

**Front stage, backstage and off stage: the socialisation  
of first year physical education and primary  
education students on an initial teacher education  
programme at a Scottish university.**

Brian D. Cosford

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

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## **Declaration**

- I have composed this thesis
- The thesis is my own work
- The thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified

# THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

*(Regulation 3.1.14)*

Name of Candidate	Brian D. Cosford
Address:	
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This is a study of two cultures in a School of Education where, since 1998, PE students and primary students have taken a generic Education course that comprises one third of their study programme. PE students have been perceived to be a problem for the people responsible for running the Education course because their behaviour and attitudes have not matched the expectations of the staff. Drawing on Goffman's metaphor of theatre, and on Becker's analysis of the collectively held perspectives of medical students, this study examines the hidden curriculum of the academic front stage and students' activities back stage and off stage. The study uses an ethnographic approach using multiple methods and direct and prolonged observation of front stage, back stage and off stage settings. Three aspects of the hidden curriculum are identified, tensions between the Education courses and the ITE programmes, assessment and timetabling.

The hidden curriculum supports and defines students' beliefs and defines the two student cultures. For PE students the effect was to marginalise the Education courses and promote 'mainstream' PE courses. For primary students this effect was absent. The front stage supports the development of two separate cultures and on the back stage there is an influential PE culture supported by a 'family system' that links the four year groups. Backstage is an arena for the acquisition of social capital and the deliberate construction of sociability through bonding activities and it is here that PE students are socialised into the norms and values of the group. Primary students did not appear to have an identifiable group culture, either on campus or off campus. Despite the different socialisation experiences, both groups of first year students successfully accomplished placement and had relatively similar perspectives on teachers and teaching.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction and organisational context

This is a study of first year students on a four-year undergraduate degree who are training to become either physical education (PE) teachers or primary teachers. I became interested in this topic because, in December 2004, I observed an improvement in physical education students' performance in the first Education assignment (see Table 1.10) after a generic 'Education' course had been redesigned to include problem-based learning. This suggested a significant change in the way the course was perceived by physical education students who had a reputation for their boisterous behaviour and apparent lack of interest in the rigours of academic study. To explore this further I decided to study the culture of these two groups of students.

There has been a great deal of work on the professional socialisation of student teachers, for example Pajares (1992), Kettle and Sellars (1996), Holligan (1997), Wideen et al (1998), Mohr (2000), Hobson et al (2005, 2006, 2008), Malderez et al (2007), most being concerned with the matching of student attributes with the demands of the teaching profession, the transition from student to teacher and organizational socialisation during the early years of teaching. Scotland has a distinctive education system and a distinctive initial teacher education system. Scottish studies (Holligan, 1997; Christie, 2003) have studied the dichotomy between theory and practice in initial teacher education and Holligan suggested that an ethnographic study might provide a deeper insight into students' perceptions of professional effectiveness. This study contributes to knowledge by examining the lived experience of two distinct cultures in the same institution, focusing on back stage activities that help to create and sustain these cultures. The aim of this study, drawing on Hargreaves (1978), is to explore social action from the point of view of the actors and to articulate the participants' taken for granted common-sense knowledge so that we have a language to discuss the student experience and to inform policy and practice by providing an understanding of everyday life as an undergraduate on an initial teacher education programme.

## 1. Teacher education in Scotland

Initial teacher education in Scotland is provided by seven university Faculties or Schools of Education<sup>1</sup>. Three types of ITE programme are available:

1. A one year Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) that prepares people, who already hold a degree, to become either primary or secondary teachers;
2. A four-year undergraduate B.Ed. programme that prepares people to become primary teachers, physical education teachers, music teachers or technological education teachers;
3. A combined (or concurrent) degree that enables students to complete a degree in a subject and a programme of initial teacher education at the same time.  
(General Teaching Council for Scotland, undated)

With the exception of Stirling University all providers offer the B.Ed. (Primary), PGDE (Primary) and PGDE (Secondary). Stirling University offers a combined degree, as do Aberdeen, Glasgow and Strathclyde. The B.Ed. (Technological Education) is only offered at Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow and the B.Ed. (Physical Education) is only offered at Edinburgh. The University of Glasgow has specific responsibility for the initial training of Roman Catholic students.

The Teachers (Education Training and Recommendation for Registration) (Scotland) Regulations (HMSO, 1993) require the Secretary of State (now Scottish ministers) to consult the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) about the duration, content and nature of programmes. The regulations also require that, with certain exceptions, the lecturers working on the programme should be GTCS registered teachers. The Scottish Executive policy on the content, nature and duration of initial teacher education programmes is laid out in the Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education Courses in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2006a). The Standard for Initial Teacher Education (SITE) comprises:

- Professional knowledge and understanding – for example of the curriculum and educational principles and perspectives;
- Professional skills and abilities – for example teaching and learning, classroom organisation and management, pupil assessment and professional reflection and communication;

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<sup>1</sup> Stirling; Glasgow; Strathclyde; Edinburgh; Dundee; Aberdeen and Paisley. Paisley University was renamed the University of the West of Scotland in November 2007.

- Professional values and personal commitment – for example a commitment to social justice, child protection and professional values such as integrity and reliability.

Initial teacher education programmes are designed to achieve the SITE benchmarks both in the university coursework and on school based placements, though as Brisard et al (2003) observe, the guidelines have a degree of flexibility:

Despite the existence of Benchmark standards and national requirements for all ITE courses in Scotland, at least two Heads of education departments in Scotland acknowledge that TEIs<sup>2</sup> are not totally constrained in Scotland and that it is nothing like in England. One of them believes that new Benchmarks ‘give a sufficiently broad framework within which you can take the students forwards in all kinds of directions’ and therefore does not necessarily constrain institutions in terms of how they design their course. (Brisard et al (2003) cited in McKie et al, 2005:4)

The four-year undergraduate B.Ed. was, until 2001, the more common route into primary teaching in Scotland but since 2002 the number of students recruited to the PGDE (Primary) has risen dramatically to meet government commitments to reduce class size.

Programme	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
B.Ed (Primary)	544	557	455	482	446	510	541	579
PGDE (Primary)	254	312	379	683	586	670	851	1,439

*Table 1.1 Number of students graduating from PGDE (Primary) and B.Ed. (Primary) programmes in Scotland, 1999-2006 (Scottish Executive, 2006b)*

## 2. Institutional mergers in Scotland 1993 - 2001

Until 1993 teacher education took place in specialist institutions (Kirk, 2003) but, between 1993 and 2001, all the former colleges of education were incorporated into the university sector. Munn (2007) attributes this to a decline in student numbers, the consequent financial fragility of the colleges, the educational advantages of aspiring teachers being educated alongside a broader range of students and the opportunity for teacher education staff to be more extensively involved in research.

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<sup>2</sup> Teacher Education Institutions.

<b>Former College of Education</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Date of merger</b>
Jordanhill College of Education	Strathclyde	1993
Craigie College of Education	Paisley <sup>3</sup>	1993
Moray House Institute of Education	Edinburgh	1998
St Andrew's College of Education	Glasgow	1998
Northern College of Education	Dundee	2001
Northern College of Education	Aberdeen	2001
Institute of Education, Stirling university	Stirling	No change

*Table 1.2 Dates and nature of recent mergers of Scottish Colleges of Education*

The incorporation of the colleges of education into the university sector has led to a number of perceived advantages but also some tensions, particularly between teaching and research. In 2003 the EIS-ULA<sup>4</sup> response to a review of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) suggests that the opportunity for teacher education staff to be more extensively involved in research was posing problems given the amount of time former college of education lecturers spent on teaching and visiting students on school based placements:

The EIS-ULA has consistently voiced its concern at the lack of value afforded to teaching over research in the higher education sector across the UK and believes teaching academics, with a large amount of student contact time, are “looked down on” by their more research active colleagues. EIS-ULA believes if this is not corrected the UK is in danger of establishing a two-tier higher education sector; one teaching focused and the other research focused. (EIS-ULA, 2003)

It is in the context of these national changes that Moray House is examined in greater detail as the setting for the professional development of B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary) students.

### **3. The Moray House context**

Moray House has trained primary teachers for over 150 years but the initial training of PE teachers in Scotland was, until 1987, undertaken at two separate colleges;

<sup>3</sup> From 30th November 2007 the University of the West of Scotland

<sup>4</sup> The University Lecturers' Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland represents lecturing staff in all but one of the post 1992 higher education institutions in Scotland and a considerable number in pre 1992 higher education institutions.

women being trained at Dunfermline College of Physical Education in Edinburgh and men at Jordanhill College in Glasgow. When, in 1987, the initial training of physical education teachers in Scotland was rationalised, Jordanhill ceased to train PE teachers, Dunfermline College of Physical Education expanded to train both men and women and was merged with Moray House Institute of Education. A brief history of the development of teacher training at Moray House is outlined below.

1848	The Free Church of Scotland's Normal and Sessional School opened on the Moray House site – considered the 'beginning' of Moray House College.
1905	The Carnegie Dunfermline College of Hygiene and Physical Training opened in Dunfermline, a college for male and female students.
1931	Male PE students to be transferred to Jordanhill College, Glasgow. Dunfermline College now trains only women PE students.
1932	Jordanhill College of Physical Education opens in Glasgow for male students.
1959	Establishment of Moray House College of Education in Edinburgh.
1964	Callendar Park College of Education opens in Falkirk for 600 women primary students.
1981	Callendar Park College of Education merged with Moray House.
1986	Dunfermline College merger with Moray House announced.
1987	Undergraduate training of PE teachers at Jordanhill College ceases and undergraduate training of both male and female PE teachers centralised at Moray House on the Dunfermline College campus at Cramond on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The institution is renamed the Scottish Centre for Physical Education, Movement and Leisure Studies.
1991	A formal association between Moray House and Heriot-Watt University was formed. Moray House retitled Moray House Institute of Education.
1998	Moray House merged with the University of Edinburgh to become its Faculty of Education. Generic Education courses introduced.
2001	The PE department moves from Cramond to the Holyrood campus.

*Table 1.3 Key events in the history of the Moray House (Perfect, 2007)*

The first mixed intake of students to the B.Ed. (PE) comprised 28 males and 52 females (Bayman, 1995). The separate training of male and female PE teachers prior to 1987 reflected different orientations towards physical education. Women studied movement and had a more rounded approach to the purposes of physical education whereas men came from a coaching tradition, Jordanhill being predominantly a science-oriented college<sup>5</sup>. This was also the case in England (Fletcher, 1984) and the

<sup>5</sup> Interview with PE lecturer (March 2006).

United States, women having separate and different school curricula, teacher education programmes and professional associations (Lawson, 1988:71).

#### 4. Initial teacher education programmes at Moray House

Moray House offers PGDE and B.Ed. programmes for both secondary and primary teaching. The PGDE (Primary) and the PGDE (Secondary) courses comprise 36 weeks of study of which 18 weeks are spent on placement, normally in three different schools and, for the primary course, at different stages – nursery, early, middle and upper primary. Of the 18 weeks at the university half the time is generic and half is subject based.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Minimum entry requirements</b>	<b>Enrolment 2007-08</b>
PGDE (Secondary)	A degree relevant to the teaching qualification being studied and Higher English.	239
PGDE (Primary)	A degree, Higher English and Standard Grade mathematics at level 2.	299
B.Ed. (Primary)	Four SQA Higher grades BBBB including English with Standard Grade Maths at 1 or 2. If English is grade C, then Maths Higher at grade B.	156
B.Ed. (PE)	Four SQA Higher grades BBBB (or more if two sittings) including English with Standard Grade Maths at 3 or above.	104
B.Ed. (Design and Technology)	Four SQA Higher grades BBBC including English with Standard Grade Maths. Standard Grade Technological Studies or Physics if not at Higher.	13

*Table 1.4 Minimum entry requirements by course and enrolment 2007/08 (Scottish Executive, 2005)*

The three undergraduate programmes require students to take three 40-credit courses each year, two of which are specific to the programme plus a generic course in 'Education'. School based placements take place in each of the four years, increasing in length from four and five weeks in years one and two to ten and eleven weeks in years three and four. All students spend their first placement in a primary school but, from their second year, B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Technology) placements are in secondary schools. Each of the undergraduate programmes has, for many

years, been taught separately by dedicated teams, most of whom are GTC registered which means that they are qualified and experienced teachers. However, immediately after the merger with the University in 1998 courses were reviewed and modified so that they conformed to the pattern required by the University. A major change was the introduction of a suite of four generic Education courses, one to be taken in each academic year. These were outwith the control of any individual programme as they were designed to meet the needs of all initial teacher education students on four year undergraduate programmes and, for the first time, PE students, primary students and design and technology students met together in lectures, seminars and workshops.

## **5. New 'Education' courses at Moray House**

The planning of the new Education courses was a complex undertaking as there were many conflicting interests. The main problem was that by introducing the new Education courses, which would comprise a third of a student's programme, there would be an equivalent reduction in the time available for other courses. According to the course organiser for the first four years of Education One (1998-2002):

The process of course construction was rapid and rather exclusive and those on the 'outside' were either feeling excluded, alienated or downright opposed to this approach, feeling that their courses (PE, Primary, Community Education, and Design and Technology) were being undermined or reduced in ways which diluted their quality. (Ducklin, 2002:2)

This was taking place alongside an institutional policy to reduce staff/student contact time in order to improve the RAE research rating. The tension between the academic and the professional orientation was apparent both in 1997/98 when the courses were first designed and in 2002/03 when they were reviewed. Ducklin adds: "it is quite apparent, from some contributions to the Education Course Review, that acceptance of the Education courses is a considerable way off and there are some firmly held views that the changes that have been introduced have been made for the worse not the better" (Ducklin, 2002:12). This was confirmed by a long serving PE lecturer (interview, March 2006) who regarded the changes since the merger of Moray House with the University of Edinburgh to have been detrimental to the

education and training of physical education teachers, a view confirmed by a teaching fellow in February 2008. Table 1.5 outlines the stages in the development of the suite of Education courses.

Academic year	Activity
1997 – 1998	A planning committee, chaired by the Dean, designs the new Education One course with three sub groups responsible for parallel strands on 'Teaching and Learning', 'Social Context and Lifespan Development' and 'Perspectives'. Three lectures each week, a workshop every other week and assessed by two essays and an examination.
1998 – 1999	Education 1 starts but lectures are delivered on two sites, Holyrood and Cramond. Fortnightly workshops are held on the Holyrood campus.
1999 – 2000	Education 2 starts. Education 1 and Education 2 lectures are delivered on two sites. Workshops for Education 1 and Education 2 are held on the Holyrood campus.
2000 – 2001	Education 3 and 4 start. Education 1 lectures take place on one site for the first time in the George Square lecture theatre. PE students are bussed into Edinburgh.
2001 – 2002	Arrangements as in 2000 – 2001. PE staff and students are relocated on the Holyrood campus in September 2001. The Cramond campus closes.
2002 – 2003	Revision of Education 1 which now becomes two 20 credit courses, Education 1Ah and Education 1Bh. Web based resources, PBL activities and associated PDPs are designed for implementation in 2003 - 2004.
2003 – 2004	Education 1Ah and Education 1Bh start.
2004 – 2005	No significant change to the Education 1 courses. Research: collaborative inquiry group initiated (November 2004 to March 2005).
2005 – 2006	No significant change to the Education 1 courses. Research: data collection and literature search begins.
2006 – 2007	No significant change to the Education 1 courses. Research: data collection and literature review ongoing.
2007 - 2008	Revision of Education 1Ah, 1Bh, 2Ah and 2Bh begins. Four 20 credit courses to be reduced to three 20 credit courses, New courses to start in 2009 – 2010. Research: data analysis and writing up continue.

*Table 1.5 The development of the suite of Education courses*

Ducklin observed that, in 2002, there were still a number of ongoing difficulties and 'rumbling animosities' between academic staff in relation to the Education courses.

At the height of the animosity Ducklin notes: “The use of two letters (PE) has, in some quarters, become a by-word for negativity and lack of integrity and, whilst perhaps containing semblances of truth, exaggerates the unreasonableness and lack of professionalism of others” (Ducklin, 2002:7). The proposal for merger between Moray House and the University of Edinburgh (1998) stated:

It is essential that programmes of education are as academically demanding as others offered by the University ... At the same time, it has to be recognised that the professions for which the existing Moray House trains expect that graduates will be accomplished practitioners. While it is crucially important to ensure that professional skills are firmly grounded in theoretical understanding, it is also vital that theoretical understanding can issue in competent professional performance. Moreover, in professional programmes, both theoretical understanding and professional performance should be reflected in the final award that is conferred. University of Edinburgh, 1998:17)

The aim was for the new courses to be as academically demanding as others offered by the University, but at the same time produce accomplished practitioners. A number of academic staff were concerned about the new structure and the reduction in the time available for the study of the school curriculum and professional practice:

It would be useful to know the arguments underpinning the new structure i.e. why was it decided that most of the time should be cut from the curriculum areas? Without these arguments being fully explained the temptation is to assume that the committee (which appears to be dominated by tutors from the Education course) had an inbuilt bias towards Education courses. I'm sure that this isn't the case but this needs to be demonstrated. (Email from a primary curriculum lecturer, 1998)

PE staff were also concerned at the reduction in the time available for practical skill development and at one point a group of PE staff and local PE teachers met with the Dean arguing that, because the introduction of the new Education courses had reduced the time available for the study of the PE curriculum, future PE teachers would not be adequately qualified to teach in schools<sup>6</sup>. For many staff the loss of teaching time was a major concern:

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<sup>6</sup> Field notes – discussion with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies (2007).

As we have moved from Dunfermline College to Moray House to Heriot-Watt and to Edinburgh University I have found it increasingly difficult to live out in my practice the educational values that we try to teach our students. Physical education students are finding that really difficult and we are having to make all sorts of allowances for physical education students as they develop into teachers because we simply don't have the time now. (Interview with lecturer in PE, March 2006)

The reduction in contact time meant that some staff did not feel able to prepare students for teaching in the way they would wish. Hall and Schulz (2003) describe a similar tension between the demands of the university and the professionalism that teacher educators themselves want to model as teachers of prospective schoolteachers:

As university level teachers themselves, the teacher educators are also often struggling to define their own professionalism in a wider university context that can appear hostile to the vocational bias and commitment to practical knowledge which underpin teacher education as a discipline. Prevailing university cultures tend to reward individualised, autonomous academic achievement, whereas prevailing discourses within teacher education necessarily focus upon partnership and collaboration. (Hall and Schulz, 2003:380)

Once the new pattern of courses had been established the debate turned to the content of the Education courses. For the first three years the content was overseen by the Dean<sup>7</sup> but when the Education courses were reviewed in 2003/04, programme coordinators for B.Ed. (PE), B.Ed. (Primary) and B.Ed. (Design and Technology) took issue with what they saw as the failure to include programme specific professional issues within the revised Education courses:

We consider that, in the absence of practicum<sup>8</sup>, the applied half course model must clearly address fundamental underpinning professional preparation issues. If it fails demonstrably to do so, then it is failing to fulfil the revised course model as agreed in the minute of the meeting of 16th April, 2003 and outlined in detail in the Review of Education Courses: A Position Paper (March 2003). (Email from the programme coordinators for B.Ed. (PE), B.Ed. (Primary) and B.Ed. (Design and Technology), May 2003)

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<sup>7</sup> The Dean had been Principal of Moray House for over 20 years.

<sup>8</sup> 'Practicum' was the term used to describe preparation for placement.

This highlights two distinct orientations to ITE, a practical orientation concerned with craft knowledge and a focus on classroom experience and a critical inquiry orientation that sees the teacher as a critical, reflective change agent. Christie (2003) notes that tensions between theory and practice have been a persistent characteristic of initial teacher education.

The review of the Education courses (2002/2003) was eventually resolved with a compromise in which both theoretical and practical elements were included in a course that now used problem-based learning. Apart from their involvement in discussions about the course content few PE staff were able to be involved with the teaching of the Education courses which were predominantly organised and taught by primary education staff. There had been little effective communication between PE staff and the remainder of the School of Education and some PE staff believe that the PE department is as isolated from the rest of the School of Education as it was when located at Cramond prior to their relocation on the Holyrood campus in October 2001:

I think there is an incompatibility between the two places because the training of physical education teachers, to my mind, is still a specialist subject and you need specialist considerations. I don't think physical education teacher training is like most other teacher training. Very few people at Moray House have been sympathetic to the special needs of PE courses and part of it stems from the fact that some people just don't appreciate the role that physical education can play. At the end of the day, just as in many schools, physical education has a marginal status. (PE lecturer, March 2006)

Each of the Education courses is coordinated by a 'course organiser' whose role is to design the course, in consultation with others, and ensure the efficient day to day running of the course (Pain et al., 1997). In addition an 'Academic Co-ordinator for Education Courses' ensures continuity and effective liaison between the four 'Education' courses. However, the Education course organisers have been very primary oriented, three of them being located in the department that has overall responsibility for the PGDE (Primary) and the B.Ed. (Primary) programmes. The Academic Coordinator has an office next to the B.Ed. (Primary) programme coordinator and all course organisers, with the exception of myself, have offices on

the same corridor. At course organisers' meetings they routinely refer to the 'curriculum courses' meaning the primary subjects with which they are familiar, maths; language; religious, moral and philosophical studies (RMPS); environmental studies and aesthetic subjects and show little knowledge of courses taken by students on programmes other than the B.Ed. (Primary). The content of the course was often problematic and PE students considered much of it 'irrelevant'. In this they were often correct. The first version of the Education 2 course [2000/01] had been designed to prepare students for a forthcoming placement in a nursery school and all the lecturers, most of whom had previously taught on the B.Ed. (primary) course, made their lectures relevant to teaching in a nursery school. This was an early indication of the primary orientation of the course and the apparent failure to acknowledge that PE students were training to be secondary teachers and did most of their placements in a secondary school.

The internal tensions between theory and practice are part of a wider issue about the perceived relevance of educational theory courses in initial teacher education. Holligan (1997) found that Scottish B.Ed. (Primary) students wanted to develop their basic craft expertise and saw their college courses as a direct preparation for the practical, everyday demands of classroom teaching. Students were unanimous in their view that school experience played a highly significant role in fostering their professional development. Earlier studies had found that students were critical of Educational Studies' lack of 'immediate relevance' to the classroom (HMI (1979); SED (1978), cited in Holligan (1997:534) although in 1992 OFSTED found that two-thirds of newly qualified teachers viewed Educational Studies favourably (HMSO (1993), cited in Holligan (1997:534).

## **6. The students**

Many ITE students have relatives who are teachers. Of the eight students interviewed in November 2005 five had family members who were teachers and Malderez et al (2007) found that 19 of their 84 interviewees referred to teaching as a family profession, this being a significant source of anticipatory socialization.

Many staff teaching on the Education courses stereotype PE students as not being very academic and, whilst good at sport, probably having low entry qualifications (field notes, various dates). This is a common stereotype, and one of the PE lecturers (interview, March 2006) observed that PE students tended to play up to this stereotype. However, as early as 1975, Hendry (1975) observed that although PE teachers had low subject status in schools, a higher percentage of PE students had university entrance qualifications than students following other college courses<sup>9</sup>. Analysis of a 25% sample of PE and primary entrants to the Moray House course (2005/2006) found that PE students and primary students had similar entry qualifications, typically five Highers grades AABBC. All PE students had Scottish qualifications and only three primary students had 'A' levels.

Mean	'A' grade	'B' grade	'C' grade	'D' grade	N=
Primary	2.2	2.2	1.0	0.1	31
PE	2.2	2.5	1.1	0.2	31

*Table 1.6 Higher grades on entry by course based on a 25% sample (2005/06)*

A subsequent analysis, based on the entire population entering the course in 2007/08, found that the entry qualifications for PE students were virtually the same as in 2005/06. However the primary entry qualifications are lower in 2007/2008 because access students<sup>10</sup> had been excluded in the 2005/06 analysis. With access students included in the 2007/2008 analysis the mean entry qualifications for primary students' are slightly lower with fewer 'A' grades.

Mean	'A' grade	'B' grade	'C' grade	'D' grade	N=
Primary	1.6	2.0	1.2	0.2	145
PE	2.1	2.4	1.2	0.17	99

*Table 1.7 Higher grades on entry by course (2007/08)*

<sup>9</sup> This study was of a College of Education in the North of England.

<sup>10</sup> Mature students who have taken an 'access' course at a local FE college which guarantees a place on the B.Ed. (primary) course.

To test the hypothesis that entrants to the B.Ed. (PE) course have qualifications in less challenging subjects an analysis of entrants' Higher subjects in 2007/2008 was undertaken and, as can be seen in table 1.8, this is clearly not the case. Most PE students have Highers in the main 'academic' subjects including English, Mathematics, Science and the Humanities. Primary and PE students' entry qualifications are broadly comparable, although most PE students have Higher PE. More PE students have mathematics and a science than primary students whilst more primary students have art or music. This may reflect the selection process.

Subject	B.Ed. (PE) 2007/2008	B.Ed (Primary) 2007/2008
English	96	89
PE	83	6
Humanities <sup>11</sup>	76	74
Science	71	48
Mathematics	68	46
Home Economics, Technology, Business <sup>12</sup>	54	47
Art/Music	19	45
Languages	18	34

*Table 1.8 Percentage of students with a Higher in the various subject areas*

Most primary students were under 20 years of age on entry although there are a significant number of 'mature' entrants, twenty eight in 2006/07. This was because of a deliberate policy to recruit mature students from 'access' courses at local FE colleges. Most PE students were under 20 years of age on entry, only 12% being over 20 years of age compared with 29% of B.Ed. primary students. None of the PE students were over 24 years of age.

<sup>11</sup> 'Humanities' included History, Geography, Modern Studies, Economics, RE, Media Studies, Sociology and Psychology.

<sup>12</sup> 'Home Economics, Technology, Business' also included Childcare, Secretarial, Computing and Graphic Communication

Age on entry	Primary students		PE students	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Over 30	16	11	0	0
26-30	6	4	0	0
25	3	2	0	0
24	4	3	3	3
23	6	4	2	2
22	4	3	2	2
21	3	2	6	5
20	18	13	16	15
19	72	50	64	58
18	12	8	17	15
TOTAL	144	100	110	100

*Table 1.9 Age on entry by course: September 2005*

PE students are recruited from the whole of Scotland because this is the only undergraduate PE teacher education course in Scotland whereas the B.Ed. Primary course recruits mainly from the East of Scotland because Faculties of Education in Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen and Paisley also provide teacher education courses. Consequently relatively few first year PE students lived at home during term time whereas over half the primary students live at home and commute to the university. As we shall see later, this has a significant effect on students' participation in backstage activities and on the socialisation process.

Most primary students are female (93%), primary education being a quintessentially feminine domain and, "in popular discourse, male teachers have been variously depicted as 'unusual', 'ambitious', 'odd' or even 'deviant'" (Carrington, 2002:287). In 2005/06 57% of PE students were female though in 2006/07 there were slightly more men than women. This was the first time that men had outnumbered women and this was regarded as a significant development by some of the PE staff:

When the lads came in 1987 they were kept separate. They did add something to the course but they seem to want to live out the traditional image of physical education as a student. As long as we were able to add the civilising influence of the women, we managed to keep the lads in check. Eventually what has happened is that the lads have had such an influence that there are

some things that have gone on that I have found absolutely embarrassing. (PE lecturer, March 2006)

PE students are young, come from all over Scotland, live in flats in Edinburgh, have good academic qualifications and, as we shall see later, are a distinct and cohesive social group. Most entrants have a sport in which they excel and which they have played at school, club or national levels. In 2006/07 seven of the 27 sports bursaries awarded by the University to elite athletes were given to PE students. Primary students are mainly young but with a significant group of mature students, come mainly from the East of Scotland, live at home with their parents, have good academic qualifications but do not appear to form a distinct or cohesive social group. By the end of the first semester primary students outperform PE students in the Education 1Ah assignment<sup>13</sup>. Over a five-year period (2001- 2005) twice as many primary students achieved a grade A or B (41% compared to 19%) and twice as many PE students as primary students got a D (32% compared to 15%). This contributes to the stereotype of PE students that is held by many of the academic staff.

Percentages	PE students					Primary students				
	A/B	C	D	Fail	N =	A/B	C	D	Fail	N =
December 2001	29	42	24	5	100	44	38	19	4	138
December 2002	15	40	33	11	97	39	39	19	3	149
December 2003	8	35	44	13	96	31	53	9	7	150
December 2004	34	43	23	1	101	50	37	12	2	153
December 2005	12	38	38	11	105	40	41	16	3	139

*Table 1.10 Attainment on the Education 1Ah essay 2001 – 2005 (percentages)*

PE and primary students have entry qualifications that are virtually identical so why, between 2001 and 2005, did primary students outperform PE students in the Education 1Ah assignment? This study examines students' attitudes, behaviour and culture in an attempt to understand what happens to PE and primary students during their first year at university.

<sup>13</sup> See appendix 4 for 2006 and 2007 attainment statistics.

## Chapter 2 Literature Review

There is a rich and diverse literature on the socialisation of student teachers, the two main approaches being symbolic interactionist and functionalist. Within the symbolic interactionist approach three stages can be identified, anticipatory socialisation, pre service socialisation and organisational socialisation. This chapter will critically discuss the 'PE literature' and the 'general literature', though there is much common ground between them. The emphasis is on studies of undergraduate programmes rather than postgraduate programmes. Studies of teacher education in USA; Canada; Australia; New Zealand; Greece; Norway; Finland; England; Scotland and Israel were reviewed. There is a lack on consensus in the literature about the effect that ITE programmes have on students' beliefs about teachers and teaching and the influence of socialisation on the backstage of university life is neglected. The following questions guided the analysis of the literature:

1. To what extent does anticipatory and organisational socialisation influence ITE students' beliefs and perspectives?
2. What influence does pre service socialisation (time spent in college) have on the beliefs and perspectives of PE and primary students?
3. Does pre service socialisation take place on the official front stage, official backstage, unofficial backstage or offstage? How is this manifested?

One of the problems with comparative research in this field is that teacher education programmes in different countries and at different times exhibit considerable variations. For example, Andriamampianina and Si Moussa (2005) found that teacher education courses for secondary school physical education teachers in France and China reflect different concepts of physical education, with a sports based approach in Beijing and a science based approach in France. Many of the North American PETE courses have an emphasis on physical education coaching that is not as evident in the UK (Hutchinson, 1993). Teacher education in Scotland is different from that in England and, as was described in chapter 1, only the concurrent and consecutive routes into teaching are available in Scotland. In an analysis of ITE policy documents in England and Scotland Menter et al (2006) found that, "there is a much more explicit commitment to a strong intellectual component ... in Scotland than in England, including frequent references to research and theory in Scotland"

(Menter et al, 2006:279) and notes that, “both England and Scotland ... are among the few countries to place particular emphasis on practical training in behaviour management and school discipline as well as general management and organizational skills” (Menter et al, 2006:280).

Even in one education system teacher education programmes develop over time to reflect central government initiatives and structural changes such as the incorporation of initial teacher education in Scotland into the university sector. Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) identify five orientations that characterise different initial teacher education courses:

- An academic orientation that is concerned with subject knowledge and with the student teachers’ own education;
- A practical orientation that is concerned with craft knowledge and which focuses on classroom experience and an apprenticeship model of teacher education;
- A technical orientation that is based on a behaviourist model that focuses on microteaching and a competency based model of teacher education;
- A personal orientation that is based on interpersonal relationships and humanistic psychology, focussing on personal development;
- A critical inquiry orientation that is concerned with social reform, seeing the teacher as a critical, reflective change agent.

The distinction between these orientations can be blurred and most ITE courses will manifest variants of these orientations in different parts of the course. However, in the literature the dominant educational ideology of the institution being studied is not always apparent. In this chapter the notion of front stage, back stage and off stage as sites for the socialisation of student teachers is explored and the literature on the professional socialisation of student teachers is critically discussed.

### **1. Front stage, backstage and offstage as sites for the socialisation of student teachers**

Students on a Scottish undergraduate initial teacher education course spend four years at university where they experience a formal curriculum [lectures, practical classes etc] that is designed to make them into competent teachers. Students are also exposed to various other influences as they interact with their peers in a university setting and with teachers in school settings.

The hidden curriculum is particularly important in professional education, which characteristically includes prolonged periods of exposure to the predominant occupational culture (Lempp and Seale, 2004). Becker's (1961) study of medical students explored the effects of living and working in a medical school and the way in which students shape and control their conduct by taking into account the expectations of others. Students interact with one another in relation to their problems and jointly consider the meaning of events and the ways in which they might respond to them. Becker uses the term 'perspective' to refer to a co-ordinated set of ideas and actions that a person uses when dealing with a problematic situation. Perspectives were derived from what students said and did unprompted on the official backstage. Becker identifies a 'long range perspective', the wish at the end of the course to qualify as a doctor, an 'initial perspective', when students attempt to learn everything and become overwhelmed by the quantity of work, a 'provisional perspective' when students realise that 'you can't do it all' and begin to prioritise certain aspects of the work and a 'final perspective' when students identify 'what they want us to know', focussing on passing the course by meeting the needs of the people who are assessing them. Sinclair (1997), drawing on Becker, identified an 'academic perspective', which is the need to learn academic conventions such as academic essay writing and appropriate library skills and a 'perspective of student co-operation', helping and supporting one another backstage or off stage.

Front stage, backstage and offstage settings are outlined in table 2.1. The official work of the institution takes place on the front stage where lecturers teach the manifest curriculum. Backstage, in keeping with Goffman's theatrical metaphor, is where participants prepare and develop their front stage persona. Goffman defines the backstage as "the place, relative to the given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course." (Goffman, 1956:112) Students' backstage activities take place in bars, on the football pitch and in the halls of residence where there are no staff as an audience so that the rules that define their front stage performances no longer apply. In chapter 5 it will be argued that backstage is where ITE students develop their perspectives about teachers and teaching.

	OFFICIAL	UNOFFICIAL	THE LAY WORLD	
FRONT STAGE	The official front stage is the manifest curriculum comprising lectures, seminars, workshops, meetings with Directors of Studies and tutors, exams, essays and presentations. The school-based placement is also part of the official front stage but takes place in a different field – in the case of first year students this is a primary school.	The unofficial front stage includes sporting activities such as football, netball, rugby and basketball as well as the clubs and societies that are available to university students.	The lay world includes former school friends and current university friends who are not on initial teacher education courses. It also includes life at home, though in situations where parents are teachers this might be seen as part of the unofficial backstage.	OFF
BACK STAGE	The official backstage is the space provided by the university for 'preparation' and may include the libraries, the problem based learning workspace (third floor of the library), the common room, computer labs and the Education One 'study groups'.	The unofficial backstage is where students prepare for official and unofficial front stage activities and may include the student bars, the refectory, halls of residence, and email conferences. It also includes social events organized by students.		STAGE

Table 2.1 *The field – front stage, back stage and off stage*<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Modified from Sinclair (1997:16).

Broadhead (1983, cited in Sinclair, 1997) describes the private lives of students being inundated by activities which, whilst they fall within the institution, are not part of the institution's official function of producing doctors. Students only participate in these activities because of their status as students although peer pressure makes participation almost compulsory. Unofficial back stage activities at Moray House include the various sporting and social events described in chapter 5.

It is difficult to establish a fine distinction between front stage, backstage and off stage settings. What is front stage in one context might be back stage in another context. The library may be the official back stage for the preparation of work to be performed on the front stage (a tutorial). However, it may also be the front stage for students' presentation of self to their peers in which case preparation for the performance takes place either off stage or in another setting that becomes a back stage for that particular performance. In both cases preparation will involve the modification of speech, behaviour and dress to suit the performance.

Becker's fieldwork took place mainly on the official backstage whilst Atkinson's (1981) study of clinical teaching took place mainly on the official front stage. In teacher education Riksaasen's (2001) study of nursery and primary courses in Norway focussed entirely on front stage activities and whilst White (1989), Eisenhart (1991) and McNamara et al (2002) allude to back stage activities in relation to rites of passage and Stroot and Williamson (1993) allude to backstage activity when they suggest that within the student subculture collusion and negotiation provide some degree of student control over their teacher preparation. However, the main emphasis in the literature is on front stage institutional arrangements.

