A Study of Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education and Induction: Perceptions of New Entrants and their Mentors.

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Leicester.

by

Linda Chapman

School of Education

University of Leicester

September 1999

A Study of Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education and Induction: Perceptions of New Entrants and their Mentors.

Linda Chapman
School of Education
University of Leicester

ABSTRACT

In recent years, a growing emphasis on the school-based elements of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the implementation of an induction programme for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in England and Wales have led to the role of the mentor becoming increasingly important and complex. This research study focuses on the mentoring needs of new entrants (NEs) to primary teaching, exploring whether these needs are being met within the current climate of change and development. It investigates NE, mentor and headteacher perceptions of the amount and type of mentoring support received by and needed by two cohorts of NEs. In particular it explores *changes* in the mentoring support received by and perceived to be necessary for NEs across the period of their Initial Teacher Education (for the purposes of this research, a one-year Post Graduate Certificate in Education) and their first year as NQTs. Information is collected through case studies and questionnaire surveys, providing both qualitative and quantitative data. The study finds that there are significant changes in the mentoring needs of students and NQTs, particularly in terms of the roles their mentors fulfil and identifies personal and contextual factors that affect the success of the mentoring at different stages in an NE's professional development. Current provision of mentoring support, in particular the provision for NQTs, is found wanting, The study concludes that there is a need for the role of the mentor to be clarified in schools, in particular for NQTs, so that all involved in the mentoring process share an understanding that the mentor has a vital role to play in supporting the NE's continuing professional development.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My greatest debt is to my supervisor, Dr Janet Moyles. Her support and guidance have been utterly invaluable - her enthusiasm and her interest a continual inspiration. Thanks go to all the research participants. In particular, thanks to those case study new entrants and mentors who gave up their precious time and allowed me to share their experiences. Thanks too, must go to all the academic, administrative and technical staff in the School of Education for providing me with such excellent support during the last three years, in particular, Julie Thomson, Belinda D' Sa and Ros Holmes. Special thanks go to Ian Parker for so patiently initiating me into the use of video cameras, dictaphones and Macshapa.

On a more personal note, thank must go to all my friends for being so understanding this last year, particularly Helen Green, Stephanie Rose and Liz T'Sang at Companion Dog Training; to Poppy, Teasel and Bramble for regularly dragging me away from the computer and out on walks and of course to Peter. Without his endless love and support the last three years would never have been possible. I can only echo the sentiment and mean it more than ever - whatever words I say...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of tables in Chapter Two

List of tables in Chapter Three

List of tables in Chapter Four

List of tables in Chapter Five

List of tables in Chapter Six

List of tables in Chapter Seven.

List of Figures

List of figures in Chapter Three

List of figures in Chapter Four

List of figures in Chapter Five

List of figures in Chapter Six

List of figures in Chapter Seven

A Study of Mentoring in Initial Teacher Education and Induction: Perceptions of New Entrants and their Mentors.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, mentoring has become an increasingly significant concept within the context of education with the term 'mentor' being applied to many different roles in many different contexts from the mentoring of students involved in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) to the mentoring of headteachers (McIntyre and Hagger, 1996).

For the purpose of this research, the particular area of investigation is the mentoring of new entrants (NEs) to primary teaching, with the term 'new entrants' including students undertaking their course of ITE and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) undertaking their first year of teaching. The term 'mentor' is used to refer to a member of school staff who is designated to support an NE's professional development - who assists a new entrant in 'the transition from student-teacher to self-directing professional' (Vonk, 1993: 31). In brief, this research investigates NEs', mentors' and headteachers' perceptions of the amount and type of mentoring support received and needed by NEs to primary teaching across the period of ITE and the first year as a qualified teacher.

In recent years, the increasing emphasis on the school-based elements of ITE (DfE Circulars 9/92, 14/93, DfEE Circular 4/98) and the implementation of an induction programme for NQTs in England and Wales (DfEE Circular, 5/99), has led to schools having a much greater role in the education of student-teachers. Students now spend a larger proportion of their course time in schools, and while they are in schools, mentors are responsible for overseeing and guiding their professional development (Evans, Abbot, Goodyear and Pritchard, 1996; Fish, 1995; Maynard and Furlong, 1993).

Alongside this increase in the school-based elements of ITE has been the growing emphasis on continued professional development for all teachers, particularly NQTs. Since June 1998, all NQTs have been provided with a Career Entry Profile (TTA, 1997) which has the purpose of conveying their 'strengths and priorities for future

development' (1997: 3). The Career Entry Profile sets out expectations that each NQT will set targets for professional development. The introduction of the Induction Year from June 1999 further formalises these expectations. From this date, all NQTs working within maintained schools or non-maintained schools in England are required to complete an induction programme which includes being assessed against a set of standards determined by the Secretary of State. Circular 5/99 suggests that the Induction Year should 'provide well-targeted support in the first year... it will also provide a foundation for the newly qualified teacher's long-term continuing professional development' (Introduction: para. 1). As part of this programme it is expected that NQTs will be allocated an 'induction tutor' (in the terms of this research, a mentor) who will be responsible for the day to day monitoring and support of the NQT and who will:

> be able to make rigorous and fair judgements about the newly qualified teacher's performance in relation to the requirements of the satisfactory completion of the induction period and to provide or co-ordinate guidance and effective support for the NQT's professional development. (Circular 5/99: para. 24)

With the above developments it can be seen that the mentor's role is becoming increasingly significant in schools. There is a growing recognition that teaching is 'a highly skilled, complex profession requiring many years to reach full competence' (Sidgwick, 1996: 103) and that mentors have an important role in this process.

However, research has suggested that there is often confusion over the nature of the mentor role within schools (Cross, 1995; McIntyre, Hagger and Wilkin, 1993) and that, in practice, NEs' professional development is not always being supported as effectively as it could be (Carney and Hagger, 1996; Bleach, 1999; Bush, Coleman, Wall and West-Burnham, 1996; Edwards and Collison, 1996; Tickle, 1993).

This research study investigates whether NEs' mentoring needs are being met within the current climate of change and development. It explores the factors that influence whether mentoring needs are being met, particularly exploring *changes* in the mentoring support received by and perceived to be necessary for NEs across the period of ITE (for the

purposes of this research, a one year Post Graduate Certificate in Education - PGCE) and the first year as a newly qualified teacher.

The exploration of changes is particularly important. A growing body of research suggests that the mentor's role is complex and needs to change to meet the changing professional needs of the NE (e.g. Ballantyne, Hansford and Packer, 1995; Maynard and Furlong, 1995; Vonk, 1996). However, despite the growing emphasis on maintaining continuity between ITE and the NQT year, the majority of research on mentoring NEs has concentrated either on the mentoring of students or on the mentoring of NQTs. There is relatively little research that explores mentoring across the period of ITE and the first year as qualified teacher.

The research questions were therefore:

- How much and what type of mentoring support is received by NEs at different stages of professional development?
- Does the type and amount of mentoring support received in practice at different stages of professional development match the type and amount of mentoring support theoretically thought to be necessary?
- What factors influence the mentoring received by NEs at different stages of professional development?
- How much and what type of mentoring support do NEs, mentors and headteachers perceive NEs need at different stages of professional development?
- How does the amount and type of support received by NEs and perceived to be necessary for NEs change at different stages of professional development?

These questions were investigated using both case studies and questionnaire surveys, with both qualitative and quantitative data being collected.

Within this research study, certain terms have been used that may be open to different interpretations. For the purposes of this research, these terms have been defined as set out below:

- 'mentor': member of staff in a school designated to support the NE's professional development.
- 'mentoring needs': the requirements an NE has from mentoring i.e. those factors that are necessary if successful mentoring is to occur, successful mentoring being mentoring that fulfils its purpose (i.e. to support the NE's professional development).
- 'mentoring support': support provided by the mentor or the school that assists the NE in developing professional competences.
- 'mentorial': formal meeting between mentor and NE.
- 'mentoring structures': systems to support mentoring within the school context.
- 'mentoring co-ordinator': member of staff responsible for overseeing the mentoring within a school, may or may not be an individual mentor as well, exact responsibilities vary from school to school.
- 'formal mentoring': pre-arranged mentorials with an agenda, structure or specific focus.
- 'informal mentoring': spontaneous interactions, varied in content, often satisfying an immediate need.

Chapter One explores the background literature, in particular, examining conceptions of the mentoring role and the personal and contextual factors identified as having an influence on the success of the mentoring process.

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This research focuses on the mentoring needs of NEs both in their period of initial training and in their first year as qualified teachers. For the purpose of this research, 'mentoring needs' are defined as those factors necessary for successful mentoring to occur - successful mentoring being mentoring which fulfils its purpose. As discussed in the Introduction, for this research study the purpose of mentoring is taken to be to support an NE's professional development.

In order for a mentor to effectively support an NE in his/her professional development, it is generally accepted that the mentor needs to take on certain roles or functions (Ballantyne *et al*, 1995; Cross, 1995). However, there are widely differing opinions on what the exact nature of these mentor roles should be with many different conceptual models of mentoring being proposed (e.g. Maynard and Furlong, 1995; McIntyre and Hagger, 1993; Vonk, 1993). This chapter first reviews the literature on mentoring models, exploring the roles theoretically perceived necessary for mentors to fulfil. Writers, for the most part, have tended to focus either on the mentoring needs of pre-service or qualified teachers (McBride, 1996). For this reason, the literature that discusses the role of the student-mentor and the literature that discusses the role of the NQT mentor are reviewed separately before the two areas are drawn together.

Research has also suggested that certain personal and contextual factors will influence whether or not mentoring is successful (e.g. Bleach, 1999; Wildman, Magliaro, Niles and Niles, 1992; Yeomans, 1994). Personal factors include individual mentor and NE personality traits, characteristics and attitudes. Contextual factors include those features

of the school environment that may affect the quality of the mentoring provided, for example, the amount of time available for mentoring; the status of mentoring within the school; the general school ethos and culture. Taking the premise that NEs therefore have certain personal and contextual needs, this chapter also reviews the literature on this area.

Mentoring Models

Pre-service mentoring models

For most of the twentieth century schools have played a limited role in ITE, generally being perceived as places where student-teachers went to 'put into practice' the theory they had learnt at their Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Gardner, 1993). Responsibility for the student's professional development lay firmly with the HEI and its staff and the classroom teacher was essentially seen as a supervisor or overseer (Wilkin, 1990). However, during the last twenty-five year, schools have come to play an increasingly important role in the education of student-teachers (Fish, 1995; Furlong, 1994; McIntyre *et al,* 1993).

This movement towards emphasising the role of schools in ITE was initially marked by DES Circular 4/84 which promoted greater links between schools and HEIs in ITE. Subsequent circulars have expanded the role of schools in ITE (e.g. DfE Circulars 9/92; 14/93; DfEE Circular 4/98). Circular 9/92 (secondary education) stated that 'schools should play a much larger part in initial teacher training as full partners of higher education institutions' (DfE, 1992: 1) and set out that two-thirds of every PGCE course should be school-based. In 1998, new standards for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) were introduced (DfEE Circular 4/98). Although it is the responsibility of HEIs to ensure that these standards are met, the decision on whether a student meets these standards is judged by his/her performance in school.

This increase of the role of schools in ITE has led to mentors playing a far more significant role in the education of student-teachers (Kirkham, 1992; Smith and Aldred, 1993; Wilkin, 1992). Supervising class teachers are now widely known as 'mentors' and as such, have a responsibility for guiding the professional development of the students they mentor. Theoretically their role is now expected to go far beyond that of the traditional supervisor (Evans *et al*, 1996; Fish, 1995; Maynard and Furlong, 1993). Maynard and Furlong suggest that:

> It is necessary to move from the notion of supervision in school, where teachers are supervising trainees in the application of training acquired elsewhere to a notion of mentoring, which is an active process, where teachers themselves as practitioners have an active role in the training process. (1993: 71)

The exact nature of this new mentor role is a subject that has led to considerable debate (McIntyre *et al*, 1993). Many different models conceptualising pre-service mentoring have been proposed. Maynard and Furlong (1995) summarise these models under three headings: The Apprenticeship Model; The Competency Model and The Reflective Practitioner Model.

The Apprenticeship Model

The advocates of this model share a mechanistic conception of teaching and teacher education, believing that teaching is essentially a practical skill, involving the transmission of knowledge and the preservation of cultural and moral values (Lawlor, 1990; The Hillgate group, 1989; O'Hear, 1988, 1991). In this model the view is taken that teaching is a process best learnt through practical experience in schools, that 'teaching is a practical ability best learned by doing; educational theory has no direct bearing on this ability' (O'Hear, 1991: 17). The student-mentor is therefore purely a role model and as such needs no qualifications other than being an experienced teacher.

This position has come under considerable attack from many professional teacher educators (e.g. Fish, 1995; Furlong, 1994; Maynard, 1996; Mountford, 1993). Furlong views these writers of the New Right as having 'mounted a sustained attack on many aspects of contemporary educational policy' (1994: 11) and suggests that it is impossible to underestimate their influence on the government policies of recent years. It is argued that as a conception of mentoring this model is not only limited but also questionable with many studies showing that students simply placed in classrooms do not always learn how to teach (e.g. Dunne and Harvard, 1993; Edwards and Mercer, 1987; Watkins and Whalley, 1993).

The Competency Model

The competency model is advocated by those who perceive teaching to primarily be a skills-based activity and that learning to teach involves the student being systematically trained to achieve a number of pre-defined competences, achievement being measured by satisfactory performance (e.g. Beardon, Booth, Hargreaves and Reiss, 1992). Within this model of learning to teach, the mentor's role is essentially perceived to be that of a coach or trainer.

Opponents argue that such a model is limited because it fails to take into account the cognitive and affective changes that occur during the process of learning to teach and the importance of the role of critical self-reflection in this process (e.g. Elliott and Calderhead, 1993; Frost, 1993; Hyland, 1993; Jacques, 1992; Smith and Aldred, 1993).

The Reflective Practitioner Model

The reflective practitioner approach owes much to the view that teaching is a highly complex activity and that learning to teach involves far more than performance of a set of skills (Bleach, 1997). Advocates of this model believe that learning to teach involves developing a professional knowledge base underpinned by a theoretical, ethical and moral understanding of teaching and learning. Such a knowledge base is formed through

reflection on practice - both the student's own practice and that of other teachers (e.g. Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Elliott and Calderhead, 1993; Feiman-Nemser, Parker and Zeichner, 1993; Schön, 1987; Zeichner, Liston, Mahlios and Gomez, 1988; Zeichner and Liston, 1987.) Within this model, the mentor's role is perceived as promoting and encouraging reflection in the student-teacher. Calderhead (1987) suggests that without the support and guidance of a mentor, a student's reflection is likely to be shallow and superficial. Zeichner *et al* (1988) and Feiman-Nemser and Buchman (1993) echo this view, reporting that without guidance students are likely to focus on immediate performance rather than the theoretical, ethical and moral dimensions underlying practice.

Looking overall at these three models, Maynard and Furlong criticise all three for being largely one-dimensional and for failing to take into account the developmental nature of professional learning:

> They are ideologically rather than empirically derived. As a consequence they take into account neither the complexities nor the developmental nature of professional learning... it is because students typically go through different stages of learning to teach that we suggest that mentoring needs to be developmental too. (1995: 179)

A substantial body of research suggests that student-teachers progress through a series of 'stages' or 'phases' as they develop professionally, each stage or phase having its own specific concerns (e.g. Calderhead, 1987; Fuller and Bown, 1975; Guillaume and Rudney, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1995).

Fuller and Bown (1975) propose that students develop through three discrete stages: 'survival', when they are concerned with surviving through the first few weeks ; 'mastery', where they are concerned with achieving a level of basic competence and a third stage where they will either become set in their ways and resistant to change or become increasingly focused on the impact of their teaching and the learning experiences

of their pupils. Similarly, Calderhead (1987) suggests that students develop through three stages: 'fitting in' where students are concerned with being able to fit in with the school and its routines; 'passing the test' where students become concerned with achieving a level of competence sufficient to pass their teaching practice and 'exploring' where students begin to experiment and explore new ways of teaching.

Instead of seeing development in terms of stages, Guillaume and Rudney (1993) identify six principal areas of concern that student-teachers have: lesson planning; discipline; working with pupils; working with the classroom teacher; working with others in the school and making the transition from student to qualified teacher. They argue that throughout a student's development he/she will have these six areas of concern but that as the student develops and his/her professional thinking becomes increasingly complex the *nature* of the concerns will change.

Maynard and Furlong (1993, 1995) argue for a series of five stages that have many similarities with Calderhead's (1987) and Fuller and Bown's (1975) models of professional development discussed above.

- **Early Idealism:** seen in students before they go on their initial school experience
- **Personal Survival:** during the first few weeks of their teaching experience when students are principally concerned with 'fitting in', learning school routines and being seen as a teacher.
- **Dealing with Difficulties:** after the first few weeks when students are increasingly concerned with making a good impression and passing their teaching experience.
- **Hitting a Plateau:** when students have achieved basic control and competence they 'hit a plateau', having found strategies that work they stick to them.
- **Moving On:** with sensitive supporting and challenging, students can eventually be moved to a deeper consideration of the theoretical underpinning of professional practice and to take responsibility for their own professional growth.

Unlike Fuller and Bown (1975), Maynard and Furlong suggest that the stages of development are not discrete and that student development is not linear and simple but complex, individual and often erratic with students, particularly in times of stress, being likely to revisit earlier stages. Elliott and Calderhead similarly emphasise that learning to teach is 'idiosyncratic and personal' (1993: 173), suggesting that it is unlikely that there is a uniform progression in all domains of development.

Maynard and Furlong suggest that the final stage - 'Moving On' - is essential if students are to become effective, 'self-developing professionals'. They believe that this stage is marked by the student's focus shifting from his/her own performance to that of the children's learning. Similarly, Kagan (1992), who proposes that students' professional growth occurs in a number of different domains, suggests that professional development is characterised by an increasing emphasis on the children's learning.

McIntyre (1992) argues that professional development is marked by an increasing ability to reflect in depth on practice. He identifies three levels of reflection: the technical, the practical and the critical, that students should ideally move through. He suggests that, in the early stages of learning to teach, students' reflection will be at a basic technical level where they are essentially reflecting on whether they have achieved certain goals, for example, maintaining control in the classroom. As the student begins to develop an understanding of teaching and learning the reflection will move to a practical level with the emphasis on evaluating practice and articulating their understanding. The eventual aim for student-teachers should be to develop the ability to reflect critically, that is, to reflect on the wider theoretical, ethical and political issues arising their own and others' practice. However, McIntyre warns that this level of reflection is rarely practised even by experienced teachers.

When considering the role of the mentor, Maynard and Furlong (1993, 1995) suggest that it is vitally important to recognise the developmental nature of students' learning and to recognise that a student's mentoring needs will change as they develop:

> To ignore the trainees' needs is equivalent to the student-teacher planning a lesson without any thought of the age, abilities or interests of the children for whom the lesson is intended. (1993: 71)

Maynard and Furlong propose four basic mentoring stages each with a mentoring role and most appropriate strategies: Beginning Teaching; Supervised Teaching; From Teaching to Learning and Autonomous Teaching.

Beginning Teaching: The mentor's role, at this early stage, is primarily to support the student by acting as a role model so that the student can develop certain simple teaching strategies and come to terms with him/herself as a teacher.

Supervised Teaching: At this stage when the student is starting to take some responsibility for teaching, he/she needs to begin to develop a body of practical professional knowledge. The mentor's role is seen to be to assist this process by coaching and training, guiding the student, focusing the student on the specifics of teaching and encouraging students to discuss and reflect on their practice.

From Teaching to Learning: As students reach a level of basic competence and begin to 'hit a plateau' it is suggested that the mentor should become a 'critical friend', moving the student's focus from their own performance to that of the children's learning. The mentor should encourage the student to 'consider more deeply the educational purposes underlying their teaching' (1995: 188) guiding the student towards 'systematic enquiry' into his/her own practice.

Autonomous Teaching: This stage involves students moving towards becoming an autonomous, 'self-developing professional'. The mentor's role at this stage is to guide the student towards a fuller understanding of the theoretical, social, political and moral dimensions of teaching. The mentor should promote a more open and equal relationship with the student encouraging the student to take greater responsibility for their own development and encouraging the student to experiment with new strategies and

routines. This role is described as a 'co-enquirer'. Maynard and Furlong suggest that the student will only be ready for this type of sophisticated reflection once a certain level of competence and confidence is achieved.

Maynard and Furlong argue that the mentor's role should be changeable and flexible, adapting continually to meet the student's needs and constantly helping the student move forward in his/her professional development. This model includes all three conceptions of mentoring described above - The Apprenticeship Model; The Competency Model and The Reflective Practitioner Model - each being appropriate at different stages in a student's professional development.

Other writers have also proposed that the mentor's role should adapt as the student's needs change (e.g. McIntyre and Hagger, 1993; Sampson and Yeomans, 1994).

McIntyre and Hagger (1993) suggest that once a student reaches a certain level of basic competence the mentor needs to take on a different role and relationship in order to assist the student in becoming a self-developing professional. In this new relationship the student needs to be encouraged to take the lead in setting agendas and to become responsible for their own professional development, with the mentor and student interacting as equals. This new role and relationship appears very similar to the 'co-enquirer' role proposed by Maynard and Furlong (see above). McIntyre and Hagger suggest that in the context of the Oxford Internship scheme this change tends to occur around two thirds of the way through the PGCE year.

Sampson and Yeomans (1994) argue that the mentoring role changes according to the student's needs, recognising that 'the mentor's role is complex, multifaceted and the way it is performed can change rapidly within the course of a few minutes.' (1994: 63) They do not propose a set pattern of developmental stages but suggest a model whereby the single role of mentoring is divided into three areas of concerns or dimensions - 'structural', 'supportive' and 'professional'. Each dimension has several 'elements' and associated 'strategies'. Within this framework, they suggest that different dimensions,

elements and strategies will become dominant at different points in the student's professional development.

Structural dimension: the structural dimension is associated with ensuring that the conditions in school will facilitate student's learning.
Elements include: 'planner', 'organiser', 'negotiator' and 'inductor'.
Strategies include: 'negotiating', 'informing'

Supportive dimension: the supportive dimension relates to minimising students' stress.
Elements include: 'host', 'friend', 'counsellor'.
Strategies include: 'chatting', 'encouraging', 'praising', 'joking'

Professional dimension:- the professional dimension relates to any activities connected with the student's professional development as a teacher.
Elements include: 'trainer', 'educator', 'assessor'.
Strategies include: (for trainer element) 'demonstrating', 'commentating', 'prompting', 'suggesting', 'coaching', 'telling', 'confronting'; (for trainer or educator element) 'collaborating', 'persuading', explaining', 'reviewing', 'modelling'; (for educator element) 'discussing', 'focusing', 'generalising', 'reflecting back', questioning', facilitating'; (for assessor element) 'observing', 'recording', 'formalising', 'communicating feedback', 'confronting', 'reviewing'.

Sampson and Yeomans propose that as the student develops professionally then there will be a gradual shift from the use of strategies connected to the 'trainer' element, for example, role modelling, demonstrating, telling and coaching, to those connected with the 'educator' element, for example, generalising, reflecting back and focusing.

This model shares many similarities with those of Maynard and Furlong (1995) and McIntyre and Hagger (1993) discussed above. Within these models, the twin mentor roles of support and challenge are perceived as vital. Many studies have documented the

stressful nature of a student's teaching experience and shown how crucial it is that the student feels *personally* supported by the mentor (e.g. Bennett, Carré and Dunne, 1993; Yeomans, 1994). Without this support the relationship is likely to break down and the quality of the mentoring be compromised. However, providing personal support on its own is not enough. As Calderhead (1987) suggests, students that are not challenged will be likely to remain at a basic level of competence with limited, inflexible strategies.

Edwards (1997) argues that students need to be guided beyond simple reflection on their own performance to an understanding of the wider theoretical issues underlying practice. Mentors need to make their knowledge base accessible to their students and also give the students access to a language of professional discourse with which the students can articulate their growing professional understanding.

Conclusion

After reviewing the different mentoring models it would appear that the most useful and theoretically-sound conceptions of mentoring are those which take into account the developmental nature of learning to teach. In order to most effectively assist the professional development of a student the mentor needs to fulfil a variety of roles that continually adapt to meet the student's changing professional needs. Although there is not a set of discrete stages and each individual's development will be idiosyncratic, there is essentially a progression across the period of development from the mentor being a 'trainer' to being an 'educator', the student's development being characterised by an increasingly ability to reflect and a shift in emphasis away from his/her own performance to a deeper consideration of the children's learning. The roles of challenge and support are perceived to be equally necessary if the student is to be guided beyond basic competence to becoming a self-developing professional.

NQT mentoring models

Much has been written about the importance of an NQT's first year teaching, with studies suggesting that the first year of teaching will have a powerful influence on a teacher's future practices and attitudes (e.g. Calderhead, 1992; Early, 1993; Kuzmic, 1994; Reid, Bullock and Howarth, 1988). In 1998, The Teaching and Higher Education Act formalised the induction process for NQTs setting out that all NQTs should complete an 'induction period' of three terms. During this time each NQT will be assigned a mentor (described in DfEE Circular 5/99 as an 'induction tutor') who will have a significant role in supporting the NQT's professional development.

As with pre-service mentoring models, there appears to be some disagreement as to the definition of the term 'mentor' in the context of NQTs and the understanding of the roles that should be fulfilled by such a mentor (Cross, 1995). There have been many different mentoring models proposed, each specifying different mentor roles as being appropriate. The models that have been proposed can be categorised under two headings, those that perceive the NQT as being a fully competent professional (e.g. Cole, 1990; Kelly, Beck and apThomas, 1992; McIntyre and Hagger, 1996) and those that perceive the NQT as being partially competent, working gradually towards the goal of becoming a 'self-directing professional' (e.g. Bleach, 1997; Vonk, 1996).

