

SLIDE 1

The ideas for this presentation are emerging from research which draws together issues facing teachers in PCE which is a subset of Ph D research.

Three particular years from 1992 to 2008 have been considered and the connections between working as a teacher and the situation of teacher training have been used to highlight these emerging issues.

Part of the argument is to start refreshing and reinvigorating the images of teachers in PCE.

SLIDES 2 AND 3

The philosophy behind the presentation

SLIDE 4

Unless it isn't completely clear, this slide summarises the essential situation as I see it at present, based on the research undertaken to date and my experience in the sector.

SLIDE 5 – 1992/3

THE SITUATION FOR TEACHERS

The 'good old days'???!!!

Background: The changing context of Further Education

The 1992 Further and Higher Education (FHE) Act granted FE institutions their independent corporate status.

The FEFC was set up by Government with the task of ensuring the 'adequacy' and 'sufficiency' of provision in the sector. It assumed responsibility for Inspections previously performed by HMI, and for the funding and strategic control (though not curriculum) of colleges, previously the domain of the LEA.

The result was seen as an apparent increase in autonomy, but FE colleges in reality became more controlled by central government principally through the FEFC's funding mechanism (Randle and Brady 1997).

The new funding formula, based on the principle of 'more for less', means that funds may be 'clawed back', if colleges fail to meet targets, retain students or if students fail to successfully complete courses.

THE SITUATION FOR ITT

- Large amount of autonomy
- Clear and focussed curriculum
- Integration and progression
- Team teaching and almost all participants had remission
- Almost all participants received genuine remission and financial support

SLIDE 6 – 2002/3

THE SITUATION FOR TEACHERS

Many reports / policies initiatives

Situation of teachers had got a good deal worse

Industrial action after incorporation ... new contracts 'or else'

The Learning and Skills Development Agency carried out wide-ranging surveys of teaching staff in FE colleges, revealing, in the results published in 2001 that:

- More staff were negative about their job and their college than were positive.
- What happens within a college does make a substantial difference to staff attitudes, which are by no means determined entirely by the external educational environment.

In the following year, 2002, the results did improve, including that:

- The large majority of those surveyed appear to enjoy their job and would recommend their college as a good place to work.
- Job satisfaction was primarily influenced by factors directly related to the education and care of learners.

However staff still indicated that:

- In relation to college management, almost as many staff were negative about their job and their college than were positive.

(LSDA 2001, 2)

It is perhaps not entirely surprising that the survey of staff was not continued after 2002.

The approach adopted by government to introduce recognised teaching qualifications for FE lecturers (Blackstone, 2000) through the use of the FENTO standards does not appear either to support a reflective approach, or to acknowledge the need for continual professional development for all lecturers beyond the first two categories of reflection; the Technical 'know how', related to efficiency, and the Practical 'know what I ought to do', related to enhancement. The Critical = 'know why', related to self and social awareness appears not to be of importance in a culture of results, outcomes, and efficiencies. Such an emphasis on practice can lead to atrophying of the underpinning theories.

The rhetoric that surrounded the introduction of the TVEI and GNVQ developments talked of the new type of lecturer and a new management of learning (Gleeson, 1987; Bloomer, 1998; Bates, 1998), but it is evident that many of the 'old' type of lecturer and old styles are still in place, and will continue to co-exist with the new as long as the cultures and management styles in colleges fail to recognise the importance of 'professionalism' in its widest sense and the value of communities of practice.

The government is committed to lifelong learning, and is using the tools of new funding and inspection regimes to drive it forward. However questions still remain over the compatibility between this initiative, the professional deliverers, the learning and teaching cultures, and the management styles with FE.

Parsons, Avis and Bathmaker (2001: 14)

sustained attack on public sector professionalism from the late 1970s and the shift towards managerial control of teachers work.

Shain (1998)

THE SITUATION FOR ITT

- Legislation to require staff to get qualified
- FENTO standards and FENTO endorsed awards

- Validation plus endorsement
- Stages 1, 2 and 3
- OfSTED FE ITT survey in progress
- Very few participants got remission
- More content – less hours

SLIDE 7 – 2008

THE SITUATION FOR TEACHERS

Improving results – LSC Press release April 2007

Success rates in the Further Education sector increased dramatically in 2005/06, beating a number of Government targets. Figures released today by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in a Statistical First Release (SFR) which gives details of learner outcomes, show that the success rate target for FE colleges has been passed two years early, with rates increasing by 2 percentage points to 77 per cent in 2005/06, which exceeds the LSC's target of achieving a 76 per cent success rate by 2007/08. This means that for every 100 courses started, 77 result in success with a qualification being achieved. In the past 6 years, success rates in colleges have risen by over 20 per cent and now over three-quarters of students are achieving qualifications.

The results show that the sector is responding well to the skills challenges set out by Lord Leitch and the LSC's *agenda for change* which aims to raise the reputation of FE by encouraging excellence, economic success and simplification.

There have also been significant improvements made in the number of young people completing Apprenticeships. Success rates for full

Apprenticeship programmes have increased by 13 percentage points over one year from 40 per cent in 2004/05 to 53 per cent for 2005/06. Work Based Learning success rates are now within striking distance of 59 per cent, which is the 2007/08 target.

Full Level 2 success rates for 16-18 year olds are up by 5 percentage points to 66 per cent and for adults by 6 percentage points to 65 per cent. Level 2 is the minimum level of qualifications needed to gain employment and get on in life.

Mark Haysom, Chief Executive of the LSC said:

"These figures show the massive achievement that all those in the further education sector have made in driving up quality in post-16 education and training. Over the last six years, success rates in FE colleges have risen by over 20 percentage points from 56 per cent in 1999/2000 to the present level of 77 percent.