Within the same institution different student groups occupy different backstage and off stage areas and Hansen (1995) observed that technological education students tend to congregate with peers from their own programme area, making opportunities for contributions to the school culture and the profession generally problematic. As we shall see in chapter 5, this resonates with observations of Design and Technology

students at Moray House, who rarely mix with other students, whilst PE and primary students also manifest distinctive and separate patterns of backstage behaviour.

## **2. Socialisation into teaching**

The main traditions of research into the socialisation process are structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism. The symbolic interactionist approach is exemplified by Becker (1961) and the structural functionalist approach by Merton (1957). The functionalist perspective sees socialisation as the process whereby the relevant competencies and values are acquired and internalised by the novice, student teachers being viewed as passive entities moulded by their past and pressed into shape by the present. The interactionist approach sees socialisation as much more problematic where the period of professional training is one of discontinuity and where conflicts of interest may exist. Interactionist ethnographies are interested in the subjective meanings of participants and focus on how students manage to 'make out' and survive the demands placed upon them. The image is one of the student teacher as an active agent constructing perspectives and choosing actions (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1986). Atkinson and Delamont (1985) argue that symbolic interactionists tended to overemphasise the enclosed nature of the institution being studied at the expense of discussing how novices become incorporated into the larger culture of the occupational group outside the training site. As will be seen later in this chapter, since 1985 there have been many studies of organisational socialisation that have focussed on ITE students' socialisation into the wider teaching profession though there have been few studies of peer group socialisation on the back stage of university life.

Zeichner and Gore's (1990) classification of the socialisation literature is based on the stages of student teachers' careers (a) prior to formal teacher education (b) during pre-service teacher education and (c) during the in-service years of teaching. Wideen et al's (1998) literature review found three thematic groups of studies (a) prior beliefs of beginning teachers (b) programme interventions occurring during teacher education and (c) the first year of teaching. Drawing on these classifications, this

review considers (a) anticipatory socialisation (b) pre-service socialisation and (c) organisational socialisation. Anticipatory socialisation takes place prior to entering university or college, pre-service socialisation takes place whilst the student is at university or college and organisational socialisation takes place after the student has gained their professional qualification and when they are in their first post as a teacher. Organisational socialisation may be anticipated during school based placements.

## 2.1 Anticipatory socialisation

Zeichner and Gore (1990) identify three perspectives on anticipatory socialisation. The *evolutionary influences* perspective (Stephens, 1967) suggests 'primitive spontaneous pedagogical tendencies'. These may be manifested in voluntary 'teaching' activities such as Sunday school, Brownies or coaching children's sports teams. As will be seen in chapter 5, most of the Moray House B.Ed. (Primary) and B.Ed. (PE) students had done some kind of 'teaching' or coaching before joining the course. However, these may not be 'primitive' or 'spontaneous' tendencies but simply an interest in joining a relatively accessible occupation. Indeed, to get accepted onto the course an applicant is expected to have some 'experience' with children and many careers advisors suggest some kind of voluntary work in a local school<sup>15</sup>. The *psychoanalytic perspective* (Wright and Tuska, 1967) suggests that anticipatory socialization may be influenced by the quality of the relationships initial teacher education students had with important adults when they were children. As will be discussed in chapter 5, most of the Moray House B.Ed. (Primary) and B.Ed. (PE) students had a 'good' relationship with their teachers at school. *Experiences whilst at school* is a perspective that sees anticipatory socialization occurring largely through the internalization of models of teaching that were experienced during the time spent as pupils in close contact with teachers - an 'apprenticeship of observation' (Lortie, 1975).

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<sup>15</sup> Field notes – discussion with a primary headteacher, March 2007.

Mohr (2000) argues that the period before beginning an initial teacher education course is of major significance in the socialisation of teachers and that, “students do not enter teacher education as blank slates” (Mohr, 2000:15). Entrants’ beliefs about teachers and teaching are well established by the time they enter initial teacher education (Pajares, 1992, Richardson, 1996) and Stofflett and Stoddart argue that pre-service teachers, “do not typically develop new perspectives, but simply become more skilful at defending the perspectives they already possess,” (Stofflett and Stoddart (1992), cited in Wideen et al 1998:142). Beliefs formed early in life tend to persist, despite contradictions from experience, and act as a filter through which new information is processed (Pajares, 1992). Anticipatory socialisation, by its very nature, takes place in the absence of any understanding of learning and teaching theory and is most likely to replicate students’ experiences as a pupil. For this reason prior beliefs about learning and teaching are often seen as problematic by researchers, most of whom are teacher educators.

The anticipatory socialisation of PE students contributes to their reasons for wanting to become a PE teacher, a combination of a love of sport and an 'apprenticeship of observation' whilst at school (Schempp, 1989, Green, 2000, 2002). During their apprenticeship prospective students begin to make evaluations about what is high and low quality instruction and become familiar with pedagogical practices and tasks. Lawson (1983a, 1983b) and Dewar and Lawson (1984) found that by observing PE teachers, who they often see as a role model, prospective PE students identified what they regarded as positive aspects of the job:

- The ability to continue an association with sport;
- Working in the familiar environment of a school;
- Long summer holidays, money, prestige and security;
- Working with young people and helping others to develop their sporting skills;
- Providing a valuable service to society.

There is also a perception that the entry requirements and academic rigour of teacher training in PE courses do not constitute a barrier to them. The findings about entry requirements and academic rigour are based on North American studies and reflect perceptions in the 1980’s (Lawson, 1988, Sage, 1980, Templin et al., 1982). As was noted in chapter 1, entrants to the B.Ed. (PE) course at the University of Edinburgh

have high entry qualifications though the perception that academic rigour would not be a barrier may still apply to Scottish students, particularly if this perception is reinforced by friends, family and teachers.

Recruits to PE courses have narrow, but well defined, beliefs about PE teachers and PE teaching and believe that the most important aspect of PE is that it is fun and that a really good teacher is caring, understanding, warm, and has the ability to relate to children (Weinstein, 1990, Hutchinson, 1993). By the turn of the century a healthy living message had emerged, prospective PE teachers seeing themselves as role models for a healthy and active life, raising self esteem through PE, motivating learners and exemplifying the meaning of PE through their own lives as PE teachers (O'Bryant et al., 2000). For ITE students, anticipatory socialisation may be as long as fifteen years, perhaps beginning at the age of five. During this time people, “develop meanings for the knowledge, values, attitudes, beliefs, skills and interests that are particular to their school community and characteristic of teacher roles” (Hutchinson, 1993:344).

Because of anticipatory socialisation many prospective ITE students believe that they already know how to teach and that all they need from a college course are a few strategies to get them started, many recruits believing that teachers are born rather than made. Anne, a PE student and one of Doolittle's case studies, said in her initial interview, “I feel like I could go and adequately teach classes now, like I did in high school. I didn't feel inadequate teaching ... I felt equal to the person who was professionally qualified to teach” (Doolittle et al, 1993:360). Richardson's (1996) review of the general literature on teacher socialisation found that people planning a career in teaching saw teaching as the simple and rather mechanical transfer of information, teachers handing out knowledge that pupils memorise. Hollingsworth's (1989) study of elementary and secondary ITE students found that 10 of her 14 participants believed that teaching was teacher directed and textbook based whilst Paine's (1989) study of elementary education, English and mathematics teacher education students found the views of beginning teachers to be conservative and

individualistic with, "an enthusiastic appreciation of personality factors and an underdeveloped sense of the role of content and context" (Paine, 1989:20).

Calderhead and Shorrock (1997), argue that student teachers' initial conceptions of teaching and learning are based on one or two well remembered teachers who were charismatic, inspirational, good communicators and who inspired children whilst Mertz and McNeely (1992) found that almost all of the students in their study had a teacher that they saw as a role model. Initial conceptions of teaching were also influenced by having a parent who was a teacher, experience in the Boys Brigade, Brownies, Sunday school or work experience with young children. As was seen in chapter 1, 83% of the PE students at Moray House had taken Higher PE at school and 'got on really well' with their PE teacher who was 'a great laugh'. Writing about PE students, Schempp and Graber argue that:

(Students) arrive (at college) with powerful ideologies regarding the social role of a teacher or coach, ideologies tempered by years of experience in schools. It would be naïve for teacher educators to believe that recruits are waiting to be filled with the professional dogma of teaching or coaching. Instead, they can expect to encounter students who may become active participants in the dialectic of teacher socialization and contest, directly or indirectly, many believe the training program attempts to instill. (Schempp and Graber, 1992:336)

One feature that distinguishes PE teachers from primary teachers is the opportunity, and often the expectation, that PE teachers will also be sports coaches, though this is more pronounced in North America. Lawson (1983a, 1983b) distinguished the 'coaching oriented' and the 'teaching oriented' PE student, the former seeing their primary role as coaching elite athletes and the school teams, the latter seeing their primary role as teaching physical education to the 'average' pupil. Lawson argues that teaching oriented students were more likely to internalise the philosophy of the teacher training institution. PE students with a coaching orientation were more likely to be male, have participated at a high level in inter-school sport and attended a school with a high level of emphasis on extra curricular sports teams and little emphasis on instruction in PE lessons. Students with this orientation, suggests Lawson, see PE teaching as something to be endured so that they can get on with the

coaching. In contrast students with a 'teaching orientation' saw PE lessons as the main part of the job with coaching as something extra. These students were more likely to be female, not to have been involved in traditional organised competitive sport and to have experienced high quality PE teaching at school.

Anticipatory socialisation has a powerful influence on students entering teacher education. Rivers' (2006) review of the New Zealand literature noted the 'international findings' that prior beliefs were difficult to change and potentially limited student teachers acquisition of new knowledge whilst Malmberg's (2006) study on teacher education in Finland found that applicants' previous experiences of education were related to their perceptions of teachers and teaching and Shkedi and Laron's (2004) study of ITE in Israel found that whilst students came with preconceived beliefs about teaching their beliefs changed from idealistic to pragmatic after the experience of placement.

## **2.2 Pre service socialisation**

Pre service socialisation takes place during the initial teacher education course and during school based placements. However, the cumulative effects of anticipatory socialization can be very powerful. Beliefs developed during childhood and adolescence are not easily changed and PE students use coursework and placement to confirm their beliefs rather than to modify them (Curtner-Smith, 2001, Doolittle et al., 1993, Graber, 1995). One of the reasons, suggests Pajares (1992), is that preservice teachers are insiders, having experienced close observational contact with teachers for 15 years:

The classrooms of colleges of education and the people and practices in them differ little from classrooms and people they have known for years. Thus the reality of their everyday lives may continue largely unaffected in higher education ... These students have commitments to prior beliefs, and the efforts to accommodate new information and adjust existing beliefs can be nearly impossible (Pajares, 1992:323).

Student teachers, it has been argued, are socialised into the profession primarily during school based placements and in the first two years of teaching and not during

the time spent during their pre service education (Lortie, 1975, NCRTE, 1988, Hansen, 1995, Mardle and Walker, 1980, Wideen et al., 1998).

However, Kettle and Sellars (1996), Woods and Earls (1995) and Riksaasen (2001) found that the college course did have an impact on students' beliefs and values. I will argue in chapters 4 and 5 that the impact is accomplished through the hidden curriculum on the front and back stages of university life. Woods and Earls (1995) found that newly qualified PE teachers had 'carried over' much of what they had learned at college and they argued that the teacher preparation programme was relatively successful in facilitating this. Matanin and Collier (2003) argue that PE students assimilate information from their courses about curriculum content, teaching effectiveness, and lesson planning but reject information about classroom management and the purpose of physical education. However, if new information cannot be assimilated into existing beliefs, the belief system has to be replaced or reorganised but Matanin and Collier found "... minimal research to suggest what steps are needed to change beliefs" (Matanin and Collier, 2003:155). If initial teacher education is to impact on what students believe it is necessary to explore the beliefs that students bring with them to the ITE programme (Bullough and Gitlin, 1995).

Wideen et al found that, "the notion that coursework should provide teaching skills and information about teaching - and that beginning teachers can integrate and effectively implement that information - receives very little support from this research" (Wideen et al, 1998:151) and suggest that other factors, particularly messages from the hidden curriculum, interfere with or nullify the message coming from the college course. Thus the curriculum, as presented on the official front stage, is modified or rejected by students because of their activities backstage or offstage. Lawson (1993) found that PE students valued sport performance rather than theory, did not use research of any kind and acquired knowledge by sharing and interacting with peers. One of the features of ITE courses is their increasingly academic orientation as they move from a diploma or certificate in a teacher training college to a degree from a university. Flintoff (2006) observed that Physical Education has often felt the need to play to 'different rules' in attempting to raise its

status, developing examinations to establish academic credibility or by arguing its contribution to health. Every sports person thinks they could become a PE teacher and every mother an infant teacher!

A major study in England explored the lived experience of becoming a student teacher (Malderez et al., 2007, Hobson et al., 2006, Hobson et al., 2005, Hobson et al., 2008). The 'Becoming a Teacher' project is a longitudinal study (2003 – 2009) based on a questionnaire completed by 4,790 student teachers in 2003/04, eighty five of whom were selected for a subsequent in-depth interview. The study corroborated earlier studies which found that students' prior conceptions of teachers and teaching can have an impact on students' experiences of pre-service education. Key themes that were identified included; teacher identity, the role of relationships, the notion of relevance and, "the affectively charged personal journey through which student teachers tended to pass in undertaking an initial teacher preparation programme" (Hobson et al., 2008:5).

Malderez et al (2007) suggest a role shift from being a non-teacher to being the teacher and much of the data suggest a preoccupation with the notion of teacher identity. Malderez suggests two aspects of this, actualising an already identified potential and the transformation of self in order to change into a teacher. Half the interviewees thought they already had appropriate personal characteristics and skills, having a suitable personality, a creative side or knowledge of the subject (Malderez et al., 2007:230).

Relationships with children, with their own former teachers, with teachers in placement schools and with their own family and peers were found to be central to the lived experience of beginning teachers. Prior to beginning the course 84% of survey respondents were, "particularly looking forward to ... being in classrooms and interacting with children" (Malderez et al, 2007:232) whilst the main things they wanted to learn from their course were 'how to bring about learning' and 'how to maintain discipline'. Most (84%) had been inspired by a teacher when they were a pupil and 19 of the 84 interviewees referred to teaching as a family profession,

having a parent or close relative who was a teacher.

Relevance was a preoccupation of students, most of whom valued placement but questioned the value and relevance of what they called 'theory'. One trainee said that the theory part of the course was only going to be useful in interviews although she did say that she might be using it 'subconsciously'. About a third of the respondents felt that there was an imbalance between the theoretical and practical elements of their programmes, with the majority feeling that their programmes were too heavily weighted in favour of the theoretical elements (Hobson et al, 2008:8).

... trainees generally considered HEI based components of initial teacher preparation programmes ... and what they saw as the 'theoretical' elements of course provision, including written assignments, to be amongst the least relevant aspects of their programmes. Those elements of course provision which tended to be regarded as more 'relevant' included work undertaken in relation to classroom management and trainees' subject specialisms (Hobson et al, 2008:5).

The experience of undertaking an ITE programme had a strong affective dimension. Interviewees used emotive language such as 'excited', 'love it', 'relaxed' and 'worry', 'panic' or 'overwhelming'. The factor producing these emotional responses was the student's perception of the success (or otherwise) of their relationship with pupils, mentors and teacher colleagues (Malderez et al, 2007:236).

Kettle and Sellars (1996), writing about primary students, introduce the concept of a teachers' 'practical theory' which they describe as an individual's system of knowledge, attitudes and values in relation to teaching that is highly individualised and susceptible to change. Handal and Lauvas define practical theory as:

A person's private, integrated, but ever-changing system of knowledge, experience and values which is relevant to teaching practice at any particular time. This means, first of all that "theory" in this sense is a personal construct which is continuously established in the individual through a series of diverse events (such as practical experience, reading, listening, looking at other people's practice) which are mixed together or integrated with the changing perspective provided by the individual's values and ideals ... it is indeed a practical theory primarily functioning as a basis, or background, against which action must be seen, and not as a theoretical and logical "construct "

aimed at the scientific purposes of explanation, understanding or prediction. (Handal and Lauvas, 1995, cited in Kettle and Sellars, 1996:1)

Kettle and Sellars (1996) describe how a teacher education student had developed her 'practical theory' by the time she had reached the second year of her course. Her theory consisted of a number of broad concepts which she had difficulty articulating and that she was unable to elaborate. However, all the student's ideas had centred on herself and what she wanted from the students, without giving much consideration to the needs of the students. Kettle and Sellars argue that the student's experiences at university were a major influence on her perceptions of teaching and that the student appeared to be progressing through a series of stages of professional development; concerns about self (survival), concerns about task (lesson plans) and concerns about impact (learning). Kettle and Sellars argue that student teachers enter teacher education with only partially developed theories and that the development of these theories is part of the professional development that takes place during the course. However, Kettle and Sellars' model of pre service socialisation appears to be a linear development and whilst this is influenced by practical experience, reading, listening and looking at other people's practice it appears to be an individual journey which takes place in the absence of a strong collective culture of the kind experienced by PE students or medical students. The back stage and off stage appear to play no part in Kettle and Sellars' model of the development of student perceptions.

Riksaasen's (2001) analysis of primary and pre-school initial teacher education students draws on Bernstein's theory of knowledge codes (Bernstein, 1990) and, examining the visible and invisible pedagogic practices of the pre service courses, finds that primary teachers and pre school teachers in Norway are trained differently. The implication is that college does make a difference although as the main focus is on the role of lecturers and not on anticipatory socialisation or the student subculture one can not rule out the possibility that primary and pre-school applicants have pre-formed notions of what the teacher's role involves. The study also ignores back stage activities or the influence of peers. The back stage activities and the influence of peers is important because it is a site where students generate social capital. Social capital comprises networks with shared norms and values that facilitate co-operation

within or among groups (Cote and Healy, 2001). Portes (1998) suggests that benefits accrue to individuals by virtue of their participation in groups and the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource, "social networks are not a natural given and must be constructed through investment strategies oriented to the institutionalisation of group relations" (Portes, 1998:3). There are two elements of social capital; the social relationship itself, which enables individuals to access resources possessed by other group members, and the amount and quality of those resources. Portes argues that, through social capital, actors can gain direct access to economic resources, can increase their cultural capital through contacts with experts and can affiliate with institutions that confirm valued credentials. However, "transactions involving social capital are characterised by unspecified obligations, uncertain time horizons (and) a possible violation of reciprocity expectations" (Portes, 1998:4).

Whilst Coleman (1988, 1990) and Bourdieu (1986) consider social capital an attribute of the individual, Putnam (2000) sees it as an attribute of communities, comprising networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together to pursue common goals. Chapter 5 uses this concept in the analysis of data on the various sporting and social activities that characterise the world of the Moray House PE student. Putnam distinguishes thick trust and thin trust, thick trust being based on intimate social networks and thin trust based on the wider community. Fukuyama (1999) describes 'a radius of trust', social capital being acquired by bridging and bonding with others. Bonding reinforces links within a relatively small homogenous group whilst bridging is the creation of links with a wider group. As will be seen in chapter 5, PE students, in their backstage activities, are bonding with one another, though there appears to be relatively little bridging with students on other courses or with other parts of the university. Bridging also takes place with teachers in the school system and with coaches and sports people in the lay world. Learning to become a teacher is not a solitary activity but a process of increasing participation in communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and, as will be argued in chapter 5, backstage activities can have a powerful effect on participants' perspectives on teaching and their acquisition of social capital.

### 2.3 Organisational socialisation

Organisational socialisation is relevant to this study because students on initial teacher education courses undertake a number of teaching placements during which time there is minimal contact with the college and almost total immersion in the culture of the school. Whilst the literature on organisational socialisation generally focuses on students' transition from their initial teacher education course to their first job as a teacher, the process begins as early as the first year of the course when students spend four weeks on a school based placement. Fuller's developmental teacher concerns model (Fuller and Bown, 1975, Fuller, 1969) suggests staged changes in students' perceptions and orientations to teaching:

- a) The pre-teaching stage before students have access to a class and where students identify with the pupils rather than with themselves as the teacher;
- b) The survival stage which is during or after the first experience of teaching when students lose their idealistic notion of teaching and focus on survival. The focus is on class control and students who previously had a 'humanistic' ideology become more custodial;
- c) The third stage includes a limited teaching context where the student's focus is still on their own performance rather than on pupil learning;
- d) The final stage is where students focus on pupil learning and set out to achieve learning outcomes for both the whole class and for individual learners.

Mohr found that "a recurring theme in the literature is the tension between pre-service teachers, cooperating teachers and teacher educators as attempts are made to merge the somewhat incompatible cultures of the university and schools" (Mohr, 2000:22). Wendt et al (1981) found little relationship between the educational theory learned on an initial teacher education PE course and the beliefs and practices of a newly qualified PE teacher and Farrell et al (2004) found that,

Pre-service teachers are sent out for a student teaching experience with the intention that they will get to practice the theory that they have learned during

their course. However, the influence the cooperating teacher has on the preservice teacher may washout all previously learned information. (Farrell et al, 2004:37)

Newly qualified teachers often revert to previously held beliefs about teaching, whilst pruning away the beliefs and practices acquired during the initial teacher education course (Wideen et al., 1998). This has been called the ‘washout effect’, the process of developing teaching skills as a newly qualified teacher drawing very little on the cognitive and technical information about teaching that students had received during their initial teacher education (Hollingsworth, 1989, Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981). This supports the notion that pre service education has little effect and that it is an individual’s own background, experiences and abilities that influence their beliefs and practices as a teacher. (Ennis, 1985, Doolittle et al., 1993)

White (1989) describes the transition from university to school as a rite of passage. The rite of passage in teacher education is, “the process(es) by which neophytes acquire cultural knowledge about teaching and eliminate inappropriate displays of behaviour” (White, 1989:177). White suggests that initiation rituals serve to establish the dominant ideologies and social practices of the organisation and argues that, “the teaching profession must find a way to ensure that its version of reality and in particular its fundamental tenets will be transmitted and accepted without question” (White, 1989:178). White highlights the competition between the university, the school system and the individual student to establish their particular definition of the situation. There is likely to be a tension between the front stage, back stage and off stage definitions of appropriate and inappropriate displays of behaviour and it is far from clear whether the university, the school system, the individual student or the peer group has the power to define the dominant culture. White suggests that moving from the world of the non-teacher to the world of the teacher is problematic and suggests the following model:

First the student teachers cut the ties that bind them to the ordinary world (rites of separation). Then they are secluded in the bush where a body of professional knowledge unique to the professional community is transmitted to them (rites of transition). If they successfully survive all their trials, the novices are then ritually reinstated in the ordinary world with the

accompanying changes in their status, rights and prerogatives (rites of incorporation). (White, 1989:179)

Before their first teaching placement student teachers' beliefs and values included liking children, believing in a nurturing, warm and positive climate of social relationships between teachers and pupils and wanting a good rapport with the children they are teaching. Data on students' perspectives on teachers and teaching are analysed in chapter 6. Students' attitudes, suggests White, are challenged on the first placement when they are told, "don't make the mistake of trying to be friends with the kids" (White, 1989:183). The cultural message presented by the school is that the classroom is:

Messy, unstable and uncertain and that any teacher can 'lose it' at any moment, that the teacher has to assert their dominance over the pupils and that various taken for granted teacher characteristics have to be learned, such as posture, pitch of voice, intonation, position in the room etc. (White, 1989:191)

Rust (1994) found that a child centred approach that had been developed during initial teacher education changed to a control-oriented belief about teaching during students' first year as a teacher because of the need to fit into a school with a control-oriented ethos. Newly qualified teachers did not have the confidence and status to develop their own ideology in a context that did not support it. Eisenhart (1991) suggests that socialisation into teaching has inconsistent goals and a confused set of messages for students to interpret. White's rites of passage model implies that 'separation', 'transition' and 'incorporation' are managed and achieved during the teacher training course but this was not apparent in the course analysed by Eisenhart where lecturers were frustrated by the students' apparent lack of interest in 'theory' whilst the students found the university part of their course boring. McNamara (2002) sees initial teacher education courses as neither linear nor confused but a dynamic process involving ritual practices and symbolic acts in the process of both 'being' and 'becoming' a teacher. McNamara notes that, on the four year B.Ed course, students have to constantly change their status between student and teacher with the consequent demands on their dramaturgical skills when presenting different aspects of self. Children made students feel like a teacher, as did parents, but time

spent at the university denied them their status as teachers and reinforced their role as students.

### 3. Conclusion

Wideen et al (1998) argue that the consensus in the literature is that formal teacher education has little impact on the cumulative effects of anticipatory socialization because students develop strategies that enable them to acquire skills that they believe are important whilst ignoring those that they believe to be irrelevant or dysfunctional and Brisard et al (2005:13) argue that, “ ... many teachers ... believe(d) that their most powerful learning had come during the school-based elements of their initial training and even more powerfully during the early stages of their employment as teachers”. However, Kettle and Sellars (1996) argue that students' experiences at university do have an influence and that anticipatory socialisation provides entrants with only partially developed theories of teaching which students develop during their course. If pre-service socialisation has an effect it is not always the effect intended by teacher educators, yet many teacher educators create expectations that involve fundamental changes in student beliefs. Most studies of teacher socialisation focus on front stage activities and underplay or ignore back stage and off stage activities and an in depth analysis of peer group influences is absent from the literature. The studies of rites of passage (Eisenhart et al., 1991, White, 1989) do not focus explicitly on backstage activities though they are implied, whilst Sumsion and Patterson (2004) found a sense of community arising ‘unexpectedly’ on a four year teacher education programme through an online bulletin board, which suggests that backstage activities may have supported student learning.

The research questions that arise from the literature review focus on the hidden curriculum of initial teacher education as manifested in front stage, back stage and off stage activities and derive from the work of Becker (1961) and Sinclair (1997).

1. What does the experience of being at a School of Education do to first year B.Ed. (PE) students and first year B.Ed. (Primary) students (or enable them to do) apart from providing them with a technical competence as a teacher?
2. Do students' ideas (perspectives) about teachers and teaching derive from front stage, backstage, offstage activities, or from a combination of all three?
3. How might the culture of B. Ed. PE and B. Ed. Primary students be described? This study aims to give a detailed account of the concrete experience of life within this culture and of the beliefs and social rules that are used as resources within it.
4. In what ways do the experiences, culture, beliefs and developing perspectives of B.Ed. PE and B.Ed. Primary students differ from one another?
5. How can we explain these differences?

An ethnographic account of student life on the official and unofficial backstage can provide an insight into the development of student teachers' beliefs and values and this study explores student culture as it develops during the first year of a four-year ITE degree.

## Chapter 3 Methodology

### 1. Methodological overview

This study uses an ethnographic approach, drawing on symbolic interactionism to sensitise the analysis to particular kinds of events. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) characterise ethnography as the overt or covert participation in people's lives for extended periods of time, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research. Ethnographers normally prefer naturalistic to artificial settings, using observation rather than interviews, and because the researcher is attempting to understand a new culture as a stranger they have an objectivity that is normally unavailable to members of that culture. Whilst I was no stranger to the institution, having worked there as a social scientist for three decades, initial field research revealed that the backstage and off stage activities of PE students and primary students were completely unknown to me.

Delamont (1992) argues that in situations with which we have some familiarity, such as a classroom, the researcher should attempt to 'make the familiar strange'. LeCompte and Preissle support Delamont when they write, "ethnography strives for the sensitizing device of making the familiar strange and making the strange familiar to researchers during the data collection and analysis phases of the research" (LeCompte and Preissle, 1994:154). The primary goal of the ethnographer is to describe the culture and to, "give a detailed account of the concrete experience of life within a particular culture and of the beliefs and social rules that are used as resources within it" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:10). However, description on its own is insufficient, "The analytical and/or theoretical side of an ethnography is what separates it from journalism" (Delamont, 1992:16). Delamont uses the term 'participant observation' interchangeably with 'ethnography' and argues that "ethnography means that the researcher values the views, perspectives, opinions, prejudices and beliefs of her informants, actors or respondents she is studying and is going to take them seriously" Delamont (1992:7). Massey describes what he sees as the minimum requirements for research to be called ethnographic, as opposed to

qualitative or naturalistic. Ethnographic research, argues Massey (1998), is the study of a culture, using multiple methods and requiring direct and prolonged observation. Much of the understanding of the setting is subjectively informed so that findings come from the interaction between the researcher and the subject. Multiple perspectives are sought by triangulation because "knowing what natives know is not enough" (Massey 1998:3). The ethnographer needs to constantly modify hypotheses and theories in the light of further data, the overall goal being to combine the view of an insider with that of an outsider in order to describe the social setting. This study explores the values, practices and relationships of PE and primary education students. What is the prior cultural knowledge held by the actors? What does it mean to be a member of the group and what is it that makes someone an insider or an outsider?

Ethnographic data comprises written documents and the researcher's field notes including observation notes and records of discussions, chance conversations, interviews, and overheard remarks. Delamont (1992) describes observation as her preferred method, though she also uses interviewing with open ended questions, life history interviews, oral histories, studying personal constructs and mental maps. For the ethnographer, eliciting meaning from data is achieving a description that is recognised by the members of the culture as one that resonates with their own experiences, "ethnographers portray people as constructing their social world, both through their interpretations of it and through actions based on those interpretations" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:11). Because PE students and primary students belong to different cultures, differently constructed worlds will exist. Ethnographic research can never represent social reality in an unproblematic way and the complexity of undergraduate life in an initial teacher education institution can best be portrayed by an approach that recognises the multiple realities of students, staff and others.

Becker (1961), in his study of medical students, used a symbolic interactionist approach. Symbolic Interactionism is the process of interaction in the formation of meanings for individuals and normally deals with small scale everyday life situations

with the aim of understanding group processes, relationships and the motivations of the participants. Blumer (1969) identifies three core principles, 'meaning', 'language', and 'thought'. *Meaning* suggests that people act toward other people and things depending on the meanings that they have given to those people or things.

Participants will assign meaning to categories of people such as 'PE students', 'lecturers' or 'mature students', though the initial meanings will be negotiated and modified over time. *Language* enables the negotiation of meaning whilst *thought* modifies each individual's interpretation of the symbols and is a mental dialogue that requires the actor to imagine different points of view. Social interaction is not a static phenomenon, the participants constantly redefine the situation, assigning meanings to events and comparing and contrasting their perceptions of what is going on. According to Prus (1996) an ethnographer engaged in a study using a symbolic interactionism lens should be cognisant of:

- The intersubjective nature of human behavior;
- The viewpoints of the actors involved in the situation;
- The interpretations that the actors attach to themselves;
- Other people and other objects that they interact with;
- The ways in which the actors do things on both an individual and interactive basis;
- The attempts that the actors make to influence (as well as accommodate and resist the inputs and behaviors of) others;
- The bonds that the actors develop with others over time and the ways in which they attend to these relationships;
- The processes, natural histories or sequences of interactions that the actors develop and experience over time. (Prus (1996) cited in Tan et al., 2003:5)

As students progress through their course they will gradually develop their sense of who they are, who the other people are and how to interpret the settings in which they find themselves.

Garfinkel (1967) argued that social facts are created by individuals with objective and important meanings emerging from everyday, seemingly trivial, social exchanges, social interaction being a mechanism for locating, creating or reinforcing social meanings. In social interaction it is important that each person knows that the other person assigns the same meaning to the symbols being used, and is able to take the role of the other. A symbolic interactionist assumes that participants have the

ability to adopt the perspective of a number of others simultaneously, seeing their own behaviour not only in terms of significant others but also in terms of generalised norms, values and beliefs. There are different norms and values of behaviour in different settings. In the first year Education course I am interested in the kind of sense that participants make of one another and the extent to which they learn the symbols used by one another. "The symbolic interactionist would see the role not as a prescriptive list of behaviours to be selected from, or as offering a how-to-do-it manual for all occasions, but, rather, as a more abstract model, offering general guidance. Appropriate conduct is worked out by the interpretive and interactive process" (Woods, 1996:34). This is achieved through the interplay between the two aspects of the self, the 'I' and the 'Me', the 'I' part of the self being a more spontaneous, impulsive initiator of action whilst the 'Me' is the product of viewing oneself as object, as one would be viewed by others.

Symbolic interaction as a research perspective means that the researcher grounds the study in the empirical world under study, focussing on the "minute by minute, day by day social life of individuals" (Woods, 1996:37). Research methods are normally unobtrusive and the entire research process, not just the data collection, needs to keep faith with the empirical world under study, making as few assumptions in advance of the study as possible. Berger (1966) describes social reality as having many layers of meaning, the discovery of each new layer changing the perception of the whole. Groups in interaction develop their own culture or subculture and appear to inhabit different territories, physical, cultural, social and intellectual. The researcher does not necessarily have access to the meaning of the symbols associated with each of these cultures or may misunderstand them. The establishment of meaning for new members is often accomplished by initiation rituals such as the PE adoption night. Access to the PE culture, as will be seen later in this chapter, was facilitated by reading students' messages to their FirstClass conference which was used as a social networking site:

Awrite ppl, howz the summer goin? Just a wee shout out on the conference to say that maybe we should think about organising our adoption nite soon. Apparently the manager at City has offered us the club as a venue but we hav to get in contact with him. We don't want to be letting down the tradition

now do we? It will b fun getting 1st years as drunk as what we were on adoption nite. (Message sent to the B.Ed. (PE) FirstClass conference by a second year student, 10-8-05, 11.51 pm)

The researcher needs to capture the meanings that permeate the culture as they are understood by the participants but it is important that the researcher's interpretations are credible to those who are involved. As one of Mac an Ghail's (1988) informants said, "It's really good, I've read through most of it. I think that you have really captured what it's like for black kids at school" (Mac an Ghail, 1988:142). Like Mac an Ghail, the researcher has to understand the symbolic meanings that emerge in interactions over a period of time, typically learning the language of the participants, including gestures, looks, actions appearance, body language and non verbal communications.

Hargreaves (1978) suggests that the main strength of symbolic interactionism is its ability to explore social action from the point of view of the actor and to identify the participants' taken for granted common-sense knowledge so that we have a language to discuss the area under investigation. Symbolic interaction also gives the researcher the ability to inform policy by providing knowledge about everyday life in the setting under investigation. Students have many opportunities to interact with one another and to jointly consider the meaning of events and how they might respond to them. One of the aims of this study is to discover 'what everybody knows' and 'what everybody does'. If we can gain a deeper understanding of the *meaning* that first year undergraduates on an initial teacher education programme assign to the various activities associated with their professional development we may be better able to serve them.

This study used a number of research methods because of the evolving series of research questions and because during the early stages of the research I was unaware of the existence of many of the data sources. Hypotheses, theories and methods of analysis were modified as additional data sources became apparent. The idea of analysing the data in terms of front stage, back stage and off stage arose during the literature review and the first stage analysis of the data. Symbolic interactionism was used because I wanted to capture the 'meaning' of the events and activities the

students encountered. These included lectures, workshops, study groups, the football match, the PE 'uniform' and adoption night. People interpret or define one another's actions and do not merely react to stimuli; there must be 'a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human behaviour' (Blumer, 1962:180). A symbolic interactionist stance was not adopted in the analysis of the students' PDP entries because the aim was to identify students' perspectives on teachers and teaching and the questions asked in the PDPs did not appear to lend themselves to a symbolic interactionist approach.

Virtual ethnography was used when it was discovered that PE students' used the FirstClass conference for social networking and visual ethnography when it was realised that students regularly posted photographs of their back stage activities to their FirstClass conference. The visual ethnographer is interested in how informants use the image to communicate meaning and represent their knowledge, self-identity and experiences (Pink, 2001). The images are the students' way of constructing their idealised version of reality and presenting themselves both as individuals and as a group.

## **2. Data collection**

This study used multiple methods and direct and prolonged observation over a period of three and a half years (September 2004 – March 2008). Table 3.1 summarises the data collection methods and relates them to the research questions.