The Competent NQT

The advocates of this model promote the view that NQTs are fully competent members of staff, that since being students NQTs have changed from being 'learners' into being 'teachers' (Carney and Hagger, 1996). It is not denied that NQTs are still in need of continuing professional development but their needs are seen as essentially the same as those of any qualified teacher new to a school.

Cole (1991) argues for an informal system of mentoring for all teachers in a school, where teachers should have informal mentoring relationships with 'buddies' who are self-selected and who are working within 'a caring and helpful community'. Formal mentoring arrangements are perceived as likely to be to the detriment of professional development, a development which she argues should happen naturally within such a supportive collegial community.

Kelly *et al* (1992) propose a more structured mentoring programme but again one that applies to all teaching staff, whether headteachers, NQTs or students. Distinctions are made between the mentoring needs of student-teachers and NQTs. Student-teachers are perceived as needing mentor help in 'acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for classroom teaching' (1992: 176). NQTs' main needs are perceived to be primarily that of initiation into the school and general advice:

> For teachers in their first year, the mentor plays a very different role... access to resources, support and advice are essential to help first year teachers settle into their new environment. (1992: 176)

McIntyre and Hagger (1996) argue for a model of mentoring in which mentoring is conceptualised on three, successively more complex, levels. The first level is a mentoring relationship in which a relative novice is supported in a new role by a relatively experienced colleague. It is, primarily, a personal relationship. This level is seen as applicable for headteacher mentoring. The second level involves a mentor with more experience than the mentee, guiding, advising and challenging the mentee in a new job - this level is seen as appropriate for middle managers and NQTs. The third level additionally involvies the mentor planning and managing the NE's learning curriculum - this is seen to be the most appropriate for student-mentoring.

In all the above models, NQTs are assumed to be fully competent teachers needing essentially the same amount of advice and guidance as other qualified teachers new to the school. Students on the other hand are perceived as needing a structured programme of

training. The mentor's role is essentially to support the NQT's self-directed learning, allowing the NQT to set the agenda. In some ways this can be seen as a continuation from mentoring in ITE, with mentors fulfilling the 'co-enquirer' role (Maynard and Furlong 1993, 1995). However, advocates of the partial competence model described below argue that NQTs, in the early stages at least, do not operate at a sufficiently sophisticated level of practice for this to be an appropriate mentor role (e.g. Stammers, 1993; Tickle, 1993; Vonk, 1994, 1996).

Research on staff and NQT perceptions of mentoring has shown that this conceptualisation of NQT mentoring is one that is often dominant in schools. In one study, Sidgwick found that:

> Many staff, including senior management, hold what one respondent termed a 'deficiency model' of induction, seeing a programme of observation, feedback and support as appropriate for NQTs who are struggling, but not for those who are 'coping well' (1996: 101)

Similarly, Bush *et al* (1996) found that NQTs were left to ask for help and that mentoring had a tendency to 'fizzle out'; Early and Kinder (1994) found that NQTs were unlikely to be regularly observed and Carney and Hagger (1996) reported that both NQTs and staff were sceptical of any provision that took NQTs out of the classroom or implied that NQTs were not fully competent members of staff.

The Partially Competent NQT

Advocates of this model believe that teaching is 'a highly skilled, complex profession requiring many years to reach full competence' (Sidgwick, 1996: 103). NQT mentoring is seen as part of a long-term process whereby the NQT moves through pre-service training to induction to eventually becoming a 'self-directing professional' (Vonk, 1996: 130). The mentor's role is perceived as being complex, a role that encompasses giving both personal support and guiding the NQT's professional development (Carré, 1993). Just as with the

pre-service mentoring models that stressed the developmental nature of students' mentoring needs, advocates of this model emphasise that mentors need to be flexible, continually adapting their role to meet the NQT's individual needs (Bleach, 1999; Wildman *et al,* 1992).

Vonk writes that 'the process of becoming a teacher is developmental in nature' (1996: 114). He perceives professional development as a single process that spans the career of the individual from pre-service training to retirement. For student teachers and NQTs, he suggests a development from initial training to induction to self-directed professional development. Initial training is aimed at the development of the NE's basic competences. Induction follows and is split into two phases, the 'threshold phase' which spans the NE's first year as a professional teacher and the phase of 'growing into the profession', which covers the second to fifth year of teaching (Vonk, 1993).

NQTs are at the 'threshold phase'. They are seen as initially concentrating on the survival aspects of the job, striving for acceptance within the school and classroom. At this stage they have very specific concerns and areas of professional knowledge that need developing. Just as Maynard and Furlong (1995) suggest that student mentors need to understand their students' needs in order to adopt the most effective mentoring roles (Vonk, 1996) argues that NQT mentors need to understand the nature of NQTs' problems if they are to deal with those needs effectively.

Vonk (1993) identifies three dimensions of need for NEs - the 'personal' dimension, the 'environmental' dimension and the 'professional' dimension. The mentor has a role within each.

The personal dimension: NQTs are under a great deal of stress as they struggle to develop a perspective of themselves as teachers. The mentor's role in this dimension involves helping NQTs develop this perspective and deal with stress.

The environmental dimension: NQTs have to learn how to fit in, they need information and they need to be accepted. The mentor's role is to facilitate this process.

The professional dimension: This is concerned with the NQT's professional needs. It has three sub-dimensions - pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management skills and teaching skills. The mentor's role is to assist development in these areas through encouraging the NE to reflect systematically on practice.

In many ways, these three dimensions correspond closely with the mentor role dimensions suggested by Sampson and Yeomans (1994) for student-mentors - the Supportive, the Structural and the Professional - discussed above.

Vonk suggests that as NQTs progress through the 'threshold phase' they should gradually develop a knowledge base through reflection on practice informed by academic knowledge that will enable them to work autonomously (Vonk, 1993). This view of professional development is, in many ways, similar to that proposed by Maynard and Furlong (1995) for students (see above). However, the significant difference is that Vonk's model assumes that NQTs are far *less* competent when they start their first year teaching than Maynard and Furlong's model would suggest students are likely to be when they finish the period of ITE. Maynard and Furlong suggest that at the end of their period of ITE, students will have achieved basic classroom management skills and should have already entered the stage of autonomous teaching.

Vonk (1996) suggests that NQTs have no more than very basic competences and a rather limited capacity for reflective thought when they start their first year teaching. He argues that they will be likely to have developed only a 'survival kit' - a limited, inflexible repertoire of coping strategies. It is the mentor's role to encourage the NQT to reflect on his/her own practice and guide the NQT to relate his/her experiences to wider theoretical principles of teaching and learning.

Tickle's (1993, 1996) research supports Vonk's claim. Tickle reports that the reflection NQTs displayed in his research was largely limited to day-to-day practical situations with little critical thinking beyond the immediate. He too suggests that NQTs need to be guided towards deeper reflection beyond the 'realms of technical and clinical competences' (1996: 146).

Ballantyne *et al* (1995) propose that the mentor's role must adapt to meet the NQT's changing concerns. In a study of NQTs, they found that in the first term NQTs were most likely to be concerned with planning and pupils' behaviour and to most value their mentors providing reassurance, encouragement, general advice and ideas. In the second and third terms there was a gradual shift in focus from their own performance to the children's learning and they most valued mentors who provided them with critical feedback and evaluation.

Studies reported by Carré (1993), Menter (1995) and Veenham (1984) also identify the areas of discipline and classroom management as being areas that NQTs are most likely to be concerned with, particularly in the first term. Carré reports that in the second and third terms, the concerns gradually shifted to a focus on the pupils' learning.

Cross (1995) suggest that an NQT mentor has three basic roles or functions:

- to transmit knowledge and skills
- to initiate the NQT into rules and ethics of the profession
- to bolster the NQT's confidence through encouragement and praise.

Ballantyne *et al* (1995) suggest that mentors need to fulfil four basic roles:

- giving personal support
- giving task-related assistance and advice
- giving problem-related assistance and advice
- guiding critical reflection on practice

In both these models, as in Vonk's described above, the role of giving personal support is perceived as very important. Ballantyne *et al* suggest:

> The personal and emotional support that a friendly, open and approachable mentor can provide is seen as one of the most important functions of mentoring. (1995: 300)

Similarly, Abell, Dillon, Hopkins, McInery and O'Brien (1995) found that the NQTs in their research 'wanted their mentors to first and foremost be that person they could talk to' (1995: 185).

As with models of pre-service mentoring, the role of challenge is also seen as vital if the mentor is to guide the NQT's professional development (Bush *et al*, 1996). It has been suggested that, if their thinking is not challenged, NQTs will tend to develop a very limited and inflexible range of strategies and actions and will fail to develop a solid base for reflection and further development (Bleach, 1997; Carré, 1993; Tickle, 1996; Vonk, 1996). However, as with student-teachers it has been suggested that such a role will not become appropriate until the NQT has reached a certain level of confidence (Ballantyne *et al,* 1995; Cross, 1995; Vonk, 1996).

It can be seen that mentoring models based on the conception of the NQT as a partially competent teacher essentially propose that mentors should fulfil roles very similar to that of a student-teacher mentor - they should offer personal and professional support and guide professional development. The role is perceived to be a flexible one, adapting to meet the continually changing needs of the NQT.

Summary of theoretical frameworks for the mentoring of NEs

From the above review of the literature on mentoring models it can be seen that many researchers hold the view that the mentor's role is complex and multi-faceted and needs to adapt to meet the NE's changing needs. In both areas - pre-service mentoring and NQT mentoring - the role of the mentor is widely taken as being to offer personal and professional support and to guide professional development. This role can be summarised as essentially having three dimensions:

- the personal i.e. providing personal support for the NE.
- the structural i.e. inducting into the school.
- the professional i.e. guiding professional growth.

Within the professional dimension it is suggested that the exact nature of the roles fulfilled by the mentor will change according to the NE's individual needs but there being a gradual progression from giving support to training to educating i.e. challenging. Challenging is seen as a vitally important role if the mentor is to effectively support the NE's professional growth (Bleach, 1999; Bush *et al*, 1996; Daloz, 1986; Elliott and Calderhead, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1993)

If the mentor is to fulfil the mentoring role it would appear vitally important that he/she has an accurate understanding of the nature and aims of the role and yet research has suggested that mentors may not have accurate expectations of their role. In particular, mentors seem unaware of the importance of the challenge role.

Elliott and Calderhead (1993) report that student-mentors generally viewed their role in terms of 'nurturing supporting' rather than challenging. Collison and Edwards (1994) found that mentors in their research study generally perceived themselves as 'carers' , occasionally as 'guides' but only rarely as 'challengers' (1994: 8). Cameron-Jones and O'Hara (1995) found that student-mentors perceived their roles as being to support, to be

a professional example, to provide feedback but not to 'challenge'. Other studies have also found this lack of awareness of the importance of the challenging role with NQT mentors (Ballantyne *et al*, 1995; Carney and Hagger, 1996).

Research has suggested that there is very little evidence of challenging and in-depth critical reflection with either students or NQTs in practice. Bleach (1997) found that interactions between NQT and mentor were generally 'comforting rather than challenging' (1997: 22). Zeichner *et al* (1988) report that only a very small proportion of the discourse between mentors and students in their study was concerned with underlying theoretical principles and moral and political issues and that there was a general lack of attention given to the pupil's learning experiences. Edwards and Collison (1996) found little evidence of mentors challenging students' preconceptions or of encouraging students to engage in critical reflection. Edwards and Ogden (1998) report that mentors rarely engaged in developing principles of practice from concrete teaching experiences when giving feedback to students.

It is very important that mentors are aware of the full remit of their role because research has indicated that both students and NQTs are often unaware of their own needs. It has been found that they tend to focus on the immediate 'survival' aspect of teaching and disregard longer term aims (Maynard, 1996, Bush *et al*, 1996, Tickle, 1996). It is therefore up to the mentor to 'be assertive in their interventions, providing students with what they 'need' rather than what they necessarily 'want' (Maynard and Furlong, 1995: 180).

NQTs, in particular, appear like their mentors to have variable understandings about the nature of their professional development and their mentor's role in this. Tickle (1993) found that NQTs largely wanted to be left on their own, seeing learning as learning through private experience and lacking an understanding of their own long-term developmental needs. Gratch (1998) reports that the NEs in her research perceived that providing the mentor/NQT relationship was a 'friendship' then the mentor was fulfilling his/her role satisfactorily. Consistent with Tickle's work (1993) she suggests that NQTs enter the

teaching profession with the attitude that teachers should not need to ask for help with problems in their classroom.

Factors that influence the success of mentoring

A growing body of research has explored, theoretically and empirically, the factors that are thought to be necessary for successful mentoring (e.g. Wildman *et al*, 1992; Yeomans, 1994). These factors can be classified as personal and contextual. Personal factors are those factors which may affect the mentor and NE relationship, for example, mentor and NE characteristics, personality traits and attitudes. Contextual factors are those features of the school environment that may affect the success of the mentoring, for example, the time made available, the school ethos, the attitude of senior management.

Personal Factors

The Mentoring Relationship

Much has been written about the importance of the mentoring relationship in determining the overall success of the mentoring (e.g. Bennett *et al,* 1993; Elliott, 1995; Hawkey, 1998; Yeomans, 1994). Yeomans (1994) suggests that a good mentoring relationship with the NE is vital: 'positive relationships helped students to focus on developing their professional skills in a supportive atmosphere' (Yeomans, 1994: 101). Bennett *et al* (1993) found that the perceived quality of the mentoring relationship influenced students' evaluation of their teaching practice. When the students perceived that they had been supported well, they perceived they had gained in confidence and that the experience had been positive. When they perceived a lack of support they expressed feelings of resentment and were more likely to perceive the experience in a negative light.

While the relationship is important regardless of the status of the person being mentored, the exact nature of the mentoring relationship is likely to change as the NE develops professionally (McIntyre and Hagger, 1996). Student/mentor relationships are generally characterised as being a teacher/learner relationship (Yeomans, 1994), a relationship where a professional distance needs to be maintained (Campbell and Kane, 1996). However, as the student develops professionally it has been suggested that the relationship should change to become more that a relationship between equals (McIntyre and Hagger, 1993).

NQT/mentor relationships are generally characterised as being more of an equal relationship from the start. Bush *et al*, 1996 reported that NQTs and mentors perceived that the mentoring relationship was an 'equal partnership'. Ballantyne *et al* (1995) suggest that although there is some level of equality between mentor and NQT, the relationship does not truly become that of equals until the second and third terms when the NQT is more independent professionally and the relationship changes to becoming more that of friendship. Similarly Bleach argues that the relationship will change over the course of the year, becoming 'an increasingly voluntary and equal partnership.' (1999: 29)

Mentor Qualities and Skills

Much has been written about how mentors' personal qualities and skills can influence how effectively they fulfil their role (e.g. Bleach, 1999; Brooks, 1996; Early and Kinder, 1994; Shaw, 1992; Wildman *et al*, 1992; Vonk, 1994; Yeomans, 1994). Most often mentioned is the need for the mentor to have good interpersonal skills (e.g. Early and Kinder, 1994; Vonk, 1994; Yeomans, 1994). These include the mentor being:

- approachable
- accepting
- open-minded
- flexible

Interpersonal skills relate to the personal dimension of the mentor's role and are perceived as important for all levels of mentoring, particularly so when the mentor is supporting through the stressful initial period of taking on a new job and the mentoring relationship is being formed (Bleach, 1999; McIntyre and Hagger, 1996).

Certain mentor personal qualities have also been identified as important for the professional dimension of the role, qualities that help establish a relationship in which an NE can accept criticism and challenge from the mentor without becoming defensive (Wildman *et al,* 1992). These qualities include:

- self-awareness
- open-mindedness
- sensitivity
- reliability

As well as personal qualities or attributes, it has also been suggested that the mentoring will be more likely to be successful if the mentor has certain skills i.e. accomplishments or expert knowledge (Campbell and Kane 1996; Brooks, 1996; Kirkham, 1993). These skills include:

- being a good listener
- having good communication skills
- being able to give constructive feedback
- being a good teacher
- being respected professionally

NE Qualities

Research suggests that the NE's own personal qualities and attitudes will affect the mentoring relationship (e.g. Yeomans, 1994; Wildman *et al,* 1992). Qualities generally identified as being influential include:

- friendliness
- positive
- ability to be open up - to admit problems
- willingness to accept help
- professional attitude e.g. reliable, punctual, responsible

Mentor/NE Beliefs

Dart and Drake (1996) suggest that it can be helpful for the mentoring relationship if there is a match between the student's and mentor's beliefs about teaching. Bush *et al* (1996) suggest that it is particularly important for there to be compatibility of professional beliefs when the mentoring is between colleagues, for example, with NQTs.

Contextual Factors

As well as the personal factors that may affect the mentoring relationship there are certain contextual or external factors that may also influence the quality of the mentoring support provided.

Time

A wealth of studies point to the importance of time and availability in ensuring successful mentoring (e.g. Bailey and Brankin, 1992; Campbell and Kane, 1996; Mountford, 1993; Watkins and Whalley, 1993). Time is needed for mentor and NE to

meet and for mentors to observe NE and for NE to observe other teachers teaching (Cross, 1995; Watkins and Whalley, 1993).

Lack of time has been identified as a particular problems in NQT mentoring relationships. Bush *et al* suggest that with NQTs: 'lack of time is a significant potential weakness of mentoring' (1994: 127). Early and Kinder (1994) report that time was one of the top priorities for NQTs. In their study, only four out of eighteen NQTs receiving timetabled discussion time with their mentor. Early and Kinder suggest that a lack of timetabled time may severely hinder a mentor taking an effective role in the professional development of an NQT.

Time spent on mentoring has been found to decrease substantially over the NQT year (Ballantyne *et al,* 1995; Early and Kinder, 1994).

The need for the mentor to be available for the NE has been used to argue against the practice of using senior management as mentors. Staff in such roles have many school duties and responsibilities and this has been found to sometimes adversely affect the mentoring relationship (Jacques, 1992).

Proximity

Wildman *et al* (1992) suggest that in the mentoring of NQTs, physical proximity of the mentor and NQT i.e. being located close to one another in the school may be important in ensuring the success of the mentoring relationship. They suggest that this is because of the spontaneous nature of the interactions between mentor and NQT particularly in the first few weeks when the NQT is settling into the school. Similarly, they suggest that teaching a similar age range helps ensure the success of the relationship as it means that mentor and NE are able to share an understanding of the conditions encountered.

Guidelines

It has been found that many schools do not have structures in place to support mentoring (Bush *et al*, 1996). Sidgwick (1996) found a similar pattern with NQT mentors in her research also appearing to be uncertain about their responsibilities.

It has been argued that guidelines are needed for all levels of mentoring, that all staff in schools should be made aware of the roles and responsibilities of mentoring (Frost, 1993; Mountford, 1993; Shaw, 1992; Vonk, 1996). Bush *et al* (1996) report that few NQTs in their study had seen written guidelines and that mentors and NQTs were generally unclear about what is expected: 'mentors do not understand what is expected of them and mentees are not always clear about what they are entitled to' (1996: 141).

Bailey and Brankin (1992) argue for written guidelines detailing criteria against which mentors will be selected and appointed. Others have also argued for the careful selection of mentors using definite criteria (e.g. Campbell and Kane, 1996; Vonk, 1996; Wilkin, 1992).

Mentor Status

It is necessary for mentoring and mentors to have a certain status within the school if the mentor is to successfully negotiate with colleagues and get their co-operation (McIntyre and Hagger, 1996; Moyles, Suschitsky and Chapman, 1999). Evans *et al* (1996) report that mentors perceive support from senior management to be extremely important. Glover and Mardle (1996) suggest that positive attitudes from management towards mentoring can greatly enhance the experience of students involved in ITE. However, research has shown that the management in schools do not generally give mentoring enough recognition or accord it enough importance (e.g. Little, 1990; Sidgwick, 1996; Tickle, 1993).

Whole School Mentoring

In order for mentoring to be as effective as possible it has been suggested that it is important that mentoring takes place within the culture of 'the mentoring school' (Shaw, 1992). In such a school, a culture of professional growth is fostered and the development of all staff is facilitated and supported (Kelly *et al*, 1992). Moyles *et al* (1999) found that mentoring was most successful when in schools where there were genuine support systems for all staff. However, such systems can only be established when the management of the school realises the benefits of mentoring and promotes mentoring throughout all levels of the school (Bleach, 1997; Sidgwick, 1996).

Edwards and Collison warn about the danger of 'desert-islanding' the student and mentor 'in the ocean of school-life' (1996: 6). They argue that mentoring needs to be accepted as an important element in the dynamics of a learning school and report that schools often still fail to recognise the potential of mentoring.

Summary of personal and contextual factors

From the above, it can be seen that a number of factors contribute to the success or otherwise of the mentoring. Some of these factors are universally needed across both student and NQT stages of development e.g. interpersonal skills, good relationship, time being available. However, some of these factors are needed more or less or in different forms at different stages of the NE's professional development.

Conclusion

In the literature it is suggested that NEs have certain mentoring 'needs' in terms of personal and contextual factors that need to be met and the roles the mentor needs to

fulfil. However, studies have tended to focus either on mentoring in the context of ITE or on mentoring in the context of induction for NQTs. There is little research that investigates these needs across the two phases of professional growth and yet there is a growing body of theoretical writing proposing that students and NQTs should not be seen as having widely different needs, that it is more useful and theoretically sound to view the transition from student to NQT as one of a continuous period professional development as the NE moves, over a period of years, to becoming a fully competent and experienced practitioner. (e.g. Bleach, 1999; McBride, 1996; Sidgwick, 1996; Thompson, 1993).

Research suggests that, in reality, an acute distinction is seen with staff in schools and NQTs themselves sharing the perception that NQTs are fully competent, essentially just needing the experience of running their own classroom to develop professionally (Carney and Hagger, 1996). With mentoring becoming increasingly significant in both the contexts of ITE and for NQTs it would appear that there is a need to further explore whether those involved in mentoring, including the NEs themselves, have accurate perceptions of the type and amount of mentoring required effectively to support NEs across different stages of professional development.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design and methods used to collect and analyse evidence about changes in the amount and type of mentoring support thought to be necessary for and received by NEs across the PGCE and NQT year.

RESEARCH DESIGN

> Qualitative data are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events lead to which consequences and derive fruitful explanations (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 1).

Mentoring is a complex activity taking place in a highly individual social setting (Evans *et al*, 1996; Fish, 1995; McIntyre and Hagger, 1996) and as such it was felt that an essentially qualitative research approach would be the most appropriate, allowing for in-depth investigation of the complex interactions between individuals within their school settings. Because of the exploratory nature of this research study, it was considered to be very important that the data was defined by the participants rather than being artificially structured by the researcher (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Patton, 1980). One of the key characteristics of qualitative research is that it allows for progressive focusing of the research over time (Bogdan and Birklen, 1992). It was expected that through the on-going collection and analysis of data, themes would emerge and the focus of the research would become progressively more defined.

It was felt that a meaningful understanding would best be achieved by considering each instance of mentoring within its own specific environment and over a period of time. The focus of the research was *changes* in mentoring when NEs are at different stages of professional development and so a multi-site, case study approach was chosen.

However, while the advantages of such an approach are that they allow meanings to be explored and discoveries to be made, an undeniable limitation of the case-study approach is that it is rarely, if ever, possible to claim that the findings can be generalised to the broader population: 'what can be discovered by qualitative research are not sweeping generalisations but contextual findings' (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994: 21). In view of this limitation, it was therefore decided to combine the multi-site case study approach with a series of questionnaire surveys. It was hoped that the questionnaires would provide the opportunity to explore case-study findings across a broader population and to gather data for statistical analysis.

Data collection was both quantitative and qualitative. Although traditionally research has fallen into either the quantitative or qualitative camp (Miles and Huberman, 1994), there is now a growing acceptance that combining both quantitative and qualitative data-collecting methods can be of great benefit (e.g. Dey, 1993; Cohen and Manion, 1989). Dey suggests:

> In my view these methods complement each other, and there is no reason to exclude quantitative methods such as enumeration and statistical analysis, from the qualitative toolkit. (1993: 4).

This is the philosophy adopted in this thesis. Case studies and questionnaire surveys were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. In order to make the data as reliable as possible, all data-collection and analysis was both structured and systematic.

Essential to this research endeavour is the concept of triangulation. With any observational research study, the potential for bias has to be acknowledged. However, if through triangulation of data sources, method and data type, findings are duplicated then the potential effect of bias is reduced and greater claims for reliability can be made (Miles and Huberman, 1994). A triangulated set of data was developed by collecting data from different sources (NEs, mentors and headteachers within the case studies and from both case studies and a survey of a larger sample of NEs); by different methods (through

interviews, logs, journals, observations, questionnaires) and of different data types (both qualitative and quantitative).

The research project thus consisted of two studies. Study One: a multi-site case study and Study Two: a series of questionnaires distributed to two cohorts of NEs over their PGCE and NQTs years. These two studies ran concurrently, with analysis of data from Study One informing the questions being generated in Study Two.

Each study constituted four phases:

- Phase One: PGCE students undertaking their first teaching practice.
- Phase Two: PGCE students undertaking their final teaching practice.
- Phase Three: NQTs undertaking the first term of their NQT year.
- Phase Four: NQTs undertaking the second and third terms of their NQT year.

Study One

Summary

A multi-site, multi-method case study using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Each case consisted of a mentor and an NE and monitored their interaction within the context of their school. Data were collected in a number of different ways - through logs, journals, interviews and videos - and from a number of different sources - headteacher, mentor and NE perceptions - thus developing a set of triangulated data.

Data were collected chronologically with collection and analysis running side by side. Each case was investigated individually. After initial individual analysis, cases were compared, firstly within phases and then between phases.

Data collecting instruments throughout Study One were developed from those used in a study conducted by Leicester School of Education from April 1996 to September 1997. That study was funded by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers and had the aim of investigating mentoring and support structures in primary schools using a case study approach (details of it are provided in Moyles, Suschitsky and Chapman, 1998).

