable articulating their viewpoints in the interviews, or that they might feel compromised during the observations conducted, due to the inherent power structure of the school placement coordinator-tutor relationship. In addition, there was a chance that I could be perceived as the 'expert' by my participants (Braun and Clarke 2013). I was mindful of the claim by Foucault (2000) that power relations are at the heart of societal interaction. But I also noted his assertion that "Power exists…only when it is put into action" (Foucault 2000, p.340). I endeavoured to promote a "balanced research relationship" (Orb et al. 2000, p.94) in all my interactions with my participants and to be an 'empathetic interviewer' (Braun and Clarke 2013). During all interview and observation sessions, I assiduously worked to ensure that the 'voices' of the research participants were acknowledged (Hastie and May 2012) and did my best to represent their interpretation of events (Bradshaw et al. 2017).

During interviews I was very conscious of the "power relations that shape interviewing" (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.88). I encouraged participants to speak freely, utilising semi-structured interview schedules with open-ended questions, and always concluding by allowing time for the interviewees to ask questions, or add unprompted feedback. At the beginning of each interview I reminded participants that I would respect their right to withdraw from any question, or issues that they did not wish to discuss (Webster et al. 2014; Yeo et al. 2014). I also emphasised to them that there were no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to the questions asked during the interview (Yeo 2014). While I was happy to engage with the participants during the interview process, I made it very clear to them that my interests lay in what they had to say in response to the questions, and that any additional feedback, comments or questions they might have would be welcomed. I avoided taking the stance of 'the expert' in my interactions with my interviewees, and I did my best to communicate a genuine desire to listen to them (Braun and Clarke 2013). Following each interview, I provided a copy of the transcript to the research participants and emphasised to them that I would facilitate any request from them to delete a comment made, or information shared, from the transcript and that this material would not be used in the study.

Prior to conducting observations of the placement tutors' visits to student teachers, I considered the possibilities of power dynamics in my relationship with the student teachers. As school placement coordinator, I was aware that my presence in the school placement visit might cause a degree of anxiety for the student teachers, since they were graded on each supervision visit and assessment results from school placement are "high stakes" for student teachers (Hall et al. 2018, p.101). To help address this issue, I spoke to the student teacher cohort about the purpose of my observation of the placement tutor and reassured them that it would have no impact upon their supervision visit, or the grade received. I also provided them with a Student Teacher Observation Information form (Appendix 12) and a Student Teacher Observation Consent form (Appendix 13). Eighteen out of twenty-nine students returned the consent form, and each of the eighteen gave consent for observation of their supervision visit. I chose to observe six student teacher supervisions, one for each placement tutor research participant. My choice was dictated by when my availability matched the supervision schedule offered by the placement tutors. Prior to conducting each observation, I emailed the student teachers to advise

them of my arrival since I felt it was important to reduce any stress that an unannounced visit from me might cause to them.

In my role as observer I endeavoured to remain as unobtrusive as possible during the placement tutors' supervision visits, being careful never to interfere with any of the activities I observed. As with the interviews, I provided my research participants with a transcript of my fieldnotes, showing my account of what I observed occurred, thus, allowing them to check it for accuracy of representation. Once again, I emphasised that any information recorded which they wished to be omitted from my data set would be removed and not utilised.

3.9.5 Ethical framework

There is consensus in the literature that researchers should establish an ethical framework, guided by a personal code of ethical practice (Denscombe 2010; Thomas 2010, 2011; Cohen et al. 2011; Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013; Braun and Clarke 2013). Maintaining an ethical framework ensures that the researcher remains alert to ethical issues, challenges and dilemmas that emerged during the research. I relied on a framework guided by my considerations of my research participants and my role as researcher, along with my methods of data collection and analysis. My framework, (outlined in Table 3D) helped me to ensure integrity in my research approach (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Miles et al. 2014), protecting the welfare of my research participants, promoting transparency in data collection and analysis, and encouraging a constant awareness of the implications of my 'insider' status throughout my research enquiry. Adopting a reflective and a reflexive approach (Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007) helped me to be aware of the context and situation of my research (Kvale and Brinkman 2009) and assisted me to "reflexively negotiate ethical dilemmas" (Webster et al. 2014, p.82).

Table 3D: Ethical framework underpinning my research study

Research participants	Research data	My role in the research
1. All participants were over 18 years of age. 2. Anonymity was promoted by providing pseudo names for each participant and personal details were not utilised at any stage of the research. 3. Information provided by the participants in interviews, reflective journals and email correspondence was kept completely confidential. 4. Participation in the research was voluntary and participants were offered the choice of opting out of the research at any point. 5. An information document that contained detailed description of the study methods and procedures was provided. 6. Informed consent to take part in the research was sought, and received from each participant on an ongoing basis, throughout the data collection (Cohen et al. 2011; Webster et al. 2014). 7. Permission for publishing interview and observation transcripts was sought and received from all participants. 8. Transcripts of interviews and fieldnotes from observations were provided for each participant to review and check data (Webster et al. 2014). 9. Research findings were shared with each participant.	1. A meticulous and secure data management system was maintained throughout the study to provide a 'chain of evidence' (Yin 2009). 2. Data was collected in a fair and ethical manner. 3. Data collected was used for the purpose intended only. 4. Data was kept secure. Electronic data such as emails, analysis systems etc. were stored in a passport protected folder on computer. Hardcopy data was kept in a secure locked cupboard (Webster et al. 2014). 5. Access to data was restricted to the researcher, participants and PhD supervisors. 6. Data was kept confidential and anonymous.	1. My positioning and my stance in the research was made clear throughout. 2. I maintained an ongoing reflective and reflexive stance with regards to the issue of subjectivity of the' insider' researcher (Jennings 2005; Wellington and Szczerbinski 2007, Braun and Thompson 2013). 3. My researcher diary provided evidence of my reflections at each stage of the data collection and analysis, including critical consideration of my role in the research, the possibility of bias and subjectivity and the possible impact my insider research position might have upon my study. 4. I was honest and respectful in all my dealings with the participants at all stages of the research. 5. I always observed professional procedures when collecting and analysing data, and in reporting findings.

3.10 Data Collection Methods

Research data helps us to answer our research question (Maxwell 2008; Newby 2010). The literature emphasises the importance of using different methods of data collection in order to investigate a research issue from many different angles (Newby 2010; Cohen et al. 2011; Creswell 2014; Bell 2015). Bearing this advice in mind I decided to use three sources of data collection:

1. Individual interviews
2. Observations of participants' school placement supervision visit
3. Researcher diary

My data collection was an iterative operation which involved revisiting information gathered in order to establish my next steps. It was a non-linear, cyclical process, where each set of data recursively informed the next set of data gathered. This was particularly my experience when I conducted the interviews and the observations. Having interviewed or observed the practice of the participants, I conducted a preliminary reflection on the data gathered in my researcher diary. Insights gained therein informed the way in which I approached the next interview or observation, sometimes leading to slight changes to my interview questions or a heightened awareness of an issue in my observations. In addition, I discovered that data collection was not a straightforward process, but rather there were elements of messiness and unpredictability (Sakata et al. 2019) to negotiate as I dealt with "the constant pushing and pulling that is an integral part of collecting data" (Billo and Hiemstra 2013, p.324).

One significant example of data collection 'messiness' was the impact of cancelled school placement supervision visits on observations I had planned to conduct. My observations were carefully planned according to my six placement tutors' schedules of supervision visits; and so these cancellations led to deferred observations occurring at a much later date. The impact of these unexpected events meant that two observations and the first three of the second set of interviews had to be conducted concurrently during late February and early March 2020. This experience was testament to the advice offered by Naveed et al. (2017) that researchers have to be prepared to reschedule pre-planned schedules in response to events that occur in the field.

Collecting both sets of data simultaneously contributed further to my experience of reiteration between two different sets of data in a very 'live' manner. For example, coming fresh from an observation to an interview provided me with added awareness of issues relevant to certain questions planned for that interview. Another noteworthy incident which necessitated some alteration to my data collection occurred on March 13th, 2020, when all educational institutions were put on lockdown due to the onset of the Covid 19 virus in the Republic of Ireland. This momentous event meant that face-to-face interviews with my research participants were no long possible. Instead the final two of the second set of interviews, and all six of the third set of interviews were conducted using the cloud-based video conferencing service Zoom.

An added complication was that, due to ill-health, I had to take a leave of absence from my studies (October 2017-February 2019). This meant there was a gap of eighteen months during my research, at a stage when I had commenced the first interview with my research participants. Following the advice of the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (British Educational Research Association 2018), I contacted these research participants to ensure that they wished to continue with their involvement in my study. For that reason, I operated a system of 'rolling informed consent', renegotiating the contract with my participants as the study progressed (Piper and Simons 2005).

3.11 Interviews

All research interviews have the goal of obtaining information (Oppenheim 1992; Rowley 2012). Qualitative research interviews go beyond merely obtaining information. These interviews are "active interactions between two (or more) people, leading to negotiated, contextually based results" (Fontana and Frey 2005, p.698). It is important to acknowledge that information obtained in qualitative interviews is both contextual and situational (Rubin and Rubin 2005). Qualitative interviews are not merely a means of obtaining data from participants, they are also social exchanges in which researchers aim to understand the world from the point of view of the interviewee (Jennings 2005; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Cohen et al. 2011). Hence, the qualitative interview process enables the researcher to access insights, opinions, understandings, attitudes and values of the research participants (Rowley 2012).

The interview process is exploratory in nature; during which researchers must listen to the voice of the research participants and encourage them "to describe their experiences in their own terms" (Rubin and Rubin 2005, p.17). In many respects the interview is like an "interpersonal drama with a developing plot" (Holstein and Gubrium 2005, p.15) where the researcher attempts to develop ideas about how people think and feel about a topic (Oppenheim 1992; Orb et al. 2000; Seidman 2006). Qualitative interviews align with constructivist and interpretivist research paradigms, privileging ontologically multiple perspectives, and epistemologically subjective responses (Jennings 2005). If researchers are interested in the lived experience of the research participants and the meaning they attribute to an experience, then interviews are often the most effective avenue of inquiry (Seidman 2006).

3.11.1 My interview stance

Several metaphors are provided in the literature for the interviewer. Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007, p.82) postulate that a research interviewer is like "a sponge, a sounding board, a prober, a listener, a counsellor, a recorder, a challenger, a prompter, a sharer". Flick (2009), and Kvale and Brinkman (2009), offer two contrasting metaphors. The first is the 'miner' metaphor where knowledge is seen as a given, and the job of the interviewer is to unearth buried knowledge by digging up nuggets of information from the interviewee (Flick 2009). In the second metaphor, the interviewer is compared to a 'traveller' who journeys with the interviewees, listening to their stories and interpreting them in order to find meaning in the narratives provided (Kvale and Brinkman).

I identified with the traveller metaphor in my interview stance. I experienced the process very much as a journey of discovery, which I shared with my research participants, learning from each interviewee I encountered on my journey. As a 'traveller' interviewer I developed a phronesis or practical wisdom (Thomas 2010) which informed my praxis as a researcher. Traditionally, the interviewee has been treated as "a clockwork orange", someone to be squeezed in order to extract information, but today a more empathetic approach is promoted, whereby "the interviewer becomes an advocate and a partner in the study" (Fontana and Frey 2005, p.696). Adopting the traveller approach in my interviews enabled me to become an

advocate and partner for my research participants. In doing so, we became co-constructors of meaning in a manner commensurate with the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm which was the bedrock of my research.

In quantitative research, interviews are a neutral means of obtaining information whereby interviewers ask questions and participants provide answers (Holstein and Gubrium 2005). Interviews in qualitative research, by comparison, are widely viewed as conversations between the researcher and the research participant (Holstein and Gubrium 2005; Jennings 2005; Kvale and Brinkman 2009). That said, an interview is never just a conversation; it is a conversation with a purpose (Webb and Webb 1932 cited Kvale and Brinkman 2009) in which the interviewer is not merely a neutral actor, but rather a participant in a relationship with the interviewee (Holstein and Gubrium 2005; Rubin and Rubin 2005). In many ways, research interviewers have a hidden agenda; they have questions they need to ask in order to illuminate their research topics (Oppenheim 1992).

The interview conversation is guided by the researcher who sets and asks the questions, leads the stages of the interview, and sometimes probes the interviewee's responses (Rubin and Rubin 2005; Rapley 2007). Essentially the role of the interviewee is to talk, and the role of the interviewer to 'listen with the third ear' (Oppenheim 1992, p.67), in order to hear not just what is being said, but also what is being left unsaid (Yeo et al. 2014). Researchers can take the position of a 'passive listener' who simply facilitates the interview and remains neutral, or they can become an 'active listener' (Yeo et al. 2014), facilitating the interview but also collaborating, sharing personal experience and interacting with the participant (Rapley 2007). Yeo et al. (2014) argue that by answering questions and sharing their opinion, interviewers can influence the response of the interviewee. In contrast, Rapley (2007) maintains that being neutral can sometimes silence or banish collaboration between the researcher and the participant. By becoming actively involved with her interview participants, Nicolson (2002, p.133) discovered that "the meaning of the participants' experiences was actively constructed though the interaction between the interviewer, participant and the situation itself".

I experienced a process similar to that described by Nicolson (2002) throughout the interviews I conducted with my participants. While I was very conscious that my role was to listen and allow the participant to speak, there were times where the response from a participant lead to a natural exchange of ideas or opinions between us. There were some occasions when I grappled with concerns that perhaps I should have talked less and listened more, as evident in several entries in my researcher diary (12 January 2018; 18 January 2018; 25 February 2020; 6 March 2020). Nevertheless, I also felt that I was involved in a genuine co-construction of meaning with my research participants in these interview conversations: *I had a real sense of being involved in a co-construction of ideas with this interviewee. I felt we genuinely shared ideas - listening to each other and learning from each other* (Researcher Diary, 11 January 2018). In this sense my interviews were active interviews, "interpretive practice involving respondents and interviewers as they articulate their orientations and understandings" (Holstein and Gubrium 2005, p.149).

3.11.2 Conducting the interview

During the interview, the researcher helps the interview subjects to unfold the narrative of their stories and, as such, the researcher is "the key research instrument of the interview enquiry" (Flick 2009, p.81). Being a successful interviewer in qualitative research requires the researcher to acquire "competence and craftsmanship" through using a combination of practical skills, personal insights and exercising sound personal judgement as the interview unfolds (Kvale and Brinkman 2009, p.82). The ability to listen is a fundamental skill for a research interviewer to acquire (Legard et al. 2003; Rubin and Rubin 2005).

Three levels of listening occur in a successful interview:

1. 'Active listening' enables the interviewer to pay full attention to interviewees, interacting with them and giving feedback as necessary.
2. 'Interpretive listening' involves probing and prompting questions which help investigate and clarify meaning.
3. 'Process listening' allows the interviewer to monitor the timing of the interview and ascertain where it may need to go

(Jennings 2005; Seidman 2006; Kvale and Brinkman 2009).

It is important that the interviewer achieves a balance between listening attentively to the interviewee while keeping the focus of the interview in mind (Yin 2009; King and Horrocks 2010).

The ability to ask good questions is another central skill needed by the research interviewer since the interview questions are fundamental to how the narrative unfolds in the exchange between the researcher and participant. In a general sense, good questioning technique includes asking relevant questions (of interest to the interviewee and pertinent to the research), which are logically sequenced and allow sufficient time response from the participants (Jennings 2005; Sideman 2006; Kvale and Brinkman 2009). Researchers should employ three types of questions; main questions which begin and guide the interview, probe questions which help clarify an issue, and follow up questions which allow further exploration of core ideas and concepts (Rubin and Rubin 2005). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggest that that an interview is like "mapping an 'uncharted island' that is the interviewee's world" and the questions used are the cartography necessary to map that world.

In addition to the skills of listening and questioning, successful interviews are built upon careful preparation, thorough knowledge of the subject, a good memory to recall key information at a later date, and the ability to establish a rapport with the interviewee (Oppenheim 1992; Legard et al. 2003; Rubin and Rubin 2005; Kvale and Brinkman 2009; Cohen et al. 2011; Yeo et al. 2014). Ultimately, a successful research interviewer should possess an 'enquiring mind' (Legard et al. 2003) and adopt a 'patient curiosity' (Patton 2002) and a 'deliberate naiveté' (Kvale and Brinkman 2009). These qualities enable the researcher to be open-minded and receptive to unexpected responses and new ideas which may emerge during the interview process.

3.11.3 The individual interviews

Research interviews can be structured, open, and semi-structured (Oppenheim 1992; Orb et al. 2000; Seidman 2006; Kvale and Brinkman 2009; Rowley 2012; Braun and Clarke 2013). In keeping with the tenets of qualitative inquiry, I chose the semi-structured interview approach as this provided a framework which helped to guide the interview, without the demands of sticking rigidly to the questions (Rowley 2012; Braun and Clarke 2013). The semi-structured interview facilitated me to be open to the possibility of unforeseen responses and the 'hidden gem' they might contain. In this way my interviews were "guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin 2009, p.106).

I interviewed each of the six participants on three separate occasions during the school placement year. I structured each interview schedule into three separate sections or phases; introducing the interview, interview questions and concluding the interview (Table 3E).

Table 3E: Structure of Interviews

STRUCTURE OF INTERVIEWS
Introducing the interview
1. Remind the interviewee of the aims and purpose of the interview. 2. Remind the interviewee that participation is voluntary, and all matters regarding ethics and confidentiality will be observed. 3. Remind interview that no mention of a person, place or organisation should be made. 4. Emphasise that the interview will be led by the interviewee, including omitting and questions deemed unsuitable by the interviewee.
Interview questions
See Appendices 15,16 and 17 for interview questions
Concluding the interview
1. You have provided me with some really useful information, and very valuable insights here today which will be of great benefit to my research. I'm going to finish up shortly but before I do so, are there any questions, comments etc that you may wish to share with me, in relation to anything that came up here today, or anything you may wish to add perhaps? 2. Thank you sincerely for giving up the time to be here today, and for being so forthcoming and generous in your response to the questions. I will be getting this interview transcribed and I can send you a copy of same, for your own records? I just want to reassure you once again that everything you shared here with me is in the strictest of confidence, and your name will not appear anywhere in any data which might emerge as a result of this interview process today.

I approached each interview with a set of 'main questions', with subsidiary questions that might be needed as prompts, or probes (Rowley 2012). Questions were carefully constructed to encourage the participants to tell their stories in relation to the issues being explored (Appendices 15, 16 and 17). With the participants' consent, I audio-recorded all interviews and they were professionally transcribed. I chose not to take notes during the interview since I felt it was important that I could focus all my attention on the interviewees. This enabled me to listen very closely to what they had to say, and to check eye contact and body language to ascertain if they appeared comfortable and at ease in the interview setting (Braun and Clark 2013; Webster et al. 2014; Yeo et al. 2014). Following the advice of King and Horrocks (2010) all interviews were conducted at a place chosen by participants in order to ensure minimum disruption and inconvenience for them.

In October 2017 I conducted two pilot interviews with placement tutors who were part of the SUPE programme, but not part of my research (Appendix 14). The two pilot interviews gave me the opportunity to check that my questions were easily understood by the interviewees, and appropriate to the research focus, as well as providing an opportunity to practise my interview skills (Kvale and Brinkman 2009; Rowley 2012 Braun and Clarke 2013). Following the pilot phase, the first set of interviews were conducted in January and February 2018, and October 2019 (Appendix 15). The second set of interviews occurred in March 2020 (Appendix 16), and in May 2020 I conducted the third and final set of interviews (Appendix 17). My plan had been to conduct face-to-face interviews, but the Coronavirus pandemic caused a national lockdown in the Republic of Ireland in March 2020, and so the final two of the second set of interviews, and all six of the third set of interviews were conducted online using the cloud-based video conferencing service Zoom.

3.11.4 Online interviews

Communication via the internet is becoming increasingly important in today's world, and it can provide a valuable source of online research tools (Lo Iacono et al. 2016). There are a number of information and communications technologies which allow the researcher to conduct interviews through online platforms (Salmons 2012). Online interviews can occur in two ways; though synchronous (real-time) text-based messenger services or video

conferencing, or by asynchronous (non-real-time) technologies such as emails or discussion boards (Janghorban et al. 2014). The online interview resource which I chose to use was Zoom, a cloud-based video conferencing service, similar to several other information and communications technologies such as Skype, Microsoft Teams and Google Meet. Following the Coronavirus crisis, Zoom became one of the most popular videoconferencing tools for both personal, and business meetings. I chose to use Zoom for my online interviews as I was familiar with the service, and it was a device that all six research participants could access with ease.

As with all data collection methods, there are ethical issues to address when using online interviews, in particular with regards to the issues of consent from participants and online safety (Sullivan 2012; Denzin and Wakefield 2013; Janghorban et al. 2014; Lo Iacono et al. 2016). Before I began collecting data, I had provided my research participants with information regarding my data collection methods, and I had received consent forms from each of them. Since conducting the third interview online was an unanticipated event, I decided it was best practice to provide my interviewees with an Online Interview Information document (Appendix 18) which outlined how the interview would be conducted and the security measures I planned to take to ensure they were safe from any online security threat. I also requested that they sign a consent form for participating in the online interview which was emailed to me before the online interview took place (Appendix 19). At the start of the online interview I once again reminded the interviewees of the security measure that were in place, and advised them that they could, at any time, exit the interview if necessary.

As the Coronavirus pandemic escalated in March and April 2020 and the Zoom video platform increased in popularity worldwide, initial reports of security issues with the service began to emerge (Paul 2020a; Singer and Perlroth 2020). Zoom were quick to respond to the concerns expressed through providing its service users with improved encryption tools, enhanced password protection features and additional safety mechanisms (Hussain 2020, Paul 2020b). I adhered to a number of security protocols to ensure that all online interviews were conducted safely. These included generating a new personal identification number for each interview, providing each interviewee with a password needed to access the Zoom meeting, enabling the

'waiting room' feature so that I could control who was admitted to the meeting, and turning on the 'lock meeting' feature once the meeting began in order to prevent anyone else joining.

Opinions vary when comparing online and face-to-face interviews, and the platform used must be considered when making any comparison. Deakin and Wakefield (2013,) used the video conferencing tool of Skype to conduct their online interviews. They concluded that that the main difference between face-to-face and online interviews is one of distance, since online interview can provide access to participants in worldwide location at the click of a button (Deakin and Wakefield 20123). In contrast, Davis (2003, p.951) asserts that online and face-to-face interviews should be "viewed as distinct research forms with distinct, but different attributes". However, it should be noted that this researcher used a chat messenger platform when conducting his online interviews, thus relying on text conversation rather than video conferencing. My experience of using the Zoom video conferencing tool was generally a very positive one, since this technology allowed interviews to occur in a synchronous setting, promoting interactive communication between myself and my interviewees (Janghorban et al. 2014). Geographical obstacles to accessing participants were removed, ensuring the interview schedule occurred at a time convenient to each of the research participants (Davis et al. 2004; Janghorban et al. 2014). A further feature of Zoom which I appreciated was that I could access nonverbal cues such as gestures and facial expressions in a manner somewhat similar to a face-to face interview (Salmons 2012; Sullivan 2012).

Some researchers suggest that there is a possibility that online interviews might make it challenging to build rapport with interviewees (Deakin and Wakefield 2013; Lo Iacono et al. 2016). I was fortunate that I had a well-established relationship secured with all my research participants by the time I came to conduct the online interviews. In addition, I had already conducted face-to-face interviews with each of them, hence, switching to the online forum proved to be a relatively smooth process. There were one or two technical glitches during my first two online interview attempts (Alan and Frances, Interview Two, March 2020) but these were mainly due to the fact that these two online interviews had to be conducted as a trial run, with minimum preparation due to unanticipated Coronavirus lockdown. By the time I

conducted my third and final round of interviews I was well prepared and more confident in my use of the technology.

3.12 Observations

As a research method, observation enjoys a long tradition in qualitative research (Flick 2014; Creswell 2016) and is valued as a means of obtaining "rich data in its own right and understanding that would be missed by other forms of data collection" (Ritchie al. 2014, p.245). Observation allows the researcher to go beyond what people say they think or do, to witnessing what people actually do (Denscombe 2014). It also allows researchers to look at what is taking place *in situ* rather than relying on second-hand accounts (Cohen et al. 2011; Ritchie et al. 2014). Observation allows researchers to focus on what is happening at a specific time and in a specific place and so it provides another perspective (Yin 2009; Flick 2014). My observations provided me with the opportunity to study the placement tutors in their school environments, and the process involved in their supervision of student teachers. It enabled me to use a different lens to that used in the interviews, and as such it was a very significant part of the triangulation process in my study.

The purpose of observations is two-fold; to compare and contrast findings from this research method with the findings of other research methods, and to gain further insight into the research inquiry (Denzin 1989; Stake 1995; Yin 2006; Maxwell 2008; Cohen et al. 2011). In my study, my observations provided me with a means of searching for data relevant to my research questions in a different setting to that of the interviews. The observation data also helped to inform the second set of interviews undertaken after the observations were complete. Thus, my observations served as an "adjunct to interviewing" (Creswell 2016, p.117).

3.12.1 My observation stance

The researcher's presence is an important part of the process of observation (Denscombe 2010; Dwyer and Buckle 2009; Cohen et al. 2011; Ritchie et al. 2014; Takyi 2015). The degree to which researchers become part of the process is decided by the role they occupy when they observe. Four main observation roles have been identified by Gold (1958 cited in Ritchie et al. 2014). They include the observer as complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant and complete observer. For the purposes of my research, I chose to assume the stance of 'participant as observer'. This seemed like a logical choice to me since I had already an established bond with the participants being observed; the placement tutors and the student teachers. Consequently, it was impossible, on a practical level, to conceal my identity from them.

My role of 'participant as observer' gave me the opportunity to see the reality of placement tutors' supervision visits since I was 'inside' the case studies on these occasions (Yin 2009; Takyi 2015). I was part of the school placement supervision, sitting in on lessons taught, and meetings held, while also being able to sit back and observe the process, unhindered by any obligation to take part. In this way I became the 'insider-outsider' observer (Bonner and Tolhurst 2002; Dwyer and Buckle 2009). I was an 'outside' observer in the sense that I was extrinsic to the process involved in placement tutors' supervision of their student teachers. Yet, my role as school placement coordinator, and previous experiences as a placement tutor made me an 'inside' observer with a rich knowledge of the setting, and an established relationship with the subjects being observed. In the context of my research setting, therefore, I identified strongly with the concept of the 'space between the insider-outsider observer' proposed by Dwyer and Buckle (2009). As the 'insider-outsider observer', I was able to consider what I observed from the two viewpoints, objective and subjective, to provide a rich picture of the setting observed. In some ways, the insider knowledge and experiences I brought with me to the observations was also challenging:

> It was very strange to be out in the school as an observer and not in my usual role, i.e. as SP Coordinator… I found myself having to remind myself that I did not have to assess or write up feedback for the ST…I had to focus on the PT and what the experience of supervision appeared to be like for her. At times there was a bit if an internal struggle with my responsibilities as SP Coordinator versus my need to be the

> objective observer … my 'insider knowledge' contributed to my reflection and analysis of what I saw occurring. Is that a bad or a good thing? I think it helps make the interpretation rich, but I also have to be very careful of being biased (Researcher Diary, 26 November 2019).

In the space of 'insider-outsider observer' I occupied a 'peripheral membership role' (Adler and Alder 1994), establishing an insider's identity which allowed me to observe the group without participating in activities (Kawulich 2007).

At each of the observations I made it clear to the student teachers, placement tutors, co-operating teachers, deputy principals (the observation participants) that my role as observer was very different to my usual role of school placement coordinator. From the time I entered the school site of each observation, I tried to make myself as unobtrusive as possible. Apart from greeting the observation participants, I made a conscious effort to 'detach myself' from the observation situation (Takyi 2015). I adopted a position of 'hanging out with the gang'; being present in the process of the school placement supervision, but not still quite 'one of the gang' (Denscombe 2010).

3.12.2 The individual observations

My observation of supervision visits began from the moment the placement tutor entered the school building, checking in at the school reception, meeting (if possible) the school principal and/or co-operating teacher, meeting the student teacher, observing the student teacher's lesson, conducting the post-lesson conference with the student teacher and leaving the school. When conducting the initial observations, there were times when I experienced "the challenge of maintaining the balance between involvement and detachment" (Takyi 2015, p.869). Occasionally I found myself slipping into the role of school placement coordinator conducting a supervision visit for assessment purposes and I had to remind myself that my focus was on the placement tutor and not the student teacher.

Taking fieldnotes is the basic tool of observations, and video recording can also be used (Kawulich 2007; Cohen et al. 2011; Ritchie al. 2014). I considered both options, but I decided to use fieldnotes, as opposed to video, to record the observations for a number of reasons.

1. Due to the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in the Republic of Ireland in 2018, schools are (understandably) reluctant to allow video footage of school events so I anticipated that this would be a difficult avenue to pursue.
2. For the purposes of my research I was interested in observing the entire supervision process, from the moment the placement tutor entered the school building, to the journey through the corridor and whoever might be encountered on the way, the lesson taught, the post-lesson conference between the placement tutor and student teacher and the placement tutor's departure from the school. It seemed to me that using video to record these events would be intrusive, and in many ways impractical, given that I wanted to remain as inconspicuous as possible throughout the supervision visit.
3. Student teachers find school placement supervision visits to be stressful experiences and the post-lesson conference with the placement tutors is considered to be a "difficult encounter" (Clarke et al. 2012, p150). This is the time dedicated to reviewing the lesson taught, and many student teachers come to the post-lesson conference exhausted after teaching their lesson, and nervous of what they are about to hear. Because of this, I decided that introducing a video to record the supervision visit would be unfair on the student teachers and possibly exacerbate their stress levels.

I concluded that while video recording would provide visual evidence of what was observed, to a large extent the lens of a camera can be as subjective as the pen to a page, given that it can be focused on one event that is occurring while ignoring others around it. In addition, I concluded that writing about what I observed would allow me to reflect-in-action (Schön 1983) as the events unfolded.

I conducted two pilot observations in February 2017, using a basic template of description and reflection (Appendix 20). These observations provided me with practice in terms of observation protocols such as approaching the gatekeepers (the school where the observations

were to be conducted) and the secondary participants (the student teachers being supervised). Nonetheless, I fell into the trap of trying to record everything and anything that I was watching, and I lacked clarity of structure in my approach. Further reading of the literature, and discussions with my supervisors helped me to understand that it was important to strike a balance between indiscriminately recording everything seen and recording with a focus and purpose (Denscombe 2010; Cohen et al. 2011; Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier 2013; Ritchie et al. 2014). This ensured that the research questions are kept at the forefront of the process, and events which may not be fully understood at the time of observation can be examined later by researchers. In line with this advice I realised that I needed to focus on events and activities pertinent to my study and develop a template which would assist me in this goal.

Good observation practice requires that researchers develop an "observational protocol" or method for recording fieldnotes (Creswell 2016. p.119). There are a variety of observational protocols employed by researchers, but there is a consensus that the method employed should allow researchers to describe what's happening, and to reflect upon what they see (Kawulich 2005; Merriam 2009; Denscombe 2010; Cohen et al. 2011; Ritchie et al. 2014; Creswell 2016). In searching for my observation protocol, I developed a template for my observations based on my research questions and informed by the theoretical framework for my study (Table 3F).

1. Roles of the placement tutor evident
2. Relationships observed
3. Challenges encountered by the placement tutor
4. Placement tutor as a member of this CoP
5. Placement tutor identity/identities revealed
6. Evidence of Third Space Learning
7. Insights into motivations of the placement tutor

My fieldnotes did not follow a linear timeline during the supervision visit. Instead, I logged my observations of events and activities through the lens of the seven categories, so they became 'observation moments'. In my fieldnotes I used a format of description, to log the event that occurred, and reflection, to consider the significance of each event in relation to my research questions. The experience of my first observation revealed that it was difficult to

conduct any in-depth reflection on events observed as I generally had to move on quickly to record another event as it appeared. For the remaining observations I chose to follow my description of each moment with brief bullet point reflections, which I called 'Initial Reflections'. These reflections were similar to the 'Jottings' described by Miles et al. (2014, p.94); the "fleeting and emergent reflections and commentary on issues" that occurred as I witnessed the observation moments and they enabled me to put a narrative structure on what I observed (Rozelle and Wilson 2012). Later, on the evening of each observation, I revisited and expanded my bullet point reflections in order to interrogate the observations moments at a deeper level and extract the core significance of the events or experiences witnessed.

Table 3F: Observation template

OBSERVATION OF PLACEMENT TUTOR SUPERVISION VISIT			
DATE:	**PT:**	**SCHOOL SETTING:**	
CATEGORY	**DESCRIPTION**	**INITIAL REFECTION**	**FURTHER REFLECTION**
Roles of the placement tutor evident			
Relationships observed			
Challenges encountered by the placement tutor			
Placement tutor as a member of this CoP			
Placement tutor identity/identities revealed			
Evidence of Third Space Learning			
Insights into motivations of the placement tutor			

3.13 Researcher Diary

Maintaining a researcher diary is a key tool in the researcher's audit trail (Creswell and Miller 2000) since it can be used to document the logistics of the research, and the methodological decisions taken in relation to the researcher's epistemological perspective (Nodwell et al. 2017). A researcher diary is a method for recording "thoughts, feelings, experiences and/or practices over a specified period of time" while also affording insight into the context of events and experiences (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.147). It is a personal document which reflects the researcher's journey through the research process. The researcher diary also serves as reflexive research tool since it provides an opportunity for personal reflection and inner dialog (Engin 2011; Browne 2013; Nodwell et al. 2017).

Writing in a diary can be a cathartic process, allowing the researcher time to consider anxieties, challenges and dilemmas in the research study, fulfilling the role of "a sympathetic fellow PhD student to whom we turn and rely on for reassurance and support" (Browne 2013, p.423). Ultimately the researcher diary facilitates the research process through acting as an anchor for thoughts, feelings and decisions during research, hence contributing to the development of the researcher and the construction of research knowledge (Engin 2011). Maintaining a researcher diary enhances the rigour of research through allowing the researcher to describe and interpret experience (Newbury 2001; Glaze 2002). Through this process "the interaction of subjective and objective aspects of doing research can be openly acknowledged" and so diary accounts provide a space for researcher bias to be explored (Newbury 2002, p.3).

As emphasised in the literature, my diary proved to be a very valuable part of my research journey. It became an audit trail of my thoughts, decisions and judgements (Smith 1999 cited in Glaze 2002). It also became a space for me to express and examine my fears, frustrations and anxieties as I got to grips with the demands of conducting a doctoral study. My diary was the start of a kind of informal data analysis, long before I began the data analysis proper since it was the place where I recorded my first insights immediately after conducting interviews and observations. This process helped me to become aware of important patterns that were beginning to emerge in my dataset, including possible links to my theoretical framework and

literature review, sometimes leading to an addition or amendment in the next interview or observation. These diary entries were like fledgling moments of analysis - nothing formal, coded or categorised, but an initial attempt to make sense of what was said in the interview, by both the interviewee and the interviewer. Hence, I could relate to Engin (2011) who described her researcher diary as an internal dialogue with her research process as well as a narrative of her research journey.

My diary included reflections on meetings with my PhD supervisors, challenges encountered in the writing up of my doctoral study, the iterative cycle of my research questions, my journey in selecting my data collection methods, insights on interviews and observations conducted and reflection upon my data analysis distillation process. There was often a cross-over between different accounts. For example, when writing about the challenge of questioning placement tutors about identity in the first two individual interviews, I found myself referring back to my account of discussions with my supervisors and a 'critical friend' as I tried to make sense of what exactly I was searching for in my questions about identity (Reflective Diary 20th January 2018). In this instance my diary helped me to use my growing understanding of my theoretical framework to inform my data collection methods.

My researcher diary served as a "melting pot for all of the different ingredients" of my research study (Newbury 2010, p.3). It became a vehicle through which I began to understand the research process, and my role as an emerging researcher. In this regard my diary chartered my personal journey with all its frustrations, uncertainties, exciting landmarks, growing insights and deepening understandings that occurred over six years of research scholarship.

3.14 Data Analysis

Data analysis involves selecting large chunks of information (data) and closely examining and explaining them in order to find patterns, connections and relationships (Gibbs 2007). Through this process the analyst attempts to make sense of the data with reference to the research participants' explanation of a situation (Cohen et al. 2011). Data analysis necessitates taking

apart the data, matching, comparing, and contrasting information in order to move from description to explanation to synthesising new knowledge (Le Compte and Preissle 1993 cited in Cohen et al. 2011). Data analysis, like data collection, is a selective operation, since the researcher is constantly making decisions about what to include and what to omit in order to add to the validity and authenticity of the analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994).

In qualitative research there are several different methods to choose from when analysing data, for example, Grounded Theory Analysis, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, Content Analysis, Discourse Analysis and Thematic Analysis (Miles and Huberman 1994; Bryman and Burgess 2002; Silverman 2005; Cohen et al. 2011; Braun and Clarke 2013; Flick 2014; Miles et al. 2014). Each of these approaches has its own processes and techniques for data analysis, and it is important to recognise that the common denominator that links all approaches is "a central concern with transforming and interpreting qualitative data in a rigorous and scholarly way" (Coffey and Atkinson 1996, p.3).

3.14.1 The iterative nature of qualitative data analysis

In general, all approaches to qualitative data analysis share the following four steps:

1. Becoming familiar with the data through reading and rereading.
2. Identifying codes or labels, and categories or themes through scrutinizing the data.
3. Interpreting these elements in relation to the research framework, research question and relevant literature.
4. Writing a report based on the findings from step three

It is important to note that data analysis is by no means as linear a process as might be suggested above. There is a consensus in the literature that in qualitative research, data collection and data analysis are concurrent activities, since early analysis of data can inform the process of data collection, and new data can, in turn, inform the analytic process (Miles and Huberman 1994; Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 1996; Stake 2005; Gibbs 2007; Maxwell 2008; Flick 2009, 2014; 2014b; Braun and Clarke 2013; Vaismoradi 2016; Nodwell

et al. 2017). Consequently, the researcher is involved in an iterative operation of going back and forth between the collection and analysis of data (Braun and Clarke 2013) and "both steps are applied in a parallel, sometimes entangled way" (Flick 2014, p.10).

This recursive process was one I experienced in my research study, not only when conducting the data collection phase and the data analysis phase, but also during the write up of the findings when I continued to review and revisit the data collected and analysed. Braun and Clarke (2013) claim that data analysis begins when the researcher begins to notice and search for interesting information in the data, and this can often occur during the data collection phase. My first cycle of data collection involved interviewing each of the six placement tutor participants. My first interviews were followed by my observations of each placement tutor. Since my data collection was also determined by the timeline of the academic school year, these observations took place soon after the first set of interviews. At this stage I was in the middle of my preliminary analysis of the first set of interviews, reading and rereading the interview transcripts, coding and generating initial or 'candidate' themes (Braun and Clarke 2006). This analytic work had an influence on what I looked for in my observations.

On completion of fieldnotes and reflections for each observation conducted, I once again recorded my initial thoughts and insights in my researcher diary. This process allowed me to make links with the first set of interviews and raise issues that contributed to the second set of interview questions. Completing the codes and themes for the second round of interviews, and for the observations, fed directly into the third set of interview questions. Hence, the cycle of data collection, data analysis, further data collection, further data analysis, was a key feature during the period of data collection (Table 3G).

Table 3G: Timeline of data collection and data analysis

3.14.2 My approach to data analysis

There is no one correct method for conducting data analysis (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Braun and Clark 2006; Yin 2009; Cohen et al. 2011). Indeed, successful research relies not as much upon good methods, as good thinking (Stake 2005). Researchers should strive to use independent and rigorous thinking, present sufficient evidence, and carefully consider alternative interpretations (Yin 2009). Ultimately the researcher must be clear on the purpose of the analysis since this will determine the type of analysis undertaken (Cohen et al. 2011). The goal of my data analysis was to describe the lived experiences of part-time placement tutors; to interpret and make sense of these experiences; to search for patterns across the six cases; and to generate themes related to my research question and to offer findings which would inform initial teacher education, my field of study.

Cohen et al. (2011) posit that researchers should choose a data analysis method that is a 'best fit' for their research framework, and their research stance. Having reviewed the literature on methods of data analysis I decided that my 'best fit' was thematic analysis. I believed that this mode of data analysis would provide me with a valuable means of generating connections and differences between the dataset from each of the six case studies in my research and, in doing so; it would assist me to answer my research questions effectively. Additionally, since thematic analysis is not a methodology but a method, it is not aligned to any particular research tradition, and therefore allows the researcher make sense of the data while working within their own theoretical framework and paradigm (Braun and Clarke 2006; Braun and Clarke 2013). Coming to the data analysis with my constructivist-interpretative perspective, I was confident that thematic analysis would allow me to maintain this perspective through providing an opportunity to examine the dataset in detail, and so construct meaning in a coherent and authentic fashion. Identifying themes informed by my tripartite theoretical framework of Identity (Holland et al. 1998), Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010) and Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010), ensured that I maintained coherency and focus in my analytic work.

3.15 Thematic analysis

While thematic analysis is a relative newcomer to the field of data analysis, there is a growing volume of literature on this particular method of data analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2013, 2018; Fereday, and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Bazeley 2009; Vaismoradi et al. 2013; Maguire and Delahunt 2017; Nodwell et al. 2017; Houghton and Houghton 2018; Roberts et al. 2019). Thematic analysis is "essentially a method for identifying and analysing patterns in qualitative data" (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.120). Thematic analysis seeks to identify, analyse and report patterns (or themes) which are specific to the focus and the context of the research, the research question and the theoretical framework of the research (Roberts et al. 2019). This method of analysis can be applied across a variety of research frameworks to answer a range of research questions (Braun and Clarke 2013; Nodwell et al. 2017) and it provides valuable core skills to researchers for conducting other forms of qualitative analysis (Vaismoradi et al. 2013).

Braun and Clarke (2013 p.178) claim that thematic analysis was first used as a named approach in the 1970s, by Gerald Holton, a physicist and historian of science, but it has only been recently recognised as "a distinctive method with clearly outlined set of procedures for the social science". Thematic analysis promotes a rich and detailed account of a data set (Braun and Clarke 2006), paying attention to the significance of words, rather than their frequency (Vaismoradi et al. 2013). However, Clarke and Braun (2018, p.109) suggest that "rich analysis typically moves from simple summation-based description into interpretation; telling a story about the 'so what' of the data". Hence, in addition to being a useful tool for describing and summarising data, thematic analysis provides a rich contextual account of the data story.

Bazeley (2009) emphasises that contextualising and making connections between themes in order to develop a convincing argument for the reader is the most important goal in thematic analysis. Nodwell et al. (2017, p.2) opine that while thematic analysis is a highly flexible method "there are few discussions in the literature about how to conduct a rigorous and relevant thematic analysis". More recently, Clarke and Braun (2019, p.108) posit there may be confusion about the term thematic analysis, emphasising that it is best seen as an umbrella term

to describe "a variety of approaches, which share some assumptions in common …but also vary in terms of analytic procedures and guiding philosophy".

In recent years Braun and Clarke (2019, p.594) have renamed their approach as 'Reflexive Thematic Analysis' due to their belief that high quality thematic analysis is dependent on "the researcher's reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process". This emphasis on researcher reflexivity resonates strongly with my constructivist-interpretive stance as a researcher. In addition, I wholly concur with Braun and Clarke (2019, p.591) that qualitative analysis is a "creative, reflexive and subjective" undertaking, where the subjectivity of the researcher should be viewed as a resource, rather than a limitation. The combination of rigor and flexibility in the Braun and Clarke thematic analysis model enabled me to undertake and complete the data analysis for my study in a manner which appealed to my researcher stance, and my commitment to in depth and meaningful engagement with the analytic process.

Yin (2009, p.127) claims that there are "few fixed formulas or cookbooks to guide the novice researcher". Cohen et al. (2011, p.361) support this viewpoint, suggesting that researchers should subscribe to the principle of 'fitness for purpose' and "be clear what he or she wants the data analysis to do as this will determine the kind of analysis that is undertaken". The approach to thematic analysis provided by Braun and Clarke (2006) was the one that best fit the purpose of my research (Table 3H).