Research question	Data collection
<p><b>Research question 1</b> What does the experience of being at a School of Education do to first year B.Ed. (PE) students and first year B.Ed. (Primary) students (or enable them to do) apart from providing them with a technical competence as a teacher?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative inquiry group (2004/05).</li> <li>• Analysis of course materials.</li> <li>• Interviews with academic staff.</li> <li>• Interviews with students.</li> <li>• Analysis of PDPs<sup>16</sup>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research question 2</b> Do students' ideas (perspectives) about teachers and teaching derive from front stage, backstage or offstage activities?</p> <p><b>Research question 3</b> How might the culture of B.Ed. PE and B.Ed. Primary students be described? This study aims to give a detailed account of the concrete experience of life within this culture and of the beliefs and social rules that are used as resources within it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with first and second year students to explore their developing perspectives on teachers and teaching and to discover what 'everybody knows' and 'everybody does'.</li> <li>• Ethnographic field notes in front stage, backstage and offstage settings including lectures, workshops, the PBL workspace and a residential fieldwork course for B.Ed. Primary students.</li> <li>• Following Becker, an exploration of problem areas/flash points, as perceived by students, and the beliefs and social rules (perspectives) used by students to inform their actions.</li> <li>• Analysis of students' online discussions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research question 4</b> In what ways do the experiences, culture, beliefs and developing perspectives of B.Ed. PE and B.Ed. Primary students differ from one another?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with students, asking them to articulate what they perceive to be the differences/similarities between what I hypothesise to be two culturally distinct groups.</li> <li>• Observation of students' backstage activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Research question 5</b> How can we explain these differences?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was based on an analysis of the literature and an analysis of the data collected.</li> </ul>

*Table 3.1 Summary of data collection methods*

Whilst total immersion was not possible I had considerable insider knowledge, having worked at the School of Education for a number of years. I was also able to use virtual ethnography to analyse online discussion and images posted by students on their FirstClass conference<sup>17</sup>. Data collection methods, which will be discussed on the following pages, included:

<sup>16</sup> The Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) is described later in this chapter.

<sup>17</sup> The FirstClass conference was used by PE students for social networking. Primary students did not use it in this way.

- 2.1 A collaborative inquiry group (September 2004 – March 2005).
- 2.2 Ethnographic field notes, on various dates, of lectures, workshops, the library, meetings with student representatives, staff meetings, the refectory and a three-day field trip in the Scottish Highlands in May 2006.
- 2.3 Virtual ethnography - an analysis of online discussion. Over 1,000 messages from students on the PE students' FirstClass conference were analysed.
- 2.4 Interviews with thirteen first year students and four second-year students
- 2.5 Interviews with three academic staff.
- 2.6 Analysis of the students' Professional Development Portfolio (PDP). PDP5 comprised responses from 113 primary students and 83 PE students in March 2006. PDP6 comprised responses from 91 primary students and 51 PE students in May 2006 and from 99 primary students and by 56 PE students in May 2007.
- 2.7 Analysis of course materials.
- 2.8 Analysis of student records.
- 2.9 Visual ethnography – the analysis of photographs taken by students.

### **2.1 A collaborative inquiry group (September 2004 – March 2005)**

The collaborative inquiry project drew on the work of Heron and Reason (Heron, 1996, Heron and Reason, 2001, Reason and Heron, 1999, Reason, 2002, Reason, 1994, Reason and Bradbury, 2001, Reason and Rowan, 1981, Reason and Hawkins, 1988, Reason and Marshall, 1987). Heron's notion is of a group of people observing and recording what it is that happens to them so that they develop a better understanding of their experience, gradually becoming fully immersed in the experience so that they can elaborate and develop their initial superficial understandings. The collaborative inquiry group had a membership of eight and met once a month for five months, the aims being fairly loose and open ended. Reason suggests that a key notion in collaborative research is critical subjectivity:

Critical subjectivity means that we do not suppress our primary subjective experience, that we accept that our knowing is from a perspective; it also means that we are aware of that perspective, and of its bias, and that we articulate it in our communications. Critical subjectivity involves a self reflexive attention to the ground on which one is standing (Reason, 1994:327).

Heron and Reason (2001) advocate 'going with the flow', following the collaborative inquiry group as they 'simply watch what it is that happens to them' as they

experience life as a first year student and engage in the various activities that the course requires of them. Reason describes this as "knowing through empathy and resonance, that kind of in depth knowing which is almost impossible to put into words" (Reason, 2002:2). Co-operative inquiry is one of a number of related collaborative approaches and in some projects a combination of approaches is fruitful (Reason, 1994).

The members of the inquiry group were volunteers and all but one were mature students and therefore not typical of the student cohort. This did not affect confidence in their observations because they became informants and research associates with a valuable insight into life as an undergraduate student. Only Susie provided insight into the backstage life of PE students although the others had informed opinions about the relationship between primary and PE students. The collaborative inquiry group discussed what sense students make of their courses, their perceptions of what they are doing in the education course, their feelings about problem based learning and collaborative learning and the characteristics of different groups of students. As collaborative researchers they observed everyday life as a first year student and by the end of the session produced a set of advice sheets for new students. The collaborative inquiry group was my initial exploration of the culture of the two student groups and was accomplished through the experiences of first year students who were able to go to places that were off limits to me. In the second year of their course (2005/2006) taped interviews were conducted with four of them (three primary and one PE) and in their third year (2006/2007) they were occasional informants.

## **2.2 Ethnographic field notes in front stage, backstage and offstage settings.**

Douglas (2002) kept what she describes as a personal journal and used journaling to create spaces for retrospective reflection and sense making. Ethnographic field notes were made at lectures, workshops, seminars, the refectory, the library, the sports centre, at a residential fieldwork course in the Scottish Highlands, as well as at meetings and informal encounters with staff and students, the aim being to observe

first hand the front stage, back stage and off stage experiences of students. Sanger (1996) writes, "sometimes we look where we expect to find rather than opening ourselves to any possibility that might turn up" (Sanger, 1996:5) and it was important for me to recognise that I was constantly engaged in fieldwork. Like Sanger I became quite opportunistic and began deliberately to overhear what people were saying. Whilst a routine event, such as a meeting or having a coffee in the refectory, might appear to have nothing to do with my research I was constantly alert to what was going on around me and always carried a field notebook. Sanger describes the ethnographer as one who reflects upon being immersed in social events and that this reflection upon immersion is brought into sharper focus when the ethnographer researches less familiar settings. I had imagined that, as a member of staff, I was very familiar with the organisation but upon adopting an ethnographic stance discovered that much of it was far from familiar. "The strength of a naturalistic perspective lies in the acceptance of the singularity of the moment and the reliance upon third-party audiences to make of the research what they will" (Sanger, 1997:15).

The residential fieldwork course involved living and working with thirty six B.Ed. (primary) students and three staff for three days, walking in the Scottish Highlands, fording rivers, sharing meals and sitting with students and staff in the bar in the evening. This provided an opportunity for legitimate participation with students in an informal setting and enabled me to focus on things that appeared to have importance to the participants. The residential fieldwork took place in a relatively isolated hostel which the students were unable to leave except on group activities when they were accompanied by staff. The residential field trip gave me access to front stage, backstage and off stage settings.

### **2.3 Virtual ethnography: an analysis of online discussion**

This was an entirely unanticipated, but incredibly rich, data source. I had no reason to visit the B.Ed. (PE) Year1 conference except in my role as a virtual ethnographer. The School of Education uses 'FirstClass', an asynchronous computer mediated communication (CMC) system that enables users to contribute to online discussion areas known as 'conferences'. This generated a form of documentary data that

provided an insight into front stage, backstage and offstage communications. Staff working on the course use it to post lecture notes and official notices but I discovered that students used it to organise football matches, nights out and for general banter:

We have booked the 1st year vs 2nd year game at 3 o'clock a week on Wednesday. It is up to you guys to get a team together and avoid being absolutely stuffed by the big boys. We won against the 2nd years last year so make sure you have a decent team out. Bring shin guards. (Message posted by a second year student to the first year PE conference, 27-9-05)

Over 400 messages were posted on the main PE conference during one academic year and messages for 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 were saved for subsequent analysis. The B.Ed. (Primary) conference was not a fruitful source of data because it was not used by students for informal chat and was simply an online notice board for the staff teaching on the course. The PE conference appears to reflect a culture rather than simply being a place for the exchange of course related information. In this respect the B.Ed. (PE) conference is unique and I am unaware of any other conference in the School of Education that resembles an un-moderated chat room. Computer mediated conferencing provides insights into aspects of the unofficial backstage that would not otherwise be open to the researcher.

Becker and his team (1961) spent two years participating in the daily lives of the medical students. They attended school with the students, followed them from class to laboratory to hospital ward, following the students for an entire day's activities. Sinclair (1997) spent over a year doing fieldwork amongst medical students and notes that some areas of institutional life on the unofficial backstage were not open to him. Becker and Sinclair were doing their research in the era before computer mediated conferencing (CMC) when the only way of recording back stage activities was for the researcher to be there and to record their observations in a field note book. Participants might be interviewed about the activity after the event but the role of the researcher was to record it. With computer mediated conferencing the participants leave a record of their online conversations and this is a rich source of data about what goes on backstage and how the participants feel about it.

In 2006/07 students' messages to the PE conference became less frequent and virtually ceased in session 2007/08. The main reason for this has been the growth in popularity of social networking sites such as Bebo and Facebook. Current research suggests that most social networking sites support existing social relations rather than creating new ones (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). I hypothesise that the online PE community has moved to a more user friendly and 'cool' social networking site. A search on Bebo quickly identified Sam and Christine's pages<sup>18</sup>, both of which included messages to and from students on their courses as well as images of back stage activities.

The lack of equivalent data from B.Ed. (primary) students would be a problem if, at the time, there were similar social networking sites that were being used by primary students. This was not the case and the use of FirstClass by PE students for social networking was unique. More conventional research methods were used to elicit information about primary students' experiences of front stage, back stage and off stage.

## **2.4 Interviews with students**

In session 2005-06 a representative sample of first year students from the B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary) courses was selected for interview. Students were selected on the basis of gender, domicile and age because these were the main differences between the two courses. Eight students were interviewed during January and February 2006. It only emerged during the course of the interview that three of the PE students lived at home and commuted to the university. This is uncharacteristic for PE students, most of whom live in a hall of residence or a flat.

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<sup>18</sup> Sam and Christine are second year PE students.

Name <sup>19</sup>	Age on entry	Home Address	Course	Residence
Helen	17	Edinburgh	Primary	home
Lorraine	17	Kinghorn	Primary	Flat/hall
Donna	18	Livingston	Primary	home
Deidre	18	Musselburgh	Primary	home
Richard	18	Selkirk	PE	Flat/hall
Douglas	18	Edinburgh	PE	home
Philip	17	Kirkcaldy	PE	home
Mary	17	Bothwell	PE	home

Table 3.2 First year students interviewed in January/February 2006

Interviews were recorded on audio tape and transcribed using voice recognition software. Questions were open ended and are listed in table 3.3.

Research question 1	Tell me about the work you've had to do this semester ( <i>front stage</i> ). What are you expected to do? Did you find it easy? Did you enjoy it? Was it 'useful'? Did other students help? What did the students think of it generally?
Research question 2	Tell me about yourself. Why did you want to do this course? What was it that led to your decision to become a teacher?
Research question 3	How has it been for you in semester one (probe: professional development, academic development, personal development)? Tell me about preparation ( <i>backstage</i> ) - the work you had to do at home/in your flat. Did you find this easy? Tell me about it. Did you normally work on your own or with others? Where did you normally do it?
Research question 4	Where do you live (flat, hall, with mum and dad)? How often do you go home? During the vacation what did you tell your parents/friends about Uni? ( <i>offstage</i> ) Where is home? What do your friends think about you taking this course?

Table 3.3 Interview questions (first year students)

At the beginning of session 2006/07 five first year students from the 2006/07 cohort were interviewed with a view to confirming, or validating, the data gathered during the previous twelve months.

<sup>19</sup> The names of students have been changed in order to ensure anonymity.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age on entry</b>	<b>Home Address</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Residence</b>
John	18	Aberdeen	PE	Flat/hall
Sam	17	Ayrshire	PE	Flat/hall
Connie	18	West Lothian	Primary	Home
Rachel	18	Dumfries	Primary	Flat/hall
Christine	18	Balerno	Primary	Home

*Table 3.4 First year students interviewed in November 2006*

Repeat interviews were also conducted with some of the students that had been interviewed in November 2005. These students were in the second year of their course.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age on entry</b>	<b>Home Address</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Residence</b>
Helen	17	Edinburgh	Primary	home
Deidre	18	Musselburgh	Primary	home
Douglas	18	Edinburgh	PE	Flat/hall
Philip	17	Kirkcaldy	PE	Flat/hall

*Table 3.5 Second year students interviewed in November 2006*

The aim was to record students' accounts/stories of their experiences of the various sites of formal and informal learning, socialisation and interactions with one another. In the analysis the aim was to assign activities to front-stage, backstage or backstage off stage settings.

## **2.5 Interviews with academic staff**

Taped interviews were conducted with three members of the academic staff, two associated with the B.Ed. (PE) and one with the B.Ed. (primary). All were 'old timers' having worked at Moray House for over thirty years. The two PE staff had worked at Dunfermline College of Education prior to the merger in 1987 and the primary member of staff had worked at Callander Park College of Education prior to the merger in 1981. The aim of the interviews was to explore their perceptions of the changing culture of the institution over the years. In addition to the formal interviews informal conversations were held with a large number of staff from all parts of the organisation and these are best categorised as ethnographic field notes.

## 2.6 Analysis of the students' Professional Development Portfolio

In teacher education the Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) is used mainly on placement<sup>20</sup>. It is a file where students keep lesson plans and evaluations and is routinely checked by placement tutors and by teachers. As part of the Education course students had to make six entries in their Professional Development Portfolio, one copy being sent to the FirstClass conference where it was read by tutors and by other students. This is clearly a front stage activity, a relatively short piece of writing, two of 500 words, the remainder just 200 words. PDP5 (March 2006) was submitted at the end of the taught part of the course and just before the school based placement. The questions asked were:

1. In the light of all the courses that you have taken since September how have your views about education changed?
2. How will the ideas you have encountered influence the way you approach your first placement?
3. What do you think are the most important characteristics of a teacher?
4. What kind of teacher would you like to be?

PDP6 (May 2006) was submitted a week after the end of the school based placement.

The questions asked were:

1. Read your last PDP entry again, the one that asked what kind of teacher you would like to be. Have your views changed since you wrote that? In what ways? What do you think was your best experience whilst learning to teach? What aspects of your teaching do you want to develop?
2. What have you learned from your placement experience about the social context of education? Try to link your observations with some of your reading from the 'Social Context' part of the Education 1Bh course.
3. Having spent three weeks observing and interacting with both learners and teachers write some notes about the connections you see between your reading about classroom observation and 'Life in Classrooms' (for example Meighan, Hargreaves or Simpson) and what you experienced whilst on placement.

The PDPs were part of the course structure and were not initially seen as a data gathering device. In 2007, having recognised the value of the PDPs as a data gathering device, the questions for PDP6 were changed and students were asked

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<sup>20</sup> Something like this is used on most ITE courses though it may be called different things such as the 'teaching folder' or the 'task book'.

which aspect of their experience at university had been most valuable during placement, the aim being to find out if being at college had made a difference and if so which aspect of it. The modified questions were:

1. What, in your opinion, are the characteristics of a good teacher? Read your last PDP entry again, the one that asked what kind of teacher you would like to be. Have your views changed since you wrote that? In what ways? What aspects of your teaching do you want to develop? (400 words)
2. Thinking about all the courses that you have taken this year (not just Education 1Ah and 1Bh) which aspect of your experience at university has been most valuable to you during your placement? This might be a particular series of lectures, practical experiences or group activities associated with a presentation. How were you able to make use of these ideas in your teaching? (100 words)

## **2.7 Analysis of course materials**

Course and programme documentation was analysed and subsequently discussed with staff and students. This is a description of front stage activities and includes the daily, weekly and monthly pattern of required activities such as lectures, workshops, assignments and presentations.

## **2.8 Analysis of student records**

Official records were accessed to ascertain factual information about students such as age on entry, domicile and entry qualifications. Course records were also accessed to record assignment grades.

## **2.9 Visual Ethnography**

The analysis of photographic images had not been planned because I did not anticipate having access to images of students' back stage and off stage activities. However, I was able to download over one hundred images from the FirstClass conferences, all but two being posted to the PE conference by PE students. PE students posted images of a second year skiing trip (April 2006) as well as images of birthday celebrations, and PE nights out. The very act of posting images to the

conference suggests the existence of a strong peer culture that is reinforced by viewing photographic images of shared group experiences. Primary students did not normally post images to their conference from which one might infer that there is not a strong peer culture to be shared<sup>21</sup>. Students' photographs from the B.Ed. (Primary) Glenmore Lodge field trip were entries to a photographic competition for which I offered a cash prize. Students were invited to submit photographs that represented the spirit of the field trip and which represented their feelings about what it was like being there. Only five students sent in photographs and, as will be seen in chapter 5, they were quite different from the images posted by PE students.

Pink's ethnographic approach to visual images (Pink, 2001) is in reaction to earlier positivist approaches. Her aim is to depart from a scientific and realist paradigm and develop a new approach to making and understanding ethnographic images, arguing that many sociologists reject the use of visual images because they believe that their subjectivity and specificity renders them invalid for the scientific project of sociology (Pink, 2001:10). Pink argues that visual meanings can generate new types of ethnographic knowledge and that the written word and visual images should be regarded as an equally meaningful element of ethnographic research. An image of a PE night out represents the photographer's perception of reality at the time that the image was taken. The participants are role-playing and the images are subjective constructions rather than empirical truths. The images created by students were shared with other students on the course as email attachments and the meanings attributed to the images depend on the cultural context of the group. Atkinson (2005) argues that the analysis of visual images should not be separated from the social settings in which they were generated and adds that many ethnographic studies lack an adequate description of the physical location with only sketchy accounts of the built environment where the social events take place. The physical environment can provide symbolic as well as physical boundaries and embody tacit cultural assumptions about the classification and processing of people and things. Images of the physical environment inhabited by first year PE and primary students (the lecture

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<sup>21</sup> One primary student posted two images of the Glenmore Lodge field trip to the Environmental Studies conference.

theatres, the seminar rooms and the third floor of the library) provide a visual basis for an analysis of the way the physical contexts define meaning as well as being a data source in their own right. The images are used in chapters 4 and 5 to support the analysis of front stage and back stage settings.

### **3. My relationship to the field**

I have worked in this organisation since 1974 and the various roles I have occupied contribute to my understanding of its culture and changing ethos. My relationship to the field is relevant because many of my experiences influence the way I think about the activities that I observe. On the theory/practice interface I have been on both sides, a member of a sociology department in the 1970's and 1980's teaching sociology to students on social work, teacher education and community education courses and then, in 1986/87, enrolling as a PGDE (Primary) student. After qualifying as a teacher I was accepted by the primary staff as a suitable person to assess students on their school-based placements. Because of the various roles I have occupied over the years I have a fairly good understanding of the various tribes and territories to be found at Moray House. (Becher and Trowler, 2001) Apart from the first one, all of the roles outlined below took place before the current research was started.

1. I am course organiser for Education 1Ah and Education 1Bh, two 20 credit courses taken by PE and primary students and which constitute a third of the students' work. I have worked on the course as a lecturer and tutor since its inception in 1998.
2. For two years (1998-2000) I was a lecturer and tutor on Education Two. I was also a member of the staff student liaison committee where I gained an insight into the differing perceptions of primary and PE students.
3. Over a period of thirty years I have been involved with every programme taught in the college; social work, community education, design and technology, TESOL, M.Sc., PGDE (Secondary), PGDE (Primary), B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary). Unlike most staff based on the Holyrood campus I regularly taught on

the Cramond campus and was able to experience life in a PE college in the period immediately after the merger with Moray House in 1987. Being a member of a PE course team provided an insight into life in a PE department and twenty years of involvement (albeit marginal) with PE staff has meant that when talking to current PE staff I have some kind of credibility – they know who I am. I also have a taken for granted awareness of the geography of the place and its cultural history.

4. In 1986/87 I became a student on the PGCE (Primary) course. I was a mature student, seconded from my job as lecturer in sociology. Unlike other students I was a participant observer in the organisation for which I had worked for twelve years. As part of the course I had to undertake eighteen weeks of school based placement and I became aware of the stresses and tensions involved in learning to teach, writing lesson plans and being socialised into a school culture. As part of the course I also learned how to teach PE and spent many an hour in the college gymnasium learning how to teach dance or ball skills. I spent a lot of time in the company of students whilst in the role of student and whilst this was not a formal exercise in participant observation I was a sociologist familiar with the growing literature on classroom ethnography (Chanan and Delamont, 1975, Stubbs and Delamont, 1976, King, 1978) and my professional project was an exercise in classroom ethnography.
5. After qualifying as a primary teacher one of my roles (1988-1999) was to assess students on their school-based placements. This has been a useful experience as it has added to my understanding of the student experience of placement and the roles and attitudes of supervising teachers. Taken alongside my experience of being assessed on placement when I was a student this meant that I had a strong taken for granted understanding of how the participants view placement. I have not assessed students on placement during the life of this research project.
6. I was an elected staff member of the Board of Governors (1991 –1998) where I represented the views of academic staff and was party to discussions and decisions about various aspects of the development of the college, including the process of merging with the University of Edinburgh, and this has contributed to my understanding of the organisation under investigation.

7. For about ten years (1988 – 1998) I was an office holder in the lecturers' trade union (EIS-ULA) attending national meetings, organising local meetings and meeting with senior management to discuss areas of contention. This has contributed to an overview of the college and the conflicting values held by some of the different 'tribes'. During this time I became fairly well known to most of the academic staff.

#### **4. Data analysis**

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) argue that, "in ethnography the analysis of data is not a distinct stage of the research. It begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues into the process of writing up. Formally it starts to take place in analytic notes and memoranda, informally, it is embodied in the ethnographers' ideas, hunches, and emergent concepts" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995:174).

As a participant observer I was in the field whenever I was at work and whenever I logged on to the FirstClass conferences to observe, or participate in, online discussions. However, I did not participate in the PE conference, the only conference in which I participated being the Education conference where my role was that of tutor and e-moderator (Salmon, 2000). Field notes were kept in a field notebook, on scraps of paper or typed and filed on my computer. Initially field notes were fairly disorganised because no particular organising principle was apparent. Given the large quantity and the fragility of electronic data it was difficult to know what to keep. Massey (1998) argues that the ethnographer needs a willingness to see everything and suspend premature judgment on what should be selected as data because the usefulness of a particular piece of information might not be immediately apparent. What I considered to be significant messages on the FirstClass conferences (those relating to front stage, back stage and off stage activities) were forwarded to my own mailbox and filed. Data was constantly revisited as new data appeared to resonate with, or contradict, data collected earlier. An example of this was a meeting

of the SSLC<sup>22</sup> in November 2007 when a B.Ed. (Primary) student told us that PE students went out every Thursday night to meet second, third and fourth year PE students and that primary students were not welcome at these events. Previous field notes, interview data and email correspondence about father/daughter and mother/son nights suggested that it was unlikely to be every Thursday night and was probably a father/daughter or mother/son night, which was the normal follow up to adoption night. In this way a gradual picture emerged of the backstage life of PE and primary students.

Data were collected in various forms. Interviews were recorded on audiotape and transcribed using voice recognition software. The time consuming act of transcribing audiotapes meant that the first stage of analysis began during transcription as themes emerged and began to resonate with, or contradict, data from the earlier collaborative inquiry group. Email messages on the PE FirstClass conferences (2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06) were saved for subsequent analysis as were images posted by students<sup>23</sup>. It was not initially clear to me why a particular message on the conference might be important but after a while I realised that I was observing students' backstage discussions on what we now refer to as a social networking site. As will be discussed in chapter 5, the significance of these exchanges between students only emerged later. Ongoing reading informed the analysis and in February 2006 I noted:

The main focus at the moment is tension between a vocational/practical (professional?) orientation and an academic orientation. It is also about the process of (being in) the first year at university. A feeling that PE and primary students are very different in the way they present themselves – is it all 'front'? PE students frighten Deidre!

At the moment the main ideas appear to be:

- Front stage, back stage and off stage;
- The relative significance of the three courses taken by the students;
- Lecturers' perceptions of the culture of the various 'tribes';
- The significance of 'practical' classes.

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<sup>22</sup> Staff Student Liaison Committee

<sup>23</sup> I was not a 'controller' of the PE conferences and messages could have been deleted at any time by the conference controller, this being normal practice at the end of each academic year.

This year is a pilot for next year – next session I plan to observe freshers' week and adoption night. (Notes about the research process written in February 2006)

These were tentative thoughts based on data from the collaborative inquiry group (2004/05), interviews with first year students (November 2005 – January 2006) and regular meetings with PE and primary students in lectures, seminars and workshops. The act of transcribing the interviews led to an initial understanding of what appeared to be emerging themes and I spent the summer of 2006 conducting a first order analysis of all the data sets that were available to me at that time.

	<b>Data set</b>
1	Interviews with first year students.
2	Interviews with second year students.
3	Interviews with staff.
4	Email discussions on the PE conference.
5	Student perceptions of lectures and seminars.
6	The Glenmore Lodge field trip.
7	The Professional Development Portfolio (PDP 5 and PDP6).
8	Visual ethnography, a preliminary analysis of students' photographs.

Table 3.6 Data sets available in July 2006 for a first order analysis

In the first order analysis I assigned activities to front-stage, offstage, backstage official or backstage unofficial settings. This was a blurred distinction but I noted that if students were able to tell me about 'what everyone knows' and 'what everyone does' I would be able to identify the wide range of activities that students engage in whilst at university. Only a few of these, I thought, would relate to either academic work or professional preparation the rest being about getting by, getting drunk, playing rugby and getting a girlfriend or boyfriend. I thought it was probable that I would uncover very submerged or incoherent front-stage, backstage and off-stage narratives.

The analysis of the students' Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) entries was a major exercise because of the size of the data set. The data comprised:

- PE students' responses to PDP6, May 2007, question 1 (19,785 words).
- Primary students' responses to PDP6, May 2007, question 1 (39,442 words).
- PE students' responses to PDP6 May 2007, question 2 (6,065 words).

Primary students' responses to PDP6, May 2007, question 2 (13,181 words).

PE students' responses to PDP5, March 2006 (20,302 words).

Primary students' responses to PDP5, March 2006 (26,784 words).

The PDP entries were about students' perceptions of the characteristics of a good teacher and the aspects of their experience at university that they considered most valuable during placement. Analysis was initially conducted by reading a sample of PDP entries from just one workshop group (10 primary and 9 PE students). As this amounted to just 9,500 words it was a question of reading and rereading in order to identify words and phrases that might constitute themes. On the basis of this I wrote a descriptive account of what students said, trying to identify key words and concepts. Key words from the literature were also searched. Atlas Ti was used to code and search the entire data set and reports created for each of the key words. Subsequent analysis eliminated double counting and ensured that all variants of the words were included. Whilst superficially appearing to be a quantitative analysis, the numbers are only indicative. It was more important to read what the students were saying rather than just counting the number of times it was said. The value of Atlas Ti was that I was able to organise the data by theme and collect together students statements on common themes. Many potential themes were discarded during the analysis whilst new ones emerged.

<b>Teacher identity</b>		<b>Relationships</b>	
Key word	Number of times used	Key word	Number of times used
Knowledge	110	Fun	99
Planning	178	Approachable	58
Behaviour	208	Patient	38
Respect	72	Encouraging	40
Management	157	Relationship	49
Being organised	104	Enthusiasm	90
Control	87	Confidence	92
Discipline	67	Interesting	81
Firm but fair	66	Humour	31
Flexible	59	Role model	29

*Table 3.7 The characteristics of a good teacher, key words identified in PDP5 and PDP6*

Malderez et al (2007) identified four themes that resonated with my data, (1) teacher identity, (2) the role of relationships, (3) the notion of relevance and (4) emotion. Teacher identity was the role shift from being a non-teacher to being the teacher. The role of relationships refers to the importance of student teachers' relationships with children, their own teachers when they were at school, with teacher colleagues in placement schools and with family members and peers. Relevance was when student teachers placed a higher value on the practical and school-based components of their courses than on the more theoretical aspects of their courses whilst emotion was where trainee teachers experienced highly emotional states before and during their final school placement. In relation to Malderez' theme 'emotion' I analysed PDP6 (May 2006) which asked students to describe their best experience whilst learning to teach.

The analysis of students' photographs was not a major part of this study, which is not primarily a visual ethnography, the images being used to illustrate the emerging themes from the data. However, by analysing the images one is able to learn something about the informants' perceptions of reality. Pink (2001) suggests that the analytical process involves making links between different kinds of data, which in this study includes photographic images, field notes, messages on the FirstClass conferences, interviews with students and students' writing. The images give an insight into the backstage and offstage areas of students' lives which would otherwise be hidden from the researcher. The images also reflect the way that students choose to present their group identity and the different ways in which PE students and primary students present themselves.

This comparative study aimed to explore the ways in which the experiences, culture, beliefs and developing perspectives of B.Ed. (PE) students and B.Ed. (primary) students differ from one another? Chapter 4 will compare and contrast the front stage experiences of students in terms of their timetable of lectures, tutorials and practical activities, their assessments and the hidden curriculum of other institutional arrangements. Whilst the Education course is taken by both groups of students they have different perceptions of it and its relationship with their other courses. Chapter 5 will analyse the backstage activities of PE and primary students.

At the beginning of the research I was unaware of the nature or the extent of the student subcultures. I found a rich and vibrant PE group culture but the absence of a discernable group culture amongst primary students. This meant that I acquired vast quantities of data about the back stage life of PE students but relatively little data about the back stage life of primary students. Primary students did not engage in group activities and most of them lived at home with their parents. However, the absence of a strong group culture amongst primary students is a significant finding, and, as will be discussed in chapter 7, there is a parallel with the two cultures identified by Becker (1960) in a medical school, 'fraternity men' and 'independents'. Neither PE nor primary students appeared to develop links with the mainstream university culture.

## 5. Ethical issues

Greenbank (2003) argues that the researchers' values influence the choice of research method and that the ontological and epistemological position adopted by the researcher is influenced by their competency and personal values and contends that research methods cannot be value-free, arguing that researchers should adopt a reflexive approach and attempt to be honest and open about how values influence their research. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) distinguish 'procedural ethics' and 'ethics in practice' in relation to qualitative research. Procedural ethics is the process of seeking approval to undertake the research, often based on guidelines laid down by research bodies (AERA, 2000, BERA, 2004, SERA, 2005) whereas ethics in practice includes everyday ethical issues which the authors describe as ethically important moments and microethics. "Medical ethics is not just about the dramatic questions that are discussed widely in the popular media or in the philosophical texts. Ethics is what happens in every interaction between every doctor and every patient" (Komesaroff (1995), cited in Guillemin and Gillam (2004:266).

The main ethical issue in this research is the fact that I am course organiser for Education One, a course taken by all the students in this study. Whilst students are aware that I am course organiser this is largely an administrative role and I believe

that it is perceived as such by the students. A general recommendation in codes of ethics is that a researcher should not study people that they are assessing. This is a grey area in this research project because as course organiser and tutor I do have a role in relation to assessment. However, all assignments are marked anonymously, the only information on a script being the student's matriculation number and examination number. Each semester I normally assess 12 scripts, out of a total of 320. Scripts are allocated to markers randomly by the course secretary. In the first semester (session 2005/2006) I co-tutored one of the workshop groups but in the second semester I visited the other workshop groups as an observer. I am not involved in assessing the students' professional practice when they are on placement and have no role in relation to school-based placement.

At the beginning of the course I explained to the students that as well as being the course organiser I was also researching the course and would be talking to some of them about their experiences of the course. Prior to each interview I explained the nature of the research, emphasised confidentiality and invited questions. My role in relation to the collaborative inquiry group (2004-05) developed over a period of time and was based on guidelines suggested by Reason and Heron (1999). At the end of the collaborative phase of the research we agreed that we would continue to meet as they entered the second year of their course. Prior to each interview with second year students I gave them a copy of the abstract of my research proposal. Interestingly, one second year student, a former member of the collaborative inquiry group, immediately identified, and was able to offer a definition of, front stage, backstage and offstage settings.

PE and primary education staff were also given an abstract of my research proposal which was an effective way of explaining what I was planning to do. Whilst the nature and purpose of my research was outlined to the staff being formally interviewed there was the dilemma as to whether I should explain my role prior to every casual conversation or staff meeting. It was decided that this was not necessary and it soon became apparent that most staff seemed to know roughly what I was doing.

The ethical issues relating to the analysis of messages posted to course conferences were carefully considered. Within the School of Education FirstClass conferences are the official communication channels between staff and students. Emails may be sent to an individual in which case they are private communications, or they may be sent to a conference, in which case they are public communications. Public communications are intended to be read by all users of the conference and, as a member of staff, I had legitimate access to the course conferences. The conference does not 'belong' to the students but to the institution and its manifest function is to support and enhance learning. I also thought long and hard about the ethics in relation to the photographs that students posted to the conferences. When I was looking at the photographs I did feel a little intrusive. However, like the e-mails, the photographs were intended to be shared with other conference users and the sharing of images is now widespread on Internet social networking sites. I discussed the skiing photographs with one informant (Susie), who had been on that trip, and she expressed neither surprise nor concern that I, like many other people, had viewed the images which were there for everyone to view.

Maguire (2002) supports the notion of researching within one's own institution, suggesting that we 'dig where we stand', digging in long enough to grapple with the messy work of changing our own institutions. Reason and Heron (1999) argue that you do not have to throw away your lived experience in the search for objectivity but should build on it and develop it. My cultural awareness of the institution over an extended period of time has been an asset to this research and some of the 'taken for granted' knowledge that I have acquired has helped me to decode many of the observed events.

## Chapter 4 Front stage

The front stage is where the official work of the PE and primary education programmes takes place and comprises lectures, seminars, workshops, practicals, assignments, examinations and the school based placement. Data sources included observation of front stage settings, analysis of course materials, and interviews with academic staff and students. Chapter 5 will explore back stage activities. Zeichner and Gore argue that:

According to Bartholomew (1976) and others such as Giroux (1980), Popkewitz (1985) and Ginsburg (1988), the real impact of preservice preparation lies in ... images of teacher, learner, knowledge, and curriculum which are subtly communicated to prospective teachers through the covert processes of the hidden curriculum of teacher education programs. Thus, despite the existence of many studies which suggest that teacher education courses have a low socializing impact, one must be cautious in accepting their findings. (Zeichner and Gore, 1990:19)

However, Wideen et al (1998) found that the consensus in the literature was that formal teacher education has little impact on the cumulative effects of anticipatory socialisation. What image of the PE teacher or the primary teacher is communicated to students on the front stage of university life? What is the image of the learner and what kinds of knowledge are valued by PE and primary students? This chapter explores the hidden curriculum of initial teacher education in relation to the 'new' Education courses.

### 1. The courses

Each year students have to achieve 120 credits, either full courses (40 credits) or half courses (20 credits). Unlike students on non-vocational undergraduate courses, only in their final year do ITE students have any choice about the courses that they take. Course content is constrained by the SITE benchmarks (Scottish Executive, 2006), each course descriptor listing the elements of the SITE benchmarks that are achieved within that course. The fixed nature of the pre service curriculum gives the message that this is a teacher training course that will enable students to teach effectively on a

school based placement. As was explained in chapter 1, programme coordinators argued strongly that the Education courses should also contribute to the preparation for placement, and one of the learning outcomes of Education 1Ah is to, ‘prepare for (the) work-based placement, or equivalent, and understand the relationships between professional action and theoretical perspectives’ (University of Edinburgh, 2005). As will be seen later in this chapter, despite this learning outcome PE students consider the Education course to be less relevant than their other courses, the theoretical aspects of education being less highly valued than the practical aspects, a finding that is supported by the literature (Christie, 2003, Lawson, 1983a, b, Holligan, 1997, Lacey, 1977, Liston et al., 2006, Hobson, 2003). The courses taken by PE and primary students are outlined in tables 4.1 and 4.2.