Participants

- Phase One: Five mentors and five PGCE students (January - March 1997).
- Phase Two: Five mentors and five PGCE students (May - July 1997).
- Phase Three*: Five mentors and eight NQTs (September 1996 - December 1996).
- Phase Four*: Four mentors and five NQTs (January 1997 - July 1997).

* Phases Three and Four were investigated using the same participants, the reduction in numbers between the two phases was caused by one Phase Three school withdrawing from the research project before Phase Four began.

In total, thirteen schools were used (one school was used in both Phases One and Three, and two of the Phase Three mentors were at the same school). Details about the schools and the numbers of schools and participants involved in this study are shown in Table 2.1 below.

Sample

It was decided to focus on NEs who were completing or who had completed a PGCE course at the University of Leicester, with the intention being to eliminate variables that might have resulted from NEs undergoing courses of ITE that differed in terms of content and organisation. Similarly it was decided to focus upon NQTs undertaking their NQT year in schools within the Leicestershire LEA, therefore eliminating variables that might have resulted from differing LEA provision on policies.

Table 2.1. Profile of Schools participating in Study One.

Research Phase	School	NEs involved	School Type	Catchment Area	No. on role**
Phase One	1*	1 student	Primary and Nursery	Inner-city multi-cultural	550
	2	1 student	Primary	Suburban, owner-occupier	400
	3	1 student	Primary and Nursery	Inner-city multi-cultural	600
	4	1 student	Infant and Nursery	Inner-city, mixed	250
	5	1 student	Primary and 4+	Suburban, owner-occupier	650
Phase Two	6	1 student	Primary	Suburban, owner-occupier	600
	7	1 student	Primary	Urban estate	350
	8	1 student	Primary and Nursery	Suburban estate	400
	9	1 student	Primary and Nursery	Suburban mixed	350
	10	1 student	Primary and Nursery	Inner-city multi-cultural	400
Phases Three/Four	11	1 NQT	Infant and Nursery	Inner-city multi-cultural	350
	12	1 NQT	Primary	Country, village, owner-occupier	200
	13*	3 NQTs	Primary and Nursery	Inner-city multi-cultural	550
	14	3 NQTs	Primary	Urban, mixed	550

* Schools 1 and 13 were the same.

** Number of pupils on role is rounded to the nearest 50 to prevent the schools becoming uniquely identifiable and to thus preserve participants' anonymity.

With reference to the LEA lists which indicated which schools in Leicestershire were employing NQTs and the university lists on the schools which were known to be having students on the teaching practices, schools were identified where effective mentoring practices were believed by university tutors to exist. A short list was drawn up covering

as wide a range of schools as possible from small rural schools to large, inner-city schools (see Table 2.1) and schools and mentors were approached.

Potential Phase Three/Four schools were approached through the headteachers with mentors being contacted once the headteacher had expressed a willingness for each school to be involved in the research. Student mentors were approached when they attended mentor training days at the university and asked if they would be willing to be involved. Following mentor and school agreement, the student/NQT was then approached.

Although, as planned, all the students who participated in the case studies were undergoing training at the University of Leicester and all the NQTs were undertaking their NQT year in Leicestershire schools, two of the NQTs (one in School 14 and one in School 11) had completed their period of ITE at institutions other than Leicester. One of the NQTs in School 14 had completed a PGCE course at Cardiff. Hearing about the research, she expressed a desire to be involved - the other two NQTs in the school had both completed their training at Leicester. In School 11 there were two NQTs - one who had completed her training at Leicester and had therefore been identified as a possible participant and one who had completed a four year B.Ed. course at Nottingham Trent University. The mentor who had agreed to take part in the research was originally intended to be mentoring the Leicester graduate. However, due to school circumstances she was then asked to mentor the other NQT instead. Because arrangements had already been made it was decided to continue as planned with this mentor and her new NQT.

The aims and demands of the research were discussed with the mentors and NEs. Agreeing to participate meant agreeing to be interviewed, to complete certain documents and agreeing to be videoed having a mentorial (formal mentor/NE conversation) at least once. It was agreed that no extracts from the videos or tape-recorded interviews would be used without written permission from the participants involved. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process.

Context

All the students involved in Study One were students on the 1996-97 primary PGCE course at Leicester University. This is a one-year training course involving two six-week assessed teaching practices, one in the Spring term and one in the Summer term. During the teaching practices, students are assigned a mentor, generally, but not necessarily the classteacher of the placement class. During the teaching practices, students are also supported periodically by a university tutor. The NQTs involved in Study One were all working in schools within Leicestershire LEA. As discussed above, six of the NQTs had completed the primary PGCE course at the University of Leicester in the previous year. One NQT had completed a one year, primary PGCE course at the University of Cardiff. One NQT had completed a four year B.Ed. Hons. at Nottingham Trent University.

Table 2.2. Summary of Data Sources in Study One

The methods	Interviews	Logs	Journals	Observations	Meetings
Phase One					
Headteachers	✓				
Mentors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students	✓	✓		✓	✓
Phase Two					
Headteachers	✓				
Mentors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students	✓	✓		✓	✓
Phase Three					
Headteachers	✓				
Mentors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Students	✓	✓		✓	✓
Phase Four					
Headteachers	✓				
Mentors	✓	✓	*	*	✓
Students	✓	✓		*	✓

* although it was originally planned that these methods would be used during Phase Four, the research design evolved as the study progressed (see Chapter Seven).

Previous to this research and for the purposes of developing material for mentors, teaching staff at the University of Leicester had worked with a group of primary practitioners to formulate a mentoring pack to be used in all schools in which students from the university were undertaking their teaching practices. This pack was available in all case study schools.

Data Collecting Instruments

As shown in Table 2.2, data were collected in a number of different ways - through logs, journals, interviews and videos - and from a number of different sources - headteacher, mentor and NEs.

Interviews

The mentors (n=14), headteachers (n=13) and NEs (n=18) were all interviewed with the interviews being tape-recorded for transcription and coding at a later date. Participants in Phase One and Phase Two schools were interviewed once, near the end of the teaching practice. In Phase Three participants were interviewed near the end of the first term. In Phase Four mentors and NEs were interviewed twice, once at the end of the second term and once at the end of the third term; headteachers were only interviewed once at the end of the third term.

Interview schedules were semi-structured to support systematic coding of the data. All questions were open-ended to allow for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and perceptions and for the potential for clarification through the use of prompts and probes, therefore enabling the interviewer to 'make a truer assessment of what the respondent really believes' (Cohen and Manion, 1989: 313). A criticism often levelled at open-ended questions is that the data collected is vulnerable to distortion because of the reliance on researcher interpretation. To ensure that researcher interpretation of interview data was correct, interviews were transcribed, researcher interpretations and comments were added and then the transcriptions were returned to the participants for

checking. It was found that participants made very few changes to the researcher comments.

Interview questions were initially developed from the research questions. As the study progressed, early findings were used to inform the interviews and the questions in later versions were developed/added to. However, despite this progressive focusing of the questions, it was felt important to maintain a basic structure to allow for systematic comparison across the cases. Similar questions were asked of all participants (see Appendix B for interview schedules) with a final question that allowed participants to add any comments or to bring up any issues that they perceived to be pertinent.

Interviews were held in a variety of places, with mentors, NQTs and headteachers being interviewed within the school, normally at the end of the day in the case of the mentors and NQTs. Students were interviewed at the university the week after they had returned from teaching practice because it was felt that they would be more likely to be honest about their experiences if they were assured of not being overheard. Similar concerns were held about the mentors and NQTs and so they were twice invited to the university to discuss their experiences and perceptions outside of their school settings.

Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence was collected in the forms of journals and logs. Mentors and NEs were asked to complete a weekly log that recorded instances of formal and informal mentoring (with formal mentoring defined as a pre-planned discussion where the mentor was acting in the role of mentor and informal sessions referring essentially to spontaneous interactions). Mentors and NEs recorded information about:

- the number of mentoring sessions in the week
- the number of times sessions had been initiated by NE/mentor
- the amount of time spent in the week on mentoring
- the length of time of each formal session

- the topic(s) under discussion as well as recording any mentoring activity that had taken place with a person other than the mentor.

The questions were of a closed nature and the data gathered was essentially quantitative, i.e. numerical (although it is acknowledged that this quantitative data was still essentially the participant's perception of the mentoring that had happened rather than being an unequivocal, 'real' record of the mentoring that had taken place - see Chapter Seven for further discussion of this). For the purposes of validation, both NEs and mentors were asked to complete logs.

The logs were initially designed using an open-ended format. However, early feedback from Phase Three participants suggested that logs in this format were too time-consuming. As has been stated above, the research approach had been chosen to specifically allow for findings to inform on-going data collection and analysis. In consultation with Phase Three participants, the Logs were re-designed so that the same information (essentially numerical data) could be collected through the use of closed questions. Collecting data in this structured way had the added advantage that it allowed for valid systematic comparisons to be made across the cases. The re-designed logs were used from the fourth week in Phase Three and for the whole of Phases One, Two and Four (see Appendix A for Log proforma).

In the re-designed logs, participants were asked to estimate the number of informal mentoring sessions, the amount of time spent on informal mentoring and the number of sessions initiated by the mentor and by the NE.

Participants were also given a list of 25 areas, for example, 'time management'; 'behaviour'; 'resources', and were asked to use tally marks to record the number of times each area was discussed in the week. The 24 categories used were developed from the literature about NEs' needs and through discussion with the pilot study mentors on the ATL research project discussed above (Moyles *et al*, 1998). All pilot study mentors were experienced mentors and primary practitioners.

A challenge faced in the use of any printed data collecting instruments completed without the researcher being present is that of ensuring unambiguous interpretation of the terms used (Oppenheim, 1992). It was acknowledged that there was potential for confusion. In order to try and limit this, meetings for all mentors and NEs were held at the start of each phase to clarify meaning and ensure that participants and researcher held shared understandings of the terminology used. Definitions of the terms used in the logs are shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3. Agreed definitions of Topic/Area categories

Topic/ Area	**Agreed definition**
time management	children's use of time as managed by the teacher
classroom management	management of children and resources
curriculum	the content of learning including all those curriculum experiences that children have in the school context
behaviour/ discipline	all aspects of control within the school context
individual children	dealing with differentiated needs
assessment of children	formative and summative; informal and formal
record keeping	day to day informal records as well as formal records
expectations of children	what can be expected of the children in terms of behaviour and learning.
observations of children	informally and formally
planning lessons	short, medium and long term planning - what is going to be done and how and why the NE is going to do it
planning problems	responding to problems with planning
teaching and learning	theory/practice links; theoretical underpinning of practice
display	two and three dimensional wall and table display
extra-curricular	activities that take place out of the classroom
adult management	management of support staff and other adults
parents	dealing with parents in relation to their children
administration	day to day organisation e.g. dinner register
school procedures	school policies, schemes of work and time-tabling
resources	school resources - location and use of them
expectations of NE/M	what NEs/mentors can expect from each other
evaluate NE's progress	mentor assessment of NE's progress
personal issues	issues outside professional domain
teaching file	document used to plan and monitor day to day planning
assembly	gathering together of school

Mentors were also asked to keep a journal - an essentially qualitative record of the mentors' thoughts and feelings on instances of mentoring, recorded using proforma sheets. NEs were not asked to complete journals as concern was felt about loading additional paperwork on to NEs as they faced the demands of teaching practice and their NQT year.

Journals were originally designed around a basic structure of open-ended questions about the context of the interaction, mentor intentions, agreed outcomes, time issues and level of mentor satisfaction and perceptions of mentor's own professional development. However, as with the logs, early feedback from Phase Three participants suggested that this format were proving extremely time-consuming. Because the aim of the journals was essentially to collect perceptions and thoughts on *the processes* of mentoring, it was considered important to retain a certain degree of open-endedness to the questions. However, it was felt that it was also important to acknowledge participants' concerns. Journals were therefore re-designed to have three closed questions which collected information on why the session occurred, the topics covered and the mentor's intentions using sets of pre-defined categories, while retaining three open-ended questions which collected information on how the issue was dealt with, what the outcomes were and the effect of the mentoring on the mentor's own professional development, to allow for perceptions to be explored in some depth (see Appendix A for journal proforma). All closed questions had the option of an 'other' category and a space in which further comments could be made. For the closed question on 'topics discussed' the same set of categories was used as in the logs (see Table 2.3). For the closed question on 'mentor intentions' a set of 21 categories was developed based on the literature on the mentor role (Maynard and Furlong, 1995; Vonk, 1996; Sampson and Yeomans, 1994). With the roles, where it was perceived that there might be some confusion over the exact meaning, clarification was given in brackets. The role names and the clarification are shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4. Role names and clarification terms given to mentors.

Role	Clarification
to encourage	
to reassure	
to offer/show support	
to counsel	to listen and to empathise
to sponsor	to promote
to induct into school	to initiate and to inform
to plan	lessons/days/weeks
to negotiate	on behalf on NE
to assess NE	
to advise	ideas and suggestions
to discuss	
to protect	foresee problems
to clarify	to make clear/explain
to train	to coach and to teach
to focus NE	on issues/problems/needs
to identify NE's needs	
to analyse NE's needs	
to help NE reflect on classroom practice	
to help NE reflect on children's learning	
to challenge	to question NE
to action plan	to set targets

Observations

Video observations were planned to record one mentorial for each mentor/NE pair in each phase. The aim was to observe a mentorial that was as accurate a representation of the NE/mentors' usual mentorial as possible and therefore the content and length of the mentorial was left entirely to the mentor/NE to determine. For the same reason, mentorials were conducted without a researcher present with the mentorial being captured on video. As with any type of observation, it has to be acknowledged that there is a strong possibility that researcher presence, whether in actuality or through a video, will affect the behaviour of the participants. However, after the first two or three

minutes, the presence of the camera appeared to be ignored, discussion with NE and mentor afterwards confirmed this, with many suggesting that they 'had forgotten it was there'. While this does not mean that the possibility of researcher-effects can be discounted, their influences could be relatively minor. More importantly, the process of triangulation using a variety of other methods of obtaining data should ensure that researcher-effects would not appear consistently across different data sets, and could clearly be identified as bias appearing in one set only.

Students were videoed once, half way through their teaching practice. The intention was to video the NQTs once in each term. However, after the first term none of the NQTs had any pre-arranged, formal mentoring conversations and so NQT observations are only available for the first term (see Chapter Seven).

The aim of the observations was to collect qualitative data which could be used to enrich and supplement data gathered from other sources. Of particular interest was the potential the observations offered for comparisons between mentor and NE perceptions of the mentoring and the actuality of the mentoring in practice, bearing in mind that the 'actuality' of the mentoring would only ever be the researcher's interpretation of a supposed reality. Because of this, in as many cases as possible, the researcher's interpretation of the mentorial was tested by discussion at a later date with the mentor and NE. Mentors were also asked to complete a journal entry for the conversation.

Analysis of Data

Data collection and data analysis were concurrent processes, one informing the other, leading to a gradual narrowing of the focus as certain themes and patterns began to emerge (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Detailed individual case studies were developed, data from all sources within each case were combined in order to provide as detailed and complete a picture as possible of the mentoring received by and perceived to be necessary for the NE in each case.

Cases within phases were then compared and recurring patterns and themes identified from the qualitative data, for example, the relationship between NE expectations and perceptions of mentoring success. Quantitative data were amalgamated to establish, for example, the mean length of a formal mentoring session; the mean number of formal mentoring sessions; the mean amount of time spent mentoring or the topics discussed most frequently.

By comparing the data across cases within each phase it was possible to build up a more general picture of the mentoring within that phase and then to compare the mentoring across the phases to investigate any changes taking place.

Interviews

The interviews were transcribed for the purposes of systematic coding. The data was examined and a set of 'descriptive codes' (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was developed from the research questions and a consideration of the literature, including the categories:

- school mentoring structures
- mentor roles
- mentor/NE relationship
- mentor personal qualities
- NE mentoring needs

The data were coded and then rearranged under these categories. These broad categories were then divided into sub-codes. The codes were tested by using them to code samples of data and were redefined and expanded. A final set of codes was reached as shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5. Coding categories for interviews in Study One

Broad areas	Sub-codes	Sub-Sub-codes
School Structures	formal structures	Guidelines co-ordinator non-contact time selection of mentor perceptions of structures
	informal structures	staff other NEs
	time issues	amount of time other responsibilities changes in time
	perceptions	staff management priority of mentoring
	concerns	*
Roles	appropriate roles	*
	changes in role	*
	quality of support	*
Relationship	nature of relationship	*
	quality of relationship	*
	changes in relationship	*
Personal Qualities	personal	*
	professional	*
NE changing needs	changes in area of support	*
	other changes	*

* It was not felt necessary to sub-sub code these categories.

The data were re-organised using these sub-codes. With the data in an easily accessible and manageable format it was possible to identify and code themes emerging across the data sets, both within a case and between cases and to re-classify the data accordingly. With the data thus organised it was possible to interpret and explain rather than simply describe.

In terms of the mentor roles considered appropriate by participants, the responses given had enough similarities to be grouped together into 21 categories. In order to allow easier comparisons between individuals and across phases, these categories/roles were then grouped together into three 'role domains', with one of these domains - the 'Professional' - being sub-divided into four 'Role Elements' as shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6. Role domains, elements and associated roles.

Role Domain	Role Element	Associated Roles
Personal		to be a friend
Structural		to induct to facilitate
Professional	Professional Supporter	to encourage to reassure to listen to support in classroom
	Trainer	to protect to role model to train to discuss to advise to identify needs to focus to clarify to be a critic to help reflect
	Educator	to set targets to relate practice to theory to challenge
	Assessor	to evaluate

These role dimensions and elements are adapted from Sampson and Yeomans' research (1994). Sampson and Yeomans proposed a model of the mentoring role with three basic role dimensions: the Structural, the Supportive and the Professional with the latter including three elements: Trainer, Educator and Assessor (see pages 13-14). However, it was felt that the term 'dimension' used in their model is potentially confusing because it implies a measurable construct where individual items belong to it to a greater or lesser

degree. The term 'role dimension' was therefore replaced with the term 'role domain' with each separate domain being an individual domain of support.

Additionally, Sampson and Yeomans' Supportive' role dimension (including the roles to be a friend, to host and to counsel) was renamed the **Personal** domain because it was felt that all the roles were in some way supportive and that the use of the word 'Personal' clarified the type of support better. Within the **Professional** domain, a Professional Supporter element was added. This element was added after initial analysis of the interviews suggested that mentors and NEs distinguished between offering personal support i.e. generally being a friend, and offering professional support i.e. listening to professional problems and encouraging and reassuring. The **Structural** domain remained the same in name and definition.

A substantial body of research suggests that if mentors are to effectively support the NE's professional development then the role 'to encourage reflection' is vital. It is argued that by guiding the NE's reflection then the NE will come to a greater understanding of professional practice and move towards becoming a 'self-developing teacher' (e.g. Bleach, 1997; Maynard and Furlong, 1995; Vonk, 1996). It might therefore have been thought that the role 'to encourage reflection' would have been placed within the Educator element in the model used for analysis. However, research suggests that much of the reflection observed when mentors and students interact is at a superficial level, focusing more on performance than on the theoretical underpinning of practice (Edwards and Ogden, 1998; Feiman-Nemser *et al*, 1992; Zeichner *et al,* 1987). A distinction therefore was made between reflection which involved the mentor simply encouraging the NE to reflect generally on their day to day practice - reflection at a 'technical' and 'practical' level (McIntyre, 1992) and the role 'to challenge' which involved the mentor . questioning the NE and asking for justification of practice - reflection at a 'critical' level (McIntyre, 1992).The former role was identified as the role 'to encourage reflection' and was associated with the Trainer element, the latter was identified as the role 'to challenge' and was associated with the Educator element.

Logs

Log data were essentially quantitative detailing the amount of mentoring by type, i.e. formal and informal and the topics discussed. Session numbers and topics were pure frequency data, while amount of mentoring was generally recorded as time in minutes. The raw data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and could be treated as parametric, giving the opportunity for frequencies and means to be calculated for individuals and grouped and analysed across individuals, topics, or types of mentoring, and for the data to be portrayed graphically.

Data from individual cases within each phase were amalgamated, which enabled a more general picture of the mentoring across the phase to emerge and subsequently to be compared with other phases.

Journals

The open-ended questions on the journals were analysed in a very similar way to the interviews with information being classified under broad categories (taken from the headings of the sections of the journals which had themselves emerged from initial analysis of the data) and then being re-organised using sub-codes.

The closed questions were treated quantitatively and were coded and analysed using Excel, just as with the Logs.

Observations

Observational data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data were transcribed for the purposes of coding.

Quantitative analysis included recording the length of conversation, mean length of utterances, numbers of turns, number of interruptions. Analysis of the interviews

suggested that the mentor role, i.e. the functions a mentor fulfils, was an area of particular interest and importance to this study. It was therefore decided to use the time available to concentrate on this aspect of the observed mentorials, i.e. to investigate the roles mentors were observed to fulfil during the mentorials.

A set of coding categories was developed using the roles that had emerged from the interviews described above (see Appendix D for the coding categories used). It was acknowledged that any coding of observational data is open to researcher bias (Croll, 1986) and in order to make the findings as valid as possible, three researchers took part in the coding process.

Categories were discussed and defined through jointly watching and coding a piece of video. The categories were then redefined and the process repeated. When it was felt that a satisfactory set of mutually exclusive categories had been agreed, coding of a different video was then carried out by each of the researchers independently and the results of the coding compared. The inter-observer reliability figure was found to be 90.5% agreement on the broader categories, i.e. the role domains and elements with the figure falling to 65% agreement on the sub-categories, i.e. the individual associated roles. The main study data were coded and for each mentor a profile was drawn up showing each role as a percentage of the total number of interactions.

The data collected were used to inform the individual case study and also to explore changes in the mentoring across the different phases.

Study Two

Summary

Questionnaires were distributed to two cohorts of NEs:

- Cohort One: 140 NEs, who completed their PGCE at the University of Leicester in July 1997.
- Cohort Two: 146 NEs, who completed their PGCE at the University of Leicester in July 1998.

Questionnaires were distributed in four phases:

- Phase One: after the NEs' first teaching practice.
- Phase Two: after the NEs' final teaching practice.
- Phase Three: at the end of their first term as an NQT.
- Phase Four: at the end of their final term as an NQT.

Student questionnaires were given to university tutors who distributed them to the students personally, a week after teaching practice had ended. The tutors collected the completed questionnaires. NQT questionnaires were posted to the NQTs with a covering letter, reminder letters were sent to the NQTs three weeks after the initial questionnaires had been sent out.

Sample

As with Study One, it was decided to focus upon PGCE students at the University of Leicester in order to eliminate variables that might have resulted from NEs undergoing courses of ITE at other institutions. By selecting the sample in this way, it was known that all students had received the same training, that the schools in which the students were on teaching practice would have received the same information on mentoring and had the same access to mentor training as the case study schools involved in Study One and that the training experience of the larger sample of NEs would mirror that of nearly all of the NEs taking part in Study One.

It was decided to follow two cohorts of NEs. The first cohort was studied in detail, while the second cohort provided essentially quantitative data which could be

statistically compared with those from the first cohort to highlight areas where findings might be due to any unusual characteristics of the initial sample. Patterns occurring across both data sets would thus be more clearly generalisable to the general population.

Response

Phase One

- Cohort One: 140 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 77 completed and returned - a return rate of 55%.
- Cohort Two: 146 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 97 completed and returned - a return rate of 66%.

In both cohorts in Phase One, the return rate was lower than might have been expected (when compared to Phase Two return rates). In both cases the relatively low number of completed questionnaires can partly be attributed to the tutor of one student group failing to give out the questionnaires (a different tutor each time).

Phase Two

- Cohort One: 140 questionnaires were distributed and 109 were completed and returned - a return rate of 78%.
- Cohort Two: 146 questionnaires were distributed and 124 were completed and returned - a return rate of 85%.

Phase Three

- Cohort One: 60* questionnaires were distributed and 28 were completed and returned - a return rate of 47%.
- Phase Three: 110 questionnaires were distributed and 34 were completed and returned - a return rate of 31%.

Phase Four

- Cohort One: 60* questionnaires were distributed and 20 were completed and returned - a return rate of 33%.
- Cohort Two: no questionnaires were sent in this phase because the month before the questionnaires would have been sent out the participants were contacted as part of a separate University of Leicester research study on the experiences of NQTs and it was thought that two similar surveys in the space of a month from the same institution would place too great a burden on NQTs.

* Only 60 questionnaires were sent to Cohort One in Phases Three and Four because after Phase Two, respondents had been asked whether they would be prepared to be involved in Phases Three and Four, 60 respondents agreed. This did, of course mean that the sample in cohort one were self-selected for these phases and it is possible that this might have influenced the data collected. For this reason, the NEs in cohort two were not asked whether they would be prepared to participate, instead all who were known to be in a teaching position were contacted with a questionnaire. As shown in Chapter Seven there were very few significant differences between the two cohorts, suggesting that the self-selection of the Phase Three and Four sample in cohort one did not necessarily skew the results. Of course, it is important to acknowledge that as with any form of survey conducted by post, the respondents will to a certain extent be self-selected because they make a choice whether to return the questionnaire or not.

As can be seen from the above figures, the response rate was acceptable for both cohorts in Phase Two i.e. it was over 60% (Robson, 1990). It fell just below 60% for cohort one in Phase One. However, few significant differences were found between Cohorts One and Two in this phase and Cohort Two's return rate *was* acceptable. The return rate for questionnaires in Phases Three and Four was disappointingly low for both cohorts, despite reminder letters being sent. However, when the data were analysed there were reassuringly few significant changes between the two cohorts, therefore suggesting that

there were reasonable grounds for assuming that the findings in the main study had a certain degree of validity (see Chapter Seven).