Table 3H: Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis

Six phases of thematic analysis
This should not be viewed as a linear model, where one cannot proceed to the next phase without completing the prior phase (correctly); rather analysis is a recursive process.
1) Familiarisation with the data: is common to all forms of qualitative analysis – the researcher must immerse themselves in, and become intimately familiar with, their data; reading and re-reading the data (and listening to audio-recorded data at least once, if relevant) and noting any initial analytic observations.
2) Coding: Also a common element of many approaches to qualitative analysis (see Braun & Clarke, 2012a, for thorough comparison), this involves generating pithy labels for important features of the data of relevance to the (broad) research question guiding the analysis. Coding is not simply a method of data reduction, it is also an analytic process, so codes capture both a semantic and conceptual reading of the data. The researcher codes every data item and ends this phase by collating all their codes and relevant data extracts.
3) Searching for themes: A theme is a coherent and meaningful pattern in the data relevant to the research question. If codes are the bricks and tiles in a brick and tile house, then themes are the walls and roof panels. Searching for themes is a bit like coding your codes to identify similarity in the data. This 'searching' is an active process; themes are not hidden in the data waiting to be discovered by the intrepid researcher, rather the researcher constructs themes. The researcher ends this phase by collating all the coded data relevant to each theme.
4) Reviewing themes: Involves checking that the themes 'work' in relation to both the coded extracts and the full data-set. The researcher should reflect on whether the themes tell a convincing and compelling story about the data, and begin to define the nature of each individual theme, and the relationship between the themes. It may be necessary to collapse two themes together or to split a theme into two or more themes, or to discard the candidate themes altogether and begin again the process of theme development.
5) Defining and naming themes: Requires the researcher to conduct and write a detailed analysis of each theme (the researcher should ask 'what story does this theme tell?' and 'how does this theme fit into the overall story about the data?'), identifying the 'essence' of each theme and constructing a concise, punchy and informative name for each theme.
6) Writing up: Writing is an integral element of the analytic process in TA (and most qualitative research). Writing-up involves weaving together the analytic narrative and (vivid) data extracts to tell the reader a coherent and persuasive story about the data, and contextualising it in relation to existing literature.

(Braun and Clarke 2006, cited in Clarke and Braun 2013, p.3-4))

Braun and Clarke's identification of six phases in the analysis process assisted me to conduct data analysis in a thorough and rigorous manner, while also allowing me the freedom and flexibility to adapt elements to suit my needs as an analyst. The following section describes the steps I took during each of the six phases:

3.15.1 Phase One: Familiarisation with the data

Becoming familiar with the dataset is the first important step of thematic analysis since it provides the researcher with the opportunity to start noticing information that might be relevant to the research question (Braun and Clarke 2013). It is important that researchers read the data actively and critically in order to move beyond a surface meaning of words and stories, to ask questions about the information presented, and to begin to identity patterns and meanings within the dataset (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2012, 2013; Clarke and Braun 2013).

3.15.1.1.Getting to know the interview data

Directly after conducting each of the first set of interviews, I listened back to the audio recording of each interview and wrote my initial impressions of the interview exchange in my researcher diary. In my accounts I used the interview questions as headings and noted 'things of interest' (Braun and Clarke 2013) that were significant to my research questions and relevant to my tripartite theoretical framework. This preliminary engagement with the interview material was followed by a more intense scrutiny of each interview transcript, whereby I continued to probe deeper into the material, checking back to what I had recorded in my initial journal writing. During this stage I began making notes or 'jottings' (Miles et al. 2014) on the transcripts, highlighting sections that were of particular significance and interest, and noting any discrepant or unanticipated data. This process allowed me to develop "memory aids and triggers of coding and analysis" (Braun and Clarke 2012). I approached the second and third set of interviews in a similar manner, with an added layer of comparison made possible because of analysis conducted on the previous set of interviews and the observation fieldnotes. This further enriched my familiarisation with the dataset.

3.15.1.2 Getting to know the observation data

As with the interview dataset, I recorded my initial impressions or 'noticings' (Braun and Clarke 2013) of each observation in my researcher diary. I then read, and reread my observation fieldnotes, again noticing and highlighting data that appeared relevant to my research questions and my theoretical framework. Since the observations were conducted after the first set of interviews, I also reflected upon information in the observation fieldnotes that connected to, or sometimes contrasted with, issues noticed in the first set of interviews. Furthermore, some school placement visits scheduled for observation were cancelled; hence, the last three observations had to be deferred. These were conducted whilst I was beginning the second set of interviews. As a result, there was a sense of very immediate and 'live' cross referencing of data between the case studies (Yin 2009). This in turn led to further comparisons between the data sets which in turn enhanced my knowledge of the database.

3.15.2 Phase Two: Coding the data set

Coding is the name given to a range of approaches that help organise, retrieve and interpret data (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). Codes are the tags or labels assigned to 'chunks' of data, such as words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, that are relevant to the research focus (Miles and Huberman 1994). They are like the building blocks of analysis (Braun and Clarke 2013) since they reveal and categorise similar data into units of meaning so that the researcher can begin to make links to the research questions (Flick 2014; Miles et al. 2014). Coding is essentially a heuristic operation that provides a means for the researcher to interact with the data (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Miles et al. 2014).

Once I had become sufficiently familiar with the first set of interview transcripts, I then began coding. I set up a template, using a Word document with a table of two columns. In the first column I pasted a copy of the interview transcript, and the second column was reserved for inputting my codes (Appendix 21). I used a similar approach for coding the observation fieldnotes, adding columns in the Word table to allow for coding of the three layers of information provided in this data set (Appendix 22).

Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013) advise that when identifying codes, it is important to match them up with the data extract that demonstrates that code. Following this advice, I found the template of the Word document allowed me to easily highlight the extract related to each code or codes. Coding the first interview proved to be very time-consuming, involving a continued reading and re-reading of the interview script. Given that this was my first attempt at coding, initially I tended towards adopting a 'complete coding' approach in order to "identify *anything* and *everything* of interest or relevance" to answering my research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.206). Discussions with my supervisors and a colleague helped me to achieve a better balance and become more discerning in my coding so that I was able to operate somewhere in the middle of complete and selective coding of the data (Braun and Clarke 2013). I focused on data relevant to my research question and the theoretical framework informing my study, whilst also remaining vigilant with regards to unexpected or discrepant information that I might uncover. I also found it useful to apply cross case analysis (Yin 2009), using the codes identified in the first data piece as a reference baseline when coding further data pieces within that set. This seemed like a logical approach to me since I decided that *if I code the first interview, and establish the main codes then coding of the other interviews can be done by referencing back to the codes establishing the first interview* (Researcher Diary, 20 January 2020).

The work of coding is not about simply applying labels to data; it is about trying to find meaning in that data through questioning and finding provisional answers that transform data and so open it up for analytic investigation (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Flick 2014; Saldaña 2016). I used the 'track changes' feature of Word to allow me to engage actively with the coding process though writing 'analytic memos' that documented my reflections and ideas about the data (Cohen et al. 2011; Miles et al. 2014). This method was invaluable in assisting me to review and clarify codes chosen. It also enabled me to highlight connections between other data sets, as well as links to my literature review. Once I had concluded coding of each individual interview transcript and each of the five observation fieldnotes, I then transcribed the codes into an Excel spreadsheet. This helped me to organise codes that appeared to be connected to each other, as well as identify the data extracts linked to these codes within each interview transcript or fieldnotes document (Appendices 23 and 24). While coding the data manually was certainly a labour-intensive endeavour, it had the advantage of deepening my

knowledge of each data set and preparing me for the next phase of generating themes. Reflecting upon the experience of coding in my researcher diary I noted *there is something very satisfying about seeing the codes build up…I feel like I'm really getting to know my interview dataset. I now have an Excel spreadsheet of codes and am ready to begin developing themes* (Researcher Diary, 4 March 2020).

3.15.3 Phase Three: Generating themes

This phase of analysis involves reviewing the coded data to identify areas of similarity or overlap between codes in order to produce themes. In their early description of thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) referred to this stage as 'searching for themes', but in more recent years they use the phrase 'generating themes' since they believe this is more consistent with the active role played by researchers as they shape, craft and combine codes in order to construct themes (Braun and Clarke 2013, 2018; Clarke and Braun 2018). I concur with Braun and Clark's stance since this phase of the data analysis required an active response from me as researcher in order to uncover the themes and subthemes that best encapsulated the story of each data set.

Put simply, a theme is "is a coherent and meaningful pattern in the data relevant to the research question" (Clarke and Braun 2013, p.121). Themes are like key characters in the story the researcher is telling about the data (Clarke and Braun 2018). They contain a central organising concept, or an essence, which highlights something meaningful about the content of the data in relation to the research question (Braun and Clarke 2013). Themes are generated through "collapsing or clustering codes that seem to share some unifying feature together, so that they can reflect and describe a coherent and meaningful pattern in the data" (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.63).

At this phase of the analysis process, the themes I generated were potential or 'candidate themes' (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2013). They were my initial attempts at making connections between the coded data set. The importance of these candidate themes was determined not by

how frequently they presented in the data, but in terms of the important and meaningful information they revealed which would help answer the research question (Braun and Clarke 2013). I found it useful to move from codes to subthemes that represented a specific meaningful aspect of a central idea. Taken together, the subthemes associated with this idea made it easier for me to identity candidate themes. Following the advice of Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013) I moved coded data that did not appear relevant to the research question into 'miscellaneous themes' to be put to one side for further review at a later stage. Codes that did not seem to belong in any provisional space were discarded.

While Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013) advise that it might be useful to create a visual map to indicate the relationship between codes, candidate themes and subthemes, I found it more useful at this stage to build upon the excel spreadsheet of codes produced during phase two of the analysis (Appendices 23 and 24). The excel spreadsheet programme provides a 'comment' facility which provided a valuable means of collapsing initial codes into more established codes. The programme also allowed me to 'cut and paste' information in order to cluster codes together and identity the subthemes, and candidate themes related to these codes. I concluded this stage of analysis with a detailed spreadsheet of candidate themes, subthemes, codes and sources of coded extracts for each of the three sets of interviews (Appendices 25, 26 and 27) and observation fieldnotes (Appendix 28).

3.15.4 Phase Four: Reviewing themes

Phase four begins when the candidate themes have been developed and the researcher now seeks to review and refine these themes in order to determine if they 'work' in relation to coded data extracts and the full data set (Clarke and Braun 2013). In other words, this exercise is one of quality control to ensure candidate themes 'fit well' within the coded data and "tell a story that rings true with the data" (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.233). The first stage of reviewing my candidate themes involved rereading and revisiting each of the data items in the datasets, checking for connectivity between the themes and codes. The Excel spreadsheets of candidate themes and subthemes for each of the four data sets (Appendices 23, 24, 25 and 26) proved invaluable at this stage as they provided access to the codes and extracts associated with each

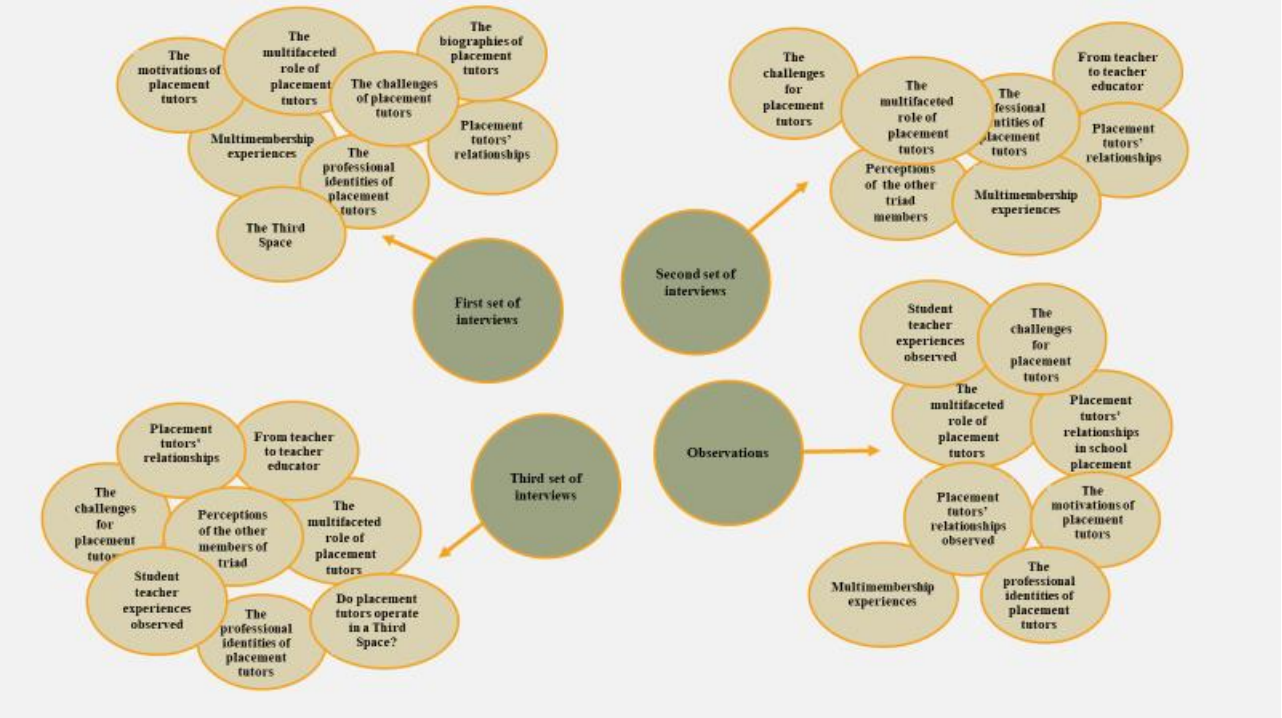
theme and subtheme. In addition, the 'cut and paste', and 'insert comment' functions of the Excel programme made it easy to rename, collapse or discard codes, themes and subthemes in the spreadsheets as needed. Throughout this rather arduous task, I adhered to the advice of Braun and Clarke (2013) to be prepared to let go of data that did not fit in the analysis in order to ensure that the revised themes and subthemes chosen were relevant to my research questions and reflected my tripartite theoretical framework.

Having found a coherent set of revised themes for each dataset, I was able to use these themes to conduct a macro review of the data, noting themes that reoccurred across different data sets, as well as themes that were particular to one or more sets of the data. Some of this work involved further revision of codes, themes and subthemes in order to extract the themes and subthemes that best suited the macro level of analysis occurring at this stage of the process. And so, the ongoing 'intense data analysis '(Merriam 2009) cycle continued; renaming one or two themes, introducing a new theme, collapsing some themes together, re-coding new data extracts, and letting go of codes no longer relevant (Braun and Clarke 2006). An example of this reiterative process is captured in one of my researcher diary entries:

> I decided to compare the miscellaneous codes from both interviews. But when I was doing this comparison, I discovered I missed some miscellaneous codes from Interview 1. This contributed to another theme for Interview 1, i.e. What do PTs understand about third space learning in ITE? I think this is further evidence of the iterative process of data analysis – going back and forth between the two sets of data from Interview 1 & Interview 2 (Researcher Diary, 18 June 2020).

At this end of this phase of analysis I was able to create a 'thematic map' of coherent themes identified in each dataset (Table 3I). This map charts the interrelationship between the newly reviewed themes, thus capturing the meaning of the full dataset in relation to the research questions and theoretical framework of my study.

Table 3I: Data Analysis Phase Four-Thematic map of themes from each data set

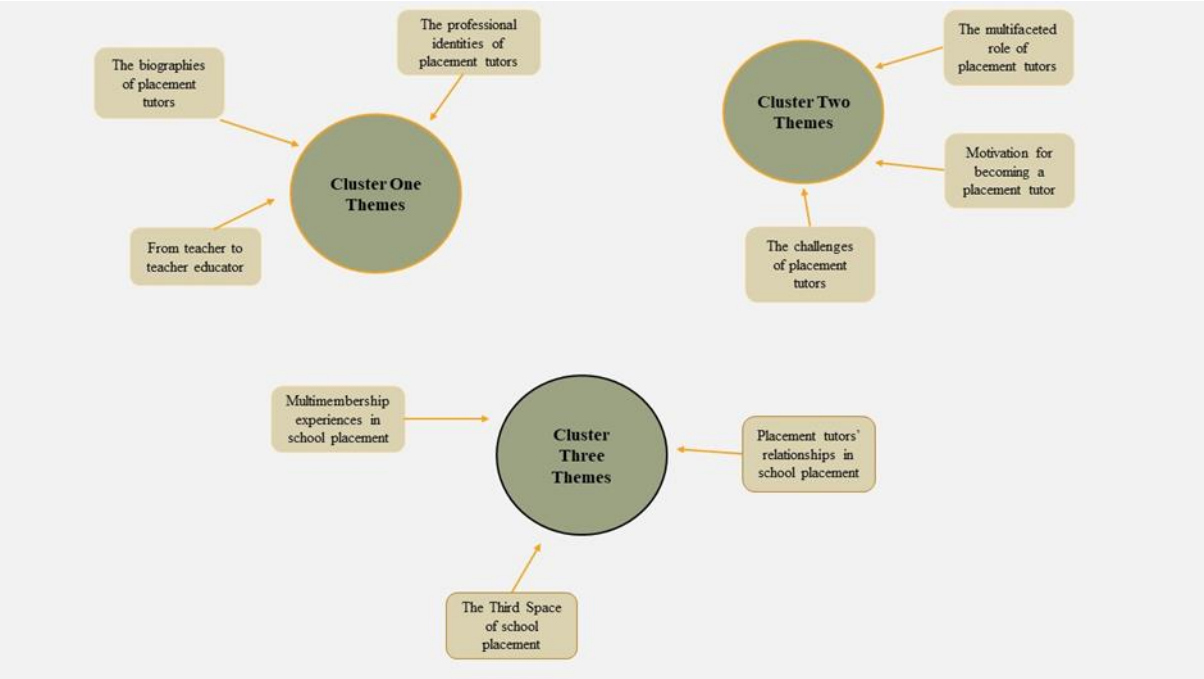


3.15.5 Phase Five: Defining and naming (overarching) themes

The fifth phase of thematic analysis begins when the revised themes established in phase four are ready to be further reviewed in order to clearly define and name the final overarching themes of the research study. Braun and Clarke (2006) call this the 'define and refine' phase where the researcher seeks to get to the essence of each refined theme identified in the thematic map, and to clarify what aspect of the data is represented in that theme. Since I had merged the revised themes and subthemes into one thematic map (Table 3I), I found it easy to review these themes, both in terms of the individual data stories they represented, and also in terms of how these stories overlapped and came together to tell a bigger data story.

When reflecting upon my thematic map of revised themes and subthemes, I examined the themes closely and considered different iterations of how they might be connected. This involved further movement back and forth between each element of the data set, checking and rechecking and sometimes adjusting themes and subthemes generated in the previous stages of analyses once more. As a result of this 'define and refine' operation I was able to identify relationships between the themes. I decided to represent these relationships by grouping the refined themes into 'families', or cluster themes (Table 3J).

Table 3J: Data Analysis Phase Five (1)-Clusters of named and defined themes

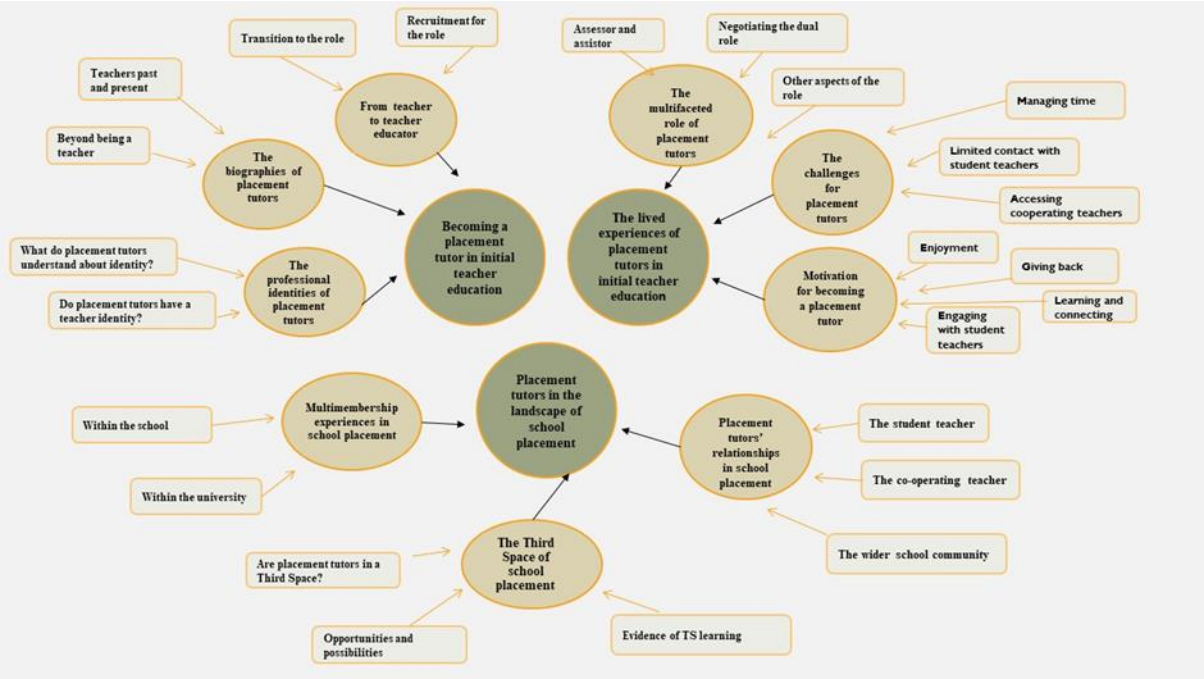


Further scrutiny and review of the cluster themes generated the three overarching themes that I believed best represented the dataset of this study in relation to answering the research questions while still maintaining allegiance to the tripartite research framework:

1. Theme One: Becoming a placement tutor in initial teacher education
2. Theme Two: The lived experiences of placement tutors in initial teacher education
3. Theme Three: Placement tutors in the landscape of school placement

These overarching themes are supported by the subthemes which in turn are linked to codes, since this was the starting point of thematic analysis. This movement from codes, to themes and subthemes is represented in the second thematic map (Table 3K).

Table 3K: Data Analysis Phase Five (2)-Final overarching themes, subthemes and related codes

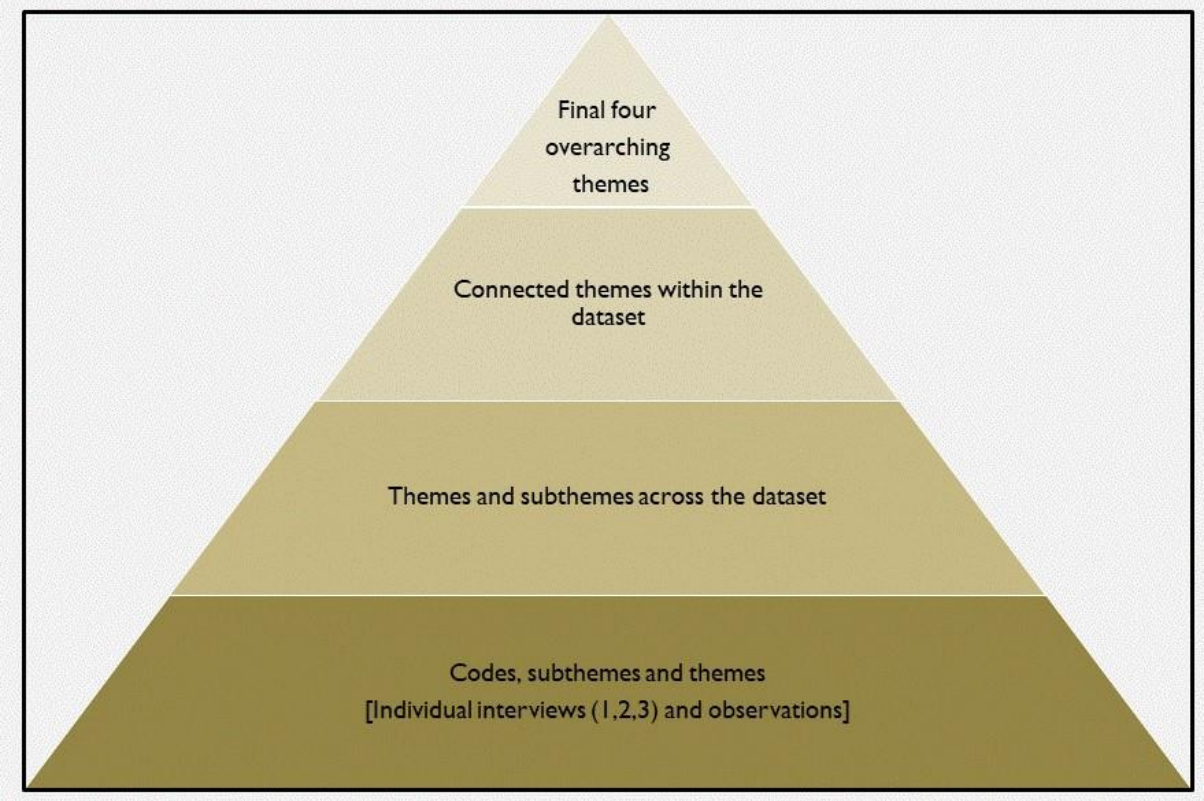


3.15.5.1 The distillation process of my data analysis

> *When I look back at how I felt when I first began this journey of analysis, I couldn't envision how I withdraw the material from all the datasets together into a coherent whole* [Researcher Diary 16th July 2020].

Arriving at the conclusion of phase five of the analysis marked the end of a distillation process that had occurred iteratively throughout all phases of data analysis. Data collected from eighteen interviews and five observation fieldnotes had been reviewed and filtered in order to extract the essence of the story of the data. It was a journey from the general to the specific; from a maze of information provided by over 360 pages of interview transcripts and detailed fieldnotes from almost fifteen hours of observations, a process of rigorous and assiduous coding work, development and review of themes and subthemes, refinement of themes to form cluster groups, to the construction of the three overarching themes. This distillation process provided a means of collating relevant data from many data streams in order to provide a collective answer to the research questions driving my study (Cohen et al. 2011). Table 3L provides a diagram that represents the distillation process. This diagram emphasises how raw data collected during interviews and observations was sifted and funnelled through the rigorous and methodical framework of thematic analysis I employed.

Table 3L: The distillation of the research data



3.15.6 Phase Six: Writing the report

In the final phase of thematic analysis, the researcher strives to provide a report that interprets data connected to the research question(s) and to the broader scholarly setting of the research study (Clarke and Braun 2013). This stage of the analysis should create an overall story that communicates what different themes reveal about the research topic (Nowell et al. 2017). The written report is an 'analytic narrative' in which the final themes, accompanied by compelling data extracts, are described, discussed and interpreted in order to tell the story of the data (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2012). The report should present a compelling and persuasive story which convinces the reader of the merit and validity of the analysis undertaken, while also providing answers to the research question(s) posed in the study (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2012; Clarke and Braun 2013). Linking the storyline of the data to literature pertinent to the field of study is a crucial part of this stage in order to provide a rich, contextualised account that facilitates depth of understanding of the research findings (Clarke and Braun 2013; Vaismoradi et al. 2016). In addition, interweaving the literature and the findings helps to produce a story of merit in the written report (Arison 1994, cited in Nowell et al. 2017).

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the methodological components of my research; including my research questions, the research setting, the research participants, my role as researcher in the research process, my choice of case study method, ethical issues encountered, the data collection methods and the data analysis approach.

The next three chapters provide a report of the findings related to the three overriding themes identified in this study. Findings are presented and discussed within the interrelated ambits of the research questions, the tripartite theoretical constructs framing the study, and relevant literature. This research involved a multiple case study approach which facilitated a comprehensive examination of the experiences of six part-time placement tutors within the worlds they inhabit (Stake 2005). Cross case analysis (Yin 2009) promotes a forensic

interrogation of the data and provides a structure to present and discuss the findings relevant to each theme.

- Chapter Four explores Theme One: *Becoming a placement tutor in initial teacher education*; the journey taken by placement tutors as they move from teacher to teacher educator and the identities that emerge in this space.
- Chapter Five presents Theme Two: *The lived experiences of placement tutors in initial teacher education*, discussing the realities of being a placement tutor in relation to the multifaceted role, and the challenges, opportunities and motivations experienced in fulfilling the role.
- An examination of Theme Three: *Placement tutors in the landscape of school placement* is offered in Chapter Six, evaluating the experiences of placement tutors as they move between two communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991), the possibilities of a 'hybrid' Third Space of school placement (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010), and the significant relationships they form in this 'landscape of practice' (Wenger 2010).

Chapter 4: Findings & Discussion: Theme One: Becoming a part-time placement tutor in initial teacher education

The community of teacher educators is a 'diffuse one' (Lunenberg et al. 2014). Teacher educators are recognised as "all those who actively facilitate the (formal) learning of student teachers and teachers" including higher education academic staff, counsellors, coordinators and tutors who support newly qualified teachers, co-operating teachers who mentor student teachers in schools and placement tutors who supervise their teaching practicum (European Commission 2013, p.8). Like many placement tutors in the Republic of Ireland, the six participants in the study are part-time staff, operating on year to year contracts, and have little or no connection to the university.

Centering on three subthemes, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of how the six placement tutors in this research study became teacher educators. The analysis includes:

- an exploration of the biographies that led participants to the space of teaching teachers;
- an examination of the identities embraced by the participants in their role of placement tutor;
- a review of their transition from teacher to placement tutor.

4.1 Subtheme One: The biographies of placement tutors

Similar to other part-time placement tutors in the Republic of Ireland, the participants in this study joined the SUPE programme though the 'practitioner route' route (Davy 2013). Alan is a retired teacher, while Bob is a retired deputy principal and teacher. Both Clare and Deirdre have left mainstream teaching to pursue other teaching and learning related roles. Ellen and Frances are full-time teachers, acting as placement tutors to a small number of student teachers. Like all teacher educators, the participants bring their own unique personal history to their role (O'Brien and Furlong 2015). The findings reveal a rich tapestry of experiences which contribute to their practice as placement tutors, and these are now examined in this section.

4.1.1 Teachers past and present

In a study exploring the characteristics of good teacher educators, Smith (2005) found that the forty recently-graduated novice teachers in the study identify the ability to be a good teacher and 'practice what you preach', as well as recent teaching experience as the top two most important attributes of a good teacher educator. Research conducted by O'Brien and Furlong (2015, p.389) into the identities of nine teacher educators in a primary school initial teacher education institution report that all participants highly value their biography of being a teacher, and believe it provides them "a legitimacy and a sense of authenticity as they take on their new roles". The researchers conclude that participants' former teacher identity plays a significant role in shaping their new identity as teacher educators and "rather than drawing on new teacher educator identities or even creating one, six of the nine participants…draw from their stronger former teacher identity (O'Brien and Furlong 2015, p. 389). The findings in this study concur with this research, revealing that each research participant deems their teaching background to be an essential component for their role of placement tutor.

Bob and Alan believe that their former teacher biography enable them to bring a 'craft skill set' to the role which is valued by the student teachers who *recognise that your understanding has depth, right, but it's also grounded in practice* [Alan, Interview 1]. As former teachers, they are able to offer practical advice *of issues, for example, relating to pedagogical skills, classroom management from my own life experience, not just reading from a textbook* [Bob, Interview 1]. Both participants claim that teaching experiences gives them credibility in the eyes of the student teachers [Bob Interview 1, Alan Interview 1]. Alan reveals that, when first meeting with his student teachers, he highlights his extensive background in teaching:

> I will have let them know prior to this that I've thirty-three years teaching experience… … Yeah, and that's important in terms of their registering that, you know, when I offer advice, that advice has some basis [Alan, Interview 2].

Like Alan and Bob, Ellen also 'plays the teacher card' (Murray 2014) by telling her student teachers about her teaching experience: *Look, I've come from ten years of teaching in an all-boys school. I can tell you this, this, and this will help you* [Ellen, Interview 2]. In her initial meeting with her student teachers Ellen too emphasises her teaching biography:

> the first thing that I would say to my students is I'm a teacher, I'm teaching PE, and I've taught it for whatever length of time, and that's how I would introduce myself to them" [Ellen, Interview 1].

It is significant to note that sharing their biography of teaching aligns both Alan and Ellen with teacher educators in the research conducted by Murray (2014, p.14) in the United Kingdom for whom "being able to cite teaching experience remained an essential form of capital to establish professional credibility".

Clare asserts that a teaching background is needed by placement tutors in order to give relevant feedback to their student teachers: *you know, you have to be able to kind of unpack it [the lesson] a little bit and say why it was good and whatever… …you have to know what you're looking for there* [Clare, Interview 1]. She also believes that her teaching skills help her to be organised and systematic in her approach to the assessment of her student teachers [Clare, Interview 1]. Her background as a teacher provides Deirdre with a creative approach to her work as a placement tutor, as well as a rich understanding of pedagogical practices:

> …being PE teachers, our training, our background is so far ahead of other areas in terms of our various methodologies, which informs us to be creative in our thinking, which then gives us a cross-application of skills across so many areas [Deirdre, Interview 1].

Furthermore, she opines that the role of teacher and teacher educator share a connection, and one role has something to offer to the other: *I suppose they both inform one another* [Deirdre, Interview 2]. Similarly, Frances, also a practising full-time teacher, reports that her experiences as a teacher 'definitely' help her in the work of supervising student teachers and occasionally brings in some of her own teaching resources to share with her student teachers:

> …when I went to observe a student, I brought some of my own sample work into them… for them to see my task cards…. Because I felt from last year, when I was observing some students, they didn't know what I was talking about" [Frances, Interview 2].

4.1.1.1 Teacher biography connections

A further interesting aspect of the placement tutors' teaching biography which emerges in the study concerns connections within the teaching community that a teaching biography provides for them. When reflecting in my researcher diary upon the first set of interviews conducted with Alan, Bob, Clare and Deirdre, I wondered if the location of the participants' initial teacher education studies, and their teaching careers, might have some impact upon their experience as placement tutors, in terms of their connections with the local school community in which they supervise student teachers:

> Is it possible that these placement tutors' previous biographies impact upon their connection to the school community? For example, Alan, Bob, and Deirdre completed their undergraduate study in a university in the ROI. Alan taught in a local school … Bob taught in a number of different schools and was a deputy principal in a large suburban school, and so has lots of connections in local school communities. Deirdre taught in a local school for 13 years … By comparison, Clare completed her undergraduate studies in the UK and perhaps does not have access to the same network as the other three placement tutors. In addition, she taught in a post-primary school in a different county in the ROI (Researcher Diary, 24 February 2018).

Certainly, there is strong evidence to suggest that having a teacher biography helped Alan, Bob and Clare feel connected to the teaching communities in their placement schools:

> Alan: I would know most of the practising teachers… they would recognise that I have a long contribution made to Physical Education [Interview 1].
>
> Bob: I like the experience of visiting schools. Many of my former colleagues are in senior management in the positions. I like meeting them for a cup of coffee and a chat on an informal basis [Interview 1].
>
> Deirdre: I am also current with teachers. I'm current with relationships with people that I've met in my own time in college. So, it's really nice to keep within the forum because I'm not in the teaching Physical Education zone anymore [Interview 1].

As a full-time teacher, Ellen also finds that this part of her teaching biography helps her when she visits the schools:

> Like there was I thinking that two out of the three schools that I went into last year I knew at least one teacher in there. This year I know one or-I know the deputy principal

> in one of the schools. Actually, I know the deputy principal in two of the schools. So that kind of helps [Ellen Interview 1].

In contrast to the previous four participants, Clare, who studied in the United Kingdom and taught in another part of the Republic of Ireland prior to her role as a placement tutor, appears to have very little connection to her placement schools: *you just run in and run out, you know… I'm probably not going to go into the staffroom* [Interview 1]. Similarly, Frances, who studied and taught in the United Kingdom before becoming a placement tutor, doesn't have any connections to teachers in the schools she visits. Hence, these two participants do not have the network of connections enjoyed by the other four participants. This is something to consider given the fact that most part-time placement tutors feel like outsiders in the school community (Slick 1998; Murphy 2010; Asplin and Marks 2013).

4.1.2 Beyond being a teacher

While each of the participants in this study shares a teaching biography, there are other aspects to their life stories which extend their experience beyond that of being a teacher in a post-primary school. It is interesting to note in this study that the participants' biographies, beyond being a teacher, are linked to learning and, as such, these wider biographies provide opportunities to enrich and enhance their practices as placement tutors.

4.1.2.1 Biography of student teacher

All participants undertook periods of school placement during their own initial teacher training programme. Their experiences as student teachers influence interaction with their student teachers. Bob [Interview 1] recalls his own experiences of being a student teacher when, like many student teachers, he feared the arrival of the placement tutor (Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Andrew 2007; Clarke et al. 2012; Burns and Badiali 2015):

> I remember my own teaching practice days in the early Seventies, and one might fear the arrival of what was then called the inspector. And it helps me, having gone through that as a 21 and a 22-year-old [Bob, Interview 1].

Due to his experiences as a student teacher, Bob adopts an empathetic approach: *It helps me empathise with the young lady or the man that I'm visiting, to give them a break, to expect high standards but to empathise* [Bob, Interview 1]. Deirdre's negative experiences in her final year school placement remind her of the importance of supporting teachers:

> I got a pass in my own teaching practice in my school placement experience in my final year, which I was very, very unhappy with.... it has put me in an empathetic situation with students as well, because, you know, I wasn't the 1.1 student coming through. I know the realities of the challenges they face [Deirdre, Interview].

Despite this, Deirdre highlights that the learning achieved during her time as a student teacher is a factor which continues to inform her practice as a placement tutor today:

> There are things that my own tutor said to me when I was in teaching practice [school placement] that at the time didn't make sense and there are things that it's actually only very recently some things I've been thinking about, that are informing me in what I do now [Deirdre, Interview 1].

Like Deirdre, Frances also remembers a negative experience from her student teacher days: *I didn't have a nice experience. My mentor* [co-operating teacher] *was absolutely horrible. He nearly ruined me* [Frances, Interview 1]. She emphasises that this negative experience as a student teacher motivates her to provide a more positive experience for the student teachers in her care [Frances, Interview 1]. Ellen recalls that that her experiences as a student teacher left her feeling that certain tutors looked for particular approaches to teaching and as a result, she encourages her student teachers to develop their own pedagogical approaches:

> Like I've said things to them like, you know, some tutors might always want to see you do a full stretch with students. And, I said, look, for me it depends on what you're doing, like, so don't think that you have to do—you have to stretch every muscle in the body as part of your class, like [Ellen, Interview 2].

Notwithstanding the fact that these participants' biographies as student teachers stretch back in time, it appears that their 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie 1975 cited in Burns and Badiali 2015) as student teachers still resonates with them in their current role as placement tutors. Just as my 'apprenticeship of observation' as a student teacher assisted me in my early

years as a placement tutor (see Chapter One), these participants also draw upon their memories and experiences of their student teacher days when supervising their student teachers today.

4.1.2.2 Biography of co-operating teacher

Experience of being a co-operating teacher is cited as a useful tool to draw from when supervising student teachers (Murphy 2010). Four of the six participants were former co-operating teachers. Deirdre acknowledges that her previous experience of working as a co-operating teacher with student teachers, from *the other side of the fence* [Deirdre, Interview 1] was a useful preparation for her role as placement tutor. Frances emphasises that it is vital for student teachers to have a co-operating teacher who supports and guides them during their school placement experiences: *I just feel that it's just so important for a trainee to have a mentor that's supportive* [Frances, Interview 1]. Alan reports that his experience as a co-operating teacher provides him with a very good understanding of how challenging it is for co-operating teacher who wish to support their student teachers but are also trying to manage their own busy teaching schedule *because it isn't that necessarily the teacher in the school doesn't want to support, it's just how much they can actually do* [PT, Interview 1].

Ellen has had extensive experience as a co-operating teacher. One of the experiences she cites as being particularly valuable is her role as a co-operating teacher in a doctoral research programme several years ago:

> I was involved with a research programme in that college with someone who was doing in a PhD there, and her PhD was based on forming a community of practice for co-operation PE teachers [Ellen Interview 1].

In this project Ellen was facilitated to become part of a community of practice of co-operating teachers who were given formal continuing professional development for their role. During the project Ellen was present during all of the student teacher's lessons; she had formal structured meetings with the placement tutor who came to visit the student teacher; and she played an active role with the placement tutor in observing the student teacher's lessons and giving feedback to the student teacher after the lessons [Ellen, Interview 1]. As a result of this experience she learned how to have 'learning conversations' with her student teachers, and she

posits that it was a valuable preparation for induction into the role of placement tutor [Ellen, Interview 2].

4.1.2.3 Biography of teaching in third level education

Three of the participants in this study have various experiences of teaching in initial teacher education programmes, beyond their role as placement tutors. Alan worked as a lecturer in Physical Education for one year, and a part-time placement tutor for three years in two other initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland. It is fair to assume that his experiences of teaching in other initial teacher education institutions have provided him with an added perspective to his role as placement tutor, since this part of his biography exposed him to alternative and complimentary methods and approaches to supervising student teachers. He is currently a part-time lecturer in several modules in the SUPE programme. Deirdre was a part-time lecturer on the SUPE programme for two years when she first began her role of placement tutor several years previously. She currently teaches on another programme within Rosemount University. Bob has been a part-time lecturer in several modules in the SUPE programme since he began working in the university almost eight year ago. Their experiences of working with adult learners provide valuable insights for these participants in their current roles as teachers of novice teachers.

All three participants report that working as a part-time lecture on other aspects of the SUPE programme helped them to establish relationships with the student teachers which enhanced their practices when supervising these students on school placement. Bob's comments represent the general feeling of all three participants in this regard:

> …when I visit a student or when I get my list of students in September, I'm able to relate to those students because I have worked with them as a teacher on the programme in second year and in third year and I find it invaluable [Bob, Interview 2].

Alan highlights an interesting aspect of being involved in the student teachers' programme of study when he comments on how this might impact upon the student teachers:

> And at this point now I would have met this group of students. I would have met them in first and second year and then I would have been, you know, doing the delivering of the practical areas, and then I would meet them again now in their teaching placement…. What's interesting is some of the work you do in first and second year [in teaching the student teachers], by the time they get to fourth year of course, you know, it's so far back there. And their philosophies may not concur with yours, even though you're offering best practice [Alan, Interview 1].

Alan's response is noteworthy given the amount of research that indicates student teachers like to please their placement tutors (Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Andrew 2007; Basmadjian 2011; Clarke et al. 2011; Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan 2018). Is there a possibility that Alan's biography of teaching on the SUPE programme may not always be to the advantage of his student teachers? The impact of previous relationships with student teachers will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis of placement tutor-student teacher relationships presented in Chapter 6.

4.1.2.4 Biography of teaching/coaching adult learners

A significant difference between teaching in the school and university systems is that in the latter, the learners are adults. Murray and Male (2005) and Lunenberg et al. (2014) emphasise that this is a very important consideration for all teacher educators when moving from being a 'first order teacher', a teacher in schools, to becoming a 'second order teacher', a teacher of teachers, (Murray and Male 2005). Five of the research participants in this study have a variety of experience of working with adults in a learning environment. Key to becoming a 'second order teacher' (Murray and Male 2005) is acquiring a knowledge of how young adults learn, and the supports they need to engage in active self-directed learning (Murray and Male 2005; Lunenberg et al. 2014; Murray 2008b, 2014).

Deirdre has worked extensively as a life coach for several years in another university programme in Rosemount University and in community settings and she acknowledges that *there's a huge cross-application between* her role as a life coach and a placement tutor [Deirdre,

Interview 1]. Concurring with Murray and Male (2005) and Lunenberg et al. (2014), she asserts that *teaching adults is very different* to teaching school students [Deirdre, Interview 2]. Bob agrees with Deirdre emphasising that he would expect students in the SUPE programme to be capable of *more independent learning, to be possibly more responsible than* students he taught in school setting [Bob, Interview 2].

From his time as a deputy principal in the latter part of his teaching career, Bob has maintained close contacts with a network of school management personnel and frequently acted as a mentor/coach to newly appointed deputy principals, as well as potential candidates for school management positions [Bob, Interview 1]. Alan, Ellen and Clare have been involved in delivering continuing professional development programmes in schools [Alan, Ellen, Clare Interview 1]. For these five participants, experience of working with adult learners provides them with insights and practices which they can apply to their work with student teachers.

4.2 Subtheme Two: The question of identity

This study is underpinned by a theory of identity informed by Holland et al. (1998) which suggests that identity can be viewed as a complex mixture of three types of identities: positional identities we assume in our everyday life and living, figured identities we develop as we negotiate the different world we inhabit, and authored identities we assume when we act as agents of change in responding to our environment and extending the boundaries we may encounter (Holland et al. 1998). When considering the research focus for this study, I decided it was important to understand the identities placement tutors embraced in order to understand their practice as teacher educators:

> ...the notion of identity is crucial since a PT's identity is formed by the socio cultural environment they live in…I think they bring a sense of identity with them from their life (and work) experiences to date and they inherit the identity of being a PT which comes from the figured world of the tutor…and is influenced by the figured world of both the school and the university… The question then becomes how do they manage both of these worlds…perhaps authoring an identity which in turn has a direct impact upon the 'significant others' they meet, i.e. student teachers, coop teachers, school management, other PTs etc. I think some PTs may become agents, and author this identity, others remain with the positional identity they have and the figurative identity

> they inherit. And that is important to consider in this research (Researcher Diary, 22 June 2016).

This section explores the participants' understanding of the concept of identity, as well as the identities they reveal in their role of placement tutor.