<b>B.Ed. (PE)</b>	<b>B.Ed. (Primary)</b>
Physical Education Perspectives (PEP1) <i>Exercise Physiology</i> <i>Skill Acquisition</i> <i>Sociocultural</i>	Mathematics
Physical Education Curriculum (PEC1) <i>Learning and Teaching</i> <i>Curriculum</i> Practical classes	Environmental studies
Education 1Ah	Education 1Ah

Table 4.1 Courses taken by students in semester one

<b>B.Ed. (PE)</b>	<b>B.Ed. (Primary)</b>
Physical Education Perspectives (PEP1) Aesthetics	Language
Physical Education Curriculum (PEC1) <i>Learning and Teaching</i> <i>Curriculum</i> <i>Practical classes</i> School visits (five half days)	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
Education 1Bh	Education 1Bh

Table 4.2 Courses taken by students in semester two

## 1.1 PE courses

Physical Education Curriculum (PEC1) comprises *Learning and Teaching* and *Curriculum*. Learning and Teaching covers child development which is linked to teaching and learning within the 5-14 curriculum. The Curriculum course in semester one comprises four core activities which are part of the PE curriculum in schools, badminton, swimming, basketball and gymnastics. There are weekly lectures in ‘Learning and Teaching’ and ‘Curriculum’ and a series of practical classes.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Time allocation</b>
Swimming	11 hours
Basketball	11 hours
Early years	5 hours
Dance	5 hours
Netball	6 hours
Generic games	6 hours

*Table 4.3 PE Practical classes in semester one*

In semester two PE students have lectures in Teaching and Learning for six weeks and then spend five half-days on observation visits to local primary schools which reinforces the emphasis on a practical orientation concerned with craft knowledge and a focus on classroom experience. Students also have practical classes which focus on learning how to teach children in a primary school. Students consider practical activities to be both enjoyable and ‘relevant’ and, as will be seen in chapter 5, these are often the same sporting activities that students engage in both backstage and off stage, “the practical side is OK because most people on the course don't look out of place doing any sport. The practical is something that everyone is comfortable doing so there is no pressure.” (Interview with first year PE student, January 2006)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Time allocation</b>
Gymnastics	11 hours
Badminton	11 hours
Generic games	6 hours
Dance	5 hours
Athletics	5 hours
Football	5 hours
Rugby	5 hours

*Table 4.4 PE Practical classes in semester two*

Skill Acquisition, taught in PEP1, is a subject that is similar to what PE students were doing as sports people either at school or in sports teams. Richard (PE) enjoyed Skill Acquisition, “because it's about the sort of activities which are easiest for us to understand because we're all athletes.” (Interview, January 2006) Other PEP1 courses are Exercise Physiology and Sociocultural. Exercise Physiology is the science of the body, and how the body works in relation to performing activities and students see it as very relevant for a sports person. Sociocultural is about the history of sport and how peoples' perceptions have changed over the years and Richard found this quite difficult although he enjoyed PEC1 because it included activities such as swimming, basketball and generic games. The familiarity of sport related activities, because of anticipatory socialisation at school and in sports clubs, meant that what one of the PE lecturers called ‘the mainstream PE courses’ were popular and were perceived to be ‘relevant’ by the students. The use of the term ‘mainstream’ suggests that the Education courses are marginal and this is a message that is picked up by the students.

## **1.2 Primary courses**

The programme specification for B.Ed. Primary describes the programme as having three major strands, Educational Studies, Curriculum Studies and School Experience, “these feature in each year of the programme but the balance between them varies over the four years with School Experience occupying an increasingly larger share of the students' workload” (University of Edinburgh, 2003:16). The emphasis is on school experience although in the first year the school-based placement is only of

four weeks duration. Apart from placement the taught components are the Education course (Educational Studies) and Curriculum Studies. The purpose of Curriculum Studies is:

... to engage students in the study of the aspects of the curriculum that feature in the primary school so that they are able in their teaching to draw on the substantial knowledge base that is presupposed in the 5-14 guidelines. In each of these curricular areas the aim is to engage students in the analysis of its central concepts and principles in a manner that allows them to grasp its predominant organising features and methods of intellectual enquiry and reflection as well as ensuring studies are effectively related to the primary school curriculum and its associated pedagogy. (University of Edinburgh, 2003:17)

All four curriculum courses in the primary programme include some element of preparation for the school-based placement. In Language 1h, “students are taught how to plan, implement and assess lessons for children at the early and upper stages by making use of the English Language 5-14 guidelines”; in RMPS 1h<sup>24</sup>, “students, devise and teach stimulating relevant and challenging programmes of work for use in the primary school” and in Environmental Studies 1h students, “will ... be introduced to appropriate ways of organising and presenting the curriculum to others, through researching topics and teaching to peers, as well as developing skills in planning activities for children.” Both the PE and the primary programmes are designed to meet the SITE benchmarks; professional knowledge and understanding, professional skills and abilities and professional values and personal commitment. However, as we shall see later, students tend to prioritise professional skills and abilities, which they believe will help them to teach on the school-based placement. There is a strong hidden message that placement is the most important part of the course. Both course structure and course content are prescribed with an overt emphasis on the skills of teaching; courses being perceived as ‘relevant’ insofar as they relate directly to the skills of teaching. School visits on the PE programme emphasise the practical nature of the course. The ‘curriculum’ courses on both the PE and primary programmes cover the school curriculum and these parts of the programmes are familiar to students because of their anticipatory socialisation. These

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<sup>24</sup> Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies.

characteristics are 'hidden' because they are taken for granted by both staff and students.

## **2. The hidden curriculum of the timetable**

Montgomery and Smith (1997) found that secondary schools placed a different emphasis on different aspects of the curriculum and that some subjects were promoted as more valuable than others. Teachers felt that this was fairly obvious to pupils and that the pupils' perception of the relative values of different subjects was influenced by the school timetable and the amount of time that was given to each subject. On the PE and primary programmes the students' timetable determines the way that they experience their time at the University and specifies the time and duration of their front stage activities. The remaining time is spent either off stage or back stage. The different amounts of time allocated for each subject suggests that some are promoted as being more valuable than others.

### **2.1 The PE timetable**

PE students are allocated to one of four groups (groups A, B, C and D) for practical activities because these subjects are best taught in small groups. Each group experiences the same classes, which are repeated. The front stage from the perspective a PE student in group 'A' is described in table 4.5.

Day	Timetable for group A
Monday	Swimming at nine with the 25 students in group A, then an hour for coffee, 'Early Years' with group A for an hour, free time from twelve until four and then exercise physiology with the whole year group from four until six <sup>25</sup> . Quite a late finish to the day. The four hours of free time can be a problem for students who do not have a base close to the university.
Tuesday	For the first five weeks there is free time until half past two but from week 6 there is an hour of netball with group A at ten thirty, then Sociocultural with the whole year group from half past two until four and Exercise Physiology with the whole year group from four until six. Having a class that finishes at 6.00 pm gives the message that this is an important subject.
Wednesday	An early start for a PEC1 lecture with the whole year group at nine, an hour for coffee and then a PEC1 workshop at eleven followed by basketball with group A at twelve. The afternoon is free and traditionally Wednesday afternoons at the university are dedicated to sport.
Thursday	An Education lecture at ten with primary, design and technology and community education students, followed by dance with group A at half past eleven, Sociocultural with the whole year group from two thirty until four and Skill Acquisition with the whole year group from four until five. Another relatively late finish to the day.
Friday	An Education lecture at nine followed, most weeks, by a seminar or a problem based learning (PBL) workshop. Skill Acquisition is from three until five. Another late finish to the day.

*Table 4.5 PE students' weekly timetable for semester 1 (group 'A')*

Semester two is similar though Science and Sociocultural are replaced with Aesthetics, meeting from 3.00 – 4.00 every Monday and from 2.00 – 4.00 every Tuesday. As in semester one, Monday morning comprises practical activities, including gymnastics, dance and generic games. There are school visits on Wednesday mornings, an Education lecture on Thursday at ten with football and rugby in the afternoon. On Friday there is Education at 9.00 am with badminton in the afternoon so the education course is interspersed with group bonding activities as the students engage in practical activities in their social groups. As will be seen in chapter 5, these groups become important sites for the development of social capital.

<sup>25</sup> PE students are joined by Sports Science students for this course although according to Susie (interview, March 2006) the two groups do not mix socially.

The timetable is structured in a way that sometimes causes friction between practical classes and the Education courses. PE students regularly arrive late for Education lectures, often in groups of ten or fifteen with the explanation that they had come from a practical class. It is invariably an entire group of 25 students that is late although normally only about fifteen students come in late, the remaining ten deciding not to attend. In October 2007 a PE lecturer explained that:

The students left last week with eight and a half minutes to go and I told them to get across quickly, to run if necessary so as not to be late for the lecture. I regard, my work, the analysis and practice of pedagogy in small groups, to be vital to the development of students' professional skills. I am willing, as instructed and in collegial spirit, to donate ten minutes to Ed 1 but I cannot be held responsible for the tardiness of the students. I have encouraged/instructed them to get across quickly and be on time. To obviate any further problems perhaps Ed 1 could recognise the reality of traveling time, and in the same spirit, start the lecture at eight minutes past thereby minimising said disruption.(Email from PE lecturer, October 2007)

This email highlights a tension between a practical orientation, concerned with craft knowledge, and a critical inquiry orientation that sees the teacher as a critical, reflective change agent (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997). The statement that, "I regard, my work ... to be vital to the development of students' professional skills," suggests that the Education course is not 'vital' and that it does not develop students' professional skills. The notion that a lecture, being given to 300 students, might be delayed by 8 minutes so that the late arrival of 25 PE students can be accommodated suggests that these two activities are in competition with one another. Whilst the students do not have to get changed and have a shower after the 9.00 am practical class this changeover period resonates with PE classes at school when pupils would arrive at the following maths lesson with flushed faces, wet hair and in an excitable mood. The way the timetable is organised embodies the hidden curriculum. After a 9.00 am Education 2 lecture PE students have to get to the Peffermill playing field, two and a half miles away, by 10.30 am but the lecturer insists that they get there ready to play by 10.15. The dilemma for PE students is whether to miss the Education 2 lecture in order to avoid a wrath of the games lecturer<sup>26</sup>. The structure of the timetable creates tensions between the academic and the professional parts of

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<sup>26</sup> Field notes – discussion with a PE lecturer, October 2007.

the programme and in particular between the Education courses and the 'mainstream' PE courses.

## 2.2 The primary timetable

The timetable for primary students is less complex because the students are not grouped for practical classes. It appears quite a light timetable and some PE students have observed that primary students have more time to prepare group presentations for the Education course. Primary students have more free afternoons than the PE students and no late classes.

Day	Timetable
Monday	Environmental Studies all morning then maths at two.
Tuesday	Free most of the day but with maths at three.
Wednesday	Free all day.
Thursday	Education at ten followed by maths from eleven until one. Free all afternoon.
Friday	Education at nine followed, most weeks, by a seminar or a PBL workshop. The afternoon is free.

*Table 4.6 Primary students' weekly timetable for semester 1*

In Semester two Maths and Environmental Studies are replaced by Language and RMPS<sup>27</sup>. Monday is a free day, RMPS and Language are on Tuesday, RMPS on Wednesday, Education and Language on Thursday, and an Education lecture at 9.00 am on Friday is followed, most weeks, by a seminar or a PBL workshop.

PE students have a much heavier timetable than primary students. In addition to the Education classes PE students have 5 hours per week of practical activities and 13 hours of PEC1 and PEP1 classes whereas Primary students have only six hours of classes in addition to Education. The primary timetable has the equivalent of three one-hour lectures per week for each 40-credit course so that the Education course comprises a third of the timetable. The PE timetable gives proportionately more time to PEC and PEP. A second year primary student observed, "as their (PE students')

<sup>27</sup> Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies.

schedule is a lot fuller than ours, attendance wise, I kind of understand that Education is a less strong role in their priority list.” (Interview, December 2005) The structure of the timetable for PE students, which allocates more time for PEC1 and PEP1 than for Education, means that the hidden message is that because of the number of timetabled hours, PE courses are promoted as more important than Education.

As was described in chapter 1, PE staff were concerned about the reduction in their contact time when the Education courses were introduced, some staff believing that they would be unable to prepare students for teaching in the way that they would wish. However, the PE programme has managed to protect teaching time and consequently PE students have a heavier timetable than primary students. The existence of classes finishing late in the afternoon (two finishing at 5 pm and two at 6 pm in semester one) also supports the notion that these are ‘mainstream’ classes. PE students are timetabled in groups (A, B, C and D) for practical activities and a consequence of this is that it stimulates social bonding and supports backstage activities. Primary students have free days and free afternoons and do not have any late classes but, as will be seen in chapter 5, they have poorly developed social networks, relatively few organised backstage activities and usually stay at home if they do not have a class. The timetable has a significant impact on students’ perceptions of their courses.

### **3. Assessment**

Assessment on the PE and primary programmes is both summative and formative. Summative assessment is graded and comprises essays and examinations whilst formative assessment, which is designed to support learning, comprises group presentations and, on the Education course, written entries in the students’ Professional Development Portfolio (PDP).

<b>Semester One</b>			
<b>B.Ed. (PE)</b>		<b>B.Ed. (Primary)</b>	
Curriculum	1500 word essay	Mathematics	1 hour Examination
Teaching and Learning	1500 word essay	Environmental Studies	1,500 word essay
Exercise Physiology	1500 word essay (40%) 1 hour examination (60%)		
Skill Acquisition	1000 word essay (20%) Poster presentation (20%) Examination (60%)		
Education 1Ah	2000 word essay 3 group presentations (dp) <sup>28</sup> 3 PDP entries (dp)	Education 1Ah	2000 word essay 3 group presentations (dp) 3 PDP entries (dp)
<b>Semester Two</b>			
Teaching and Learning	1500 word essay	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (RMPS)	1,500 word essay 3 lesson plans Multiple choice exam
Sociocultural	1 hour examination	Language	1,500 word essay
Education 1Bh	2000 word essay 2 group presentations (dp) 3 PDP entries (dp)	Education 1Bh	2000 word essay 2 group presentations (dp) 3 PDP entries (dp)
School placement	Observed lesson	School placement	Observed lesson

*Table 4.7 Assessment on the B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary) programmes*

Summative assessments in the first two years of the course do not count towards the final degree classification although a fail could lead to the termination of a student's course. However, it is very unusual for a student to fail one of the academic courses and this is probably widely known to PE students through the informal social network that spans the year groups. As we shall see, primary students do not have a well developed social network and are unlikely to share this understanding.

Assessment on placement is based on a 'crit' lesson that is observed and assessed according to the SITE benchmarks by a member of the academic staff and by the school.

<sup>28</sup> Duly performed – a formative assessment that is a course requirement and which gets oral or sometimes written feedback.

Students consider summative assessments to be more important than formative assessments although presentations can be quite worrying as it is a front stage performance observed by peers. Formative assessments must be 'duly performed' and a valid excuse has to be given should a student fail to submit a piece of written work or attend a group presentation. As will be seen later in this chapter, this has been an issue with PE students in relation to the Education course. A heavier assessment load gives the message that these subjects are more important than subjects that are lightly assessed. As was shown in table 4.7 PE students are more heavily assessed than primary students and have more summative assessments which students prioritise over formative assessments. Primary students give equal priority to the Education course which they consider more central to their studies whereas the Education course is given a lower priority by PE students. Different assessment patterns give powerful messages about the relative importance of the different components of the students' programme.

#### **4. Education Lectures**

Education lectures are interpreted in different ways by PE students and primary students. Even if few lectures are attended, the predominant student culture defines the way in which students perceive them. Every Friday at 9.00 am and every Thursday at 10.00 am there is an Education lecture in the main hall. Neither PE students nor primary students have any of their other lectures in this hall, using instead smaller purpose built lecture theatres. Built in 1914, the main hall has previously been used as a gymnasium and an audio-visual resource centre.



*Picture 4.8 An Education 1Bh lecture in Paterson's Land lecture theatre (2002)*

This is an unconventional teaching space as it is more like a school hall than a lecture theatre. It is not tiered and has a flat wooden floor marked out for playing badminton. At the front there is a raised stage with a screen, data projector, DVD player etc. The lecture theatre can accommodate 340 students seated on stacking chairs. The Education lecture is the biggest lecture the students attend, other lectures having a maximum attendance of about 150. Double doors to the front and rear of the hall serve as entrance and exit respectively. At the back there is a balcony that can seat about thirty people. The lecture begins at 9.00 am and finishes promptly at 9.50. Another lecture is normally scheduled for 10.00 am so 300 students exit from the rear whilst another 300 enter from the front. The hidden message of this setting is that this is a school hall rather than a university lecture theatre – an old fashioned secondary school hall of the kind used for prize giving or the school assembly. You almost expect the school prefects to be monitoring behaviour. The raised stage means that the students are looking up at the lecturer and the seating makes it difficult to slip in unnoticed if you are late.



*Picture 4.9 Images of the lecture theatre (October 2006)<sup>29</sup>*

Becker (1961) identified two distinct cultures in the medical school lectures, ‘fraternity men’ and ‘independents’. Fraternity men were more often ‘companions’, who interacted with one another from personal choice, unlike ‘associates’ who interacted only because they met one another in the laboratory. “Companions often went back and forth together between their homes and the medical school, and shared living arrangements or residential areas.” (Becker, 1961:141) Seating arrangements, in the lectures observed by Becker and his team, were stable with friendship groups, based on fraternity, sitting together. In the Education lectures students on different programmes normally sit together, “the primary people sit there and the PE people sit here and the community education people sit over there” (first year primary student, January 2006). Mature students<sup>30</sup> usually sit at the front where they often ask questions of the lecturers; younger primary students are embarrassed when mature students do this and consider it a norm violation (first year primary student, January 2006). The balcony is normally occupied by PE students even when there is plenty of space elsewhere. It would be a major norm violation for a non PE student to attempt to sit in the balcony<sup>31</sup>. On the balcony you can see but not be seen. Some lecturers do not like the students to sit in the balcony and one student referred

<sup>29</sup> The image on the left was taken before the lecture had started – it is not evidence of poor attendance.

<sup>30</sup> These are normally B.Ed. (primary) students, female and invariably ‘access’ students.

<sup>31</sup> On one occasion a mature (male) Community Education student attempted to use the balcony and found the behaviour of the PE students such that he could not concentrate on the lecture. (Field notes, November 2007)

to the lecturer, “who wouldn’t let us go up to the balcony.” (Course evaluation, March 2007) The balcony has a relaxed atmosphere with students sitting at tables, often with something to eat and drink and the ability to chat to one another without being noticed. A regular complaint at the Staff Student Liaison Committee, usually made by mature primary students, is about talking in the lectures and it is invariably PE students who are accused of this:

It has been reported by students and lecturers that there has been a good deal of disruption caused by latecomers to lectures. There have also been reports of noisy chatter and lack of attention being paid to the lecturers. The general opinion was that this type of behaviour is not only rude but shows lack of respect. (Minute of SSLC meeting, November 2007)

Sinclair (1997) describes the medical students in his study actively performing the role of audience in the lectures, often being unruly during lectures on ‘culturally disapproved subjects’ such as sociology, psychology or statistics and making loud derogatory remarks about the lecturers.

The hidden curriculum is also transmitted in the public utterances of the lecturers. The following observations are based on field notes taken by myself and another observer<sup>32</sup> at an Education 1Bh lecture on reflective practice<sup>33</sup>, one of four lectures designed to prepare students for placement. Amy, a second year Sociology student who was taking the course as an option, described the lecturer as, “just like a primary headteacher”. The dress and demeanor of the lecturers is significant. A PE lecturer explained that to retain credibility with the PE students you had to teach practical activities and that his track suit was his badge of authority. (Interview, March 2006) Lecturers give hidden messages by their dress and demeanor and some can be quite ‘strict’. In the observed lecture the lecturer began by stating that, “most of you will be primary”, which was correct in terms of attendance as most of the PE students had skipped this lecture. There is a longstanding issue amongst primary lecturers about PE students’ attendance and behaviour at these lectures and the lecturer told me

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<sup>32</sup> An M.Sc. student doing an ethnographic study of B.Ed. (Design and Technology) students.

<sup>33</sup> Date of observation - March 2007.

afterwards that there were only three PE students present. The lecturer was quite aggressive, picking on the three PE students who she accused of talking while she was speaking. She asked if they wanted to stay, telling them they could go if they were not interested. The message was that the three PE students were not welcome. The Design and Technology students sitting in the back row seemed confused. The antagonism between primary and PE was quite apparent and a hidden message seemed to be that PE students were negligent in their approach to teaching in the primary school. As will be seen in chapter 5, messages like this are rapidly absorbed into the PE culture. The lecturer then gave the students a handout outlining the SITE benchmarks but this was headed 'for primary students' so she was excluding Design and Technology students, PE students and students from outwith the School of Education. Whilst this event can be explained as an oversight or as part of a series of misunderstandings, it does give a consistent message about the distinctive nature of the programmes and their cultural differences.

The following day the second lecture in the series was given by a different lecturer who had already been briefed about the PE students' poor attendance. He began by asking, "How many B.Ed. students are here"? This terminology is significant because all the students are B.Ed. students. Clearly he meant B.Ed. (Primary). The lecturer then asked how many Design and Technology students there were (five) and how many PE students (none). In doing this he is continuing to relay the hidden message about the two cultures. The terminology is significant because the public and undifferentiated use of the term B.Ed. to mean B.Ed. (Primary) reinforces the notion that the dominant culture in the School of Education is one of primary education and that B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Design and Technology) are marginal. A lecturer in Community Education told me that the undifferentiated use of the term B.Ed. within the School of Education was a longstanding bone of contention with Community Education staff because the Community Education students are taking a BA degree<sup>34</sup>. The independent observer noted that:

It's a completely different environment to the Design and Technology

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<sup>34</sup> Community Education students take Education 1Ah but not Education 1Bh when the observations were made.

workshop setting which is casual, loud and has a lot of interaction. It feels to me like a different culture and the focus at the beginning on primary education made me wonder if this reinforced them as being very different groups. The lecture begins with a bit of a focus on primary education students and the handouts are geared towards them as well. One of the design and tech students goes up to get the handouts and then ... looks to see if anyone from their group needs any handouts. Two of the girls put up their hands. They seem to be looking after themselves. The lecturer talked about some students who would not get registered as teachers at the end of the course and it made me wonder about some of these students and how they feel when she says that (M.Sc. student undertaking an ethnographic study of B.Ed. (Design and Technology) students).

The reference to some students not getting registered as teachers at the end of the course suggests both an authoritarian stance on the part of the lecturer and a statement of the importance of preparation for placement – if you do not pay attention you will fail the course. The context of this exchange is that for several years, attendance by PE students at this series of lectures has been very poor. This is partly because PE students are prepared for placement during five half day visits to primary schools and a separate subject specific series of lectures. Although the programme coordinators required the Education course to contribute to preparation for placement, as was described in chapter 1, it seems that both the PE and the primary programmes want to prepare their own students for placement, thus diminishing the role of the Education course. In session 2007/08 the Academic Coordinator for the Education courses suggested that PE students be excluded from these lectures and a notice was posted on the website, “The four lectures and the two workshops are not for students on the B.Ed. (Physical Education) programme who have alternative arrangements to cover these topics.”

Attendance at Education lectures is good at the beginning of the course but tails off as the course progresses, PE students’ attendance at lectures being particularly poor. Sinclair (1997), in his study of medical students, notes that students’ attendance at lectures varied considerably and that after initially attending all the lectures students became more discriminating about which lectures they would attend. As exams approached some students would go to lectures, “if only to see how their colleagues were doing.” (Sinclair, 1997:135) A lot of PE students choose not to attend the

Education lectures, particularly the lecture that takes place at nine o'clock on a Friday morning, though primary students attend most of the lectures, "I suppose it's a personal thing but I don't think they are optional." (Interview, October 2006) All of this primary student's friends go to the lectures and they sit in the same place every week, "because we are creatures of habit." (Interview, February 2006) Douglas (PE) tries his best to go to every lecture and thinks he probably missed about five out of sixteen lectures, which is quite a lot of the lecture course to miss. Non-attendance at Education One lectures by PE students may have become a cultural norm learned from second year students. Douglas commutes from home and thought that non-attendance at lectures was probably more often the case with people who stay in the halls of residence, which is about 85% of the PE students. Richard (PE) does not enjoy the Education lectures:

I'm not too keen on the lectures. I think it's the big hall, I just find it difficult to take anything in in the mornings. But I enjoy the seminars and workshops. A lot of PE people don't go to the lectures. I think it's because people thought that because there was only an essay you could just focus on the essay rather than go to the lectures. Everyone I speak to enjoys the workshops but they are not too keen on the lectures. (Interview with first year PE student, February 2006)

Richard identifies the physical space, the time (9.00 am) and the type of assessment as reasons for giving a low priority to the Education lecture. Some of the students' messages on the FirstClass conference about PE nights out explicitly mention the effect of a hangover on attendance at the Education classes:

Alrite folks, here's the script, There's a Valentines night out a week on Thursday (16th Feb) at Lava and Ignite aka Cav. It's to help raise funds for the Uni football club and another good excuse to get blootered and miss education on the Friday morning! (Email to the PE conference, February 2006)

Mary (PE), an outsider who commutes to the university, has been to all the nine o'clock lectures but has noticed that there never seemed to be many PE people there, she once counted just 15. "I don't know why they don't go, maybe it's because they've been out the night before and because it's nine o'clock in the morning." (Interview, January 2006) A common reason given for skipping the Education

lectures was that they were not seen to be relevant; "I didn't really see how some of the lectures could help me as a PE teacher"; "they could be more PE related, the lectures seemed to be irrelevant to my studies of PE." (Course evaluation, March 2007)

Donna (primary) thinks that the main rule for being a primary student is to make sure that you attend all the lectures and make sure you do your work on time and, when you are asked to do an assignment, to make sure you understood it properly. Helen (primary) also goes to all the lectures, "I only missed some of the lectures when I had the mumps. I feel bad if I miss a lecture, I feel really guilty." (Interview, January 2006) Sometimes the lecture theatre is quite empty with nobody sitting in the first twenty rows. "I feel sorry for the lecturer. I suppose I need to be there because I need to hear it but some people just don't turn up, or they sleep in." (Interview with primary student, March 2006) Most primary students evaluated the lectures in relation to their value for writing the essay, "I don't really see how the lectures relate to the essay questions" (course evaluation, March 2007), though they were also evaluated in terms of interest and in relation to the forthcoming placement, "the lectures on life in classrooms will be beneficial for us when we go on placement." (Course evaluation, March 2007) There appears to be a strong conformist ideology amongst primary students that may be nurtured by an authoritarian approach by some of the staff.

## **5. Seminars and workshops**

There are twelve seminar/workshop groups in the Education course each comprising 25 students a staff tutor and a Ph.D. student/tutor. In a seminar students discuss an academic paper and in a workshop groups of students each give a 20 minute presentation of the findings of a small scale research project. This is where Primary and PE students interact with one another on the official front stage and where their behaviour and attitudes are visible to other students. In an observed seminar (January 2006) students arrive in ones and twos chatting in an animated way. It appears to be a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. A group of PE students arrive and sit together. For

these students this is a front stage performance and the presentation of self and of one's sub culture appears to be important. All the PE students in this workshop are members of group B so they regularly socialise together on the back stage, as will be seen in chapter 5. Primary students are not members of an external social group. The rules of behaviour appear to be quite relaxed. Everyone has a bottle of water or a fizzy drink. Four male PE students are sitting together. They are the only men in the group and are very well built and wearing jogging trousers and sweat shirts with the university logo on the front.<sup>35</sup> Some primary students find PE students, "a bit frightening." (Interview, January 2006) Students are given two minutes to prepare oral presentations. The style of the presentations is casual and, whilst the content was acceptable, most students are not good speakers. It was apparent that many PE students had not attended the lecture or read the seminar paper. At the end of each presentation there is applause and the banging of desks by the PE students.

The seminar is a site for the interaction of two distinct cultures and the behaviour of PE students in Education workshops and seminars is sometimes a cause for concern. Mary (PE) told me that, "some PE people in my group were always messing about and I think it was annoying for other people in the class as well." (Interview, February 2006) Towards the end of semester one a Community Education student complained about the behaviour of PE students in her group:

I have been really annoyed at the general attitude and behaviour of others in the class. For example in today's workshop I had to shout and ask people to stop talking as I couldn't hear the instructions from (the tutor). As well as people talking there were people slumped over their desks and last week we had to wait an additional ten minutes after the allocated break was finished for two people to come back from coffee as their groups were next on to do the presentations. (Email from Community Education student, November 2007)

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<sup>35</sup> When they are in school, PE students are required to wear a uniform, comprising a tracksuit and a sweatshirt with the university logo. One informant (PGDE(S) student, April 2006) told me that she understood that they would be penalised in a 'crit' if they were improperly dressed. The Freshers' week timetable for PE students includes 'clothing distribution'.

The tutors observed that, “last Friday's seminar was more a matter of the PE groups looking as if they had had a late night and being half asleep and unfocused” (email from workshop tutor, November 2007) and, “Friday it was quite a surprise for me as the PE students (not all) were not really engaging and were disrupting the discussion. They have not been like that before.” (Email from Ph.D. student tutor, November 2007) The PE students on this occasion had been on one of their ‘nights out’, probably a father/daughter, mother/son night. PE nights out will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.

Mary (PE) thought that at the beginning of the year a lot of the PE students were not really paying attention in the workshops and seminars but she thinks they are a bit better now:

I think a lot of people leave essay writing to the last minute. You see them in the library trying to write an essay which is due in an hour's time or the next day. I think a lot of them leave it to the last minute because they just can't be bothered. I think a lot of them are quite lazy when it comes to academic work. I think maybe people on the PE course think that PE shouldn't really be academic but should be all about sport and things like that (Interview with first year PE student, February 2006).

Mary is an outsider and not yet fully socialized into the norms and values of the PE culture because she commutes from her parents' home, a 90 minute return journey which means an early start when there is a lecture at nine and a late arrival home when the class finishes at six in the evening. She appears not to fully understand what the others PE students get up to in the evenings and at the weekends and identifies the tension between academic study and practical activities.

Whilst attendance at Education lectures is not monitored, attendance at seminars and workshops is closely monitored and students who do not attend are expected to provide a valid reason for their non-attendance. If a student misses two seminars or workshops they are sent an email asking for a valid explanation. If they miss three they get a letter, copied to their Director of Studies. PE students provide a lot of excuses for non attendance, some valid but many rather questionable and evidence of a failure to prioritise the Education course. In November 2007 a third of the PE

students failed to attend their workshop to give their presentation. One of the reasons given was, "I will be unable to attend this week's workshop as I am going to visit my sister in hospital. Very sorry." (Message from PE student to tutor, 23 November 2007) The PE students did have several other presentations that week but the mass absence suggests the development of a group perspective on this problem that was formulated either backstage or off stage.

Problem based learning on the Education course requires students to collect and analyse data and give a group presentation. A handout produced by the collaborative inquiry group explained the purpose of the study groups in the following way:

Study groups are groups of students who have to get together to talk, share ideas, do research and make joint presentations two or three times each semester. They normally meet on the third floor of the library, in Chapters<sup>36</sup>, in one another's flats, in fact anywhere that's convenient. It's quite good being put into a study group because you make new friends and meet other people on the course.

The study groups can work very well when everyone makes a full contribution. If you've got five people working together you've got five times the energy and some really good outcomes. Mind you, working in a group can be tricky. It's important to negotiate suitable times and places for everyone to meet. If you have any problems with your group, that can't be resolved, you should tell your tutor.

Presentations are not assessed but can be fun and are really useful both for placement and for the assignment. You can be as imaginative as you want and it gives you the opportunity to talk in front of twenty people, which can be scary but we'll have to do this sort of thing when we are teachers.

Handout written by the collaborative inquiry group (March 2005) and issued to subsequent groups of first year Education students.

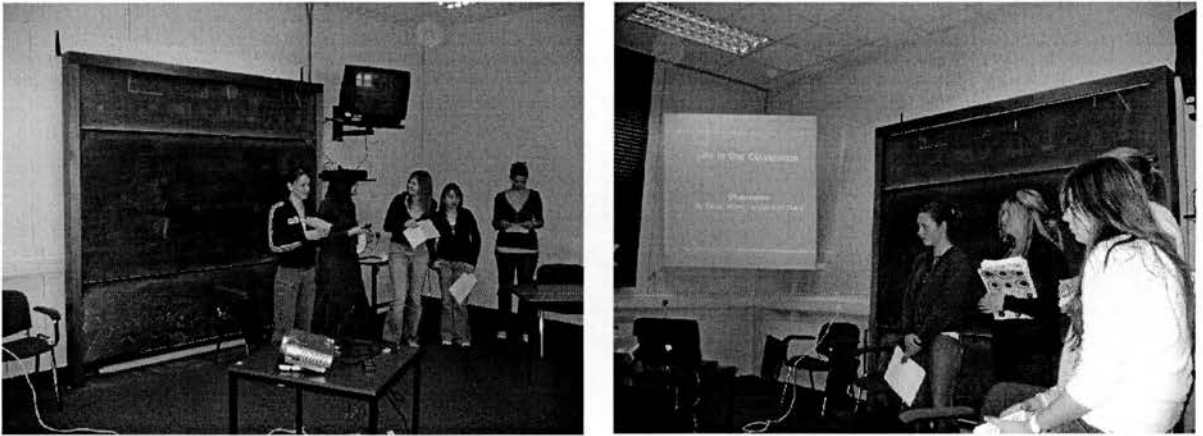
Helen (primary) described her feelings about participating in front stage activities:

We had to go to lectures and workshops and we had to meet in different groups so I met a lot of different people which was quite good. Having to speak in class puts you on the spot, especially if it's in front of people that you don't really know yet, but I think it's probably good for me because I don't have a lot of confidence when I'm standing in front of people and I'm

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<sup>36</sup> The refectory.

going to need a lot of confidence if I'm going to be a teacher. (Interview with primary student, January 2006)



*Picture 4.10 A PBL presentation (primary students), February 2006.*

Helen is already anticipating the skills she will require as a primary teacher. The possibility of being ‘put on the spot’ made Helen prepare more fully for the class, “you are more organised if you think you are going to be asked lots of questions.” (Interview with primary student, January 2006) Some people made a complete mess of it which Helen thought was good, “because we all make a mess of it sometimes and it means you're not the only one and it makes everybody laugh.” (Interview with primary student, January 2006) A lot of primary students were anxious about giving presentations, “Angela is another one who gets nervous so me and her just shake together, which is fine. In semester one it was like rabbits in the headlights but this term it's much better.” (Interview with primary student, January 2006) PE students did not express anxiety about the PBL presentations and staff have observed that whilst their preparation may be poor their presentation is often imaginative.

Most primary students found the seminars useful, “because they provided us with a deeper understanding which helps us with the essays and they encourage extra reading.” (Interview with primary student, January 2006) This is the basic concept of the seminar, each being based on a reading that is provided as a download from the course website. Primary students were very positive about the seminars:

They are led really well and are interesting to take part in.  
 The papers were sometimes very difficult to understand but after discussion the meanings and ideas became clearer.  
 It was always fun with a good mix of activities and good mixing of groups.  
 (Course evaluation (primary students), March 2007)

These comments by primary students focussed on learning for its own sake though some still wanted more relevance to the placement, “the seminars could be more focused on practical issues in the school.” (Course evaluation, March 2007)

PE students were also positive about the seminars and workshops. Some students felt that the topics were irrelevant to PE but this was a minority view, “I feel that PE students are being given a fair chance in this semester, the discussion made the topics more relevant to PE.” (Course evaluation, March 2007) Meeting primary students was seen as a positive aspect of the seminars:

It helps to hear the primary students' views and findings because they put a lot more effort into it than PE students.  
 It was good for interaction between primary and PE students.  
 The group got on well and I learnt a lot.  
 It was very good and enabled me to interact with primary students.  
 (Course evaluation (PE students), March 2007)

Interaction with primary students is seen as a positive thing but preparation for the seminars and workshops was a problem for some PE students and, whilst the discussion was enjoyable, the reading was competing with what many regarded as more relevant aspects of the course. PE students wrote of the seminars:

Some of the readings were quite difficult to understand.  
 The papers were quite long but the things we spoke about in the seminars were often useful.  
 It was very beneficial but I found the articles difficult to read.  
 The readings were quite long and it was too much to be expected to read them and have the questions answered in time for the seminar.  
 We have lots of other work from our other courses.  
 I often felt that we were required to do far more work for the seminars than we had time for.  
 (Course evaluation (PE students), March 2007)

Primary students were critical of PE students' lack of preparation, "it would have been better if everyone had read the papers in advance, a lot of people ... didn't complete the reading ... so discussion was difficult." (Course evaluation (primary student), March 2007) PE students also commented on their lack of preparation, "it was quite noticeable that our group had not spent as much time planning our presentation as the other groups and so was not at as good a level as the other presentations." (PE student's PDP entry, November 2007)

Our group never met once ... another group member and I were left to try and come up with something a day before ... the following day our group decided to meet an hour before the presentation. I knew that two other members of the group were not going to attend, and the two attending were, as usual, going to 'wing' the presentation. (Email from PE student, December 2007)

The main message from PE students is that they have lots of other work from their other courses which they regard as more important. A PE lecturer, who had discussed the Education course with eight PE student representatives, told me that the main issues with the education course were that the students had difficulty understanding it, could not see its relevance, thought they could easily write the essays by using the material on the website and only went to the seminars and workshops because a register was taken. For most PE students the study groups were not working as informal forums for learning. (Field notes, December 2007)

In the Education seminars and workshops learning is facilitated but not enforced. There is a relaxed atmosphere and little pressure on students who have not prepared adequately. The PE stereotype appears to have been accepted by staff on the Education course and there are few sanctions for those who did not attend the lecture or read the seminar paper. Whilst PE students were often poorly prepared for seminars and workshops primary students were normally well prepared. Messing about, talking out of turn and generally being delinquent was not uncommon and excuses for non attendance were invariably accepted even when they were trivial excuses. The hidden message that is transmitted in the Education seminars and workshops appears to be that learning is an option and in this sense the seminars and

workshops adopt a traditional university model of learning rather than the taught model that has been a characteristic of Colleges of Education.