Design

The questionnaires were designed to investigate the NEs' perceptions of the mentoring they had received, the mentoring support they felt they had needed and the mentoring support they expected to need in the future. The questions were developed with reference to the research questions informed by on-going analysis of the case study data. Later questionnaires were adapted, developed and extended in light of findings from the earlier questionnaires, although it was felt important to retain a degree of similarity in order to allow for later valid comparisons across the phases (see Appendix B for questionnaire proformas).

The questionnaires contained a mixture of open and closed questions. The advantage of closed questions is that numerical values can be clearly assigned to the output of closed questions, which allows greater opportunity for statistical comparisons across phases and cohorts. However, there is always a danger that by restricting the range of responses available to respondents, the researcher will constrain the answers that respondents can make (Oppenheim, 1992). To avoid this problem open-ended questions were included interspersed between the closed ones. Although this meant that many of the possible responses may be used by relatively few respondents, it avoids the danger of the researcher prejudging the results to be obtained and alerts the researcher to areas which had not been previously anticipated.

The closed questions listed a choice of researcher-defined categories or were rating-scale completions. In the two questions where researcher-defined categories were given - the areas in which support had been most needed and the roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled - the researcher-defined categories had emerged from close analysis of the case study data and were very similar to the categories used in the logs and journals (see above).

Analysis

A suitable environment for analysis of the questionnaires was found in Excel.

The closed questions (rating scales and tick boxes) provided data that could easily be assigned number codes and put into an Excel spreadsheet. The open questions were essentially treated as qualitative data. The responses for each question were examined and then drawing both on the data itself and the analysis of similar data from Study One, a coding scheme for each question was devised with a number of mutually exclusive categories. After a coding scheme had been devised a sample of questionnaires were then 'test-coded' to evaluate the effectiveness of the coding scheme. This led to revision of the categories and further test coding until it was evident that the categories for each question were exhaustive and exclusive (the categories finally decided upon and their definitions are shown in Appendix C). After the coding schemes had been finalised, the open questions were then coded and added to the Excel spreadsheet.

Once the data were entered into the spreadsheet, simple frequencies, correlations and percentages could be worked out and data could be represented graphically. Comparisons across the stages within one cohort could then be made using a number of different statistical tests. A chi-squared statistic (based on the McNemar Change Test - Siegel and Castellan, 1988) could be calculated to compare NE's expectations of their mentoring needs as reported at the end of one stage with their actual mentoring needs as they perceived them when they had completed that stage in reality. In theory the collection of data from the same subjects at four different points in time should have meant that it would have been possible to conduct a within-subjects analysis of variance (doing a repeated measures analysis increases the sensitivity of the test, so the differences are more likely to be significant). However, in practice, the number of participants who completed all four questionnaires was so small, in Cohort One at least, that such an analysis would not have been appropriate. Instead a between-subjects analysis was used.

Comparisons of the two cohorts could also be made, using analysis of variance where data were on numerical scales and chi-squared statistics where frequencies were to be compared. Additionally correlations within the two samples could be contrasted with each other by transforming them onto a normal distribution (Fisher's z transformation) and performing statistical testing on the transformed correlations (using z or t statistics depending on whether comparisons were between or within samples).

CONCLUSION

This is then the background to the research. The following chapters describe the findings. Each chapter describes the mentoring support perceived to be necessary for and provided for NEs at a particular point in time:

- Phase One i.e. first teaching practice
- Phase Two i.e. final teaching practice
- Phase Three i.e. first term as an NQT
- Phase Four i.e. second and third terms as an NQT.

A further chapter then compares each of these separate phases, focusing on the changes across these phases.

CHAPTER THREE: Findings from Phase One

Introduction

This chapter reports findings about the amount and type of mentoring support received by and perceived to be necessary for students in Phase One. Student participants in Phase One were undertaking a six-week teaching practice. This teaching practice took place in the Spring term, during January and February 1997. The findings are reported under two headings - Case Studies and Questionnaires.

Case Studies

Case studies were undertaken of five mentor-student pairs in five different primary schools. Comparisons were made across the cases to investigate general patterns and trends in the amount and type of mentoring support received by Phase One students and of headteachers', mentors' and students' perceptions of the type of mentoring support required by Phase One students. Detailed analysis of the individual case studies then explored mentors' and students' perceptions in greater depth and investigated the personal and contextual factors that influenced the mentoring support received by each student in each school. Data were mainly collected through interviews (with all participants) and weekly logs (completed by mentors and students) with additional supporting material from mentor journals and videoed mentorials.

Questionnaires

Findings from the case studies about students' perceptions of their mentoring requirements and their perceptions of the mentoring they received during Phase One were investigated by a questionnaire survey of 140 participants (including the five case study participants).

Case Studies

Table 3.1. Case study participants in Phase One.

	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Mentor *	Gina	Anne	Kim	Liz	Jill
Student *	Katrina	Joanna	Manesh	Alan	Asha

* Pseudonyms used throughout.

The findings from the case studies are reported under two headings:

- The mentoring support received by students across all five cases. A comparison of the mentoring support received by the five students and of perceptions of the mentoring support required, including: the amount of mentoring received by the students; the areas discussed by the students and mentors; the mentoring structures in the schools; the nature of the mentor/NE relationship; the perceptions of the roles the mentor fulfilled/should have fulfilled; the perceptions of the personal qualities a Phase One mentor needed.
- Individual case studies. A detailed analysis of each case exploring the support provided for the student in each school; the underlying factors that influenced the support the students received; the students' and mentors' evaluation of this support and from these evaluations, drawing out conclusions about the students' perceived mentoring requirements.

The mentoring support received by Phase One students across all five cases.

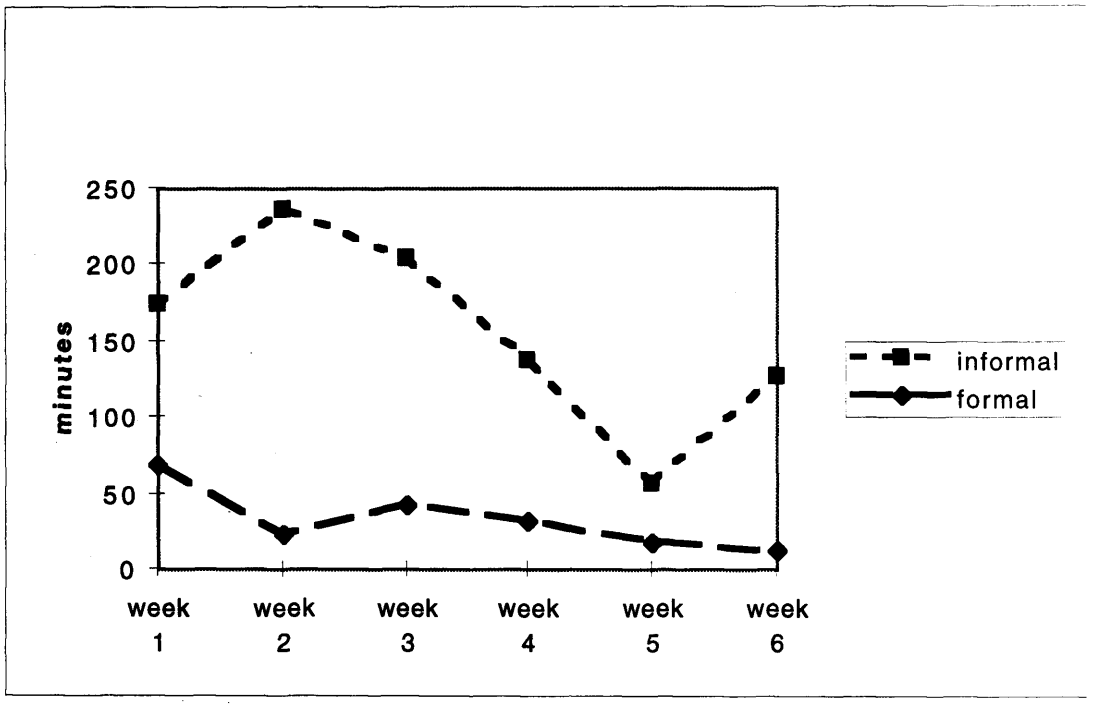
Mentors and students completed logs to record the amount of time spent on mentoring weekly. For the majority of analyses, the data for all five mentor/student pairs is taken from the mentor logs (see page 69 for comparison of mentor/student perceptions).

Amount of mentoring.

Phase One students received between 7 and 34.8 hours of mentoring over the six weeks, with the mean total amount of mentoring over the six weeks being 18.8 hours.

All students received both formal and informal mentoring. In all cases the amount of formal and informal mentoring received changed over the six weeks. Changes are shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1. Changes in the mean amount of formal and informal mentoring over the 6 weeks of Phase One.



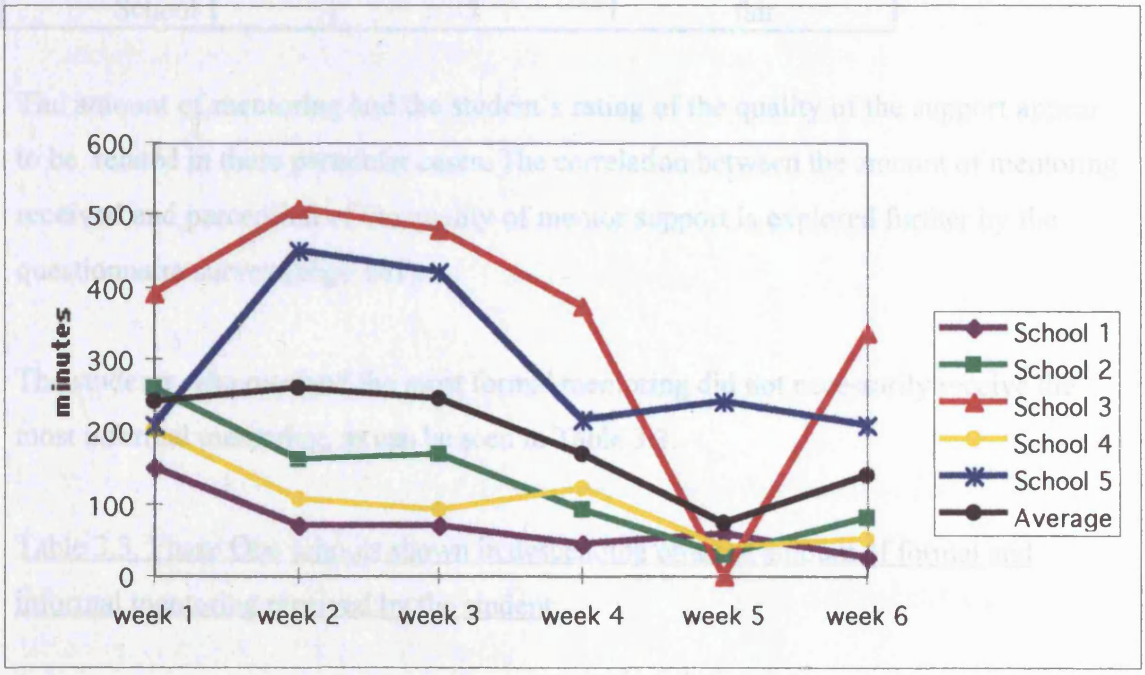
Both formal and informal mentoring decreased over Phase One. The dip in the amount of informal mentoring in week 5 is probably explained by the fact that it was half term break that week and only three days were spent in school. It is possible to speculate that without this explained dip in week 5, the amount of informal mentoring may have remained relatively constant across weeks 4, 5 and 6.

This decrease in the weekly amount of mentoring over the teaching practice is consistent with the work of Calderhead (1987) suggesting that a student's need for intense

mentoring support will lessen as he/she becomes familiar with the school and gains in confidence and competence. However, it is perhaps surprising that the amount of mentoring should decrease to such an extent considering the theoretical models of mentoring that suggest that once a student has achieved basic competence the mentor's role should not decline but should develop, becoming that of 'challenger' or 'co-enquirer' (e.g. Maynard and Furlong, 1993; McIntyre and Hagger, 1993). This point will be discussed further in Chapter Eight.

From Figure 3.2, it can be seen that in all cases, the amount of mentoring, when both formal and informal are totalled, decreased over Phase One.

Figure 3.2. Changes in the total amount of mentoring (formal and informal) received over the six-week period by each Phase One case study student.



Phase One students received widely different amounts of mentoring. It has been suggested that the amount of mentoring a student receives is a factor that is likely to affect the student's perception of the quality of the mentoring (e.g. Campbell and Kane, 1996; Mountford, 1993). When the case study students took part in the Phase One questionnaire survey, they were asked to rate their mentors' support on a five-point

scale, choosing between 'excellent'; 'very good'; 'good', 'fair' or 'poor'. As can be seen from Table 3.2, the two case study students who received *more* than the average amount of mentoring (in Schools 3 and 5) were the only case study students who rated the support they had received from their mentor as 'excellent'.

Table 3.2. The relationship between the amount of mentoring received and the students' perception of their mentors' support in Phase One with schools arranged in descending order of total amount of mentoring.

School	Total amount of mentoring (hours)	Student's rating of mentor support
School 3	34.8	excellent
School 5	29.1	excellent
School 2	13.2	very good
School 4	10.1	very good
School 1	7	fair

The amount of mentoring and the student's rating of the quality of the support appear to be related in these particular cases. The correlation between the amount of mentoring received and perception of the quality of mentor support is explored further by the questionnaire survey (page 101).

The students who received the most formal mentoring did not necessarily receive the most informal mentoring, as can be seen in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3. Phase One schools shown in descending order of amount of formal and informal mentoring received by the student.

Highest amount of formal mentoring	Highest amount of informal mentoring
School 5	School 3
School 2	School 5
School 1	School 2
School 3	School 4
School 4	School 1

As can be seen in comparison with Table 3.2, the amount of informal mentoring appears to be the most predictive of the rating of quality of mentor support, with there being a less clear relationship between the amount of formal mentoring and the rating of overall mentor support.

Summary:

Within these case studies:

- Phase One students received varying amounts of mentoring (7 - 34.8 hours over the six weeks).
- All Phase One students received both formal and informal mentoring.
- Mentoring, both formal and informal, decreased in amount from the beginning of the teaching practice to the end, although the decrease in both cases was not a steady, week by week decrease but rather each individual student had moments when the amount of mentoring rose and fell across the six weeks.
- The amount of mentoring the Phase One students received may have been a factor affecting their rating of their mentors' support (see Table 3.2).
- The amount of *informal* mentoring appeared to relate more closely to these ratings of support than does the amount of *formal* mentoring.

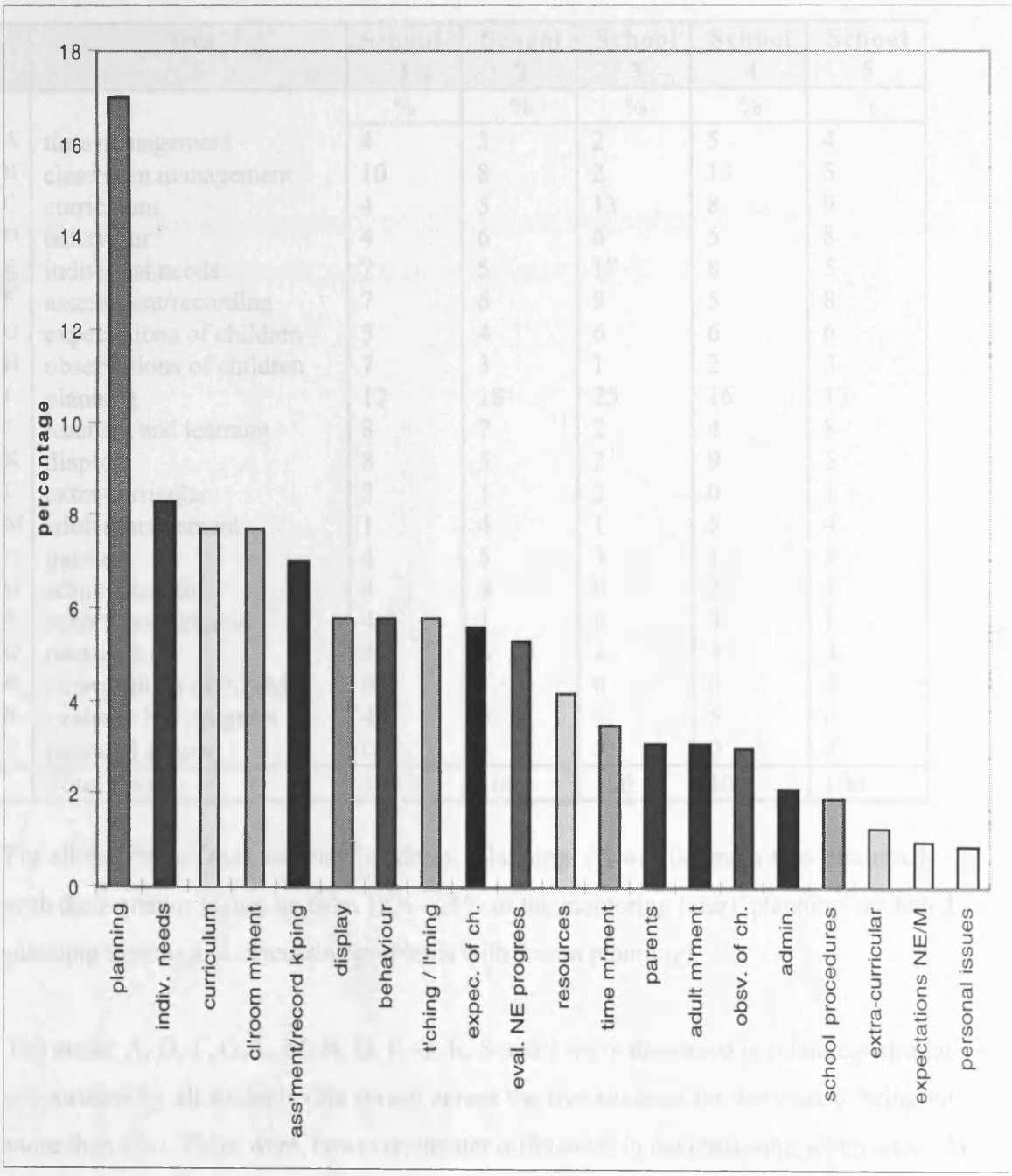
<u>The areas Phase One students discussed with their mentors.</u>

In the weekly logs, Phase One mentors and students recorded the areas discussed over the six weeks. They selected the areas they had discussed using a set of pre-determined categories as shown in Figure 3.3 (see Chapter Two for a more detailed discussion of the definition and origin of these categories).

The five areas most frequently discussed by Phase One students and mentors were:

- 'planning'
- 'individual needs'
- 'curriculum'
- 'classroom management'
- 'assessment and record keeping'

Figure 3.3. The areas discussed by Phase One mentors and students (amount expressed as the mean percentage).



'School procedures', 'extra-curricular', 'expectations of the NE/ mentor' and 'personal issues' were discussed least in Phase One. By looking at the areas discussed by individual students and their mentors it can be seen that although there were common factors, there were also individual differences (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4. Areas discussed in Phase One by individual students and their mentors (expressed as a percentage of the total time).

	Area	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
		%	%	%	%	%
A	time management	4	3	2	5	4
B	classroom management	10	8	2	13	5
C	curriculum	4	5	13	8	9
D	behaviour	4	6	6	5	8
E	individual needs	7	5	17	8	5
F	assessment/recording	7	6	9	5	8
G	expectations of children	5	4	6	6	6
H	observations of children	7	3	1	2	3
I	planning	12	18	25	16	13
J	teaching and learning	8	7	2	4	8
K	display	8	5	2	9	5
L	extra-curricular	3	1	2	0	1
M	adult management	1	4	1	5	4
N	parents	4	5	3	1	3
O	administration	4	4	0	2	1
P	school procedures	4	1	0	3	1
Q	resources	4	6	4	3	4
R	expectations of NE/M	0	1	0	0	4
S	evaluate NE progress	4	6	5	5	6
T	personal issues	0	2	0	0	2
	Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100

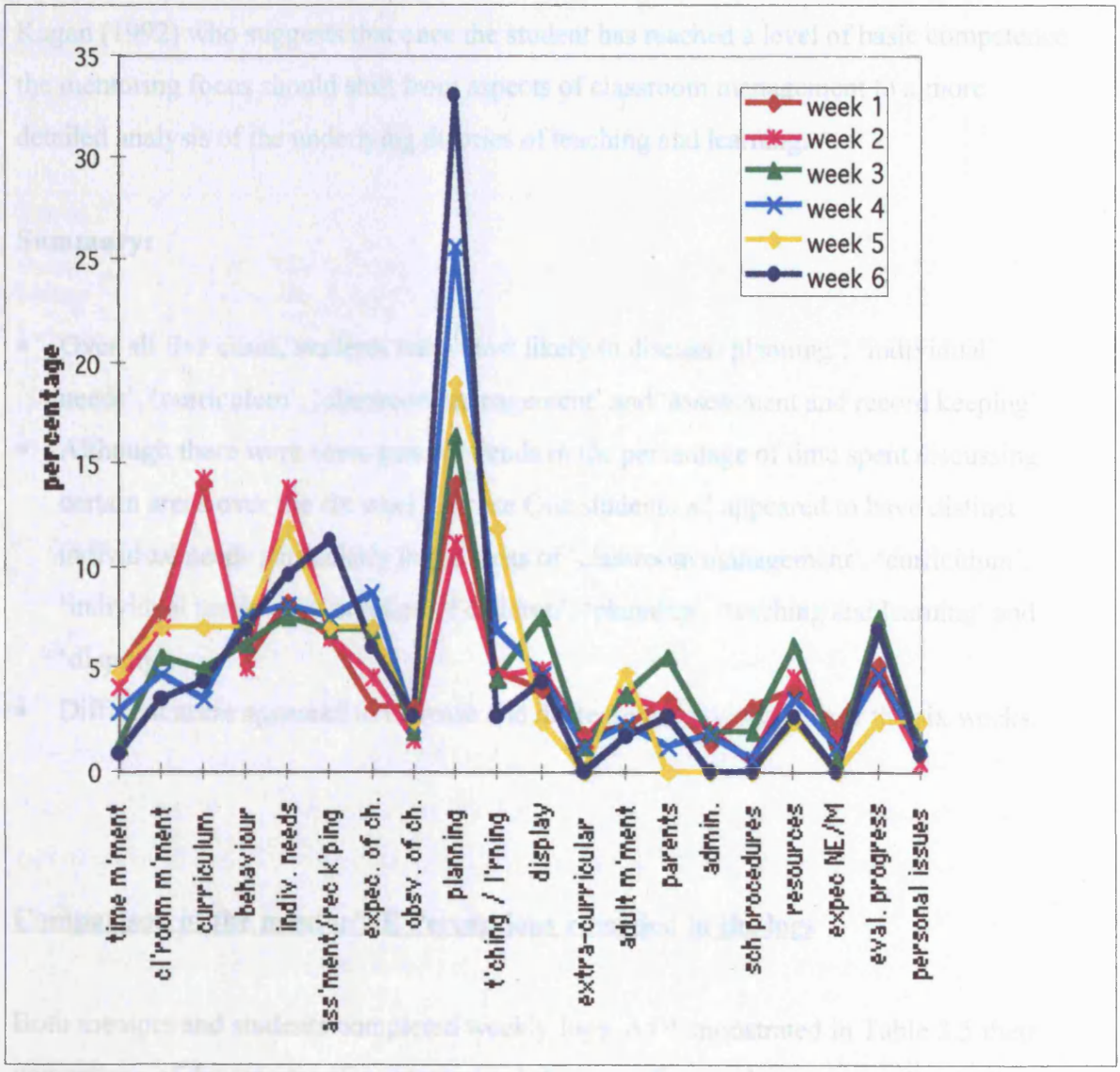
For all the Phase One case study students, 'planning' (I) was the main area discussed with their mentor taking up from 12% - 25% of the mentoring time ('planning' included planning lessons and discussing problems with lesson planning).

The areas: A, D, F, G, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S and T were discussed in relatively similar proportions by all students (the spread across the five students for these areas being no more than 4%). There were, however, greater differences in the remaining seven areas. As Elliot and Calderhead (1993) suggest, student teachers all have their own individual needs.

It is noticeable that apart from School 5, 'expectations of the NE/mentor' were rarely if ever discussed.

Different areas were discussed with different frequency over the six weeks as shown in Figure 3.4. The percentage of time per week spent discussing 'resources' was higher in the first three weeks and the percentage of time per week spent on 'school procedures' was highest in week 1; this is as might be expected, bearing in mind that the students in the first few weeks were adjusting to working in a new environment.

Figure 3.4. Changes in areas perceived to have been discussed during Phase One (amount expressed as a percentage of the total amount of mentoring for the week).



'Expectations of children' were discussed most in week 4. Intuitively one might have expected the student to need to discuss expectations of the children early in the practice. However, it is possible to speculate that this finding relates to the fact that students in the final weeks of Phase One were expected to be managing the class alone for the majority of the time, thus they may have had an increased need to discuss with the mentor what they can expect of the children. Similarly, this could account for increase in 'planning' as an area of discussion in the last three weeks.

A focus on 'teaching and learning' was highest in weeks 4 and 5 whereas a focus on 'classroom management' was highest in weeks 1 and 2, consistent with the work of Kagan (1992) who suggests that once the student has reached a level of basic competence the mentoring focus should shift from aspects of classroom management to a more detailed analysis of the underlying theories of teaching and learning.

Summary:

- Over all five cases, students were most likely to discuss 'planning', 'individual needs', 'curriculum', 'classroom management' and 'assessment and record keeping'.
- Although there were some general trends in the percentage of time spent discussing certain areas over the six weeks, Phase One students all appeared to have distinct individual needs particularly in the areas of 'classroom management', 'curriculum', 'individual needs'. 'observation of children', 'planning', 'teaching and learning' and 'display'.
- Different areas appeared to increase and decrease in importance over the six weeks.