4.2.1. Participants' understanding of identity

Many of the research participants appear to understand identity as 'positional' (Holland et al. 1998), in terms of their position within the figured worlds in which they operate. Alan opines that his identify is closely linked to the roles he has had in different work settings [Alan, Interview 1]. This comment is echoed by Bob who contends his identity as a placement tutor is connected to his role as a representative of the university in schools as well as an assessor and supporter of student teachers:

> …my identity would be as a representative of the particular third-level institute. My identity would be as an assessor on set criteria that both the student and I know. My identity is also one of, as I've mentioned before, one of advisor and facilitator or mediator… [Bob, Interview 1].

As someone who works three part-time jobs (including that of placement tutor), Deirdre admits: *…it's still taking me a while to actually realise what my identity is…* but she too sees a close link between her work and her identity [Deirdre, Interview 1]. The link between work and identity, and the experience of 'shifting professional identities' (Williams 2013), is also highlighted by Clare:

> yeah, your identity could be in-you know, if I'm practical areas coordinator, this morning I'm doing this interview now, I've another job this afternoon with a different agency, and I sometimes don't know who I am or what I'm doing [Clare, Interview 2].

As a full-time teacher and part-time placement tutor, Frances [Interview 1] proposes her identity changes with her role when she moves from being a teacher to a tutor. Ellen (also a full-time teacher and part-time placement tutor) concurs with this opinion suggesting that her identify is that of *a teacher, but a tutor on the side* [Ellen, Interview 1]

Clare, Alan and Frances assert that identity is influenced by our set of belief and values. Commensurate with the research of Gee (2000), Clare suggests that identity is connected to the kind of person you are: *it's much more about your character and who you are… …your person, your character, your morals, your beliefs, that kind of thing* [Clare, Interview 1]. Alan also believes identity is closely connected to value set, and this in turn promotes an ascribed identity (Holland et al. 1998) which others recognise in us:

> I think your identity is probably first and foremost founded on the values you feel are really important. So, it comes back to things like respect, empathy, support. So these are really important, and you will do what you can in order to promote those in your interaction with others, your relationship with others, and they'd be a part of your identity also because people will recognise that [Alan, Interview 2]

Frances supports this opinion, suggesting that values such as compassion and loyalty contribute to character and identity: *all those little things that come with the person that you are, the character that you are* [Frances, Interview 2].

Alan and Ellen highlight that interaction with others is part of our identity formation, and though our social interactions certain identities are conferred on us by others (Holland et al. 1998; Beijaard et al. 2004; Rodgers and Scott 2008; O' Brien and Furlong 2010; O'Brien and Furlong 2015). Alan suggests that *People will know you in different contexts. And so that's probably their first point of reference* [Alan, Interview 2]. He proposes that *part of your identity should be, you know, should be evident in the way you interact* [Alan, Interview 2]. Ellen purports that identity is related to the *different hats* we wear as we go about our day to day living, and we wear a particular hat to respond to specific situations in order to respond to other. [Ellen, Interview 2].

4.2.2. Identities revealed

Research highlights that our identity is always evolving, and we reveal multiple identities at any given time (Gee 2000; Akkerman and Meijer 2011). Identity is not a fixed entity; it is complex and ever changing and greatly influenced by the situation in which we find ourselves (Holland et al. 1998; Dinkelman et al. 2006; O'Brien and Furlong 2015). Thus, it is not

possible to ascribe any singular identity to an individual since identity is shaped within multiple contexts. Notwithstanding this fact however, research evidence suggests that past experiences of teaching and a 'teacher identity' is highly valued by those who work in teacher education programmes (Murray and Male 2005; Murray 2008b, 2014; Hökkä and Eteläpelto 2014; O'Brien and Furlong 2015). The findings in this study concur with this research. The evidence in the study related to the perspective on identity provided by the research of Holland et al. (1998) reveals interesting insights.

Throughout the three interviews conducted with each participant, their teacher identity is frequently revealed in their discussion of their placement tutor role. Perhaps this is not surprising given the value participants attribute to their teacher biography. The extent to which participants rely on their teacher identity to inform their practice varies between the participants. Three participants embrace a strong teacher identity which is clearly central to their practice as placement tutors. The other three participants see their teacher identity as contributing, but not central to their practice.

4.2.2.1 Teacher identity is central to professional identity

In their research on nine primary school teacher educators, O'Brien and Furlong (2015) discovered that rather than constructing a new identity as a teacher educator, six of these participants preferred to rely upon their identity as former teachers. Bob, Clare and Ellen adopt a similar stance in this study.

Bob's identity is supported by years of extensive experience as a former teacher. *I am able to talk about my own teaching experience; I am able to talk about issues that may be on their agenda because I have faced those same issues ten years ago* [Bob, Interview 1]. He believes that his student teachers recognise and value that he has a teacher identity, and this gives him credibility in their eyes: Bob also indicates that when on school visits, his teacher identity has been recognised and validated by members of school management:

> …he [the school principal] knew that I was coming from a teaching background, and he was able to say to me, 'Nice to see that having been thirty-seven years in the

> classroom that you know the reality of what may be the challenges faced when a young student teacher is facing a 13 or a 14-year-old.'[Bob, Interview 1].

Furthermore, he reports that in the wider community in which he lives *people, would simply see me first of all as a retired teacher* [Bob, Interview 1].

In her first interview, Clare makes it very clear that she sees herself first and foremost as a teacher, recounting that even though she is involved in other part-time roles outside of her work as a placement tutor, there is a teacher element running through all her roles: *They're education-based and I love them all, I suppose, really, I always just thought I was a teacher* [Clare, Interview]. She believes she would be perceived by most people who know her as 'the teacher': *I probably come across quite teacher-y. You know what I mean? …Like people would see me as a teacher* [Clare, Interview]. She reveals that in her role as a placement tutor, she remains close to her teacher identity: *I like teaching, I like education, and I suppose I want to pass that on to other people… … I would still feel that I'm a* teacher [Clare, Interview 2]. Across all three interviews Clare communicates a strong teacher identity: *I'm just a teacher with a little bit more experience, that's it* [Clare, Interview 3].

Given that Ellen is currently teaching full-time while undertaking the placement tutor role on a part-time basis, it comes as no surprise that she identifies primarily as a teacher: *I would see myself first as a teacher* [Ellen, Interview 1]. She reports that *more people regard me as a teacher than as a* [placement] *tutor* [Ellen, Interview 1], which of course may be due in part to the part-time nature of her teacher educator role. Ellen is proud of her teacher identity and asserts that having a teacher identity *is a good thing, like, because that is what I am* [Ellen, Interview 2].

4.2.2.2 Teacher identity is part of professional identity

Unlike the previous three participants, Alan, Frances and Deirdre recognise that a teaching identity is part of their practice, but they do not see it as central to their practice.

Alan sees that part of his identity as a placement tutor is in the 'space of a practising teacher' and in how it assists him to supporting his student teachers: *I would have been very conscientious about the practice and I would always be looking at how do I improve that practice, how do I make it better* [Alan, Interview 1]. However, he opines that in his current role he sees himself more as a placement tutor:

> …ultimately, I'm a [placement]tutor, which means I'm employed by a third-level institution to do a job of work, to work with student teachers… … to offer them support over a three-meetings period and then to allocate an award or a grade for that practice. So that's the professional role, the hard-set form of it [Alan, Interview 1].

His tutor identity is a 'third level identity' one which allows him to share his expertise with somebody *who's in the process of learning* [Alan, Interview 3]. As such, he believes his student teachers recognise him as a tutor [Alan, Interview 1]. Frances concurs with Alan in her response to the issue of her placement tutor identity. While recognising that her teaching identity contributes to her practice, she believes her primary identity is that of a tutor to the student teachers [Frances, Interview 1]. Her tutor identity is revealed in her emphasis on *supporting, encouraging, giving student teachers guidance throughout their placement from the first observation to the second, to the third* [Frances, Interview 3].

Deirdre appears to embrace a number of different identities. As a part-time placement tutor who is also involved in part-time roles of life coach and team skills mentor, she admits that she finds it difficult to really describe her professional identity. Deirdre believes that her teacher identity, along with identities from other aspects of her life, informs her work: *I draw my teaching, my Physical Education teaching, my travelling, and my creative side. I draw all of that into the spaces in which I work and teach* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. Furthermore, she emphasises that her identity is not confined to that of a teacher: *we can be, we are much broader than what people would formally identify as being a teacher* [Deirdre, Interview 2]. She believes her professional identity lies somewhere *between the school and the university* and in recent years she has developed an artist identity which *really I suppose supports what I do* [Deirdre, Interview 2].

4.2.1.3 Moments of teacher identity witnessed during observations

When accompanying five of the participants on separate school placement supervision visits, I witnessed several examples of their teacher identities emerging in their interactions with their student teachers during the post-lesson feedback sessions. This was revealed in the way all participants referenced their teaching backgrounds when giving feedback to their student teachers. This is recorded in my observation fieldnotes for each of the five observation visits I conducted:

> During PLC teacher identity is evident in how Ellen gives very practical feedback examples from her own teaching [Observation fieldnotes 25 November 2019, Ellen].
>
> In the PLC, when discussing the teaching of the main skill of today's lesson, Clare refers to how she teaches the same skill… she seems to draw from her teacher identity to help give practical advice the ST [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].
>
> …personal/past experience as teacher came out a little in how he gave some feedback…some very practical teaching tips given, also at times there was a sense of him being the teacher and her the pupil listening attentively to his feedback [Observation fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].
>
> I saw strong teacher identity emerging in the post-lesson conference where the placement tutor made many references to her own experiences as a teacher when she was giving feedback to the student teacher [Observation fieldnotes 7 February 2020 Frances].
>
> Teacher identity is very present in the PLC, as Alan's vast experience as a former PE teacher is used time and time again as he advises the ST, gives very practical tips and examples… Alan is very much in teacher mode in how he talks to the ST, or perhaps it is how the ST listens to him? He checks back with the ST after he offers feedback, "what have you heard there in what I've seen" [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan].

Given the teaching biography of these participants, it is not surprising to see their placement tutor/ teacher identity emerge in this manner as this identity allows them to share their teaching experiences with their student teachers. And, as emphasised by Murray (2014), Ellen believes that a teacher identity helps establish professional credibility amongst student teachers:

> I think if you're giving a good sense of teacher identity to the students that you're supervising or advising, then, like, I think that kind of it can set them at ease and it can kind of assure them that you know what you're talking about and that you're not talking through your hat, like, and that you are actually, you know, talking from experience [Ellen, Interview 2].

4.2.1.3 Applying the perspective of Identity theory (Holland et al. 1998) to the participants in the figured world of school placement.

Urrieta (2007) claims that becoming part of a figured world depends on who we are and the personal story we have. In this regard, when considering the positional and figurative identities outlined by Holland at a. (1998), the fact that participants see their identity primarily a teacher or tutor is significant. It may be the case that participants' reliance on their teacher identity is linked to their previous biography of being a teacher, in which their positional and figured identities were clearly delineated in the figured world of the school which they inhabited. The figured world of school placement encompasses two figured worlds; the school and the university, but placement tutors are positioned on the periphery of these two figured worlds. Hence they continue to operate from their previously known identity of being a teacher (Bob, Clare, Ellen) with some movement towards becoming a tutor (Alan, Deirdre, Frances).

Holland et al. (1998, p.52) assert that in figured worlds "particular characters and actors are recognised, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others". While the Teaching Council (2013, 2020) outlines the position and roles of each of the main characters in school placement, the absence of any formal university-school partnership, means that the figured world of school placement is not an established one. In truth, it sits on the wobbly bridge between university and the school (Heinz and Fleming 2019). Deirdre emphasises that placement tutors move between two figured worlds and are tasked with establishing an identity in the space between these two worlds. She notes that *sitting in that space it can be quite challenging* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. In the figured world of school placement, positional identities are ascribed to placement tutors, student teachers and co-operating teachers. But figured identities may be hampered by an imbalance of power whereby the placement tutor is seen as the assessor of school placement (Conway et al. 2009; Young et al. 2015). And so it is not surprising that the participants in this study identify strongly with the teacher-tutor identity, but they report that student teachers, co-operating teachers and school management, see them as 'inspectors' [Bob, Clare, Deirdre, Frances, Interview 3]. So it seems that the identity ascribed to placement tutors by the other actors in the figured world of school placement is not the one they ascribe to themselves.

As individuals become more established and confident in their figured worlds, they may choose to respond to particular situations or practices that ask them to step outside the boundaries of their figured worlds, and their figured identities, and act as agents of change and authors of their identity (Holland et al. 1998). Fundamental to agency is the concept of a well-defined identity, since a strong sense of identity empowers us to "move ideas forward, to reach goals or even to transform the context" (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009, p.183). Findings in this research indicate that participants have a strong teacher-tutor identity, but their marginalised position in school placements makes it difficult to author their identity. One exception to this rule occurred during my observation of Clare's supervision visit.

In this particular situation the student teacher had little or no input from a co-operating teacher. Clare had briefly met the allocated co-operating teacher before the lesson began and had a three-minute hurried conversation with him. The co-operating teacher indicated that, due to timetable clashes, he had not yet seen the student teacher delivering a lesson, and so he could only comment very generally about the student teacher's engagement in the wider school community. On observing the lesson, it was very apparent that this student teacher would greatly benefit from more 'hands on' mentoring in the school. At the end of the visits, as we were about to leave the school, Clare noticed the co-operating teacher sitting in the main reception and decided to speak to him again. She thanked him for his current support of the student teacher but emphasised that it would be in a great help to the student teacher if the co-operating teacher could be facilitated to attend some of his future lessons to observe his teaching and assist him to address the challenges he was currently facing. This was a difficult conversation to negotiate for Clare given the informal arrangement regarding co-operating teachers in the school placement. In this instance the co-operating teacher took this request very graciously and indicated he would make a request to school management to try and facilitate this request.

On reflecting upon the supervision visit I noted that Clare's advocacy for her student teacher was an admirable act of agency. By stepping outside of the boundaries imposed by the school placement system (limited access to co-operating teachers), Clare managed to secure the possibility of support for the student teacher.

> There was also some sense of her being agentic in her actions – she responded to a situation by stepping outside practice and seeking out the CT on behalf of the ST – she had spoken to the CT earlier and normally would have concluded her visit and left but in this she stepped outside normal practice and became 'an agent of change' [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

This example of authoring identity was the only such agentic practice revealed in the findings of this study. Holland et al. (1998, p.282) remind us that that the space of authoring can often be "a contested space, a space of struggle". In order to enter that space, individuals need to have a confidence to respond to situation in ways that require they step outside boundaries of practice. Acts of agency are difficult for placement tutors to undertake when positioned as outsiders or visitors in the figured world of school placement.

4.3 Subtheme Three: From teacher to teacher educator

Initial teacher education institutions in many countries have great autonomy in deciding the qualifications of teacher educators (Caena 2012). Recruitment patterns and entry criteria vary from one institution to the next (International Forum for Teacher Educator Development 2019) and teacher educators are often appointed without any formal route of qualifications, training, or induction (Cochran-Smith 2003, Kosnik and Beck 2008; Snoek et al. 2011). Currently teacher educators are not required to register with a professional body in the Republic of Ireland (Dolan and Kenny 2014). This section reviews how the participants in this study were appointed to the role of placement tutors, and analyses how they negotiated the transition from being a teacher to becoming a teacher educator.

4.3.1 Appointment to the role of placement tutor

The system for the recruitment of placement tutors in the Republic of Ireland relies on a combination of some advertisement of the role, and informal recruitment processes such as recommendations given by existing staff members and/or enquiries from teachers interested in the position (Dolan and Kenny 2014). Likewise, the findings in this study indicate that the participants were appointed through a combination of both informal and formal recruitment processes.

Three of the participants in this study were recruited by the SUPE programme for the position of placement tutor:

> Alan: I would have been approached by the college to see would I be interested in the role, as I had retired… because I knew the person particularly well and they would have known me in terms of my history, there wasn't an interview process [Interview 1].
>
> Clare: ... we just had a chat, just had an informal chat about it. And I was definitely looking for more work at the same time [Interview 1].
>
> Deirdre: It was actually an informal happening at the time… there was a particular woman working as a placement tutor and it worked out that she couldn't fulfil the role, so I was brought on board midstream to take over her role as placement tutor at the time [Interview 1].

It is interesting to note that in all three cases there was no formal interview process; a combination of personal connections, and valued reputations were considered sufficient to be offered the role of placement tutor.

As a recently retired teacher and deputy principal, Bob decided *after six months of retirement there's only so much grass you can cut and there's only so many papers you can read and coffee you can drink* [Bob, Interview] and he approached the university to seek opportunities to put his skillset from a long career in education to work. Once again, there was no formal interview, just an informal chat*: it was a matter of if the particular institution had some need for a person with maybe my experience. I had something to give…* [Bob, Interview 1]. As a result, Bob was appointed to the role. The experiences of the remaining (and most recently appointed) two participants, Ellen and Frances, are reflective of the more formal process of advertisement and interview adopted in recent years in the SUPE programme. Both participants saw the advertisement on the website of a national Physical Education teacher support group, were interviewed and appointed to the role [Ellen, Interview 1; Frances, Interview 1].

Formalising the recruitment process for placement tutors is an important development for two reasons. Firstly, it gives due recognition to the complex role of placement tutors, and secondly, it helps to ensure that the best personnel are recruited for the role. Teacher educators need to

develop a pedagogical approach towards teacher education that extends beyond the pedagogy of teaching in the classroom (Kosnik and Beck 2008). In other words, they need to know and understand how to teach, but also, how to teach about teaching (Loughran 2014). The skill set required for teaching or managing school students in of itself is not sufficient for the role of supporting and evaluating student teachers (Kosnik and Beck 2008; Steadman and Brown 2010; Burns and Badiali 2015; Hall et al. 2018). Schools and university settings differ in many fundamental ways (Kosnik and Beck 2008) and extensive classroom experience does not, in of itself, translate into knowledge of the "science and art of teaching" (Parker et al. 2019, p.7).

4.3.2 The transition from teacher to teacher educator

For many placement tutors, becoming a teacher educator involves a "mid-career or even end-of-career transition" from classroom teacher to student teacher supervisor (Walsh and Dolan 2018, p.3). A growing volume of literature has been written about the transition from teacher to teacher educator (Feiman-Nemser 2001; Zeichner 2005; Murray and Male 2005; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Beck and Kosnik 2008; Murray 2008b, 2014; Cuenca 2010a; Dinkelman 2011; White 2013; Williams 2013; Dolan and Kenny 2014; Izadinia 2014; Walsh and Dolan 2018). This literature emphasises that the transition is a difficult undertaking, with many candidates experiencing stress and isolation as they move from school to university settings, with little or no formal supports systems provided for them. For many teacher educators, induction into higher education is not a positive experience; they feel uncertain about their ability to fulfil their role as teacher educators and frequently find it difficult to develop a teacher educator identity (Izadinia 2014).

My induction into the role of placement tutor has been described in the introductory chapter of this study. My experience of the transition from teacher to teacher educator mirrored the findings of Izadinia (2014). Indeed, my experience of feeling like an outsider in the school and university settings concurred with the studies of other researchers (Slick 1997; Murphy 2010; Cuenca at al. 2011). This experience was the catalyst for the research focus of this study. Hence, it came as a pleasant surprise to me to discover that five out of the six placement tutor participants (Alan, Bob, Clare, Deirdre, Frances) in this research study reported positive

experiences of moving from the role of teacher to placement tutor. Deirdre recall that her initial experience was less positive as she became a placement tutor halfway through the school placement year in order to step in and replace a staff member on sick leave.

The findings suggest there are three key elements that helped the participants negotiate the transition from teacher to placement tutor. The first two elements relate to the biography of teacher (all six participants) and the biography of co-operating teacher (four participants). The third element concerns preparation for the role and the support needed to undertake it. Each of these elements will now be discussed.

4.3.2.1 First order teaching assists second order teaching

Teacher educators' reliance upon previous teaching experience is well documented in the literature (Murray and Male 2005; Murray 2008b, 2014; Murray et al. 2011; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Dinkelman 2011; Hökkä and Eteläpelto 2014; Williams 2013; White 2014). All participants in this study reported that their experiences of being a 'first order teacher' helped them to meet some of the challenges of their new role as a 'second order teacher' (Murray and Male 2005).

The practical, 'hand-on' experience accumulated after many years of teaching made the transition from teacher to placement tutor a relatively smooth one for Bob:

> …a lot of what I'm doing with my students is a reflection on my own experience of 36 years in the classroom. What it does is it allows me give examples of issues, for example, relating to pedagogical skills, classroom management from my own life experience, not just reading from a textbook [Bob, Interview 2].

Commensurate with the research of Murray and Male (2005) and Lunenberg et al. (2014), Bob recognises the shift from teaching school students to third level students necessitates consideration of how to deal with adult learners [Bob, Interview 2].

Alan also reports that coming to the role of placement tutor with extensive teaching experience was of great benefit to him. He echoes the distinction made by Bob regarding the teaching of young adult learners: *It's more now the nuances of it involved with… adolescents or beginning teachers* [Alan, Interview 1. He also wisely points out that, as young adults, his student teachers bring their own experiences to the process of learning to teach and it is important to recognise *that they have something to offer* [Alan, Interview 2].

For Clare moving from teacher to placement tutor was a 'natural transition' due to her background as a teacher [Clare, Interview 2]. Becoming a placement tutor after ten years of teaching at post-primary level gave her a confidence that she may not have had if she had taken on the role in her early years of teaching*: I certainly think I wouldn't have been able to do it even ten years ago. I think you need that bit of experience at post-primary* [Clare, Interview 2]. She asserts that the knowledge she gained as a teacher helps her to evaluate her student teachers and support them with effective feedback: *because I'm assessing them, their teaching ability. So, I need to have some grounding as a teacher to be able to give them some feedback*… [Clare, Interview 1].

Deirdre recalls her initial transition to the role of placement tutor as being a difficult experience. She had to dive in at the deep end since she was brought into the school placement programme halfway through the school year to replace a staff member who went on sick leave:

> There wasn't any training and as far as I remember we didn't have any form of rubric [for evaluating student teachers] …didn't know at what level I should pitch my assessment, let's say, or my observation of students. So, it was quite a challenging space [Deirdre, Interview 1].

During her first six months of her role as placement tutor she relied heavily on her 'teaching background' [Deirdre, Interview 1]. Her experience of moving from teacher to teacher educator was assisted by the reciprocal relationship she believes exits between both roles: *I occupy both spaces of teacher and teacher educator, and one definitely informs the other. It's like a reciprocal-type relationship* [Deirdre, Interview 2].

Ellen is one of the two participants in this study who, in addition to her role as placement tutor, continues to teach full-time in a post primary school. Her experience of teaching Physical Education for almost eighteen years made the transition to placement tutor a comfortable one for her: *when it comes to going in and supervising them and watching their classes and giving them feedback on the classes, I feel qualified to do that* [Ellen, Interview 2]. As the second participant involved in a full-time teaching position, Frances also believes that her teaching experience contributed '100%' to her transition to the role of placement tutor [Frances, Interview 2]. She acknowledges that there are 'different criteria' for how she operates as a teacher of Physical Education and a placement tutor but, like Deirdre, she believes both roles share a reciprocal relationship, with one informing the other [Frances, Interview 2].

4.3.2.2 Previous experience as a co-operating teacher provides insight into the role of placement tutor

The research literature demonstrates that the role of the co-operating teacher is different to that of the placement tutor in terms of the kind of feedback and support provided to student teachers, and how these two members of the school placement triad are perceived by student teachers (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Koster et al. 1998; Korner et al. 2002; Bullogh and Draper 2004; Caires and Almeida 2007; Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009; Asplin and Marks 2013; Murphy 2014; Burns and Badiali 2015; Hall et al. 2018). Notwithstanding this fact, the participants in this study who had experience of being a co-operating teacher report it was a valuable preparation for their transition to placement tutor.

Alan believes that his past experience of being a co-operating teacher provided a good foundation to help prepare him for the role of placement tutor as it helped him learn about the 'context' of supervising student teachers [Alan, Interview 1]. Similarly, Deirdre also values her past experiences as a co-operating teacher, reporting that she relied on her *experience of having had students from the university in my school and seeing them as a mentor teacher* when she first began her role as a placement tutor on the SUPE programme [Deirdre, Interview 1]. Ellen believes her previous biography as a 'hand-on' co-operating teacher, was a very valuable preparation for the role of placement tutor [Ellen, Interview 2]. Becoming part of a research-based community of practice of co-operating teachers provided her with continuing

professional development opportunities which in turn helped her to have 'learning conversations' with student teachers. She emphasises *that kind of gave me a bit of standing on it* [the role of the placement tutor] [Ellen, Interview 2].

Frances was a co-operating teacher in her school in the United Kingdom. While undertaking the role of co-operating teacher, she was asked to provide formal feedback to student teachers, and she had many conversations with placement tutors who came to view the student teachers. For Frances, past experience of being a co-operating teacher was a significant factor in preparing her for the role of placement tutor: *Obviously, if I didn't have that experience, I wouldn't have been able to take on this role* [Frances, Interview 2]. She reports that familiarity with supervising student teachers as a co-operating teacher provided her with in-depth knowledge of the process involved in supervising student teachers: *we had a student teacher in, and I had to observe them and give them feedback. So, I think that was valuable for me* (Frances, Interview 2).

4.3.2.3 Induction and support assists the process of becoming a placement tutor

The accounts of the participants in this study strongly suggest that the transition from teacher to placement tutor is made easier when accompanied by an accessible support system. Since 2014, the SUPE school placement programme provides the following induction for novice placement tutors:

1. All novice placement tutors attend an induction workshop outlining the roles and responsibilities of placement tutors, the protocols for school placement supervision visits, and the system for assessment of student teachers.
2. Each of the novice placement tutors then shadow a more experienced placement tutor on a supervision visit.
3. Finally, an experienced placement tutor, or the school placement coordinator accompanies new placement tutors when they conduct their first supervision visit.

This induction programme has worked very successfully as a means of initiating new placement tutors to their role, as well as promoting relationships between 'newcomers' and 'old timers' (Lave and Wenger 2001) in the SUPE team of placement tutors

Alan, Ellen, Clare and Frances emphasise that the experience of shadowing a more experienced colleague was *the most valuable* [Ellen, Interview 1] initiation into their role. It allowed Alan to witness first-hand *the practice and observe the detail and recognise, you know, what kind of support takes place, what kind of discussion takes place, what kind of documentation is maintained* [Alan, Interview 1]. Clare also appreciated having the support of a more experienced colleague accompany her on her supervision visit, *just to make sure I was doing okay* (Clare, Interview 1). Frances concurs with this response emphasising that having access to someone to *peep over what are you doing and like having a dialogue with you* gave her a feeling of security during her first supervision visit.

Support from the school placement coordinator and the SUPE programme administrator is highlighted by all participants as a positive part of their journey as a placement tutor. Bob reports that the school placement coordinator has been the 'link' for him, *the person that keeps it together in relation to school placement* and that the administrator of the SUPE programme *plays a key role ... in linking in with the fourteen or twenty tutors* [Bob, Interview 1]. Alan acknowledges that the *really good* relationship he has with the school placement coordinator makes his experience of being a placement tutor *a better experience overall* [Alan, Interview 1]. Both Ellen and Clare appreciate the support provided by school placement coordinator and the SUPE programme administrator who is always on hand to help deal with employment contract, travel expenses and other administrative issues [Ellen and Clare, Interview 1]. For Frances, conducting her first year as a part-time placement tutor, while continuing her full-time job as a teacher in the United Kingdom, was a particular challenge. She recalls that emails and Skype meetings with the school placement coordinator were invaluable to her during this first year: *I found the dialogue there was fantastic, and without that dialogue I wouldn't have known what I was doing* [Frances, Interview 1]. Regular contact with the SUPE programme administrator also helped her to negotiate the first year of her new role [Frances, Interview 1].

These participants' testimonies of feeling supported in the SUPE school placement programme provide a noteworthy contrast to the abundance of literature that suggests placement tutors generally feeling unsupported in their roles (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Slick 1997; Koerner and O'Connell Rust 2002; Zeichner 2005; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Cuenca 2010a; Murphy 2010; Steadman & Brown 2011; Basmadjian 2013). Given Deirdre's initial challenging induction to the role of placement tutor where she felt unsupported and *had to go out and literally find my way* [Deirdre, Interview 1], her comments regarding the importance of supporting placement tutors are particularly relevant and insightful:

> And then I value the support that you give us as placement tutors because like it really underpins what we do. Because initially when we were floating, you know, without any format or proforma, without any support on the phone or by email or by connecting us with other tutors or giving us resources or even giving us, you know, the lecture notes from your lectures so that we can support our own feedback to student teachers… you know, that floats the boat for everybody, you know [Deirdre, Interview 1].

Conclusion

This chapter set out to present findings and discussion related to the first overarching theme of *Becoming a placement tutor in initial teacher education*. This task was conducted by closely examining the three subthemes of participants' biographies, their identities as placement tutors and their transition to teacher education. To conclude this chapter, a brief synopsis of each subtheme is now provided.

Subtheme one, *'The biographies of placement tutors'*, demonstrates that, like most part-time placement tutors, the participants in this study have a previous teacher biography which they believe greatly enhances their practice. They emphasise that having experience of the realities of teaching helps them to make informed decisions, provide relevant feedback and evaluate practice. This fact is borne out consistently, both implicitly and explicitly, in the participants' responses to many questions during the three sets of interviews conducted. It was also witnessed during the observations conducted of the placement tutors' supervision visits where it was very apparent that student teachers respected the teaching experience of their placement tutor. Some participants also identify their teaching biography as a source of valuable connection in the school communities where they supervise their student teachers. This fact is

worth noting as these connections can be a means of bringing placement tutors into the school community and reducing some of the isolation experienced in their status of visitor to the school. Other biographies of being a student teacher, a co-operating teacher, lecturer or tutor in third level and in adult education are also identified as sources of valuable experiences which enhance their practice as placement tutors. Taken together, participants' collective biographies are grounded in education and learning, and their commitment to being educators is endorsed throughout the findings.

Giving the significance all participants attribute to their teaching biography, the emergence of an affiliation to a strong teacher identity in the second subtheme, *'The question of identity'*, is not unexpected. Three participants indicate their teacher identity is central to their practice as placement tutors, while the other three participants move between teacher and tutor identity. The fact that none of the participants embrace a teacher educator identity is interesting. It may be that their position at the fringes of the figured worlds of the university and school communities does not provide them with the opportunity to extend their teacher-tutor identity and so they are unable, or reluctant, to relinquish their past identities in order to embrace a new one. Furthermore, given that many teacher educators prize their status of 'once a teacher', it is understandable that these part-time placement tutors maintain allegiance to their teacher identity. The fact that there is little or no evidence in this study of participants entering the space of authoring identity would seem to support this premise.

Subtheme three, *'From teacher to teacher educator'*, evidences how participants made the transition from teacher to teacher educator through analysing how participants were appointed, and how they navigated the challenges of their new role. In terms of recruitment and appointment in the SUPE initial teacher education programme, findings reveal a move away from the traditional method of sourcing placement tutors through the network of connections, reputations and informal chats to a system of formal advertisement and interview. Once appointed to the role of placement tutor, a transition from teacher to teacher educator must occur. The literature reveals that this is a challenging task. My own experiences, documented in this research, narrate a number of challenges I experienced in my journey. Nonetheless, the findings presented in this subtheme indicate that, for the main part, participants did not have

significant challenges in this regard. Induction into the role, the availability of ongoing continuing professional development and access to the SUPE school placement coordinator and programme administrator are cited as valuable supports in assisting transition to their new role. Previous (and current) experiences of teaching, facilitating continuing professional development for teachers and being a co-operating teacher also are also acknowledged as useful assets.

Chapter Five will now set forth the second overarching theme of the research, *The lived experiences of placement tutors in initial teacher education,* by examining how participants negotiate their multifaceted role, their motivations for undertaking the role and the challenges, opportunities and dilemmas presented when enacting the role.

Chapter 5: Findings & Discussion: Theme Two: The lived experiences of placement tutors in initial teacher education

Placement tutors enact a complex role in a 'hybrid space' (Zeichner 2010) which transverses the worlds of university and school. Placement tutors are required "to hold three different perspectives simultaneously: the perspective of the individual learning to teach, the perspective of the teacher in a school, and the perspective of the teacher educator in the university setting" (Korthagen et al. 2006, p.1034). Thus, placement tutors must mediate between multiple perspectives in order to support student teacher learning (Reynolds et al. 2013). The recent research conducted by Hall et al. (2018, p.34) on school placement in the Republic of Ireland recognises 'the multi-dimensional role' of placement tutors, highlighting that these teacher educators are involved in negotiations with student teachers, school principals or deputy principals, co-operating teachers and various member of the university programme.

This chapter explores the experiences encountered by the six participants in this study, related to their respective roles as teacher educators, through:

- analysing the multifaceted nature of the placement tutor role;
- identifying the challenges encountered in fulfilling the role;
- examining the motivations for undertaking the role and the opportunities that arise as placement tutors to discharge their professional responsibilities.

5.1 Subtheme One: The multifaceted role of placement tutors

There is consensus in the literature that placement tutors fulfil a complex and important role in initial teacher education (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Enz and Freeman 1996; Slick 1997, 1998; Steadman and Brown 2011; Asplin and Marks 2013; Higgins et al. 2013; Reynolds et al. 2013; Burns and Badiali 2015; Burns et al. 2016b; Hall et al. 2018). The supervision of student teachers behoves placement tutors to undertake "multiple tasks and practices" (Burns et al. 2016b, p.420). This section begins by discussing placement tutors' dual role of assessment and assistance, including how participants in this study navigate this duality. A review is also provided of participants' enactment of other aspects of their role such as linking the university

and school, advocating for student teachers and addressing the theory-practice dichotomy experienced by student teachers.

5.1.1 Assistor and assessor (Slick 1997)

Findings in this study indicate the participants believe that their primary responsibility is to fulfil a dual role of assessor and assistor of student teachers. They are aware that they have a responsibility to uphold standards and evaluate student teachers' practice, but equally they place great emphasis on doing this in a manner that provides support, advice and guidance for the student teachers in their care. In doing so, they embody the claim of Basmadjian (2011, p.120) that placement tutors need "to understand the balance between assistance and assessment". They also replicate the findings of the research on school placement in the Republic of Ireland conducted by Hall et al. (2018) where placement tutors in that study demonstrate an awareness of the importance of balancing affirmation and judgment when supervising student teachers. Hall et al. (2018, p.94) conclude that, while placement tutors are involved in grading student teachers "in general, that this is not an inspection-type enterprise, it is primarily about enabling the ST gain confidence and competence as a professional". There is evidence in this study that all participants fulfil the dual role of assessor and assistor in a conscientious and thoughtful manner.

5.1.1.1 Placement tutors' perceptions of the dual role

My personal experience of being a placement tutor led me to identify strongly with the research which indicates that placement tutors may experience a tension when fulfilling the dual role of assessor and assistor for student teachers (Slick 1997; Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Walsh and Dolan 2018). This does not appear to be the case for the participants in this study as they demonstrate a keen awareness of the nature of their dual role, along with an ability to carry out the role competently and comfortably.

In his first interview Alan contends that as a placement tutor he has a dual role of assessor and assistor to fulfil: *I think ultimately you have to do* both. Alan seeks to communicate to his

student teachers that he is both assistor and assessor: *coming from a point of helpfulness while also being the person who will ultimately have to evaluate and give them a mark*. He summarises his role as follows:

> to offer them [the student teachers] support over a three-meetings period and then to allocate an award or a grade for that practice…it's also a role of supporting [student]teachers in the process of becoming a 'becoming' teacher [Alan, Interview 1].

Bob also embraces the dual nature of his role, as evident in comments in his first interview: *It is a dual role. It is not purely assessing. It is there as advice. It is there as giving advice to students* [Bob, Interview 1]. He reiterates his dual role in the other two interviews:

> …being an assessor of their teaching quality or being an assessor of their teaching file, I'm also there to assist, to guide, to listen, to mentor [Bob, Interview 2].
>
> So, there is the dual role of the assessor on one hand and also the mentor and the supporter of the student throughout his or her academic year [Bob, Interview 3].

He is very comfortable being both assessor and assistor in his interactions with his student teachers:

> I was able to visit the student and under certain criteria, under certain rubrics assess, but on the other hand as well support and encourage this particular young teacher who was going through personal illness… [Bob, Interview 3].

Clare is aware that assessing student teachers is part of her role, *I'm assessing them, their teaching ability* but similarly to Alan and Bob, she has no difficulty in being both assessor and assistor: *I don't find it a huge clash or a huge challenge*. While she understands that she must assess student teachers' performances, she also believes that her role is *to support them and just help them out* [Clare, Interview 1]. Ultimately, Clare is aware that she fulfils a dual role as a placement tutor:

> I feel I'm pretty clear on the role, that it is mentor, supporter, advisor, but I'm also pretty clear that, yeah, I grade them at the end…I don't see the lines getting blurred or anything like that for me [Clare, Interview 3].

Deirdre acknowledges *our dual role as assessor and advisor* and maintains that providing support for student teachers is the most important aspect of her placement tutor role: *I think ultimately, the supporting role is the important role* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. She reports that she has no issue fulfilling her dual role but, in certain circumstances, it can be a complex task:

> I wouldn't have thought I had a major issue with it [the dual role], but when challenges come up then you realise that, you know, there's a lot more to it [Deirdre, Interview 3].

The main challenges in this regard she attributes to student teachers having different perceptions of feedback received and the lack of an established relationship that she, as a part-time placement tutor, has with them: *in terms of student perspective and our contact with the students, you know, our limited contact with them* [Clare, Interview 3]. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six when the relationship between placement tutors and their student teachers is examined.

Achieving a balance between being an assessor and an assistor is an important part of the dual role for Ellen:

> Yeah, like, again it's a balance. Getting it right between scaring them enough that they won't be coming in thinking that it's going to be—that you're just automatically going to hand them a 1H, like— and, you know, being nice to them to encourage them that don't be scared when I come in [Ellen, Interview 1].

She doesn't see any conflict between the role of assessor and assistor. In fact Ellen believes both aspects of the dual role are interconnected, and ultimately serve to help student teachers to improve their practice*:*

> No, they're connected, I suppose, because your assistance is trying to improve their grade… … they do complement each other well… … They kind of link in nicely to each other [Ellen, Interview 1].

Frances admits that, as a novice placement tutor, she initially struggled with the assessment side of her role: *obviously last year I was new to it. I'm thinking am I doing this right? Am I doing that wrong?* [Frances, Interview 1]. She acknowledges that with the SUPE placement tutor support programme, and the experience of one year behind her, she is now feeling *more*

confident going out because I know what I'm looking for exactly [Frances, Interview 1]. She is now comfortable in the role of the assessor and can *call the grade* as necessary [Frances, Interview 1]. Like the other participants, she also emphasises the importance of the supportive element of the dual role of the placement tutor:

> I can be the assessor. I'm looking for things…I'm looking for X, Y and Z. Again, I also like to give support with that format as well [Frances, Interview 3].

5.1.1.2 Witnessing the placement tutors' dual role

During my observation of the participants' supervision visits to their student teachers, I witnessed them enact their dual role. In general, the role of assessor was most obvious during the participants' observation of the student teachers' lessons since the physical presence of the placement tutor in the school hall appeared to communicate that they were there to assess the student teacher. Their acts of examining paperwork, observing the teaching, making notes all communicated that an assessor was at work:

> PT as assessor appears evident in the very beginning of this visit, as seen by Ellen's decision to look at the SPF, check out the planning [Observation fieldnotes 11 November 2019, Ellen].
>
> Clare divides her time between observing the teaching, making notes and looking through the SPF and the LP for today. The assessor role very much in evidence [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].
>
> Role of assessor communicated in Bob's stance as observer and note-taker during the lesson [Observation fieldnotes 22 January, Bob].
>
> Frances's physical positioning in the hall establishes her as assessor, as she is sitting at a table in full view of pupils, and close to the LW since she needs to observe the interaction. Her activity of writing notes, observing the ST closely also establishes her as an evaluator of some kind [Observation fieldnotes 7 February, Frances].
>
> There is something about this scenario; Alan standing near the group and making notes on his pad as he listens; it puts him firmly in the role as assessor. I can understand why he got up to get closer to listen as it's a big hall. But the picture is kind of symbolic – it's obvious to everyone in the room – the pupils and the ST- that Alan is here in role of assessor [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan].

The second part of the supervision visits I observed centred on the post-lesson conference which occurs after the taught lesson. This is the opportunity for the placement tutor and student

teacher to discuss the lesson, identifying the positives and challenges evident in the student teacher's practice. Each discussion I witnessed revealed evidence of placement tutors moving comfortably and competently between the role of assessor and assistor:

> Ellen's enacted the dual role in a very effective manner, communicating a pleasant but business-like demeanour from the start of the post-lesson conference…During the PLC there was a good mix of assessor and assistor, beginning with Ellen saying 'well done' to the ST - sets a nice tone. Also, she begins with positive comments about the ST's relationship with the students. Slips into assessor quite naturally, when pointing out difficulty with accessing material in the file, and in the feedback provided about the very direct teacher style adopted by the ST during the lesson [Observation fieldnotes 25 October 2019, Ellen].

The discussion between Clare and her student teacher revealed a combination of both assessor and assistor in how she challenged his practices and encouraged him to reflect upon his teaching:

> The PLC has begun and during this stage of the visit the role assumed by the PT seems to be a mix of the assessor and the assistor/supporter. Clare listens to ST3 as he explains his teaching. She also suggests, rather than dictates, to the ST so there is a sense that she is supporting him while also pushing him onwards. She also picks out positive elements and is encouraging while also pushing him on ..."that was a nice idea but perhaps you could…" [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

Illustration of Bob's dual role was demonstrated in the support offered to the student teacher during the post-lesson conference, as well as the moments when he used *his assessor hat* [Alan, Interview 1] to question decisions taken by the student teacher in her planning and practice:

> Roles as supporter so obvious in the PLC – encourages the ST in the discussion. Very positive words – well done, good job. This is continued through when giving her feedback… Again, I saw a PT very comfortable in being both assessor and assistor- he had no problem pointing out the areas that needed improving [Observation fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].

Frances worked determinably during the post-lesson conference to make the nervous student teacher feel at ease, using very positive language and encouraging the student teacher to discuss the feedback received. In all of this, Frances appeared to embrace her dual role seamlessly:

> However, she also manages to make clear the aspects that need improvement. She appears quite at ease with the ST and moves easily between the role of assessor and assistor, for example asking ST to explain certain elements of the lesson, questioning her on them all the while appearing to be very comfortable in her role [Observation fieldnotes 7 February 2020, Frances].

In the supervision visit Alan conducted, the student teacher exhibited satisfactory classroom management but limited active teaching methodology and assessment approaches. I wondered how he would manage the role of assessor required to have *the difficult conversation with a ST who is underperforming in his role as teacher* [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan]. During the post-lesson conference Alan does not shy away from this task:

> Later in the PLC, Alan tackles the difficult conversation through the pleasant manner he has, the very good practical tips he can offer, the manner in which he asks the questions [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan].

His ability to be both assistor and assessor is very evident throughout the discussion he has with the student teacher: *The teacher/supporter is very evident in the PLC in terms of how Alan engages with the ST-asking questions, probing but also encouraging any effort* [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan].

5.1.2 Negotiating the dual role

This research study suggests that several factors help the participants to achieve the necessary balance between assessment and assistance needed to fulfil their role as placement tutors. These include adopting an approach as supportive assessors, using an explicit evaluative framework, providing constructive feedback to student teachers, and accessing continuing professional development opportunities.

5.1.2.1 Supportive assessors

Hoover and Nolan (2011) differentiate between the function of assessment/evaluation as measuring teachers' competencies against an agreed set of criteria and the function of assisting/supervision as assessing teachers' needs and providing appropriate support. The

findings in this study indicate that participants are able to combine both functions in a complementary manner and so operate as supportive assessors; 'educative supervisors' (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009) who demonstrate 'care, thoughtfulness and tact' in their supervision of their student teachers (Cuenca 2010b).

During my first observation, I reflected in my fieldnotes upon this aspect of the placement tutor role:

> Is it possible to be a supportive assessor? I would have seen these as two separate things, but I can see it in action here today. Ellen is very pleasant, manages to convey her idea of how the ST is performing, what needs to improve but in a very respectful manner. Also affirms positive practice she observed from ST. Doesn't appear to be tension between both roles here…Which is interesting since my past experience was certainly a feeling of uncertainty and being pulled between the two roles i.e. trying to support the student but being conscious that I had to make the right call when it came to grading the student. Ellen appears to be able to move between the roles quite comfortably [Observation fieldnotes 25 November 2019, Ellen].