Avis and Bathmaker (2005: 55) have described the PCE teaching workforce as 'pressured, compliant, demoralised, overstretched, disengaged, marginalised from communities of practice'. In a study of teacher trainees on placement in colleges, they found:

Poor workplace conditions, lack of resources, perceived lack of management support all affect communities of practice within further education and lead to communities which can be characterised as having low morale, being burnt out, and having lost their commitment to students. We are not claiming that all of FE in England is like this, but that this is certainly one of the ways in which current changes are affecting FE at the present time. (59-60)

To further add pressure, the management practices known as 'new managerialism' have brought with them negative consequences for teachers, students and organisations including:

- a reduction in the level of consultation with staff, and the concentration of power at the centre of an organisation in the hands of a few (Lomas 2003)
- an emphasis on enterprise, income generation, local competition and survival in the market-place at the expense of more general educational goals. (Watson and Crossley 2001)
- dilution of the authority and autonomy of professionals and its replacement by the power of managers to establish agendas and to determine work patterns. (Simkins and Lumby 2002)

Overall teaching staff (and indeed support staff) are often seen as operating in organisational cultures which marginalise educational values, even to the degree of being 'uninterested in knowledge', and which are powerfully driven by external forces and factors such as government initiatives, efficiency measures, inspection and market values (Avis and Bathmaker 2006; Crawley 2005; Hayes 2003; Hyland and Merrill 2003; Randle and Brady 1997; Shain and Gleeson 1999).

Average pay for an FE lecturer in SW £25,000

Average pay for a secondary school teacher 'more than £31,000

THE SITUATION FOR ITT

- Highly complex curriculum
- Mentoring and minimum core for nothing
- Skills for life awards but no funding
- Approval processes complex and produce excessive content
- Confusing advice and guidance
- Regulatory approach not negotiation
- Ridiculous learning outcomes
- Structure which discourages progression

SLIDES 8-11

I am here drawing the same conclusion as the one made much more persuasively and on the basis of evidence by Seymour Sarason, after his study of the reasons for *The predictable failure of educational reform in the USA* (1990). Tutors, concluded Sarason, cannot create and sustain the conditions needed for students to become lifelong learners if those conditions do not exist for the tutors *themselves*; and presently they do not in post-compulsory education. Similarly, he argues that, if tutors do not exhibit critical thinking in their own professional lives, why should we expect it in their students? (19)

The vast majority of tutors are willing to learn and improve their teaching, but wonder where the time is to come from, if nothing is done about increasing workloads and endless, repetitive administration. (23)

Here I want to highlight our central conclusion, namely, that in FE, ACL and WBL *the cornerstone of success was the strength of the tutor-learner relationship*. (34)

ICT tends to be the main form of investment in T & L that policy-makers support unequivocally; machines are, after all, cheaper than tutors, they can be worked day and night without protest from unions and, so far at least, they have not been known to answer back. (48)

Stephen Ball has been arguing for some time that policy is not a solution to our difficulties but the biggest single problem facing professionals. At first hearing I thought that Stephen's conclusion was a deliberate exaggeration for effect, but, as I have reflected on all the

reforms imposed on the post compulsory sector since 1992, I have come to accept it. (49)

People's views on their institutions are more worrying. Only 39.1% of staff say that they would recommend their organisation as a good place to work and this drops to 31.1% among lecturers and teachers. Furthermore, many respondents (42.2%) said that they don't feel valued by their employer (1)

- Only 7.4% of respondents do not work beyond their contracted hours.
- Out of the staff who said they often work beyond their contracted hours, 28.9% of teaching staff, 38.2% of managers and 63% of senior managers said they often worked more than 11 additional hours per week.
- 48.3% of people said they are not able to achieve a good work–life balance.
- Just over half of all respondents (53%) say they do not have access to flexible working arrangements.
- Most people (69.8%) of people say they feel too much stress in their job.
- Teaching staff are more likely than other groups to say they are stressed, with 73.9% reporting this.
- 45.7% of staff said they do not feel they have job security.
- a small but significant number of people are concerned about bullying.
- a number of people don't feel physically safe at work.
- 40% of people say that their organisation will tolerate managers or colleagues who bully others but 39.1% of people said that this was not the case.
- 66.6% of people said they feel physically safe at work, but 16.3% disagreed.
- Teaching staff were most likely to say that they don't feel physically safe at work, with 19.4% indicating that this is the case.
- Overall, 53.9% of people said they had been verbally abused by learners, with 58.8% of teaching staff indicating that this is the case.
- In total, 37.4% of staff said they had felt physically threatened by a learner, and teachers were more likely to say this than anyone else (39.4%).
- The overwhelming majority of staff (88.8%) reported that they have never been physically abused at work but a significant

minority of managers (7.8%) and teachers (7.7%) said they had been physically abused by a learner. (2,3)

LSN (2008)

If the two new Secretaries of State for the DCSF and the DIUS want a quick 'hit', with beneficial effects out of all proportion to the investment, then may I suggest that they take £200 million from the huge budget of £2.3 billion for building new FE colleges and use it to improve the motivation of the staff in the LSS by paying them now the same as their colleagues doing the same work in schools. Otherwise all their rhetoric about the 'workforce' (and that is the cold, managerial term preferred by the politicians and the policy-makers) being our most valuable resource will continue to sound false, if not hypocritical. (50)

We do it because we believe in social justice and, like our parents and grandparents, we want a better world for ourselves, our children and all children. That is the meaning of our lives as teachers. (62)

You may or may not feel that education can change the world, but there is no doubt that at some stage, and if you're both lucky and good at your job, you will often help to change someone else's world and life for the better. (Crawley 2005)

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