Comparison of the mentor/NE Perceptions recorded in the logs

Both mentors and students completed weekly logs. As demonstrated in Table 3.5 their perceptions of the amount of mentoring and the areas discussed were generally similar.

Table 3.5. Comparison of student and mentor estimates of amount of formal, informal and total amount of mentoring (in minutes).

	Week 1			Week 2			Week 3			Week 4			Week 5			Week 6		
	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T
School 1																		
Mentor	90	60	**150**	30	40	**70**	70	0	**70**	0	45	**45**	30	20	**50**	0	35	**35**
Student	40	60	**100**	40	30	**70**	45	0	**45**	45	45	**90**	30	20	**50**	25	25	**50**
School 2																		
Mentor	80	180	**260**	40	120	**160**	50	120	**170**	30	60	**90**	No Student			30	50	**80**
Student	30	100	**130**	15	60	**75**	20	60	**80**	20	90	**110**	Log			20	50	**70**
School 3																		
Mentor	90	300	**390**	0	510	**510**	0	480	**480**	75	300	**375**	No Student			35	300	**335**
Student	140	190	**330**	0	480	**480**	0	480	**480**	50	300	**350**	Log			0	300	**300**
School 5																		
Mentor	60	150	**210**	30	420	**450**	60	360	**420**	35	180	**215**	60	180	**240**	0	210	**210**
Student	45	150	**195**	30	400	**430**	30	300	**330**	45	60	**105**	30	60	**90**	0	160	**160**

F= formal; I= informal; T= total

(N.B. The student in School 4 did not complete a log)

In general, mentors estimated that more time had been spent on mentoring than the students (in only 3 out of 22 cases did students give greater total estimates than the mentors). However, the differences were generally small. In percentage terms, for two of the schools, overall estimates were within 10% of each other. More substantial differences were, however, observed for Schools 2 and 5. For School 5, the relatively low student estimates were limited to weeks 4 and 5, while for school 2 the relatively low estimates by the student were limited to the first three weeks. There does not seem to be evidence for large systematic differences in reporting, although there may be specific factors for individual schools in individual weeks which could be considered further.

Mentors and students also appeared to share generally similar perceptions of the areas discussed over the teaching practice as shown in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5. Comparing mentor and student perceptions of the areas discussed during Phase One: number of sessions on each area ordered by student-mentor difference.

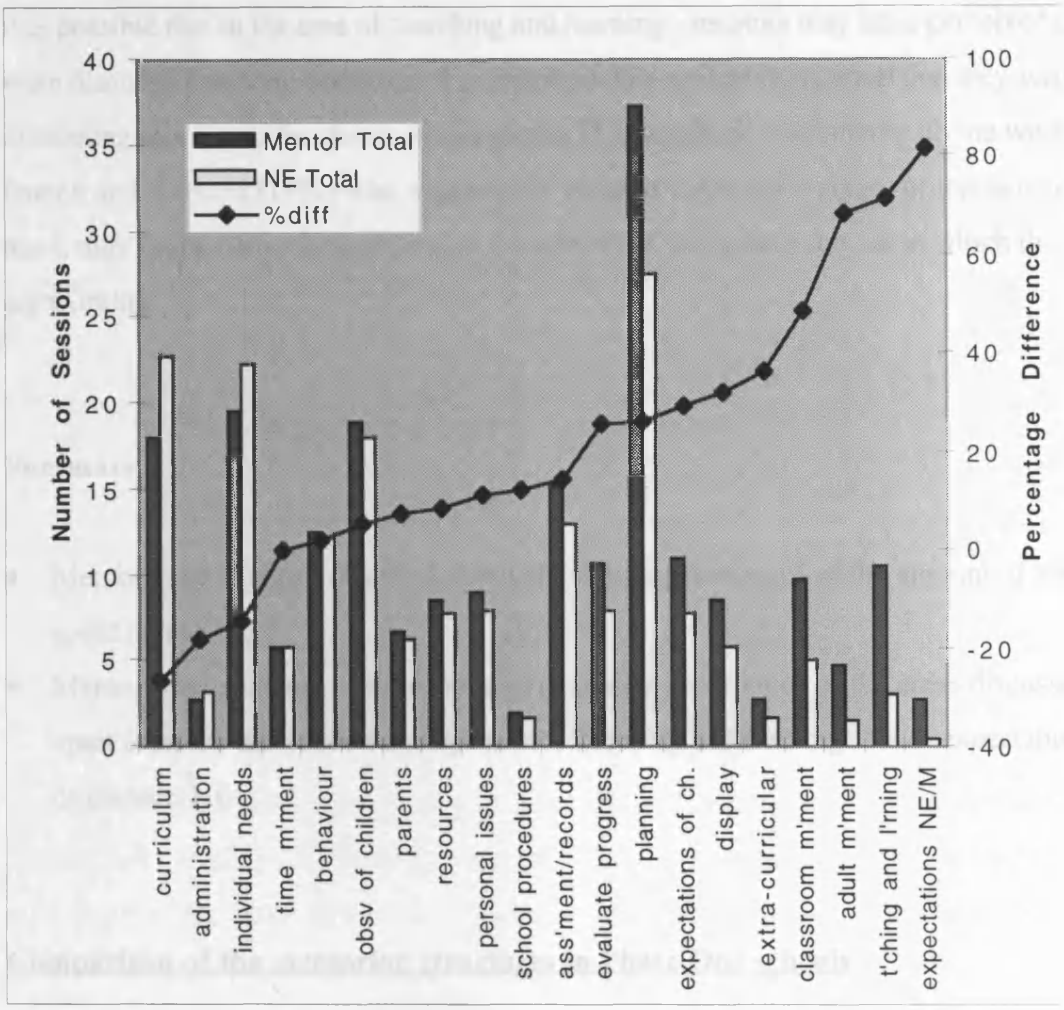


Figure 3.5 shows the estimated total number of sessions of mentoring in different areas as perceived by both the mentor and student. For each area, the percentage difference *between* mentor and student estimates was calculated. It can be seen that students perceived that the areas of 'curriculum', 'individual needs' and 'administration', had been discussed more frequently than their mentors did, with the percentage difference between mentors and students for 'curriculum' being 22%. In all other areas, mentors perceived the same amount or more discussion had taken place. Apart from in four areas, the mentors' and students' estimates were relatively similar - the mentors' estimates being no more than 35% greater than the students' estimates. However, in the areas:

'adult management', 'teaching and learning' and 'expectations of mentor/ NE' the mentors' estimates were approximately 70 - 80% greater than those of the students.

It is possible that in the area of 'teaching and learning', mentors may have perceived they were discussing general pedagogical principles while students perceived that they were discussing more specific classroom incidents. This would be consistent with the work of Dunne and Harvard (1993) who suggest that students in the early stages of learning to teach may find it difficult to generalise outside of the immediate context in which they are working.

Summary:

- Mentors and students recorded relatively similar perceptions of the amount of time spent mentoring.
- Mentors and students recorded relatively similar perceptions of the areas discussed apart from the areas: adult management' , 'teaching and learning', 'and 'expectations of mentor/ NE'.

Comparison of the mentoring structures in Phase One schools

Schools had a variety of mentoring structures in place to support students in Phase Two. As shown in Table 3.6, schools involved in Phase Two generally had few *formal* mentoring structures in place.

None of the schools provided Phase One mentors with non-contact time to meet with their students. Mentorials took place before or after school or during lunch breaks.

With no written school guidelines in any of the schools, the type and amount of mentoring was almost entirely determined by the individual mentor (see later individual case studies for more details).

Table 3.6. Formal mentoring structures for supporting students in Schools 1-5 (Phase One)

	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Mentor guidelines	* University guidelines used	No	No	No	No
Non-contact time	No	No	No	No	No
Group mentoring meetings	Introductory meeting	No	No	No	No
Mentoring Co-ordinator	Yes - Head Teacher	No	No	Yes - Deputy Head (not official)	Yes (limited role)
Selection of mentors	Senior management decision	Deputy Head	Head Teacher + year group teams	volunteers	Head Teacher and mentoring co-ordinator
Criteria for selection of mentors	good practitioner	none	good interpersonal skills and good practitioner	good practitioner and experienced teacher	experienced teacher

* All schools had copies of the university teaching practice guidelines and had a flexible learning mentoring pack. However, only in School 1 were these guidelines referred to as being widely used.

As reported below, all headteachers perceived a Phase One mentor's role to be multi-faceted and complex (see Table 3.8) and yet mentors were generally appointed using only vague criteria such as the mentor being a 'good' teacher. In one school mentors were asked to volunteer and any volunteers were accepted.

Summary:

- Phase One schools had few formal mentoring structures in place to support students or their mentors (Moyles *et al*, 1999).
- No Phase One schools had their own written mentoring guidelines and the type of mentoring support provided was essentially left up to the individual mentor to decide.
- Criteria for selecting mentors were generally vague in Phase One schools.
- None of the Phase One schools provided non-contact time for mentors.

- In four out of the five cases, the schools either did not have an official mentoring co-ordinator or the position was limited to the allocation of students to classes before the teaching practice started.

The Mentor/NE relationship

Much has been written about the importance of the mentor/NE relationship in effective mentoring (e.g. Bennett *et al,* 1993; Elliott, 1995; Hawkey, 1998). It is acknowledged that the precise nature of the relationship will change according to the professional status of the person being mentored (Bush *et al*, 1996; McIntyre and Hagger, 1996). In the interviews, students and mentors were probed about their relationship. Campbell and Kane (1996) suggest that the relationship may have both personal and professional dimensions (see Chapter One) and so NEs were asked whether they perceived their relationship with their mentor to be essentially e a professional or a personal relationship. As shown in Table 3.7, Phase One students had similar perceptions of the mentor/NE relationship.

Table 3.7. Mentors' and students' perceptions of the nature of their relationship in Phase One linked to students' ratings of quality of mentor support received (rating taken from questionnaire survey).

	Mentor and NE description of their relationship	**NE rating of mentor support***
School 1	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	fair
School 2	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	very good
School 3	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	excellent
School 4	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	very good
School 5	Equally professional and personal	excellent

* rating taken from questionnaire survey (see page 101)

In Phase One the relationship was generally perceived to essentially be professional in nature:

> It was more of a professional than a personal relationship, it is personal because you are together but yes, it's more professional than personal. (Mentor - Gina)

> It was professional but at the same time we got on very, very well, we were working towards the same thing. (Student - Manesh)

The importance of the relationship and its influence on the perceived success of the mentoring is explored further in the analysis of the individual case studies and the questionnaire survey.

Summary:

- The relationship in Phase One was perceived to essentially be a professional relationship.

<u>The mentor role</u>

Interviews explored participants' perceptions of a Phase One mentor's role. Their perceptions are shown in Table 3.8.

The categories in Table 3.8 were derived directly from the interview responses. The responses had enough similarities to be grouped together into twenty-one categories. The categories/roles were then grouped together in three *role domains:*

- Personal
- Structural
- Professional

The professional role domain is sub-divided into four *role elements* - Professional Supporter; Trainer; Educator and Assessor (see Chapter Two).

Table 3.8. Headteachers', mentors' and students' perceptions of the roles a mentor should fulfil during Phase One (including students' perceptions of the roles they perceived their mentors actually did fulfil).

Role	School 1				School 2				School 3				School 4				School 5			
	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*
Personal																				
to be a friend												*	✓		✓			✓	✓	*
Structural																				
to induct	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to facilitate	✓					✓		*										✓		*
Professional Supporter																				
to encourage	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to reassure	✓	✓			✓		✓	*		✓	✓	*		✓	✓			✓	✓	*
to listen	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to support in classroom	✓					✓	✓			✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
Professional Trainer																				
to protect	✓		✓					*						✓	✓	*		✓		*
to role model	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓		*	✓	✓		*
to train	✓											*	✓			*	✓			*
to discuss	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to advise	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to identify needs	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to focus to clarify		✓	✓							✓	✓	*		✓	✓			✓	✓	*
to be a critic				*				*												
to help reflect	✓			*		✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	*
Professional Educator																				
to set targets	✓							*		✓		*		✓		*				*
to rel practice to theory	✓		✓			✓			✓			*								*
to challenge	✓		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	*
Professional Assessor																				
to evaluate	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*

* student's perception of the roles the mentor actually fulfilled, taken from their responses in the questionnaire survey using a pre-determined set of categories (see Chapter 2).

As can be seen from Table 3.8, there was unanimous agreement among the Phase One participants that a Phase One mentor needed to fulfil roles in the Professional domain. In particular, those roles associated with the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Assessor elements. The roles of 'encouraging', 'listening', 'inducting', 'advising', 'discussing',

'identifying needs' and 'evaluating' were unanimously agreed to be appropriate roles for a Phase One mentor.

Only one Phase One mentor perceived that the 'challenger' role was appropriate. Although four out of the five headteachers stated that they perceived that challenging was an important role near the end of the practice when the students were more likely to be ready to be challenged (Maynard and Furlong, 1995), in three of the schools (Schools 2, 3 and 5) the mentor was removed from the classroom to complete other duties around the school (see individual case studies). Four of the five students perceived the need for mentors to fulfil the 'challenge' role. The majority of participants who perceived the challenge role as being appropriate stressed the need for constructive not destructive challenging.

> It's challenging in the counselling sense of challenging and not in an aggressive way, it's knowing what questions to ask and when to ask them. (Headteacher - School 6)

> It's challenging by seeking, getting their ideas and getting them to say they have not gone about it in the right way, being able to talk them through to be able to evaluate for themselves. (Mentor - Liz)

> It's important in terms of stretching you, it's a bit like teaching children isn't it they get to a certain point and need to be stretched. (Student - Manesh)

> Challenge as long as it is not too negative... getting you to back up what you did, to prove why you did something. (Student - Alan)

Being a 'role model' was perceived to be an appropriate role by all headteachers and all mentors. However, only one student suggested it as an appropriate role. The students suggested that they were concerned with finding their own style of teaching and not copying their mentor, consistent with the work of Edwards and Collison (1996) who found that students in their research wanted to be perceived as 'effective practitioners' .

The role of 'friend' was rarely perceived to be important in Phase One. Two mentors commented on the importance of being able to keep a distance in order that they could be honest with their student when identifying their needs:

> There's a slight distance which I think has actually been quite beneficial. I've been able to be quite honest although doing it positively. (Mentor - Kim)

The roles 'induct' and 'facilitate' were also mentioned rarely.

Videoed observations of each mentor/NE pair involved in a mentorial allowed for the analysis of the roles mentors were perceived by the researcher to fulfil in practice. The roles were taken from the interview data. However, only the roles associated with the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Educator elements were coded and analysed because it was felt that the roles in the other domains - Structural, Personal and associated with the Assessor element - would be unlikely to be demonstrated to any great extent within the context of a mentorial (see Chapter Two for details on the coding and analysis).

As can be seen from Table 3.9, all the mentors fulfilled a wide variety of roles. The role 'to advise' was observed to have been most frequently fulfilled by all mentors and the roles associated with the Educator element were observed to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently by all the mentors.

When Table 3.9 is compared to Table 3.8, it can be seen, at a broad level at least, that the mentors' perceptions of appropriate mentor roles corresponded with the roles they were observed to fulfil.

Using journals, mentors were asked to record the roles they had *intended* to fulfil during mentorials. Mentors were asked to select the roles they perceived they had intended to fulfil during each mentorial from a list of 22 pre-determined categories that had been developed from analysis of initial data (see Chapter Two). The journal categories correspond closely, although not exactly, with the 22 roles that were perceived by Phase One interview participants to be appropriate roles for a Phase One mentor to have.

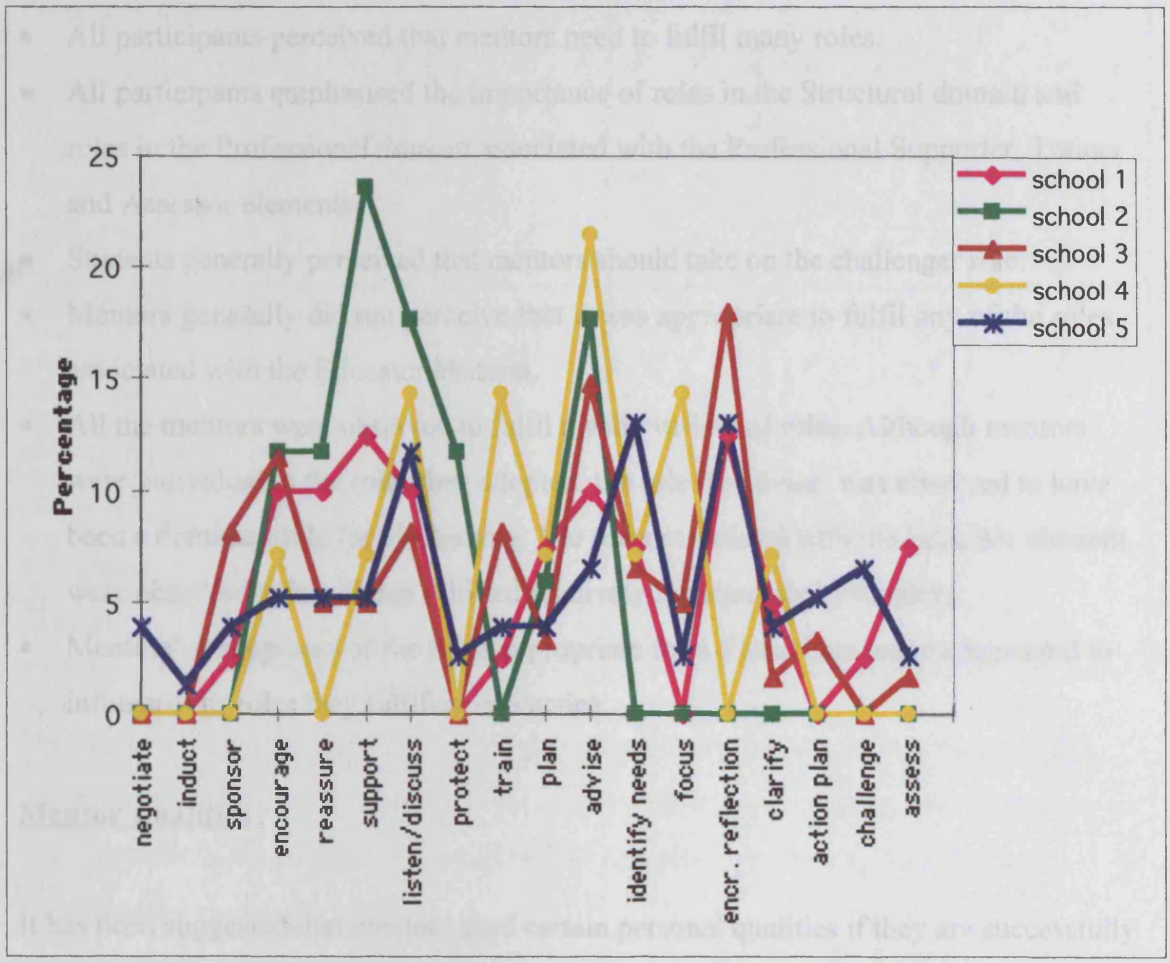
Table 3.9. The roles Phase One mentors were *observed* to fulfil during a videoed mentorial (amount expressed as a percentage of the total number of coded interactions)

Role Element	School 1 %	School 2 %	School 3 %	School 4 %	School 5 %
Prof. Support					
to encourage	8%	18%	12%	9%	21%
to reassure	4%	3%	6%	3%	4%
Train					
to protect	1%	5%	0%	1%	6%
to train	15%	5%	4%	8%	11%
to advise	37%	32%	22%	35%	24%
to identify needs	15%	7%	7%	11%	8%
to focus	1%	2%	8%	7%	8%
to clarify	0%	11%	9%	6%	3%
to be a critic	3%	0%	0%	3%	0%
to help reflect	10%	15%	19%	8%	10%
Educate					
to set targets	4%	0%	4%	2%	3%
to rel practice to theory	0%	3%	7%	6%	1%
to challenge	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%

N.B. Three roles were not included in this table that are included in Table 3.8. 'To role model' was removed from the categories for video analysis because it is a role generally associated with action rather than talking; 'to listen' was removed because it was decided to focus on the mentors' spoken interactions and the role 'to discuss' was removed because it was felt that it was a role that could overlap with many of the other categories and could therefore not be coded reliably.

It is clear from Figure 3.6 that mentors perceived they had intended to fulfil a wide variety of roles during mentorials.

Figure 3.6. Mentors' perceptions of the individual roles they had intended to fulfil during mentorials in Phase One (expressed as a percentage of the total number of roles thye intended to fulfil).



Only two out of the five mentors ever intended to 'action plan' or 'challenge' during mentorials although theoretically both are important if the NE is to be moved on from a level of basic competence and survival (Maynard and Furlong, 1993; McIntyre and Hagger, 1993). Similarly, two out of the five mentors never intended to encourage the student to reflect, despite the substantial body of research that argues that the ultimate aim of ITE should be to create reflective practitioners (e.g. Elliott and Calderhead, 1993; Feiman-Nemser *et al*, 1993; Schön, 1987; Zeichner *et al*, 1988).

The roles 'negotiate'; 'induct' and 'sponsor' i.e. those roles in the Structural domain, were selected relatively infrequently by all mentors. This might have been expected,

bearing in mind that mentorials involved the mentor and NE talking on a one-to-one level and did not usually involve other members of staff.

Summary:

- All participants perceived that mentors need to fulfil many roles.
- All participants emphasised the importance of roles in the Structural domain and roles in the Professional domain associated with the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Assessor elements.
- Students generally perceived that mentors should take on the challenger role.
- Mentors generally did not perceive that it was appropriate to fulfil any of the roles associated with the Educator element.
- All the mentors were observed to fulfil a wide variety of roles. Although mentors were individual in the roles they adopted, the role 'to advise' was observed to have been a dominant role for all mentors. The roles associated with the Educator element were observed to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently by mentors.
- Mentors' perceptions of the roles appropriate for a Phase One mentor appeared to influence the roles they fulfilled in practice.

Mentor qualities

It has been suggested that mentors need certain personal qualities if they are successfully to fulfil the mentor role (e.g. Brooks, 1996; Yeomans, 1994; Shaw, 1992; Wildman *et al*, 1992). In the interviews, all participants were asked what qualities they thought a Phase One mentor needed. Although qualities were originally meant to imply inherent characteristics that a mentor might have, for example, being approachable, participants also included qualities that might more appropriately be defined as skills, for example, being a good teacher. For the purpose of this research, the participants' interpretation of the term has been followed.

All participants agreed that mentors needed certain qualities as shown in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10. The personal and professional qualities that Phase One headteachers, mentors and students perceived were important for mentors to have.

Qualities	School 1			School 2			School 3			School 4			School 5		
	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE
Personal Qualities															
approachable	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
accepting	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
committed									✓					✓	
empathetic	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓							✓	
open-minded							✓	✓		✓				✓	
patient	✓										✓	✓			
positive			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
confident														✓	
Prof. Qualities															
available	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓		✓		✓	✓
good teacher	✓	✓		✓			✓						✓	✓	
experienced teacher										✓			✓		
understands NE 's prof. needs			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
constructive	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
good communicator	✓						✓								
good listener					✓		✓	✓							
able to challenge	✓						✓								
up to date			✓											✓	

The categories in Table 3.10. were directly derived from the interview responses. The responses were the result of an open-ended question without probing. All responses could be coded into one of the categories. The perceived qualities appeared to fall broadly into two categories:

- Personal qualities
- Professional qualities

(see Chapter Two for a more detailed description of the categories)

The majority of participants emphasised that the mentor needed both personal and professional qualities, perceiving that Phase One mentors needed to be 'approachable' (14 out of 15), 'constructively critical' (13), 'accepting' (12) and 'positive' (12).

All five students perceived that mentors needed to have 'a good understanding of a student's needs'. This included knowing when the student needed stretching or

challenging and when they needed reassuring and knowing how much information the student could cope with:

> They need to have a feel for what's important early on and what's important later on - what will come out from the student and what the student needs. (Student - Manesh)

Experience was not generally perceived as important (two participants mentioned this) with interpersonal qualities such as being 'approachable' (14) and 'empathetic' (6) and professional qualities such as being 'constructively critical' (13) being mentioned far more frequently. One headteacher suggested:

> I don't think that it's an issue of how long you have taught or how much money you get paid but how skilled the person is in inter-personal skills. (Headteacher - School 3)

Being 'accepting' was perceived as an important quality by all five students, being accepting included allowing the student to take over the class and accepting that the students would make mistakes. Four headteachers and three mentors also recognised the importance of this quality.

In Schools 2 and 5 the two students and two mentors perceived that the availability of the mentor was important. In these schools, mentors were taken out of the classroom during the teaching practice to perform other school duties (see individual case studies). It is possible that when availability of the mentor is not assured then it becomes an issue to the mentor and student involved.

Summary:

- All participants perceived that mentors needed a variety of personal and professional qualities.
- The most frequently mentioned quality was being 'approachable'.
- Availability appeared to become an issue in schools where this was not assured.

Individual Case Studies

This section describes each case in detail, exploring support received by the student; the underlying factors that influenced the support the student received; student and mentor evaluation of the support and from this evaluation, drawing out the students' and mentors' perceptions of a Phase One students' needs.

Each case study is divided into three sections:

- School support.
- Mentor support.
- Summary of the findings for each school.

School 1

Mentor: Gina
Student: Katrina

School Support:

Mentoring was given high priority in School 1. The headteacher perceived mentoring as 'essential'. Mentors did not have any other demands placed on their time and were only used as supply cover in an emergency.