The stance of supportive assessor I witnessed in this first observation was evident in all observations conducted in this study. Participants' commitment to being supportive assessors is also accentuated throughout all of their interview discussions.

Frances posits that it is important to focus on both positives and challenges when reviewing student teachers' performances: *you look at the positives first and then you kind of go in there gently with them* [Frances, Interview 1]. Clare emphasisies the importance of connecting in a positive manner with her student teachers in order to assist them in their jouney of learning to teach: *first and foremost, you know, I want to connect with them and support them* [Clare, Interview 2]. Ellen believes that providing feedback in a supportive manner is fundamental to fulfilling the placement tutor dual role:

> …like in one of the classes now the other day she was outside in the wind, like. And I was saying to her like if she had tried to bring out pieces of paper for them to do peer assessment and it was the day of Storm Lorenzo, like-you know, so I was kind of like, 'Look, I understand that you couldn't have done that today, but if you could get a bit more peer assessment in the next time then that would help.' You know that kind of thing [Ellen, Interview 1].

Alan opines that *you have to be sensitive to where the students are at and knowing their journey or trying to get a sense of what their journey is* [Alan, Interview1]. He is explicit with regards to the importance of being a supportive assessor: *I think necessarily you need to be a supporter probably first, even though your duty and your obligation is to ultimately provide the assessment* [Alan, Interview 3].

Deirdre echoes Alan's sentiments in emphasising *the importance of recognizing the entry point of the student and meeting them at that point* [Deirdre, Interview 1], and Bob is equally explicit in championing the supportive aspect of the dual role: *there is the dual role of the assessor on one hand and also the mentor and the supporter of the student throughout his or her academic year* [Bob, Interview 3].

5.1.2.2 Using an explicit evaluation system

The SUPE placement tutor team has worked over several years to develop the Student Assessment Rubric or SAR (Appendix 5), an assessment framework which clearly outlines the criteria for success in school placement. The SAR is shared with student teachers and used as a reference point during school placement supervision visits; hence student teacher performance is assessed against an accessible set of criteria of best practice (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009). Participants draw attention to how the SAR acts as an explicit and transparent means of assessing student teachers.

Bob emphasises that the SAR is an important means of encouraging student teachers to 'step up to the mark' [Bob, Interview 1] since it provides evidence of *certain qualities that are required in their teaching* [Bob, Interview 3]. He posits that having clear guidelines allows him to emphasise to his student teachers that he is there to support them, but that they too must play their part:

> I often say to the students on my very first visit my role, my job is to get them over the line come June; their job is to come half way to meet me, end of…And once that is an agreement, an informal agreement, between the student and myself, and if they embrace that agreement that it takes two to tango, my job is to help them as much as possible; their job is to come halfway to meet me. [Bob, Interview 1].

Ellen believes that it is important to have a clear assessment structure for assessment which also encourages student teachers to identify their strengths and their challenges enables them to become co-constructors in their own learning (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009) [Ellen, Interview 1]. Frances reports that the SAR makes assessment of performance explicit for her student teachers: *I would say to the students… you know how to get like from a 2-2 to a 1-H, you know what to do* and Clare opines that the SAR provides a 'neutral standard' for student teachers so they are assessed fairly and equitably [Clare, Interview 3]. Alan concurs with this opinion suggesting that the SAR clearly sets out *the criteria … you know, in the methodologies, reflection, and those criteria of professionalism that we have on our course* [Alan, Interview 3] which, in turn, helps student teachers understand the system for assessment.

5.1.2.3 Providing constructive feedback

Participants believe that providing constructive feedback helps them to be a supportive assessor.

Deirdre [Interview 3] contends that providing explicit feedback is required in order *to balance the empathetic or supportive role with giving them the really tough stuff as well*. Ellen also believes that it is important to provide honest constructive feedback in order to help student teachers improve:

> giving them honest feedback as well. Like not putting them off and not thinking that they can't improve or that they did a terrible job, but also giving them feedback that they can improve themselves [Ellen, Interview 1].

The criteria of the SAR allow Alan to offer constructive feedback, which is criterion referenced, rather than personal:

> So, I'm working against that, or with that. It's not my decision then really. Again, I'm using the features of quality as the reference point so they can see that the individual—it's not a subjective—to a point anyway—subjective decision [Alan, Interview 1].

Bob agrees the SAR system assists him to provide uniform and objective feedback for the student teachers:

> The student teacher realises the items that are required in terms of pedagogy, in terms of reflection, in terms of professionalism. They realise what is required and we as supervising tutors have these rubrics, so therefore there is very little subjective opinion. It's objective, it's clear, it's standardised, it's uniform… … that is the scaffold that allows us as supervising tutors to be able to give—those are the lenses that we can view at and it is an invaluable document. It allows a uniformity of approach [Bob, Interview 3].

Bob claims that clear guidelines on assessment allows the placement tutor and student teacher to work together in a collaborative manner to reflect upon the lesson and co-construct an evaluation of the student teacher's practice:

> …there is a collaborative effort between the student teacher and myself as a tutor to accurately reflect on the class that has just taken place… … I would say the assessment of the student is almost a collaborative effort between the tutor and the student teacher [Bob, Interview 3].

I noted, in my observation of one of Clare's feedback sessions to her student teacher:

> …she is a supportive assessor - offers very fair, valid judgement but in a very encouraging and positive manner. I am reminded of Cuenca (2010b) who writes about the PT who supervises with 'care, thoughtfulness and tact' [Observation Fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

The practice witnessed in this observation was reflected in each of the five observations I conducted. This episode encapsulates the findings in this study that the key to negotiating the dual role of assessing and assisting student teachers is that placement tutors adopt an educative, supportive approach, providing effective and constructive feedback to student teachers, supported by a clear and coherent system for assessing their teaching competencies.

5.1.2.4 Access to continuing professional development opportunitites

Basmadjian (2011, p.120) asserts that all teacher education programmes should "think purposefully about their role in preparing field instructors to understand the balance between

assistance and assessment". The experiences I had as a part-time placement tutor impressed upon me the need for support and continuing professional development in this role. Therefore, when I became coordinator of the SUPE school placement programme, I believed strongly that I too had a dual role to enact; supporting student teachers and also supporting the placement tutors who supervise them.

Burns and Badiali (2015) stress that while retired teachers or principals who assume the role of placement tutor bring extensive practitioner knowledge to their role, they often lack theoretical knowledge of supervision. The continuing professional development sessions provided for placement tutors in the SUPE programme are an opportunity to explore best practices in student teacher supervision. They also give placement tutors the chance to discuss the challenges of their dual role, respond to issues that present throughout the placement year and access up to date research on teacher education. Early on in the data collection phase of the study, I reflected upon how professional development sessions appeared to have impacted upon the participants in this study, as evidenced in three of the first interviews conducted:

> From listening to the placement tutors' responses in the interviews so far, I feel it is fair to say that the exposure to professional development opportunities has had a significant impact upon the practices of the participants in my study. These tutors are aware of many of the intricacies of supervision. They are familiar with the language, and they seemed at ease with discussing issues such as assessments and support (Researcher Diary, 18 January 2018).

Cochran-Smith (2003) writes of her experiences of working with groups of part-time placement tutors over an eight-year period, who like the SUPE placement tutor team, developed an evaluative framework. Cochran-Smith (2003, p.16) emphasises this experience allows placement tutors "treat their work as a site for intentional investigation [and] at the same time they treat the knowledge and theory produced by others as generative material for interrogation and interpretation". Consequently, through engaging in continuing professional development, placement tutors are enabled to consider how best to both assist and assess their student teachers.

5.1.3 Other aspects of the placement tutor role

Recognition of the value of the school placement component of initial teacher education programme, along with increasing demands for closer university-school collaboration, means that supervision of student teachers "can no longer be conceived of and enacted simplistically through a few sporadic classroom observations" (Burns et al. 2016a, p.67). Participants recognise that the role of placement tutor is a privileged and responsible position since they are meeting student teachers *at a very significant time in their lives* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. As such the significance of their role should not be underestimated:

> To have the right to speak into somebody's life and say I like what you did there or I didn't like that or maybe you'd consider this, you know, it's not to be sneezed at or not to be taken lightly, I think, to speak into somebody's life [Clare, Interview 1].

Hence, the role of the placement tutor must extend beyond that of being assessor and assistor. Bob's comments accentuate the multidimensional nature of the role he is called to enact in his practice: *I'm an assessor, I'm an advisor, I'm a facilitator, in some cases I'm a mediator, and I'm a listener to both management and the student* [Bob, Interview 1].

5.1.2.1 Linking the university and the school

Commensurate with the research (Koerner et al. 2002; Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Wilson 2006; Sharqawi and Jarwarneh 2012; Wright et al. 2012; Asplin and Marks 2013), the participants recognise they are the connection or link between the university and the placement school. They see themselves as the representative of the university: …*the link or the face or the connection between the university and the school* [Alan, Interview 1], the *person on the ground that the school sees* [Clare, Interview 3].

Frances describes her position in the university-school partnership as *'person in the middle'*, the liaison between the co-operating teacher and the SUPE programme:

> Like I feel I'm the person in the middle. So, you know, the co-opted teacher would speak to me, the university would speak to me, and it's just like—it's just crossing over in delivering the information and ensuring that I have the correct and valid information. So obviously if I don't have the answer, I would say to them, 'Look, give me your email and I can contact you [Frances, Interview 3].

While Deirdre agrees she has a role in the partnership between both institutions, she also contends that the limited number of visits she pays to the school, coupled with the short timeframe of her visits, reduces the impact of her role in this regard

> …there is a role in the partnership without a doubt. But… you know, in terms of, you know, meeting with the students and connecting with the school more often—you know, because you go in and out their door three times a year—and then you're paid for two-and-a-quarter hours—you're paid for, whatever, seven-ish hours a year for your interaction, you know, it's very tight… [Deirdre, Interview 3].

Bob believes his position as university representative is a very significant part of his role and merits very high standards of professionalism:

> I'm very conscious of the fact that any time I step inside a post-primary school today I'm representing a third-level institute… in terms of standards, in terms of ethics, in terms of liaison with that particular school [Bob, Interview 1].

Alan also emphasises the significance of his role as the face of the university, and the onus placed upon him to represent the university in a responsible and respectful manner:

> …you are conscious then as a tutor coming into the school that you have to be respectful of the school because, again, whatever you do reflects back on the college and the programme. So that's important that you are respectful of that role that you have and the impact of that. Your behaviour in that role, you know, reflects back on the college and on the programme, so it's really important [Alan, Interview 3].

5.1.2.2 Advocating for student teachers

Several participants recall occasions when individual student teachers need additional support and assistance and, hence, placement tutors are required to act as advocate for the student teacher. Alan reports that there have been some occasions when he has contacted the school placement coordinator to seek additional support for student teachers who were struggling with their teaching competency. He also recalls approaching co-operating teachers to seek support for some student teachers:

> Particularly if a student presents as having some particular issues I would make a point of spending some time with the tutor then to try and explore that-what's their experience of it, do they register-have they registered these as issues themselves [Alan, Interview 1].

Clare also reports that meeting with co-operating teachers on behalf of student teachers experiencing difficulties in school placement is a very important part of her role [Clare, Interview 1]. I witnessed one of Clare's acts of advocacy during my observation of her school visit when she sought out the co-operating teacher to speak about providing more support for the student teacher:

> Clare is walking with the ST towards the reception of the school to sign out when she sees the CT who is sitting and talking to someone. She asks if she can talk for 2 minutes. They have a brief discussion about the ST. She asks the CT if there is any chance he can get in to observe the ST teaching. He says he will ask if he can be released from a few lessons after Christmas to get in and see the ST. Clare says that would be great [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

In a similar vein, Deirdre recalls an occasion when one of her student teachers was having a very difficult time due to ill-health and personal circumstances. As a result, Deirdre had several phone conversations with the co-operating teacher, and also reached out to the student teacher's Arts Specialism placement tutor:

> And I had a student with various challenges before Christmas and I suppose I spoke to her tutor three times over a couple of days on the phone and I spoke to her other subject area tutor as well, and we emailed over and back a couple of times [Deirdre Interview 1].

In each of these situations, acting as advocate for the student teacher is clearly illustrated, and provides further evidence of how the participants in this study act as a support system for their student teachers.

5.1.2.3 Mediating the theory-practice divide

There is much research to suggest that student teachers struggle to link the theoretical aspects of teaching to their teaching practices (Korthagen and Kessels 1999; Zeichner 2002, 2010; Korthagen et al. 2006; Korthagen 2010; Cuenca et al. 2011, Darling-Hammond 2010; Rozelle and Wilson 2012; Cochran-Smith et al. 2015; Jackson and Burch 2016; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Beck 2020; Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2020). It has been suggested that placement tutors can act as mediators in this theory-practice divide (Cuenca et al. 2011; Higgins et al. 2013; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Beck 2020). Indeed Cuenca et al. (2011, p.1068) claim that "as field-based

teacher educators, university supervisors are uniquely positioned to help student teachers bridge the university-based content of their teacher preparation programs and the practical knowledge of teaching that emerges during student teaching". In reality, while the assertion made by Cuenca and his colleagues might apply to full-time teacher educators who have access to the university-based content provided for student teachers, this is not the case for part-time placement tutors. These teacher educators, like four of the participants in this study, have little or no involvement in the student teachers' university programme. Hence, while participants in this study recognise the importance of helping student teachers to connect theory and practice, they differ in the degree to which they feel equipped to fulfil this aspect of their role.

Bob posits that, as a part-time placement tutor, and a part-time lecturer on the SPE programme, he can help his student teachers to connect the 'spaces' of theory and practice in the school placement setting:

> they are now getting a chance to implement and some of them refer to certain theory that they might have come across as a second-year student. And they see it now in the flesh. They see issues that we might have discussed in theory, but they see it in practice now [Bob, Interview 2].

Alan, who is also a part-time lecturer on the SUPE programme, emphasises the importance of helping student teachers to apply their understanding of theory to practical teaching situations:

> So we might talk about the concept of differentiation, the importance of differentiation… …you need to kind of have-to explore that a little bit with them to get a sense of where they're at around it [Alan, Interview 1].

Echoing Bob and Alan, Deirdre suggests that school placement has the potential to be a place of *praxis… the amalgam of both theory and practice* and she tries to embody this belief in her interactions with student teachers [Deirdre, Interview 1]. It should be noted that Deirdre has the benefit of additional study undertaken on her own time when she completed a Masters Degree in Education with a focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning. This gives her an added perspective.

Clare believes that the school placement file provides evidence of student teachers reflecting upon their practice and this helps them to *bring the two together-theory and practice.* But, as a part-time placement tutor, Clare is uncertain about her role in this regard: *How much of a role I'm meant to have bringing them together I don't know* [Clare, Interview 1]. Likewise, Ellen claims her part-time status makes it difficult for her to know the theory student teachers are exposed to in their university course and, as a consequence, she feels *slightly unprepared* for addressing the theory-practice relationship [Ellen, Interview 1]. Despite this, she posits that as a full-time teacher she benefits from considerable continuing professional development which allows her to pass the theory of teaching onto her student teachers [Ellen, Interview 2].

The importance of teacher educators being 'research active' is supported in the literature (Zeichner 2002, 2010; Cuenca et al. 2011; Hunt 2011, Sahlberg et al. 2012; Burns and Badiali 2015; Jackson and Burch 2016; Hall et al. 2018). All participants in this study acknowledge the importance of research in teacher education and the importance of keeping up to date in their practice as placement tutors. But they emphasise that, as part-time placement tutors, they have neither the time nor the resources to become research active themselves: *very few of us would be doing the product, the paper, literature* [Alan, Interview 2]. Alan claims the best he and his placement tutor colleagues can do is to reflect upon their own practices and ask *what did I learn from that interaction and could I have done better?* He also endorses the SUPE placement tutor meetings as an opportunity for action research where placement tutors get a chance to reflect upon their practice and share their insights [Alan, Interview 2].

Bob asserts that in terms of accessing opportunities to conduct research, his position as a part-time staff member puts him at a disadvantage when compared to full-time members of the SPE programme, but he does his best to keep abreast of developments in education:

> …as a part-time supervising tutor, in contrast to my full-time colleagues that may on a daily basis be getting research literature, etc., one mightn't have access to this. But I try to keep abreast by, let's say, media such as newspapers, etc., the newest ideas happening within teacher education or generally within education in Ireland [Bob, Interview 2].

Likewise Frances, Clare, Deirdre and Ellen like to keep informed about *what's out there, what's new* in education [Frances, Interview 2], but they report that trying to undertake research in their current part-time placement tutor role would be a *step too far* [Clare, Interview 2] as the *space/time isn't there* to commit to such an undertaking [Deirdre, Interview2]. Ellen makes an interesting and practical suggestion in this regard. She suggests that, given the realities of the part-time placement tutor position, the best that can be hoped for is that placement tutors remain 'research informed':

> I'd say that research-informed might be more realistic, whereas I think when you think research-active, you kind of think oh, you should be actually going out and conducting interviews and doing surveys and stuff. Whereas research-informed is probably a more realistic way of looking at it [Ellen, Interview 2].

Against a backdrop of research which indicates that placement tutors are often neglected and receive little training and support (Borko and Mayfield 1995; Slick 1997; Koerner and O'Connell Rust 2002; Cochran-Smith 2003; Zeichner 2005; Dinkelman et al. 2006; Andrew 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Cuenca 2010a; Murphy 2010; Snoek et al. 2011; Steadman & Brown 2011; Basmadjian 2013; Schwartz et al. 2018), Ellen's suggestion is worth considering in terms of how placement tutors can be assisted to be genuine mediators in the theory-practice dichotomy experienced by student teachers:

5.2 Subtheme Two: Challenges encountered by placement tutors

The multifaceted role placement tutors undertake presents a number of challenges. The main challenges identified by participants in this study include time constraints of school placement visits, having limited contact with student teachers, and accessing the co-operating teacher in schools. Each of these challenges is examined in this section.

5.2.1 Time constraints of supervision visits

As part-time placement tutors, these participants are contracted to spend a total of two hours, fifteen minutes for each school placement supervision visit. Given that the supervised lesson is normally eighty minutes in duration this allows approximately fifty-five minutes for other

elements of the supervision visit such as checking in at the school reception, meeting the school principal or deputy principal, meeting the co-operating teacher, meeting the student teacher before the lesson, checking the school placement file and conducting the post-lesson conference with the student teacher after the lesson. Five out of the six participants report dissatisfaction with the time allocation of the supervision visit.

Clare posits that the current duration of the supervision visits makes it challenging for her to give as much support as possible to her student teachers and have enough time to review their school placement files thoroughly. This file contains all the student teacher's planning and reflection work and it is an important part of the assessment process. It is graded on a pass/fail basis. Hence, placement tutors need to pay particular attention to the contents, and the supervision visit is their only opportunity to access the file. Clare also remarks that a supervision visit can be a 'tense' experience for both herself and the student teacher: *they're a bit nervous-and I'm a bit nervous* and a longer timeframe would give her greater flexibility to manage the process [Clare, Interview 2].

Alan reports that there are occasions when, in order to deal with the time challenges of his visit, he has to 'steal time' from observing the lesson in order to speak with the co-operating teacher:

> You're stealing time really in a way to try—now, sometimes it can be a distraction if it continues into the class that the student teacher is introducing their session and the teacher, tutor, or the co-operating teacher is chatting and all that with you [Alan, Interview 1].

He asserts that the time allocated for the supervision visit is inadequate and this makes it difficult for him to perform his role effectively:

> From my experience, the time isn't sufficient. And it's not that we use the time to over-elaborate, it's literally just to sufficiently undertake the role effectively, because there are a number of things you have to do or are required to in the process [Alan, Interview 2].

Bob supports Alan's opinion, reporting that he too is challenged by the restricted timeframe of the visit since *two-and-a-quarter hours would barely cover the actual supervision, the twenty minutes beforehand, and certainly the post-lesson conference* [Bob, Interview 2]. Under the current timeframe, the post-lesson conference is restricted to twenty minutes and frequently placement tutors feel under pressure *to get through it quickly* [Ellen Interview 2] in order to give as much feedback as possible to the student teacher. Deirdre and Alan highlight that the post-lesson conference can be a very challenging space for student teachers. Having just taught an eighty minute lesson, many student teachers can be *mentally and physically exhausted after being observed teaching, under that pressure* [Deirdre, Interview 3]. As a result, they may not be receptive to the feedback provided by the placement tutor: *you have to say to yourself at some point this is going to be going over their heads anyway because they're already almost stressed by the experience of it* [Alan, Interview 2].

Bearing this in mind, Deirdre firmly believes that more time is needed to make the post-lesson conference a meaningful learning experience for the student teacher:

> So, it would be really nice to have more of an allocation of time at that space where you could pace things—so that you could actually help to teach them, help them to learn in that space [Deirdre, Interview 3].

Hall et al. (2018, p.33) assert that "it is imperative that the HEI tutor is able to support and encourage students in thinking about and implementing innovative and different approaches". But it is difficult for placement tutors to have an in-depth, critical discussion with their student teacher during a post-lesson conference constrained by time limitations. In such circumstances, the practice of telling rather than dialogue occurs (Burns and Badiali 2015). I reflected on this challenge during one of my observation visits:

> …the balance between making sure you, as PT, give the feedback you need to share with the ST, while also leaving the ST time to contribute. If we want STs to become reflective practitioners (Schon 1983), we need to encourage them to speak. Yet there is the reality of time constraint – it takes a lot longer to go through the feedback if we sit back and wait for the ST to speak [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

Frequently, in order to deal with the challenges of a limited timeframe, placement tutors go above and beyond the time for which they are paid, often arriving earlier or leaving later to accommodate the time deficit. Ellen [Interview 2] reports that she is *definitely there more than two-and-a-quarter* hours. As with the other participants, she wants to give as much time as possible to the student teachers:

> …you know, you don't want to be rushing away on a student either and you don't want them to feel like they didn't get enough feedback or that you were trying to push them out the door, you were trying to rush away yourself [Ellen, Interview 3].

While Frances is the only one of the participants to claim she is happy with the time allocation for her supervision visits, she also admits: *I arrive a little bit earlier to the students.* During my observation of her supervision visit I noted that she spent almost two hour and forty minutes (as opposed to the two hours fifteen minutes allocated by the SUPE programme) in the school. Bob also reports that he does not stick rigidly to the time allocation for the supervision visit: *to me time issue isn't the main issue. I just wish to give a professional service to my student and if it takes, as I say… it takes what it takes* [Bob, Interview 2].

These sentiments are very laudable and reflect this participant's genuine desire to support his student teacher cohort. I reflected upon his commitment during my observation of his practice:

> …being retired he possibly has more time than some of the other placement tutors who were either teaching or working in other part-time jobs. Hence, he arrived at the school in very good time for the supervision. In fact, he arrived there an hour and a half before the lesson began. This gave him time to look at the file to meet with management and have a good chat about the student teacher. However, I am mindful that not all placement tutors are able to give of their time so generously [Observation fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].

The concluding sentence is an important one to consider in terms of making school placement an equitable system for all placement tutors (and by implication their student teachers). The reality is that each placement tutor comes to their role with a different biography, and different work commitments, and not everyone can arrive earlier or stay later than the allocated time. I noted that since Bob had arrived at his school very early, he had ample time to review the student teacher's file and so appeared very relaxed during the student teacher's lesson:

> The challenge of managing file check, watching ST and writing up feedback that I observed in previous two Obs., is not evident here as PT2 has already had a chance to look at the file thoroughly. So, he continues to look relaxed. He had spent a lot of time at the start and middle of the lesson just watching. He took occasional notes and once or twice just sat with arms folded, leaned back slightly against the wall, just looking [Observation fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].

This account contrasts starkly with my observation of Clare's supervision visit:

> Clare is kept very busy during this lesson - she is trying to do three things at once -- watch this ST's teach and observe the other dynamics of the lesson (learners' response, safety issues, organisation of the activities), while also looking at paperwork AND trying to complete the Proforma which is the feedback to be discussed with the ST [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

There is no doubt that managing time during supervision visits is a challenge for the participants in this study, and it requires that they negotiate this challenge in different and sometime inequitable ways.

5.2.2 Limited contact with student teachers

Placement tutors visit their school infrequently (Rikard 1990; Murphy 2010; Young and MacPhail 2014), hence, their contact time with student teachers is very limited (Borko and Mayfield 1995). In the SUPE school placement programme, placement tutors meet their student teachers as a group for thirty minutes in early September, the beginning of the school placement year. This is a very casual 'meet and greet' scenario which merely facilitates both parties 'to put a name to a face'. The next point of contact between them is the first supervision visit, usually conducted between late September and early October. A second supervision visit is conducted just before, or after, Christmas and the third occurs in February or March. Apart from occasional email exchanges, there is no further contact between placement tutors and student teachers.

There are twenty-two Physical Education and Arts Specialism placement tutors on the current SUPE placement tutor team. Two are full-time members of the programme, the remainder are

part-time staff. The participants in this research study are all part-time placement tutors. Within the group, Alan and Bob also teach part-time on the programme while Clare, Deirdre, Ellen and Frances have no other connection to the fourth-year student teacher cohort. Hence, in addition to limited contact with their student teachers, they have little or no prior relationship or previous knowledge of their student teachers. In recent years I have provided all placement tutors with access to the PowerPoints pertaining to the school placement lectures I conduct with the fourth-year group. However, this is not possible for other modules in the programme.

Ellen reports that, as a part-time placement tutor, she has no idea what the student teachers are doing in the programme studies, and this can impact upon her assessment of their practice: *sometimes when I'm - there was once or twice when I was saying to them, 'Have you done this'? Or, you know, 'do you know that'?* [Ellen, Interview 1]. While she acknowledges receipt of my school placement lecture notes, this is only one of many other modules in the programme. Ellen contends that, since student teachers are so stressed during the supervision visit, they often don't fully assimilate the feedback provided by placement tutors: *A lot of the time I'd say they don't actually take in a lot of what you say to them*. She claims that having more contact with placement tutors, outside of the school visits would greatly reduce this stress load for the student teachers, and they would be able to engage more productively with their placement tutors [Ellen, Interview 3]. Frances supports Ellen's suggestion, highlighting that more contact time would be productive for both the student teachers and the placement tutors:

> it would be beneficial for the student to meet their placement tutor, to have that dialogue, you know, in case they have concerns… …It would kind of give us more like insight into the student, I would think. You know, to make it easier for the student when you're going to visit them that they actually know you as a person, not like being quaking [Frances, Interview 3].

Deirdre used to work as a part-time lecturer on the SUPE programme and so she had prior knowledge of, and relationships with, the student teacher cohort. This year is the first time she has met student teachers who are completely unknown to her, and she to them. She recounts a situation encountered where a lack of established relationship with a student teacher made the post-lesson conference a very challenging space for both of them:

> My last visit I had just before Christmas with a girl I could see she was seething, and I couldn't understand why. And I asked her how she was, and she answered frankly. She'd say, 'Fine.' And I couldn't figure—and I was giving her feedback and I knew the feedback I was giving her was just going right over her head. And she sent me on the post-lesson reflection afterwards and the post-lesson reflection basically said, 'You have absolutely no understanding where I came from. You didn't take my circumstances into account. I feel really let down and I'm upset and I'm this or that' [Deirdre, Interview 1].

While Deirdre managed to respond to the student teacher and iron out the difficulties with her, she opines that a prior relationship between herself and the student teacher would have avoided this difficult situation:

> I think that's a challenge of not knowing them beforehand and then not knowing her form. If she had known me…had a couple more meetings or I'd known her in some other capacity, she would know me to a better extent. And that would have made our post-lesson conference more fruitful [Deirdre, Interview 1].

She posits that more contact with student teachers would provide a more relaxed environment for student teachers and allow her, as placement tutor, to make more informed and balanced decisions:

> I suppose it's a space where there, you know, there isn't an explicit assessment happening. Of course, they're conscious that you are their assessor, but there isn't an explicit assessment happening in that space. And I'm also—I also—sometimes I'm envious of the arts tutors because they have with some of their students, they have contact tutorial time. So, they can make more informed and potentially more balanced decisions [Deirdre, Interview 3].

In the first interview Clare states that she is content with limiting her contact with her student teachers to three visits a year as she believes any further contact might make the assessor side of her role a bit challenging:

> No, I think if you've too much contact with them, you know, that role of assessor, as you say, would become more blurred. I don't think I'd like to have any more contact than the three visits [Clare, Interview 1].

Nonetheless, in her third interview, Clare acknowledges meeting with her student teachers outside of supervision visits would give her an added perspective on them, and help her get to know them better:

> Perhaps just to get a greater impression of where they're at and how they're doing. I think the visit is very focused on whatever you see in that one visit, that two hours or an hour-and-a-half teaching… And I think that meeting would just give a broader perspective of how they're getting on, how they're faring [Clare, Interview 3].

Alan is one of the part-time placement tutors who also teaches a limited number of modules on the SUPE programme. This gives him some prior knowledge of and relationship with the student teacher cohort. Despite this, he believes that more time with the student teachers outside of the school placement visits would allow the student 'voice' to be heard more since it would allow *students to come to that space with their questions around what would improve their practice, what steps might they take in order to work on…it would give them the voice* [Alan, Interview 3].

Like Alan, Bob also teaches on the SUPE programme and is involved in a number of modules, so he has good prior knowledge of the student body and a well-established relationship with them. He acknowledges that this is very valuable for him in his role:

> I know the context of that person because I have worked with that person, lectured to that person, got to know that person for two years... ... And having that background liaison with the students I find as a placement tutor invaluable, invaluable, because I know the context that I'm going into [Bob, Interview 1].

He believes that other part-time placement tutor colleagues may be disadvantaged in this regard. He opines that, for these colleagues, further contact with student teachers would be a positive development leading to further support for the student teachers:

> The visit, the supervising visit and the post-lesson conference…tends to be official, tends to be formal, and maybe the young student teacher might like the opportunity—I know they would like the opportunity—to discuss in a more informal context with their supervising tutor certain issues [Bob, Interview 3].

He suggests that more contact would enhance the placement tutor-student teacher relationship would make it more 'collegial' and *it would lead to discussing expectations on both sides, lead to maybe clarification of issues* [Bob, Interview 3].

5.2.3 Access to co-operating teachers

In their research on school placement in the Republic of Ireland, Hall et al. (2018) conclude that there is limited opportunity for placement tutors to meet co-operating teacher appointed to their student teachers. This is due largely to the fact that the role of the co-operating teacher in the Irish teacher education system continues to be an informal one, based on a tradition of goodwill (Cannon 2004) whereby co-operating teachers usually undertake their role in addition to an already full teaching timetable in the school. In research conducted on a teacher preparation programme in Finland, Talvitie et al. (2000, p. 86) conclude that co-operating teachers "have to cope with everyday tasks of their own at school, and they have indicated that they have enough problems with their own pupils". Similarly, in the Republic of Ireland, co-operating teachers do not engage "in extended professional conversations" with student teachers (Young et al. 2015, p. 35). Indeed, any dialogue that happens between them occurs in "an ad hoc manner, without adequate time release or structured support" (Farrell 2021, p.12).

Reflecting upon his role as a placement tutor, Elfer (2012, p.14) reports meeting with the co-operating teacher was "logistically impossible as it was generally the case that co-operating teachers were teaching in the minutes immediately following an observation and therefore unavailable to participate". As coordinator of the SUPE school placement programme, I am well aware that frequently co-operating teachers are not timetabled to observe student teachers' lessons. In the five observations I conducted of placement tutors' supervision visits, only two student teachers were timetabled with a co-operating teacher. In one of those cases, the co-operating teacher was often called upon to perform other school-related duties during that time. In such scenarios, not only are co-operating teachers unavailable to meet placement tutors when they visit the schools, they have little constructive feedback to offer on a student teacher's teaching.

The experience of accessing co-operating teachers varies amongst the participants in this study. Clare reports that it is generally difficult to access co-operating teachers in some schools, and when she does manage to do so, the meeting takes the form of a very brief chat:

> it's difficult to find them and talk to them and even, you know, I'd say sit down is beyond—you know, it's just kind of a chat in the corridor or a chat outside the PE room or whatever [Clare, Interview 3].

Usually the feedback Clare receives from the co-operating teacher is very general, focused on the student teacher's participation in the school community, rather than any specifics of their teaching or, at best, a generic comment that the student teacher is managing well in the lesson, which, in her experience, is not always the case:

> a lot of the time I suppose what you hear from the co-operating teacher—oh, but they're doing fine, they're doing absolutely great, and then I go and watch the lesson and it seems to be a different story [Clare, Interview 1].

She concludes that *as long as they're* [the student teachers] *helping out with afterschool sports, they* [the co-operating teachers] *seem to be happy enough…* [Clare, Interview 1].

Ellen's experiences concur with Clare's account, reporting her contact with the co-operating teachers is very casual, and the feedback received very general: *they'll kind of pop in and they'll say hello and they'll, you know, they'll say, yeah, he or she's getting on great* [Ellen, Interview 3]. Indeed, she questions if such feedback is of any value to her at all, recalling how in the previous year she received effusive praise regarding a student teacher's ability but the reality she observed in the lesson told a very different story:

> Like I found like last year with that student that was struggling, like their co-operating teacher couldn't have spoken higher of them and then when I was in the class I was kind of going, okay, well, you obviously you don't really know what's going on in this class [Ellen, Interview 2].

As a full-time teacher, Ellen offers an interesting, but alarming, perspective on how a teacher in one of her previous schools perceived the role of the co-operating teacher:

> …in the last school that I worked in I think a student that I had was teaching maths and I was teaching PE. So, the student was shared between the two of us. And I said to him [the Maths co-operating teacher], I was like, 'Oh, how's she getting on in the maths?' And he said, 'Yeah, yeah, she's great. I did that old test. I went up to the door and put my ear to the door and I didn't hear a peep, so yeah, she's doing great.' And I was kind of going, oh, God, that's…that doesn't measure anything, like [Ellen, Interview 2].

Deirdre's experience in accessing the co-operating teacher for her student teachers varies in that she has a very well-established relationship with the co-operating teacher in one of her placement schools, as this school commits to timetabling the student teacher with the co-operating teacher for his lessons. For her four other student teachers, it is '*hit and miss'* and she may or may not get to speak with their co-operating teacher if they are available to meet with her. None of these student teachers have a co-operating teacher timetabled to watch them teach [Deirdre, Interview 2].

Bob reports similar difficulties with regards to accessing co-operating teachers is similar to Deirdre's situation. He enjoys a professional relationship with those he gets to meet but access *can vary from school to school* [Bob, Interview 2]. Frequently, through no fault of their own, some co-operating teachers are not available:

> On a visit, the co-operating teacher may or may not be present depending on circumstances in the school, may or may not be available for comment, maybe away with a team, maybe out ill - various circumstances [Bob, Interview 2].

Frances has three students in one school where *their co-operating teacher is there, you know, popping in and popping out during like when I'm out there doing the observations* [Frances, Interview 2]. When I conducted the observation of her supervision visits to this school I noted: *…there appeared to be a pleasant working relationship, with dialogue flowing between both parties* [Observation fieldnotes Frances, 7 February 2020]. Unfortunately Frances was unable to meet the co-operating teacher before the lesson, so this discussion had to take place while the student teacher was teaching, which was not ideal: *While it's great that the CT is providing feedback, it's difficult to have an in-depth discussion since Frances is trying to also watch the ST teach* [Observation fieldnotes 7 February 2020, Frances]. Frances reports that, in her two other placement schools, she was unable to meet any co-operating teacher in her recent

supervision visits, but she had general conversations about the two student teachers with the school principals in each school [Frances, Interview 2].

Alan is placement tutor for four student teachers who are all in one school and share one co-operating teacher. This co-operating teacher is not timetabled to watch the student teachers teaching; but *the school has given the teacher the role of being the connecting teacher for all of the students* [Alan, Interview 2]. In this case the co-operating teacher is in regular contact with the student teachers, but not during their teaching time: *she looks at their files and speaks to them about, I suppose, how they're delivering their programmes* [Alan, Interview 2]. Her feedback to Alan centres on student teachers planning for lessons, their response to her advice and their role in the school community.

> Talks generally around the planning side of it and around their openness to feedback and openness to information or guidance they've been given… their work within the school… …The conversation is short [Alan, Interview 2].

During my observation visit, I noticed that the opportunity for any kind of in-depth discussion was difficult as the co-operating teacher was on her way to one of her own lessons, and Alan was trying to meet up with the student teacher before he began his lesson: *He meets with CT and they have a 5-minute conversation…She is not timetabled with ST; in fact, she is due to go to her own class* [Observation fieldnotes Alan, 3 March 2020]. So, once again, access to the co-operating teacher and quality of feedback was an issue in this setting.

With regard to the findings discussed in this section, the recently published *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) is timely and encouraging. The proposal for a national programme of continuing professional development for co-operating teachers is an important step forward. If, as suggested, a formal system for co-operating teachers is put in place, the challenges of access to co-operating teacher and their current limited involvement in the school placement process can be addressed. Such a development would enhance the quality of school placement for all three members of the triad.

5.3 Subtheme Three: Motivation for becoming a placement tutor

The findings in this study suggest that participants are motivated to undertake the role of placement tutor for a variety of reasons, and their accounts indicate that there are many opportunities to be gained when engaged in this work. Enjoyment, the opportunity to contribute to their profession, engaging with student teachers, and opportunities to learn, are the four main factors identified.

The term 'motivation' is used to describe why people undertake various tasks (Cherry 2020). The most common motivational factor reported by participants is the fact that they greatly enjoy the role. Alan indicates that, as a retired teacher, the role provides him with a focus: *You know, I'm doing it because I enjoy doing it. And I have the time now to do it—I'm retired—and it gives me a good focus* [Alan, Interview 1]. As the other retired teacher in the group, Bob expresses similar sentiments to Bob, stressing that enjoyment of the role is very important to him:

> Well, as I said, having retired, in six months—I don't play golf, so I wasn't going to—I can cut a certain amount of grass and walk a certain number of dogs. So, what motivates me would be first of all I enjoy it. I wouldn't be doing it if I didn't [Bob, Interview 2].

It is interesting that, as two retired teachers, the fiscal aspect of this work is not a factor in any way for these two participants. Both are clear that they have undertaken the role because they want to do so. In this regard, they are part of a cohort of placement tutors in many initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland and other countries that (as retired teachers) may not be dependent on earing a wage from this job. Hence, it is possible that this group of teacher educators contribute to a system whereby they are offered casual, part-time contracts with little job security. In a similar fashion, both Ellen and Frances are full-time teachers, so, like Alan and Bob, they also are not dependent on the job of placement tutor as a main source of income. They make no mention of any fiscal motivations, but both emphasise that they have had very positive experiences to date and enjoy the role [Ellen, Interview 1; Frances, Interview 1].

For both Clare and Deirdre, the role of part-time placement tutor is one of several other part-time positions in which they are currently engaged, and, as such, is a source of income: *It's part of my work. So, finance is an important aspect of it* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. However, neither participant indicates that finance is a motivating factor for them and, in line with the other participants, both enjoy their role. Clare feels valued in the role and is pleased that she can contribute to the student teachers' learning:

> I definitely enjoy it. I get a lot out of it. I think I give a lot into it. I think I definitely have a role there and it's valued by the university, by the students, and just myself. I can see myself doing it—I definitely see what should be happening, or I'm able to give feedback [Clare, Interview 1].

Despite her less than confident beginning when assuming the role of placement tutor with no induction and limited guidance, Deirdre now enjoys her role, feels confident and at ease in the work involved: …*so the role for me has evolved. I thoroughly enjoy the role now because I really find I'm grounded in the work* [Deirdre, Interview 1].

The second motivational factor reported by participants is the desire to 'give something back' to the teaching profession by contributing to the next generation of teachers. Alan believes this is a very positive aspect of the role: *It's wonderful to be involved in the role because you can contribute again in terms of the wealth or the depth of your experience—can pass on to another generation* [Alan, Interview 1]. Being able to help others in this way is also very significant for Clare: *I can do this; I can actually help this student and help people. And yeah, that definitely gave me the motivation* [Clare, Interview 1]. She believes that she gained a lot from her experiences in education and she likes to be able to pass on her love of education to others. Bob is very proud of his teaching background and appreciates that he can use his experiences to contribute to the learning of beginning teachers: *I like to be able to give back to them some of my own experiences, be they right or wrong. I like to be able to liaise with them to maybe pass on some of my experiences* [Bob, Interview 1]. Likewise, Deirdre is pleased to be able to make a positive contribution to the student teachers: *I feel like I'm making some sort of a difference in these people's lives-in the student teachers' lives* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. Frances speaks of her own negative experiences as a student teacher and she acknowledges that contributing to a more positive experience for student teachers is very important for her: *I want*

to do this. I want to help the student not to go through the experience that I had [Frances, Interview 1].

In research conducted with twelve teacher educators, Malm (2020) identified that meetings with student teachers and nurturing meaningful relationships with them is a positive feature of being a teacher educator. Similarly, engaging with student teachers is the third motivational factor identified by participants in this study. Bob likes being around the energy and enthusiasm of a new generation of future teachers: *I like seeing the energy of our young 22, 23-year-olds or our young fourth year students. They're the future generation of teachers in Ireland* [Bob, Interview 1]. Clare also benefits from her interactions with her student teachers: *actually being out there in the school chatting to the student, giving them feedback; very enjoyable* [Clare, Interview 1]. As someone who values creativity in teaching, Deirdre enjoys the interaction with her student teachers; the opportunity to help them expand upon their teaching skills, to take risks, learn from mistakes and commit to creative approaches to teaching:

> And I love working with the students because, you know, one thing I always say to them is that I love to see them making mistakes. Genuinely I love to see them making mistakes. And I would be very creative in my approach to teaching and my personality would be quite creative, so I love to push them in that way and just open up that world for them in terms of creativity [Deirdre, Interview 1].

My observations of their practice confirmed that participants enjoyed the interaction with their student teachers, as evidenced in the positive exchanges between them and the obvious desire of each participant to support their student teacher's learning:

> In the PLC Frances seems to really enjoy the conversation with the ST. She is positive and encouraging and appears genuinely interested to hear the ST's point of view [Observation fieldnotes 7 February, Frances].
>
> During the PLC evidence of a nice relationship emerges. Ellen is firm in challenging the ST on different aspects of her teaching but does it in a very pleasant manner [Observation fieldnotes 25 November 2019, Ellen].
>
> Clare appears to enjoy her job as PT. Her demeanour is positive and engaged [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

Several of the participants emphasise that being a placement tutor provides opportunities to learn. In this they testify to the research of Holme et al. (2016) which suggests that the prospect of 'lifelong learning' can be a motivational factor for teacher educators. As a practising teacher, Ellen appreciates the new ideas and insights into teaching she gains from observing her student teachers teach and evaluating their planning and resources. Hence in her role as placement tutor she is comfortable to move between the role of expert and novice (Orland-Barak and Yinon 2005):

> I feel like I learn from it. It helps me as a teacher to improve… … I think that I learn a lot from it. Like, you know, sometimes I'd be looking through their files and I'm like, 'Oh, yeah, I forgot about that game. I could do that,' or, you know, you see them doing a game and it's like, 'Oh, yeah, I like that.' Or like one of the students last year, now, had, you know, a way of doing orienteering. I was like, 'Oh, yeah, I hadn't thought about doing that before.' [Ellen, Interview 1].

Ellen suggests that teaching can sometimes be a solitary activity, where one can become a little static, so she welcomes the opportunity to broaden her horizons beyond her classroom, and to engage with members of other school communities:

> So, this is something different that you can do that's related to the teaching but it kind of broadens your perspective. It brings me outside of my own school, gets me in seeing other schools, meeting other teachers, meeting other principals, just broadens my own environment, which I like… … It keeps me in touch, and it keeps me learning and just broadening my narrow—like, just teaching can be quite narrow. So, it's broadening me out a little bit. [Ellen, Interview 1].

Similar to Ellen, Clare values the different approaches to teaching she encounters during her supervision of her student teachers in terms of how they may enhance her own pedagogical practices: *you just see things done differently to how you do them—which is good for me* [Clare, Interview 1]. Deirdre believes that, as a placement tutor, she is in a privileged position as someone who is learning, and contributing to learning:

> No, I'm lucky that I can be in a space where—in some ways it's a sort of a privilege to be able to do it—in two ways. In one way to be involved in the coalface of education, and be able to inform [Deirdre, Interview 1].

She appreciates how the role keeps her up to date with current curricular developments in Physical Education*:…it's a learning experience because I'm keeping up to date on current issues within the area of Physical Education* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. She also welcomes the opportunity to be part of an academic discourse, and a culture of lifelong learning: *And also, to be involved in academia, you know. That's a really nice space. I like the lifelong, the constant learning that we all strive for* [Deirdre, Interview 1].