## 6. A home base

The nature of the physical territory occupied by staff and students contributes to the hidden curriculum of the institution. Atkinson argues that, “built spaces provide symbolic as well as physical boundaries. They physically enshrine collective memories as well as more personal biographical and emotional work.” (Atkinson, 2005:7) In an interview with one of the PE lecturers, The Cramond campus<sup>37</sup> was described as “a special sort of place” where there was a very strong sense of community and a social area where the staff could sit and have coffee with the students. The lecturer felt that it was significant that the new PE building did not have a social space and she believed that this gave a strong message to the students. It was also very important to her that the building did not have a lecture theatre:

It is quite symbolic that when there is a lecture for the PE students they had to leave the PE building and go to a lecture theatre somewhere else. Although it's only crossing Holyrood Road it might as well be travelling as far as Cramond, it's a symbolic separation. (Interview with PE lecturer, May 2007)

This is a significant statement and the symbolic importance of the physical space suggests an explanation for the gulf between what she calls ‘the mainstream PE courses’ and the Education course. This lecturer thought that when PE students go to an Education lecture, “they feel that they're going somewhere else”, suggesting that the students were leaving ‘home’ to go into uncharted territory, and hostile uncharted territory at that. Whilst the students may not initially experience the physical territory in this way they learn this perspective from the staff:

Probably for them Edinburgh University is rather a misnomer, they are at Moray House School of Education and their trips up to the University as such are probably quite limited. Because the Moray House library is very good for PE literature there is not the need for them to go to another library. The

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<sup>37</sup> PE staff and students had left the Cramond campus in July 2001, some six years earlier.

Sports Union, the Peffermill playing fields and the Pleasance<sup>38</sup> might be another area of attachment and some of the PE students work at the Pleasance. (Interview with PE lecturer, May 2007)

I suggested that it was probably the same for primary students. “You mean they cross the road the other way?” I explained that I wasn't thinking about crossing the road but about primary students not having a home base. The lecturer was surprised at the notion that primary students did not have a home base and it was apparent that she had little knowledge of either the courses or the culture of the B.Ed. (Primary) programme. The belief in the symbolic importance of a home base for PE students akin to the former Cramond campus is significant and a message that strongly supports the separate identify of PE students. The PE ‘uniform’ is also part of the institution’s hidden curriculum and supports the notion of a symbolic ‘home’. Whilst PE students and primary students have been on a common course constituting a third of their study time since 1998, separate identities and separate cultures have been fostered by staff attitudes and institutional arrangement.

## **7. Two cultures meet on the official front stage**

The lectures, workshops and seminars on the Education course are the only times that PE students and primary students meet on the official front stage. Richard (PE) thought the workshops were a good way of integrating with the primary students and getting their point of view but he thinks that a lot of them don't seem to want to integrate with PE students, “I mean some of them won't even speak to you in the education workshops, it's a big divide.” (Interview, February 2006) Helen (primary) has worked with PE students in her education workshop and sees them in the lecture theatre but does not see them socially. She thinks they are nice people but she thinks that some of them seem very immature, and not yet adjusted to university life, the implication being that primary students are adjusted to university life. As will be seen in chapter 5, primary students are adjusted to a very different kind of university life from that experienced by PE students. Helen talks of, “gangs of PE people. And it's threatening to tiny wee primary school people like me.” (Interview with primary

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<sup>38</sup> The Pleasance is a purpose built gymnasium and sports centre.

student, January 2006) The use of the term ‘tiny wee primary school people like me’ suggests a strong self perception of a young, weak and unimportant person. Helen gets annoyed at the behaviour of some of the PE students who talk, joke and laugh during the lectures so that she is unable to hear what the lecturer is saying. Donna (primary) also feels intimidated by the PE students, “they're just a bit more outgoing than the other people, they've got more confidence really and are quite loud.”

(Interview with primary student, January 2006) Deirdre’s experience of the Education workshops was that PE students tend to ‘talk over you’, which she found quite frustrating. Lorraine (primary) thinks PE students are very cliquey. One of her friends in the hall of residence is a PE student:

I'm friends with her and some of her friends but it is very much your group and your course and that's who your friends are I suppose. I think she is finding it easier than I am because she is more intelligent so she is not having to do as much work as I am. She's failing her exams but I think they weren't what she expected. She's doing new subjects like ‘Participating in Sport’<sup>39</sup>. I think she's finding it a little more difficult adapting to a different sort of life - and she's not very motivated either. (Interview with primary student, January 2006)

There are confused messages here but a clear indication of two cultures, though it is difficult to identify a distinctive culture for primary students other than what is available on the official front stage. Like the PE students they are learning what it means to be a teacher and there is a strong focus on placement. Primary students’ descriptions, and often disapproval, of the demeanor and behaviour of PE students gives an indication of the norms and values of primary students. Primary students put a high value on motivation and see all the front stage activities as very relevant to their occupational aspirations. Sean, a mature second year student<sup>40</sup> reflected:

I was talking to a group of PE students and they think that primary students stereotype them as hard headed and a bit stupid. I think that what PE students are studying is really very challenging but I think some of them are doing it because they have been reasonably successful sports people. My feeling is that they are looking for an easier goal and are not interested in learning for

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<sup>39</sup> There is not a course called ‘Participating in Sport’ on the PE programme. Lorraine may be thinking of Skill Acquisition.

<sup>40</sup> Sean and Maude were members of the collaborative inquiry group in 2004/05.

its own sake. I think they are talented but perhaps a bit lazy. (Interview with second-year primary student, December 2005)

Sean's perception of PE students is that they do not adopt an academic orientation and are not keen on 'learning for its own sake' and whilst he acknowledges that they probably have the ability he describes them as lazy. Maude, another mature second year student, thought:

It would be very easy to be damning and say that if second-year primary students are immature then PE are even worse, but it's not actually true when you listen to them and talk to them and try and put yourself in their position. I think they are actually quite hard working. Sometimes they don't seem to know what they're supposed to be doing but enthusiastically pull through in the long run and turn up trumps. Mind you they're quite prickly, there's a definite them and us attitude coming from PE students. Initially it's quite hard work collaborating with PE students and you're inclined not to include them. (Interview with second-year primary student, January 2006)

Dierdre (primary) thought that because PE students were good at sport and active things they were perhaps a different kind of learner and might not want to sit down and read academic papers, "which would be more difficult for them than for someone who learns that way." (Interview, January 2006) Dierdre thought that PE students didn't find the seminar papers relevant and that some of the things that they had to discuss in the seminars didn't seem to be as much an issue for PE students as for primary students. She also thinks that PE students don't read the seminar papers in advance:

I know a couple of them didn't do the reading at all so they could not really participate. You got the feeling that they were not really interested. I'm not saying they're all like that but in our group they are not interested in what you have to say. I think it's important to at least look a little bit interested, or at least pretend. (Interview, January 2006)

By deciding to put PE students and primary students together in the Education courses the institution highlights differences and encourages comparison. In public forums such as the Staff Student Liaison Committee PE students are often talked about in a derogatory way. Primary students both criticise and stereotype PE students, referring to them as rude, a different kind of learner, not really interested

and lazy. The creation of occupational stereotypes reinforces the development of separate identities for these groups of students.

## **8. Discussion**

The front stage is the arena where students' performances are observed by an audience and Table 4.11 summarises the main findings of this chapter. The audience comprises other students on the same programme as well as students from other programmes. Academic staff also observe the performance. The setting is important as the lecture theatres and seminar rooms send powerful hidden messages about the activities that take place there. The territory occupied by each group is also important and one of the PE lecturers suggested that PE students do not like being away from 'home', home being in the PE department with the PE lecturers. Lecturing staff give powerful messages about the relative value of different student groups through their demeanour and use of language, as was seen earlier in this chapter. The culture of the two groups is revealed on the front stage and the attitudes and values that are developed and sustained on the back stage reinforce behaviour on the front stage.

Relevance to placement was an important factor for all students but for PE students the Education course appears to compete with what are perceived to be more relevant aspects of their programme; "we have lots of other work from our other courses." (Course evaluation, March 2007) PE student's attendance at Education lectures is poor whereas primary students attend most of the Education lectures and have strong feelings about people who don't attend.

Event/activity	Observation/finding
The courses	Courses are compulsory and defined by the SITE benchmarks. Curriculum courses cover the school curriculum and are familiar to students because of their anticipatory socialisation. There is a history of tension between PE and primary programmes and the Education courses. The term B.Ed has come to mean B.Ed. (Primary) which reinforces the dominant ideology, PE being marginalised. Programmes are overtly structured to prepare students for placement.
The timetable	PE students have a heavier timetable than primary students and, because of the number of timetabled hours and classes finishing late in the afternoon, PE courses are promoted as more important than the Education courses. Timetabling PE practical activities in small groups stimulates social bonding. Practical classes are dominant in both the PE and the primary programmes with an emphasis on placement.
Assessment	A heavier assessment load in PE courses gives the message that 'mainstream' PE courses are more important than the Education course which is lightly assessed. Primary students have similar assessments in their three courses.
Lectures	Non-attendance by PE students at Education lectures is a significant feature. Non-attendance is tacitly accepted at Education lectures but not at lectures for students' other courses. The hidden messages of the physical space and the attitude of some of the lecturers helps to define their perceived lack of relevance for PE students.
Seminars/workshops	An arena where the two cultures are visible to others. Learning is enabled but not enforced and takes place in a relaxed atmosphere with little pressure on students who have not prepared adequately. For PE students workshops are an extension of their social groups. PE students are 'frightening', mess about and don't do the work and the hidden message is that they are allowed to get away with it.
Other students	PE students like meeting the primary students in seminars and workshops. Mature students on the primary programme supports an ideology of commitment and hard work.
A home base	The belief in the importance of a symbolic home base for PE students supports their separate identify, as does the PE 'uniform'. Students remain on the Holyrood campus and don't integrate with the University. Primary students do not have a home base.

*Table 4.11 The hidden curriculum of the front stage*

Both primary and PE students were very positive about the seminars, which were considered to be 'fun' although many PE students do not prepare for them in

advance. The data supports Curtner-Smith's observation that PE students use coursework and placement to confirm their beliefs and values rather than to modify them (Curtner-Smith, 2001), PE students prioritising the 'mainstream' PE courses over the Education course because they confirm their beliefs about teachers and teaching. However, Zeichner and Gore argue that:

Another challenge to the position that professional education courses have a weak socializing impact on students comes from those who consider the hidden curriculum of these courses. Ginsburg and Clift (1990) for example, describe how the hidden curriculum in teacher education sends messages to students concerning such issues as teachers as an occupational group (their status and power), the theory and practice of teaching, the nature of the curriculum and the teacher's role in making curriculum decisions and in relation to inequalities in society, and the role of the school in relation to these inequalities. They argue that the hidden curriculum constitutes the core of teacher socialization (Zeichner and Gore, 1990:18).

This chapter has focused on two aspects of this, occupational identity and the tension between theory, as experienced in the Education course, and professional practice, as experienced in the students' other courses. The front stage helps to reinforce differences rather than similarities between these two groups of students. Chapter 5 will explore socialisation on the back stage of university life.

## Chapter 5 Back stage

### 1. Living in a student community

The official backstage is the space provided by the University for students to prepare for performances on the front stage and includes the library, the PBL workspace<sup>41</sup> on the third floor of the library, the common room, computer labs and Education One 'study groups'<sup>42</sup>. The unofficial backstage is where students prepare informally for official and unofficial front stage activities and includes student bars, the sports union, the refectory, halls of residence, and email conferences. Off stage includes the lay world of former school friends, current university friends who are not on initial teacher education courses, and life at home with one's parents, though in situations where parents are teachers this might be seen as part of the unofficial backstage. B.Ed. (primary) and B.Ed. (PE) students experience the backstage of university life in quite different ways and this analysis is based on data from interviews with first and second year students, observations of backstage settings to which I had access and messages posted by students on their FirstClass conference. The official and unofficial backstage provides an important site for socialisation into the dominant culture and for the development of students' perspectives on teachers and teaching.

As was outlined in chapter 1 the majority of PE students live in flats in Edinburgh whilst most primary students live at home. For students who commute from home on a daily basis socialisation into the student culture is mitigated by the influence of family and non-university friends in the lay world. As will be seen later in this chapter PE students have a strong social network at the University, mainly people on their own course, whereas primary students have a weaker network at the University and maintain greater contact with their family and non university friends.

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<sup>41</sup> This is a space where students can meet to prepare for group presentations.

<sup>42</sup> The purpose and composition of study groups was described in chapter 4.

## 1.1 Primary students

For most primary students the influence of their home continues after they have become undergraduates and their everyday lives continue largely unaffected by university based official or unofficial backstage activities. Whilst they are influenced by front stage activities such as lectures, workshops and seminars there is not a strong peer group influence. Helen (primary) lives in Edinburgh with her parents and spends an hour and a half each morning getting to the university by public transport. Helen says that at night other students go out drinking but as she is not yet eighteen she cannot do that. Her main social life involves family gatherings at her parents' home. Her extended family live quite close, "so people are always popping in to see us" (interview, November 2006). Helen has a friend on her course who went to the same primary school and the same high school as her and who, "lives round the corner" (interview, November 2006). The B.Ed. (Primary) course serves the East of Scotland and it is not uncommon for pupils from the same school to be on the course.

Helen still has many friends from outwith the University and whilst she sees her university friends socially the two sets of friends have not yet met. Donna (primary) commutes from Livingston on a daily basis and, although it takes 40 minutes on the train, she likes her home comforts. From Monday to Friday Donna travels to Edinburgh doing university work with her friends and at weekends, "I just spend time in my house." (Interview, January 2006) Donna does most of her studying at home, "I have my own routine with the dining room table and everything scattered everywhere. We have a computer in the dining room so everything is there for me." (Interview, January 2006) Donna likes to keep university and home life separate and spends most of her social life in Livingston. Lorraine is unusual for a primary student as she stays in a hall of residence away from home but thinks that going home at weekends is quite common:

I'm living with another B.Ed. primary student in the hall of residence and her parents live in Edinburgh so she often goes home to study. I try to go home quite a lot at the weekends because it's nice and quiet there. I just go back to normality really. It's loud in the halls. At home I have a little study so I can go and shut the door and no one will bother me. (Interview, January 2006)

Just going back home to 'normality' is to retreat to a comforting and non-threatening place, somewhere that most of the primary students spend much of their time. There does not appear to be an active social life for primary students at the University. First year students living at home share a lot of their experiences with their parents, particularly with mum. Deirdre (primary) says she is very close to her mum and dad and tells them about what she is doing and if she is struggling with anything or falling behind with her work. Her parents know when her assignments are coming in and her mother proof reads her essays to make sure there are no grammatical mistakes. Donna (primary) also has a close relationship with her family, "I go home every night and tell my mum and dad what I've been doing. My uncles and aunts are always asking how I'm getting on." (Interview, January 2006) Helen (primary) also tells her parents about her day at the University, "whilst my mum is cooking the tea I tell her all about my lectures and my workshops and the work I've got to do." (Interview, November 2006) Lorraine, though living in a hall of residence, also confides in her mother:

We did experiments and I went home and did it with my mum who said it was quite good. When I was at school I had my mum on my back so at the start of the course I was finding it hard to actually sit down and do work. My mum told me to get started on my essay early. (Interview, January 2006)

Not all primary students live at home and at the Glenmore Lodge field trip (March 2006) I spent some time with a group of students who stayed in one of the halls of residence. They had rooms next door to one another and the conversation was about the student upstairs who played loud music late at night, the noisy Spanish people in the street and the best places to go shopping. These were people living in Edinburgh as students with no mention of mum and dad, unlike most of the students I had interviewed. This is an alternative perception of life as a primary student living away from home. However, they were not members of a strong group culture and there was little evidence of group activity across the programme. A primary lecturer summarised his perception of primary students' social life:s

Most primary students live at home and commute and this is significant because they are not meeting other students socially. Students who live at home will only come in for their lectures and will spend every weekend at

home so they are not fully exposed to university life. If they stayed in the halls of residence they would probably do less work, would be more assertive and have wider social contacts. If they don't have a class then they don't come to the University and as most of them also have jobs they miss out on the socialisation. There's clearly a reluctance to be here. There's nothing to draw them here, that they are aware of, which is a great pity. (Interview with lecturer in primary education, February 2007)

## 1.2 PE students

Unlike primary students, most PE students stay in flats in Edinburgh and spend a lot of time on campus. A student living at home is likely to miss out on backstage aspects of university life and this is particularly problematic for PE students. Mary (PE) lives in South Lanarkshire, two hours from the University by public transport and has to get up at six in the morning for a nine o'clock class and when classes finish at 6.00 pm she does not get home until very late. Mary writes all her essays at home because she is unable to concentrate in the library and when Mary goes to a PE night out she stays with a friend rather than trying to catch the last bus home. PE students go out frequently and Mary sometimes feels she is missing out, "they go out quite a lot at weekends and on Wednesday nights they just randomly go out. If they go out spontaneously I can't go because I haven't got the right clothes and everything." (Interview, January 2006) At the first Education presentation, "they were all out the night before so it was just me and I felt I was the only one who had done the work." (Interview, January 2006) However, on balance Mary prefers staying at home although she plans to get a flat next year. Mary talks about the other PE students as if she is watching them from outside and deciding whether or not to join in. Using the term 'they' rather than 'we' suggests that, after one semester, Mary still does not identify with the PE culture. I hypothesise that Mary has found it difficult to tune in to the mainstream PE culture because she is at home most weekends, "in fact I'm at home all the time, I usually work on a Friday and Saturday so I'm always working." (Interview, January 2006) Mary appears to identify her 'uni friends' as subordinate to her friends at home. Some of her university friends are from Glasgow so they sometimes meet up when they are home for the weekend, "I do prefer my social life in Glasgow to over here." (Interview, January 2006) One of

the primary students in her Education One workshop group went to school in her home town and knows her cousins so Mary is still socialising with non-PE students and appears to have a marginal relationship to the mainstream PE culture. About fifteen of the 100 people on the PE course commute but once they recognise the importance of backstage life at the University most of them will move into a flat in their second year.

An outlier is important in an ethnographic study because they do not take for granted the norms and values of the group. It is likely that the fully-fledged member of the analyst-defined community or social category will not perceive what they are doing as worth sharing with the researcher. In the case of the PE group Mary and Philip were outliers in the first semester but were soon drawn into the group and by their second year had moved to Edinburgh. When interviewed their insights were valuable additions to the mainstream presentation of the PE culture.

## 2. Backstage life at the University

The official backstage of the University includes 214 societies and 61 sports clubs as well as extensive library facilities and computer labs. However, most Moray House students do not venture far from the Holyrood campus. The unofficial backstage for PE students is manifested in group 'nights out', the 'family system'<sup>43</sup> and informal sporting events but for primary students there is little evidence of group backstage activities and Primary and PE students lead separate lives in distinct cultures, "you don't see primary students around much. We assume they must go home."

(Interview with second year PE student, March 2006) "Most students do their socialising within their own courses but not to the extent that PE students do."

(Interview with first year primary student, February 2006) Being social is an essential part of the PE experience, "it's what PE teachers are like - a good laugh."

(Interview, February 2006) PE students go drinking and clubbing and play a lot of sport, "in the first year there's a lot of socialising and work tends to come second."

(Interview with PE student, February 2006) Primary students go shopping or go to

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<sup>43</sup> The 'family system' is described later in this chapter.

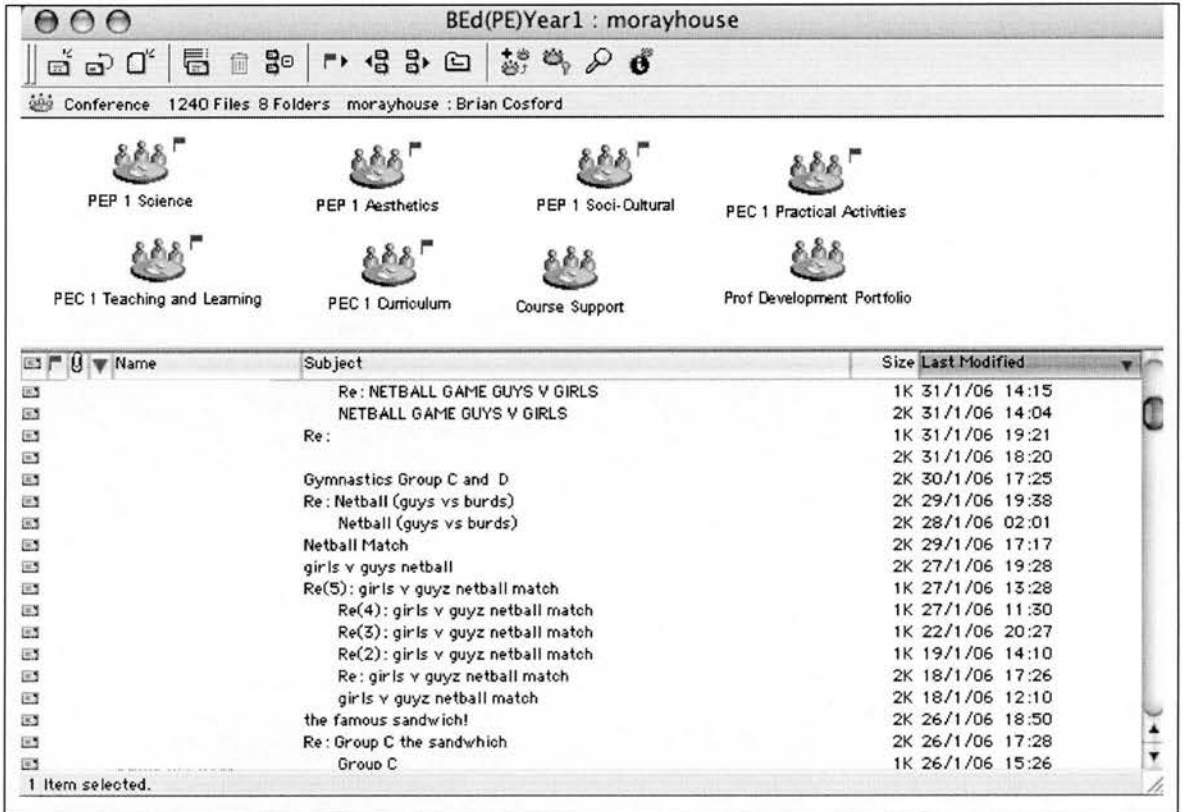
the cinema and continue to lead their lives much as they did before coming to university. They perceive PE students as ‘cliquey’ and more outgoing than other people, “they've got more confidence and are quite loud.” (Interview with primary student, January 2006)

### **3. PE students’ on the back stage**

Despite working at Moray House for thirty years, until I embarked on this study I was unaware of ‘adoption night’ or the rituals associated with the ‘family system’. However, by reading messages on the PE FirstClass conference, which is used as a virtual common room<sup>44</sup>, I was able to observe backstage planning for adoption night, a powerful initiation rite which bonds first and second year students through the ‘family system’. Third and fourth year students are also part of the family system which perpetuates the hard drinking, sport loving culture of the group though with a strong emphasis on placement – something that is always there in the background. Evidence of a strong online community is visible on the FirstClass conference, a place where students discuss various issues unprompted by staff and whilst the conference is open to staff they do not participate in the student’s backstage discussions.

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<sup>44</sup> When I first discovered the PE conference I called it a virtual common room. The current term would be a social networking site.



Picture 5.1 The B.Ed. (PE) conference (January 2006)

In the screen shot (picture 5.1) the icons above the bar represent conferences for each of the courses taken by first year students and these are often used by lecturers as front stage sites where students have to participate in discussions about their work. The space below the bar is the general discussion area and is used by the students to chat and organise social events. The messages in picture 5.1 are about an informal ‘girls v guyz’ netball match. By 2007 students had abandoned FirstClass in favour of Bebo and Facebook but in session 2005/06, when this study was undertaken, FirstClass was used by students for social networking. Primary students have similar conferences but they are used, almost exclusively, as part of the official front stage with course related messages from lecturers and inquiries about course work from students.

### 3.1 Adoption night

Initiation into the PE culture takes place on ‘adoption night’. Primary students do not have an equivalent event. The following account is based on interviews with four

first year PE students from the 2005-2006 cohort (interviewed in January 2006), two first year PE students from the 2006-2007 cohort (interviewed in November 2006), two second year PE students from the 2005-2006 cohort (interviewed in November 2006) and an analysis of messages sent to the conference.

Between 10 August and 11 September 2005 a group of second-year students began planning adoption night for the new first year students. According to the students it is traditional for second-year students to organise the event and the impetus to do this is part of the PE culture, 'passed down the generations from father to son'<sup>45</sup>.

"Adoption night is when the whole thing starts." (Email from second year student, March 2006) The basic idea was to book a club with a DJ and an area neither too large not too small for 200 people. Drinks promos (£1.50 a drink) and space for drinking games were considered essential, drinking games being a dominant aspect of the PE culture. Alan was the first to email the conference with a message that captured the essence of this event, "we don't want to be letting down the tradition now do we. It will be fun getting the first years as drunk as what we were on adoption night."<sup>46</sup> (Email, 10/8/05) Douglas replied in a similar spirit, talking about "going into the wee meeting that the first years have in freshers' week to tell the poor wee children what the tradition is." (Email, 18/8/05) Most of the organising was done over a twelve day period, the main discussion being about the choice of venue. The language used by the students was almost tribal in nature:

We can meet the new first years and welcome them to PE in the traditional way. We can't let the wee first years try and escape their wrath. We want the first years to have their first experience of a hungover lecture. (Email, 29/8/05)

The message is that naïve and innocent first-year students, referred to as 'kids' or 'children', arrive from home, turn up at adoption night sober before the 'carnage' begins. The battle cry of one of the organisers perhaps sums up the overall attitude to

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<sup>45</sup> This is a reference to the 'family system'. To be technically accurate the messages would be handed down from 'mother' to 'son'.

<sup>46</sup> Spelling has been corrected in all email messages to facilitate reading. Students use a lot of texting conventions in their messages.

this event; "we are PE super PE - be afraid, be very very afraid first years." (Email, 6/9/05) This is the same battle cry that was used by a group of fourth year students in a graphic PowerPoint story of a drunken night out in December 2004 which is briefly described later in this chapter. This battle cry has been transmitted from fourth year students to first year students who are now using it at the beginning of their second year, which suggest a powerful social network across the four years of the PE course.

Organising adoption night is as much a rite of passage for second-year students as it is for first-year students. All four years of the course are involved in some way. Alan (second year) met up with his 'mum'<sup>47</sup> for advice about planning adoption night and fourth year students have an interest in adoption night because it helps to fund their graduation ball, "it's adoption night tomorrow night. I'm pretty sure that in the past the fourth years have taken all the proceeds even though it's mainly a first and second year thing. Does anyone know who organised it? Let's get them told." (Email from 4<sup>th</sup> year student, 21/9/05)

Adoption night, which takes place in the first week of the course, comes as quite a shock to the new students. These were young sports people living away from home for the first time and not used to a culture that involved such intense group activities. First year students recalled their experience of adoption night:

You go to Teviot<sup>48</sup> and you stand in the middle of the room, just a room with music playing, and second year girls come up to you and say, 'have you got a mother yet?' and you say 'no', so she says 'I'll be your mum'. So they adopt you. (Interview with first year student, January 2006)

I made it into Education at nine o'clock on Friday somehow but I was only half there! But you get your mum's phone number and go out with them for a few nights and then if you have any problems you can just text them. I liked it. I've not actually met my 'grandpa' yet because they were away on placement last semester when my 'mum' was here, and now that my mum's away on placement she can't introduce me to him. I think we go out for a

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<sup>47</sup> Alan's 'mum' is a third year PE student who adopted Alan at last year's adoption night when she was a second year student and a member of the informal adoption night planning group.

<sup>48</sup> Teviot is a venue run by the student association that can be booked by students for social events.

meal together<sup>49</sup>. It's quite a good idea getting a mum because it does give you somebody that you can look out for if you're stuck or need something. My mum's quite a nice person, we get on quite well. (Interview with first year student, January 2006)

When I heard that they would buy you drinks all night I thought if I asked for a pint she would buy me a pint. I didn't realise she would give me four vodka and Cokes to down in one. I thought we would be a bit more casual than that. The second years don't touch any drinks, and then go to another club leaving you trying to find your way home. (Interview with first year student, January 2006)

Susie, a second year student, recalls that a lot of the girls, "were in a bit of a state" but their 'dads' looked after them by getting them a taxi or making sure their friends were with them, "we are pretty responsible, well not responsible, that sounds ridiculous, but no one is going to leave you on your own." (Interview, March 2006) After adoption night there was quite a lot of online banter, initiated by second year students, about the goings on at adoption night. These were distinct 'performances' in which each actor is clearly playing a part. Whilst some of the roles appear to be carefully scripted, other participants appear touchingly naive. Students treat the conference as a virtual common room, an unofficial back stage and a place where presentation of self is very important. Angela and Jane, two second-year students, reflect on adoption night, suggesting that the first-year students cannot handle their drink and that this is a requirement of members of the PE culture:

Hi guys, Angela and Jane here! Just a wee message to slag you all off for how drunk you all were at adoption night. How many remember? We hope that you are planning some hard-core training and fear not, we have some excellent training programmes if anyone needs any assistance. Remember we were all first years once, although never quite as lightweight as you. Keep in mind that we have mother/son and father/daughter nights coming up and we don't expect such a poor show this time around. Do us proud children and toughen up recruits. Drink-up, party hard, but keep it down. We don't need to see what you had for dinner. You just spewed up our money guys! POOR SHOW. (Email, 28/9/05)

The hard-core training clearly involves more drinking and a badge of office is the ability to drink hard, party hard and keep it down. The ethos of the family system is

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<sup>49</sup> A reference to father/daughter and mother/son nights.

embodied in the following message where a father tries to contact his daughter, “Shona the Shetlander, it's your dad here! Didn't get your number on adoption night (lets not go into too many public details) so if you could give me an e-mail back it would be quality as your Gran wants to meet up.” (Email, 27/9/05) Adoption night and the family system play an important role of the socialisation of PE students. After adoption night there are father-daughter and mother-son nights when first year students go to someone's flat and their ‘father’ or ‘mother’ supplies all the drink. There are normally drinking games and the first year students get to meet all the people that their mum or dad know. The family ritual is enhanced by the tradition that gifts are given to the ‘parents’ who are hosting the evening. The second year students normally stay relatively sober to make sure that everybody is OK, “you have to make sure they're not sick everywhere, especially if it's your flat.” (Interview, March 2006) Second and fourth year students are on placement at the same time, (see table 5.2) so opportunities for bonding have to be created and this is accomplished through family nights out and through sport. The influence of second, third and fourth year students is still apparent, reinforcing the importance of placement and defining ‘relevant’ and ‘less relevant’ aspects of the course. “We hear from second years that you don't have to do that (and) you don't have to do this; it's just through the grapevine” (interview with second year PE student, March 2006). The Education courses, for reasons discussed in chapter 4, are labeled as less relevant.

Year	1	2	3	4
September			XX	
October			XXXX	
November			XXXX	
December				
January		XXXX		XXX
February		X		XXXX
March				XXXX
April	XX			
May	XX			

X = number of weeks on placement

*Table 5.2 Placement dates for primary and PE students*

### 3.2 Drinking games

Drinking games may be unfamiliar to the reader but are a major feature of PE students' social life. I was unable to observe PE students' drinking games though I have played a couple of them in a different context. Sinclair (1997) found that they were common amongst medical students where they were part of the development of 'competitive cooperation':

Some (games) are relatively specialised, such as the allocation among a group of students watching a televised game of rugby of the names of the players; when the commentator mentions a player's name, the student to which that name was allocated is obliged to drink a specified amount of beer. An example of a more general game, also played by non rugby players, is Fuzzy Duck. The players sit round a table, facing inwards and the game is started by one player saying "Fuzzy Duck". The player on his left repeats, "Fuzzy Duck", and this continues around the table, with each player repeating the phrase after the person on his right has said it. The direction of play can be reversed by anyone saying, alternatively, "Does he"; it is now the turn of the player on his right to answer and the response is, "Ducky Fuzz", which then goes round the table anticlockwise. The forfeit for failure to respond correctly is to drink, for example, three fingers of beer (as measured by holding three fingers against the side of the glass). Clearly the way is open for incorrect phrases like 'Does he fuck?' and 'Fuck he does' (Sinclair, 1997:111).

My own experience as a participant observer was of 'the name game' (drink while you think) where everyone sits in a circle and the first player says the name of a famous person. The next person must say a name in which the first name starts with the same letter as the last name that the first person gave. The drinking takes place when someone is unable to think of a name. Until they can think of a name that nobody has used before they must continue to drink and everyone shouts, "drink while you think". It gets more complicated because if someone says a name in which the first and last initials match the letter of the previous surname, the rotation reverses and the person who's turn it is has to drink twice.

Students were introduced to drinking games at adoption night, right at the beginning of their course, and whilst some of the rugby players may have come across drinking games during their period of anticipatory socialisation, entrants are coming straight

from school and they are unlikely to have previously experienced a culture like this one. In December 2004 a fourth year PE student posted a PowerPoint presentation telling the story, in words and pictures, of a boys' night out:

This is the story of the 4th year PE boys, in a mission to explore and experience times of old, to sample the Prinz (a brand of beer) and cause Carnage in the quiet town of Cramond. To boldly go where only a few had gone before. (Email from PE student, December 2004)

Six of the boys decided to sample some of the Cramond Inn's delicious range of food. The rest of the group took exception to this and punished them to down 1 pint of Prinz, the loser would have to take a forfeit. Billy, AJ, Sammy, Cosy, Brian and Mac took to the stage. Mr Taylor lost the challenge and was confronted with downing 1 shot of rum. Would Billy live up to the expectations of being the first to hurl? Cosy, a friend of Sammy, joined the PE boys for the evening and his induction involved downing a pint of the "finest" stout. What would the result be? Straight to the sink for Cosy! Re-joining the PE boys was Jim and his forfeit for late arrival was the downing of 4 pints which failed after the 2nd pint and putting the toilets virtually unusable. (Extract from a PowerPoint presentation posted to the 4<sup>th</sup> year conference, December 2004)

One of the PE lecturers felt that there was a real drink problem and that students did not seem able to drink sensibly. (Interview, March 2006) Drinking does seem to be central to the students' lives. Philip, a male PE student who was teetotal and who, like Mary, was an outsider in his first year, observed:

When you look at the girls in PE, they are much more laddish. They go out to do drinking games, but I don't like that in girls because some of the girls in PE drink a lot and don't really exercise that much and they kind of let themselves go. (Interview November, 2006)

The PE culture can compromise individual pursuits. Philip lived in Kirkcaldy in his first year and played football for Cowdenbeath FC under 19's which involved training two nights a week. Influenced by the PE culture, Philip gave up playing for Cowdenbeath and, in his second year, moved into a flat in Edinburgh.