There were few formal mentoring structures in School 1 with the headteacher perceiving that formal structures were not necessary because mentoring was implicit in the existing structures in the school. A highly collaborative, supportive ethos was encouraged with teachers being expected to communicate and support each other both within their year groups and across the whole school. Gina confirmed that this collaboration did happen in reality:

> We do communicate a lot the three of us *(in the year group teams)* because that's how we work, we know each other and we work closely together and we more or less work on the same lines.

Gina and Katrina both perceived that informal mentoring occurred within the school, mentoring of both the student and the mentor:

> I have been going to another building where there are another two mentors... if there is anything I need to talk about I can go and ask them... I know all the students and we do talk, not formally but informally. (Gina)

> All the year one teachers used to pop in from time to time and see that everything was OK, it was more of an informal and friendly thing... one of the other year one teachers was the special needs co-ordinator and because I had to take half her class for some things and she had all the year one special needs children she helped me out... all the other teachers, the ones we saw in the staffroom were really friendly. (Katrina)

Gina perceived that the management thought mentoring was very important and valued the support they offered: 'I think the management think it is very important... if I need any support and guidance then I can go and ask and they are always supportive.' She was encouraged to read the university guidelines and university mentoring pack which she found very useful.

Both Katrina and Gina valued the mentor's availability, perceiving that it allowed the student's needs to be met as they arose: 'I have been very pleased that I have been around in the classroom, if I think she's looking for guidance then I can immediately pick it up.' (Gina)

Mentor Support:

Katrina was not entirely satisfied with the support she received from her mentor:

> Sometimes I felt that Gina could have been a little more helpful, sometimes I tried to do what I thought was the sensible thing to do but it wasn't and she hadn't said anything about it... she always just let me muddle through and then commented on how I had done it.

Gina and Katrina appeared to have different perceptions of the mentor's role (see Table 3.8.) Gina perceived that her role was essentially to be available when needed and to provide feedback after the lesson. Katrina, suggested that she would have preferred Gina to be more pro-active, to foresee problems and to initiate more interactions. By the end of the practice, Katrina perceived that she had reached the stage where she would have liked to have been challenged and observed more formally. She perceived that Gina did not provide this support.

The relationship was a professional rather than personal relationship. Gina was happy with this and felt that Katrina: 'responded well to my advice'. However, Katrina suggested she would have preferred a more personal relationship: 'she's not a very relaxed sort of person... it was more like a teacher-pupil relationship than that of a colleague.'

In the questionnaire survey, Katrina rated Gina's support as 'fair'. She suggested that this evaluation related to the nature of the relationship and the failure, as she saw it, of Gina to fulfil the roles she expected a mentor to have.

Summary of findings from School 1:

- The headteacher's active involvement in, and promotion of, mentoring appeared to help ensure that the mentor and student felt supported in school.
- The highly collaborative ethos in the school and well-established, effective systems of support appear to have resulted in the student receiving much support from other members of staff.
- The mentor and student valued the mentor being available for the student whenever needed.

- The mentoring relationship was perceived by the student to be too much of a teacher-learner relationship.
- The student wanted the mentor to foresee problems and protect her from making mistakes at the start of the practice and to challenge her near the end. The mentor did not perceive the challenger role to be appropriate. The perceived failure of the mentor to fulfil roles the student expected, appeared to result in the student giving a relatively low rating to the mentor support.

SCHOOL 2

Mentor: Anne
Student: Joanna

School support:

The headteacher of School 2 had a positive attitude towards student mentoring: 'I'm all for it - anyway where else are they going to train? You can't have a class full of rubber dummies they've got to have real, live children.' However, in practice, mentoring appeared to have low priority within the school. There was no time set aside for mentors to meet with their students (mentorials taking place before or after school or at lunch-time) and student-mentors were regularly taken out of the classroom for supply cover and to attend meetings about their curriculum area. This was a practice perceived by the mentor and the student as being detrimental to the support the mentor could provide:

> My idea is that the student shouldn't be left completely - not that you don't trust what they are doing but I feel we should be there if they need us, they should know exactly where we are and that we are available rather than in somebody else's class. (Anne)

> Sometimes you thought your mentor was going to be there and you planned something quite ambitious then they would have to go off and do supply... towards the end she was hardly there at all... It is recognised by the school that

> subject co-ordinators and SENCOs need time but it is not recognised that mentors need time as well... it should be seen as a job rather than oh, you've got a student you can fill in round the school. (Joanna)

There were few formal mentoring structures. Students were allocated to teachers by the deputy head, with the headteacher suggesting that these placements were made according to whose 'turn' it was: 'we try to give everybody a fair whack.' The amount and type of mentoring support provided for the student was left up to the individual mentor to decide:

> There were five students in the school and each of them really worked just with their immediate mentor.... it was really just the relationship between myself and the class teacher. (Joanna)

The headteacher perceived that the informal mentoring structures in the school effectively supported students. He perceived that there was an informal system of mentoring in the school: 'there's always an informal, perhaps almost secretive network of mentoring in any school, it's not structured but it's there.' However, according to Anne and Joanna, there was little evidence of this informal mentoring in reality and few instances of the student observing anyone else or being mentored by anyone else.

Anne perceived that the structures needed to be more formalised with greater collaboration between the staff involved in mentoring. After having attended a mentoring course at the University the previous year, she had tried to informally develop the role of mentoring co-ordinator. However, when she tried to arrange meetings, she met with a great deal of resistance from the other mentors: 'I think they thought I was interfering.' It was her belief that if such a position was to evolve then it would need to be officially set up by the school management, without official recognition she perceived that it would not be an effective role.

Mentor Support:

Joanna was satisfied with the support she had received from her mentor. Anne and Joanna perceived that they had a good working relationship that was essentially professional with some personal elements. They had generally similar expectations of the mentor role (see Table 3.8.) Both agreed that the role needed to adapt to meet the changing professional needs of the NE. However, they had different perceptions of exactly how it needed to change. Anne believed that as the student became more competent, her role became mainly that of reassurer. Joanna, on the other hand, suggested she would have liked to have been challenged in the last few weeks:

> I felt it got to the point where my tutor had come in and said I had passed and from that point there was a slight sliding off which I didn't really want.... I still wanted to be extended and I felt that by that point I was really confident enough for someone to criticise me more strongly and I would have been able to take it and that would take me onto a new stage of development.

In the questionnaire survey, Joanna rated her mentor's support as 'very good'.

Summary of findings from School 2:

- The headteacher perceived that there was an informal network of mentoring and support in School 2. However, according to the student and the mentor this did not exist.
- Although the headteacher suggested that mentoring was important, in practice mentoring appeared to have very low priority in the school. There was little management involvement, mentors were used as supply cover and other staff members were perceived by the mentor to be uninterested in developing mentoring within the school.
- The mentor perceived that the quality of mentoring offered to students who came to the school was variable because of staff having varying expectations of the mentor's role. She suggested that this could be helped by having formal guidelines.

- Both mentor and student perceived that the mentoring support offered by the mentor suffered because the mentor was taken out of the classroom to perform other school duties.
- The student perceived that she would have benefited from the mentor taking on the challenger role in the last few weeks of the practice and yet the mentor did not perceive this to be an appropriate role.

SCHOOL 3

Mentor: Kim
Student: Manesh

School Support:

The headteacher in School 6 had a positive attitude towards mentoring whilst at the same time recognising that it was not given a particularly high priority in the school: 'it's important not just for school but for the future of the profession... I know I don't put enough time and effort into organising it.' She perceived that it was an area that needed improving. Student mentors were regularly taken out of the classroom for other school duties. The headteacher suggested that the time was timetabled by discussion between herself and mentor. Kim suggested that it was rather less of a democratic process: 'there's certainly been the view within school that my time is timetabled so I'm shown what I'm doing with my time which is not necessarily mentoring.'

There were few formal mentoring structures in School 6. The amount and type of mentoring support the student received was largely determined by the individual mentor. The headteacher considered that she took on the role of mentoring co-ordinator as part of her general staff development role. The selection of mentor was decided upon by the year-group teams and the headteacher with the latter using certain criteria, including the proposed mentor having good interpersonal skills and being a good classroom teacher:

> Matching the right person to the right person is very important... I don't think that it's an issue of how long you have taught or how much money you get paid but how skilled the person is in inter-personal skills.

Manesh believed that the mentoring received by students in the school was generally good: 'they certainly seemed to all receive very good quality mentoring.' It is possible that the selecting of mentors using the above criteria rather than a case of whose 'turn' it was contributed to the general quality of mentoring in the school as perceived by the student.

Although there was a collaborative ethos within the school, particularly across the year-group teams, the student received little mentoring from other members of staff. The headteacher acknowledged that other staff were not involved:

> They probably see it *(student mentoring)* as a fairly low-key activity because it's not been particularly high profile... I think in some situations people don't even know what's going on.

Kim suggested that some other staff did not have a full understanding of the mentor role:

> Mentoring in terms of student teachers is something quite new in the school... I don't think anyone's actually formulated a view, sometimes I've felt that it's been very much "oh lucky you, you've got lots of non-contact time," there's certainly been that view.

The provision of non-contact time was an area about which Kim felt strongly. She perceived that it was necessary for mentors to have time when they could meet with the student. Out of all the mentors studied in Phase One case studies, Kim spent the most time on mentoring (see Table 3.2), this possibly explains why she viewed having non-contact time as being such an important issue. The headteacher perceived that although time was an important factor in successful mentoring, adequate time was available: 'with students the time is there anyway.' The headteacher's and Kim's different views on the necessity of non-contact time for student mentors appeared to relate to their different

perceptions of a mentor's role. Kim emphasised the professional side of the role (see below). The headteacher emphasised the personal side of the role: 'I personally think that the most important role of it is the personal support rather than the clear-cut professional bit.'

Mentor Support:

Manesh was very satisfied with the support received from his mentor: 'my experience was 100% positive.'

Both Manesh and Kim believed they had a good working relationship which was essentially professional rather than personal: 'it was professional but at the same time we got on very, very well, we were working towards the same thing' (Manesh). Kim perceived that the slight distance was beneficial because it allowed her to be honest. Although Manesh also perceived this distance he found Kim to be 'approachable and easy to talk to.'

Kim and Manesh shared similar expectations of the mentor role (see Table 3.8). They both perceived that the mentor's role changed over the six-week practice, with Kim perceiving that the mentoring moved away from feedback on general performance to stretching and extending Manesh and Manesh perceiving that he needed to be challenged more in the final few weeks. Manesh rated the support he received from Kim as 'excellent'.

Summary of findings in School 3:

- The headteacher perceived that mentoring was important whilst admitting that it did not have particularly high priority within the school.
- Mentors were selected using certain criteria by the headteacher. The mentor and the student perceived that the quality of mentoring in the school was high for all students. It is possible that this was due to the careful selection of mentors.
- Although School 3 had a collaborative ethos, informal mentoring for the student from other staff members did not automatically occur.

- The mentor in School 3 was taken out of the classroom to perform other school duties and perceived that the mentoring suffered as a result.
- A professional distance in the mentor/student relationship was perceived by the mentor to be beneficial although despite this distance the student viewed the mentor as 'approachable'.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.

SCHOOL 4

Mentor: Liz.
Student: Alan.

School Support

Mentoring was given high priority in School 4. Mentoring was perceived by the headteacher as an important role: 'PGCE students get the full-time support of the class teacher, if we've got PGCE students then the class teacher really gives them as much support as they need.' Mentors themselves decided how much time they would spend out of the classroom and what they would do with their time, only being used as supply cover in an emergency. Liz was also an NQT mentor and used some of the time her student was in school to free herself to visit the NQT's classroom. During the time Liz was out of the classroom, the headteacher or one of the other teachers was available if Alan needed help: 'when she was mentoring the NQT and I took the class either the headmistress or someone would come in and check I was alright.' (Alan)

The headteacher took an active role in the mentoring in the school, taking over Liz's role as Alan's mentor when Liz was ill. Alan felt comfortable with the headteacher watching him, largely, he said, because he was used to seeing her around all the classrooms: 'in some places I would have felt intimidated by it but she was always around, like when she did supply, so I was used to seeing her and it wasn't a problem.'

There were some formal mentoring structures in the school. Liz was the deputy head of the school and acted as the mentoring co-ordinator: 'overall I am in charge of the mentoring that goes on within the school.' She had produced a school booklet for all staff including students with guidelines on school procedures. Specific guidelines for student mentors were in discussion. Student mentors were self-selected although the headteacher said that she would only allow experienced teachers to be mentors.

The headteacher perceived that there was an informal network of support available for all NEs whether students or NQTs: 'we always recommend that they keep on asking questions and that they don't hesitate to ask anyone anything and in that way everybody is a mentor.' Students were invited to all staff meetings and given copies of school documentation. The informal support from other members of staff was recognised by Alan:

> Generally everybody was very supportive... one of the other student's teachers had done a GEST course and she let us go and sit in on a PE lesson... there were things like that and we were invited to go to the teacher training days over half term as well but I think most of us needed a break by then.

Liz suggests that all the staff appreciate the amount of work that goes into mentoring: 'it is seen as difficult, as hard work, a lot of input going in, everyone realises that we don't take on students lightly.'

Student mentors were not given non-contact time. The headteacher suggested that she would have liked to have provided it but said that it was not feasible. Liz suggested she would have liked some non-contact time. However, she did not appear to feel any resentment at not getting it. This could possibly be because she was part of the management team and therefore understood how difficult provision would have been.

Mentor Support:

Adam was generally satisfied with the support he received from Liz: 'I was pleased... I think I got good support.' Liz and Alan perceived that they had a relationship that was essentially professional in nature:

It was mainly professional. (Liz)

She was fine, pretty much what I would expect any teacher to be like. (Adam)

Alan perceived that he would have preferred a relationship that was both personal and professional: 'you need someone you can talk to about things other than teaching with occasionally otherwise it gets a bit much.' He suggested that he thought one of the reasons that the relationship did not develop in such a way might have been because of Liz's deputy head duties:

> She was sometimes off as deputy head doing things.... I tended not to talk about personal issues too much because I knew it was not a valuable use of my time... I felt I had to glean as much as possible in a short time. (Alan)

However, Liz suggested that the relationship had not developed to have personal elements because of the student's personality: 'he seemed to find it difficult to talk about things outside education.'

Apart from in the area of the relationship Alan did not feel his needs had been compromised by having a mentor who was the deputy head. He perceived that she had been available when he needed help and that she had made good use of the time they did have: 'she was really helpful, she was available whenever I wanted her, what she had to say helped me a lot, every time she said something it helped.'

Liz and Alan shared similar perceptions of the mentor's role with both generally perceiving roles associated with the Educator element to be inappropriate (see Table

3.8). Both perceived that the mentor should be non-threatening, should offer lots of encouragement and should identify needs without overloading the student:

> It's important to praise them, to say that they are good at doing things... everyone likes to feel that they are good at something... it's seeking out their ideas on what has gone well and what has gone badly, asking the right questions encouraging them to think things through. (Liz)

> It was quite nice just to have three or four things picked up rather than listing twenty... they need to be positive, rather than telling me that I'm not good at anything saying that you did that really well or this went really well... it shouldn't go on in leaps, it has to be short steps rather than giant ones. (Alan)

Neither mentor nor student perceived that the challenge role was particularly appropriate on first teaching practice. Alan appeared to be happy with the roles Liz had taken, rating her support as 'very good'.

Summary of findings from School 4

- The headteacher's active involvement in, and promotion of, mentoring appeared to help ensure that the mentor and student felt generally supported. The student valued the headteacher's involvement.
- The staff in the school offered the student informal support. It was suggested by the mentor that this was because mentoring was taken seriously by the management.
- The mentor was able to decide how to organise her own time during the teaching practice, deciding when it was appropriate to leave the classroom. The student valued knowing that the mentor was always available when needed.
- The student did not perceive that having a mentor with other school duties e.g. being deputy head, adversely affected the general quality of the mentoring, however, he did suggest that the time commitments of the mentor did possibly hinder the development of the personal side of the mentor-student relationship.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.

SCHOOL 5

Mentor: Jill
Student: Asha

School Support:

The headteacher in School 5 perceived that mentoring was: 'essential, implicit in the structures in the school.' She perceived that there was a strong emphasis on staff development in the school. Staff worked in year-group teams with the head of each year group being responsible for overseeing the professional development of their team. Jill, however, perceived that mentoring needed to be more explicitly discussed:

> The management tend to think that it's just something that we've always done and are always going to do. It's never a priority in school to discuss it and discuss how we can improve it. It's just there.

Although mentoring was perceived by the headteacher to be 'essential', mentors were taken out of the classroom, the use of their time generally being decided by the management. Jill believed that mentoring should take priority over other duties and resented being taken out of the class to be used as supply cover. Asha agreed:

> There were occasions when she had to go into other classes, like on my last day she wanted to be there but she couldn't because she had to go and teach a different class... they are helping to train us so they should be there.

There were few formal mentoring structures in School 5. There were no guidelines, no regular meetings and there was no non-contact time allocated to the mentors. Jill perceived that it would be very useful: 'I've felt the pressures of time, sometimes you just haven't enough.' There were several mentoring co-ordinators, one for the Open University students and one (the deputy head) for PGCE students. However, their main role was allocating students to classes rather than overseeing the development of the

students once they were in school. The main criteria for the selection of a mentor was that he/she should be an experienced teacher.

Jill perceived that the lack of formalised guidelines and procedures led to variations in the quality of mentoring received by students. She suggested that other members of staff did not understand the mentor role:

> Last year there were two of us who had students in the same year and the other teacher said I've got all the work-sheets ready for my student because they are here to control the children not to teach them... I think that students find it very hard in some classes because they have to fit in very rigidly to how the teacher teaches so if the teacher's decided that they are going to do a certain work-sheet that week then they have to conform to it... I don't work like that. I tend to have an open mind and then at the end when we've finished I'll try and look at what has been covered and what hasn't been covered and I'll try and follow up then.

Jill perceived the need for guidelines on the mentor role, increased communication between mentors and training for mentors to ensure all students in the school received quality mentoring and yet she felt that it would be difficult to tell these concerns to the headteacher, and that if she did so they would not be taken on board.

One other PGCE student had started in the school at the same time as Asha. However, she had left after four weeks. (There was a difference of opinion on why). Asha suggested that 'she wasn't getting on with her teacher.' The headteacher suggested that 'she was a poor student who was affecting the class.' Jill perceived that it was a mixture of the two reasons and felt that with better support the student would probably have been able to complete her teaching practice.

Asha was informally supported by the other two teachers in her year-group team, she planned with them and would ask them for information and advice when Liz was not available.

Mentor Support:

Asha was very satisfied with the mentoring she received from the mentor:

> I have had a really good experience and I know from other students that they haven't had such a good experience either the teacher not letting go or not being there.

Jill and Asha perceived that they had a very good relationship that was both personal and professional. Much of the success of the relationship appeared to come from the mentor's own personal qualities. Asha perceived Jill as being very approachable and accepting:

> I felt that if I wanted to ask something I didn't feel like I was stupid... she made me feel comfortable... she was there if I needed her but she let me make mistakes and I think that's important you learn a lot by making mistake.. sometimes I had the ideas and she would say why don't you go about it like this, so it wasn't her saying do it like this, it was fifty fifty.

Jill perceived that mentors needed to have these qualities:

> You've got to make them feel welcome. It must be very difficult if you don't feel welcome... the first thing is getting them to want to come through that door... Sometimes I think that students find it very hard in some classes because they have to fit in very rigidly to how the teacher teaches... I don't work like that. I tend to have an open mind.

Jill summed up the relationship with a student: 'I try to be a friend but a friend who can be firm if there are problems.' This type of relationship was valued by other students not just Asha; in the school was an NQT who had been a student with the mentor on teaching practice when training and she still visited Jill regularly for advice. Jill also said that many of the other students she had mentored would keep in touch and ring her for advice.

Jill and Asha shared expectations of the mentor's role. Jill perceived that on first teaching practice it was important not to overwhelm the student: 'there's a fine line, you don't want to inundate a new entrant with too much, just enough to get them going, to get them by to start with.' Challenging was perceived by Jill in terms of encouraging the student to question what they had done and to move towards evaluating their own practice. Similarly, Asha saw that the challenging role was more of a questioning rather than confrontational one. Asha rated Jill's support as 'excellent'.

Summary of the findings in School 5:

- Despite mentoring being considered essential and having an explicit ethos of professional development established in the school, the mentor perceived that students received mentoring that was very variable in quality. It is possible that this was partly because the mentors were only selected using minimal criteria (i.e. that they should be experienced teachers). The mentor suggested that it was also because of the lack of school guidelines clarifying the mentor's role.
- The mentor was taken out of the classroom to perform other school duties. Both the mentor and the student perceived that mentoring should be seen as a priority for the mentor and that taking the mentor out of the classroom had a detrimental effect on the mentoring support the mentor provided.
- The mentor's personal qualities appeared to be an important factor in influencing the success of the mentoring. The student commented on the mentor's warmth, approachability and positive attitude.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and perceived they had a good relationship that was both personal and professional in nature. Both of these appeared to be factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.

Summary of main findings from the Phase One individual case studies

Mentoring Structures in Schools:

- With no school guidelines in any of the schools, mentoring was almost entirely determined by individual mentors. It was perceived by some of the mentors that this led to students in their schools receiving mentoring that was variable in quality. Three of the five mentors suggested the need for school guidelines to help clarify the situation.
- Mentors and students perceived that mentoring should be given priority over other school duties. In the three cases where mentors were *regularly* taken out of the classroom for other school duties such as acting as supply cover, both mentors and students perceived that this had been detrimental to the mentoring. In the other two cases, where mentors were only *occasionally* taken out of the classrooms both mentors and students felt well-supported by the school. In both these schools (Schools 1 and 3), the headteachers perceived mentoring to be very important and showed this by being actively involved in the mentoring process.
- All Phase One headteachers suggested in the interviews that they perceived mentoring to be important. However, in at least two cases, the headteachers did not appear to back this up in practice - engaging the mentor in other school duties and, according to the mentor and student perceptions, not being actively involved in the mentoring process. When headteachers were actively involved in the mentoring process, either through visiting the student's classroom or meeting with the mentor, both the mentor and the student felt well supported by the school.
- In the two cases where headteachers were actively involved in the mentoring process the students and mentors perceived that other staff members were very supportive of mentoring. All the headteachers perceived that there was an informal network of support in their schools that the students would be able to draw on but according to the mentors and students this was not the case. In the schools where the mentor perceived that the management did not attach much importance to mentoring (Schools 2, 3 and 5) then support from other staff members was not always forthcoming.

- Phase One case study participants generally perceived that the support they received from other teaching staff members was useful but not essential apart from in one case where the mentor was perceived as not providing effective enough support. In this case the student valued highly the support of staff members within the same year group team.

The Mentor/Student Relationship:

- Students perceived that the mentoring relationship was important in determining the success of the mentoring support provided by their mentor.
- In one school, the student perceived that the mentor's senior management responsibilities hindered the development of a relationship that was personal as well as professional. However, the mentor perceived that it was the student's personality that prevented the relationship developing.

The Mentor Role:

- It appeared that regardless of the students' exact expectations of the mentor role, providing the mentor and the student shared expectations of the roles a mentor should have and the mentor was perceived as fulfilling these roles, then the quality of the mentor's support was rated highly by the student.

Mentor Personal Qualities:

- Students perceived that their mentor's personal qualities were an important factor in influencing mentoring success.

Questionnaire Survey Findings

Questionnaires were used to investigate students' perceptions of mentoring across a sample of 140 students undertaking their PGCE during the academic year 1996-7. Phase One questionnaires were distributed in the week after the students' first teaching

practice. Questionnaires were distributed by university tutors. A total of 77 questionnaires were completed and returned, a return rate of 55%. 25% of questionnaires were missing were missing due to one tutor group not receiving them.

Mentor support

Respondents were asked to rate the mentoring support they had received from their mentor on a five-point scale.

Table 3.11. Number of students giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in Phase One

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	25 (32%)	15 (20%)	13 (17%)	5 (6%)

As shown in Table 3.11, students perceived that they received mentoring support that varied in quality.

Reasons for ratings of mentor support.

Students were asked to give reasons for their rating of their mentors' support. The reasons they gave had enough similarities to be grouped into 20 categories for the purpose of coding and analysis. These categories were split between positive statements and negative statements as shown in Table 3.12.

The positive statements appeared to refer to the mentor having certain desirable personal and professional qualities and skills. The negative statements referred to the lack of desirable personal and professional qualities and skills, the lack of availability of the mentor and the mentor having inappropriate expectations of the student and the mentor role. Figure 3.7 shows how these statements related to ratings of support.

Table 3.12. Reasons students gave to explain their rating of the mentor support they received in Phase One.