5.3.1 Motivation in action

I looked for evidence of motivation during my observations of the participants' practice. Han and Yin (2016, p.3) define motivation as "energy or drive that moves people to do something by nature", but they also posit that there is no absolute consensus on what is meant by the term. I concur with this opinion as it seems to me that motivation is a rather intangible element to identify in some ways, since the observer looking on cannot say for definite how the person being observed is actually feeling: In my observations I concluded that seeing a placement tutor as a motivated individual was made possible by the manifested behaviour and demeanour witnessed. Shagrir (2011, p.19) describes a motivated person as "one who performs tasks with enthusiasm, energy, inspiration, and a desire to achieve success". From what I witnessed during the observations, each placement tutor participant appeared to be enthusiastic, positive and motivated.

During the first observation I conducted with Ellen I witnessed a well-motivated and professional individual at work: *Difficult to be definitive about observing motivation but one can only assume that Ellen is well motivated as evident by her professional behaviour throughout* [Observation fieldnotes 25 November 2019, Ellen]. In my next observation with Clare, I concluded that her body language, her communication, as well as her professional and supportive stance communicated motivation and commitment:

> This category is difficult to really see in an observation setting, apart from interpreting body language and verbal expressions perhaps. Clare appears at ease with the role, committed seen in the hard-working stance visible throughout. Enthusiastic in her discussion with the ST… very professional with school personnel, very efficient in her observing during the lesson, and very supportive towards the student teacher… [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

By my third observation, with Bob, I decided that verbal cues such as body language, conversation and general demeanour were the key to learning about placement tutors' motivation for their role:

> Overall, at this initial stage of the supervision what was most apparent was that Bob appeared relaxed and very happy to be here… This PT exudes positivity and connection with the people he meets. He has such a warm personality and appears to genuinely like the interaction… … It's difficult to observe 'motivation' as such, as it is a rather intangible element. I think I can only comment on it from evidence of a person's demeanour, attitude and actions. Bob's demeanour, attitude and actions indicate he thoroughly loves this role [Observation fieldnotes 22 January, Bob].

My theory was further strengthened by my observation of Frances, where I witnessed a placement tutor who appeared to thoroughly enjoy her role, and who exuded positivity:

> I'm looking at how Frances interacts with people she meets, I'm looking at her demeanour and general energy around her and it all seems positive, hence it seems that enjoyment appears as evidence of motivation here. In the PLC the language she uses is positive; she shares a joke with the ST and tried to put her at ease. So perhaps it's language and behaviour, both of which were very positive here today, are evidence of whether the individual is motivated or not [Observation fieldnotes 7 February, Frances].

In my final observation, with Alan, his enthusiastic approach and his supportive and positive engagement with his student teacher appeared to me to be visible sign of a motivated placement tutor. Furthermore, Alan did not let the challenge of time restriction affect his commitment to his student teacher, staying well past the recommended time allocation of two hours and fifteen minutes.

> As with other observations, it's difficult to write about motivation. But all I can say is that PT1 is so enthusiastic in his engagement with the ST that I believe this must be evidence of his motivation… …Also Alan is very generous in his time for the PLC – he doesn't finish up until well after 2…so he has been in the school since 11:12 – that's three hours!

Overall, the observations of the participants confirmed testimonies provided in interviews of enjoying the role, engaging with student teachers, and wanting to contribute to the next generation of teachers. This was particularly evident in the encouraging and supportive stance I witnessed in their encounters with their student teachers. These participants were supportive

assessors, well-motivated and conscientious in their approach, demonstrating 'care, thoughtfulness and tact' in their supervision of their student teachers (Cuenca 2010b).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the second overarching theme of this research study, *The lived experiences of placement tutors in initial teacher education*, through detailing and discussing the multifaceted role undertaken by these teacher educators, the challenges they encounter, their motivation for undertaking the role and the opportunities presented to them in enacting the role.

The complex role of the placement tutor is explored in subtheme one, *'The multifaceted role of placement tutor*s'. The most challenging aspect of the role is the duality involved in being both assessor of, and assistor to, student teachers. Notwithstanding this fact, participants in this study indicate that they have no difficulty fulfilling both elements of this dual role. Indeed, their interview responses and their supervision practices observed, indicate all participants operate as supportive assessors, similar to the model of 'educative supervisors' promoted by Fernadez and Erbilgin (2009). They demonstrate an ability to balance the demands of assessment and awarding grades, with a supportive and empathetic stance in their encounters with student teachers. They identify three features which help them to perform their dual role, including use of the Student Assessment Rubric (Appendix 5), giving constructive feedback to student teachers and availing of ongoing continuing professional development opportunities. In addition to the role of assessor and assistor, participants acknowledge two other significant roles involved in their work as placement tutors. These include being the link or bridge between the placement school and the SUPE programme and acting as advocate for their student teachers when necessary in order to ensure these novice teachers receive the best support possible. While some researchers suggest that teacher educators have a role in mediating the theory practice divide for student teachers, only two of the six participants believe they address this aspect of the role. This is connected to the fact that these two participants also teach part-time on the SUPE programme and hence have access to the theoretical constructs of teaching and learning. As a collective group, participants recognise

that research in teacher education is very valuable, and they appreciate the need to be 'research informed'. However, no member of the group is involved in research production.

Subtheme two, *'Challenges encountered by placement tutors'*, identifies three main issues. Firstly, time allocation for the supervision visits is perceived by most participants as inadequate, leading to rushed post-lesson conferences with their student teachers. A second challenge highlighted is limited contact with their student teachers. Apart from the two participants who also teach on the SUPE programme, other participants have no opportunity to meet with their student teachers, apart from the three supervision visits conducted during the placement year. Accessing co-operating teachers is the third challenge mentioned by the participants. They report that in some cases student teachers are not timetabled with a co-operating teacher, and the teaching commitments of co-operating teachers means they are not always available to meet with the visiting placement tutor for more than a five minute conversation. As a result, feedback on student teachers provided is very generic, revealing little about student teachers' teaching strengths or challenges.

The third and final subtheme in this chapter, '*Motivation for becoming a placement tutor'*, outlines a number of factors that contribute to the participants' desire to work as placement tutors. These included enjoyment of the role, opportunity to contribute to a new generation of teachers, engaging with student teachers, and availing of opportunities for further learning. Observations revealed that participants were well motivated placement tutors; interested and engaged in their role.

Chapter Six will examine the participants' experiences in the 'hybrid space' (Zeichner 2010) of school placement through exploring their membership in the school and university communities of practice, evaluating school placement as a site for Third Space learning and interrogating participants' relationships within the school placement triad.

Chapter 6: Findings & Discussion: Theme Three: Placement tutors in the landscape of school placement

School placement is the 'landscape of practice' (Wenger 2010) for placement tutors. It is the 'hybrid space' (Zeichner 2010) where they enact their role and establish their significant relationships, with student teachers and co-operating teachers. In this space, placement tutors are tasked with navigating two communities, the university and the school. This chapter sets out to provide evidence of the research participants' experiences and encounters as they transverse these two communities of practice by:

- exploring the possibilities of multimembership for placement tutors (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010) in two communities of practice;
- investigating the concept of Third Space theory (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) in relation to the school placement programme;
- reviewing the significant relationships established by the participants in the landscape of school placement.

6.1 Subtheme One: Multimembership in school and university settings

The concept of multimembership suggests that, as social beings, there is potential for individuals to be members of many different communities of practice, in both their personal and public lives (Wenger 2010). Since the participants in this study move between the university and school communities, I sought to investigate the possibility of placement tutors accessing multimembership experiences which could contribute to their practice. But the findings in this study concur with research which suggests that placement tutors are perceived as 'outsiders' (Rikard 1990; Borko and Mayfield 1995; Slick 1998; Murphy 2010) operating on the 'cusp' or 'margins' (Davy 2013) of both communities. This section presents the experiences of the participants in each setting through investigating:

- participants' perceptions of the school community of practice;
- observations of participants in the school community of practice;

- participants' perceptions and experiences of the community of practice in the SUPE programme and the wider university setting.

6.1.1 Participants' perceptions of the school community of practice

The participants in this study visit their student teachers' schools on three occasions during the school year. All participants report feeling welcomed to the school community as visitors who sign in at reception, sometimes meet with school management or co-operating teachers, conduct their supervision of the student teacher and then leave. In the main, participants perceive the school community as being chiefly concerned with the education, care and wellbeing of its students.

Bob [Interview 2] emphasises that learners are the central focus of the school community of practice: *the core person in all of this organisation is the young student to be educated*. Frances [Interview 2] also believes that students are *the heartbeat of a school* and Clare [Interview 2] suggests that the school community of practice should act as *a community of care* focused on students' holistic development and wellbeing. Ellen [Interview 2] asserts that the promotion of a *caring learning community* is key to a successful school community of practice. Alan [Interview 2] endorses this opinion, highlighting that *the key in any school is help them* [the students] *achieve the greatest potential that they have and realise their abilities*. Similar to the other participants, Deirdre concurs that the students and their learning are the centre of a school community of practice. She suggests that helping students to develop skills of collaboration and communication is central to an effective community of practice in schools where students are active learners; not just passive receivers of knowledge preparing for the 'endgame' of exams: *it's very much about students engaging together, interconnecting, interrelating, and developing those very important skills that we don't assess formally*. [Deirdre, Interview 2]

It is clear from these extracts that all participants agree that the focus of the school community of practice is to support the students who are the 'raison d'être' of its very existence. What is notable in their responses is that none of the participants refer to the learning of student teachers as constituting any part of the focus of the school community of practice. In this they seem to

provide support for the claim made by Mutton (2016, p.212) that "teacher education remains a secondary focus of the school's activity, since its primary focus remains the learning of its own pupils". Given the tradition of the Work Placement Model of university-school partnership (Maandag et al. 2007; Conway et al. 2009), along with informal student teacher mentoring systems that prevail in schools in the Republic of Ireland, it seems unlikely that student teacher learning would be a priority in the school community of practice. In their review of the Irish school placement system, Hall et al. (2018, p.47) conclude that "ITE is far from the main focus of the work of a school". That is not to say that members of the school community do not support student teachers learning, but their first and foremost priority is to support their students' learning.

6.1.2 Do participants feel part of a community of practice in the school setting?

> Is it a case that the PT cannot be part of a COP practice in the school since, by definition a CoP has a shared endeavour and focus, which in the school CoP, is the learning of pupils, whereas the PT is focused on the ST? [Observation fieldnotes 7 February 2020, Frances].

Given that the focus of placement tutors is on their student teachers, and not the students in the school, can placement tutors be regarded as members of a school community of practice? This is the question I asked myself while reflecting upon the placement tutor's role in the school community during my observation of Frances' school placement visit. Given their views on the primary focus of the school community of practice discussed above, it is perhaps not surprising that five out of the six participants report that they do not feel part of the school community of practice. Bob, Clare, Deirdre, Ellen and Frances see themselves as visitors to the school, and as such they believe that that their impact on the school community of practice is restricted to their interaction with their student teachers.

Frances does not see herself as contributing to the learners in the schools: *I'm only there for my student teacher. I'm not there for the actual students, the children that my student teachers are teaching* [Frances, Interview 2]. While she has established connections with one or two co-operating teachers, in general she feels that she is *outside the school* and has very little

interaction with the members of this community [Frances, Interview 1]. Clare also emphasises lack of involvement with school students precludes her from being part of the school community of practice: *I would see students being the centre of it* [the school community of practice]*, I don't really interact with the students. That's not my role*. Her visits to the schools are sporadic, and these visits are impacted by the limited time allocated for the supervision visits: *you go in for two-and-a-quarter hours and you go back out. You know, rarely do I even go to the staffroom* [Clare, Interview 2].

Concurring with Clare, Bob identifies limited time spent in schools as a barrier to being part of the school community of practice. While he acknowledges that he enjoys visiting the school and, when possible, meeting staff members, he emphasises that this is not sufficient to become part of the community of practice in the school:

> But coming back to the reality of the situation, where I visit a school three times over the course of an academic year and may not be back in that school again for a number of years, it's hard to see a community of practice being built up between supervising tutor and the community [Bob, Interview 2].

Bob suggests that more frequent interaction with schools might help placement tutors build up a better relationship with the school communities:

> … if I was a visitor to that school on a weekly basis then it would be far more different… … I'm saying is that building up that relationship, they getting to know me, me getting to know them adds to the quality of the experience. It adds to the quality, and we're able to relate [Bob, Interview 1].

The implication here is that more time spent in the school would lead to better tutor-school relationship. It does not indicate anything about how placement tutors might contribute to the school community of practice, apart from having more established relationships with members of the school community. Being part of a community of practice involves more than improving relationships with members of a community; it also necessities working with others on a shared enterprise, developing a repertoire of knowledge and skills in order to improve practice (Lave and Wenger 1991).

Deirdre highlights this point in her response to the question of her role as placement tutor in the school community of practice. She suggests the issue is not just about limited time spent by placement tutors in schools: *Is it a limitation of time? You know, what more are we going to—if we extended visits to three hours, how much richer is it going to be?* Ultimately Deirdre doesn't believe that there is a place for placement tutors to contribute to the school community of practice

> I'm not sure if it's valid that we would even be part of the community of practice… … I'm not sure is there a space in the secondary school, or is management willing to make a space? Is there an entry at all? [Deirdre, Interview 2].

She suggests that placement tutors' contribution would be best served in the *university fora* whereby co-operating teachers would come into the university for continuing professional development which would assist them in their role of mentoring student teachers [Deirdre Interview 2]. In this way, a community of practice between placement tutors and co-operating teachers could be established. Improved mentoring of student teachers would, in turn, enhance their teaching, and ultimately the learning of the students in the school. In this way, there could be potential for placement tutors to indirectly contribute to the school community of practice.

Ellen takes Deirdre's idea a step further in terms of how placement tutors might offer continuing professional development within the school community of practice. Like Clare and Bob, Ellen reports that time constraints reduce the possibility of engaging in the school community of practice: *it is difficult to be part of the school community of practice when you're only coming in, you know, three times a year* [Ellen, Interview 2]. She suggests that in order to become part of the school community of practice, placement tutors need to contribute to the community, in the community setting. Hence, she suggests that placement tutors could be brought into the school community to provide continuing professional development with whole staff groups. This opens up possibilities of enabling placement tutors to engage with other members of the school community in a shared enterprise over a sustained period of time and, hence, move to a position of 'legitimate participation' (Lave and Wenger 1998).

Unlike the other five participants, Alan initially claims that, through his interaction with his student teachers, he contributes to their students' learning and, as such, he is part of the school community of practice:

> Like if the student is at the centre of all of our work, ultimately, I am through the teaching, through the teacher, the student teacher helping the students, the reception end of it, to have experience. So that's ultimately what—when I'm speaking about the student or when I'm speaking to the student teacher, I'm saying what would make the student's experience a better one in terms of the organisation and use of technology? So ultimately, I'm assisting them to assist the school…my contribution is by helping the teacher be a better teacher the students' experience is going to be better one or, you know, a more enlightened [Alan, Interview 2].

Alan's point is an interesting one, since, as he rightly emphasises, improving the quality of teachers leads to better learning experiences for the school students. Perhaps the question to ask is if this connection makes Alan is part of the community of practice in the school? Discussing the issue further, Alan concedes that, through his work with his student teachers, he is contributing to the practice of the school community, rather than the school community of practice (Alan, Interview 1). While Alan collaborates with his student teachers and shares ideas and strategies with them, Alan does not participate in the practices of the school community in any direct way. At best he can perhaps be seen as a peripheral member at the fringes, rather than the centre of the school community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991). In this regard, it is important to realise that being part of a community of practitioners is not the same as being part of a community of practice (Amin and Roberts 2008).

6.1.3 Observations of participants in the school community of practice

In the five observations conducted, I witnessed each participant being welcomed in a very positive manner to the school by an administrative staff member (Ellen and Frances), school principal (Alan, Bob) or deputy principal (Bob and Clare). In all cases, however, the participants were received as visitors, conducting university business within the school community. It seemed clear to me that the participants operated on the periphery of the main business of the school community of practice. They were temporary members of the school community, whose stay in the setting was fleetingly brief. My reflection on the first

observation I conducted with Ellen describes a situation that is echoed in each observation that followed:

> Ellen is welcomed into the school community, but she is still an outsider in this community. She has to check in. She has to wait. She doesn't just walk into the school and go and find the student teacher herself. And this is entirely reasonable. There has to be due process for all visitors who come into the school. And I suppose that's what the placement tutor is – a 'visitor'. This school, like others in the SUPE programme is a separate space to the university, and it is a busy community of practice –management, teachers, administrative staff and students all move about united in this space. The placement tutor is a peripheral member of this community of practice [Observation fieldnotes 11 November 2019, Ellen].

Upon arrival at her school, Clare was given a 'Visitor' badge and directed to wait in the reception area until the student teacher could be located. Clare has visited this school many times before, so she is a familiar face to the reception staff and to school management. While Clare sat alone in the school reception waiting, the school bell rang for class changeover and suddenly the corridor just beyond the school entrance was filled with a sea of noisy, lively chatting students, interspersed with teachers making their way to their next class. This glimpse of the school community was a sharp contrast to the solitary figure of the placement tutor, sitting with her visitor badge, waiting. The scene symbolised for me Clare's position as visitor to the school: *sitting there alone, wearing her visitor's badge seems to set her apart from other members of the school community* [Observation fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare].

When I went with Bob to his school, his position as visitor was made very clear from the start. Like the two previous participants, Bob began the visit by checking in at the school reception. While there was no visitor's badge forthcoming on this occasion, Bob was asked to wait at reception for someone from school management to speak with him. The school reception in this case was the foyer, just inside the main school door beside the school reception office. The entrance to the main school building was blocked by a closed door which was password protected. The school principal arrived shortly afterwards, spoke with Bob for a few minutes and returned behind the locked door while we waited for the student teacher to arrive. As with Clare, I noted that Bob's position as visitor was established right from the very beginning of the school visit:

> The locked door to main school building is almost a symbol for where the placement tutor stands in this CoP – outsider, welcomed, but still not part of the school community COP…He is welcome as a visitor to the school, representing the university, but it's like he is in a different space to the members of this COP [Observation fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].

In my observation of Alan's visit, I noted that he was greeted warmly at the school reception by the school principal and joined quite quickly by the co-operating teacher for a brief chat. Then the school principal accompanied us though the main school corridor to the school hall to meet with the student teacher. All very convivial interaction, but apart from the brief exchange with the principal and co-operating teacher at the start of the visit, Alan had no further contact with any other staff member in the school:

> There was no REAL collaboration between Alan and any member of the school. You couldn't count being greeted and chatted to for 5 minutes as a collaborative COP [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan].

My observation of Frances's school placement visit revealed that apart from checking in with the school receptionist and communications with the student teacher and the co-operating teacher, this participant had no interaction with anyone else in the school community:

> No evidence of tutor involvement in a community of practice in this school today. Since the PE hall is right beside the reception Frances didn't even have to enter the main school building where she might have at least made eye contact with members of the school community [Observation fieldnotes 7 February 2020, Frances].

Once the lesson concluded, the post-lesson conference with the student teacher was conducted in a room adjacent to the school hall. It was almost as if Frances operated in a bubble, physically distanced from the main school community. Having concluded the post-lesson conference, she left the school building since signing out at school reception was required. Hence, in many ways, Frances was an invisible presence in the school for the entire duration of her stay.

6.1.4 Do participants feel part a community of practice in the university setting?

In their role as part-time placement tutors, participants spend very little time in the university. Consequently, it is understandable that they do not feel part of the wider university community of practice. As indicated in Chapter 4, participants feel well supported in their position as placement tutors on the SUPE programme. However, face-to-face contact with other placement tutors is limited to three meetings during the school placement year. Relationships within the group are collegial, but casual and sporadic. Communication amongst the group is limited to emails or phone calls between tutors who share the same student teacher when preparing final summative grades at the end of the year.

Alan's comments regarding the group of placement tutors in the SUPE programme reflect the overall response of the participants:

> Bonding within that group I'm not sure. I don't meet them or get to know them well enough for that to happen…You know, it's kind of a difficult enough space because people are—they've come in to do that job of work and then they disperse and there isn't that building of a cohesive unit [Alan, Interview 1].

In addition to their work as placement tutors, Alan and Bob teach part-time on three modules in the SUPE programme. Thus, in comparison to the other four participants, they have more contact with staff and students in the SUPE programme. Nonetheless, they believe that, as placement tutors, they play no part in the university community of practice. Alan reports that issues that may arise from his work as a placement tutor which need to be shared within the wider university community of practice is *somebody else's responsibility* [Alan, Interview 2]. Bob claims that his role of placement tutor makes him a peripheral member of the university community of practice:

> as a placement tutor I am part-time, I am only involved at certain months of the year when students are on teaching placement. So, one may be seen to be on the periphery [Bob, Interview 1].

Unlike Alan and Bob, the remaining participants in the study are not involved in any other aspect of the SUPE programme and, as part-time placement tutors, they have no connection to

the university community of practice. Clare and Frances enjoy meeting with their placement tutor colleagues but emphasise that they feel more supported by individuals, rather than a community of practice within the SUPE programme:

> There's one other placement tutor and, you know, we'd have the odd phone call, just different things, and just kind of a bit of a friendship, I suppose, and check in with her [Clare, Interview 1].

> There was a gentleman on the course that was my own previous teacher from my old school and he kind of took me under his wing… And he gave me lots of advice throughout the year. If I went to see a student and I was thinking, oh, am I doing this right or this wrong? And I would have like a conversation with him [Frances, Interview 1].

This is Ellen's second year in her role as placement tutor and as a result she is getting to know *a few more faces* within the placement tutor group [Ellen, Interview 1]. Overall though, as a full-time teacher, her contact with other placement tutors is minimal. She is content with this situation: *as a teacher:*

> like, you kind of get used to that as well because you go off and teach your class and that's your class…. I don't really feel the need for it [more contact with other placement tutors] like. I think a few times a year is enough [Ellen, Interview 1].

In reflecting upon Ellen's response, I wondered if being a full-time teacher in a school community of practice reduces the need to be part of a community of practice in the SUPE programme. Furthermore, Ellen reports that having to take time away from school to attend meetings can be challenging, so perhaps this also contributes to her reluctance for any further involvement with her colleagues in the SUPE tutor team:

> Does the fact that Ellen is a full-time teacher with a community of practice in her own school, where she probably has a lot of interaction with teacher colleagues, reduce her need for having further meetings and contacts with her placement tutor colleagues? Also, she emphasises that getting out of school to attend meetings makes life difficult for her so that is probably another contributing factor in her acceptance of limited connections with colleagues in the SUPE programme [Researcher Diary, 15 October 2019].

Deirdre likes *connecting with the other placement tutors* during the placement tutor meetings, and values the continuing professional development offered during these sessions. Nevertheless she has no connection to the wider university community: *I don't see the university connects with us. I find we need to be the ones to make the connection with the university* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. She believes her role as placement tutor is undervalued and unappreciated by the university. Despite being a placement tutor for almost seven years, Deirdre has to face ongoing administrative issues each year. Her employment contract ceases at the end of May, and each September she has to face *issues with the staff card and silly things* such as getting her library card re-issued and her contract for the year set up once again. She highlights that, as a part-time placement tutor, there is no room on campus she can go to if the need arises to meet a student teacher, or another placement tutor colleague:

> Like I go into the university to pick things up in the office, with the secretary in the office, and like I might need to sit down and write something or do something. Like I end up in a corner of a coffee shop [Deirdre, Interview 1].

Deirdre describes her experience of visiting the university as one of *walking around in no man's land.* She believes that a working space should be available to members of the university community: *…having the seat to put your bottom on if you need to do some work.* Echoing the research of Slick (1997), Deirdre emphasises that placement tutors by nature of their role are disenfranchised outsiders: *we're disenfranchised. Particularly because we're outside, very much outside the space of both school and university.* She posits that a designated space within the university for part-time placement tutors would go some way to helping address the feeling of being left outside the community of practice in the university setting [Deirdre, Interview 1].

6.2. Subtheme Two: Investigating Third Space learning in the SUPE school placement programme

Over the past two decades there has been increased interest in the value of Third Space learning in teacher preparation programmes (Zeichner 2002, 2010; Darling-Hammond 2006; Cuenca et al. 2011; Hulme et al. 2009; Cochran-Smith et al. 2015; Jackson and Burch 2016; Helleve and Ulvik 2019; Mauri et al. 2019; Beck 2020; Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2020). As an ideal, Third Space theory has much to offer to initial teacher education programmes, but this ideology is

"neither easy nor quick, nor is it ever a completed project" (Klein et al. 2013, p. 28), and to a large extent it "remains elusive in practice" (Beck 2020, p.382). Creation of a Third Space in school placement is dependent on a three-way meeting point between the placement tutor, co-operating teacher and student teacher "where all the participants are brought face-to-face with each other" (Talvitie et al. 2000, p.87). In other words, it requires that schools and universities "work together, rather than in parallel" (Jackson and Burch 2019, p.139) in order to support the student teacher. This represents a fundamental challenge for the school placement programme in this study.

Similar to other initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland and throughout the world, the SUPE school placement programme operates in two spaces; the school and university. Placement tutors move across and between both spaces and so they have the potential to become a 'boundary broker' (Jackson and Burch 2019) and forge connections between them. In order for Third Space learning to materialise in school placement "all participants must not only understand the various processes involved in the school placement, but also they must also have a voice in the process" (Young et al. 2015, p. 28). However, limited and sporadic access to co-operating teachers, conducted without the presence of student teachers, means that participants in this study did not get any opportunity to meet with both the co-operating teacher and the student teacher in a triad meeting arrangement.

The findings regarding Third Space in the SUPE school placement programme are explored by:

- considering the barriers to Third Space learning identified by the participants;
- reviewing the Third Space challenges witnessed during observations of participants' supervision visits;
- analysing participants' viewpoints on the potential role of placement tutors in Third Space scenarios.

6.2.1 Barriers to Third Space learning identified by the participants

Participants identify two challenges relating to the development of Third Space in school placement. These include the lack of time during supervision visits to facilitate Third Space meetings in schools, and the limited role played by co-operating teachers which precludes their participation in a Third Space setting.

Bob emphasises that busy school life makes it difficult to find time to meet with the co-operating teacher and the student teacher together: *practically it's not always available. Particularly in very busy schools it's not always feasible* [Bob, Interview 3]. Alan also emphasises that the current limited duration of placement tutors' school visits is a deterrent:

> More time would be needed - fifteen minutes isn't going to get you that, you know. If you're going to—if that conversation's going to happen, you're looking at the forty-minute class at least [Alan, Interview 3].

Ellen agrees with Alan. She recalls that, as the co-operating teacher in a research project modelled on Third Space learning, she was part of the student teacher's supervision lesson and the post-lesson conference held after the lesson. During the post-lesson conference, Ellen gave her feedback as the co-operating teacher, and the placement tutor also gave her feedback. This resulted in a very lengthy post-lesson conference: *if I'm giving the feedback and then the tutor was giving the feedback, it meant it was a longer chat after the visit or after supervision* [Ellen, Interview 3]. Ellen discovered that organising the three-way meeting was challenging and dependent on her sometimes losing her lunchtime period or staying after school on her own free time. The views expressed by Alan and Ellen are supported by Burns et al. (2016b, p.421) who posit that if placement tutors are to foster the "essential relationships" needed for Third Space learning, then they will need to spend more time in schools and move beyond "just engaging in observation and feedback".

The second barrier to Third Space identified by the participants concerns the limited and informal role played by co-operating teachers in the school placement process. Participants' experiences of limited access to co-operating teachers, has been discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The recommendation in the *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group*

(Teaching Council 2021a) for formalising the role of the co-operating teacher is a very welcome one. Such a development would open up opportunities for co-operating teachers to be brought into a Third Space in school placement. Participants in this study report incidences of student teachers being timetabled to teach without the presence of a co-operating teacher [Interview 2]. This has implications for a Third Space meeting which, by definition, should be collaborative and is dependent on input from all participants (Jackson and Burch 2019; Beck 2020). Co-operating teachers cannot be part of genuine three-way collaboration if they do not get the opportunity to witness student teachers' teaching.

Bob believes that most co-operating teachers would be reluctant to take part in a Third Space post-lesson conference:

> Maybe the co-operating teacher may have felt no, that's just between university and the student teacher and that my presence wouldn't be of benefit… … And it is my experience that they tend to step back. [Bob, Interview 3].

Ellen supports Bob's opinion. She claims that co-operating teachers don't feel they should make a formal contribution to the supervision of student teachers*: I think teacher's kind of feel like it's not their place, like, and the student teacher is in there and it's the university's role to supervise them, like* [Ellen, Interview 2]. Clare [Interview 3] opines that making the co-operating teacher role more formal would ensure that co-operating teachers can be present with student teachers when they teach and provide them with valuable feedback and support. Deirdre concurs with this opinion, claiming a formal role, with accompanying continuing professional development opportunities, would ensure that co-operating teachers become *framed as professionals*, with potential to contribute to a Third Space setting [Deirdre, Interview 3].

Ellen believes that bringing co-operating teachers into a Third Space setting would ensure that they could support student teachers to achieve goals set and monitor their progress in a genuine manner:

> …the biggest advantage of that would be to the co-operating teacher, that the co-operating teacher would get to see what was being advised to the student and then the co-operating teacher could provide the ongoing support to the student… … you know, they'd have the co-operating teacher there as a monitor [Ellen, Interview 3].

Deirdre suggest that the Third Space meeting involving all three members of the triad should occur as a follow-up to the post-lesson conference conducted between the student teacher and placement tutor:

> I would see it as being quite a structured meeting…something like exploring the feedback from the post-lesson conference, sharing it with the student teacher—or sharing it with the co-operating teacher, and basically having a three-way input into building on it and setting goals, you know, setting various or achievable goals for the student teacher [Deirdre, Interview 3].

This is an interesting idea to consider and it might address, to some degree, the concerns expressed by Alan, Bob and Ellen regarding the challenge of facilitating a Third Space meeting in the current supervision timeframe. Putting the idea into practice would necessitate changes to the current school placement system in order to allow placement tutors to return for this follow up triage meeting.

6.2.2 Third Space challenges witnessed during observations of participants' supervision visits.

The five observations conducted of the participants' supervision visits indicated very clearly that Third Space learning did not feature. Co-operating teachers were not timetabled with the student teachers for the lessons supervised by Alan, Clare and Ellen. In each case the co-operating teachers spoke to the placement tutors for five minutes before the lesson, while the student teacher was organising resources in the hall, and then had to hurry away to teach their own class group. The fact that student teachers had been forewarned regarding the observation visits meant that the co-operating teachers involved were aware of the exact time of the visit, hence, they were able to make themselves available to meet the placement tutors. In normal circumstances, placement tutors visit the school unannounced, and often they do not get to meet co-operating teachers who may be unavailable due to prior teaching commitments.

In the lessons supervised by Frances and Bob, the co-operating teachers were timetabled to attend student teachers' lessons. As such, these settings showed potential for a three-way conversation but unfortunately, this potential was not realised in either case. At the start of Bob's supervision visit he spent approximately ten minutes talking to the co-operating teacher who appeared to give detailed feedback on the student teacher. She then came to greet me, and then she left the school hall and did not return:

> After talking with the placement tutor today, the co-operating teacher came over to say hello to me briefly. Even though she is timetabled during this time to be with the student teacher, her comment to me was "I think I leave now because three is a crowd". Isn't that interesting! While this co-operating teacher certainly fulfilled a role and a very valuable role in giving feedback on the student teacher, she did not think she had anyplace in observing the supervision or taking part in the post-lesson conference afterwards [Observation fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].

The co-operating teacher's choice of words was significant here, confirming the concerns expressed by Bob earlier that co-operating teachers do not feel they have a role to play in either observing the supervised lesson or taking part in the post-lesson conference afterwards.

In my observation of Frances's school visit I noted that the co-operating teacher came in and out of the school hall a few times at the start of the lesson. At one stage he sat beside Frances and appeared to be discussing the student teacher's teaching. However, he didn't linger and took no part in the post-lesson conference with the student teacher afterwards. Once again the potential for a Third Space meeting did not materialise:

> This was the second opportunity where TSL could have occurred since the CT was timetable with the ST. I think perhaps the responsibility lies with us in the university to push for the CT to stay and to stay for the PLC. Of course, the only problem is that so many of our STs don't have a CT timetabled to teach with them, this would be problematic [Observation fieldnotes 2 February 2020, Frances].

Fundamental to creating a Third Space in teacher education is that each member of the school placement triad is equally valued and given an opportunity to contribute (Klein 2013). The

organisation of such a space or meeting point requires careful consideration (Helleve and Ulvik 2019). The findings in this study indicate

> in order for Third Space to occur in school placement, a radical shift is needed in terms of the current role played by co-operating teachers and the format of the school placement supervision visits [Observation fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan].

6.2.3 Participants' viewpoints on the potential role of placement tutors in Third Space settings

The general consensus amongst the participants is that placement tutors could fulfil the role of facilitator of Third Space meetings. This viewpoint concurs with the research of Mauri et al. (2019) who established a 'Joint Setting' or Third Space school placement experience where all three members of the triad, co-operating teachers, placement tutors and student teachers, came together. The researchers found that even though each member was afforded equal opportunity to speak, the co-operating teachers and the student teachers looked to the placement tutors to facilitate the meetings, and to "promote equity and dialogue among all the voices in the setting" (Mauri et al. 2019, p.482).

Bob suggests that placement tutors could facilitate discussions amongst the triad:

> I think the placement tutor could almost act as a facilitator to discuss certain issues… … to allow for discussion to take place concerning expectations, for example, of the co-operating teacher, expectations of the student teacher [Bob, Interview 3].

Clare [Interview 3] concurs with Bob, asserting that placement tutors could be the *link person* between the student teacher and the co-operating teacher, facilitating each to speak, encouraging student teachers to reflect upon their practice, and guiding co-operating teachers to support them. Alan [Interview 3] also opines that, placement tutors could support a triage conversation in order to *try and elucidate and ask where the understanding is about various proforma elements* used in the assessment of student teachers.

As a student in a Schools Direct teacher preparation programme in the United Kingdom, Frances had direct experience of being part of a Third Space environment involving both her co-operating teacher and her placement tutor. As a result, she suggests that the placement tutor and co-operating teacher should operate a Third Space discussion like a 'tag team', the placement tutor leading the conversation initially and then handing it over to the co-operating teacher: *I suppose it would be a bit like a tag team… I would probably lead it and then that person [the co-operating teacher] would come in and just contribute to areas* [Frances, Interview 3]. In her analogy, Frances indicates that the co-operating teacher and placement tutor should work as a team in a Third Space meeting to give feedback to the student teacher. Yet, despite supporting the Third Space meeting, an opportunity for the sharing discussion with her co-operating teacher colleague, she emphasises that she, as placement tutor, would have the *final say* [Frances, Interview 3].

Deirdre sees the input from the placement tutor as *a guide on the side* who supports the Third Space as the setting for a *three-way conference* involving each participant, thus facilitating a *congenial three-way supportive relationship to develop*. She emphasises that a Third Space should be viewed as an opportunity for *professional adult relationships*, to develop amongst the members of the triad, reducing the idea of hierarchy but valuing input from all participants equally [Deirdre, Interview 3]. Deirdre's response supports a more democratic Third Space meeting between each member of the school placement triad. While Bob, Clare, Alan and Frances recognise that placement tutors can act as facilitators in the Third Space, nonetheless the emphasis seems to be on a role of leader and director, rather than facilitator. Deirdre's recommendations come closest to the vision of Burns et al. (2016a, p.68) who claim that, for school placement to be truly effective, a shift is needed in the role of placement tutors from one of "supervisors of learning to liaisons for learning".

6.3 Subtheme three: Establishing relationships in the school placement triad

Fundamental to the placement tutor's role is the ability to develop and nurture positive relationships in the school community in order to promote optimum conditions for student teacher learning (Slick 1997; Caires and Almeida 2007; Elfer 2012). Central to developing school relationships is the quality of interactions between placement tutors and the other two

members of the school placement triad. While there is "theoretical agreement as to the importance of equal and reciprocal relationships in the practicum, achieving this outcome in practice can be very difficult" (Aspden and McLachlan 2017, p.23). The findings in this study testify that participants establish professional and cordial relationships with student teachers and co-operating teachers. Yet, as part-time university staff members, positioned as outsiders in the school community of practice with no access to Third Space meetings, it is difficult for placement tutors to form close relationships with either of these triad members. This is evidenced in the following overview of each relationship dyad.

6.3.1 Participants' relationship with student teachers

The relationship between placement tutors and student teachers is a significant source of personal and emotional support (Caries and Almeida 2007). Building relationships with student teachers enables placement tutors to find the balance between challenging and supporting student teachers in order to help them learn (Beck and Kosnik 2002; Bullough and Draper 2004). The findings in this study, as presented in Chapter 5, indicate that participants are supportive of their student teachers, and enact their role in a caring and committed manner. Despite this, forming relationships with their student teachers is negatively impacted by three factors:

- the time constraints of supervision visits
- the part-time status of the placement tutor role
- the task of assessing student teachers

These issues have been discussed in Chapter 5, but they are briefly revisited in this section in the context of how they impact the participants' relationship with their student teachers.

6.2.1.1 The impact of time contraints on the participants' relationships with student teachers

Research conducted by Borko and Mayfield (1995, p.516) highlight that "powerful and inevitable structural constraints" impact upon interactions between placement tutors and student teachers. These researchers note that it is not possible for placement tutors to be frequently present in classrooms or have access to ongoing conversations with student teachers.

Twenty-five years later the same problem emerges in this study as limited time allocation for supervision visits continues to be a feature of school placement programmes. Such time constraints make it challenging for participants to engage with student teachers in a meaningful way.

During the school placement supervision visit, the post-lesson conference is held to allow placement tutors and student teachers to review and reflect upon the lesson. This is also an opportunity for placement tutors to check in on student teachers' general wellbeing and progress in the school. However, in reality, participants in this study report that the post-lesson conference is a rushed affair [Deirdre, Interview 2; Ellen, Interview 2], and makes it difficult for participants to move beyond a discussion on the Proforma assessment criteria used to evaluate their practice [Alan, Interview 2]. In consequence, the post-lesson conference often becomes

> …a mechanical process of going through the proforma with the student and telling them what's in it without having time to discuss it with them and make sure it connects with where their understanding is [Alan, Interview 2].

This issue is also identified as a source of 'dissatisfaction' for the placement tutor participants in research conducted by Borko and Mayfield (1995) where these participants report that time constraints made it difficult to establish anything more than a 'surface level' relationship with their student teachers. This study found that "conversations between university supervisors and student teachers were frequently too rushed….and student teachers learned not to expect much out of their relationships with…university supervisors" (Borko and Mayfield 1995, p.515). The practice of telling (rather than listening) occurs frequently when time is of the essence (Burns and Badiali 2015). It is a testament to the participants in this study that, despite the challenges of the limited timeframe of supervision visits, they do their utmost to establish positive and respectful relationships with their student teachers. This was evident in all observations conducted where it was apparent that, consistent with the research of Hall et al. (2018), the supervision process was not focused on inspection and determining grades, but rather on supporting student teachers in their journey of learning to teach.

In observing Ellen during the post-lesson conference, I noted that, even though that this was only her second visit with the student teacher, she appeared to quickly establish a very pleasant working relationship which was well received by the student teacher: *body language of the PT and ST indicates an ease - both sitting close together, side by side* [Observation Fieldnotes, 25 November 2019, Ellen]. The interaction between Clare and her student teacher was also positive, pleasant and respectful [Observation Fieldnotes, 2 December 2019, Clare]. Similarly, in my observation of Alan's visit, I noted the presence of a *friendly, professional and respectful relationship* he established with his student teacher who seemed to *really value the PT's feedback, expressing his appreciation throughout the PLC, and again at the end* [Observation Fieldnotes, 3 March 2020, Alan]. I witnessed Frances being very sensitive towards a nervous student teacher in terms of how *she established a friendly and supportive working relationship* with her student teacher from the very start of the supervision visit. At the beginning of the post-lesson conference she did her utmost to encourage to student teacher to relax and engage in conversation:

> …she really put the student teacher at ease even from the very first moment where she asked the student teacher to bring her chair closer to her so they could talk. Hence they sat in close proximity during their discussion [Observation Fieldnotes, 7 February 2020, Frances].

Observation of Bob's visit emphasised that as a placement tutor who also taught in several modules in the SUPE programme, he had the advantage of prior knowledge of the student body, which, no doubt, contributed to the very warm and friendly environment I witnessed: *The fact is Bob and ST 2 know each other quite well since he has taught her in college modules…and it is so obvious that she is at ease with him* [Observation Fieldnotes, 22 January 2020, Bob]. Later, when reflecting upon the visit, I also wondered if the prior relationship Bob has with his student teachers gives these student teachers an advantage over other student teachers:

> As I looked at them engaged in the post-lesson conference, I wondered whether this student teacher is at an advantage because she knows her tutor and has an established relationship with him. Is this fair to the other student teachers who may be supervised by a part-time person who has no previous knowledge of them and has very little time during supervision visits to get to know them? [Researcher Diary, 22 January 2020].

6.3.1.2 The impact of part-time status on the participants' relationship with student teachers

The research of Asplin and Marks (2013, p.6) indicates that student teachers "who had taken a class from their university supervisor perceived a more positive relationship with that supervisor". Furthermore, they conclude that student teachers are more likely to take on the advice given by placement tutors if they had a prior relationship with them, while those with no prior relationship with their placement tutor were more inclined to follow the advice of their co-operating teacher (Asplin and Marks 2013). This research has implications for the student teachers of the participants in this research study, all of whom are part-time placement tutors.

Clare acknowledges that, despite the limitations of her part-time status, *there's definitely some sort of a relationship and, yeah, I would, you know, genuinely care*. She believes she is firm but fair with her student teachers: *they're probably not going to pull the wool over my eyes either… … I would hope they feel supported or they could approach me and tell me stuff that's going on* [Clare, Interview 2].

Deirdre reports that being a part-time placement tutor makes it difficult to establish relationships with her student teachers. She recalls that when she was teaching on the SUPE programme she had a sense that student teachers knew her, and she knew them. Now she works only as a part-time placement tutor on the programme, so she has *less of a connection* with her student teachers [Deirdre, Interview 2]:

> So, the reality now is that I'm meeting the students for the first time in September. So really, they don't know me from Adam. They don't know what my pedagogical preferences are. You know, they'll get a sense of who I am as a person, but beyond that I think in the intro—like certainly in the first visit my sense is that there isn't, you know, a connection between my expectations or my pedagogical styles and theirs trying to marry to suit me as their assessor [Deirdre, Interview 3].

Given that she is rarely in the university campus and sees her student teachers for a limited amount of time, Deirdre reports that student teachers are less in her 'headspace' than they would have been when she had a closer affiliation to the programme [Deirdre, Interview 2].

Both Frances and Ellen reiterate Deirdre's sentiments. Ellen believes her part-time status results in a *distant yet professional relationship* with her student teachers [Ellen, Interview 2]. She receives email contact from some student teachers regarding timetable issues or school closures and enjoys meeting with them on the supervision visits. Although she advises her student teachers to contact her if they need any help, this has not occurred to date [Ellen, Interview 2]. Frances [Interview 2] concurs that limited time spent with her student teachers makes it difficult to know *what's going on in their life* and she struggles with the limitations of the relationships that can be established in the current system.

In contrast to his fellow participants above, Alan teaches on a first and a second-year module in the SUPE programme. As a result, he has some prior, though limited, connection with his student teachers when he meets them in fourth year:

> I might meet them once in the module. So, like it is a limited enough meeting point. But I do know them. You know, I would have connection with them going in. [Alan, Interview 2].

Bob teaches on several modules across second, third and fourth year; and so, he knows the student cohort very well and believes this greatly enhances his relationship with his student teachers:

> So, when they see me on the corridor for the first time, maybe they're a little bit more comfortable in dealing with me because they've dealt with me in second and third year and I've dealt with them [Bob, Interview 2].

It should be noted that, as part-time placement tutors, Bob and Alan are exceptions to the general rule, since the vast majority of part-time placement tutors have no contact with student teachers outside of their visits to schools. There is no doubt that this structural limitation of school placement programmes reduces the possibility of placement tutors fostering meaningful relationships with the student teachers they supervise.

6.3.1.3 The impact of the assessor role on participants' relationship with student teachers

There is much research to suggest that student teachers often strive to 'please' placement tutors in order to get good grades (Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Andrew 2007; Basmadjian 2011; Clarke et al. 2012; Burns and Badiali 2015; Hall et al. 2018). Consequently, there is a danger of an imbalanced power dynamic in the placement tutor-student teacher relationship. Participants in this study are aware of the student teachers' desire to get a good grade, and the corresponding effect this has on the interactions with their student teachers.

Alan believes that some students may teach in a particular way in order to impress their placement tutor:

> I don't still know whether they think, oh, here's Tutor Number 1 coming in and we know what he is looking for, and, you know, he expects this, this and this and we'll work to that, you know [Alan, Interview 1].