### 3.3 Going out

For PE students group nights out are a key feature of social life with a lot of pressure to attend. 'Being social' is considered something that PE students have to do and is a characteristic of the PE culture. As was described in chapter 4, first year PE students are organised into four groups for timetabling purposes and these immediately became social groups with quite a healthy sporting rivalry and regular group nights out. Group membership is important, "I can't imagine being in any other group because they are my friends now." (Interview, January 2006) There are regular football, basketball and netball tournaments between the groups which can generate intense rivalry, "we really get along with them but if you are going to go up against them then you want to beat them. It's just in the sport." (Interview, January 2006) Mary describes the four social groups in some detail:

Groups A, B and D all seem to be friends and know everyone but nobody really knows group C. Nobody really talks to them and they are sort of a weird group, they're a bit quiet and don't really socialise. They talk to each other but they don't talk outside their wee circle. I don't know much about group D because I'm more friendly with group A. Group A are a bit more cliquey than the rest. Group B are the best group, group C are weird and group D are all right. Groups A and B are closest. (Interview, January 2006)

About once a month there is a 'PE night' for the whole year group because, "for PE students it's more about the social side, they like their night out." (Interview, January 2006) Douglas felt that at the beginning of the course, because everyone was trying to find their feet, there was a lot of socialising and work tended to come second, "you didn't want to just get your head stuck in the books from the word go because you didn't want people to think of you as the sort of person who would do that and not socialise." Darren thought that by January there was a better balance between studying and socializing. He likes the people on the course and thinks all the guys are a good laugh. There's a lot of pressure to attend PE nights out which are, "quite heavy going but we don't do it too often, about once a month." (Interview, March 2006) Susie does not go to all the nights out but when she doesn't go she gets pressure:

There was an argument on the conference recently because the last PE night out was formal dress with the guys in suits and the girls in cocktail dresses. Only 35 out of 100 second years went and we were getting slagged from the third years because nearly all the third years went. (Interview, March 2006)

The 2007/08 cohort bonded rapidly and all four groups had a Christmas night out which they arranged on the PE conference. Group A planned a meal in someone's flat:

We are having our Christmas meal on Monday. The idea is that everyone brings a bit of Christmas meal, such as wee sausages, or roast potatoes. Kim has a list of what people have said they'd bring and has requested that everyone brings a small gift (£5 maximum) for a wee goodie bag type secret Santa thing as well. I think the plan for after the meal is a wee trip up to Princes Street to the ice skating. (Email from first year student, December 2007)

The group A event was considered a great success:

This a massive THANK YOU and well done to the group A crew which came, cooked and helped out at our awesome Xmas meal yesterday!! The food was great and the banter even better and well done with the prezzies!! Ice skating was hilarious. (Email from first year student, December 2007)

Group B planned a meal, a pub crawl and ice skating,

We'll go out for something to eat on the Wednesday night and then a wee pub crawl possibly followed by the Opal. I think lunch is still a shout on Thursday provided hangovers aren't too severe followed by a little ice skating. (Email from first year student, December 2007)

Group C were less organised, "for those coming for a nibble tomorrow we'll just see everyone at 12.00 at the seats in St. Leonards and take it from there." (Email from first year student, December 2007) Group D went to Pizza Express:

Our group night is booked for Thursday at 7.30 at Pizza Express on the North Bridge. It's booked for 20 people. Should be a good night. Remember your secret Santa's. Good luck with the exams. (Email from first year student, December 2007)

For Richard, "the social life is all getting a bit too much to be honest." (Interview, February 2006) Richard plays squash just about every night and thinks he was probably going out to pubs too often, "it's a case of balancing what you've got, because you are only eighteen once, but then you're only a first-year student once and you've got to pass." (Interview, February 2006) Images of PE nights out give an insight into the nature of the occasion. Jill posted nine images of a PE night out and nearly everyone is dressed very smartly, almost formally.



*Picture 5.3 A PE night out (22 March 2006)*

Three of the men are wearing kilts, other men are wearing smart shirts and ties although in one image three men are wearing T shirts so 'smart with a tie' is not a requirement of the club but a personal/group choice. All the girls are wearing formal evening dresses and this has the appearance of a formal occasion and suggests that a PE night out is a serious event and one not to be missed. Susie told me that, "the actual nights are heavy going but we don't do it once a week or twice a week, it's just four or five within the year." (Interview, March 2006) So there is a PE night out about every five weeks with a lot of pressure to go. Susie explained that for most PE nights, "we always do the same kind of thing like we always just go to a club, get absolutely wasted (and) have a few drinking games." (Interview, March 2006) Linda's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in February 2006, "was a legendary party in the city of Scumdee<sup>50</sup> and I'm sure good times were shared by all." (Email, 12/2/06) Seventeen

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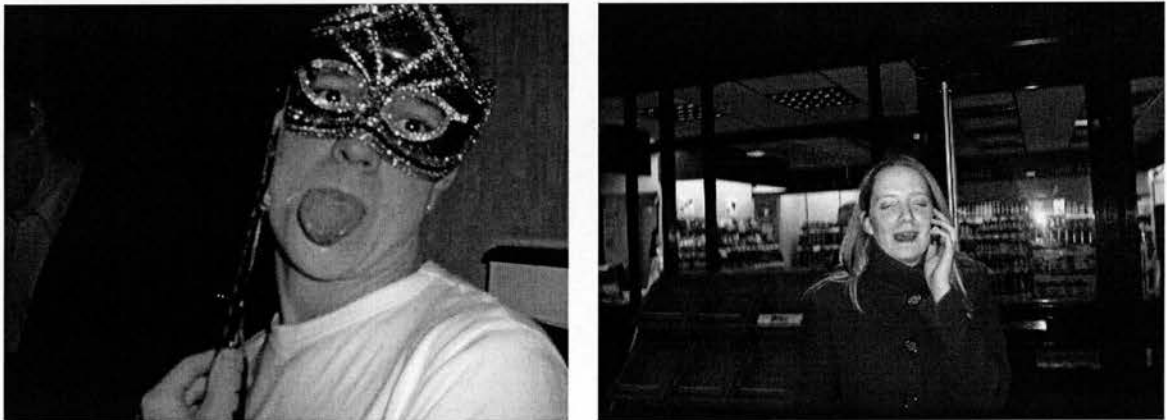
<sup>50</sup> Dundee.

images were posted and, like the PE night out, they nearly all feature the girls dressed in formal evening wear and in formal poses.



*Picture 5.4 Linda's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party (February 2006)*

The message of these images is that a good time was had by all and that means dressing up and going to a club, though the men are not as formally dressed as they were for the PE night out. There are three images of couples but it is mainly the girls being photographed, though the images had been taken by two of the girls. Two images require additional comment.



*Picture 5.5 Linda's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party (February 2006)*

The image on the left (above) features a guy with a mask, did he bring it or did it belong to one of the girls? The message being given is about having fun and being silly. The image on the right (above) is entitled 'rough as fuck' and suggests that the

evening ends with everyone rather worse for wear. These images are significant in that they are posted on the conference for all the students to see so that it reinforces the culture of the group. Pink (2001) argues that visual meanings can generate new types of ethnographic knowledge and sees the visual not just as a method of recording data or illustrating text but a medium through which new knowledge and critiques can be created. The ethnographer is interested in how informants use the image to communicate meaning and represent their knowledge, self-identity and experiences. Analysis, argues Pink, is not just a matter of interpreting the visual image but rather examining how different producers and viewers of images give subjective meaning to their content and form. Martin's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party included his parents. Martin wrote:

Alright everyone? Hope placement is going well for everyone<sup>51</sup>. I'll be finished on Friday! Three weeks of placement (not bad eh?). Anyway how are all u MOFO's? Looking forward to bringing the banter back to the streets of Edinburger!!!?

Just a short one anyway to thank all of those who came to my party at the castle, it was a great turn out and thanks sooo much for the cards and the pressies. It was an amazing night – I hope u all enjoyed it. Apologies too for my parents making their sexual desires known to most of the uni that night!! Not good! Anyway, put a few photies on the net here for you to have a skeg at. If any of you have any more they would like us all to laugh at feel free to post em up here. Looking forward to seeing you all soon. (Email, 7/2/06)



*Picture 5.6 Martin's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party*

It was a 'great turn out', so PE students saw it as a normal part of their social scene to attend parent organised 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties. This was another formal occasion

<sup>51</sup> See table 5.2 for placement dates.

and again kilts were the order of the day. In addition to PE nights out there were quite a lot of 21<sup>st</sup> birthday parties. As was discussed in chapter 3, Portes (1998) suggests that by their participation in groups and the deliberate construction of sociability, social capital is created with benefits for the participants. He argues that social networks are not a natural given but must be constructed through investment strategies oriented to the institutionalisation of group relations. This is clearly what is happening when students regularly attend PE nights out and play football with one another. Students have to invest in the community in order to gain social capital from it, something that Mary and Philip began to do in their second year.

### **3.4 Doing sport**

Sport provides a strong bonding experience for PE students. The first-year PE conference was used extensively to plan, discuss and chat about sporting activities and, read by everyone, defines and reinforces the culture. Ability at sport is an important aspect of social capital and Joe, a first year student, told me how important this was to his self esteem and social standing when he was a secondary school pupil. As a younger pupil he admired the older pupils who played for the school teams and when he was selected for his school team he was conscious that younger pupils looked up to him. Joe also greatly admired his PE teacher and a number of PE students told me that their PE teacher was someone they admired and wished to emulate.

In the first week of their course first year students were challenged to a football match by second year students. This was described as, “the traditional way to welcome new students to the course” (email 21/9/05) and is symbolic of the relationship between the year groups. In their first few days at university students are quickly inducted into the world of PE:

Hey 1st years, just a wee note to mention the football match against the second years. It is tradition that we welcome you to the PE course with a game. Last year the 2nd years filled the conference with abuse on how they were going to pump us (and we all know who won), so we won't make the same mistake with you guys. Instead we will let the football do the talking. It is up to you guys to get a team together and avoid being absolutely stuffed by

the big boys. We won against the 2nd years last year so make sure you have a decent team out! See you on Wednesday 5th October. Bring shin guards. (Email from second year student, September 2005)

OK lads lets get organised. We will have to meet up beforehand and maybe have a bounce game and get positions organised. Anyone interested should meet up on Friday on level 3 of the library at 1pm so we can get things sorted. (Email from first year student September 2005)

Yo boys, 2nd year here! I definitely agree that you should have a bounce game because I must say, our team is absolutely unstoppable! You shall need the practice! Don't make the same mistake the current 3rd years did last year and underestimate us boys! HARDEST AND MOST IMPORTANT GAME OF YOUR LIFE!! Get it sorted! You guys will be playing in your maroon PE T shirts with your Speedos and we will be playing in the white ones! Unfortunately for you guys it is the 1st year tradition to wear Speedos when playing! Good luck with the chaffing!!! Preparation H helps! Be assured you will hear the famous quote "THANX 4 COMIN". If you don't understand, don't worry, you will find out! Over and out girlies. (Email from second year student September 2005)

Playing in 'Speedos' (swimming trunks) is an aspect of ritual humiliation that, according to the second year students, is 'traditional'. The humiliation is reinforced by calling them 'girlies', presumably until such time as they prove themselves. To a first year student straight from school this kind of challenge demands a response. There is little opportunity to be a shrinking violet on the PE course because by signing up for the course you also sign up for the total experience – right from week one.

A few weeks later the first-year girls challenged the first-year boys to a netball match which they won. The following good-natured banter between the boys and girls, and a challenge to play basketball, suggest powerful bonding between the first year boys and girls:

OK, on behalf of the guys let me be the first to admit that we had no idea what we were doing. Allow we still gave 100% effort, we were still beaten in an intensely close game. Score not relevant. (Email message from a first year student, January 2006)

We were wondering if the girls would accept our offer of a basketball game to give us a chance to redeem ourselves. Now, there is no reason why u can't

play because u have already proved to us that u have the team work, communication, passing skills, tactics and aggression to play. So the question remains, will the girls accept our offer, just like we did for the girls and played netball and put up with the bloody ref blowing her whistle ever 2 seconds, but it's all in the name of fun and sportsmanship. (Email message from a first year student, January 2006)

Its fair to say we were well and truly hammered but that's coming from a group of guys who didn't have a clue and were getting let off with nothing! I'm surprised the whistle wasn't hurting the amount of times it got blown. Good performance none the less. But the real question is are the girls man (or woman) enough to actually play us at a sport where you are allowed to run with the ball. So as said before do you accept the basketball challenge. (Email message from a first year student, January 2006)

The third-year students returned from placement in January and immediately challenged the first-year students to a football match. Students are on placement in schools throughout Scotland so the only opportunity to meet is when they return to the university<sup>52</sup>. It is significant that playing football with the first years is an early priority for the third-year students. The following is a response by one of the first-year students:

Has anybody noticed that the third years are challenging the first years to a game? I'm well up for it, anybody else want to teach them a thing or two? A wee chance to make up for that second year result. (Email message from a first year student, January 2006)

Towards the end of semester 2 the students organised a rugby match and a girls' football match. This is just before placement and is the last opportunity for first and second year students to meet before they disperse for the summer:

It's been on the cards for a while to organise a 1st v 2nd year girls match (so that we can complete the clean sweep of our young children!). We thought it would be a good way to end the term before us older ones leave to stress about our exams and you guys go on placement. The plan will be to have fun, play footy, then head to the Craggs<sup>53</sup> after to eat (if you want) but more importantly drink and be merry! We're gonna play rolling subs and there will be plenty of sideline socialising (as we PE students often get thirsty at these events!) so no one will be left out! Make sure you bring support along (that

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<sup>52</sup> Though the second year students did manage to get to Edinburgh for Martin's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party.

<sup>53</sup> The Craggs is a local pub.

means the guys too) drag them if you have to but I know you all get along pretty well. Oh and one small detail, the losers are on the first round ... its about time u paid us back for the amount we spent on adoption night. Luv your aunties. (Email message from two second year students, March 2006)

Right then girlies, it's time to properly show the second years up with our silky smooth skills on the football pitch! The game is hopefully going to go ahead on Wednesday with enough time for all of us to make it after our school visits<sup>54</sup>. I think its going to get played at Peffermill before the boys' rugby game which we can all go and watch afterwards. (Email message from first year student, March 2006)

There is an interesting use of symbolic language here. The two second year students, writing to the first year girls, refer to themselves as 'your aunties', a term which subtly reinforces the family system. Second year guys are their 'dads' so it follows that second year girls must be their aunties<sup>55</sup>. The response from the first year girl is also significant in that she uses the diminutive 'girlies'. This is part of an elaborate role play which helps to distinguish the insider from the outsider and is not an expression that would be used outside the PE culture.

The boy's rugby and the girls' football matches are social activities designed to end in the pub and to involve all first and second year students. There is an interesting observation about the losers getting in the first round of drinks and a reference to the amount of money that the second years spent on adoption night. A second year PE student explained:

the second-year versus first-year girls' football match is quite a common way of getting to know one another. You either go out drinking or you play sport. It's a different way of doing the same thing because you do end up getting really drunk. (Interview with second year PE student, March 2006).

Sport is an important way for PE students to bond with one another, "a lot of the guys went down to watch the girls' football and then the girls stayed on to watch the

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<sup>54</sup> This was the series of half day visits to primary schools as part of the students' preparation for placement.

<sup>55</sup> Whilst it would be politically correct to refer to students as either men or women, the students themselves use the terms girls and boys or guys and gals and this convention is followed.

guys' rugby, but again it's just an excuse to get drunk." (Interview with second year PE student, March 2006) The online discussions about the various sporting events suggest a strong sense of unity within the four years of the B.Ed. PE course. The banter is friendly, crosses year groups, and includes sporting rivalry between the four 'houses'<sup>56</sup> and between the boys and girls. Boys get to play netball and girls get to play football. There is a very strong sense of 'who we are', and in this case 'we' are first year PE students being socialised into the wider culture of second, third and fourth year student life and also into the role of PE teacher.

### 3.5 Hanging about on campus

During the day, when they do not have classes, PE students just hang about. Because he lives at home Douglas goes to the third floor of the library to study or sometimes to the reception area of St Leonard's Land where there are seats with cushions, "we call them the comfy seats and we just sit there and do our work because you can talk there and it's quite good." (Interview, January 2006) Some of the gaps between classes are quite long, "so we go down to Chapters restaurant<sup>57</sup> and just sit there and talk and do work." (Interview, January 2006) PE students do not mix much with students from other parts of the University and do not venture far from the Holyrood campus, rarely going to the main library in George Square. On specified days and times the third floor of the Moray House library is available for first and second year students to engage in work-related group discussion. This is so that study groups can prepare for their PBL presentations. However, PE students also use this part of the library as an unofficial backstage social space and as early as the second week of semester one first year students had learned that this was the place to organise their football team.

Most library users are individuals, library use normally being a solitary activity. However, PE students often go to the library in groups and there is a long history of

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<sup>56</sup> Groups A, B, C and D appear to resemble a secondary school house system.

<sup>57</sup> The refectory.

'inappropriate' behaviour in the library by PE students. In November 2004 a student complained about the noise on the third and fourth floors of the library:

I am a third-year student and believe the problem has got steadily worse as time has passed. The majority of the students are talking, shouting to each other or are on their mobile phones. It really is a disgrace that something cannot be done about this. (Email to the librarian, 9/11/04)

Later in the same academic year (March 2005) the Vice Dean, following a similar complaint from the librarian, visited the third floor of the library where he observed:

Three groups of female second year PE students totaling 15 in all (who) were passing the time waiting for the next lecture at 3 p.m. They were drinking, eating, sitting on tables or had their feet on the tables and some were observed using mobile phones. They were definitely not working. Noise levels were quite high. (Email from Vice Dean, March 2005)

The following week the Vice Dean returned to observe the third floor of the library on CCTV and reported that whilst some students appeared to be working at a group task others were sitting or standing in groups around computers and did not appear to be working. Food and drink was visible and students were sitting on tables or had their feet up on chairs. He presumed they were PE students because some were in shorts and all were wearing tracksuit and trainers. This is an interesting observation and reflects the institutional stereotype of PE students. They were "standing in groups around computers (and they) did not appear to be working." (Email from Vice Dean) The three groups of students were quite likely to have been 'study groups' on the Education course, although they were not manifesting conventional signs of 'working'. There are different notions of what constitutes 'working' and as one senior academic, who observed the library space on CCTV, wrote, "it seemed to me that even though there was no overt disruption the space was being used inappropriately to eat, to socialise and to laze around." (Email from a senior academic, October 2006) At the beginning of academic year 2006/07 the librarian once again complained to the Dean:

The behaviour of many School of Education students has been a matter of serious concern annually since at least 2001. Now, two days into the first semester it has arisen again. A large number of students (from what I could pick up, second year PE students) went straight from a lecture to the

takeaway shop in the Canongate, and then, with a large quantity of food and drinks, (went) straight from there to the library where they deposited themselves on floor three. I was outside the building when this happened, so I know where they came from and I know where they were going and when I came back I could see where they were. (Email from the librarian, September 2006)

It is significant that the librarian dates the start of the incidents from 2001 because that was when PE staff and students moved from the Cramond campus to the Holyrood campus and began using the Holyrood library. This whole issue reinforces a stereotypical perception of PE students who use the library not for academic study but for larking about in shorts and T shirts. Are the PE students unconsciously trying to impose a PE value system on the University? One of the PE lecturers told me:

We've been trying to change the stereotype (of PE students) but without losing our identity. We're really trying hard but look what happens, noise in the library. We didn't have this problem at Cramond and the reason was that the librarians knew the students by name. The problem here is they don't know them by name. On the Cramond campus the librarian would phone a member of staff and tell them about a particular student if they were causing a problem. In the old days students that caused problems were sorted out, but on the quiet. At one point the PE staff went down on a rota basis to patrol the library in our lunch hour. (Interview with PE lecturer, March 2006)

The use of the library as a lunchtime social space has a long history and in the 1990's it was common for academic staff to monitor the Cramond library at lunch times. Hanging around on campus, when you are a member of a large and active social group, poses problems. Where is the best place to meet? This is not a problem for students but creates problems for the University and whilst the PE staff try to control the students they also support them, "I think that part of the problem in the library comes partly because there is no alternative place for them to meet but, having said that, some of the behaviour is just indefensible." (Interview with PE lecturer, March 2006)

### **3.6 A strong self belief**

First year PE students have a strong self-belief. They think they have more fun than primary students and that they go out more. Primary students are perceived by PE

students as 'sort of posh' and not wanting to integrate with PE students. However, a second year PE student's perception of primary students is that they are out partying and having a good time just like PE students. Whilst primary students appear to work harder than PE students she thinks this is really just a front and that PE students work just as hard but they just do different things in different places. Susie thinks PE students have a chip on their shoulder:

PE students think that they do one of the toughest jobs ever and that they are superior to every other teacher in every possible way. They think PE teachers have a better relationship with the kids and that physical education is really important whilst primary teaching isn't all that important. (Interview with second year PE student, March 2006)

Susie has a couple of friends on the primary course and to her it seems tough work, "but everyone on the PE course thinks that primary is the easy option, and that's rubbish." (Interview, March 2006) She believes that PE students think that they're pretty good at it and don't really have to put in a lot of effort, "I think it's pretty arrogant, thinking that they are better, when they're not. I think primary students get a hard time of it from PE students." (Interview, March 2006) This is an interesting insight from a member of the PE culture. Susie was nearing the end of her second year and was giving a perspective that also drew on her experience of talking with primary students.

### **3.7 A skiing weekend at Kingussie (February 2006)**

The annual second year skiing trip is an important bonding experience. The four groups, A, B, C and D that were formed at the beginning of the first year still appear to be powerful friendship groups. Speaking about group A Susie said:

Without a doubt I think if I hadn't been in a group and just left to my own devices I would have really struggled. If you're on a night out and your group is there you can go and speak to them and if you need help you get somebody in your group because they're doing the same thing. It is without a doubt fantastic. (Interview, March 2006)

When Susie went on the skiing trip there was just one other person from her group

(group A) and Susie was:

completely out of my comfort zone because I didn't know group D because we don't spend any time with them. We are in the lecture (together) but you don't really get to speak to them. At the hostel there were six girls sharing a room and it was really nice to spend time with them and to get to know other people. (Interview, March 2006)

Five people posted sets of images from the skiing trip. Arthur posted nine images of individual guys on the ski slope posing for the camera and similar group shots in the pub. The message he sent with his images read:

For the lads who were on the trip, three simple words ring clear ...  
 RIDE SALLY RIDE!  
 I'm gonna make it a life mission to find out that guy's name,  
 Kingussie's most entertaining attraction!  
 Quote from the man (or whatever he was) himself, "sorry guys I've got the  
 dancing bug!" – Absolutely LEG – END!  
 Keep the dream alive!  
 (Email, 6/3/06)



*Picture 5.7 Arthur's images of the skiing weekend*

Martin posted 17 images, mostly taken in the pub. The overall impression is of a group of guys and girls having a really good time and posing, with plenty of smiles, for the camera. This is a group of people that clearly knew one another very well and enjoyed one another's company.



Picture 5.8 *Martin's images of the skiing weekend*

Martin wrote:

Just wanted to say a BIG thanks to everyone who went away this weekend it was amazing. I've put a couple of pics on here (cheers Mikey, legendary mate!!) hope you all enjoy them and feel free to put more on asap!! Making pyramids in front of 'Creativity', Barry almost killing himself on the bench, PAM's !!!! Get ya PAMS oot!, Amy falling off the roundabout, Tina being abused by a toy horse, Steph queuing for the juke box, ya cud go on and on!! Quality weekend! Hope you all enjoyed it!! Check out the photos n get more on here asap. (Email, 21/3/06)

Mike's images comprise group scenes in the pub and laddish behaviour in the street. Creativity is a gift shop and Pam's is a coffee shop. The roundabout was in a children's swing park that you pass on the way back from the pub to the hostel. Strong images of male group bonding, though the girls were there too.



Picture 5.9 *Mike's images of the skiing weekend 1*



*Picture 5.10 Mike's images of the skiing weekend 2*

Jill's images showed a female perspective on the weekend. Groups of girls this time and taken in the hostel. Bonding took place in the dormitories and in the lounge and whilst preparing meals in the kitchen. Jill reminds us that they also went skiing with some group images of everyone dressed for the ski slopes.



*Picture 5.11 Jill's images of the skiing weekend 1*



*Picture 5.12 Jill's images of the skiing weekend 2*

#### **4. Primary students**

Most interaction between primary students is on the official front stage and official back stage, there being no induction comparable to adoption night and no organised social activities apart from the Glenmore Lodge field trip in April. Donna (primary) knows four people from Livingston who are doing the PE course and:

they seem to know everybody. Everyone on the PE course knows everybody, even someone from Kirkcaldy. With the amount of people on the course it's funny that they all seem to know each other. (Interview, January 2006)

This observation is a reflection on the absence of extensive friendship networks within the primary course. The induction of primary students into their new culture is mainly on the official front stage, at lectures, seminars, workshops and on the official backstage where they meet in their study groups and prepare for presentations and seminars. 'Group study time' is part of the Education course schedule and primary students perceive this as a significant part of their timetable. PE students' study groups are the same groups that go on PE nights out and play football together whereas primary study groups meet solely for the purpose of study, though they might have a coffee together. There is little formal or informal contact between first year and second year primary students.

The field trip to Glenmore Lodge was a powerful setting for group socialisation, though this takes place at the end of their first year at university rather than at the

beginning. This was an opportunity for backstage activities because it was not possible to go home at the end of the day and in the evenings most students met in the bar where moderate drinking was allowed though, unlike the PE students' visit to Kingussie, the staff went to the bar with them. The staff appear to be acting in loco parentis. One of the primary education lecturers described a 'problem' on a previous field trip that had involved liaisons between some of the primary girls and some soldiers in an adjacent hostel. A couple of the mature students were concerned about this and asked him to intervene in some way. He did intervene by having a word with the officer in charge of the soldiers who were warned to leave the girls alone! Situations like this do not happen often and this was a memorable event, though there was a similar 'problem' with another cohort when the girls were taken by minibus to a ceilidh in a local village, but when the staff rounded up the girls at 11.00 pm to take them back to the hostel the local men objected. (Field notes, May 2006) The staff expressed surprise that the students did not seem to know one another prior to the field trip and had to run a 'getting to know you' session. B.Ed. primary students do not have many opportunities to establish a wide range of friendships during the first year at the University and this may be because so many of them live at home, either with mum and dad or with husbands and children. There are no formal or informal social events for primary students, they do not use FirstClass for social networking, there is no socialisation by second, third and fourth year students and no evidence of group participation in sport or recreation activities.

#### 4.1 Going out

Primary students do not go clubbing and pubbing in an organised way. Helen has been to Teviot<sup>58</sup> because she has her student card but normally she likes to have a coffee and maybe go to the cinema with either her new university friends or her old friends from school. Helen sees 'the people from the University' quite a lot, "I saw people at the weekend and we went shopping. I have quite a social life but I don't base it at all on what the University has to offer." There has not been much of a change in what Heather does in her social time, "I thought it would change and it

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<sup>58</sup> Teviot is the student association bar, club and social centre.

might change when I turn 18.” (Interview, January 2006) Deirdre says she is not a club or pub kind of person, “I don't drink or anything like that so we go horse riding and if it's nice weather we go down to Princes Street to sit in the gardens. I'm not very keen on going out at night.” (Interview, February 2006) Deirdre has been horse riding all her life and has found someone in her study group who also goes riding and who has her own horses. On Fridays Deirdre and her study group normally go to Chapters<sup>59</sup> for half an hour for coffee. Donna says that she only meets with other people on the B.Ed. (primary) course though she sometimes has coffee with a couple of friends from her secondary school who are studying medicine. However, they are usually in the library in Bristo Square, a fifteen minute walk from the Holyrood campus, “and if you've had a heavy day you can't be bothered walking and you just want to go home.” (Interview, January 2006)

Deirdre was interviewed a year later when she was well into her second year at the University. She told me that she still lived at home and anticipated doing so for the remainder of her course. She still has the same boyfriend who is a second year student at a local FE College and is still friends with the three people on her course that she knew at primary school. So for Deirdre it's horses, church, parents, local friends and a local boyfriend.

## 4.2 Hanging about on campus

Primary students don't hang about on campus very much and PE students wondered where they went, “nobody really knows where they go between their lectures. I think they all go home.” (Interview with PE student, January 2006) For primary students life on campus is limited to the official front stage where they meet PE students in Education One workshops. Deirdre finds mixing with the PE people quite difficult. Apart from study group meetings primary students do not have a base at the University and normally go home. For most primary students going home means returning to the parental home rather than to a flat in Edinburgh. If they stay at the University between classes they tend to stay on the Holyrood campus. Deirdre has only been to the main library in George Square once because, “everything is

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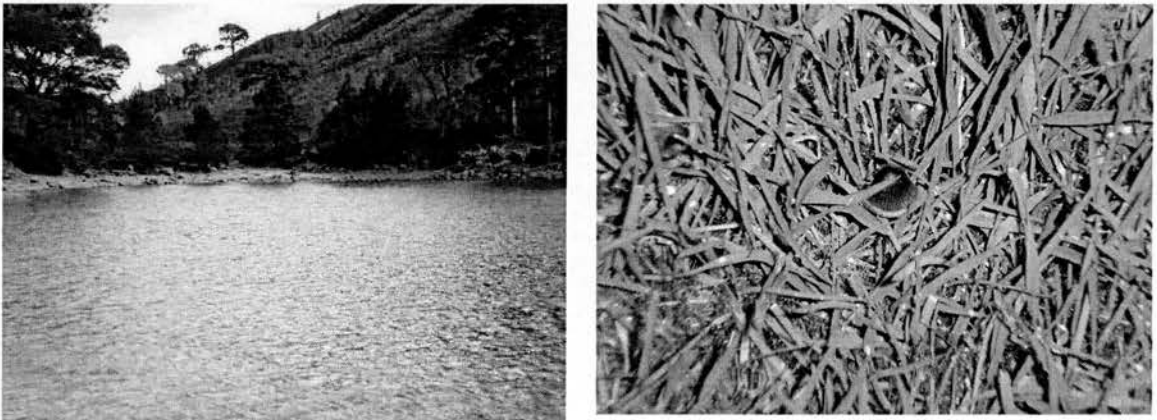
<sup>59</sup> The refectory.

provided down here.” (Interview, February 2006) She does not think many people have been to George Square<sup>60</sup> and meets with her study group about once a week. Donna explained that, “we have quite a bit of free time at Uni and we normally prepare for our presentations then. We also sit and have a coffee and have a bit of a giggle.” (Interview, January 2006) Helen’s day was similar:

We meet up outside as well as in the classes. We normally meet in the library or sometimes we go for coffee but generally it's in the library because we have access to computers and stuff that you need for research and everything. (Interview, January 2006)

#### 4.3 Primary students’ images of Glenmore Lodge (May 2006)

On the field trip students were invited to provide a set of five images that represented their feelings about what it was like at Glenmore Lodge. The remit asked for images about their feelings and their personal experience but most images were of the scenery. The images of the students are quite soft and unthreatening, quite gentle compared with the images posted by PE students. Kate submitted no images of people, just toadstools, trees and the loch. This was an environmental studies field trip and her images reflected the manifest function of the field trip but not the latent function. There is no notion that socialising with other students has any importance.



*Picture 5.13 Kate’s images of the environmental studies field week*

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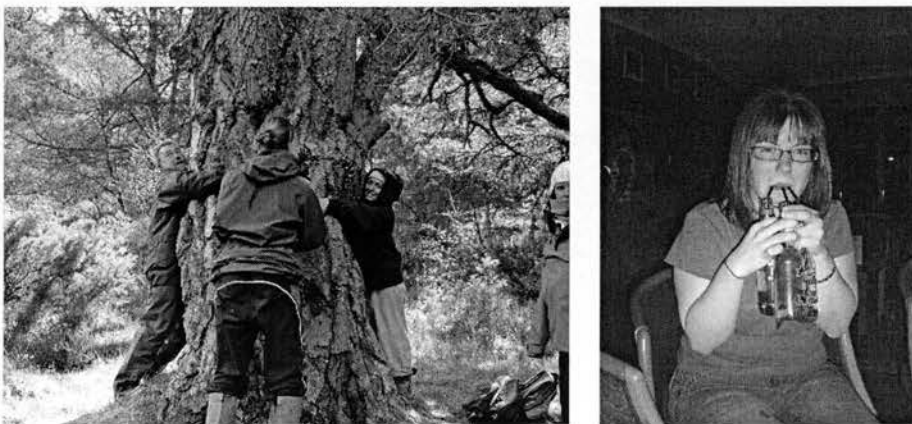
<sup>60</sup> The main library and student association is at George Square.

John had two images of people, the others being of a sunset and a robin. John's group images are quite unlike the images of PE students on the ski trip that had a group dynamic independent of the manifest function of the field trip. PE students went to pubs together and photographed themselves larking about in the street after the pub had closed. They are also a mixed sex group that has a different dynamic from the single sex primary group. John was the only man on this field trip.



*Picture 5.14 John's images of the environmental studies field week*

Mandy had two images (below) with people in them, hugging a tree and one 'amusing' image. This was quite unusual, but quite unlike the PE students' human pyramid in Kingussie. This is almost a sad image. Is this the most fun we can have when spending four nights together in a hostel?



*Picture 5.15 Mandy's images of the environmental studies field week*

Four out of five of Sheila's images were about people. There is the group inside, the group outside, finding a newt and dancing round a tree as part of a drama activity.



*Picture 5.16 Sheila's images of the environmental studies field week*

Christine, who had been to Glenmore Lodge the week before (there are three cohorts) sent the following message to the Environmental Studies conference:

Take lots of money for the bar cos they charge you if you use your card and take some nice clothes (there are Olympic men in the bar). You'll need warm jammies, slippers for sore feet at night, a swimsuit and wellies for walking in rivers.

A word of warning say goodbye to our loved ones cos the phone signal's basically none. Also remember to do your introduction to your log book before you go as most of our group had finished placement and didn't have time. There is a lot to do at night and sitting writing log books for hours and hours is not so nice. I've added some of our piccies just to get you in the mood, have a grate time. We certainly did. (Email to Environmental studies conference, May 2006)



*Picture 5.17 Christine's images of the environmental studies field week*

Christine's message is about the work to be done and whilst the field trip was fun it still sounds like a school trip organised by teachers. This was one of only two messages about the field trip sent to a primary conference, the other being a recipe for a tray bake. Messages from primary students are quite different from those sent by PE students and reflect the different cultures.

#### **4.4 Mature students on the primary course**

Students' reaction to the presence of mature students on the primary course [there are none on the PE course] is mixed. Some like having them on the course but others find that they tend to dominate discussion and violate the norms of behaviour in lectures and workshops. Lorraine was very positive about mature students, "it was mature students and us. I enjoyed the Education workshops because I got close to the mature students." (Interview, January 2006) Helen was less positive:

Some of the mature students are not very friendly, they look at us as if we are aliens, like 'I'm not talking to you, you're much younger than me and I don't want to know you'. They usually sit at the front and answer the questions before the young people. (Interview with primary student, January 2006)

To Helen, asking or answering questions in a lecture is a norm violation. Mature students do tend to ask questions in lectures and get annoyed if people behave inappropriately in seminars or workshops. At the end of an Education lecture (January 2007) a group of mature students accosted the lecturer to ask why he had

not stopped the PE students in the back row from talking. Annette, an 18 year old primary student, experienced major problems with a mature student in her study group:

She intimidates me intensely which has lowered my self esteem to almost non-existence, I find it hard to attend our study sessions because I do not wish to spend an hour in depression. She treats me as a less able person and 99.9% of our presentations consist of what she wants to do and her opinions. (Email from first year student, February 2007)

The mature student in question has two children, has worked with children as a nursery assistant and is very confident. She had qualified for entry to the B.Ed. (primary) course by taking an access course<sup>61</sup> at a local FE college which Annette compared disparagingly with her own entry qualifications. Students joining the course straight from school are at a very early stage of occupational socialisation whereas the mature student with life experience and knowledge of young children as a parent or as a nursery assistant may be more advanced in their occupational socialisation. A conversation with two mature students, Alice and Kelly, supports this notion. Kelly had spent several years as a nursery nurse and was relatively confident about her role as teacher. The role of teacher was very important to them and they were very analytical about the process of becoming a teacher. Kelly was “really jealous” of the class teacher in her placement school, “because I so much want to be like her.” (Field notes, May 2006) Kelly’s personal aspiration to achieve professional status was very high.