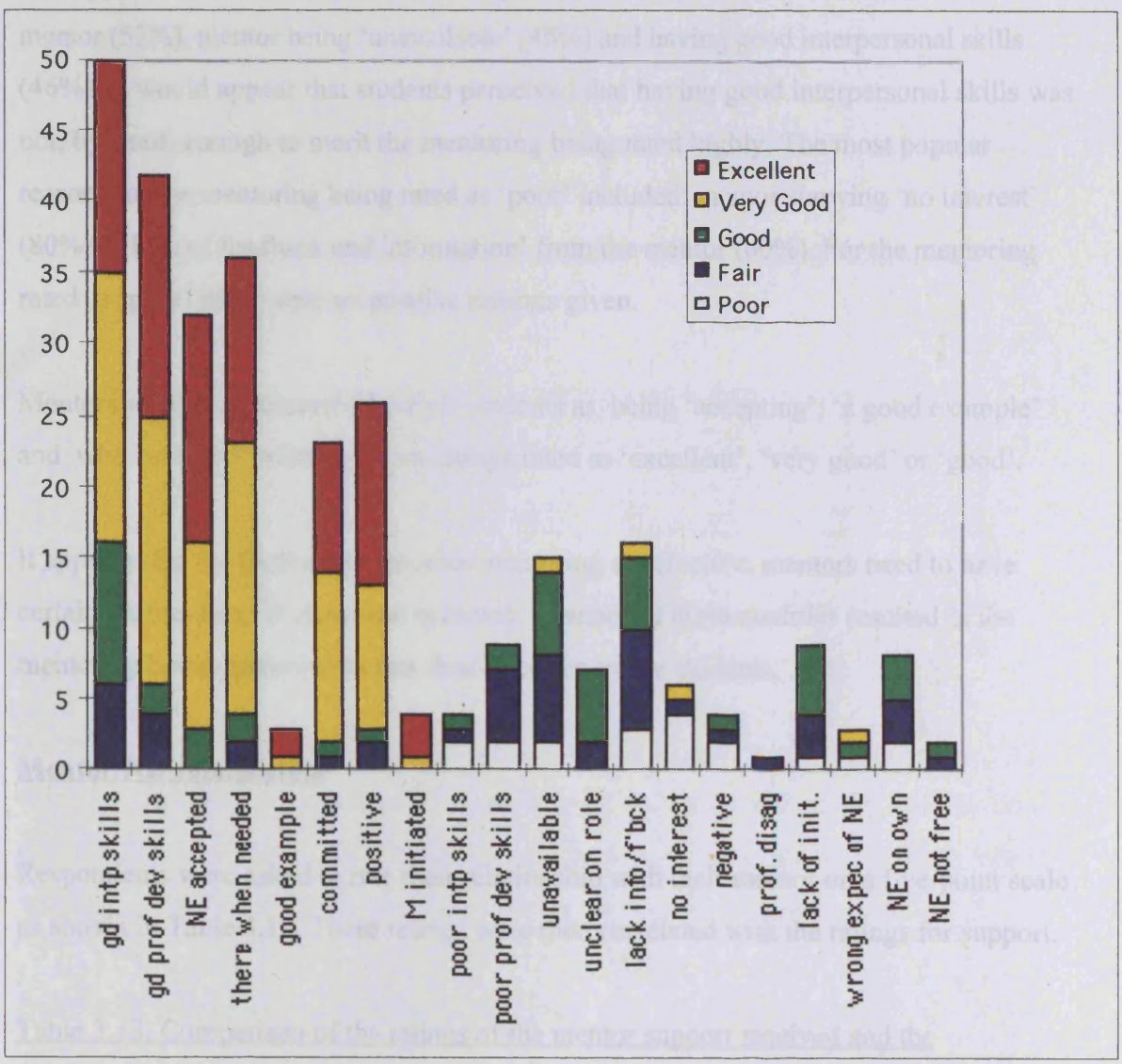
Positive Statements	Negative Statements
mentor had good interpersonal skills	mentor had poor interpersonal skills
mentor had good professional development skills	poor professional development skills
student accepted by mentor	mentor was often unavailable
mentor was there when needed	mentor was unclear about role
mentor was a good example	mentor gave little information/feedback
mentor was committed to mentoring	mentor showed lack of interest in NE
mentor was positive	mentor was negative
mentor initiated support	professional disagreement
	mentor did not initiate support
	mentor had wrong expectations of NE
	NE was left too much on own
	NE was not allowed enough freedom

Most students gave a number of reasons to explain the rating they had given to their mentor, in many cases there was a combination of positive and negative statements. The exception to this being the students who rated their mentors' support as 'excellent' or those who rated their mentor as 'poor'.

The statements for the group of students who rated their mentors' support as 'excellent' were all positive. The most popular reasons being given for this rating included: the mentor had 'good professional development skills' (89% of the students in this group gave this as a reason); 'the mentor accepted the NE' (84%); the mentor had 'good interpersonal skills' (78%); the mentor was 'positive' and 'the mentor was there when needed' (68%).

The students who rated their mentors' support as 'very good' listed reasons that were nearly all positive with the exception of four negative reasons: these being a 'lack of feedback and information' from the mentor; mentor being 'unavailable'; mentor showing 'no interest in student' and mentor having 'wrong expectations of student' and mentor being 'negative'. These four statements were each given once. The most popular reasons being given for the 'very good' rating included: the mentor having 'good interpersonal skills', 'good professional development skills' and mentor being 'there when needed' (76% of the students in this group gave these reasons for their ratings).

Figure 3.7. Frequency of reasons given for mentor support ratings by Phase One students.



The students who rated their mentor's support as 'good' listed a wider mix of positive and negative factors than the above two groups. The most popular reasons being given for this rating included: the mentor having 'good interpersonal skills' (66%); the mentor being 'unavailable' (40%); the mentor 'not initiating' meetings, the mentor being 'unclear of mentor role', the mentor 'not giving enough feedback/information' (all 33%). For this group of students, the positive features of the mentoring, for example, having good professional development skills, appeared to be off-set by certain negative features, for example, the mentor being unavailable.

When the rating fell below 'good', the number of positive statements about the mentoring decreased substantially. The most popular reasons for the students who rated the support as 'fair' included: there being a 'lack of feedback and information' from the mentor (53%), mentor being 'unavailable' (46%) and having good interpersonal skills (46%). It would appear that students perceived that having good interpersonal skills was not, by itself, enough to merit the mentoring being rated highly. The most popular reasons for the mentoring being rated as 'poor' included: mentor showing 'no interest' (80%) a 'lack of feedback and information' from the mentor (60%). For the mentoring rated as 'poor' there were no positive reasons given.

Mentors who were perceived by their students as being 'accepting'; 'a good example' and who 'initiated' meetings were always rated as 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good'.

It appears that for students to perceive mentoring as effective, mentors need to have certain personal and professional qualities. Absence of these qualities resulted in the mentoring being perceived as less than effective by the students.

Mentor/NE relationship

Respondents were asked to rate their relationship with their mentor on a five-point scale as shown in Table 3.13. These ratings were then correlated with the ratings for support.

Table 3.13. Comparison of the ratings of the mentor support received and the relationship the student had with the mentor in Phase One.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	25 (32%)	15 (20%)	13 (17%)	5 (6%)
Relationship rating	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	35 (45%)	11 (14%)	9 (12%)	3 (4%)

The two ratings of support and relationship are highly correlated r(75) = 0.809. As found in the case studies, the mentor/NE relationship appears to be an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of how effective the mentoring was.

Amount of time

Students were asked how often they met formally and informally with their mentors.

Table 3.14. Number of students giving each of the five different frequency ratings for formal and informal mentoring in Phase One.

	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Informal mentoring	77 (100%)	59 (76%)	13 (17%)	2 (3%)	3 (4%)	0 (0%)
Formal mentoring	77 (100%)	10 (13%)	17 (22%)	27 (35%)	7 (9%)	16 (21%)

As shown in Table 3.14, informal meetings tended to be daily whereas formal meetings tended to be weekly. There is only a weak correlation between these two frequencies r (75) = 0.273. Therefore having many informal meetings is no guarantee of many formal meetings. This would appear to confirm similar findings in the case studies.

Both these frequencies are positively correlated with the support ratings:

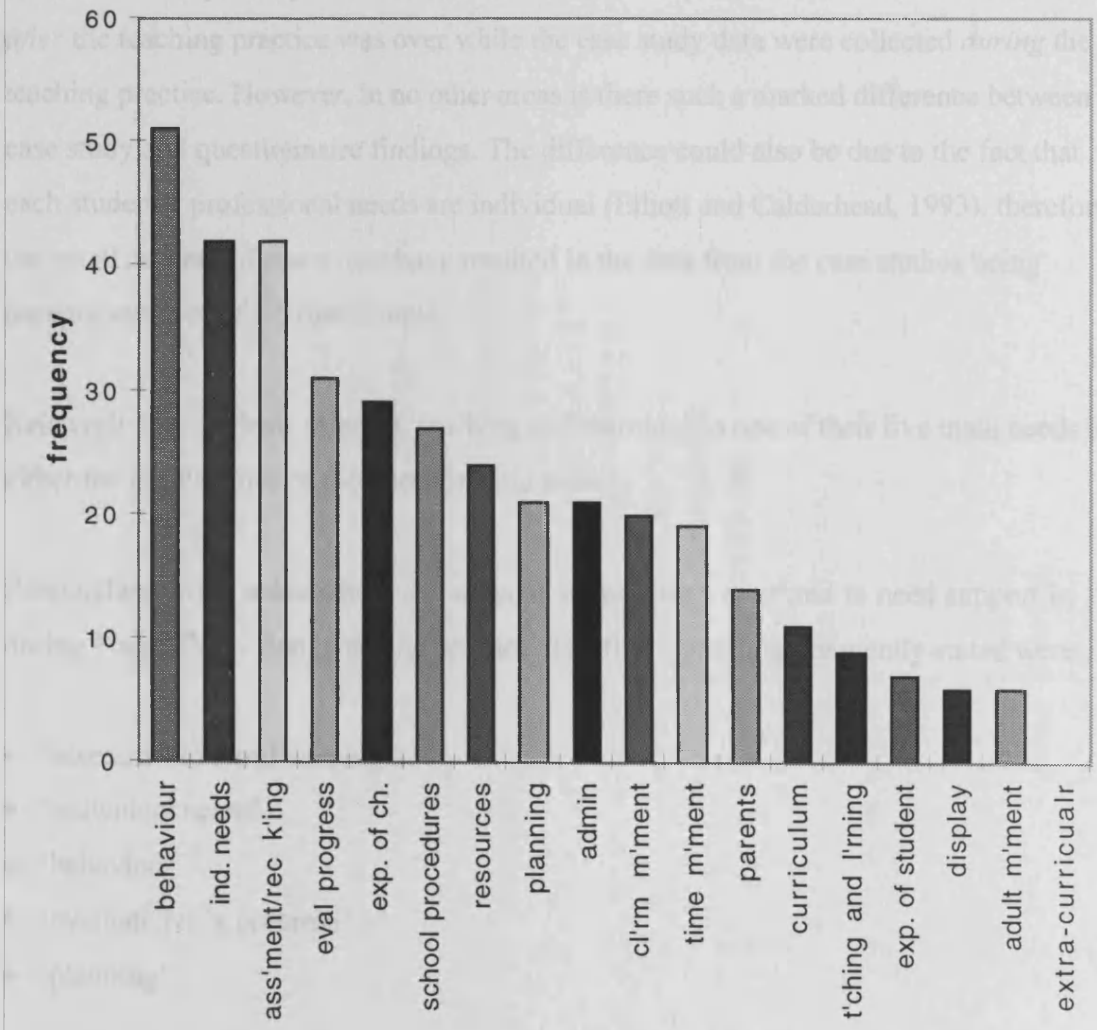
r(75) = 0.428 for informal
r(75) = 0.316 for formal

The amount of time spent mentoring appears to be an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of how effective the mentoring was. As found in the case studies, amount of informal mentoring would appear to be more predictive of mentoring success than formal mentoring.

Areas Phase One students perceived they needed the most mentor support

Respondents were asked to select the five areas from a pre-determined list in which they perceived they had needed the most support in Phase One (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the definitions and origins of these categories).

Figure 3.8. Phase One students' perceptions of the areas in which they needed the most support.



It can be seen in Figure 3.8, that the five main areas in which Phase One students mainly perceived they had needed support were:

- 'behaviour'
- 'individual needs'
- 'assessment/record keeping'
- 'evaluate NE's progress'
- 'expectations of children'

It is useful to compare Figure 3.8 with Figure 3.3 showing the areas perceived to have been discussed on teaching practice in the case studies. In both figures, 'individual needs' and 'assessment / record keeping' are high. However, there are many differences. These differences can possibly be accounted for because the questionnaire data were collected *after* the teaching practice was over while the case study data were collected *during* the teaching practice. However, in no other areas is there such a marked difference between case study and questionnaire findings. The difference could also be due to the fact that each student's professional needs are individual (Elliott and Calderhead, 1993), therefore the small number of cases may have resulted in the data from the case studies being unrepresentative of a larger sample.

Relatively few students selected 'teaching and learning' as one of their five main needs in either the case studies or the questionnaire survey.

Respondents were asked about the areas of support they expected to need support in during Phase Two - final teaching practice. The five areas most frequently stated were:

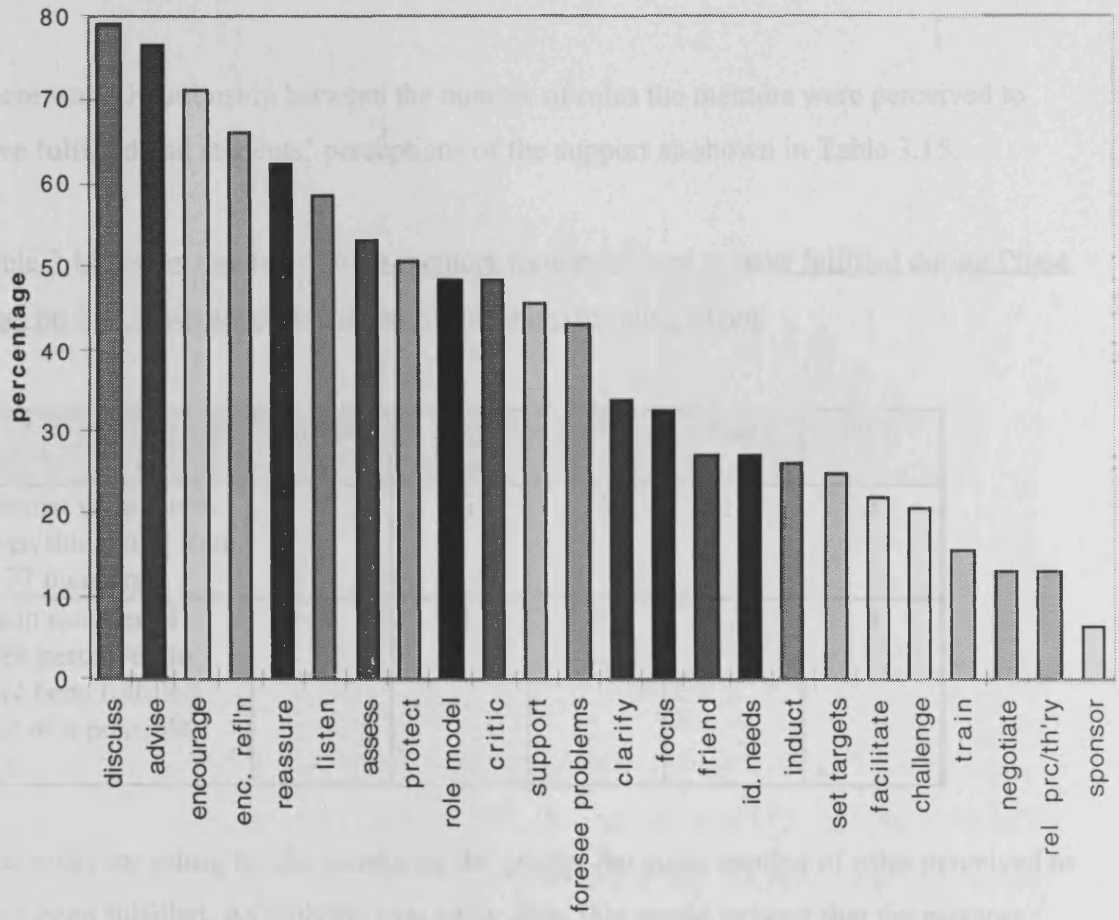
- 'assessment/record keeping'
- 'individual needs'
- 'behaviour'
- 'evaluate NE's progress'
- 'planning'

Interestingly these areas correspond closely to the areas perceived as actually being discussed on this teaching practice in the case studies (see Figure 3.5).

Role of the mentor.

Respondents were asked to select all the roles that they perceived their mentors had fulfilled during Phase One, from a pre-determined list (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the categories and their origins).

Figure 3.9. Roles that students perceived their mentors fulfilled during Phase One (expressed as a percentage of the total number of student responses)



As shown in Figure 3.9, the roles most frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors in Phase One were roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements of the Professional domain. The roles selected most frequently included 'to discuss' (79% of the students perceived that their mentors had fulfilled this role); 'to advise' (77%) and 'to encourage' (71%). As in the case studies, it was not common for

mentors to have roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. 'to set targets', 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to challenge'.

Being 'a friend' was not perceived to be a role frequently undertaken by Phase One mentors (27% of students perceived that their mentors had fulfilled this role).

The roles in the Structural domain - 'facilitate', 'induct', 'negotiate', 'sponsor' were not perceived to have been taken frequently. This may reflect the students failing to realise that their mentors were taking on these roles on their behalf or may reflect that the mentors did not, in actual fact, fulfil these roles.

There was a relationship between the number of roles the mentors were perceived to have fulfilled and students' perceptions of the support as shown in Table 3.15.

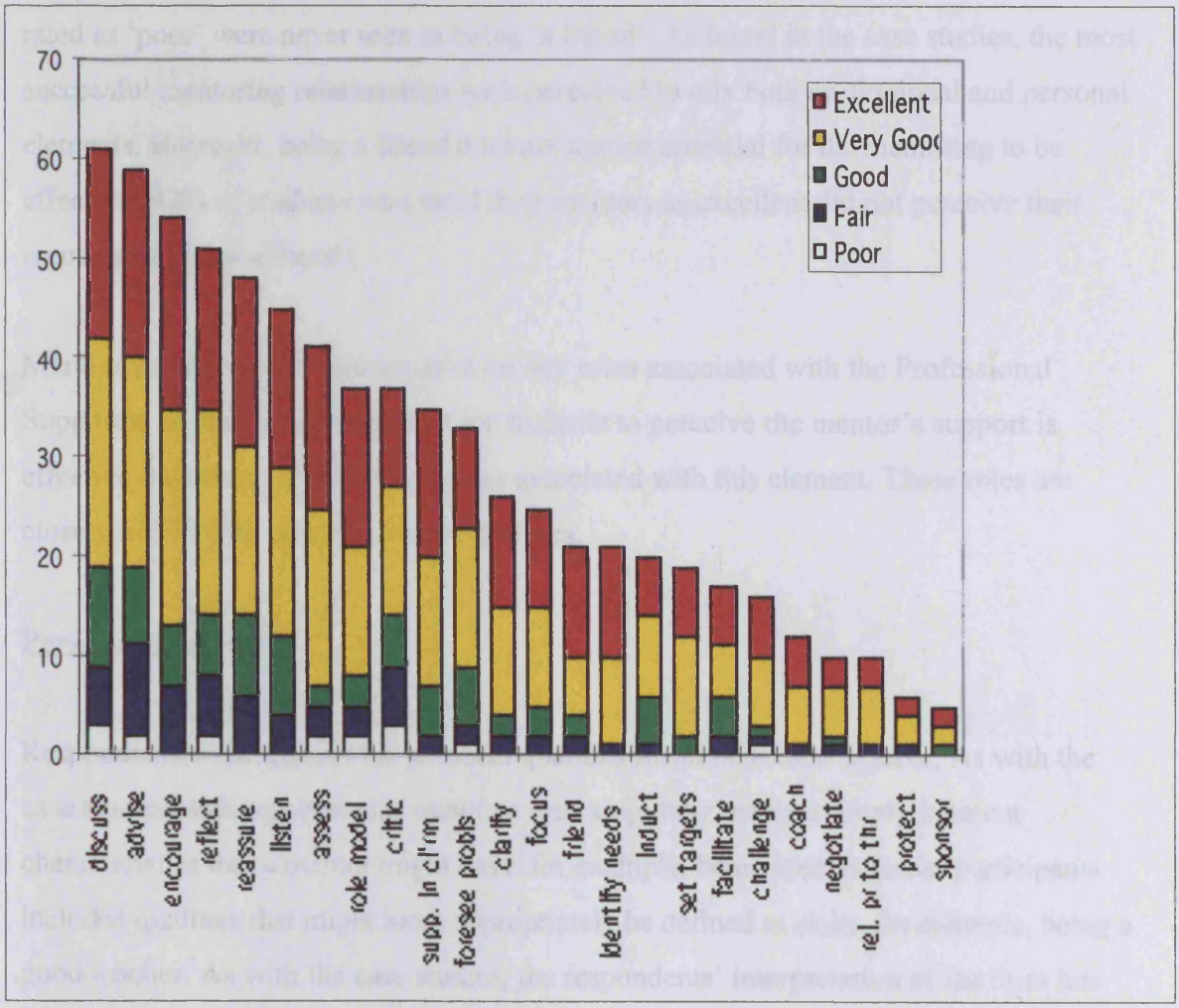
Table 3.15. Mean number of roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled during Phase One, broken down according to the overall support rating given.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of mentors given this rating (out of 77 mentors)	19	25	15	13	5
Mean number of roles perceived to have been fulfilled (out of a possible 25)	14	11	6	5	3

The better the rating for the mentoring the greater the mean number of roles perceived to have been fulfilled. As with the case study data, this would suggest that the mentors who provided the perceived best levels of support took on more roles than other mentors.

Certain roles were found to be associated with high ratings of mentor support. As can be seen from Figure 3.10, the roles 'to sponsor' and 'to set targets' were only associated with mentors who were rated as 'good' or better.

Figure 3.10. The relationship between the perceived roles the mentor had and the support rating given by the student in Phase One.



100% of mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived as having fulfilled the roles 'to advise'; 'to discuss' and 'to encourage'; 89% 'to reassure' and 84% 'to listen', 'to be a role model' and 'to encourage reflection'. Within this group, the percentage of mentors perceived as having fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element was relatively low: 34% were perceived as having fulfilled the role 'to set targets'; 31% to have fulfilled the role 'to challenge' and 15% 'to relate practice to theory'.

In general, those mentors who *were* perceived as having fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element were rated as 'very good' or 'excellent' - 90% of all mentors who were perceived as having fulfilled the roles 'to set targets' and 'to relate practice to theory'

were rated as 'very good' or 'excellent'. 81% of mentors who were perceived as having fulfilled the role 'to challenge' were rated as 'very good' or 'excellent'.

58% of mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived to have been 'a friend'. Mentors rated as 'poor' were never seen as being 'a friend'. As found in the case studies, the most successful mentoring relationships were perceived to mix both professional and personal elements. However, being a friend does not appear essential for the mentoring to be effective (42% of students who rated their mentors as excellent did not perceive their mentors had been a friend).

Mentors rated as 'poor' did not take on any roles associated with the Professional Supporter element suggesting that for students to perceive the mentor's support is effective the mentor must take on roles associated with this element. These roles are closely linked with certain personal qualities.

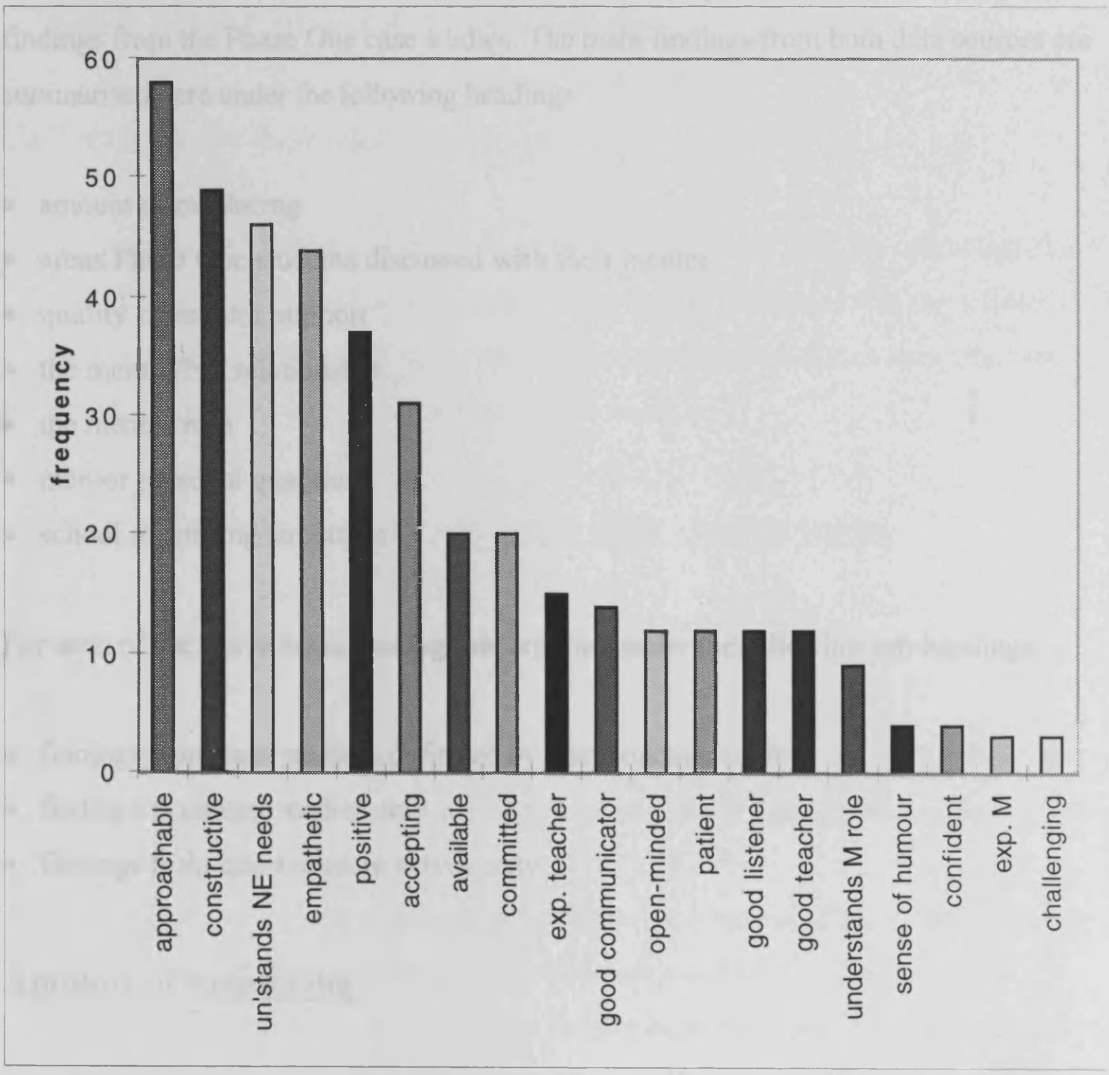
Personal qualities.