Ellen [Interview 2] recalls being asked by a student if there was any particular approach she wanted him to use in his teaching. Clare reports a similar concern: *They try to find out what I like and what I don't like in teaching*. She believes that student teachers can become *fixated* on their grades [Clare, Interview 1]. Frances [Interview1] claims that many student teachers fear the arrival of the placement tutor and that *some student will contact other students to ask; what does that placement tutor look for?* [Frances Interview 2].

Deirdre [Interview 1] attributes student teachers' preoccupation with grades to a fear of failure. In such circumstances, cultivating open and honest relationships is a challenging task since many student teachers "give responses that they believe their supervisors want to hear" (Basmadjian 2011, p.102). Deirdre recalls that when she was teaching on the SPE programme, many student teachers attempted to *emulate down to the nth degree* her style or approach to teaching, often reproducing lessons that she taught them: *So I thought, This is really odd, you know. I've seen three lessons in the last three weeks and each one has been team challenges when I'm expected to arrive for a visit* [Deirdre, Interview 3]. She is not at all surprised at this occurrence since she recalls responding in a similar way during her own student teaching days:

> I remember having a physical education inspector at one stage and I knew they were big on adventure ed., and luckily I was as well, and my lesson like planned within an inch of its life when the inspector was coming for a whole-school inspection…what I knew that he'd like to see, you know [Deirdre, Interview 3].

In observing Clare's visit with her student teacher, I noticed that, notwithstanding the pleasant relationship evident between both parties, the student teacher was inclined to defer to the placement tutor for most of the discussion: *The ST listens attentively but is happy to defer to the PT and allow her talk …The ST appears eager to agree with everything the PT says* [Observation Fieldnotes 2 December 2019, Clare]. This occurred to a lesser extent during Ellen's visit, but nonetheless it was a feature in the post-lesson conference: *there are shades of the ST seeing the PT as 'judge and jury' as the ST initially appears to be taking a back seat in the discussion* [Observation Fieldnotes 25 November2019, Ellen]. Even in the situation where there was a well-established relationship between Bob and his student teacher, a hierarchical teacher-pupil dynamic appeared evident in the post-lesson conference:

> However, it seems ST2 is quick to agree with suggestions Bob makes so in a sense there is a kind of teacher-pupil relationship evident here…desire to please the tutor perhaps? [Observation Fieldnotes 22 January 2020, Bob].

Given the fact that placement tutors hold ultimate responsibility for awarding the grade to student teachers, perhaps my observations of student teachers' deference to their placement tutors is to be expected. After all, school placement grades are "high stakes" for student teachers since they are often an important consideration for prospective employers offering teaching posts (Hall et al. 2018, p.101). Furthermore, fourth year school placement in the SUPE programme is a twenty-credit module; hence the grade received has a significant impact on the overall degree conferred on graduates of the programme. All things considered, it is understandable that student teachers are often more focused on assessment and grades than on building a relationship with their placement tutors (Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan 2018).

6.3.2 Participants' relationship with co-operating teachers

As with the student teachers, the relationship between the participants and the co-operating teachers in this study can be best described as professional and cordial, but *fleeting* [Ellen, Interview 1]. Participants' limited school visits, along with co-operating teachers' informal and unsupported role, has direct implications for the relationship between these two members of the school placement triad. The research of Hall et al. (2018) supports this premise, citing that 56% of post-primary school co-operating teachers reported inadequate contact and absence of dialogue with school placement tutors. The comment made by one co-operating teacher in their report is significant: "The tutor comes into the school and leaves the school without any acknowledgement or any hello or goodbye. But I have never formally met any of the tutors" (Hall et al. 2018, p.108). The findings in this study provide the other side of the coin; the experiences of placement tutors who seek interaction and dialogue with co-operating teachers, only to find they are unavailable.

Alan has a limited number of student teachers and they are placed in the same school; hence he has opportunity to build a *good relationship* with the co-operating teacher. Nevertheless, he also acknowledges that the co-operating teacher knows him through his work in providing continuing professional development programmes in schools [Alan, Interview 2]. My reflective entry in my observation of Alan's supervision visit best emphasises the crux of the problem with regard to the placement tutor-co-operating teacher relationship: *it is very difficult to comment much on relationship between the PT and members of the school community since Alan spends so little time talking to the CT* [Observation Fieldnotes 3 March 2020, Alan]. This is a fundamental problem highlighted in this research study.

Clare opines that it is difficult to build a relationship with most co-operating teachers since *it's difficult to find them and talk to them* [Clare, Interview 2]. In my observation of her visit to the school I noticed that when she eventually did manage to track down the co-operating teacher, their meeting took place in the school corridor at lesson changeover. Hence, it was a *very public place and so difficult to have a proper discussion* [Observation Fieldnotes 2 December 2020, Clare]. Ellen's conversation with the co-operating teacher occurred during the three or four minutes we walked from the school reception to the school hall on the day I

observed her school visit; *but because the CT had come out of a lesson to speak to PT6, there wasn't any time for an in-depth discussion* [Observation Fieldnotes 25 November, Ellen]. Ellen reports that her part-time status affects her ability as a placement tutor to forge connections with co-operating teachers in the schools she visits: *I wouldn't have a huge amount of time before or after to be chatting to people either* [Ellen, Interview 2]. Furthermore, speaking as a full-time teacher, Ellen posits that most teachers are content to take a backseat in the role of co-operating teacher*: a lot of teachers don't want to overstep the mark. They don't want to -I think they don't want the universities to think that they're - you know that they think that they're the tutors* [Ellen, Interview 1].

All participants agree that returning to the same school each year helps to build a better relationship with co-operating teachers on the basis that it allows placement tutors to *build rapport* [Frances, Interview 2], *to get to know familiar faces* [Ellen, Interview 2] and to *make a connection with the school and with individuals within it* [Alan, Interview 2]. Clare's response elucidates this opinion: *like I'm back in a school this year that I was in last year. So I feel it's very easy to chat to the co-operating teacher there* [Clare, Interview 2]. Bob too agrees that revisiting schools has a positive effect on school relationships: *I'm saying is that building up that relationship, they getting to know me, me getting to know them adds to the quality of the experience. It adds to the quality, and we're able to relate* [Bob, Interview 2]. This was very much in evidence in my observation of Bob's visit when I noted:

> This is the first, out of three observations I have done so far, when I witnessed genuine interaction between a CT and a PT. The discussion was at least 10 minutes, and the CT had a lot to say about this ST… …it appeared as a dialogue between two people with a shared focus i.e. the student teacher. [Observation Fieldnotes 22 January, Bob].

Deirdre reports positive relationships with co-operating teachers in two schools she has visited during her eight years as placement tutor, *out of five schools there's two where I've a very good connection with the co-operating teacher* [Deirdre, Interview 1]. She describes how her relationship with one of these co-operating teachers developed over a five-year period during which she witnessed him move away from a very didactic mentoring approach where *he would basically teach a lesson and ask the student teacher to replicate the lesson* to one where he gave student teachers the space to find their own approaches [Deirdre, Interview 2]. She

believes that this shift in mentoring approach occurred as a direct result of the supportive relationship that developed between them:

> I've been in the school for five or six years or so, and his methodologies seem to have changed. And he's meeting me more as opposed to being confrontational with me … he doesn't see me as a threat or an obstacle or somebody who's trying to come in and change things… our relationship has thankfully developed very well. We've met each other at a place where he sees me as being supportive [Deirdre, Interview 2].

Deirdre's story illustrates that dialogue and interaction between placement tutors and co-operating teachers is needed in order to build established relationships between them. It also points to the potential of such relationships as a means of providing a strong and cohesive support system for student teachers. However, the current school placement system of infrequent placement tutor visits of short duration, coupled with the loose co-operating teacher framework that exists in schools, needs to be addressed in order to fully realise this potential.

Conclusion

The third and final theme of this research study, *Placement tutors in the landscape of school placement,* provides a picture of participants operating between two worlds, that of the school and the university. This 'in-between space' presents a number of challenges for them as evident in the findings discussed in this chapter.

The findings in sub theme one, '*Multimembership in school and university settings'*, demonstrate that the possibility of multimembership (Wenger 2010) is not realised for part-time placement tutors in school placement. Participants identify the goal of the school community of practice to be the learning, care and welfare of its students, and they note that, as placement tutors, they do not contribute to this goal. The location of the placement tutor on the fringes of the school community of practice is also linked to the binary system of initial teacher education that currently operates in initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland. Though welcome as visitors to the school, the placement tutors are regarded as inspectors, part of the university and extrinsic to the main business of the school

community. This is a somewhat paradoxical situation since the findings related to this subtheme also suggest that part-time placement tutors do not feel part of the university community of practice. Apart from limited interactions with their placement tutor colleagues, the SUPE school placement coordinator and the SUPE programme administrator, participants report they have no interaction with other members of the university community. In fact, there is some suggestion that they feel undervalued and isolated in this community of practice.

Allied to their peripheral positioning in the school community, the second subtheme, '*Investigating Third Space learning in the SUPE school placement programme'*, indicates that Third Space learning does not occur in school placement. In this study, many co-operating teachers were not timetabled to watch student teachers teach, nor available to meet before or after the supervised lesson, and so the opportunity to hold a meeting of the school placement triad, did not materialise. In addition, the current culture within schools perceives that the supervision of student teachers is the sole responsibility of placement tutors. Participants recognise the potential of such a Third Space meeting, indicating they could adopt a role of leader/ facilitator in order to enhance student teachers' learning.

Given the findings of the first two subthemes, it is not surprising that the third subtheme, '*Establishing relationships in the school placement triad*', reveals that participants' relationships with the other members of the school placement triad are professional, but insubstantial. With regards to student teachers, the limited duration of school placement visits, the part-time status of the placement tutor participants and the 'power of the grade' impacts upon the relationship between participants and their student teachers. Lack of access to co-operating teachers, as well as limited opportunities for engaging in professional dialogue with them, means that relationships between these two members of the triad are also difficult to establish.

Chapter Seven will bring this doctoral research to a conclusion by outlining the key conclusions of the study, along with articulating recommendations for policy and practice in the school

placement element of initial teacher education. Possibilities for further research will also be presented.

Chapter 7: Shining a light

The aim of this research was to shine a light on the experiences and contributions of part-time placement tutors who are employed by universities to supervise student teachers in school placement settings by examining their experiences in, and contributions to, the school placement component of initial teacher education. This endeavour took me on a doctoral journey of investigating the stories of six part-time placement tutors in the SUPE initial teacher education school placement in Rosemount University in the Republic of Ireland. An extensive literature review and tripartite theoretical framework of Identity (Holland et al. 1998), Multimembership (Wenger 1998, 2009, 2010) and Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) informed the research questions for the study. These questions were explored through conducting a multiple case study composed of six part-time placement tutor participants. Individual interviews, observations, and maintenance of a researcher diary were utilised as data collection methods, and data analysis was conducted through employing a thematic analysis approach. Three overarching themes and associated subthemes were uncovered, and these represent the salient findings of this investigation.

This final chapter offers a summation of my doctoral journey by:

- offering conclusions regarding what has been learned about the part-time placement tutors in this study;
- proposing recommendations for practices, policy making, and future research pertaining to part-time placement tutors;
- discussing the limitations of my research study;
- offering a brief reflexive account of my researcher experiences during my doctoral journey.

7.1 Conclusions

The conclusions arising from this doctoral study are informed by the research questions, and the tripartite theoretical framework adopted. They are derived from the key findings and discussion in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Several conclusions are presented through a framework composed of eight inter-related subheadings:

1. The dual role
2. Biography and identity
3. Part-time placement tutors' experiences in the school placement setting
4. Part-time placement tutors' experiences in the university-school partnership
5. The impact of placement tutors' part-time status
6. Third Space learning in school placement
7. The motivations of part-time placement tutors
8. Supporting part-time placement tutors

7.1.1 The dual role

This study highlights that the role of part-time placement tutors is essentially a dual one, to assess and assist student teachers. The phrase 'assessor and assistor' was first used over two decades ago by Slick (1997). This phrase resonates strongly with the model of teacher supervision and evaluation proposed by Hoover and Nolan (2011) where supervision can be equated with assistance and evaluation with assessment. The former is concerned with determining the needs of each individual teacher and proving a platform of support to help meet these needs, while the latter is concerned with making judgements about each teacher's competence to teach (Hoover and Nolan 2011).

The dual role is a complex and multifaceted one whereby part-time placement tutors are tasked with helping student teachers to negotiate the journey of learning to teach, while also acting as gatekeepers of the teaching profession. The role involves facilitating student teachers to learn about teaching by mediating between student teachers and co-operating teachers, liaising between the school and the university and assessing if student teachers have reached the required standards of professional knowledge, skills, competence and conduct necessary to

practice as teachers. The evidence in this study is conclusive; despite the challenges and constrains of the current system of school placement which will be discussed later in this section, part-time placement tutors are committed to assisting and assessing student teachers. All participants fulfil both aspects of the dual role effectively. This is evident in the experiences they recount, and in their practices witnessed.

Three factors assist the part-time placement tutors in this study to address the assessor-assistor duality and meet the demands of their complex role. Firstly, these tutors act as 'supportive assessors' who evaluate student teachers in a fair and empathic manner, providing constructive feedback to assist them to improve their practice. Secondly, they are supported in their assessment task by a transparent grading system with explicit criteria for success which are made available to student teachers. Finally, participants avail of ongoing professional development opportunities provided for the SUPE placement tutors to develop their skills as assessors and assistors. The team meets three times a year to review their practice, discuss challenges that emerge, engage in dialogue with their colleagues and update their knowledge.

It is clear from the findings in this study that these part-time placement tutors have no difficulty in fulfilling both aspects of their dual role. Indeed, they see them as separate but connected practices, involving different but complementary tasks. As 'supportive assessors' these teacher educators act as 'educative' supervisors (Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009) who are cognisant that the task of grading student teachers must be balanced with assisting them, and they embrace their role with 'care, thoughtfulness and tact' (Cuenca 2010b).

7.1.2 Biography and identity

Commensurate with the literature, participants in this study come to teacher education through the practitioner route (Davey 2013). As retired or practising post primary school teachers, they bring a rich biography of past and current teaching experiences. All participants emphasise that their teaching biography is an asset to their practice as placement tutors. It provides them with expert knowledge about teaching and learning, an understanding of the wider school

community in which school placement occurs, and insights into the challenges faced by student teachers as they begin the journey of learning to teach. Participants also report that their teaching biography is valued by student teachers who regard it as evidence that these placement tutors can 'talk the talk and walk the walk', bringing with them advice and wisdom honed from years of practice as a teacher.

Aligned to their teacher biography, these part-time placement tutors embrace a strong teacher identity. Findings suggest that while student teachers and the school community may perceive them to be 'inspectors', these part-time placement tutors see themselves as teachers working with teachers. Furthermore, their peripheral position at the interface of the university and school communities, allied to the part-time nature of their role, provides little opportunity for them to extend their teacher identities. The part-time placement tutors in this study are not research active. They value opportunities such as the thrice yearly SUPE placement tutor meetings as opportunities to become research informed, as they believe this helps them to conduct their role more effectively. Despite this, this study evidences that, for the most part, participants have neither opportunity nor desire to become involved in research activity. Some participants are retired and perhaps not interested in committing time and energy to such an undertaking. Others have other work commitments which must also be fulfilled. Finance and the time commitment required for conducting research is not available to them.

Ultimately, these participants are content to embrace a teacher identity in their role as placement tutor. Rather than author a new identity as a teacher educator, they rely on their former well-established teacher identity to enact their role. Drawing on their teacher biography and their teacher identity, these part-time placement tutors 'play the teacher card' (Murray 2014) in their supervision of student teachers.

7.1.3 Part-time placement tutors' experiences in the school placement setting

Part-time placement tutors operate in a system which is set in schools but affiliated to a university programme. In many respects they are in a 'no man's land', caught between two communities of practice. The findings in this study indicate that they operate the fringes of each community of practice; welcome visitors in the schools but outsiders in the school community, part-time personnel in the university but external to the main activity of the campus. Participants enjoy being part of the SUPE placement tutor team in the university and value the opportunity to meet with their tutor colleagues three times a year. But three meetings a year alone is not sufficient to build a community of practice and so participants rely on one-to-one connections with other members of the group.

The school placement setting incorporates two different communities of practice but the potential for part-time placement tutors to be multimembers of these communities is not realised since they are never fully drawn into the centre of either community. Indeed, their role is seen as a secondary one in both organisations. While the school welcomes student teachers and their respective placement tutors, the primary focus of this community is upon the learning of its students. The learning of student teachers is seen as the business of the university, and so the placement tutor comes and goes with little or no interaction with members of the school community of practice. Limited visits to the university, coupled with no interaction with the wider university populace means that part-time placement tutors remain on the periphery of this community also. In a sense it is a conundrum that in the school setting these teacher educators are seen as representatives of the university, but in the university they are regarded as extraneous to the day-to-day activity of this community.

7.1.4 Part-time placement tutors' experiences in the university-school partnership

While school placement spans both the university and school environment, the alliance between the university and the placement school continues to be a very informal one. The *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) has called for action to address this issue. While recognising the valuable role placed by schools, the report proposes that a more formal collaborative partnership be established

between universities and schools. This new alliance would allow for research opportunities and high-quality pedagogical practices to be shared by colleagues across both organisations, thus ensuring that the learning needs of all participants in school placement are addressed. Nonetheless the present university-school partnership functions at the level of a Work Placement Model (Maandag et al. 2007) where schools host the student teachers but the responsibility for their learning and assessment falls on the shoulders of the university, as represented by the part-time placement tutors.

In the current university-school partnership, co-operating teachers are selected with little or no preparation for their role, often at short notice and without consultation, and sometimes availability rather than suitability is the deciding factor in their appointment to the role (Young et al. 2015; O'Donoghue et al. 2017; Hall et al. 2018). Both the *School placement in initial teacher education* (Hall et al. 2018) and the *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) have identified the lack of training and support as constituting a very real challenge in the prevailing school placement system. This fact was very evident in the study. In four out of the six case studies, the co-operating teachers were teaching another class group at the time of their respective student teacher's lesson. Since they were unable to observe their student teachers teaching, they could not act as effective supervisors for them.

This situation causes two problems. Firstly, these co-operating teachers were unable to provide feedback to student teachers on their teaching, and secondly, they were not available to meet with the placement tutors when they came to supervise the lesson. The participants report that if they did succeed in meeting with the co-operating teacher, it was usually a rushed affair occurring five minutes before lessons began and usually in the busy school corridor. Thus, conversations were brief, and the feedback provided was often generic, focused on the student teachers' engagement with the school community, with little insight into their teaching provided. All of the participants greatly value the role of the co-operating teacher, and the goodwill and generosity they extend to student teachers in challenging circumstances. Nonetheless, the placement tutor, tasked with the sole responsibility for grading the student teacher, has to do so with limited feedback from the co-operating teacher.

The existing informal university-school alliance has a direct impact upon the relationship between the part-time placement tutors and co-operating teachers. Infrequent school visits and the 'hit and miss' communication between placement tutors and co-operating teachers does not support the nurturing of relationships. Participants in this study recognise that returning to the same school each year helps to address this challenge, but in some schools the co-operating teacher is changed quite frequently, and there is no guarantee that the part-time placement tutor can be placed in the same schools each year. These findings support the claim by Aspden and McLachlan (2017) that that, while the theory of establishing productive relationships within the school placement triad is laudable, in reality, it is difficult to put this theory into practice. The best that can be said about the relationship between these two members of the school placement triad in this study is that it was professional and cordial, but fleeting and temporary.

7.1.5 The impact of placement tutors' part-time status

The SUPE programme relies heavily on part-time staff to fulfil the role of placement tutor. In the cohort of twenty-two placement tutors, twenty of them are part-time personnel. This is similar to many other initial teacher education programme in the Republic of Ireland (Sahlberg et al. 2012; Rose and Kenny 2014) and internationally (Slick 1997, 1998; Koerner et al. 2002; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Cochran-Smith 2003; Rodgers and Kiel 2007; Kosnik and Beck 2008; O'Donoghue and Harford 2010; Basmadjian 2011; Davy 2013; Zeichner and Biel 2015; Yendol-Hoppey et al. 2019). This part-time status impacts upon the work of these teacher educators in several ways. To begin with, while two of the participants in this study also teach part-time on the SUPE programme, the remaining four participants are not involved in any other aspect of the programme. Hence, they have minimal knowledge of the content and methodologies studied by their student teachers. This makes it difficult for them to help their student teachers to negotiate the theory-practice divide experienced by many of these novice teachers.

As part-time placement tutors, four of the participants have no contact with their student teachers, outside of the school placement setting. Their interaction with their student teachers consists of an initial short meeting in September, usually conducted with the group of student

teachers, and three supervision visits conducted during the year. Limited contact means that these participants have no previous knowledge of their student teachers. One of the participants indicated that lack of prior knowledge allows her to operate as an impartial assessor. However, the three other participants highlight this lack of knowledge means they have no contextual understanding of their student teachers. They believe this can make it difficult to fully determine the capabilities of some student teachers. As such these part-time tutors are walking 'blind' into the supervision setting (Slick 1997). The two participants who also teach the student teachers in other programme modules agree that previous connections with their student teachers provide valuable insights and allow for a more holistic perspective on each student teacher.

Currently the part-time role of these placement tutors makes it difficult to establish any meaningful relationship or connection with their student teachers. As evidenced in this study, all participants strive to be supportive of their student teachers and establish positive relationships with them. Notwithstanding this, school placement supervision visits which occur only three times a year, last for a limited duration of time, and carry assessment implications, are not conducive to fostering relationships. All participants endorsed the suggestion of additional meetings being provided outside of the supervision visits, indicating that these meeting would promote greater interaction and dialogue between placement tutors and student teachers. In addition, they would encourage a more collegial relationship with their student teachers. The literature clearly illustrates that student teachers focus primarily on the assessment role of the placement tutor since achieving a good grade in school placement is very important to them. In general, they are more focused on the grade, rather than the relationship with their placement tutor (Hall et al. 2018). The findings in this study reveal that the relationship between part-time placement tutors and their student teachers is professional but distant.

7.1.6 Third Space learning in school placement

The literature review in this research clearly elucidates the value of Third Space Learning. It also suggests that school placement is an ideal opportunity for such learning to occur; bringing together the placement tutor, representing the university, and the co-operating teacher, representing the school, and the student teacher positioned in both university and school. But this study reveals that the potential for Third Space learning is not realised in the current system of school placement. The findings provide substantial evidence that three-way meetings involving the placement tutor, student teacher and co-operating teacher do not occur in the SUPE school placement programme. In three out of five observations conducted for this study, co-operating teachers were not timetabled to be present at the student teacher's lesson. Participants report that this is a common occurrence in their supervision visits. While co-operating teachers were present during the other two lessons observed, both teachers choose not to observe the student teacher's lesson or attend the post-lesson conference that followed. Once again, participants disclosed that this is common practice.

Participants in this study would favour the opportunity to be involved in a Third Space meeting, since they believe it would provide for a more collaborative and integrated system of support for the student teachers. However, they are not surprised that it does not occur, since they report that traditionally, supervision visits in schools involve the placement tutor and student teacher, with minimal input from the co-operating teacher. The evidence suggests that facilitating a Third Space is currently not within the remit of the placement tutor. As outlined in Chapter 6, the existing informal university-school partnership does not support such an occurrence. A shift in how university-school partnerships are perceived and operationalised is needed in order to promote Third Space professional practice (Daza et al 2021).

The absence of something is as important as its presence, and the absence of Third Space learning is a telling indictment of the current binary system that exists in initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland. Despite long established partnerships between universities and schools, the fact remains that the lack of Third Space in school placement can be directly attributed to the informal university-school alliance whereby the education of

student teachers is seen as the responsibility of the university, and the school is merely the welcoming host. The proposal *in the Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) for a more formal university-school partnership which, in turn, can standardise the role of co-operating teachers offers hope for providing Third Space learning in school placement. Until this proposal is enacted upon, school placement supervision will continue to be a dyadic event consisting of two members only; the placement tutor and the student teacher.

7.1.7 The motivations of part-time placement tutors

Given the challenges outlined in the previous section, one might well ask; why be a placement tutor? The findings indicate that the part-time placement tutors in this study are highly motivated in their approach to their work and they enjoy their role. Participants highlight that a range of opportunities and experiences are made available to them in this work. They enjoy engaging with student teachers and witnessing them develop as novice teachers. New and different methodologies utilised by student teachers provide part-time placement tutors with added insights into teaching and learning, something which is particularly relevant to those still engaged in teaching in schools. While supervision visits to school occur infrequently, nonetheless these visits provide some occasions for participants to catch up with former colleagues. Participants indicate that team meetings organised for them in the SUPE programme provide opportunities for upskilling and further learning, and they enjoy connecting with placement tutor colleagues.

A reoccurring positive that emerges in the findings is that part-time placement tutors gain immense satisfaction from being contributors to the next generation of teachers, emphasising that they believe being able to ‘give something back’ to the profession is a worthwhile experience. This is an indication of the high calibre of the individuals involved in the role. Their desire to assist their student teachers to fulfil their potential as teachers was apparent in both interview and observations. Through their role, these part-time placement tutors remain a significant part of the cycle of teaching and learning.

It is interesting that participants did not mention the fiscal aspect of their role as being a contributory factor in their decision to be a part-time placement tutor. The reality is that the role is not well remunerated or secure; therefore it is unlikely that financial gain is a significant motivational factor for part-time placement tutors. Looking at the profile of the six participants in the study, it appears that at least four participants are not dependent on payment for this role as a main source of income. This is probably reflective of the wider population of part-time placement tutors, many of whom are retired teachers or school principals. In many ways this may actually work against this cohort of teacher educators since it perpetuates a system of casual, low paid contracts. There is some indication in the study that being associated with a university is a positive for part-time tutors. Perhaps it brings with it a kind of status and an opportunity to widen one's horizons beyond the classroom.

Whatever the reasons for committing to the role of placement tutor, the participants in this study appeared to be positive and highly motivated. This was clearly communicated in their interviews and witnessed in observations of their practice during supervision visits. They enjoyed engaging with members of the school community and their interaction with student teachers was positive, respectful and affirming.

7.1.8 Supporting part-time placement tutors

Stories of newly appointed teacher educators experiencing feelings of isolation and lack of support are common narratives in teacher education literature. The experiences of these part-time placement tutor participants are very interesting in this regard since, for the main part, they report that moving into the field of teacher education was a positive experience for them. Participants identify four sources of support which eased the transition to their new role and continue to help them to enact the role effectively:

1. A structured system of induction for placement tutors in the SUPE school placement programme provides part-time placement tutors with the necessary skill set to begin the task of supervising student teachers. The fact that a more experienced member of the SUPE placement tutor team accompanies novice placement tutors on their first supervision visit

gives them confidence as they step into their new role. It also provides a source of support for any issues that might arise in their initial experiences of supervision.

2. Ongoing continuing professional development opportunities help participants to develop greater confidence and competence in their practice each year. It also allows them to meet their colleagues in a face-to-face setting.
3. Ease of access to the SUPE school placement coordinator and the SUPE programme administrator provides one-to-one support for part-time placement tutors and ensures any issues that present are resolved effectively. An email or phone call is a quick and effective means of dealing with any problems and this reduces stress levels for the placement tutor.

The link between a successful transition to the role of placement tutor and the provision of an ongoing structured support system is an important message to take from this study. Without support there is a danger that these teacher educators will be left feeling adrift in a system which requires the ability to negotiate the boundaries of both the university and school communities. Such support is essential to help alleviate any feelings of being the 'disenfranchised outsider' Slick (1997) that part-time placement tutors may experience.

Furthermore, it is not enough to assume that a teaching biography fully equips part-time placement tutors with the full range of skills needed to supervise student teachers successfully. While a teaching biography is an asset, there is extensive evidence to indicate that relying on past teaching experiences alone is not sufficient to fulfil the tasks involved in this complex role. Part-time placement tutors need to extend their 'first order' teaching skills to embrace a new pedagogy of 'second order' teaching skills (Murray and Male 2005). The findings in this study clearly illustrate that there is little opportunity for these teacher educators to establish a teacher educator identity, so they continue to rely upon their teacher identity in their practice as placement tutors. The European Commission (2013, p.8) is clear in this regard, "In any profession, the issue of professional identity is important. The collective sense of self helps the group to shape the common aims, values and philosophy". Hence part-time placement tutors need to develop a professional identity beyond that of a teacher so they can fully embrace the role of teacher educator. Induction, ongoing professional development and a strong support system, are key ingredients for assisting them to fulfil that role.

7.2 Recommendations of the study

As with all qualitative case studies, this research offers 'fuzzy generalisations', lessons learned from one particular situation which can be used to inform other similar situations (Bassey 2001). While findings in this study emanate from the experiences of a small cohort of part-time placement tutors, these participants provide a good representation of the profile of part-time placement tutors engaged in initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland and other countries. All participants come with a teaching biography, typical of this particular group of teacher educators. Two of the participants are retired teachers, a further two have left the profession to pursue other part-time occupations related to teaching and learning, and the remaining two participants are currently involved in full-time teaching roles. Consequently, it is fair to conclude that the participants present a rich prosopography typical of this cohort of teacher educators, and 'transferability of findings' (Lincoln and Guba 1982, 2005; Mertens 2009) permits valid recommendations to be made.

The past decade has seen a proliferation of policy documents and reports published related to initial teacher education, all of which have direct implications for the work of part-time placement tutors. The Teaching Council (2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2013, 2020) has published a number of important policy documents. In addition, several significant reports have also been issued (Sahlberg et al. 2012; Hall et al. 2018; Sahlberg 2020; Teaching Council 2021a). It would seem that the time is ripe for new developments and directions to be taken in relation to the school placement component of initial teacher education. Nonetheless, when reviewing the professional development needs of university-based teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland, the research of Czerniawski et al. (2018, p.137) notes "While teacher education has become a policy priority in the last decade, the professional preparation of those working in teacher education has not been a focus". Furthermore, there is little or no consideration of the needs of part-time placement tutors in the policy documents and reports published since 2011. Ultimately, there is little evidence of research to date on this group of teacher educators. The recommendations offered here are an attempt to redress this omission and shine a light on part-time placement tutors.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research study, two sets of recommendations are offered. The first set is related to policy for all teacher educators, including part-time placement tutors, and the second set refers to practices specific to part-time placement tutors.

7.2.1 Recommendations for policy

1. *That a national body or association for teacher educators be established in the Republic of Ireland:*

   There is currently no association representing teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland. Two examples of such organisations are the Flemish Association of Teacher Educators (VELOC) and the Dutch Association of Teacher Educators (VELON). VELOC provides programmes for teacher educators and mentors, a data base of researchers and standards of competencies necessary for effective teacher educators (VELOC 2012; European Commission 2013). Similarly, VELON sets out the fundamental principles of the profession, along with four competency areas expected of all teacher educators, both in university and schools (Koster and Dengerink 2008; European Commission 2013). The foundation for a teacher educator association has already been established within the Irish teacher education community. The National Forum for Teacher Education and Teacher Educators was launched in November 2017 by a group of Irish university-based teacher educators. The aim of the Forum is twofold; to provide a space for teacher educators across the Republic of Ireland to connect and share resources, and to develop a platform for teacher education that could contribute to teacher education policy (McPhail 2019). The Forum has been a valuable source of support to those teacher educators who have chosen to engage with its seminars and meetings. However, it is not an officially established organisation and, though welcoming of all teacher educators, membership is taken up by some, but not all Irish teacher educators. A more structured and official association needs to be convened, building on the Forum organisation, with representatives from all initial teacher education providers, and relevant organisations such as the Department of Education, The Higher Education Association and the Teaching Council.

2. *That a national set of standards of conduct and practice be developed for teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland:*

   Teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland are not required to register with a professional body (Dolan and Kenny 2014). The Teaching Council offers a Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council 2016b) and the Graduate Teachers Standard for student teachers (Teaching Council 2020). It also outlines the roles and responsibilities of placement tutors in school placement (Teaching Council 2013, 2020) and the staffing requirements for school placement (Teaching Council 2020). However, the Teaching Council provides no policy to indicate the professional standards and competencies required by teacher educators. Examples of such policies introduced elsewhere include the Flemish Teacher Educator Development Profile in the Netherlands (Flemish Association of Teacher Educators 2012), The European Commission's Professional Competences and Quality (European Commission 2013) and the Standards for Teacher Educators developed by the Association for Teacher Educators (1992) in the United States. Creating a set of national standards for teacher educators in the Republic of Ireland would help provide a more uniform approach in the education of student teachers within the many teacher education programmes that currently exist in the Irish system.

3. *That the prevailing university-school alliance be made more formal, promoting equal partnership between both organisations where the roles of both school-based and university-based teacher educators are clearly defined and supported:*

   This recommendation is also supported by the findings of the *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a, p.7) which advocates that "structures at the national level to facilitate quality and collaborative engagement in school placement" be developed so that universities and schools are afforded opportunities to work more closely together, sharing research and resources and promoting effective high quality teaching practices for both student and practising teachers. It is proposed that such a development would occur in tandem with the development of programmes of continuing professional development for co-operating teachers in school so that they could be better prepared for their role (Teaching Council 2021a). The latter, in particular, would enhance the interaction between placement tutors and co-operating teachers. In addition, it would provide an opportunity for a

Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) to occur in school placement where placement tutors, co-operating teachers and student teachers could meet and learn together. Recent Irish research, based on interviews with student teachers, placement tutors, co-operating teachers and school management, highlights the lack of "a systematic and coherent approach to enabling alliances between schools and universities involved in initial teacher education" (Farrell 2021, p. 11). It is encouraging to note that the schools involved in this research project indicated a willingness to become participants in a Third Space of mutual learning (Farrell 2021). Promoting a formal university-school partnership would also ensure that placement tutors are brought into the school community of practice, as legitimate members (Lave and Wenger 1991) who can contribute to teaching and learning within the community.

7.2.2 Recommendations for practice

1. *That a national program of induction and support for part-time placement tutors be developed:*

   The findings in this research clearly indicate that part-time placement tutors value the induction and ongoing professional development programmes which equip them to negotiate the complexity of this dual role. Access to these professional development opportunities is key to ensuring all part-time placement tutors can move from teachers, to teacher educators. Initial teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland are greatly dependant on part-time placement tutors to staff their school placement programmes. Development of a national programme of induction and continuing professional development would ensure consistency of supervision within, and across, programmes of initial teacher education in the country. This would also address the claim by many student teachers that individual placement tutors adopt different approaches to school placement supervision (Clarke et al. 2012; Hall et al. 2018). The *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) recommends that a national data base of placement tutors be developed to assist in school placement programmes in different geographical locations across the country. Ensuring that all placement tutors adhere to the same set of guidelines when supervising student teachers is an essential part of such a development.

2. *That a structured support system be provided for part-time placement tutors within programmes of initial teacher education*:

   This research highlights that infrequent visits to the university, and lack of participation in the initial teacher education programme beyond school placement, means that most part-time placement tutors have limited knowledge of the programme of study undertaken by their student teachers and they experience very little connection to the university that employs them. The former limits their ability to assist their student teachers to make connections between the theory and practice of teaching needed to promote effective practice. The latter factor results in little opportunity for them to become part of a community of practice within the initial teacher education programmes. Involvement in such a community of practice would offer opportunities for part-time placement tutors to develop their professional identity as teacher educators and become involved in research projects which would, in turn, greatly enhance their professional learning. At a minimum, part-time placement tutors should be afforded a designated space which they can access if required to meet with student teachers or placement tutor colleagues in the university setting. Somewhere in the university campus that represents recognition of their importance in the programme. Furthermore, access to one key figure such as the school placement coordinator is essential for these part-time teacher educators to feel connected to the programme and to assist them to deal with the challenges they may face in fulfilling their role. This, in turn, would greatly reduce the feelings of isolation experienced by many part-time placement tutors in the current system.

3. *That part-time placement tutors be afforded increased opportunities to engage with their student teachers:*

   The literature clearly communicates that the relationship between placement tutors and student teachers is key to a successful school placement experience for both (Smith and Levi-Ari 2005; Caries and Almeida 2007; Fernadez and Erbilgin 2009; Cuenca 2010b; Caires et al. 2011; Asplin and Marks 2013). It is difficult for part-time placement tutors to build substantial relationships with their student teachers in a system of limited school supervision visits and little interaction outside of these visits. The participants in this study would all welcome the opportunity for further engagement with student teachers, particularly since they do not teach these students on the initial teacher

education programme. Extending the time allocation for supervision visits would enable placement tutors to spend more time with student teachers in the post-lesson conference which occurs after the lesson. This would allow space for more student contribution to the reflection upon practice. In addition, meeting with student teachers outside of school visits would enable part-time placement tutors to get to know their students and avail of contextual knowledge about student teachers which could be used to better support them in their journey of learning to teach. One of the positives of the recent Covid experience in education has been the lessons learned regarding the use of digital platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams to conduct effective online meetings and tutorials. This resource could be brought into school placement programmes to facilitate further engagement between part-time placement tutors and their student teachers.

7.3 Limitations of the study

As with all research, there are limitations in my study which merit consideration, namely:

1. The research methodology and design
2. My position in the research setting

7.3.1 The research methodology and design

There is much evidence to support the value of the singular, in depth, contextual focus of the case study method of research (Creswell et al. 2007; Denscombe 2010; Thomas 2010; Armour and Griffiths 2012; Green et al. 2012; Flick 2014; Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls 2014)). This method provided a means of interrogating, at a deep level, the professional lives and experiences of the six part-time placement tutors in this research study. But the specificity of the research methodology presents certain challenges. Firstly, the research is confined to a small sample size of placement tutors in one initial teacher education programme in one university in the Republic of Ireland. Secondly, the research sample consists of six case studies of Physical Education placement tutors in that programme. I was aware of this limitation from the start, and I was careful to use purposeful sampling to select six part-time placement tutors who had "the requisite knowledge and experience of the phenomena being researched"

(Bradshaw et al. 2017, p. 3). Thus, the participants' profiles were consistent with part-time Physical Education placement tutors nationally, and internationally.

My choice of data collection and analysis have inbuilt limitations. Interviews, observations and research journal are by their nature subjective in design. The interviewer may pose certain questions that can influence the outcome, and the interviewees may respond in ways that are biased by their own experience and interpretations, as well as their relationship with the interviewer. The nature of any journal is to provide a space for individuals to record life's events and their interpretations of same. This was also the case in my research journal, where I recorded and reflected on each stage of my data collections and analysis, not simply describing events, but also writing to make sense of them in a reflective and reflexive manner. Hence, subjectivity and personal interpretation were unavoidable. Despite this, I also took comfort in the words of Orange (2016 p.2176) who states, "Being aware of their own responses to the data they collect as they collect it, assists researchers in determining how much their reaction to the data may influence their analysis and interpretation". As a consequence, throughout my data collection and analysis I constantly examined the impact my opinions, responses, assumptions and actions might have upon my research study.

7.3.2 The researcher in the research setting

It cannot be ignored that my position as coordinator of the SUPE school placement programme conferred a certain hierarchical status on me, the researcher, and with that came a certain power dynamic. While my position provided me with complete ease of access to placement tutors, student teachers and schools; there was always the possibility of a power relationship being present between my research participants and me (Foucault 2000). I was very mindful of this issue throughout my data collection and I took several steps to ensure an open and transparent relationship with my participants was promoted. To this end, I provided participants with Research Information and Agreed Consent documentation (Appendices 10 and 11) before interviews and observations were conducted. Throughout the data collection phase I continually checked in all participants to ensure they were willing to continue to the next stage of data collection. I met with student teachers in order to set up observation sites and provided

them with information to assure them that my observations would not intrude upon their teaching, nor impact their grade (Appendices 12 and 13). Despite these steps and precautions undertaken, it would be naive and disingenuous to fail to recognise that my personal connections in the research setting, while helpful to me as researcher, may have been a constraining factor for some of my research participants.

7.4 The study contributions

This research is set against the backdrop of significant changes in initial teacher education in the Republic of Ireland. Teaching and teacher education have become a 'policy problem' (Cochran-Smith 2004; 2006; 2010), and a subject of scrutiny and debate internationally (OECD 2005; Early 2008; Furlong 2009 et al.; Clarke et al. 2012; Sahlberg et al. 2012; Cochran-Smith and Villegras 2014; European Commission 2015; O' Brien and Furlong 2015; Menter 2016). In many countries where economic growth and prosperity are primary goals, education is seen as the means to achieving these goals (Cobb 1999). Within the Republic of Ireland there is "a strong assumption that a high-quality education system is vital if Ireland is to grow and thrive within a globalised knowledge society" (O'Brien and Furlong 2015, p.383). This limited view of education sees students as a potential workforce for the country, and many government policy makers see teachers as the 'linchpin' of economic success (Cochran-Smith, 2005, 2008; Cochran-Smith et al. 2012). 2015). As such, student teachers are viewed as the "primary stakeholders of education", since they are the future teachers of the new generations to come (Smith 2016, p.23).

Given the general consensus that school placement is an essential component in the education of student teachers, this study has much to offer in terms of insight into the world of school placement, through the eyes of part-time placement tutors. Burn and Badiali (2015 p.419) assert that placement tutors "may be the most undervalued actors in the entire teacher preparation equation when one considers the tasks they perform". Positioned at the interface of the initial teacher education programme and the school placement site, placement tutors are tasked with enacting a multifaceted role; representing the university; supporting the placement

schools and supervising student teachers. Therefore, placement tutors are "incredibly important to the professional preparation of teachers" (Burns et al. 2016a, p.42).

This research study addresses the current dearth of research on placement tutors and provides evidence that they are central figures in the preparation of future teachers, and key stakeholders in effective teacher education programmes (Albasheer et al. 2008). The development of a 'publish or perish' culture in teacher education programmes in the Republic of Ireland (Gleeson et al. 2017; O'Donoghue et al. 2017; MacPhail and O'Sullivan 2019) has led to a situation where the supervision of student teachers on school placement is now predominantly conducted by a large number of part-time placement tutors (Gleeson 2015). The supervision of student teachers is "too important to leave to chance" (Wright et al. 2012, p.706). Understanding those who supervise student teachers; the methods they employ and the impact of these methods on student teachers is critical to ensuring effective initial teacher education programmes (Burns and Badiali 2015). The past two decades have seen new developments related to policy and practice in teacher education in the Republic of Ireland and abroad. Nevertheless, "who teacher educators are, their lives, and their work, continue to be a somewhat underexplored area internationally, while remaining a 'secret garden' in the Irish context" (O'Brien and Furlong 2015, p.379). By shining a light on part-time placement tutors, this doctoral study ensures that they are given due consideration and affirmation.

7.5 Future research directions

Having now completed this empirical study one can conclude that the original rationale for the PhD (Section 1.2) is well justified. What emerges from the fieldwork and its analysis, as elaborated in detail throughout this thesis, is the complexity and diversity of the role of the current part-time placement tutor who is neither a full time member of the academic community in the university nor a member of the school community, with all the consequent identities associated with those positions. The literature analysed in Chapter Two and brought back into discussion of the findings proved immensely valuable in interrogating and conceptualizing the empirical evidence assembled. Despite the in-depth empirical work of this thesis, together with the valuable insights from such studies as Slick 1997, 1998; Borko and Mayfield 1995; Zeichner 2002, 2005, 2010; Gimbert and Nolan 2003; Kosnik and Beck 2008; Basmadjian

2011; Cuenca 2010a, 2010b; Burns and Badiali 2015; Hall et al. 2018; Walsh and Dolan, there is considerable scope for further research as will be explained in this section. Furthermore, the proposals advanced in the *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) suggest that this the timing of this research is auspicious since many of the suggestions offered can provide valuable knowledge pertinent to these proposals.

The following list provides an overview of various areas of future interest worth pursuing:

1. *Student teachers' perspectives and experiences of supervision by part-time placement tutors in school placement:*

   The remit of this study was to tell the story of part-time placement tutors' experiences in school placement. It would be interesting to gather evidence regarding the stories of the student teachers they supervise. In particular it would be informative to explore what are the positives and challenges for student teachers in terms of being assessed and assisted by someone with whom they have no previous relationship, and limited engagement during the school placement year.

2. *Enhancing links between the SUPE school placement programme and partner schools*:

   Considering the focus of the *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a) on the university-school partnership in initial teacher education, it would be useful to investigate how a more formal alliance between one initial teacher education programme and respective partner schools might develop. This would necessitate input from all stakeholders, including placement tutors, co-operating teachers, student teachers and school management. The findings in this study clearly indicate that currently, part-time placement tutors operate at the fringes of the school community of practice. This enquiry would also help address ways in which these placement tutors might contribute as members of the school community.

3. *Exploring Third Space Learning in school placement:*

   Following on from the development of a closer university-school alliance outlined above, exploring a three-way meeting between a selection of part-time placement tutors, co-operating teachers and student teachers would be a valuable means of

promoting Third Space Learning in the SUPE school placement programme. Lessons provided by the research of Higgins et al. (2013), Helleve and Ulvik (2019), Jackson and Burch (2019), Beck (2020), Elton-Chalcraft et al. (2020) and Daza et al. 2021 would provide support for such a research study.