## 5. Discussion

The literature suggests that formal teacher education has little impact on the cumulative effects of anticipatory socialization (Lortie, 1975, NCRTE, 1988, Hansen, 1995, Mardle and Walker, 1980, Wideen et al., 1998). However, it is on the official and unofficial backstage that students spend most of their time and where

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<sup>61</sup> Mature students normally have non standard entry qualifications. By successfully completing an access course they are guaranteed a place on the B.Ed. (primary) course.

socialisation and opportunities for the acquisition of social capital occur. Sinclair (1997) argues that the amount of time spent within the medical school, which he describes as a conceptually bounded and cognitively limited professional organization, is of major significance in the socialisation of medical students. Primary and PE students are socialised into their future occupational role both prior to the course and during the course itself. Most primary students live at home with mum and dad whilst nearly all PE students stay in flats and this has a significant effect on the socialisation process. Adoption night and the family system play an important role in the socialisation of PE students, as does the role of competitive sport and PE nights out.

PE students have a strong base for the creation and acquisition of social capital and the development of their perspectives on teachers and teaching. However, it is an inward looking culture that does not integrate with the rest of the University. PE students have a reputation for drinking and clubbing as a group and this culture is supported by the 'family system'. From an early stage they are socialized into the role of secondary school PE teacher. Primary students are quite different, their main social links being within their home community. A stereotypical primary student is 18 years of age, has lived all her life in her home town with her parents, commutes on a daily basis to the University, returns home at the earliest opportunity each day, has a lifetime ambition of getting a job in a primary school in her home town and possibly staying with the same boyfriend (also from her home town). Anticipatory socialisation and an ideology of caring (Goldstein and Lake, 2000) is a powerful influence on primary students' perceptions of teachers and teaching. The official and unofficial backstage provides an important site for socialisation into the dominant culture and for the development of students' perspectives on teachers and teaching. Table 5.18 summarises the main findings of this chapter.

Event/activity	Observation/finding
PE students live in flats, primary students at home	This is significant as, unlike primary students, PE students have the opportunity to socialise backstage. PE outsiders give an insight into the PE culture which they do not take for granted.
The social networks	A strong PE network but a weak primary network. PE students used FirstClass for social networking, unlike primary students. These are two separate cultures that only meet on the front stage. Students socialise within their own courses and do not integrate with the University as a whole.
PE students have a strong self belief	PE students have created a strong group identity, unlike primary students. It is significant that PE is a mixed sex group and maybe male dominated – unlike primary students.
Language used on the PE conference	Language helps to create a separate and distinct culture and is tribal in nature including taunts about sporting prowess.
Work or fun?	Primary student focus on work whilst PE students talk about going out and having fun. Mature primary students are task oriented and maybe influence the primary culture.
The lay world	Primary students are more influenced by the lay world of parents and home.
PE nights out	These are frequent, ‘compulsory’ and often ‘formal’ occasions with kilts and cocktail dresses, group bonding being celebrated with shared images. They often lead to hangovers on Education days.
The family system and adoption night	This links all four years of the course and transmits the group culture. Adoption night is part of the family system, a rite of passage and the beginning of the socialisation process.
Drink and drinking games	This is part of the culture that is created by PE students. Primary students do not belong to a drinking culture – they tend to drink coffee.
Sport (individual) PE students	Sport as an individual activity runs parallel to the course and is source of individual prestige; boxing or playing rugby for Scotland; being Scotland’s number 2 squash player.
Sport tournaments PE students	A strong bonding activity linking year groups, the four houses and boys and girls. They often link with placement dates.
Hanging about (in groups) on campus..	PE students do this and they are very obvious in their PE uniforms. In many ways they are behaving quite normally for their age but their behaviour does not conform to institutional expectations. Primary students are conformist and use the time they are on campus to work in their ‘study groups’.
Skiing and Glenmore Lodge	The PE weekend was fun, bonding and independent of staff whereas the primary field trip was work focussed with staff in loco parentis. Images of the events were quite different.

*Table 5.18 The hidden curriculum of the back stage*

The official and unofficial backstage provides an important site for socialisation into the dominant culture and for the development of students' perspectives on teachers and teaching. However, as was discussed in chapter 2, it can be difficult to distinguish backstage from off stage as it depends both on the context and on the actor's definition of the situation. The Glenmore Lodge field trip was both front stage performance for the primary students and a back stage preparation for life back at the university. For PE students, most of whom stay in halls of residence, there are few opportunities for being off stage. Adoption night and the other PE events described in this chapter can also be seen as front stage performances in which the presentation of self is paramount.

## Chapter 6 Perspectives on teaching

### 1. Introduction

For the final four weeks of the academic year first year primary students and first year PE students have a school based placement in a primary school, PE students anticipating the placement by spending five half days observing in primary schools. Primary students do not have observation days prior to the placement although this will be introduced in the revised programme in 2009/2010. Both PE and primary students felt reasonably confident about the forthcoming placement, a confidence that they attributed to various parts of their pre service courses though, as will be seen later in this chapter, some parts were considered to be more relevant than others. PE students' placements in years two, three and four will be in secondary schools whilst primary students' placements in subsequent years will be in primary schools and in a nursery class. This chapter compares and contrasts first year PE students' and primary students' views of teaching, their role as a teacher and the relationship between their university courses and the realities of teaching.

Data comprised field notes, interviews with four second year students (March 2006) an open-ended evaluative questionnaire about the Education course (March 2006 and March 2007), a piece of reflective writing about the characteristics of 'a good teacher' (PDP5, March 2006 and May 2007), the relationship between the university courses and students' experiences of teaching whilst on placement (PDP6, May 2007) and students' reflections on their best experience of teaching (PDP6, May 2005). In the analysis of students' views of the characteristics of a good teacher, it is important to note that data from PDP5 and PDP6 come from different cohorts and that differences between PDP5 (before placement) and PDP6 (after placement) reflect the beliefs of students at two stages in their professional development as reported by first year students in March 2006 and May 2007. The data does not reflect changes in individuals' opinions. There is no reason to believe that students' perspectives vary significantly between cohorts.

Data source	Primary			PE		
	Responses	%	N=	Responses	%	N=
Questionnaire – March 2006	101	71	143	58	54	108
Questionnaire – March 2007	96	62	155	64	59	108
PDP6, May 2005, 'My best experience of teaching'	91	59	153	51	50	101
PDP5, March 2006, 'The characteristics of a good teacher ...'	113	79	143	84	78	108
PDP6 - May 2007 'The characteristics of a good teacher ...', 'the relevance of university courses'	99	64	155	56	52	108

*Table 6.1 Responses to evaluative questionnaires, PDP5 and PDP6*

Students were asked to write about the characteristics of a good teacher both prior to placement (PDP5, March 2006) and after placement (PDP6, May 2007). The question about the characteristics of a good teacher was not asked in PDP6 in 2006 or in PDP5 in 2007 because, as was explained in chapter 3, the PDP tasks were part of the Education course and were not designed to be a data gathering device. The analytical process involved the following stages:

1. Prior to the analysis of students' PDP entries interviews had been conducted with four second year students (March 2006) in which they reflected on both their first year and second year placements. This provided an insight into students' perceptions of placement;
2. Each individual PDP was downloaded from the conference to a word file, each piece of writing being labelled as coming from either a PE or a primary student;
3. A paper copy of the data was read and annotated. Themes, in the form of key words, gradually emerged from the data;
4. Data was loaded onto Atlas Ti and 'auto search' was used to find key words/concepts that had been identified at stage 3;
5. An Atlas Ti 'report' was created for each of the key words/concepts.
6. Each 'report' was printed and carefully read for further analysis;
7. The number of times each keyword was used by PE students and primary students was noted, ensuring that double counting was eliminated and that all variations of the word were included (e.g. patient, patience and patiently) and that the context was the same (e.g. the teacher being patient rather than the pupil);
8. The number of students using each keyword in PDP5 and PDP6 was noted and percentages calculated. This is a crude indicator and the percentages are simply indicative of a trend.

One of the research questions asked whether the developing perspectives of B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary) students differ from one another. My expectation was that, because of the different socialisation experiences and different occupational aspirations, PE students and primary students would have different views about teachers and teaching. However, despite their different experiences on the front stage and back stage of the university both groups of students shared common perceptions of teachers and teaching. Both groups of students felt that the practical aspects of their curriculum courses had been more relevant to placement than the Education course, a finding that confirms the main findings of the literature (Wendt et al., 1981, Wideen et al., 1998, Eisenhart et al., 1991, Lawson, 1993, Farrell et al., 2004). Christie (2003) found that PGDE (Primary) and PGDE (Secondary) students in Scotland perceived subject departments and curricular programmes to be more relevant than 'Professional Studies'. Professional Studies is one of the three components of all ITE programmes in Scotland, the Education courses being equivalent to Professional Studies. Some aspects of the Education courses were felt to be relevant although these were aspects of the course that self evidently related to placement. The dichotomy between theory and practice is discussed further in chapter 7.

PDP6 asked students to read their PDP5 entry again, the one that asked what kind of teacher they would like to be, and to say whether their views had changed since they wrote it. Overwhelmingly, both PE and primary students said that their views had not changed.

Since completing placement my views haven't changed really, if anything they have been backed up even more by the experience that I have had on placement. (PE student)

My views have not be changed a great deal but have been reinforced by the experience. (Primary student)

The experience of placement appears to have reinforced students' beliefs about teachers and teaching, beliefs that had been influenced by anticipatory socialisation whilst a pupil at school, by the content of their course (front stage) and by socialisation by peers on the back stage of university life.

Malderez et al (2007) study of student teachers' accounts of their motivations for entering initial teacher education, and their preoccupations and expectations of teaching, identified four themes; teacher identity, relationships, the relevance of the students' course to the realities of teaching and the role of emotion in the process of becoming a teacher. The data from the PDPs, course evaluations, interviews and field notes resonate with Malderez' themes and, whilst the categorisations of the PDP data are necessarily arbitrary, Malderez' themes are used as a framework for the following analysis. Words used by students in their PDPs that were associated with 'teacher identity' were; knowledge, planning, behaviour, respect, management, being organised, control, discipline, firm but fair and flexible. Words that were associated with 'relationships' were, fun, approachable, patient, encouraging, relationship, enthusiasm, confident, interesting, humour and role model.

Malderez et al describe 'teacher identity' as a sense of self as teacher, and suggests that many students felt the need 'to change into a teacher'. To do this you require knowledge of your subject, the ability to control your class (behaviour, management, control, discipline, being firm but fair) and an overview of what you are doing (planning and being organised). 'Relationships' refers to the teachers' relationship with children, being a teacher who was 'fun' and approachable, someone who was liked by the children, whose lessons were interesting and who was patient and encouraging. The analysis suggests a tension between 'teacher identity' and 'relationships' that students attempted to resolve during placement.

## 2. Teacher identity

Table 6.2 outlines the main findings in relation to teacher identify.

Key words	PE				Primary			
	Before placement		After placement		Before placement		After placement	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Knowledge	41	49	23	41	39	35	28	28
Planning	14	17	14	25	16	14	34	34
Behaviour	11	13	15	27	10	9	59	59
Respect	37	45	21	38	31	27	30	30
Management	2	2	12	21	7	6	48	48
Being organised	13	16	17	30	19	17	28	28
Control	18	22	22	39	8	7	26	26
Discipline	3	4	16	29	3	3	11	11
Control or discipline	20	24	31	55	11	10	34	34
Firm but fair	11	13	1	2	15	13	28	28
Flexible	2	2	5	9	4	2	14	14
TOTAL	83		56		113		99	

Table 6.2 The theme of 'teacher identity'

Establishing teacher identity was equally important to PE and primary students who identified broadly similar characteristics although PE students tended to emphasise 'knowledge', 'respect' and 'control' more than primary students. Prior to placement few primary or PE students mentioned 'management'.

Key word	% PE students (N=83)	% Primary students (N=113)
Knowledge	49	35
Respect	45	27
Behaviour	13	9
Management	2	6
Control or discipline	24	10
Firm but fair	13	13
Planning	17	14
Being organised	16	17
Flexible	2	2

Table 6.3 Teacher identify –PE and primary students prior to placement (percentages)

'Knowledge' is part of teacher identity<sup>62</sup> because it relates to the transmission of knowledge, and students' realisation that the knowledge gained from their courses has helped to prepare them for teaching. Whilst students acknowledged that teaching is not just about passing on knowledge they believed that a teacher does need a good knowledge of their subject (see appendix 2). After placement students still value 'knowledge' and 'respect' but there is an increased emphasis on behaviour management, control and discipline. Primary students using the term 'behaviour management' and PE students 'control' or 'discipline'. 'Firm but fair', a term used by primary students, suggests a particular approach to behaviour management that links with 'relationships'.

Key word	% PE students (N=56)	% Primary students (N=99)
Knowledge	41	28
Respect	38	30
Behaviour	27	59
Management	21	48
Control or discipline	55	34
Firm but fair	2	28
Planning	25	34
Being organised	30	28
Flexible	9	14

*Table 6.4 Teacher identify –PE and primary students after placement (percentages)*

All the words associated with teacher identity refer to students' attempts to adopt the role of teacher. The focus on planning, behaviour, management, control, and discipline suggests that students were at the 'survival' stage of their professional development, their focus being on themselves rather than on the learners. Templin (1979) argued that at the survival stage classroom control becomes a dominant concern when students who previously had a 'humanistic' ideology become more custodial.

<sup>62</sup> Knowledge was mentioned by 49% of PE students and 35% of primary students prior to placement though slightly less after placement.

Malderez et al (2007) suggest that during the role shift from being a non-teacher to being the teacher, students become preoccupied with the notion of teacher identity and the need for the transformation of self in order to change into a teacher. A focus on self is a stage to be passed through on the way to a focus on pupil learning. Fuller and Bown's (1975) model suggests that student teachers progress through three stages, concerns about self (survival), concerns about task (lesson plans) and concerns about impact (learning). Conway and Clark (2003) suggest that the initial focus on self is a necessary and valuable stage in the construction of a professional self.

## 2.1 Behaviour management

A teacher needs to be able to control their class. Before placement very few students mentioned behaviour management when describing the characteristics of a good teacher though a quarter of PE students mentioned control or discipline (see table 6.3). PE students and primary students had a slightly different emphasis on behaviour management though both groups acknowledged its importance. After placement behaviour management became a major concern (see table 6.4) and was described as 'extremely draining' and many primary students said they wanted to develop their behaviour management skills, as this was a much larger part of the placement experience than they had anticipated, "behaviour management was the biggest challenge for me but as this was also challenging for the class teacher I tried not to let it demotivate me." (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) Some students reported that, in their school, behaviour was not an issue, and one primary student noted that, because of this, when she is next on placement she would have to work harder at implementing sanctions and punishments. A positive aspect of this was that, "I found that not having to worry about the behaviour of the class allowed me to focus on the content of the lesson, and (this) allowed me to experiment with different types of media, activities and types (of teaching)." (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

After placement PE students also acknowledged the importance of behaviour management but 'being strict' was perceived as a necessary evil by PE students, "I would like to be ... a fun teacher that has the respect of the pupils without being too

strict.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) This is an interesting qualification ... without being too strict. Another PE student recalls a day when, “I had to take a much stricter stance with them in order that they would pay attention and listen to instruction.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) Whilst most PE students recognised the need for class control they still wanted a good relationship with the pupils, and this is a tension for both PE and primary students. “You must let the pupils know where the line is and if they cross the line they will obviously be disciplined but I don’t feel (that) being overly strict is a good thing as it affects the learning environment.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) In this they were not dissimilar to primary students, “I ... want to develop my behaviour management strategies and techniques ... to ensure that I use positive behaviour management before looking at any sanctions or punishments.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) Behaviour management is an important aspect of a teacher’s identity, but it is difficult to learn how to effectively manage behaviour. A PE student observed that he was, “being strict with them when there was actually no need to be, this is because the class were listening to what I was saying and were not needing to be kept quiet and well behaved because they were doing what I wanted them to do.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) Two kinds of primary teacher were identified by PE students, overly strict teachers and teachers who build a good relationship with their pupils, “one teacher seemed to be very calm, softly spoken and gentle, while the other seemed to be quite regimented and strict.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) There was an implied criticism of a ‘strict’ primary teacher whose class, “seemed to go wild when they entered the gym hall.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007)

For most nineteen year old students, having authority is something of a novelty and both PE and primary students regarded this as an important aspect of the role of a teacher. Having authority is linked to classroom control and, at this stage of their professional development, classroom control cannot be taken for granted. An important issue for students is to ensure that the pupils know that they are the teacher, and a figure of authority, and that they have to do what the teacher asks. Students believe that it is important to set boundaries so that the children know their limits. The aim was to establish a relationship with the children that acknowledged

the reality of the power relations between the teacher and the children. Once a student has established her authority, “... the classroom (can) be a fantastic place as they know you are their friend, (you) can have a laugh with them, but they know when to stop.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) Another primary student suggested that there had been an important change in her perception of the role of the teacher, “placement has shown me that in order to have fun with the children they still need to respect you and understand that you are a teacher.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) The key ideas here are ‘respect’ and ‘understand that you are a teacher’. The student is acknowledging her need to be recognised as the teacher, as the adult, as the professional and the curriculum expert. What is happening here is the transformation of self into the role of a teacher. McNamara et al (2002) make a similar point about the dual role of ‘student’ and ‘teacher’, most students in their study saying that it was the children who made them feel like a teacher.

After placement most students recognised that they needed a professional relationship with the children and being respected as a teacher was regarded as essential, “so that the teacher’s instructions are listened to.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) However, getting the children’s respect was a challenge for some students, “I realised very quickly how hard it was going to be to get the respect of the children.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) ‘Respect’ is a word used to denote authority and the desire for respect reflects students’ anxiety on their first teaching placement. Respect was considered something to be earned, “to earn this respect I think it is important to be firm but yet fair.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) It is also about self esteem, “if you do not believe in, or respect, yourself then your students are not going to either and they may misbehave as a result.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) One PE student explained that, “since I was too easy on the children, some of them lost respect for me and this affected their learning.” (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) Primary students thought along similar lines:

A good teacher should not only be liked, but respected too. (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

A teacher should be seen as an approachable and kind person, (but) at the same time the children must show them respect. However, the teacher must

earn this respect just as it is important for the children to earn their respect. (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

Placement was an eye opener for many students as they realised that they were not there to be the children's friend but to be a teacher, "some children may have days where they will not like you because of this." (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

## 2.2 Planning

Showing students how to write effective lesson plans is a fundamental aspect of initial teacher education and by the end of the placement students' belief in the importance of organisation and planning had increased. Prior to placement 17% of PE students mention planning but 25% after placement; 14% of primary students mention planning prior to placement but 34% after placement, "before I started placement I was aware that being organised was important but I didn't realise how crucial it really was." (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) Whilst on placement students began to realise some of the complexities of teaching:

At the start of my placement I was unaware of how well, and how fast, the children worked, but after spending more time with the class I was able to see how fast they worked on different tasks and I was able to plan my lessons around their ability and timing. (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

All students referred to the need to be able to adapt a lesson plan in response to how the class reacted to the lesson, "organisation and planning are important but the ability to think on the spot and adapt is equally important for a good teacher." (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) Primary students also recognised the need to be able to think on your feet and adapt a lesson but noted that, "being able to plan and prepare enjoyable and engaging lesson plans whilst being able to control the classroom climate and the children's behaviour was extremely challenging." (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

For PE students organisation meant planning for a particular lesson whereas for primary students it meant understanding the whole day, "teachers must plan their whole day every day as well as having yearly planners and vast notes on each pupil

and much more.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) PE students were concerned with things like organising the children into different coloured groups at the start of the lesson so that they had greater control of the class. Organisation was seen as particularly important when teaching in a large space, such as a gym hall, when the focus was on getting out equipment that was suitable for the space and for the learning outcomes of the planned lesson. Primary students were also concerned with detail, “little things like having put Blu Tack on the back of the flashcards and having highlighters and paper laid out and ready to hand out makes all the difference when teaching, especially as it calms you down and improves the quality of what is being taught.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) One primary student noted that, although normally she was a very organised person, she found it hard to keep up to date with everything whilst on placement and that she had not realised that being a good teacher would depend so greatly on organisation and preparation, “personal organisation and time-management were characteristics I failed to see the importance of in my previous PDP, the lesson plan is the teacher’s tool not a hindrance.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) The experience of placement provided students with a growing awareness of the complexity of the job.

### 3. Relationships

Malderez et al (2007) identify the importance of relationships with children and with teacher colleagues in the student’s placement school. Prior to placement primary students mentioned relationships slightly more often than PE students, reflecting their whole class role. Prior to placement most students wanted to be a fun and approachable teacher but after placement students focussed slightly less on relationships.

	PE	Primary
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Key words	Before placement		After placement		Before placement		After placement	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Fun	42	51	20	36	55	49	35	35
Approachable	35	42	19	34	42	37	28	28
Patient	9	11	7	13	25	22	26	26
Encouraging	3	4	3	5	9	8	13	13
Relationship	9	11	14	25	8	7	19	19
Enthusiasm	12	14	8	14	14	12	19	19
Confidence	9	11	11	20	11	9	19	19
Interesting	14	17	3	5	23	20	15	15
Humour	4	5	6	11	12	11	18	18
Role model	5	6	4	7	3	3	4	4
TOTAL	83		56		113		99	

Table 6.5 The theme of 'relationships'

PE students believed that children should look forward to doing PE and wanted the children to 'have a laugh', which is not an expression used by primary students. As was discussed in chapter 2, 'fun' is an important aspect of PE students' perception of teaching. Hutchinson (1993) found that applicants for a physical education ITE programme in North America believed that the purposes of physical education were for pupils to have fun and that everyone, if they try hard enough, can perform sport skills successfully. Both primary and PE students advocated 'a fun approach'<sup>63</sup> with 51% of PE students and 49% of primary students mentioning 'fun' prior to placement, although after placement this was modified by the need to maintain classroom control. Students believed that learning can be fun and that teachers should be creative in thinking up fun ways to teach subjects which are seen as boring, "placement has re-enforced my belief in the teacher I wish to be. I still wish to be regarded as a good fun teacher by my pupils." (PE student, PDP6, May 2007)

The focus on self, at its most extreme, was a wish to be 'idolised', "in some ways all teachers should aim to be 'idolised' by children in order to enhance learning." (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) The idea of being 'idolised' resonates with the public perception of 'sporting heroes', such as David Beckham, and the way in which some

<sup>63</sup> See appendix 3 for an analysis of 'fun'.

PE students idolised their own PE teachers when they were pupils at secondary school. (Field notes, March 2007) Mertz and McNeely's (1992) study of students training to be elementary and secondary school teachers found that almost all of them had a teacher that they saw as a role model. B.Ed. (Primary) students' anticipatory socialisation was also based on a fondly remembered primary teacher and many PE students claim a special relationship with their PE teachers. (Interviews with first year PE students, February 2006) A number of PE students represent their country in their sport so that being idolised is not entire fantasy. A student recently (February 2008) asked for an extension for his Education assignment because he had been selected to play rugby for Scotland in the Six Nations under 19 team and another because he was in the Scotland boxing squad.

Whilst the notion of being idolised was only expressed by a minority of PE students the analysis, in chapter 5, of the PE FirstClass conference, suggested a common belief that PE teachers are 'a bit special' and this belief may be associated with their ability in sport. Many Scottish PE teachers have the opportunity to pursue dual careers, teaching whilst playing sport at a high level. Scotland's number two (under 19) squash player was observed on his final placement in a local independent school and his presence appeared to generate considerable kudos within the school. (Field notes, November 2007) The backstage activities of the PE students and the nature of sport supports the PE students' notion of fun. Both primary and PE teachers want to be fun teachers but this is manifested in different ways, primary students focusing on caring, being patient and having fun in a quieter and less obvious way.

Some students experienced problems achieving an appropriate professional relationship with the children. A primary student described how she became the children's friend, which meant that she had a really good relationship with them but they did not treat her with the same respect as their normal class teacher. A PE student described how she, "found it difficult to relate to the younger children and ... their constant need for individual attention made it difficult to control the class as a whole." (PE student, PDP6, May 2007) Students also considered being approachable an important attribute of a good teacher, there being little difference between PE

students and primary students. Most believed that having control over the class was paramount and that being approachable was to be seen in this context:

I still think teachers should be fun and approachable but while also having control over their class. (PE student, PDP6, May 2007)

A good teacher should be approachable and humour is a vital tool in teaching, however, there is a thin line between this and losing discipline with the pupils. (PE student, PDP6, May 2007)

Primary students tended to give more elaborate reasons for being approachable and saw this in the context of learning across the curriculum:

If the pupils are scared of the teacher or they do not appear approachable to the children, then the children will not be getting the best education possible because they will be too scared to ask for help or advice. (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

Being approachable also includes other adults in the school, “a good teacher must be approachable by children and adults whether they are parents, visitors or other staff but they must also be able to stand their ground and be seen as an authoritative figure within the school environment.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) Primary students appear to be more integrated into the ethos of the whole school and more aware of parents and other adults in the school. This reflects their role as a trainee classroom teacher where they are involved in all the minor details of daily classroom life.

Students also believed that a good teacher should to be ‘patient’, primary students considering this a more important attribute than PE students. Being patient meant that you were not to show frustration when a pupil did not learn something as quickly as one wished, “you have to be patient in order to be an effective teacher, some children may take a while to grasp a concept and it is important that you are not impatient with them.” (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007) Being patient also meant persisting and perhaps slowing down the pace of the lesson:

I found that I was repeating myself a lot and this became tiresome but I had to remind myself that I just had to be patient and this also helped the class

because they did not feel under pressure. (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

A teacher must be a very patient person as all children are individuals - they all learn in different ways and at different speeds. (Primary student, PDP6, May 2007)

#### 4. Relevance

Malderez et al (2007) found that student teachers valued the practical and school-based components of their courses but were skeptical of the relevance and value of the more theoretical aspects of course provision. As was discussed in chapter 4, a common reason given by PE students for non attendance at Education lectures was that they were not seen to be relevant, although PE students who had attended the lectures said that they had found some of them to be both interesting and relevant. The main criterion for relevance is the extent to which lectures link with placement and the realities of becoming a teacher. As one PE student said, “The (Education) lectures in semester two were more ‘purposeful’ than semester one.” (Course evaluation, March 2007) This suggests a strategic approach to the course and a perception that the main purpose of lectures and seminars was to enable them to teach effectively in a school. This was the case for both PE and primary students who considered the practical and school-based components of their courses to be the most valuable, though PE students are more vocal about this, “I didn't really see how some of the (Education) lectures could help me as a PE teacher.” (Course evaluation, March 2007) Primary students identified workshops on behaviour management and lesson planning as the most relevant parts of their course whilst PE students identified practical activities and PEC1 (Physical Education Curriculum) as most valuable. By the end of the taught part of their programmes both primary students and PE students felt relatively well prepared for the forthcoming placement. A primary student explained that she, “now know(s) how to access and find out all I need to know to help me develop as a teacher” (PDP5<sup>64</sup>, March 2006) which suggests a high degree of confidence. A PE student felt that he would go into placement,

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<sup>64</sup> Future references to PDP5 in this chapter are not dated. All were submitted in March 2006.

“more prepared with my lessons and more aware of what goes on inside a classroom with regards to the children’s behaviour.” (PDP5, March 2006)

In the evaluations of Education 1Bh in March 2007 relevance was a key theme, lectures and workshops on classroom observation, which clearly related to placement being valued by both primary and PE students:

The second group of lectures were appropriate in their timing as both primary and PE students will soon be on placement. (Course evaluation, March 2007)

The ‘Life in Classrooms’ lectures were interesting because observation helps us when we are on school visits. (Course evaluation, March 2007)

Some students felt that helping them to learn to operate and manage a classroom would have been more helpful, though this was covered in other courses such as RMPS, Language and the teaching and learning part of Physical Education Curriculum (PEC1). The data from this study supports Malderez et al (2007) finding that student teachers value the practical and school-based parts of their courses but doubt the relevance and value of the more theoretical aspects of the courses.

## 5. Emotion

The analysis of interviews with second year students, field notes and students’ written reflections in PDP6 (May 2005) supports Malderez et al (2007) finding that ITE students used emotive language when talking about their relationships with pupils, mentors and teacher colleagues. PE students were quite emotional in their reflections on placement:

The enthusiasm of this group (of children) was one of my best experiences on placement.

I ... found that I got a great sense of satisfaction when a child said they enjoyed my lesson.

When they remembered all the teaching points (it) made all the hard work with them worthwhile. (PE students, PDP6, May 2005)

Primary students’ observations were similar:

Every day and every individual lesson was a great experience. At the end of the lesson I overheard one of the pupils saying, 'that was a great lesson' and I was so proud of myself because I had done that. It was brilliant to see them come to life and participate willingly in the discussions and tasks for each project lesson. (Primary students, PDP6, May 2005)

Being a member of the school community and having a good relationship with the class teacher was also memorable. Placement was quite a profound experience for the students.

The fashion show was memorable because I felt like (I was) part of the school. (PE student, PDP5 May 2005)

During this lesson the abstract (concept) of 'teaching' became real for me. I realised that I was actually teaching and that the group of children I had were learning something. (Primary student, PDP5 May 2005)

My (teacher) has been great and taught me so much. (PE student, PDP5 May 2005)

Preparation for teaching and writing lesson plans was also a pleasurable activity though some students expressed anxiety about some aspects of teaching.

I thoroughly enjoyed researching, preparing and teaching. (Primary student, PDP5 May 2005)

I was still nervous about doing Maths. (Primary student, PDP5 May 2005)

At the Glenmore Lodge field trip, which took place immediately after placement, the primary students were all very excited about placement. The general view was that it had been a great experience and one student told me that she was "really jealous" of the class teacher in her placement school and that she "so much want(s) to be like her" and that she could hardly wait to be a teacher. (Field notes, March 2007)

## 6. Discussion

By the end of the first year of their course students' said that their views about teachers and teaching had not changed in any significant way and that placement had reinforced their views rather than changing them. However after placement there had been changes in the way they accomplished the role of teacher and, whilst students still wanted to have a good relationship with the children, they recognised that they

also needed authority and respect. Students wanted to be approachable, patient and to appear confident, similar attributes to those found by Weinstein (1990) and similar to the words used to describe a 'good teacher' by applicants to the course. (Field notes, March 2008) Perceptions of the desirable characteristics of a teacher appear to be relatively stable and probably reflect students' experiences of anticipatory socialisation. After the placement behaviour management became a concern and the dilemma was how to achieve a balance between being a 'fun' teacher whilst also maintaining authority over the class. Being respected by the class was a priority but respect was seen as something to that you had to earn. After placement students recognised that it is possible to be an approachable and kind person as the same time as having the respect of the pupils. This resonates with Fuller's (1969) second stage of teacher development, the survival stage, when students lose their idealistic notion of teaching and focus on survival. Kettle and Sellars (1996) describe how the student initially focused on herself and what she wanted from the pupils, without giving much consideration to the needs of the pupils though this changed throughout the course. In this study being organised with well written lesson plans was seen as a key aspect of being a good teacher although flexibility was also recognised as important, the aim was to be a well prepared teacher with organised lessons which follow on from each other smoothly and which use different teaching styles.

The kind of teacher I want to be is the teacher children look forward to having and are disappointed that they won't get them the next year. I want to be a strict but fair teacher, the kind I used to like when I was at school. (PE student, PDP5, March 2006)

## Chapter 7 Conclusion

### 1. The nature of the problem being studied

This study has been about two cultures in a School of Education where, since 1998, PE students and primary students have been taught together on a generic Education course that comprises one third of their study programme. Since 1998 PE students have been perceived to be a problem for the people responsible for running the Education courses because their behaviour and attitudes have not matched the expectations of the staff and their performance in the assignment is poor. Many staff working on the Education courses believe (wrongly) that the entry requirements for the PE course are not as high as for other University courses and that the PE course is probably not academically rigorous<sup>65</sup>. A PE lecturer (interview, March 2006) dated this stereotype to the 1960's when James Scotland<sup>66</sup> described the PE teacher as, "generally a man of action rather than mind, a good man to play golf with, but not the first choice for a discussion of professional problems." (Cited in Hendry, 1975:116)

However, as was described in chapter 1, PE students at Moray House have high entry qualifications (AABBC at Higher) and their courses are both rigorous and demanding. The 'problem' has been that PE students perceive the Education courses to be less relevant than their other courses, do not do as much work for Education as they do for their other courses and get poorer grades for their first year Education assignments than other students on the course. The staff teaching on the Education courses appear to have little understanding of PE students, whilst the PE student culture, supported by the 'family' system, reinforces PE students' attitudes to the Education courses. There has been a history of tension and a lack of effective communication between PE staff and the rest of the School of Education staff post

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<sup>65</sup> Field notes – various dates.

<sup>66</sup> Principal of Aberdeen College of Education, 1961-1983.

merger<sup>67</sup>. Given the different experiences of PE and primary students one might have expected different perspectives on teachers and teaching by the end of their first year at the University but they were broadly similar and both groups of students successfully accomplished the four-week school based placement and appear to be well on route to becoming successful teachers.

## 2. The hidden curriculum

This study supports Lempp and Seale (2004) and Zeichner and Gore (1990) in finding the hidden curriculum to be an important factor in the professional socialisation of students. Research question 1 asked, “what does the experience of being at a School of Education do to first year B.Ed. (PE) students and first year B.Ed. (Primary) students (or enable them to do) apart from providing them with a technical competence as a teacher?” Student learning, and student socialisation are influenced by both the formal curriculum and the informal, or hidden, curriculum. All initial teacher education courses are designed to enable students to become effective teachers but messages from the hidden curriculum may interfere with, or nullify, messages coming from the students’ courses. For PE students this study found that the effect of the hidden curriculum was to marginalise the Education courses and promote ‘mainstream’ PE courses. For primary students this effect was absent. Three aspects of the hidden curriculum were identified, tensions between the Education courses and the ITE programmes, assessment and timetabling.

As was discussed in chapter 1, tensions between the staff running the generic Education courses and the staff responsible for the separate ITE programmes were found to constitute an important aspect of the hidden curriculum. The effect of introducing the Education courses was that a third of the time previously available to each of the ITE programmes was removed and a number of communities of interest amongst academic staff felt marginalised and ignored (Ducklin 2002). The expectation that the course content that was lost from the ITE programmes would be

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<sup>67</sup> This dates from the merger of Dunfermline College and Moray House in 1987 but has continued since the 1997 merger with the University of Edinburgh.

replicated in the Education courses was not realised and the tensions continued throughout the period of this study. The tensions are normally hidden but an underlying message that the Education courses are not as important as their other courses is transmitted to the PE students. This was not the case for primary students.

Teacher education staff in the PE department who had previously been based at the Cramond campus<sup>68</sup> have been slow to fully integrate with other staff on the Holyrood campus, though they have established strong bonds with one another and with PE teachers in the field. The PE department is just twenty yards from the library, refectory and lecture theatres but some of the PE lecturers perceive there to be a gulf between the PE department and the rest of the School of Education. This is particularly the case with long serving members of the department who fondly remember better times in the 'old days' (Interviews with PE staff, March 2006).

Latent tensions between primary staff and the Education courses also exist but are muted. Unlike PE staff, primary education lecturers are part of the mainstream culture of the School of Education. The only institutional merger to directly affect primary staff was in 1981 when Callendar Park College of Education merged with Moray House. Since then the primary education department has been relatively stable with staff playing important roles in the various institutional changes, including the development of the generic Education courses. The implications for professional practice are that the tensions of the last ten years, as discussed in chapter 1 and documented by Ducklin (2002), have led to a perception, by PE students, that the Education courses lack 'relevance'. Primary students are more accepting of educational theory but still regard practical aspects of their courses as more relevant to their school based placement.