4. *Providing opportunities for part-time placement tutors to become involved in the wider SUPE programme:*

   Similar to the school setting, part-time placement tutors in this study indicate that they do not feel part a community of practice in the university. In addition, limited involvement with the initial teacher education programme has a direct impact upon their knowledge of what their student teachers study. Exploring possibilities for closer involvement with the programme through opportunities for research projects, tutorials work with student teachers, interaction with full-time programme staff members might provide answers to this question. It would also assist them to develop a professional identity that enables them to move from identifying primarily as teachers to teacher educators.

5. *Examining the induction and programmes of continuing professional development provided for part-time placement tutors in initial teacher institutions in the Republic of Ireland*:

   International literature indicates that placement tutors are appointed through various routes, and induction and continuing professional development for this group of practitioners is often limited or completely overlooked. To date there has been no research conducted into how, and if these supports are provided for part-time placement tutors in Republic of Ireland. Since many Irish initial teacher education programmes are greatly dependant on this cohort for their school placement programmes, it would be a very worthwhile endeavour to investigate a representative selection of these programmes to ascertain the levels of support provided. This research could contribute to the development of a national programme of induction and professional development for part-time placement tutors, which in turn would greatly assist the establishment of the national base of placement tutors proposed in *Report and Action Plan of the School Placement Working Group* (Teaching Council 2021a)

7.5 A reflection upon the research journey

My journey into teacher education began as a student teacher of Physical Education and English in Thomond College of Education in the early eighties. Little did I know that, over twenty years later, I would become involved in the supervision of student teachers.

Shortly after commencing my current role as school placement co-ordinator in 2012, I was afforded the opportunity to undertake my doctoral studies. Teacher educator-researchers should have two goals, "to improve their own practice and knowledge about teacher education, and also to contribute to the broader knowledge-base on teacher education" (Tack and Vanderlinde 2024, p. 300 citing Cochran-Smith 2003 and Loughran 2014). My doctoral studies have provided me with the opportunity to achieve both goals. My experience as an emerging researcher has helped me to develop a 'researcherly disposition' (Tack and Vanderlinde 2014) and assisted me to transition from a teacher educator to a teacher educator and researcher.

A 'researcherly disposition' has three interrelated components "an ability to conduct research; a sensitivity to research occasions; and an inclination towards research" (Tack and Vanderlinde 2014, p. 302). When reflecting on the focus of my research I concluded that I wanted to undertake a project that would enhance my practice in my role. My past experience of being a part-time placement tutor was significant in contributing to my choice of research since it gave me an appreciation of the value of these teacher educators, and the need to provide support for them to negotiate the challenges that part-time status presents for them. As coordinator of a team, consisting for the main part of part-time placement tutors, I decided that what I learned from my research could greatly assist me to support the team. I also concluded that the team of part-time placement tutors would provide a ready-made group of research participants that I could study in situ, by listening to their stories and exploring their needs and requirements. Accordingly, I identified my 'research occasion'.

As anticipated, my doctoral journey has provided me with significant learning, not only about my research participants but about myself as an emerging researcher. It has been a long, challenging, and stimulating journey during which I have shifted in my practice as a teacher educator to a teacher educator and researcher. It has impressed upon me the value of research both in terms of my professional development and my contribution to research in my field of practice. As a teacher, teacher educator and researcher I believe learning is an ongoing and lifelong journey. This doctoral research has been an immensely valuable part of my journey. The American political theorist and philosopher, Hannah Arendt, wrote "With word and deed we insert ourselves into the world" (2013, p. 176). I am deeply grateful for the opportunity this research has afforded me to contribute to the world of teacher education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Proforma Feedback Document 1 (2014-2015)

	SUPE Feedback 2014-15					
	Student;	**School;**				**Visit Date;**
	Class;	**Lesson Topic;**				**No. of students**
	This feedback is intended to affirm what you are doing well and give suggestions that could enhance/progress the lesson					
	Evidence of	**V Good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**N/A**	**Comment/Suggestions for improvement**
Planning	Up to date Teaching Practice file					
	Quality resources - Slides, worksheets etc					
	Thoughful planning					
	Conceptual clarity -Schemes & Lessons					
	Creativity					
	Literacy & numeracy					
	Extras e.g. school policies, SN info					
Knowledge	Shared LO & expectations					
	Prior knowledge check					
	Subject knowledge understanding					
	Learning difficulties anticipated					
	Links to everyday experiences					
	Communication clarity					
	Extending knowledge					
Pedagogy	Correcting H/W strategy					
	Resources integrated					
	Coherence of lesson/Methodological skills					
	Energetic dialogue & clarity					
	Matched student centred activities					
	Student engagement					
	AfL strategies such as *pair work, traffic lights, mini-whiteboards etc*					
Assessment	**Variety of assessment strategies** - self, peer, *wait-time, open questions etc*					
	Student understanding & learning					
	Using IT effectively					
	Focus on learning outcomes					
	Well structured recording student progress					
	Differentiation					
	Student enjoyment					
	Evidence of	**V Good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**N/A**	**Comment/Suggestions for improvement**
Classroom	Overall management					
	Seating arrangement, rules & routines					
	Interpersonal skills					
	Student safety & awareness of school policy					
	Timing & lesson pace					
	Lesson recapping/Learn check					
	Presence - movement, tone, actions					
Reflection	Post lesson reflection					
	Weekly reflection					
	Inquiry stance					
	Linking with research					
	Linking with lectures/tutorials					
	Self-appraisal & progression					
	bridging theory-practice gap					
Professionalism	Attitude - positive language					
	Responsibility					
	Integration in school life					
	Commitment					
	Respect for students					
	Interest in students					
	Humour					
	Confidence					
	Seamless progression					
	Balance between teacher and student input					
	Classroom observation					

APPENDIX 2

Proforma Feedback Document 2 (2015-2016)

SUPE Supervision Feedback 2015-16

Student Teacher:_____ **School:**_____

Class:_____ **Topic:**_____ **Supervision Visit Date & Number :**_____

This feedback is intended to affirm what you are doing well and to provide suggestions that may enhance/progress your teaching, and your pupils' learning.

	Criteria	Comment/Suggestions for improvement	Overall
Planning	Provides an up-to-date Placement File & Lesson Plan.		Excellent
	Prepares an appropriate and coherent Scheme and Lesson Plan (Learning Outcomes,Tasks, Assessment).		
	Utilises high quality materials and resources (IT where appropriate).		
	Revises and adapts Schemes and Lesson Plans where appropriate.		
	Evidence of a relationship between written plan and actual lesson; flexibility in use of plan.		
	Targets literacy and numeracy.		Poor
Management	Maintains a safe, disciplined and ordered learning environment.		Excellent
	Establishes rules, routines and efficient beginning and endings.		
	Uses space, equipment and resources efficiently.		
	Maintains good timing and pacing thoughout the lesson.		
	Demonstrates a good presence (tone, movement, actions).		
	Creates a positive classroom atmosphere which promotes learner self-esteem.		Poor
Pedagogy	Uses a variety of pedogogical approaches(instruction, guided discovery, think-pair-share etc.)		Excellent
	Demonstrates effective questioning techniques (higher order, pause time, redirect etc).		
	Provides positive and constructive feedback to pupils.		
	Fosters independent and cooperative learning.		
	Recognises and utilises teaching moments where appropriate.		
	Structures and differentiates tasks effectively (considering the needs of less and more able pupils).		Poor
Knowledge	Appropriateness of content to the class group.		Excellent
	Accuracy of factual knowledge, language & terms.		
	Content is linked to, and promotes transfer of learning within the subject/to other subjects.		
	Conveys knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, subject to students.		
	Task difficulties identified and addressed.		
	Relates lesson content to life-experiences (where possible).		Poor
Assessment	Employs an AfL approach which informs learners' learning: - shares learning outcomes - identifies features of quality - provides focused feedback to learners		Excellent
	Uses formative and summative assessment to inform learning (adjusts next lesson plan, gives feedback to learners).		
	Uses a range of assessment tools (observation, questioning, task cards, worksheets, exit cards) which involves both teacher and learners.		
	Sets and monitors class and homework assignments to enhance learning when appropriate.		Poor
Reflection	Shows evidence of ongoing Post Lesson reflection and Weekly reflection.		Excellent
	Links reflective writing to research, lectures and tutorials.		
	Critically reflects on own practice to improve the quality of teaching and learning		
	Demonstrates an ability to reflect-on- action (look back on the lesson), and to reflect-in-action (react to a situation during the lesson).		
	Shows evidence of engagement with mentor/tutor feedback and application of feedback in followup lessons.		Poor
Professionalism	Demonstrates core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appropriate appearance and behaviour).		Excellent
	Upholds the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct (Repect, Care, Integrity, Trust - see SP Handbook)		
	Engages in positive collaborations with cooperating teacher and extended school community.		
	Maintains consistency of application, quality of work, enthusiasm and intiative.		
	Establishes and maintains ongoing and appropriate communication and dialogue with Placement tutor.		Poor

APPENDIX 3

Proforma Feedback Document 3 (2016-2019)

SUPE Supervision Feedback 2016-17 (2017-18, 2018-19)

[first copy to student teacher, second copy to placement tutor, third copy to SP coordinator]

Student Teacher:_____ **Tutor:**_____

School: _____ **Class** _____ **Topic/Theme** _____

Supervision Number: _____ **Date:** _____

This feedback is intended to affirm what you are doing well and to provide suggestions that may enhance/progress your teaching, and your pupils' learning.

	Criteria	Comment/Suggestions for improvement
Planning	Provides an up-to-date Placement File & Lesson Plan.	
	Prepares an appropriate and coherent Scheme and Lesson Plan (Learning Intentions,Tasks, Assessment).	
	Utilises high quality materials and resources (IT where appropriate).	
	Revises and adapts Schemes and Lesson Plans where appropriate.	
	Evidence of a relationship between written plan and actual lesson; flexibility in use of plan.	
	Targets literacy and numeracy.	
Management	Maintains a safe, disciplined and ordered learning environment.	
	Establishes rules, routines and efficient beginning and endings.	
	Uses space, equipment and resources efficiently.	
	Maintains good timing and pacing thoughout the lesson.	
	Demonstrates a good presence (tone, movement, actions).	
	Creates a positive classroom atmosphere which promotes learner self-esteem.	
pedagogy	Uses a variety of pedogogical approaches (instruction, guided discovery, think-pair-share etc.)	
	Demonstrates effective questioning techniques (higher order, pause time, redirect etc).	
	Provides positive and constructive feedback to pupils.	
	Fosters independent and cooperative learning.	
	Recognises and utilises teaching moments where appropriate.	
	Structures and differentiates tasks effectively (considering the needs of less and more able pupils).	

Student Teacher:_____	Placement Tutor:_____	Supervision No ____	Date _____
Knowledge	Appropriateness of content to the class group.		
	Accuracy of factual knowledge, language & terms.		
	Content is linked to, and promotes transfer of learning within the subject/to other subjects.		
	Conveys knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, subject to students.		
	Task difficulties identified and addressed.		
	Relates lesson content to life-experiences (where possible).		
Assessment	Employs an AfL approach which informs learners' learning: - shares learning intentions - identifies criteria for success - provides focused feedback to learners		
	Uses formative and summative assessment to inform learning (adjusts next lesson plan, gives feedback to learners).		
	Uses a range of assessment tools (observation, questioning, task cards, worksheets, exit cards) which involves both teacher and learners.		
	Sets and monitors class and homework assignments to enhance learning when appropriate.		
Reflection	Shows evidence of ongoing Post Lesson reflection and Weekly reflection.		
	Links reflective writing to research, lectures and tutorials.		
	Critically reflects on own practice as evident in improved quality of teaching and learning.		
	Demonstrates an ability to reflect-on- action (look back on the lesson), and to reflect-in-action (react to a situation during the lesson).		
	Shows evidence of engagement with mentor/tutor feedback and application of feedback in followup lessons.		
Professionalism	Demonstrates core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appropriate appearance and behaviour).		
	Upholds the Teaching Council's Code of Professional Conduct (Repect, Care, Integrity, Trust - see SP Handbook).		
	Engages in positive collaborations with cooperating teacher and extended school community.		
	Maintains consistency of application, quality of work, enthusiasm and intiative.		
	Establishes and maintains ongoing and appropriate communication and dialogue with Placement tutor.		

APPENDIX 4

Proforma Feedback Document 4 (2019-2020)

SUPE Supervision Feedback 2019-20

[first copy to student teacher, second copy to placement tutor, third copy to SP coordinator

Student Teacher:_____ **Tutor:**_____

School: _____ **Class** _____ **Topic/Theme** _____

Supervision Number: _____ **Date:** _____

This document provides feedback to affirm what you are doing well, and to provide suggestions that may enhance/progress your teaching, and your pupils' learning. The document should be completed with reference to the Student Assessment Recor (SAR) rubric.

PEDAGOGY	

Student Teacher:_____ **Placement Tutor:**_____ **Supervision No** ___ **Date** _____

REFLECTION	
Professionalism	

	Positives today	Challenges to address
Student Teacher		
Placement Tutor		
STUDENT TEACHER: _____ DATE:_____		PLACEMENT TUTOR: _____ DATE: _____

APPENDIX 5

Student Assessment Rubric (SAR) 2019-2020

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR PEDAGOGY

1H - 70+ EXCELLENT	• The ST's philosophy of education is **well defined, strongly consistent with the philosophy underpinning JC and SC,** and **consistently evident** in planning, teaching and assessment; • The lessons displayed a **clear and strong coherence** between planning and teaching, showing **innovation**, **flexibility, inclusion**, where relevant **embedding technology** and **diverse** mediums of communication, **clearly supported** on formal formative assessment (visible in planning documents and ongoing evidence of learning), **eventually moving towards summative assessment** if applicable; • There was **strong evidence** of the ST **moving along the teaching-learning continuum** (director-scaffolder-facilitator) as appropriate to the lesson, ensuring **learners were given opportunities** to contribute to and/or direct their learning; • Rules and routines were evident in the lesson through **on-task behaviour** and **considerable engagement** from learners, with the ST **securing smooth transitions**, **active supervision behaviours**, and a **positive relational environment**; • Learning intentions were **explicitly** stated for, and **consistently** revisited with, learners, and where appropriate, **linked** to literacy and numeracy and **relevant** key skills.
2:1 - 60-69 VERY GOOD	• The ST's philosophy of education is **defined, consistent with the philosophy underpinning JC and SC,** and **generally evident** in planning, teaching and assessment; • The lesson displayed a **clear coherence** between planning and teaching, showing **flexibility and inclusion**, where relevant **including technology** and **diverse** mediums of communication, with **elements of** formal formative assessment (visible in planning documents and/or ongoing evidence of learning); • There was **clear evidence** of the ST moving along the teaching-learning continuum (director-scaffolder-facilitator) as appropriate to the lesson, ensuring **learners were given opportunities** to contribute to, and/or direct their learning; • Rules and routines were evident in the lesson through **on-task behaviour** and **consistent engagement** from students, with the ST **securing active supervision behaviours** and a **positive relational environment**; • Learning intentions were **somewhat explicitly** stated for, and **revisited** with, learners, and where appropriate**, linked** to literacy and numeracy and **relevant** key skills.
2:2 - 50-59 GOOD	• The ST's philosophy of education is **considered, generally consistent with the philosophy underpinning JC and SC,** and **generally evident** in planning, teaching and assessment; • The lesson displayed **a clear coherence** between planning and teaching, showing **flexibility and some elements of inclusion**, where relevant **including some elements of technology** and **other mediums** of communication, with **few elements of** formal formative assessment (visible in planning documents or ongoing evidence of learning); • There was **evidence** of the ST moving along the teaching-learning continuum (director-scaffolder-facilitator) as appropriate to the lesson, ensuring **learners were occasionally given opportunities** to contribute to, and/or or direct their learning; • Rules and routines were evident in the lesson through **mostly on-task** behaviour and some engagement from learners, with the ST **securing active supervision behaviours** and a **positive relational environment**; • Learning intentions were **somewhat explicitly** stated for, and **sometimes revisited** with, learners and where appropriate, **somewhat linked** to literacy and numeracy and **some relevant** key skills.
Pass - 40-49 SATISFACTORY	• The ST's philosophy of education is **considered, somewhat consistent with the philosophy underpinning JC and SC,** and **somewhat evident** in planning, teaching and assessment;

	• The lesson displayed **coherence** between planning, and teaching, showing **some flexibility,** where relevant **occasionally including technology** and **other mediums** of communication, **potentially supported by limited elements of** formative assessment (visible in planning documents or ongoing evidence of learning); • There was **some evidence** of the ST moving along the teaching-learning continuum (director-scaffolder-facilitator) as appropriate to the lesson, hence l**earners were given little and limited opportunities** to contribute to, and/or direct their learning; • Rules and routines were evident in the lesson through **mostly on-task** behaviour and **limited** engagement from students, with the teacher securing active **supervision behaviours** and **generally positive relational environment**; • Learning intentions were **somewhat explicitly** stated for, and **sometimes revisited** with, learners and where appropriate, **somewhat implicitly** linked to literacy and numeracy, and **limited relevant** key skills.
0-39 FAIL	A fail is in given when the pedagogy of the ST is not ensuring fundamental health and safety conditions, and/or positive pedagogy to promote student learning.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR REFLECTION

1H - 70+ EXCELLENT	• The ST's development as a professional is **consistently defined** in Lesson and UoL reflections, **specifically** indicating **concrete** goals and action plans, **clearly related** to own philosophy of teaching and **critically self-evaluated**, **critically evaluating** students' learning and feedback; • The ST's Term Reflections on the engagement with the school community highlight a **critical analysis**, including **breath of evidence**, of the benefits gained from professional interactions with colleagues (observations, dialogues etc.) as well **discussion of** the value of the contributions made by the ST to the wider school community; • During the post-lesson conference, the ST is able to **critique** the lesson, demonstrating an ability to **explain and justify** significant learning moments, **self-evidenced and directed by the placement tutor**; • The ST uses a **wide range** of references (school policy, literature and lectures) to **enhance** reflections (**UoL** and Term).
2:1 - 60-69 VERY GOOD	• The ST's development as a professional is **defined** in Lesson and UoL reflections, indicating **concrete** goals and action plans, **related** to own philosophy of teaching**, self-evaluating**, and **evaluating** students' learning and feedback; • The ST's Term Reflections on the engagement with the school community highlight a **critical analysis**, including **some evidence**, of the benefits gained from professional interactions with colleagues (observations, dialogues etc.) as well as **explanation of** the value of the contributions made by the ST to the wider school community; • During the post-lesson conference, the ST is able to **critique** the lesson, demonstrating an ability to **explain and justify** significant learning moments **directed by the placement tutor;** • The ST uses a **range** of references (school policy, literature and lectures) to **enhance** reflections (**UoL** and Term).
2:2 - 50-59 GOOD	• The ST's development as a professional is **considered** in Lesson and UoL reflections, indicating **concrete** goals and action plans**, somewhat related** to own philosophy of teaching, **critically self-analysed**, and critically **analysing** students' learning and feedback; • The ST's Term Reflections on the engagement with the school community highlight an **analysis**, including **some evidence**, of the benefits gained from professional interactions with colleagues (observations, dialogues etc.) as well as **description of** the value of the contributions made by the ST to the wider school community;

	• During the post-lesson conference, the ST is able to **critique** the lesson, demonstrating an ability to **explain** significant learning moments **identified by the placement tutor**; • The ST uses a **range** of references (school policy, literature and lectures) to **support** reflections (**UoL** and Term).
Pass - 40-49 SATISFACTORY	• The STs development as a professional is **considered** in Lesson and UoL reflections, indicating **general** goals and action plans**, somewhat related** to own philosophy of teaching, **self-analysed**, and **analysing** their students' learning and feedback; • The ST's Term Reflections on their engagement with the school community highlight an **analysis**, including **limited evidence**, of the benefits gained from professional interactions with colleagues (observations, dialogues etc.) as well as **demonstration of** the value of the contributions made by the ST to the wider school community; • During the post-lesson conference, the ST is **somewhat able to critique** the lesson, demonstrating a **limited** ability to **explain some** significant learning moments **identified by the placement tutor**; • The ST uses a **limited** range of references (school policy, literature and lectures) to **support** reflections (**UoL** and Term). •
0-39 FAIL	A fail is in given when the ST demonstrates lack of engagement with the reflective process, limited analysis and supporting evidence, with no insight into future development.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR PROFESSIONALISM

1H - 70+ EXCELLENT	• The ST **consistently** exhibited an **excellent** standard of core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appearance, behaviour) in line with the Teacher's Code of Professional Conduct (Teaching Council 2012, p.6); • Feedback on the ST from the CT/SP/DP indicated **excellent** levels of engagement with advice/guidance offered, and with appropriate school requests for assistance, displaying a willingness to contribute to the school community throughout the school placement year; • The ST was **consistently professional** in **all dealings** with the placement tutor, including **submitting** assignments on time, responding to email communication and appraising the placement tutor of **all changes** that might affect teaching timetable; • The ST submitted a **minimum of 95%** of all weekly submissions to Canvas.
2:1 - 60-69 VERY GOOD	• The ST exhibited a **very good** standard of core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appearance, behaviour) in line with the Teacher's Code of Professional Conduct (Teaching Council 2012, p.6); • Feedback on the ST from the CT/SP/DP indicated **very good** levels of engagement with advice/guidance offered, and with appropriate school requests for assistance, displaying a willingness to contribute to the school community throughout the school placement year; • The ST was **professional** in **all dealings** with the placement tutor, including **submitting** assignments on time, responding to email communication and appraising the placement tutor of **all changes** that might affect teaching timetable; • The ST submitted between **85% and 94%** of all weekly submissions to Canvas.
2:2 - 50-59 GOOD	• The ST exhibited **good** standards of core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appearance, behaviour) in line with the Teacher's Code of Professional Conduct (Teaching Council 2012, p.6); • Feedback on the ST from the CT/SP/DP indicated **good** engagement with advice/guidance offered, and with appropriate school requests for assistance, displaying an **intention** to contribute to the school community throughout the school placement year;

	• The ST was **professional** in **dealings** with the placement tutor, including **submitting** assignments on time, responding to email communication and appraising the placement tutor of **most changes** that might affect teaching timetable; • The ST submitted between **70% and 84%** of all weekly submissions to Canvas.
Pass - 40-49 SATISFACTORY	• The ST exhibited **satisfactory** standards of core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appearance, behaviour) in line with the Teacher's Code of Professional Conduct (Teaching Council 2012, p.6); • Feedback on the ST from the CT/SP/DP indicated **satisfactory** engagement with advice/guidance offered, and with appropriate school requests for assistance, displaying **limited intention** to contribute to the school community throughout the school placement year; • The ST was **generally** professional in dealings with the placement tutor, including **generally submitting** assignments on time, responding to email communication and appraising the placement tutor of **most changes** that might affect teaching timetable; • The ST submitted between **50% and 69%** of all weekly submissions to Canvas.
0-39 FAIL	A fail is in given when the core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appearance, behaviour) of the ST are not in line with the Teacher's Code of Professional Conduct (Teaching Council 2012, p.6) /or when there is lack of engagement by the ST with the school community and/or the placement tutor.

APPENDIX 6

SAR Prompt Sheet for Supervision 2019-2020

SAR PROMPT SHEET FOR SUPERVISION VISITS

PEDAGOGY
• Philosophy of teaching & Learning (Related to JC & SC) • Planning, Teaching & Assessment • Teaching-Learning Continuum • Classroom management • Learning Intentions
REFLECTION
Evidence in PLR & UoLR: • Goals and action plans for professional development • Related to own philosophy • Critical evaluation of own learning and development • Critical evaluation of own learning and development Evidence during PLC: • Critique the lesson • Discuss and justify significant learning moments
PROFESSIONALISM
• Evidence of ST core professional values (punctuality, commitment, appearance, behaviour) • School Report (levels of engagement, contribution to the schools) • Engagement with tutor (assignments, emails, notifications of changes) • Weekly uploads to Canvas

APPENDIX 7

Grade Rules for School Placement 2019-2020

RULES FOR GRADING OF SCHOOL PLACEMENT PEDAGOGY, REFLECTION AND PROFESSIONALISM

The following grading rules apply to marking the core SP elements of pedagogy, reflection and professionalism, using the specific rubric allocated to each element. *Percentage ratios are used to provide clarification and as approximate measures of the required distribution and weighing of specific grade indicators that qualify a candidate for the awarding of a particular grade threshold.*

MARK	GRADE RULE
Over 90%	ST shows all 1H indicators **consistently** across all visits, while **continuing to address self-challenges**.
Over 80%	ST shows a combination of most 1H indicators (80%) and some 2:1 (20%), showing **considerable** progression **consistently** across the visits.
Over 70%	ST shows a combination of 1H (65%) and 2:1(35%) indicators, showing **considerable** progression **consistently** across the visits.
Over 60%	ST shows all 2:1 indicators, OR a combination of 2:1 indicators (70%) and none below 2:2 (30%), showing **considerable** progression across the visits.
Over 50%	ST shows all 2:2 indicators OR a combination of indicators between 2.1 (30%) and a range of 2.2 and Pass, showing **progression** across the visits.
Over 40%	ST shows all Pass indicators OR a combination of indicators between 2:2(65%) and Pass (35%), showing **limited** progression across the visits.
Below 40%	A fail is given in any, or all, of the three core elements of Pedagogy, Reflection and Professionalism as outlined in the SAR Rubric for each element.

APPENDIX 8

SREC Ethical Approval Application

UCC Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC)

ETHICS APPROVAL FORM

Name of applicant	Patricia Fitzpatrick Date 3rd October 2014
Contact Details	Phone 0861062337 Email trishfitzpatrick@ucc.ie
Department/Unit	Sports Studies and Physical Education, School of Education
Title of project	An Investigation of the Recruitment and Learning Support Provision for Physical Education School Placement Tutors on a University Initial Teacher Education programme in the Republic of Ireland.

		YES	NO
1	Do you consider that this project has significant ethical implications?		*
2	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	√	
3	Will participation be voluntary?	√	
4	Will you obtain informed consent in writing from participants?	√	
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason, and (where relevant) omit questionnaire items to which they do not wish to respond?	√	
6	Will data be treated with full confidentiality / anonymity (as appropriate)?	√	
7	If results are published, will anonymity be maintained, and participants not identified?	√	
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?	√	
9	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?		√
10	Will your participants include schoolchildren (under 18 years of age)?		√
11	Will your participants include people with learning or communication difficulties?		√
12	Will your participants include patients?		√
13	Will your participants include people in custody?		√
14	Will your participants include people engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug taking; illegal Internet behaviour)?		√
15	Is there a realistic risk of participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress?		√

16	If yes to 15, has a proposed procedure, including the name of a contact person, been given? (see no 23)		

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

17. Aims of the project

This thesis seeks to:

a) Explore the possible tension caused by the placement tutor's dual role of assessor and advisor in the school placement process, and how this impacts upon the supervision of physical education student teachers.
b) Examine the challenges faced by placement tutors in their position as "*disenfranchised outsiders*" (Slick 1998, p.821) in the 'third space' between the school and the university community.
c) Investigate the perceptions held by other stakeholders in school placement (school principals/deputy principals, student teachers, and cooperating teachers) of the roles and responsibilities of the placement tutor in school placement.
d) Develop a template of best practice for the recruitment and provision of learning support of placement tutors, so that they may be enabled to provide equitable and effective supervision for Physical Education student teachers.

Rationale for the study

This research is set against the backdrop of radical systemic changes in teacher education in Ireland, viewed as "*the most creative of eras*" where changes in initial teacher education may potentially serve as a catalyst "*to transform teacher education in Ireland and the engagement of the teaching profession with its development*" (Coolahan, 2013, p.9). The research literature maintains that the placement tutor enacts a multi-faceted role positioned at the interface of the school-university partnership, representing the university, supporting the placement schools and supervising student teachers. As placement tutors "*enter a school they have to become familiar with its contexts and processes, learning to negotiate these"* (Wilkins, Busher, Kakos, Mohamed & Smith, 2012, p.66). The most challenging role for placement tutors is to enact the "*dual role of assisting and assessing*" (Slick, 1997, p. 713) student teachers. Placement tutors are responsible for assisting student teachers on school placement through support and guidance and "*teacher educators need to know how to scaffold the learning of novice teachers toward more expert teaching*" (Zeichner, 2005, p.118).

This is a timely and relevant study, which coincides with the recent publication of the Teaching Council's 2013 '*Guidelines on School Placement'*, with the aim of ensuring "*greater consistency in the school placement experience*" and to facilitate "*enhanced collaboration*" (Teaching Council 2013, p.3) between the university and schools. The lack of training for placement tutors to enact this broad spectrum of functions appears to be a contentious issue in the research literature, with the supervision of student teachers occupying a peripheral role in universities. They are seen to "*toil in the shadows*" with little or no training or support (Kosnik & Beck, 2008, p.185).

The placement tutor plays a pivotal role in educating the next generation of teachers;" *During teacher education the seeds for professional in teaching are planted and nurtured in order to develop independently after graduation*" (Smith, 2005, p.177). Student teachers regard school placement, and interaction with the placement tutor as the two most important components of their initial teacher education programmes (Cochran-Smith 2012, Valencia et al. 2009, Clarke & Jarvis-Selinger 2005). This study seeks to explore and critically examine best practice for the recruitment, training and support of the placement tutor in order to address the challenges of the dual role he/she undertakes when guiding the student teacher's learning in school placement. The study will reveal that the effective placement tutor must scaffold the student teacher's learning using a constructivist approach, which seeks to encourage the student teacher to become a reflective practitioner (Schon 1982). It will also explore the potential of school placement to be a community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) and examine role of the placement tutor as a "broker" (Wenger 1998) who must move between the university community, and the school community. This research marks an important step in unmasking or "*deprivatizing supervisory practices*" (Levine 2011, p.939). As Wright, Grenier and Channell (2012, p.706) contend "*University supervision is too important to be left to chance*".

18. Brief description and justification of methods and measures to be used (attach copy of questionnaire / interview protocol / discussion guide / etc.)

This study seeks to interrogate the current system used for recruiting, training and supporting physical education school placement tutors, and examine how placement tutors may provide equitable and effective supervision for final year physical education student teachers in the BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education degree programme in University College Cork. It will be a qualitative study since it seeks *"insight rather than statistical analysis"* (Bell 1993, p. 6). It aims to provide 'phronesis' (Korthagen & Kessel 1999), i.e. practical or 'craft' knowledge, which may contribute to an increased understanding of the role played by the placement tutor in physical education teacher education. Thomas (2011) suggests that phronesis in research can give rise to 'exemplary knowledge', i.e. insight and wisdom that come from the study and analysis of a particular situation, which produces theory related to the context of that situation. The case study method has been chosen for this study since this research approach aims to generate, rather than verify, theories (Stakes 1988) by allowing the researcher to *"...illuminate a particular situation, to get a close (i.e. in-depth and first hand) understanding of it"* (Yin 2006, p.112).Case study also enables the researcher to study "real people in real situations" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011, p.289) and the focus of this research is upon the realities of the challenges faced by the placement tutor in his/her supervision of student teachers.

Within the case study framework, the researcher will use the following data collection tools: open profile questionnaire, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation and reflective journals. The data analysis method adopted will be one of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), i.e. "*an inductive process of discovering theory from data"* (Pidgeon & Henwood, 2004). This approach means that the qualitative researcher has *"grounded their theory in data and validated their statements of relationship between*

concepts"(Strauss & Corbin 1998, p.5). This ensures that the researcher is confident about the conclusions he/she has reached and is convinced that they will withstand criticism from the target audience. Grounded theory claims to reflect "objectively" on the data thus generating new understandings and theory (Pidgeon & Henwood, 2004).

The study will involve two phases of research:

1. Phase One: March - July 2015

The purpose of this phase is to investigate the perceptions held by stakeholders in school placement [other than placement tutors] of the roles and responsibilities of the placement tutor in school placement. Hence, a range of stakeholders will contribute data, including school principals, student teachers and cooperating teachers. These will be the first group of research participants in this study.

a) <u>Stage One</u>

Initial Open Profile Questionnaires (Vickerman 2004) **will be sent to the** school **principals/deputy principals, physical education cooperating teachers and physical education student teachers** involved in the 2014-15 BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education Fourth Year School Placement programme. The questions posed in these open profile questionnaires have been informed by (a) the literature review of the research focus of this study, i.e. Initial Teacher Education, and (b) the researcher's experience of being School Placement Coordinator, PE Placement Tutor and PE teacher at differing points in her career.

b) <u>Stage Two</u>

These participants will be invited to take part in follow up focus groups and semi-structured interviews (informed by best practice guidelines in (Creswell 2007). **Five student teachers, five cooperating teachers and five school principals/deputy principals will be selected from the respondents to participate in follow up focus groups. Semi-structured interviews will then occur with three student teachers, three cooperating teachers and three school principals/deputy principals selected from the focus group participants.** Participants who take part in both the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews will be selected from a representative group of schools who have different school profiles (boys, girls, mixed) and varying years of involvement with the BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education Fourth Year School Placement programme (1-2 years / 3- 5 years / 6-8years).

Data collection and analysis will happen simultaneously throughout this stage of the research (Yin 2006), hence, some interviews may provide evidence that leads to further focus groups and/or re-interviews as the study progresses.

The data collected during Phase One of the research will contribute to the questionnaire, focus groups and interviews administered to the second group of participants, i.e. the placement tutors, during the Second Phase of the study, i.e. September 2015 - May 2016.<u>Hence, approval for only Phase One of the study is being sought in this current application</u>. However, for the

purpose of providing an overview of this research study, an outline of Phase Two is provided below.

2. Phase Two: September 2015 - May 2016

The purpose of this phase of the study is to investigate the perceptions held by the main research participants i.e. the Physical Education placement tutors, on the roles and responsibilities involved in the supervision of Fourth Year Physical Education student teachers on the BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education programme in the School of Education, UCC, Cork. Collection of data from this group of participants will not commence until September 2015 since this study seeks to 'track' the placement tutor's journey over a full school placement year, i.e. September 2015 to May 2016.

a) Stage One

Having reviewed the data gathered in Phase One of the study, **an initial Open Profile Questionnaire (Vickerman 2004) will be sent to the team of physical education placement tutors** involved in the 2015-16 BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education Fourth Year School Placement programme .

b) Stage Two

Five placement tutors will be selected from the respondents for the purpose of follow up focus groups and semi-structured interviews. These tutors will be chosen based on the number of years they have worked as a placement tutor, i.e. newly recruited placement tutors; tutors with 3-5 years of experience; and tutors with 6 + years of experience

c) Stage Three

There will be a period of **non-participant observation during which the researcher will accompany the five placement tutors on a selection of their supervision visits** during the school placement year. **Placement tutors will also be asked to maintain a reflective journal o**f the supervisions they conduct throughout school placement year, using the Korthagan (1991, 2005) ALACT model of reflection which will enable them to critically review their practice in order to enable them to find a means of addressing the challenges of their dual role of assessor and advisor.

Once again, data collection and analysis will happen simultaneously throughout this phase of the research (Yin 2006), hence some data may provide evidence that leads to further focus groups and/or re-interviews as the study progresses. **The combination of methods of data collection outlined in 1) and 2) above, along with the range of research participants involved in this study, will allow for an in-depth exploration of the topic, and triangulation of data will generate key themes.**

19. Participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria

The focus of this study is upon the roles and responsibilities of the placement tutor in the current school placement milieu of 21st century Ireland. The research setting will be the BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education programme in the School of Education, UCC, Cork. This programme is one of three such programmes currently operating in the Republic of Ireland; the University of Limerick and Dublin City University also provide programmes of Physical Education Teacher Education. The decision to choose the programme in UCC is a practical one since the researcher is currently the coordinator of this programme. Hence, the researcher has the advantage of a thorough knowledge of the workings of this programme and ease of access to the research participants. The converse of this fact has also to be considered, since the personal knowledge and situated practice of the researcher will have to be rigorously examined throughout the study. Bonner and Tolhurst (2002, p. 8) argue "*In qualitative research it is increasingly common for researchers to be part of the social group they intend to study"*. Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 61) support this opinion suggesting that as qualitative researchers *"...we are firmly in all aspects of the research process and essential to it"*. This 'insider/outsider' perspective, which Breen (2007) calls the researcher in the "middle", provides the researcher with the advantage of in-depth knowledge of the research situation, but it also brings with it the challenges of remaining objective throughout the research process. Careful consideration and cognisance of the advantages and disadvantages the insider/outsider standpoint (Gerrish 1997, Bonner and Tolhurst 2002, Corbin Dwyer and Buckle 2009...) will be maintained throughout the study. Since the researcher is the primary instrument for date collection, the issue of subjectivity cannot be ignored (Hastie and May 2012). The triangulation of evidence described above (question 18) will help to maintain double distancing and objectivity needed by the researcher and it will ensure that the 'voices' (ibid, 2012) of the researcher participants as well as the researcher will be heard. In addition, meticulous recording, and ongoing availability of the data gathered (Yin 2009) will help ensure that the researcher remains transparent (Cronin 2014) throughout the research.

I) Placement tutors:

The five placement tutors be recruited from the team of Physical Education placement tutors on 2015-2016 school placement programme of the BEd (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education programme in the School of Education, UCC, Cork. Inclusion criteria will be the duration of a tutor's experience of being a placement tutor, i.e. first- time, newly recruited placement tutors; tutors with 3-5 years of experience; and tutors with 6 + years of experience who voluntarily wish to participate in the study and have signed written consent to do so. Exclusion criteria will be those tutors who do not wish to participate in the study. All placement tutor identities will be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

II) Students teachers

The student teachers will be recruited from the current 2014-15 cohort of Fourth Year physical education student teachers on the B.Ed. (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education programme in the School of Education, UCC, Cork. In the interests of fairness and

transparency, data collection from these student teachers will not occur until after school placement results for 2014-15 have been sanctioned by the Exams Board, UCC in June 2015. In addition, choosing to work with the 2014-15 cohort of student teachers will avoid involving student teachers supervised by the placement tutors research participants in the study. Inclusion criteria will include those student teachers who voluntarily wish to participate in the study and have signed written consent to do so. Exclusion criteria will be those student teachers who do not wish to participate in the study. All student identities will be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

III) Cooperating teacher

The cooperating teachers will be recruited from the cooperating teachers involved in the 2014-2015 school placement programme of BEd Sports Studies and Physical Education programme in the School of Education, UCC, Cork. Inclusion criteria will include the cooperating teachers who voluntarily wish to participate in the study and have signed written consent to do so. Exclusion criteria will be those cooperating teachers who do not wish to participate in the study. All cooperating teacher identities will be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

IV) School principals/deputy principals:

The school principals/deputy principals will be recruited from the schools involved in the 2014-2015 school placement programme of B.Ed. (Hons) Sports Studies and Physical Education programme in the School of Education, UCC, Cork. Inclusion criteria will include those principals/deputy principals who have contact with the physical education student teachers in their schools, and who voluntarily wish to participate in the study and have signed written consent to do so. Exclusion criteria will be those principals/deputy principals who are not involved with the physical education student teachers and/or those who do not wish to participate in the study. All identities [including that of the school] will be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

20. Concise statement of ethical issues raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them

- All participants will be over 18 years of age.
- Participation in this research study will be completely voluntary.
- Each participant will sign an informed consent form and may choose to withdraw at any stage.
- Each set of participants (See question 19, I-V) will be part of a focus group. At the beginning of the session the researcher will remind the participants to observe confidentiality and anonymity, and participants will have committed to same when they sign the consent forms.
- Participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms during the write up phase of this study**,** to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. This will serve

to conceal the actual names of participants' and their respective educational institutions.

- All assessment results and reflective journal transcripts will be provided to all participants for verification prior to publication
- A meticulous and secure data management system will be maintained which will enable the researcher to locate and analyse the data generated in this study and provides a transparent '*chain of evidence'* (Yin, 2009) or an *'audit trail'* (Seale, 1999). Hard copy data such as questionnaires, consent forms, reflective journals etc will be stored a portable filing case. Each piece of data will be clearly labelled, dated and filed according to the research stage, and the research group, e.g. Phase 1: Questionnaires Cooperating Teachers, March 2015. Copies of this data will be stored in a separate portable filing case. Both filing case will be stored in a locked cupboard. All electronic data such as emails etc will be saved in a passport protected folder on computer. Within the folder, data will be kept in subfolders according to date, research phase and research group as outlined above. A hard drive copy of all electronic data will be stored in a locked cupboard.
- All data generated by this study will be maintained by the researcher for five years duration.

21. Arrangements for informing participants about the nature of the study (cf. Question 3)

The purpose, nature and format of data collection of the study will be explained to participants in writing (information sheet accompanying the consent form) and verbally by the researcher prior to the signing of informed consent forms. Throughout the study participants will be informed of its progress. Any reports, journal articles and summaries will be provided to all participants prior to publication.

22. How you will obtain Informed Consent - cf. Question 4 (attach relevant form[s])

The researcher will disseminate informed consent forms to each participant for signature. All participants will sign the appropriate consent form only after reading and being fully aware of the study content and protocol.

23. Outline of debriefing process (cf. Question 8). If you answered YES to Question 15, give details here. State what you will advise participants to do if they should experience problems (e.g. who to contact for help).

Participants' will be debriefed at the end of their participation in the study, and in the interest of openness and transparency the key findings will be presented and discussed by the researcher.

24. Estimated start date and duration of project.

March 2015 -September 2018

Signed ___Patricia Fitzpatrick___ Date ____5th February 2015_____
Applicant

Notes

1. Please submit this form and any attachments to Dr. S. Hammond, Chair, SREC, c/o Miriam Collins, Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, Block E, 4th Floor, Food Science Building, University College Cork, College Road, Cork. Please also forward an electronic copy to srec@ucc.ie

2. Research proposals can receive only provisional approval from SREC in the absence of approval from any agency where you intend to recruit participants. If you have already secured the relevant consent, please enclose a copy with this form.

3. SREC is not primarily concerned with methodological issues but may comment on such issues in so far as they have ethical implications.

This form is adapted from pp. 13-14 of Guidelines for Minimum Standards of Ethical Approval in Psychological Research (British Psychological Society, July, 2004)

Last update: 2011-07-19

APPENDIX 9

Receipt of SREC Ethical Approval

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Oifig an Leas - Uachtaráin Taighde agus Nuálaíochta
Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation

4th Floor, Block E,
Food Science Building,
University College Cork,
College Road, Cork, Ireland.

T +353 (0)21 4903500
E vpresearch@ucc.ie
www.ucc.ie

Patricia Fitzpatrick,
Sports Studies and Physical Education,
School of Education,
University College Cork.

25th February 2015

Dear Patricia,

Thank you for submitting your revised research (project entitled ***An Investigation of the Recruitment and Learning Support Provision for Physical Education School Placement Tutors on a University Initial Teacher Education programme in the Republic of Ireland***) to SREC for ethical perusal. I am pleased to say that the amended proposal is acceptable and we are happy to grant approval

We wish you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

p.p. Mairéad Mooney

Mike Murphy,
Chair of Social Research Ethics Committee

APPENDIX 10

Participant Research Study Information

PLACEMENT TUTOR
RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION

Title of the Study: "What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?"

Subsidiary research questions include:

1. How do part-time placement tutors define their professional identity in their role as teacher educators?
2. What are the challenges, opportunities and dilemmas experienced by part-time placement tutors in their multimembership of two communities of practice: the school and the university?
3. Do part-time placement tutors have a role to play in the Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) between the university and the school?
4. Does dual role of assessor and advisor impact upon the task of supervising physical education student teachers?

Research data collection methods

1. Three individual interviews
2. Observation of one school placement supervision visit

Why have you been asked to take part?

The research participants for this doctoral study are physical education placement tutors. As a member of the BED Sports Studies and Physical Education School Placement Programme, you have been selected as a representative placement tutor candidate.

Do you have to take part?

No, participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no repercussions for not participating in the study. You have the right to withdraw from the study before it commences or discontinuing after data collection has started. In addition, should you choose to participate in the study, you have that right to withdraw data for up to two weeks following completion of data collection, in which case the material will be deleted.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. The identity of all research participants will remain anonymous. Participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms during the write up phase of this study**,** to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. All material discussed in the interviews will be kept confidential. At the beginning of the session the researcher will remind the participants to observe confidentiality and anonymity.

What will happen to the information which you give?

The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. All interview transcripts and observation field notes will be provided to all participants for verification prior to publication. Upon completion of the project, the data will be retained for a further five years in a locked cabinet and within a password protected computer file and then destroyed.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be presented in the research study; participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms in the write-up. If you consent, disguised extracts from interviews may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

I don't envisage any negative consequences arising from participation in this study.

Who has reviewed this study?

Approval has been given by the UCC Research & Ethics Committee.

Any further queries?

If you need any further information, you can contact Trish Fitzpatrick [the researcher] at [phone number] or [email address].

APPENDIX 11

Participant Research Consent Form

PLACEMENT TUTOR

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

(To be returned to the researcher)

I……agree to participate in the research study entitled "What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?"

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing.

- I am participating voluntarily.
- I give permission for my interview and focus group with the researcher to be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of completion of data collection, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity.
- I agree to observe confidentially and anonymity with regards to material discussed during focus groups and/or interviews.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

(Please tick one box)

☐ I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interviews.

☐ I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from interviews.

Signed……. Date…….

Please return this form to:
Trish Fitzpatrick, Lecturer & Coordinator of School Placement

APPENDIX 12

Student Teacher Observation Information

STUDENT TEACHER RESEARCH INFORMATION FOR OBSERVATION VISIT

Title of the Study: "What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?"

Subsidiary research questions include:

1. How do part-time placement tutors define their professional identity in their role as teacher educators?
2. What are the challenges, opportunities and dilemmas experienced by part-time placement tutors in their multimembership of two communities of practice; the school and the university?
3. Do part-time placement tutors have a role to play in the Third Space (Bhabha 1990; Zeichner 2010) between the university and the school?
4. Does dual role of assessor and advisor impact upon the task of supervising physical education student teachers

Why have you been asked to take part?

At this stage of the study the researcher proposes to conduct an observation of the placement tutor during his or her supervision visit to a student teacher. The researcher will be a non-participant observer and will not interfere in the supervision visit in any way. She will record her field notes in an unobtrusive manner and there will be no adverse effects on the subjects being observed. Identities of all subjects will be protected. **The focus of the observation will be upon the role of the placement tutor, and the observation process will have no impact upon the assessment of the student teacher.**

Do you have to take part?

No, participation in this study is completely voluntary. **There are no repercussions for not participating in the study**. You have the right to withdraw from the study before it commences or discontinuing after data collection has started. In addition, should you choose to participate in the study, you have that right to withdraw data for up to two weeks following

completion of data collection, in which case the material will be destroyed.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. The identity of all research participants will remain anonymous. Participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms during the write up phase of this study**,** to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

What will happen to the information which you give?

The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. All observation data will be provided to research participants for verification prior to publication. Upon completion of the project, the data will be retained for a further five years in a locked cabinet and within a password protected computer file and then destroyed.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be presented in the research study; participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms in the write-up. If you consent, disguised extracts from observation field notes may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

I don't envisage any negative consequences arising from participation in this study.

Who has reviewed this study?

Approval has been given by the UCC Research & Ethics Committee.

Any further queries?

If you need any further information, you can contact Trish Fitzpatrick [the researcher] at [phone number] or [email address]

APPENDIX 13

Student Teacher Observation Consent Form

Title of the study

"What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?"

Data Collection Method

Observation of placement tutors research participants during school placement supervision visits

Please tick as appropriate

☐ I am willing to allow observation of my placement tutor to occur during my school placement supervision

☐ I do not wish to allow observation of my placement tutor to occur during my school placement supervision

_____

4th Year Student teacher

_____

Date

Please email this consent form to Trish Fitzpatrick (email address) at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

APPENDIX 14

Participant Pilot Interview Questions

PLACEMENT TUTOR PILOT INTERVIEW

INTRODUCING THE INTERVIEW	
1. Remind the interviewee of the aims and purpose of the research 2. Remind the interviewee that participation is voluntary, and all matters regarding ethics and confidentially will be observed. No mention of the name of a person, programme or organisation should be made. 3. Emphasise that the interview will be led by the interviewee, including omitting any questions deemed not suitable by the interviewee.	
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	**PROMPTS**
1. Placement tutor background Just to begin, can you tell me about your own professional background? What have you worked at professionally before becoming a Placement Tutor?	• Your teaching experience? • Have you had any other previous experience/s which has/have prepared you for this role? How did you hear about the role? • How where you recruited? • How long have you worked as a placement tutor? • Is this a fulltime or part time position for you? • What other work do you do?
2. Preparation and support What are your thoughts on the training/preparation you received for the role of placement tutor?	• Did you feel adequately prepared for your first student teacher supervision? • Is there any aspect that could be improved upon?
3. Experiences to date Can you tell a little about you experiences of supervising student teachers have been like to date?	• What do you like about this role? • How has your role evolved over your time as a PT? • Are there any the challenges for you in the role? • Do you think you have been adequately trained for the role of placement tutor? Do you feel supported by the university for carrying out your role? • Do you feel supported by the school placement school(s) for carrying out your role?

4. University-school partnership Do you believe that task of preparing student teachers for a life of teaching is equally shared by the school community, and the university community?	• Who assumes most responsibility in the current system? • Do you think involving the school in evaluation of student teachers would be a good idea? Could you share your thoughts on this idea?
5. Placement tutor's experiences in the university setting What has been your experience, to date, as a placement tutor in the university environment been like?	• Do you feel part of a community of practice in the school? • Who do you talk to? • Do you feel supported in the school environment? • Have you experienced any challenges in this environment?
6. Moving between two CoPs As someone who goes between the university and the school, it could be said that you are located somewhere between both communities. What are your thoughts on this idea?	• In which environment do you, as placement tutor, feel most comfortable - the school or the university? Can you explain why this is? • Do you think your role changes when you are in each of the different environments - university and school? • Have you developed any strategies to cope with moving between two different working environments - university and school?
7. Placement tutor's skillset What do you think is the most important skills needed by a placement tutor in order to supervise student teachers, fairly and effectively?	• How do you deal with the task of assisting/supporting student teachers, while also evaluating/grading their practice? • Do you think assistance and assessment are two separate components? • Do you experience challenges in enacting both functions in your role as a placement tutor? • What strategies do you adopt in these regard?
8. Placement tutor identity What do you understand by the term' professional identity'?	• How do we acquire a professional identity? • What has helped you to establish a professional identity?

How would you describe your professional identity?	
9. Placement tutor motivation Finally, can I ask you what motivates you be a placement tutor?	
CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW	
Once again I want to sincerely thank you for giving up the time to be here today, and for all your contributions to my research to date. Are there any questions, comments etc that you may wish to share with me, in relation to anything that came up here today, or anything you may wish to add perhaps? *I will get this interview transcribed and I will forward it on to you. And once again, I just want to reassure you that everything you shared here with me is in the strictest of confidence, and your name will not appear anywhere in any data which might emerge as a result of this interview process today.*	

APPENDIX 15

Participant Interview 1 Questions

PLACEMENT TUTOR INTERVIEW 1

INTRODUCING THE INTERVIEW	
1. Remind the interviewee of the aims and purpose of the research 2. Remind the interviewee that participation is voluntary, and all matters regarding ethics and confidentially will be observed. No mention of the name of a person, programme or organisation should be made. 3. Emphasise that the interview will be led by the interviewee, including omitting any questions deemed not suitable by the interviewee.	
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	**PROMPTS**
1. Becoming a placement tutor *I'd like to begin today by asking you some questions around your work as a placement tutor.* What have you worked at professionally before becoming a PT and what led you to this job?	• What led you to this job? • Your teaching experiences? • Have you had any other previous experience/s which has/have prepared you for this role?
2. Preparation and support What are your thoughts on the training/preparation you received for the role of placement tutor?	• Did you feel adequately prepared for your first student teacher supervision? • Is there any aspect that could be improved upon?
3. Experiences to date Can you tell a little about you experiences of supervising student teachers have been like to date?	• What do you like about this role? • How has your role evolved over your time as a PT? • Are there any the challenges for you in the role?
4. Being a placement tutor In your opinion what do you think are the main skill set needed by placement tutors in their supervision of student teachers?	• Assisting/supporting student teachers, while also evaluating/grading their practice? • Do you think assistance and assessment are two separate components? • Have you experienced challenges in enacting both functions in your role as a placement tutor?
5. Your experiences in the university setting What has been your experience, to date, as a placement tutor in the university environment been like?	• Do you feel part of a community of practice in the university?? • Do you feel supported in the university environment? • Who in the university community talks most regularly to you? • Do you have any contact with your student teachers in the university site?

	• Do you have any contact with other school placement tutors in the university site? Have you experienced any challenges in this environment?
6. Your experiences in the school setting What has been your experience, to date, as a placement tutor in the school environment been like?	• Do you feel part of a community of practice in the school? • Who do you talk to? • Do you feel supported in the school environment? • Have you experienced any challenges in this environment?
7. Third space learning *Ken Zeichner suggests a model of school placement which would involve a 'Third Space', between university and school which would allow for the student teacher, placement tutor, and cooperating teacher to work together in order to support the student teacher.* Do you think this might be a useful model for ITE?	• Do you think, as placement tutor, you would have a role to play in a TS?
8. Motivation to be a PT Finally, can I ask you what motivates you be a placement tutor?	• What do you enjoy about this role?
CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW	
Once again I want to sincerely thank you for giving up the time to be here today, and for all your contributions to my research to date. Are there any questions, comments etc that you may wish to share with me, in relation to anything that came up here today, or anything you may wish to add perhaps? *I will get this interview transcribed and I will forward it on to you. And once again, I just want to reassure you that everything you shared here with me is in the strictest of confidence, and your name will not appear anywhere in any data which might emerge as a result of this interview process today.*	

APPENDIX 16

Participant Interview 2 Questions

PLACEMENT TUTOR INTERVIEW 2

INTRODUCING THE INTERVIEW	
1. Remind the interviewee of the aims and purpose of the research 2. Remind the interviewee that participation is voluntary, and all matters regarding ethics and confidentially will be observed. No mention of the name of a person, programme or organisation should be made. 3. Emphasise that the interview will be led by the interviewee, including omitting any questions deemed not suitable by the interviewee. 4. Check with the interviewee for accuracy of transcript of previous interview (1)	
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	**PROMPTS**
1. Placement tutor challenges *In the first interview, participants mentioned a range of different challenges that had to be negotiated in the role of placement tutor. I have chosen two to discuss with you today.* 1) Time allocation for the supervision visit *As a physical education placement tutor, you are allocated 2 hours and 15 minutes to conduct the supervision visit.* What are your thoughts on this allocation of time? 2) Transition from teacher to teacher educator How have you experienced the transition from teacher to teacher educator?	• The allocation of time in terms of the tasks you must complete during the supervision visit. • What is your approach to conducting the supervision? • What helped you to make the transition? • How does your experience of working with student teachers compare to your experience of working with post primary school students?
2. Placement tutors' relationships with cooperating teachers *You are now three quarters of the way through school placement year.* 1) I'm wondering what your experience has been so far in term of accessing CTs and developing a relationship with them? 2) Does your relationship (or lack of relationship) with the CTs affect the STs you supervise?	• Do each of your STs have an assigned CT? • Have you had an opportunity in the first two visits to meet each of your STs CTs? • If yes, in what way?

3. Placement tutors' relationships with student teachers *At this stage of the year, you have had two supervision visits with each ST.* 1) How would you describe the nature of the relationship you now have with your STs at this stage of the school placement year? 2) Does your relationship with the STs impact upon your supervision of them?	• Does your position as part time placement tutor impact upon this relationship, If so in what way what way? • If so, in what way? • Can you give an example (without using STs names)?
4. **Placement tutor identity** *From reading the interview scripts, it appears that all of the participants in this study appears to have a strong teacher identity* . 1) What are your thoughts on this statement? 2) From reading the first interview transcripts, and from the observations I have conducted, it strikes me that identity is also linked to the knowledge people have of us, i.e how they know us, for example one tutor said that STs see her as a tutor, while others in her local community might see her as an artist? <u>What do you think of this statement?</u>	• How does your teacher identity impact upon your role as PT? • Is there any other aspect of your identity that influences you in your role as placement tutor?
5. Placement tutor role *From the discussions in Interview 1, there were many aspects of the PTs role identified. Negotiator, supporter, advisor, assessor, the face of the university…these were some of the terms used.* My question in this regard is, do you believe that your role as placement tutor is valued?	• If yes, who do you think most values your role? • If no, who do you think least values your role? • Does this impact upon your practice?
6. Placement tutors being research active *There have been several reports recently in ITE about the importance of teacher educators being research active.*	• What do you understand by the term research active? • What supports would you need to become research active?

As a part-time placement tutor teacher educator, do you believe being research active is important for your role?	• Do you think becoming research active would impact upon your role as a PT in any way?
7. Placement tutors and the school community of practice (CoP) In your opinion, what factors contribute to PTs developing and maintaining a positive relationship with schools? *In my research I am investigating if placement tutors hold a position of multimembership, i.e. members of two CoPs – the university and the school. To clarify what I mean by a CoP, I am using the definition provided by Lave and Wenger (1991)* *-community of people who have a common interest in a subject, or area, and who collaborate over an extended period of time in order to find solutions to problems or develop new practices.* What do you believe is the function of the school CoP? *As I said above, the first interview indicated that PTs generally felt welcome in the schools they visited for supervision, but not all PTs felt they were part of the school COP*. What are your thoughts on this?	• Does it help if PTs are placed in the same schools each year? • Is it important for PT to be welcomed in the school? • How does this impact upon your task of supervision? • What might be the issue, or issues, that binds the members of the school community together? • What might be the shared goal in this CoP? • Is it important to you, as PT, to be/become part of the school CoP? • Where would you currently place yourself in the school CoP? • Where do you think others in the school Cop Practice might position you?
8. Placement tutors and the university community of practice (CoP) *Again looking at the concept of a CoP, this time in the university.* What do you believe is the function of the university CoP? *Most interviewees in Interview 1 reported feeling part (to varying extents) of a CoP in the SUPE programme. However, all interviewees reported feeling no connection to the wider university community.*	• What might be the issue, or issues, that binds the members of the school community together? • What might be the shared goal in this CoP? • Is it important to you, as PT, to be/become part of the school CoP? • Where would you currently place yourself in the school CoP? • Where do you think others in the school Cop Practice might position you?

What are your thoughts on this information?	

CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW

Once again, I want to sincerely thank you for giving up the time to be here today, and for being so forthcoming and generous in your response to the questions. Are there any questions, comments etc that you may wish to share with me, in relation to anything that came up here today, or anything you may wish to add perhaps?

As with the previous interview, I will get this interview transcribed and I will forward it on to you. And once again, I just want to reassure you that everything you shared here with me is in the strictest of confidence, and your name will not appear anywhere in any data which might emerge as a result of this interview process today.

APPENDIX 17

Participant Interview 3 Questions

PLACEMENT TUTOR INTERVIEW 3

INTRODUCING THE INTERVIEW	
1. Remind the interviewee of the aims and purpose of the research 2. Remind the interviewee that participation is voluntary, and all matters regarding ethics and confidentially will be observed. No mention of the name of a person, programme or organisation should be made. 3. Emphasise that the interview will be led by the interviewee, including omitting any questions deemed not suitable by the interviewee. 4. Check with the interviewee for accuracy of transcript of previous interview (2)	
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	**PROMPTS**
1. What is a tutor *In the 2013 Guidelines for School Placement, the Teaching Council changed the title of teaching practice supervisor to school placement tutor.* What do you understand by the term 'tutor'?	• Do you think this change of title is significant for your role?
2. The dual role of assessor and assistor *From reading the transcript of Interview 1 & 2, it appears that you, and your fellow participant believe that the placement tutor has a dual role of assessing and supporting STs. It also appears that you did not have any difficulty negotiating these two aspects of the role.* At this stage of the year have you any further thoughts on the dual role?	• What has helped you to negotiate the task of assisting AND assessing STs?
3. Student teachers and assessment *Some research indicates that student teachers believe that placement tutors have a particular approach to teaching and that, in order to get good grades, they need to teach to please the placement tutor.* Looking back over this year, what are your thoughts on this issue?	• Have you had this experience with any of your STs? • If so how has this impacted upon your role?

4. More time with STs *In some ITE programmes, the PT gets to meet with his/her STs once a week, or bi-monthly in between visits.* Do you think this would be helpful to you in your role as placement tutor?	• How might it impact upon your relationship with your STs?
5. School-university partnerships *ITE programmes are dependent on establishing a partnership between the university and the schools.* As placement tutor, do you think you have a role to play in this partnership?	• Are you happy with your role in this partnership? • What would you like to see change/develop?
6. The role of cooperating teachers *In the previous two interviews we discussed your various experiences of and relationships with cooperating teachers in the schools.* In your opinion, how could CTs become more involved in the ITE programmes?	• Is it important that the CT observed the ST teach? • Should CTs be allowed contribute to the grade?
7. The PT's contribution to Third Space Learning *I spoke to you about the concept of TSL – a place where the SP triad of ST, CT, and PT meet together to support the ST.* If it were possible to have such a meeting, how do you think a PT could contribute**?**	• Was there any occasion during the past year when a CT stayed to observe the ST's lesson with you? • Any occasions when you and the CT spoke to the ST together?
8. Interviewee questions *Before we conclude I just want to remind you of the research question for this study:* **Main research question** What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?" **Subsidiary research questions**	• No prompts – letting the interviewees decide

1. How do part-time placement tutors define their professional identity in their role as teacher educators? 2. What are the challenges, opportunities and dilemmas experienced by part-time placement tutors in their multimembership of two communities of practice; the school and the university? 3. Do part-time placement tutors have a role to play in the 'Third Space' between university and school (Zeichner 2010)? 4. Does dual role of assessor and advisor impact upon the task of supervising physical education student teachers? <u>Looking back on the year, is there anything further you wish to add that might be relevant to any of these questions?</u>	

CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW

Once again, I want to sincerely thank you for giving up the time to be here today, and for all your contributions to my research to date. Are there any questions, comments etc that you may wish to share with me, in relation to anything that came up here today, or anything you may wish to add perhaps?

As with the previous interview, I will get this interview transcribed and I will forward it on to you. And once again, I just want to reassure you that everything you shared here with me is in the strictest of confidence, and your name will not appear anywhere in any data which might emerge as a result of this interview process today.

APPENDIX 18

Participant Online Interview Consent Form

PLACEMENT TUTOR

ONLINE INTERVIEW INFORMATION

Title of the Study: "What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?"

Why have you been asked to take part in this online interview
Due to the current Coronavirus lock down the third and final interview for the study cannot take place in a face-to-face setting as occurred for Interview 1 and Interview 2. Instead the interview will occur online, via the Zoom platform.

Do you have to take part?
No, participation in this interview is completely voluntary. There are no repercussions for not participating and you have the right to withdraw from the online interview before it commences or at any time during the interview. In addition, should you choose to participate in the online interview, you have that right to withdraw data for up to two weeks following completion of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

Will your participation in the online interview be kept confidential?
Yes. The identity of all research participants will remain anonymous. Participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms during the interview to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. All material discussed will be kept confidential. At the beginning of the session the researcher will remind the participants to observe confidentiality and anonymity.

Security measures undertaken for this online interview
To ensure that your participation in this online interview (via Zoom) will not expose you to any online safety issues, the following security procedures will be observed:

- An individual personal identification number will be provided for the interview

- The interview will be password protected
- The Zoom 'waiting room' feature will be utilised to ensure the interviewer can control who is admitted to the interview
- The Zoom 'lock meeting' feature will be enabled once the interview commences in order to prevent anyone else joining the meeting

What will happen to the information which you give?

The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. All interview transcripts will be provided to all participants for verification prior to publication. Upon completion of the project, the data will be retained for a further five years in a locked cabinet and within a password protected computer file and then destroyed.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be presented in the research study; participant identities will be safeguarded through the use of pseudonyms in the write-up. If you consent, disguised extracts from the interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part in the online interview?

I don't envisage any negative consequences arising from participation in this study.

Who has reviewed this study?

Approval has been given by the UCC Research & Ethics Committee.

Any further queries?

If you need any further information, you can contact Trish Fitzpatrick [the researcher] at [phone number] or [email address]

APPENDIX 19

Participant Online Interview Consent Form

PLACEMENT TUTOR

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR ONLINE INTERVIEW

(To be returned to the researcher)

I……agree to participate in an online interview for the research study entitled "What are the motivations, roles and relationships which emerge for part-time placement tutors in their supervision of physical education student teachers in school placement?"

The purpose and nature of the online interview has been explained to me in writing.

- I am participating voluntarily.
- I give permission for my interview with the researcher to be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the online interview, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of completion of data collection, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity.
- I agree to observe confidentially and anonymity with regards to material discussed during the online interview.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my online interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:

(Please tick one box)

☐ I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my online interview.

☐ I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my online interview.

Signed……. Date…….

Please email this consent form to Trish Fitzpatrick (email address) at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

APPENDIX 20

Pilot Observation Fieldnotes Template

PILOT OBSERVATION		Placement tutor:	Student teacher:
Setting:			
ARRIVAL AT THE SCHOOL			
TIMELINE	DESCRIPTION	REFLECTION	LINKS
MEETING THE STUDENT TEACHER			
BEFORE THE LESSON			
THE LESSON			
POST LESSON CONFERENCE			

APPENDIX 21

Sample Interview Coding

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT		CODES
Interviewee:	Well, first of all, your initial question, do I like it, most certainly. I like the challenge. I like the experience of visiting schools. Many of my former colleagues are in senior management in the positions. I like meeting them for a cup of coffee and a chat on an informal basis. Having done my official business in the school I would often retire with the principal or the deputy, have a coffee, have a chat. I like that. It keeps me involved.	***MOTIVATION/ MEETING FORMER COLLEAGUES IN SCHOOLS*** ***MEETS THE SP/DP***
	I like seeing the energy of our young 22, 23-year-olds or our young fourth year students. They're the future generation of teachers in Ireland. I like to see their energy, their ideas, their enthusiasm. I like to be able to give back to them some of my own experiences, be they right or wrong. I like to be able to liaise with them to maybe pass on some of my experiences. I'm not saying the experiences are right or wrong, but at least they can take it if they so wish. Challenges that I faced as a teacher since the mid-Seventies, what things worked and especially what things didn't work for me. I would be quite upfront with the students in terms of passing on some of my experiences and hopefully it might benefit them.	***MOTIVATION/ENGAGING WITH YOUNG STS*** ***MOTIVATION/GIVING SOMETHING BACK*** ***PT ROLE/BEING A TEACHER HELPS***
	So in answer to your question, yes, it is a wonderful experience visiting our young students. There are some issues that arise that have to be dealt with. Some challenges in terms of I'm an assessor, I'm an advisor, I'm a facilitator, in some cases I'm a mediator, and I'm a listener to both management and the student. I mean, there would have been certain issues down through the last six or seven years—we can go into that at another stage if you like—but where one has to, you know, facilitate, mediate. But generally the vast majority of our students step up to the mark in terms of the criteria for successful completion of the programme.	***MULTIFACETED ROLE OF PT***

APPENDIX 22

Sample Observation Coding

OBSERVATION CODING						
CATEGORY	**DESCRIPTION**	**COLUMN A**	**INITIAL REFECTION**	**COLUMN B**	**FURTHER REFLECTION**	**COLUMN C**
Roles of the placement tutor evident	**10:00- The PT as the representative of the university** - Her role as tutor is apparent as she checks into the school office as 'tutor from…'. To the onlooker this is someone from the university coming out to see the ST.	**PT TUTOR IDENTITY** **OFFICE CHECKIN**	Something formal about the check in- having to state the organisation puts her put there as a university representative-	**PT AS FACE OF UNIVERSITY**	Stating the name of the university "I'm from…. To see a student teacher X"- establishes the role as university staff. But in reality, while PT X is seen as a staff from SU, as a part-time PT she feels quite disconnected from the university and said this in her interview 1. In fact, she recounted that she has three different part-time jobs, and sometimes feels a little disconnected in her workspace. Yet looking at her, no one would know this.	**PT AS FACE OF UNIVERSITY** **PT OUTSIDER STATUS**

APPENDIX 23

Sample Codes for Interview 1

CODES FOR FIRST SET OF INTERVIEWS						
CODES	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	PT5	PT6
	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO
BIOGRAPHY/WAS/IS A PE TEACHER	1	2	2	2	1,2	1
BIOGRAPHY/RETIRED PE TEACHER	1	2				
BIOGRAPHY/SECONDED TO DES	1					
BIOGRAPHY/DELIVERING CPD TO TEACHERS	1,3		2			
BIOGRAPHY/WORKED WITH PDST					5	
BIOGRAPHY/ PREVIOUSLY A PT FOR ANOTHER HEI	2,3					
BIOGRAPHY/ PREVIOUSLY A CT	2			2	5	
BIOGRAPHY/PREVIOUSLY MENTOR TO NQTS				2		
BIOGRAPHY/LONG ASSOCIATION WITH PE	15					
BIOGRAPHY/LEADER OF INSTRUCTORS OF AA	2					
BIOGRAPHY/P/T LECTURE ON THE SUPE PROGRAMME	3	14	3			
BIOGRAPHY/PREVIOUSLY A LECTURER ON THE SUPE PROGRAMME				2		
BIOGRAPHY/ LIFE COACH IN ANOTHER UNIVERSITY PROGRAMME				5		
BIOGRAPHY/CONTRIBUTING TO CPD PROGRAMMES	15					
BIOGRAPHY/SCHOOL MANAGEMENT		2				
BIOGRAPHY/CHAIRPERSON OF A NUMBER OF BOARDS		4				
BIOGRAPHY/INVOLVED IN INTERVIEW PROCESS		4				
BIOGRAPHY/LIFE AND BUSINESS COACHING				2		
BIOGRAPHY/NATIONAL ACTIVE SCHOOLS PROMOTION			2			
BIOGRAPHY/ITE RESEARCH PROJECT CT COP					1,2	
CHALLENGES/TRANSITION FROM TEACHER TO TEACHER EDUCATOR				3		
CHALLENGES/TRANSITION FROM TEACHER TO TEACHER EDUCATOR	20,21					
CHALLENGES/sts NO PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF STS					7	
CHALLENGES /LACK OF FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOL ON ST			7			

APPENDIX 24

Sample Codes for Observation Fieldnotes

CODES FOR OBSERVATION FIELD NOTES					
CODES	OBS1-PT5	OBS2-PT3	OBS3-PT2	OBS4-PT6	OBS5-PT1
	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO
PT AS ASSESSOR	1A	2A,2B,2C,3A,3Bx2,4A,4C	3A	3Ax2, 6A	2Ax2,2Bx2,3Ax2,3B,3C
PT AS ASSESSOR AND ASSISTOR	2A	3A,3C	4C	1A,6C	4C,6B
PT'S SUPPORTIVE STANCE	2A,2Bx2,4A	3A,3C,4Ax2,4C,19C	4A	5C,6Ax2,6B	3A,4B,4C,5B,6A,6C,7B,7C,11C
NO TENSION IN DUAL ROLE	2A,2Bx2	5CX2	3B,3C	6B,7A	4A, 4B, 4C
PT AS GATE KEEPER	2B	2B	4C		
PT AS LINK		14C,15A	5C,6C		
PT AS FACE OF UNIVERSITY		1B,1C	3A		3A,3C
PT AS ADVOCATE		14Ax2,14B,15C			
PT MULTITASKING CHALLENGES	7A, 7Bx3	3Cx3,11A,11C	9B,9C	2A,2C,3A	6,6B,7A
PT AGENCY		14B,15C	1A,1Bx2,9B,10B	3Bx2,3C,4C	2C
TIME POOR	1Bx23A,3B,5A,5B,6AX2,6Bx3,7B	1C,3B,5C,7C,8A,12A,12C,13A,13B,13C	6C,9B,9C,10C	1B,2B,2C, 7A	1A, 11B
TIME RICH			1C,6C,9A,11C		
NO PREVIOUS R/SHIP WITH ST	3B	11C		7B	
PREVIOUS R/SHIP WITH ST			1C,2Cx2,3C,8B,8C		4C
PLEASANT AND RESPECTFUL INTERACTION BETWEEN PT AND ST	2A,2B,3A,4Ax2,4B	7A,9A	3C,7C,8A,8B,	5A,5B,6B,6C	5A,5C
LIMITED PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT	6B	8C			
CORDIAL PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT	5A			5B,5C,6A	1C,5A, 5B
WARM PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT			7B, 8A		
LIMITED PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH SP/DP			2A		
CORDIAL PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH SP/DP		6C,7C	7A		5A,5B
DIDN'T MEET SP/DP	3C			1A	
SCHOOL OFFICE/RECEPTION	3A,6A,7A,8B	1A,5C,16C	1A,3A,7A	1C	1A
CT A GRADUATE OF SUPE PROGRAMME	5B				1A

APPENDIX 25

Themes and Subthemes Interview 1

Candidate themes and subthemes - first set of interviews								
CANDIDATE THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES	PT1 PAGE NO	PT2 PAGE NO	PT3 PAGE NO	PT4 PAGE NO	PT5 PAGE NO	PT6 PAGE NO
1. The diverse biographies of placement tutors	Teachers past and present	WAS/IS A PE TEACHER	1	2	2	2	1,2	1
	Beyond being a teacher	*P/T LECTURE ON THE SUPE PROGRAMME*	3	14	3	2		
		PREVIOUSLY A PT FOR ANOTHER HEI	2,3					
		PREVIOUSLY A CT, MENTOR FOR NQTS	2			2	5	1
		LEADER OF INSTRUCTORS OF AA	2					
		MEMBER OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT,INTERVIEW BOARDS		2,4				
		LIFE AND BUSINESS COACHING				2,5		
		NATIONAL ACTIVE SCHOOLS PROMOTION			2			
		ITE RESEARCH PROJECT (CT COP)					1,2	
		BIOGRAPHY/SECONDED TO DES	1					
		BIOGRAPHY/ CONTRIBUTING TO CPD FOR TEACHERS	1,3,15		2		5	
		BIOGRAPHY/LONG ASSOCIATION WITH PE COMMUNITY	15					
	Recruitment to the role	*RECRUITMENT/APPROACHED THE UNIVERSITY*		2				
		RECRUITMENT/APPLIED FOR THE ROLE					4	
		RECRUITMENT/AD ON A PE ASSOCIATION WEBSITE					4	
		RECRUITMENT/NO FORMAL INTERVIEW	3	3	2			
		RECRUITMENT/FORMAL INTERVIEW						
2. Challenges for placement tutors	Related to student teachers	*STS NOT TAKING RESPONSIBILITY*	10			7,8		6
		NO PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF STS					6,7	
		LIMITED CONTACT WITH STS			7,9	29		
	Related to supervision	*LACK OF FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOL ON ST*			7			
		LACK OF TIME TO HAVE AN IN-DEPTH PLC DISCUSSION	22					
		NOT ENOUGH TIME TO TALK TO CTS RE STUDENTS IN DIFFICULTY	19					
	Related to the role	*TRANSITION FROM TEACHER TO TEACHER EDUCATOR*	20,21			3		
		FEELING OF ISOLATION IN THE ROLE		14		6,24		
		AWARENESS OF RESEARCH	27				8,10	
3. Placement tutors' relationships	With the cooperating teacher	*DIFFICULTY GETTING TO MEET SOME CTS*	21,22		16			
		GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH SOME CTS				27,28		16
	With the student teacher	*PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH STS*	18,19	14				
		NO PREVIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH STS				5	10	
		NO PRIOR RELATIONSHIPS MEANS STS HAVE NO PRECONCEPTIONS OF PT					10	
		FURTHER CONTACT WITH STS MAY BLUR THE ROLE OF ASSESSOR			14,15			
		STS WORK TO PLEASE THE PT,TO GET THE GRADE	9		8,10			
		STS ARE AFRAID OF FAILING				8		
		STS FEAR THE PT						11

APPENDIX 26

Themes and Subthemes Interview 2

Candidate themes and subthemes - second set of interviews								
CANDIDATE THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES	PT1 PAGE NO	PT2 PAGE NO	PT3 PAGE NO	PT4 PAGE NO	PT5 PAGE NO	PT6 PAGE NO
1.From teacher to teacher educator	PT's experiences of the transition	POSITIVE TRANSITION FROM TEACHER TO TEACHER EDUCATOR	3	6	3,4x2	5x2	30	3
		BECOMING A TEACHER EDUCATOR IS A PROCESS				6,12		3
		SUPPORT FOR NOVICE TEACHER EDUCATOR IS VERY NB						5
	What assists PTs in making the transition?	PAST TEACHING EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTES TO ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATOR	7x2	6X3,7X3,8,10, 16x2		5,14		6,13
		PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AS CT HELPS PRACTICE AS A TEACHER EDUCATOR					4	6,13
2. The challenges of part-time placement tutors	Related to supervision visits	ALLOCATION OF TIME FOR SP SUPERVISION SHOULD BE EXTENDED	2	2,3	2x3,3	4	2,3	2
		CURRENT ALLOCATION MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO CONDUCT ROLE EFFECTIVELY	2x2		2	4	2,3	
		CHALLENGE OF TRAVEL TIME		3,4,5		2,3		
	Related to the role	ARE P/T PT RESEARCH ACTIVE?	15	22	15,16	23	20	17
		IMPORTANT FOR PTS TO KEEP UP TO DATE WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN TEACHING	16	22	16x2	23	20,21	18x2
3.Placement tutors' relationships	With the coperating teacher	GOOD PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT	7, 8	8, 9		8x2		9
		LIMITED CONTACT WITH CT [FLEETING]					5,7	
		ACCESS TO CT VARIES SCHOOL TO SCHOOL	9	8,9,12,13	5,6	3,4	6, 9	7,8
	With the student teacher	HAS A GOOD R/SHIP WITH STS	6	14	8			
		BUILDING A R/SHIP WITH ST IS CHALLENGING FOR P/T PT	6			3,11,12	10	11x2, 12
		IS IT VALUABLE TO HAVE A PREVIOUS R/SHIP WITH STS?	7x3	15	9	12,13		
		PT SUPPORTIVE STANCE	2,4x3,6,14	6x2,8,14x3,15	6x2,8,14x3,15	9,21	3x2,12	11x3,14x2,23
	With the wider school community	RETURNING TO THE SAME SCHOOLS EACH YEAR HELPS PT TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS	17	26	5,17	3,19	23	7,9,19
		BUILDING R/SHIPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY IS NB FOR PT	16,17	26, 27x2				
		UNIVERSITY CAN PROVIDE CPD FOR CTS TO HELP BUILD RELATIONSHIPS		28x2			27	
4.The multifaceted role of placement tutors	Assessor/assistor and more	PT PRIORITIES DURING SUPERVISION VISIT	4x2,6x2,8	2,5x5,9,13	3x2,23	3,13	3x2,12	4
		PT AS ASSESSOR AND ASSISTOR		8,14		20 &21	12	
	Who values the PT's role?	DOES THE WIDER UNIVERSITY VALUE PT ROLE	13			17,18,19	17,19x2	
		SUPE ITE PROGRAMME VALUES THE PT ROLE	13, 14x2		12	17, 18	19	
		DO STS VALUE THE PT ROLE?	13	21x2	12, 13x2	20,21	18	15,16
		DOES THE SCHOOL VALUE PT ROLE?	14	21x2,22	14,15	8	18x2	15,16

APPENDIX 27

Themes and Subthemes Interview 3

Candidate themes and subthemes - third set of interviews								
CANDIDATE THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	PT5	PT6
			PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO	PAGE NO
3. Placement tutors' relationships	With the student teacher	PTS' PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF THE STS GIVES THEM A CONTEXT		10		7x3,8x2		
		P/T PTS DO NOT HAVE PREVIOUS CONTEXTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF STS		10				
		HOW DOES PT CONTRIBUTE TO ST'S PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL				19		
		WOULD PTS LIKE TO MEET WITH STS OUTSIDE OF THREE SUPERVISION VISITS	7	10,11	9	9	5,6,7	9,10,11,12
4.The multifaceted role of placement tutors	Fulfilling the dual role	CAN THE PT BE BOTH ASSISTOR AND ASS	4	3, 6,7,20	5	6	3	5
		THE DUAL ROLE SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR TO THE STS		6				
		IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO		5x2				
	Negotiating the dual role of a	EXPERIENCE AS A PT HELPS TO NEGOTIATE THE DUAL ROLE				5		
		EXPLICIT F/B AND CLARITY OF EXPECTATIONS IS NB TO FULFIL THE DUAL ROLE		7x2		5x2		
		CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT [IN THE SAR] ASSISTS IN THE ASSESSOR ROLE	5	7,8x2,22	8			5x2, 6
	Tutor versus supervisor	FAVOURS TITLE OF TUTOR	2	3	3,6	3,4	2	3
		TUTOR TITLE COMMUNICATES SUPPORT	2x3	3x3	2,3	3,5	1,2	2
		SUPERVISOR TITLE MORE COMMONLY USED					2	
		STS USE THE TITLE SUPERVISOR/ASSESSOR/INSPECTOR			3x2,6	3x3		2
		SCHOOLS USE THE TITLE SUPERVISOR/INSPECTOR				3	8	3
		SOME STS ONLY SEE THE ASSESSOR SIDE OF THE PT ROLE		4	6			
		SCHOOLS SEE PT AS ASSESSOR	3x2				8,9	
		SCHOOLS BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND THE DUAL ROLE		6				
	PT as assistor	PT SUPPORTIVE STANCE	4,5	5,6,7		4,5,11	6	5x4,11
5. Perceptions of other members of the triad	Making the grade	STS FOCUS ON THE GRADE			3		3	
		DO STS TRY TO PLEASE THE PT?	5	8	7	7x2, 8x2	3x3	7,8x3
		IF STS FOLLOW PTS ADVISE, ARE THEY TRYING TO PLEASE THE TUTOR?					3	
		ST DON'T HAVE PRECONCEIVED IDEAS ABOUT P/T PT				6	5	
	ST-CT Dyad	STUDENT TEACHERS FUSS WHEN PT VISITS THE SCHOOL					8	
		STS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE TEACHING COMMUNITY WHEN THEY GET A					8x2,10	
	CT's role in the school placement process	CTS SHOULD BE TREATED AS PROFESSIONALS WITH A VALUABLE		15x2,16x3		13		15,16
		CT'S ROLE SHOULD BE MORE FORMALISED			12	11,12	13	19
		BEING A CT ADDS TO WORKLOAD		16				
		BEING INTERESTED IN KEY TO BEING A CT					14	
		NEEDS TO BE A QUID PRO QUO TO GET THE CT ON BOARD					14	
		CPD SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE CT				13x2	11, 12	14,15
		SCHOOLS COULD MAKE THE ROLE OF CT A POST OF RESPONSIBILITY					14x2	
		CTS SHOULD ALLOWED TO GIVE INPUT TO THE ST GRADE	12			11		
		CT SHOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO GRADING THE ST			13			
		PLC CAN ALLOW FOR ASSESSMENT AS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN PT AND CT		22x2				
		ADDING CT TO THE PLC WOULD MAKE IT A LENGTHIER PROCESS					13	

APPENDIX 28

Themes and Subthemes Observation Fieldnotes

Candidate themes and subthemes - observation field notes							
CANDIDATE THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CODES	PT1 PAGE NO & COLUMN	PT2 PAGE NO & COLUMN	PT3 PAGE NO & COLUMN	PT5 PAGE NO & COLUMN	PT6 PAGE NO & COLUMN
1. Perceptions of the other members of the triad	ST-PT dyad	ST IS TIMETABLED WITH CT		7B,8C			5A
		ST NOT TIMETABLED WITH CT	1C,1Cx2		8A,10A,14C	5B,10Bx2	
	Conversations with placement tutor	ST A PASSIVE LISTENER			3A,4A,5C,9A		
		ST AN ACTIVE CONTRIBUTOR	6A	4B		4B	4A,6C
2.PT's challenges and opportunitites	Supervision challenges	TIME POOR	1A, 11B	6C,9B,9C,10C	1C,3B,5C,7C,8A,12A,12C,	1Bx23A,3B,5A,5B,6AX2,6	1B,2B,2C, 7A
		TIME RICH		1C,6C,9A,11C			
			2A	1A			1A
		NO PT CHECK IN CHAT WITH ST			7C	6A,6B	N/M
		BUSY SCHOOL LIFE	1B	2A,10A	5A,5B		2B
	CT challenges	CT IS TIMETABLED WITH ST		7B,8C			5A
		CT NOT TIMETABLED WITH ST	1C,1Cx2	N/M	8A,10A,14C	5B,10Bx2	
	ST challenges	LIMITED F/BACK ON ST FROM CT	1A,1B,2C,7C		6C,8A,10A	4B,5B	1A,5A,5B
		DETAILED F/BACK ON ST FROM CT		7B,8A,8C,10C			
		NO F/BACK ON ST FROM SP/DP	1A,2C,7C		6Cx2	3A,4A,4B	1B
		DETAILED F/BACK ON ST FROM SP/DP		1A			
3. Placement tutors' relationships	With the student teacher	NO PREVIOUS R/SHIP WITH ST			11C	3B	7B
		PREVIOUS R/SHIP WITH ST	4C	1C,2Cx2,3C,8B,8C	N/M		
		PLEASANT AND RESPECTFUL INTERACTION BETWEEN PT AND ST	5A,5C	3C,7C,8A,8B,	7A,9A	2A,2B,3A,4Ax2,4B	5A,5B,6B,6C
		CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PT	2A	1A			
	With the cooperating teacher	LIMITED PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT			8C	6B	
		CORDIAL PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT	1C,5A, 5B			5A	5B,5C,6A
		WARM PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH CT		7B, 8A			
	With the wider school community	LIMITED PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH SP/DP		2A			
		CORDIAL PROFESSIONAL R/SHIP WITH SP/DP	5A,5B	7A	6C,7C		
		DIDN'T MEET SP/DP				3C	1A
		SCHOOL OFFICE/RECEPTION	1A	1A,3A,7A	1A,5C,16C	3A,6A,7A,8B	1C
4. The multi-faceted role of placement tutors	Assisting and assessing	PT AS ASSESSOR	2Ax2,2Bx2,3Ax2,2B,3C	3A	2A,2B,2C,3A,3Bx2,4A,4C	1A	3Ax2, 6A
		PT AS ASSESSOR AND ASSISTOR	4C,6B	4C	3A,3C	2A	1A,6C
		PT'S SUPPORTIVE STANCE	3A,4B,4C,5B,6A,6C,7B,7C	4A	3A,3C,4Ax2,4C,10C	2A,2Bx2,4A	5C,6Ax2,6B
	Negotiating the dual role of assessor and assistor	NO TENSION IN DUAL ROLE	4A, 4B, 4C	3B,3C	5CX2	2A,2Bx2	6B,7A
	Other aspects of the PT role	PT AS GATE KEEPER		4C	2B	2B	
		PT AS LINK		5C,6C	14C,15A		
		PT AS FACE OF UNIVERSITY	3A,3C	3A	1B,1C		
		PT AS ADVOCATE			14Ax2,14B,15C		
		PT MULTITASKING CHALLENGES	6,6B,7A	9B,9C	3Cx3,11A,11C	7A, 7Bx3	2A,2C,3A
		PT AGENCY	2C	1A,1Bx2,9B,10B	14B,15C		3Bx2,3C,4C
5.The motivations of placement tutors	Altruistic motivation	PT MOTIVATION-CONTRIBUTING TO TEACHING AND LEARNING	10B,10C,11A	1C			
	Opportunities to learn and grow	PT MOTIVATION-ENJOYMENT	10B	3C,7B,15A,15B	18A,18B	10A	14A,14C
		PT MOTIVATION-LEARNING				11B	
	Opportunitites to engage	PT MOTIVATION-CONNECTION		15C			14B
6. The identities of placement tutors	Teacher-tutor	PT TUTOR IDENITITY	8A,8C	12A,12C	1A,17A,17Ax2	9A,9B	12A,12B,12Cx2
		PT TEACHER IDENTITY	8A,8B,8C,9C	12Ax2,12C	17A,17C	4A,9Ax2,9B	12A,12B,12C
	Understanding of identity	HOW IS IDENTITY PERCEIVED?	8B,8C	13C			12B,12C
7. Experiences of multimembership	Within the school community	PT AS PERIPHERAL/OUTSIDER IN SCHOOL COP	7A,7C	11A,11B,11C	15C	9B	1Cx2,9A,9B,9C
		PT AS VISITOR IN SCHOOL COP	3C,7B,8C	11	15C,16Cx2	8A,8Bx2	
		SEPARATION OF SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY	8C		16C	8B	8C
		PT BUBBLE		11B	15C		
	Understanding Community and COP	COMMUNITY VERSUS COP	7C,8A		15B		9B,10C,11C
8. The Third Space	Evidence of TS learning	NO THIRD SPACE LEARNING	9A	13C	18A,18C	10A	13A
		CT CANNOT/DOES NOT ENGAGE IN TSL	9A	13A,13B,14Cx2	18A	10A	13A
	Opportunities and possibilities for TSL	POSSIBILITY FOR THIRD SPACE LEARNING		13C			13A,13A,13C,14C
		SHIFT NEEDED FOR TSL	9C	15C	17C	10B	13Cx2