Assessment and the students' timetable define the relative importance of their courses (Montgomery and Smith, 1997). PE students are heavily assessed in what one of the PE lecturers called 'their mainstream subjects' and prioritise summative and formative assessments in PEC1 and PEP1 over the Education course assessments

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<sup>68</sup> The PE department was relocated to the Holyrood campus in September 2001

and this is reflected in attendance at lectures and PE students' performance in the Education assignments. PE students also have a heavy timetable, with classes at what many students would consider to be unsocial hours, having classes until 6.00 pm on two days of the week in semester one. The PE timetable allocates proportionately more time to 'mainstream' subjects than for Education, so the hidden message, once again, is that the 'mainstream' subjects are more important than the Education course. The timetable for primary students is relatively light and more evenly balanced compared to the PE students' timetable and they consider their courses to have equal status.

### **3. The dichotomy between theory and practice**

The dichotomy between theory and practice has been a persistent theme in discussions of initial teacher education. Teacher education in Scotland comprises three components, school based placements, the study of the school curriculum and 'Professional Studies' the latter, in the Moray House School of Education, manifesting itself as 'the Education courses'. Christie (2003) argues that whilst reflective practice and constructivist approaches attempt to integrate theory and practice, students normally adopt a more strategic approach so that, "course elements were construed principally as either practical (and hence relevant) or theoretical (and hence irrelevant)" (Christie, 2003:906). In this study it was found that whilst Education 1Ah and Education 1Bh attempted to integrate theory and practice through problem based learning and reflective practice much of the course content was still regarded by many students as having little relevance for the school based placement. In the early 1990's SOED guidelines stated that, "the professional studies element of courses should provide an intellectual challenge for students and have an explicit concern with the classroom and the professional needs of teachers" (SOED, 1993 cited in Christie 2003:904) and in 1998, at the point of merger with the university, the theory practice dilemma was addressed in the following terms:

It is essential that programmes of education are as academically demanding as others offered by the University ... at the same time, it has to be recognised that the professions for which the existing Moray House trains expect that

graduates will be accomplished practitioners. (University of Edinburgh, 1998:17)

Initial teacher education courses cover familiar ground for anyone who has been a school pupil. For PE students practical activities are very familiar to them as sports people and for primary students subjects such as Mathematics, Language, RMPS and Environmental Studies are the same subjects that they studied at primary school and that they aspire to teach. However, the Education courses include topics that are unfamiliar to most students and that do not appear to have immediate relevance to placement.

The problem based learning activities include a micro teaching activity and classroom observation though the overall aim is to encourage students to link theory and practice and to develop a critical approach that is rooted in the literature. An emphasis on academic study skills stresses the importance of critical reading and appropriate referencing skills. However, messages from the hidden curriculum interfere with messages coming from the manifest curriculum and a group perspective, developed on the back stage, gives students some control over the way they experience their courses (Stroot and Williamson, 1993, Wideen et al., 1998).

Graber (1996) suggests that students develop strategies which enable them to acquire skills that they believe are important whilst ignoring those that they believe to be irrelevant and this is supported by the findings of this study. The backstage PE culture constantly defines and reinforces PE students' perspectives on their pre service courses. The perspective that the Education courses are not 'relevant' leads to the collective act of prioritising other academic and social activities. For primary students there was no evidence of a back stage group perspective and the messages from the front stage settings do not appear to have been modified. Indeed, mature students on the primary programme influence front stage group activities by emphasizing a conscientious and professional approach to the work. This study supports Wideen who found that, "older student teachers with work experience drew more heavily on principles of teaching and learning gained from coursework than did

their younger counterparts, who drew more on their most recent school experience" (Wideen et al, 1998:145).

The theory/practice interface continues to be a dilemma for the Education courses with competing pressures from both academic and professional quarters.

#### **4. Backstage life in the School of Education**

Research question 2 asked, "Do students' ideas (perspectives) about teachers and teaching derive from front stage, backstage or offstage activities?" Most studies of socialisation on initial teacher education courses do not take account of backstage settings or the influence of a peer culture. White (1989) and Eisenhart (1991) allude to back stage activities but the main emphasis is on front stage institutional arrangements. Sumsion and Patterson (2004) found a sense of community arising 'unexpectedly' on a four year teacher education programme but this was unusual and was caused by discontent with the course. However, studies of medical students (Becker et al., 1961, Sinclair, 1997) identify an influential back stage student culture, Sinclair's study resonating with the back stage experiences of PE students. Students' ideas about teachers and teaching derive from front stage, backstage and offstage settings. For PE students backstage activities have a major influence because of their powerful peer culture but for primary students back stage activities are less frequent, involve fewer peers and tend to focus on work, leaving more scope for offstage influences. This supports Pajares' (1992) observation that the everyday lives of many ITE students are unaffected by their experience of higher education because of their anticipatory socialisation.

Primary students' perspectives on teachers and teaching are influenced by a combination of front stage and off stage activities, off stage being family and friends who are fairly supportive of the front stage experience. PE students perspectives are influenced by a combination of front stage and back stage, back stage being the PE culture of drinking, clubbing and playing sport. Sinclair's (1997) distinction between an 'academic perspective' and a 'perspective of student co-operation' is

useful here because PE students and primary students have quite different 'academic perspectives' which are equally successful in the context of initial teacher education. PE students and primary students also have different 'perspectives of student co-operation'. For PE students there is quite a bit of pressure to 'be social' not just from their peers but also from second and third year PE students. For primary students there appears to be little social pressure to participate in group activities, their priority being to get on with their work in the company of four or five friends, or perhaps with their mum, who was often willing to proof read their essays.

Research questions 3, 4 and 5 asked, "How might the culture of B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary) students be described? In what ways do the experiences, culture, beliefs and developing perspectives of B.Ed. (PE) and B.Ed. (Primary) students differ from one another and how can we explain these differences?" PE students were members of a powerful group culture that had a strong identity within the School of Education. Whilst some of the visible manifestations of the PE culture were not appreciated by the staff or by other students, most of their activities took place on the unofficial backstage, which by definition is not visible to the audience. Whilst the formal curriculum introduced students to the world of academic study and prepared them for the practicalities of teaching, PE students' backstage culture, supported by the family system, was equally powerful. PE students' social life involves the whole year group and it is here that they are socialised into the norms and values of the group. Backstage is also an arena for the acquisition of social capital and the deliberate construction of sociability through bonding activities (Fukuyama, 1999). However, there was relatively little bridging between PE students and students on other programmes or in other parts of the University, suggesting a relatively intense inward looking group. The few PE students who chose to live at home, and commute to the university, were outsiders who had difficulty understanding or bonding with the group. This problem was recognised by the PE staff who encourage students to leave home in order to enjoy the full benefits of a university education, a tacit recognition of the importance of backstage settings in the development of students' attitudes and values.

Primary students have no organised social activities, do not go pubbing and clubbing like the PE students, and tend to maintain regular contact with non-university friends. Life, for primary students, continues relatively unchanged when they become undergraduates. One feature of the primary culture is the presence of mature students. Some people like having them on the course but others find that they tend to dominate discussion and violate what they perceive to be the norms of behaviour in lectures and workshops. The presence of mature students on the primary programme helps to create and sustain a goal-oriented culture where the aim is to be seen to perform well and to get good grades. Both PE and primary students are a bit baffled and slightly critical of the culture of the other group.

## **5. The influence of pre-service ITE**

Most studies into the socialisation of ITE students suggest that beliefs about teachers and teaching are well established before students begin their course and that anticipatory socialisation can be so powerful that their pre service education does not make very much difference (Mohr, 2000, Pajares, 1992, Richardson, 1996, Zeichner and Gore, 1990). Being at university helps to create, or confirm, a student's self image and PE students' backstage activities are important in the development of social capital, though there was little evidence that this was the case for primary students. By the end of their first year at the University there was no significant difference in the way that PE students and primary students perceived teachers and teaching, which is surprising given the difference in the culture of the two groups. Students said that their views about teachers and teaching had not changed in any significant way as a result of placement, which had reinforced their views rather than changing them, a finding that is supported by the literature. Wideen (1998) found that whilst pre-service teachers did not develop new perspectives they became more skilful at defending the perspectives they already possessed. Both PE and primary students still wanted to be 'a fun teacher' but, after placement, behaviour management became a major concern and the dilemma was how to achieve a balance between maintaining a good relationship with the children whilst also maintaining authority over the class.

This study suggests that students' experiences at university are an important influence on their perceptions of teaching and whilst anticipatory socialisation provides them with relatively simple theories of teaching, these theories were developed during their university courses (Woods and Earls, 1995, Kettle and Sellars, 1996). Both PE and primary students used selected aspects of their experiences at the University to enable them to perform adequately in a classroom setting, identifying those aspects of their courses that they considered relevant and those that were not relevant. The process of being socialised into the role of a primary teacher or a PE teacher is a mixture of formal and informal processes.

By the end of the first semester primary students outperformed PE students in the Education 1A<sub>h</sub> assignment. Over a five-year period, twice as many primary students achieved a grade A or B (41% compared to 19%) and twice as many PE students got a D (32% compared to 15%)<sup>69</sup>. This was not because PE students lacked the ability to achieve high grades – rather they lacked the motivation to achieve high grades. The group perspective is to give low priority to the Education courses – something that is reinforced by the hidden curriculum.

As was discussed in chapter 6, students' perceived needs in relation to placement were to have sufficient curriculum knowledge so that they would have something to teach, the knowledge and ability to control a class and an overview of the teaching process. The subject matter of Education One did not directly contribute to any of these concerns and whilst one of the learning outcomes for Education One was that students would be able to, "prepare for (the) work-based placement, or equivalent, and understand the relationships between professional action and theoretical perspectives" (University of Edinburgh, 2005) this was accomplished in an oblique manner. The course content for Education One appeared, to the lecturing staff, to be self evidently relevant to 'teaching' though this was not a view shared by students

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<sup>69</sup> In 2006 and 2007 PE students performance in the Education assignment improved (see appendix 4) and this may be attributable to the informal dissemination of the findings of this research.

who were more concerned to find out 'how to teach'. Kettle and Sellars (1996) identify three aspects of professional development, concerns about self (survival), concerns about task (lesson plans) and concerns about impact (learning). The students in this study were primarily concerned with 'self' and with 'task' whereas the Education One course was mainly concerned with 'impact' (learning), focussing on child development, theories of learning and the social context of education. Education One was an introduction to theoretically complex issues and was delivered at a time when students were focussed on a relatively narrow view of teaching and looking for tips about how to survive.

This study has drawn on Goffman's metaphor of theatre, and on Becker's analysis of the collectively held perspectives of medical students, to examine the hidden curriculum of the academic front stage and students' activities back stage and off stage. By exploring what 'everybody knows' and what 'everybody does' off stage, backstage and on stage this study has provided a fuller picture of the collectively held perspectives that guide students' behaviour. By understanding the meaning that undergraduates assign to the various activities associated with their professional development professional studies staff can design and implement courses that both engage students and relate to the other courses that they are taking. If initial teacher education is to have an impact on what students believe, teacher educators need to find out what beliefs the students bring with them and the ways in which front stage, back stage and off stage activities influence these beliefs during the early years of their course (Bullough and Gitlin, 1995).

The back stage activities and the influence of peers is important because it is a site where students generate social capital. Whilst Coleman (1988, 1990) and Bourdieu (1986) consider social capital an attribute of the individual, Putnam (2000) sees it as an attribute of communities, comprising networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together to pursue common goals. Portes (1998) suggests that the focus is on the benefits accruing to individuals by virtue of their participation in groups and the deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource, arguing that social networks are not a natural given and must be

constructed through investment strategies oriented to the institutionalisation of group relations. As was discussed in chapter 5, this was apparent in the case of PE students who had an extensive social network that was supported by the 'family system', initiation rituals and strong group bonding through competitive sporting activities.

Learning to become a teacher is not a solitary activity but a process of increasing participation in communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and, as was argued in chapter 5, backstage activities have a powerful effect on participants' perspectives on teaching and their acquisition of social capital. This study has suggested that first year PE students are bounded by the limits of their community and have to invest in the community in order to gain social capital from it. Outsiders, such as Mary, who commutes from Glasgow, appear to have invested relatively little in the community. As was discussed in chapter 4, Becker (1961) distinguishes two distinct cultures in the medical school, 'fraternity men' and 'independents'. Fraternity men were members of a fraternity with its associated bonding rituals whilst independents were not. Becker suggests that consensus on student perspectives is reached only if there is extensive interaction amongst group members. This study has found that the back stage activities of PE students provide an ideal setting for the formation of a group consensus whereas B.Ed. (primary) students act like 'independents' and do not appear to develop group perspectives.

The main perspective discovered by this study was the students' attitude to the Education course and the notion of 'relevance'. Whilst practical elements of the programme were valued more highly than theoretical elements this was not as apparent for primary students as it was for PE students and the explanation for this is the absence of a group perspective on the part of primary students. The group perspective is influenced by both front stage and back stage activities and, as was discussed in chapter 4, the hidden curriculum of the front stage has a significant influence. The hidden curriculum supports and defines students' beliefs and defines the two student cultures. Ginsburg and Clift argue that the hidden curriculum constitutes the core of teacher socialization (cited in Zeichner and Gore, 1990:18) though this study suggests that back stage activities can be equally powerful when

there is a strong subculture.

This study has found that student culture on the back stage of university life is a major factor in forming students' definition of reality and in the socialisation of ITE students, a factor that is neglected in most studies which assume that only the taught part of the course has the potential to influence students beliefs and practices. Back stage influences, as evidenced in this study, would explain why messages from the hidden curriculum interfere with or nullify the message coming from the ITE course. Student culture is also little understood by professional studies lecturers and tutors and a greater understanding of it may enhance student learning although Drever and Cope observe that, "students had no ambition to be transformative intellectuals" (Drever and Cope, 1999:105).

## **6. The limitations of this study and lessons to be learned**

This has been a small-scale study of students in just one institution at a particular period in time. However, it is one of just seven ITE programmes in Scotland and it is important because it is a study of the only institution in Scotland to offer an undergraduate route to PE teaching. The study was undertaken a few years after a major institutional change and reflects some of the conflicting values within the institution. There have been similar institutional changes in ITE throughout Scotland (see table 1.2), and this study provides some insights into the processes that take place during such a period of institutional change. There have been few studies of back stage and off stage sites for professional socialisation in ITE and I have drawn on studies on medical education, notably from Sinclair (1997) and from Becker (1961).

The study uses virtual ethnography and draws on students' online social networking at a time when social networking was not a widespread phenomenon. Indeed, the discovery that the messages on the PE conference had not been deleted for three years was of major significance and provided unique access to the PE students' backstage discussions. A potential limitation in the analysis of messages to the

FirstClass conference is that students who are confident with the technology are more likely to post messages. However, all the students read the messages even if they were not prolific posters of messages. First year PE students quickly learned, from second year students, that FirstClass was an important site for social networking although this was not the case for primary students and no equivalent insight was possible. FirstClass was cutting edge social networking technology at the time of the research but social networking has now developed to an extent that students no longer need to use the university system and this aspect of backstage life is now relatively hidden from future researchers.

The collaborative inquiry group (2004/05) comprised volunteers most of whom were mature students and not representative of the population. However, representative sampling was not sought at this stage in the research and these students were useful informants throughout the study. The sampling frame for interviews with first year students was unrepresentative in respect of students' term time address, a factor that was not considered when students were selected for interview<sup>70</sup>. Whilst primary students were representative of the population (five living at home and two in flats) three of the six PE students lived at home. However, the PE students living at home provided a valuable insight into backstage activities because they were outsiders and, despite having to commute from home, they participated in the backstage life by attending PE nights out and participating in the FirstClass conference.

The PDPs and course evaluation questionnaires were not designed as research tools but as part of the course programme. Because of this the PDP questions varied from year to year so that the analysis of changes in students' beliefs within one cohort were not possible. As the PDPs were the only data source about perspectives on teachers and teaching it has been necessary to make comparisons between cohorts. This is justified on the basis that there are no reasons for there to be differences between cohorts and Malderez et al (2007) found similar themes across a range of initial teacher education routes.

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<sup>70</sup> Students were selected on the basis of gender, domicile and age.

The research was undertaken over an extended period of time (2004 – 2008) using multiple methods including participant observation. As was discussed in chapter 3 my role as a participant observer has been both a strength as well as a potential limitation. There is a danger of observer bias, although this is offset by the advantage of familiarity with the territory.

## 7. Directions for future work

This study has focussed on the socialisation of first year undergraduates and a future study might explore developing student perspectives in the second, third and fourth years of the B.Ed. (Primary) and the B.Ed. (PE) programmes. The extended school based placements in the third and fourth years expose students to organisational socialisation in quite different settings, a primary school and a PE department in a secondary school. The two groups of students continue to meet on the Education courses but I hypothesise that their professional orientation will begin to diverge. In 2006 nearly three times as many entrants into primary teaching took the PGDE route rather than the four year B.Ed.<sup>71</sup> representing a major change in teacher education for this sector. The PGDE route into PE teaching is also growing although the four year B.Ed is currently the main route into PE teaching and some PE lecturers are sceptical about the efficacy of the PGDE route. A future study might explore the perceived advantages of the undergraduate route into PE teaching. On the PGDE (PE) course there appears to be little opportunity for backstage activities of the kind engaged in by students on the undergraduate programme. How important are backstage activities for the professional development of PE students?

The findings of this study suggest that teacher education institutions need to have a greater understanding of student perspectives, their anticipatory socialisation and the impact of front stage, backstage and off stage activities. At the moment each ITE programme in the School of Education is isolated from other ITE programmes. PE has little to do with primary except for the generic Education courses, Design and Technology is relatively isolated and PGDE (secondary) has little to do with PGDE

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<sup>71</sup> See table 1.1 in chapter 1.

(primary). The literature on partnership in relation to ITE (Brisard et al., 2006, Furlong et al., 1996, Brisard et al., 2005, Smith et al., 2006) focuses on the relationship between the University and the schools yet there is little evidence of partnership within the School of Education itself. A future research agenda might explore collaborative links between different ITE programmes within the same institution.

## **8. Postscript**

In June 2008 the members of the Collaborative Inquiry Group graduated and will be in their first teaching post in September 2008. In 2006 and 2007 the performance of PE students in the Education 1Ah assignment was considerably improved (see appendix 4). We move forward.

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## Appendix 1 Education courses documentation, March 2004

The suite of education courses is designed to serve the undergraduate teacher education and community education programmes of the School and to prove attractive to students from across the University. The courses provide an opportunity to develop a generic understanding of education with an emphasis on:

- Critical analysis drawing on disciplined knowledge;
- Developing the ability to engage with evidence and arguments on the basis of principled educational reflection;
- Developing a wide perspective on the principal features of education in a range of contexts - formal, non formal and informal;
- Understanding the nature of educational research, its findings and applications to policy and practice;
- Understanding various aspects and levels of the societal context and the complex interplay of context with educational ideas and practices;
- Appreciating the problematic, contested nature of educational policy and practice and understanding the debate surrounding education in contemporary society;
- Understanding the implications of these issues for professional action;
- To critique their professional practice with regard to planning, implementing and evaluating pupils learning in ways that take account of the diversity of the school population and the views of professionals working in the wider school community.

Education is viewed, like many other university subjects, as an eclectic field of study and professional action with systematic research and a range of disciplines contributing to integrated thinking about the various issues - conceptual, ethical, evidential, practical - to which education gives rise. A range of theoretical perspectives can shed light on these issues as can educators' practical professional knowledge.

The education courses seek to give students access to the intellectual network and vibrant critical tradition of the literature of education - a network in which inquiry, deliberation and a willingness to interrogate practice and adopt a research stance towards its development are central. Moreover it recognises the importance of students developing a justified personal perspective within the public context open to critique and to a wide perspective on issues and the need to learn a process for developing such professional understanding and action.

The courses cohere effectively with other courses in the various programmes in the School and with placements, and offer a progressive understanding of educational ideas policies and practices. The courses also aims to help students develop strong interactive links between the theory and practice of education and to respond in an educationally valuable way to the diverse range of students taking the courses. (University of Edinburgh 2004)

## Appendix 2 'Knowledge' as part of teacher identity

'Knowledge' is part of teacher identity because it is a reflection on the role of the teacher in terms of the transmission of knowledge and the realisation that the knowledge gained from their courses has helped to prepare them for teaching. Before placement 49% of PE students and 35% of primary students considered 'knowledge to be an important characteristic of a teacher. After placement this did not significantly change (PE students 41% and primary students 28%)

Teaching is not just about passing on knowledge:

"I now realise that education is about more than having an in depth knowledge of a subject." (PE student, PDP6)

"Teaching is not just passing on your own knowledge, but also using various teaching methods to benefit the understanding of the learners." (Primary student, PDP6)

However, teachers do need a good knowledge of their subject:

"(I realise) just how much a teacher needs to know, and how wide ranging their knowledge needs to be." (Primary student, PDP6)

Students acquired knowledge from the course about how to teach:

"I will also have the knowledge of why pupils may behave in the way that they do." (PE student, PDP6)

"I feel that (the) Education (course) has provided me with knowledge and a deeper understanding of how children act and behave during the different developmental stages of their childhood." (Primary student, PDP6)

"(The course) has aided my knowledge about what is expected of me as a teacher." (PE student, PDP6)

"I have also come to realise that a Physical Education teacher needs to have a very good knowledge of the sport or activity that they are taking." (PE student, PDP6)

"I would like to develop my knowledge of different drills that can be taught for different sports." (PE student, PDP6)

"I would like to develop my knowledge of activities such as gymnastics and tennis as I found it hard to teach and to think of ways to progress the lesson." (PE student, PDP6)

There was also an emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge about things like child development and behaviour management - key aspects of the teachers' role.

“I would like to increase my knowledge and develop further skills in the area of behaviour management in both positive and negative behaviour.” (Primary student, PDP6)

“I intend to continue to build on my knowledge of the curriculum which will in turn help towards improving my lesson planning.” (Primary student, PDP6)

### Appendix 3 'Fun' as a characteristic of 'a good teacher'

Before placement 51% of PE students and 49% of primary students considered 'fun' to be an important characteristic of a teacher and whilst 'fun' is less prominent after placement it is still mentioned by a third of the students (PE students 36% and primary students 35%). The students will be teaching in different contexts and fun means slightly different things to PE and primary students. PE students had found their own teachers fun and wanted to emulate them:

"As a pupil I always liked and responded to teachers that were approachable. I would ... like to be able to create fun, interesting and challenging lessons that will get my class excited to be taking part." (PE student, PDP5)

Interestingly, one PE student suggested that pupils come to school in order to have fun and this is perhaps a reflection on his own experience of PE at secondary school:

"I think a teacher must have a good sense of humour as pupils are at school after all to have fun, and we all learn better in a happy environment." (PE student, PDP5)

Some primary students found the idea of learning through fun quite a novel idea, and this is obviously something that they learn from their university courses:

"I am pleased to find that children are allowed, in fact encouraged, to have fun while they learn too." (Primary student, PDP5)

"I also now see that the so-called 'boring' subjects- maths, history and science- are actually fun! I like (the idea) that teaching is moving towards finding active and creative ways to learn, unlike before when you sat and learned from your teacher." (Primary student, PDP5)

"Since beginning the course in September, I have learned so many different teaching techniques – how to make lessons fun with games." (Primary student, PDP5)

Most students, both primary and PE, linked having fun with effective learning:

"By being enthusiastic I will be able to make the lessons more fun for the children and hopefully they will then learn more." (Primary student, PDP5)

"I now understand why a great emphasis has to be placed on fun, as I have realised that if learning is not made fun and interactive then pupils will switch off and subsequently learning will not take place." (PE student, PDP5)

Because of the context of PE taking place outwith the classroom the notion of wanting to come back was a common view of PE students:

“A good teacher will have fun with the children ... and make them want to come back to your lesson.” (PE student, PDP5)

“I would like to be a fun teacher that the children enjoy coming to for a lesson and leave the class with a smile on their face.” (PE student, PDP5)

A focus on self was common and in the case of PE students this probably derives from their recollection of their own secondary school PE teachers. A number of students wanted to be remembered as a fun teacher in the same way that they were remembering their own teachers.

“I would like to be a fun and lively teacher, that my pupils remember after (my) school experience has finished.” (PE student, PDP6)

“I would love to be remembered as a ‘good’ ‘fun’ teacher by all the children who step through the doors of the gymnasium.” (PE student, PDP6)

“I would also like to be remembered as a teacher who made learning meaningful, fun, accessible and interesting.” (Primary student, PDP6)

However, even before placement a number of students recognised that class control was going to be important:

“I want pupils to know they can have fun and a good laugh in my class as long as they behave and are sensible.” (PE student, PDP5)

After placement fun was still a common theme but it was now recognised as a difficult thing to achieve:

“After writing lesson plans of my own I realise how difficult it is to come up with lessons that are fun, original, relevant and interesting all at the same time (Primary student, PDP6)

“My views of being a fun teacher have changed quite a lot, it is hard to be fun when you are teaching certain topics, however I do believe that a teacher should always be enthusiastic about what they are teaching.” (Primary student, PDP6)

Whilst both PE and primary students still wanted to be fun teachers, after placement they recognised that classroom management was essential,

“I still think teachers should be fun and approachable but while also having control over their class.” (PE student, PDP6)

“Previously, I thought that this was the most important thing but after placement I have realised that a teacher can only be fun after setting clear boundaries in the classroom. This means there can be a fun atmosphere in the classroom but the children know when to stop.” (Primary student, PDP6)

“The kind of teacher that I would like to be is one seen as a fun teacher that has the respect of the pupils without being too strict.” (PE student, PDP6)

“The class teacher I was working with had a perfect relationship with her class. They knew their boundaries and did not even try to break them. However, the teacher still found time to have fun with the class.” (Primary student, PDP6)

#### Appendix 4 Attainment statistics for 2006 and 2007

Since 2005 the attainment of PE students in the Education 1Ah assignment has improved and, although PE students were outperformed by primary students in 2006, the difference between the two groups of students in 2007 had narrowed.

Percentages	PE students					Primary students				
Year/Grade	A/B	C	D	Fail	N =	A/B	C	D	Fail	N =
December 2006	35	30	29	6	104	59	30	7	4	150
December 2007	33	38	24	5	100	43	40	13	3	145

*Table A4.1 Attainment on the Education 1Ah essay 2006 – 2007 (percentages)*

The attainment statistics for 2006 only became available in February 2007 and the 2007 statistics in February 2008 so they did not influence either the research questions or the data collection and analysis in this study.

One explanation for the improvement might be a greater understanding by the Education One course team of the needs of PE students as a result of this research. As course organiser I have probably unconsciously acted on the findings. When interviewing PE staff, I explained the structure and content of the Education courses and this may have led to a change in their perception of the course. On the other hand it may be a statistical blip that will not be confirmed by the December 2008 statistics.

## Appendix 5 An example of an Atlas Ti query report

This query report has searched PDP6 (question 1) for sentences containing the word 'behaviour'. Only the first three pages of the report are included here and all the quotes are from PE students although the report also searched, and found, quotes from primary students.

### Query Report

---

HU: New Hermeneutic Unit  
 File: No file  
 Edited by: Super  
 Date/Time: 19/03/08 21:21:08

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Global selection criteria:  
 All

2 Primary Docs in query:

144 quotation(s) found for Query (Infix-Notation):  
 "Behaviour"

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**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:1 [In addition to this, pupils sh..] (52:52)**  
**(Super)**  
 Codes: [Behaviour]  
 No memos

In addition to this, pupils should know the levels of behaviour expected by the teacher and know the punishments that will be issued if these expectations are broken.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:2 [This helped my teaching as the..] (56:56)**  
**(Super)**  
 Codes: [Behaviour]  
 No memos

This helped my teaching as the placement went on as the pupils began to behave better and also listened to instructions a lot more.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:3 [I didn't include behaviour in ..] (60:60)****(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

I didn't include behaviour in my previous pdp as I hadn't experienced it yet but this has a great impact on your teaching and classroom environment.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:4 [But while undertaking my place..] (75:75)****(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

But while undertaking my placement, I realise that all lessons can change and vary depending on behaviour and ability of the class, and the time scale and equipment that is available.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:5 [Placement highlighted that chi..] (87:87)****(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

Placement highlighted that children try to test new teachers to see how much they can get away with e.g bad behaviour.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:6 [Therefore it's important that ..] (87:87)****(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

Therefore it's important that they understand you are looking for good behaviour from day one, this results in them gaining respect for you e.g.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:7 [It seemed that the teacher's b..] (109:109)****(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

It seemed that the teacher's behaviour had rubbed off on the pupils.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:8 [More importantly, making me re..] (111:111)**

**(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

More importantly, making me realise that discipline is not the only way of achieving good behaviour in the classroom.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:9 [Without this there is disfranc..] (116:116)**

**(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

Without this there is disfranchisement with learning in general which leads to bad behaviour, lethargy or the “canny dee it” syndrome.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:10 [If pupils are made aware of bo..] (133:133)**

**(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

If pupils are made aware of boundaries from the very beginning they know what is expected of hem and what will happen if they do not behave accordingly.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:11 [A good teacher should therefor..] (133:133)**

**(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

A good teacher should therefore be consistent in dealing with behaviour.

**P 1: PE PDP6 question 1.rtf - 1:12 [I would like to develop furthe..] (139:139)**

**(Super)**

Codes: [Behaviour]

No memos

I would like to develop further strategies for class control, such as rewarding positive behaviour.

## **Appendix 6 Student attendance (Policy statement issued to all students)**

Five key principles govern student attendance in the School of Education:

1. *The overriding expectation is that students will attend all classes (including placement).*

In all undergraduate courses and programmes of professional preparation within the School of Education there is an expectation that students will attend all lectures, seminars, tutorials and related teaching activities, including placement.

2. *Students will adhere to stated procedures for dealing with medical absence.*

If, because of illness (or other acceptable personal circumstances), an individual incurs absence which is unavoidable, medical certification should be provided according to standard arrangements (self-certification for up to 7 days and GP's medical certificate for periods of more than 7 days). In cases of absence for medical reasons that involve missing an examination or failing to submit an assignment by a deadline date, the reasons must be authenticated by means of provision of a medical certificate and this should be sought at the time of absence. Retrospective certification of illness is unlikely to be accepted.

3. *A series of different arrangements is in place for dealing appropriately with various lengths of absence (including recurring patterns of brief absence).*

Depending on the extent of a period of illness, different arrangements may be put in place. For short periods of absence in their University-based studies, students should be expected to catch up on missed work via support from their colleagues. For longer periods of absence students must seek support from relevant course/programme staff to obtain guidance on supported self-study in order to get their studies back on track. Where longer absences (or recurring patterns of short illnesses) occur it is also likely that students will need to have a progression interview with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and it may prove necessary for temporary interruption of studies to be negotiated (even after a student has been declared medically fit to resume their studies). This may involve temporary suspension of studies.

Course-specific factors such as the extent of practical activity or placement experience may mean that the requirements of a course simply cannot be overtaken within the standard timescale where absence has occurred and in such cases a repeat of the course will normally be required.

If students require leave of absence for a period longer than 4 weeks, permission must be sought from the Associate Dean (Undergraduate) in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences following consultation with the student's Director of Studies.

4. *Non-attendance may lead to some form of penalty (possibly resulting in failure of a course), even if summative assessments are passed.*

Permission for absence during term-time, for reasons other than medical or approved special circumstances, will **not** normally be granted. Any student who chooses to proceed with an unapproved period of absence will be responsible for any detrimental consequences and may be subject to a penalty.

**All students in the School of Education should be aware that non-attendance may result in some form of penalty, including failure of a course (or courses), even if all formal assessments have been carried out to a satisfactory standard.**

5. *Absence during the period of preparation for a professional placement may prevent students from beginning that placement.*

Adequate preparation for professional placement is a key feature of the period immediately prior to students going to schools or other placement agencies. If for reasons of absence it does not prove possible to prepare adequately for placement, students will be prevented from commencing placement and a period of temporary interruption of studies will be necessary. In the case of absence because of medically certificated reasons, a student will normally be permitted to undertake the placement as a 'first sit' at a later date, but in the case of non-medical reasons a student will normally only be permitted to undertake the placement as a 'resit'. The timing of such exceptional arrangements may depend on the availability of suitable placements and will be conditional on appropriate placement preparation having been satisfactorily completed by the student.

Teaching Organisation  
July 2006

## **Appendix 7 Planned changes to the Education course**

The revalidation of the Education courses in June 2008<sup>1</sup> has provided an opportunity to introduce a number of changes to the course.

### **1 The dominance of a primary education philosophy**

In Chapter 1 it was noted that all the Education course organisers were B.Ed. (Primary) oriented and, “the Academic Coordinator (for the Education courses) has an office next to the B.Ed. (Primary) programme coordinator and all course organisers, with the exception of myself, have offices on the same corridor”. One of the issues to be addressed is the dominance of primary education over the Education courses. A conscious strategy of informal liaison between primary and PE staff will be necessary if academic staff are to understand and respect one another’s values. This is beginning to happen, and in session 2007/08 three academic staff from the PE department were members of the Education 1 course team, five were members of the Education 2 course team and one member of staff from the primary department was a tutor on a third year PE course. A number of older staff with entrenched beliefs will soon be retiring although some recently appointed (primary) staff still have a negative stereotype of PE students (field notes 23 June 2008). A strategy of sharing information and understanding about the courses taken by the students will be initiated.

### **2 Assessment and the timetable**

Chapter 4 identified assessment and the timetable as important aspects of the hidden curriculum. The following changes are to be introduced in session 2009/10:

- The introduction of more summative assessments in the Education course to match the assessment load on the PE courses.
- An examination to replace the Education 1Ah essay requiring answers to questions from all three blocks of the course.

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<sup>1</sup> All courses have to be revalidated by the University and by the GTC every four years.

- One of the PDPs in semester one to be increased in length (750 words) and summatively assessed.
- The remaining PDPs to be increased in length to 500 words.
- Five additional lectures to be added in semester one and six in semester two.

### **3 Course content**

As was discussed in chapter 4 and chapter 6 PE students perceived much of the Education course to be 'irrelevant'. Suggestions for future action include the following:

- The rationale for the content to be more clearly explained to the students in lectures, workshops and on the website. Where appropriate, explicit connections with professional practice to be highlighted.
- Anticipatory socialisation to be addressed early in the course by asking students to identify and discuss their beliefs about teachers and teaching and their beliefs about the characteristics of the ideal primary teacher, PE teacher, Design and Technology teacher or community education worker.
- The provision of more PE related reading for the seminars using suggestions from PE staff. The course organiser to develop a partnership with PE staff in relation to this.
- A review of the problem based learning tasks to ensure that they are relevant to all students taking the course.
- The other courses taken by Education One students to be analysed and, with the cooperation of appropriate course organisers, connections identified and duplication of content eliminated.
- PDP tasks to be reviewed to ensure that they have relevance to the student's programme.

### **4 The lectures**

Non-attendance by PE students is a major issue. Suggestions for future action include:

- The learning outcomes of each lecture to be posted on the website. There is currently a web page for each of the lectures so this need not be a problem. This is to demonstrate the 'relevance' of lectures.
- A register of attendance to be taken at lectures and sanctions imposed where appropriate. Lecturers to be asked to take action in relation to inappropriate behaviour in lectures. The strategy of having two lecturers, one 'working the floor' with a roving mic, to be extended. This was piloted in session 2006/07.

- In session 2009/10 the 'preparation for placement' block of Education 1Bh, from which PE students were excluded in 2007/08, will become the responsibility of new programme specific placement courses so the lectures described in chapter 4, and which were considered irrelevant by PE students, will not take place.

A register of attendance will not be taken at every lecture, maybe every couple of weeks. The policy of the School of Education is that attendance is compulsory and that, "all students in the School of Education should be aware that non-attendance may result in some form of penalty, including failure of a course (or courses), even if all formal assessments have been carried out to a satisfactory standard" (Policy statement issued to all students, see appendix 6).

## **5 Workshops and seminars**

In chapter 4 it was noted that many PE students do not do the reading and are often ill prepared for workshops. Suggestions for future action include:

- Workshop tutors to be asked to draw attention to cases of inadequate preparation and impose verbal sanctions.
- Briefing notes to be provided for tutors about all seminars and workshops, with advice about dealing with inappropriate behaviour and lack of preparation.
- Attendance at seminars and workshops is currently closely monitored with registers being taken. However, trivial excuses for non-attendance from PE students have not been challenged and, with the cooperation of the PE staff, this will be dealt with on a case by case basis.