Respondents were asked what personal qualities mentors needed to have. As with the case studies, although personal qualities were originally meant to imply inherent characteristics that a mentor might have, for example, being approachable, participants included qualities that might more appropriately be defined as skills, for example, being a good teacher. As with the case studies, the respondents' interpretation of the term has been followed. The responses were grouped into 19 categories.

As shown in Figure 3.11, Phase One students most frequently mentioned the qualities:

- the mentor being approachable
- the mentor being constructively critical
- the mentor having a good understanding of the student's professional needs

Figure 3.11. Phase One students' perceptions of the personal qualities mentors need to have.



These qualities, being both personal (i.e. 'approachable') and professional (i.e. 'constructively critical' and 'understanding the student's professional needs'), appear to reflect the participants' perceptions that Phase One mentors need to fulfil roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements.

Summary of findings from Phase One

The findings from the Phase One questionnaire survey appear to confirm many of the findings from the Phase One case studies. The main findings from both data sources are summarised here under the following headings:

- amount of mentoring
- areas Phase One students discussed with their mentor
- quality of mentor support
- the mentor/NE relationship
- the mentor role
- mentor personal qualities
- school mentoring structures

For each of the above areas, findings are reported under the following sub-headings:

- findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey
- findings from case studies only
- findings from questionnaire survey only

Amount of mentoring

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase One students received varying amounts of mentoring.
- The majority of Phase One students received both formal and informal mentoring, with the majority receiving informal mentoring daily and formal mentoring at least once a week.
- The Phase One students who received the most formal mentoring did not necessarily receive the most informal mentoring.
- The amount of mentoring the student received appeared to influence the student's perceptions of how effective the mentor's support was - the greater the amount of

mentoring received, the more likely the student was to rate the quality of the mentor's support as high.

- The amount of informal mentoring appeared to relate more closely to these ratings of support than did the amount of formal mentoring.

Findings from case studies only:

- Mentoring, both formal and informal, decreased in amount from the beginning of the teaching practice to the end, although the decrease in both cases was not a steady, week by week decrease but rather each individual student had moments when the mentoring peaked and dipped across the six weeks.

Areas Phase One students discussed with their mentors

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- 'Planning' and 'classroom management' were frequently mentioned by Phase One students as the areas they discussed most (case studies) and needed most help with (questionnaires).
- Although there were some general trends in the percentage of time spent discussing particular areas, Phase One students all had their own individual needs.
- 'Teaching and Learning' was perceived to have been discussed relatively infrequently in the case studies (2 - 8% of the time) and was selected relatively infrequently by questionnaire respondents as one of the five main areas in which they needed mentor support (selected by 26% of respondents).

Findings from case studies only:

- Different areas increased and decreased in importance across the six weeks.
- Over all five cases, Phase One students were most likely to discuss 'planning', 'individual needs', 'classroom management' and 'curriculum'.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Phase One students most frequently perceived that they needed support in the areas of: 'school procedures'; 'display'; 'classroom management' and 'planning'.
- The areas Phase One students perceived that they would need most support in during Phase Two were: 'assessment/record keeping'; 'individual needs' and 'behaviour'.

Quality of mentor support

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Phase One students perceived that they received mentoring support varying widely in quality.

The Mentor/NE relationship

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- The mentor/NE relationship appears to have been an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of how effective the mentoring was - the relationship rating was highly correlated with the rating for quality of mentor support.

Findings from case studies only:

- The mentor/student relationship in Phase One was perceived by mentors and students to be essentially a professional relationship, with all case study students perceiving that the mentoring relationship should ideally be both professional and personal.
- In one school, the student perceived that the mentor's senior management responsibilities hindered the development of a relationship that was personal as well as professional.
- A student's personal qualities may influence the relationship formed.
- A mentor's management responsibilities may influence the relationship.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- 58% of the mentors rated as 'excellent' in the questionnaire survey were perceived to have been a 'friend'. However, the mentor being 'a friend' does not appear to have been essential for the student to rate the mentoring as 'excellent'.

The mentor role

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- The roles most frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors in Phase One were roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements of the Professional .
- Mentors who were perceived as having fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element were more likely to be rated highly by their students.
- Mentors who were perceived to have provided the best levels of support were likely to fulfil a wider variety of roles than other mentors.

Findings from case studies only:

- Headteachers, mentors and students perceived that Phase One mentors needed to fulfil many roles.
- Mentors generally did not perceive that it was appropriate for a Phase One mentor to fulfil roles associated with the Educator element i.e. 'to set targets', 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to challenge'.
- Students generally emphasised that it was most appropriate for Phase One mentors to fulfil roles associated the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Assessor elements of the Professional . Although, there was some recognition that roles associated with the Educator element might be appropriate.
- When mentor and student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled these roles, the mentor's support was rated highly by the student *regardless of the exact nature of the roles fulfilled.*

- All mentors were observed to have fulfilled a wide variety of roles. Although mentors were individual in the roles they fulfilled, the role 'to advise' was observed to be a dominant role for all mentors and the roles associated with the Educator element were observed to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently by all mentors.
- Mentors' perceptions of the roles appropriate for a Phase One mentor appeared to influence the roles they fulfilled in practice.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- The majority of mentors were not perceived to have fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. 'to set targets', 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to challenge'.
- The roles most frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors in Phase One were roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements of the Professional .
- Phase One mentors rated as 'poor' did not take on any roles associated with the Professional Supporter element suggesting that for students to perceive that the mentor's support is effective the mentor must take on roles associated with this element. These roles are closely linked with certain personal qualities.

Mentor personal qualities

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase One students perceived that the mentor's personal qualities were an important factor in influencing mentoring success.
- The qualities most frequently mentioned as important by Phase One students were 'being approachable'; 'understanding the student's professional needs' and 'being constructive'.

Findings from case studies only:

- Headteachers, mentors and students all perceived that mentors needed a variety of personal and professional qualities.
- Availability appeared to become an issue in schools where availability was not assured.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Absence of certain personal and professional qualities resulted in the mentoring being perceived as less effective by the student. As the number of negative qualities associated with the mentor increased, the student's rating of the mentor's support fell.

School mentoring structures

Findings from case studies only:

- Phase One schools had few formal mentoring structures in place to support students or their mentors.
- With no school guidelines in any of the schools, the type and amount of mentoring was almost entirely determined by the individual mentor. It was perceived by some of the mentors that this led to students in their schools receiving mentoring that was variable in quality. Three of the five mentors suggested the need for school guidelines to help clarify the situation.
- Criteria for selecting mentors were generally vague or non-existent.
- None of the schools provided non-contact time for mentors.
- Mentors and students perceived that mentoring should be seen as a priority for the mentor. Being a student mentor had a low priority within some of the schools and mentors were taken out of the classrooms to perform other school duties. In all cases where mentors were taken out of the classroom, both mentors and students perceived that this had been detrimental to the mentoring. In the cases where mentors

determined their own use of time, mentors and students expressed more positive feelings about the support offered by the school.

- The amount of informal support offered by other members of staff varied greatly from school to school and appeared to be influenced by the headteacher's attitude towards mentoring in each school. In schools where the headteacher was actively involved in the mentoring process, students received more informal support from other members of staff than in schools where this was not the case. Headteacher involvement appeared to help ensure that both the mentor and the student felt generally supported.
- Mentoring was often perceived by the headteacher to be informally linked to the existing support structures in the school but this only appeared to happen in schools where there was a strong ethos of collaboration. In other schools, where teachers worked more individually, mentors and students suggested that there was little evidence of informal support.
- All Phase One headteachers suggested in the interviews that they perceived mentoring to be important but in at least two cases, the headteachers did not appear to back this up in practice - engaging the mentor in other school duties and, according to the mentor and student perceptions, not being actively involved in the mentoring process. When headteachers were actively involved in the mentoring process, either through visiting the students' classroom or meeting with the mentor, both the mentor and the student felt well supported by the school.
- Phase One case study participants generally perceived that the support they received from other teaching staff members was useful but not essential apart from in one case where the mentor was perceived as not providing effective enough support. In this case the student valued highly the support of staff members within the same year group team.

CHAPTER FOUR: Findings from Phase Two

Introduction

This chapter reports findings about the type and amount of mentoring support received by and perceived to be necessary for students in Phase Two. Student participants in Phase Two were undertaking their final, six-week teaching practice. This teaching practice took place at the end of the Summer term, during May and June 1997. As with Phase One, the findings are reported under two headings - Case Studies and Questionnaires.

Case Studies

Case studies were undertaken of five mentor-student pairs in five different primary schools. Comparisons were made across the cases to investigate general patterns and trends in the amount and type of mentoring support received by Phase Two students and of headteachers', mentors' and students' perceptions of the type of mentoring support required by Phase Two students. Detailed analysis of the individual case studies then explored mentors' and students' perceptions in greater depth and investigated the personal and contextual factors that influenced the mentoring support received by each student in each school. Data was mainly collected through interviews (with all participants) and weekly logs (completed by mentors and students) with additional supporting material from mentor journals and videoed mentorials.

Questionnaires

Findings from the case studies about students' perceptions of their mentoring requirements and their perceptions of the mentoring they received during Phase Two were investigated by a questionnaire survey of 140 participants (including the five case study participants).

Case Studies

Table 4.1. Case study participants in Phase Two.

	School 6	School 7	School 8	School 9	School 10
Mentor * Student *	Mark Tamsin	Kate David	Lindsey Theresa	Sandra Sophie	Kay Penny

* Pseudonyms used throughout.

The findings from the case studies are reported under two headings:

- The mentoring support received by students across all five cases. A comparison of the mentoring support received by the five students and of perceptions of the mentoring support required, including: the amount of mentoring received by the students; the areas discussed by the students and mentors; the mentoring structures in the schools; the nature of the mentor/NE relationship; the perceptions of the roles the mentor fulfilled/should have fulfilled; the perceptions of personal qualities a Phase Two mentor needed.
- Individual case studies. A detailed analysis of each case exploring the support provided for the student in each school; the underlying factors that influenced the support the student received; the student's and mentor's evaluation of this support and from these evaluations, drawing out conclusions about the student's perceived mentoring requirements.

The mentoring support received by Phase Two students across all five cases

Mentors and students completed logs to record the amount of time spent on mentoring weekly. Two of the mentors did not complete logs due to other time commitments. For these two mentors, the students' logs were taken as being representative of the mentors'. Mentor-student differences in Phase One were found to be relatively small (pages 69-70) and mentor-student differences for the three mentor-student pairs with complete sets of data in Phase Two were also found to be relatively small (page 132). This approach

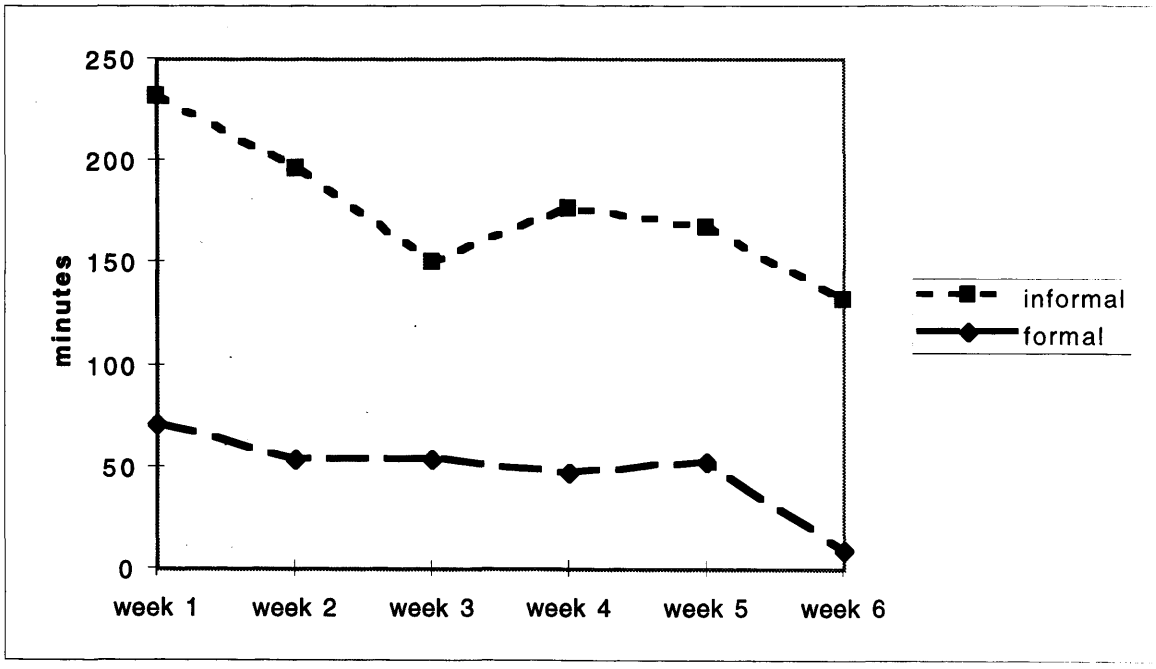
therefore supports a reasonable sample size without being unacceptably prone to distortion. For the majority of analyses, the data is thus provided by three mentors and two students, in contrast with Phase One, where the data for all five mentor/NE pairs was provided by the mentor.

Amount of mentoring

Phase Two students received between 12.9 and 31.7 hours of mentoring over the six weeks, with the mean total amount of mentoring being 22. 3 hours.

All students received both formal and informal mentoring. In all cases the amount of formal and informal mentoring received weekly changed over the six weeks as can be seen from Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1. Changes in the mean amount of formal and informal mentoring over the 6 weeks of Phase Two.

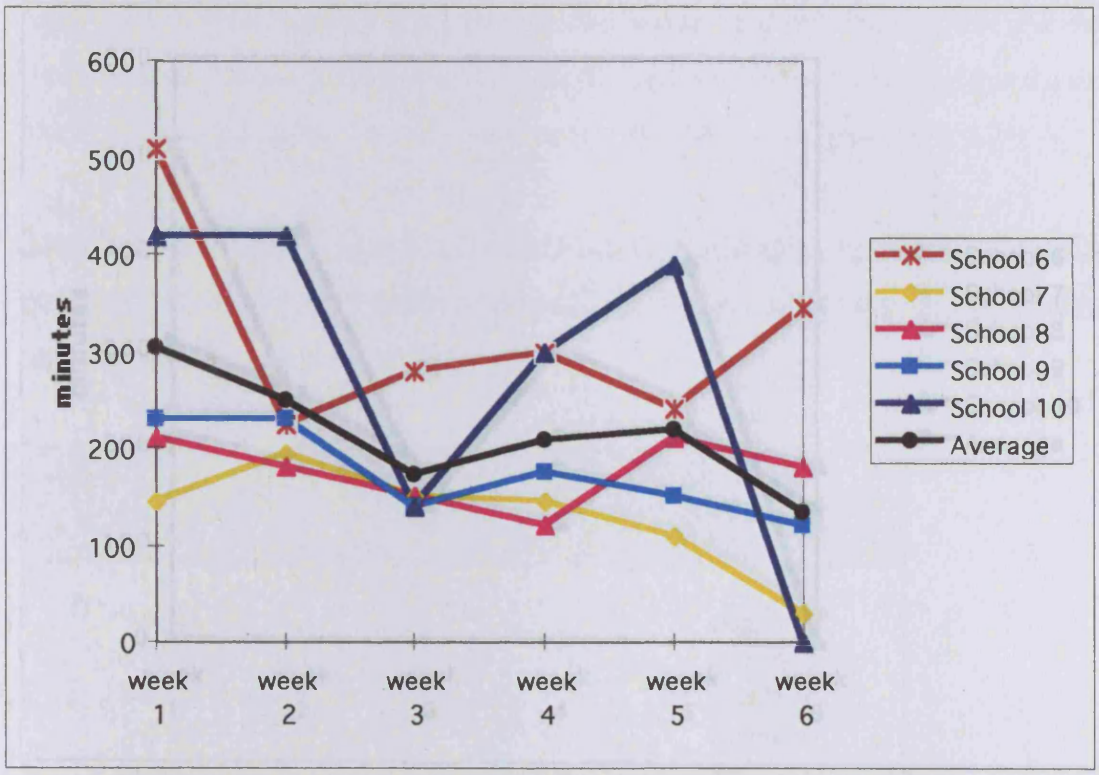


Both formal and informal mentoring decreased over Phase Two. The dip in the amount of informal mentoring in week 3 is probably explained by the fact that it was half term break that week and only three days were spent in school.

The amount of formal and informal mentoring changed in different ways over the six weeks. Formal mentoring started high and then fell to a fairly constant level for the rest of the teaching practice until it again decreased in week 6. Informal mentoring peaked in week 1 and then decreased steadily apart from the understandable dip in week 3.

When the mentor-student pairs are looked at individually, it can be seen that there are, in fact, two separate patterns to be observed as shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2. Changes in the amount of mentoring (formal and informal) received over the six-week period by each Phase Two case study student



As can be seen in Figure 4.2, the schools appear to fall into two groups, those where mentoring decreased after week 4 and those where mentoring increased. School 10 would appear to be an exception, the mentoring rose from week 4 to week 5 but then fell sharply to zero. However, this can be explained by the fact that the mentor was away in week 6 due to ill health. It is possible to speculate that, had the mentor not been away, then the mentoring would have continued to rise as in Schools 6 and 8. In the schools

where mentoring decreased from week 4 - Schools 7 and 9 - the headteachers/senior management were responsible for organising at least part of the mentor's time. In the schools where the mentoring increased (Schools 6, 8 and possibly School 10 had circumstances been different) the mentors were allowed to organise their own time during the period of the teaching practice (see individual case studies).

Figure 4.2 indicates that Phase Two students received widely different amounts of mentoring. It has been suggested that the amount of mentoring a student receives is a factor that is likely to affect the student's perception of the quality of the mentoring (e.g. Campbell and Kane, 1996; Mountford, 1993). When the case study students took part in the Phase Two questionnaire survey, they were asked to rate their mentors' support on a five-point scale, choosing between 'excellent'; 'very good'; 'good', 'fair' or 'poor'. When these ratings are compared to the amount of mentoring that was received, it can be seen that the student who received the least amount of mentoring was the only student to rate the mentor as 'very good' rather than 'excellent' (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2. The relationship between the amount of mentoring received and the student's perception of the mentor's support in Phase Two with schools arranged in descending order of total amount of mentoring.

School	Total amount of mentoring (hours)	Student's perception of mentor support
School 6	31.7	excellent
School 10	31	excellent
School 8	18.3	excellent
School 9	17.4	excellent
School 7	12.9	very good

It is interesting to note that there was a wide spread in the amount of mentoring even among all the mentors who were rated as 'excellent'. However, even the lowest figure for the 'excellent' group corresponds to almost 3 hours per week spent on mentoring. The relationship between the amount of mentoring received and perception of the quality of mentor support is explored further by the questionnaire survey.

The students who received the most formal mentoring did not necessarily receive the most informal mentoring as can be seen in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Phase Two schools shown in descending order of amount of formal and informal mentoring received by the student.

Highest amount of formal mentoring	Highest amount of informal mentoring
School 10	School 6
School 6	School 10
School 7	School 8
School 8	School 9
School 9	School 7

Summary:

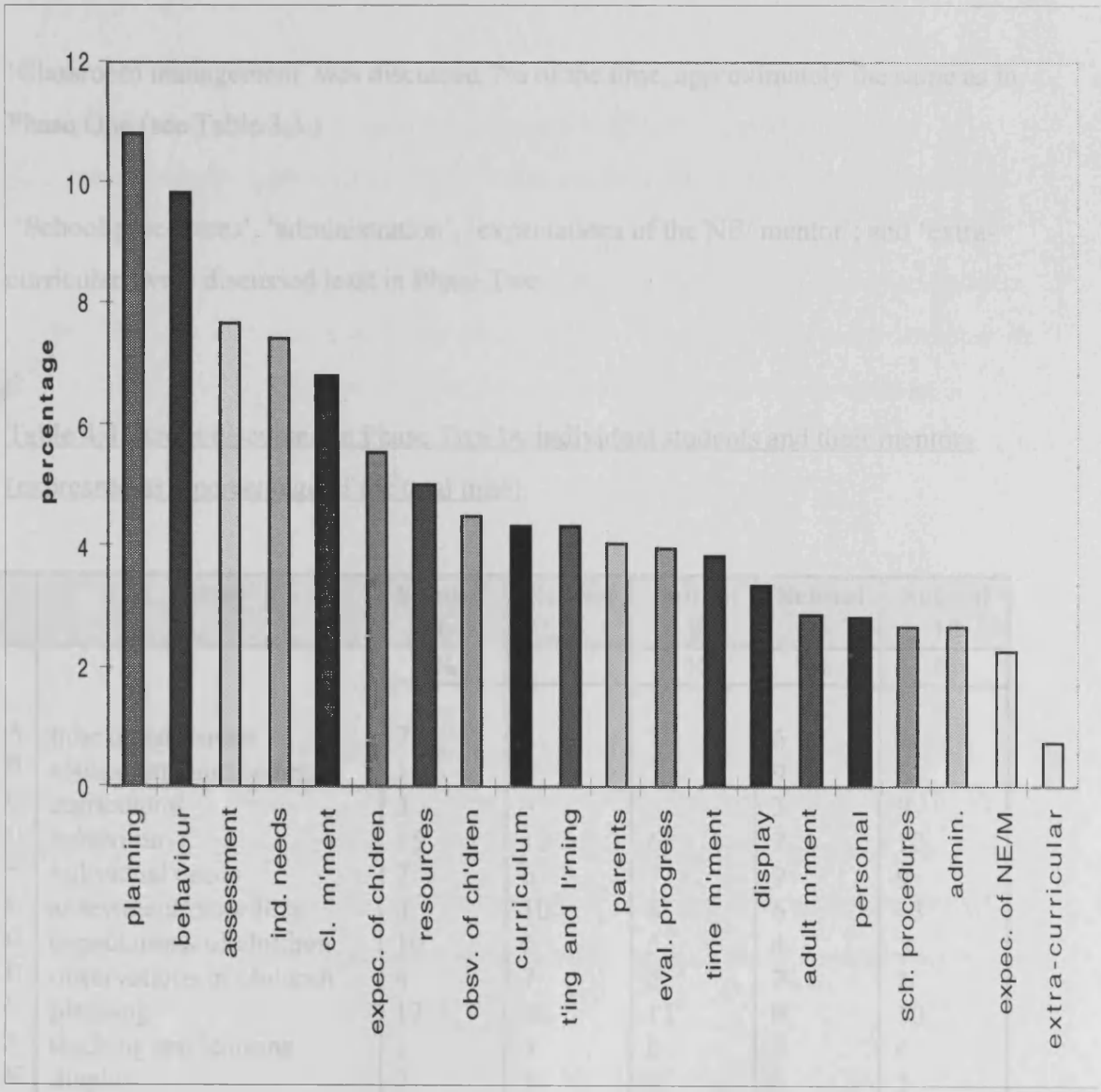
Within these case studies:

- Phase Two students received varying amounts of mentoring (12.9 - 31.7 hours over the six weeks).
- All Phase Two students received both formal and informal mentoring.
- Mentoring, both formal and informal, decreased in amount from the beginning of the teaching practice to the end, although the decrease in both cases was not a steady, week-by-week decrease but rather each individual student had moments when the mentoring peaked and dipped across the six weeks.
- When mentors were allowed to organise their own time, the amount of mentoring increased over the last three weeks of the practice (see Figure 4.2).

The areas Phase Two students discussed with their mentors

In the weekly logs, Phase Two mentors and students recorded the areas discussed over the six weeks. They selected the areas they had discussed using a set of pre-determined categories as shown in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3. The areas discussed by Phase Two mentors and students (amount expressed as the mean percentage).



The five areas most frequently discussed by Phase Two students and mentors were:

- 'planning'
- 'behaviour'
- 'assessment/record keeping'
- 'individual needs'
- 'classroom management'

'Teaching and learning' was discussed about 4% of the time. Considering that Phase Two students are on their final teaching practice, it might have been expected that this area would have been discussed more frequently (Kagan, 1993; McIntyre, 1992).

'Classroom management' was discussed 7% of the time, approximately the same as in Phase One (see Table 3.3.)

'School procedures', 'administration', 'expectations of the NE/ mentor'; and 'extra-curricular' were discussed least in Phase Two.

Table 4.4. Areas discussed in Phase Two by individual students and their mentors (expressed as a percentage of the total time).

	Area	School 6	School 7	School 8	School 9	School 10
		%	%	%	%	%
A	time management	7	2	3	6	2
B	classroom management	11	3	7	9	5
C	curriculum	3	3	5	3	9
D	behaviour	15	12	6	7	12
E	individual needs	7	6	7	9	9
F	assessment/recording	3	10	8	6	13
G	expectations of children	10	6	5	4	5
H	observations of children	4	7	5	7	1
I	planning	12	12	11	9	10
J	teaching and learning	3	5	6	3	6
K	display	2	3	7	4	2
L	extra-curricular	2	1	0	0	1
M	adult management	1	0	6	5	2
N	parents	5	3	7	6	1
O	administration	1	3	1	2	8
P	school procedures	0	6	1	2	4
Q	resources	10	3	5	6	1
R	expectations of NE/M	1	2	2	5	3
S	evaluate NE progress	3	9	4	4	2
T	personal issues	0	4	4	3	4
	Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100

By looking at the areas discussed by individual students and their mentors it can be seen that although there were common factors, there were also individual differences. These similarities and differences are shown in Table 4.4.

For all the Phase Two case study students 'planning' was one of the main areas they discussed with their mentors, taking up between 8-12% of the mentoring time ('planning' included planning lessons and discussing problems with lesson planning).

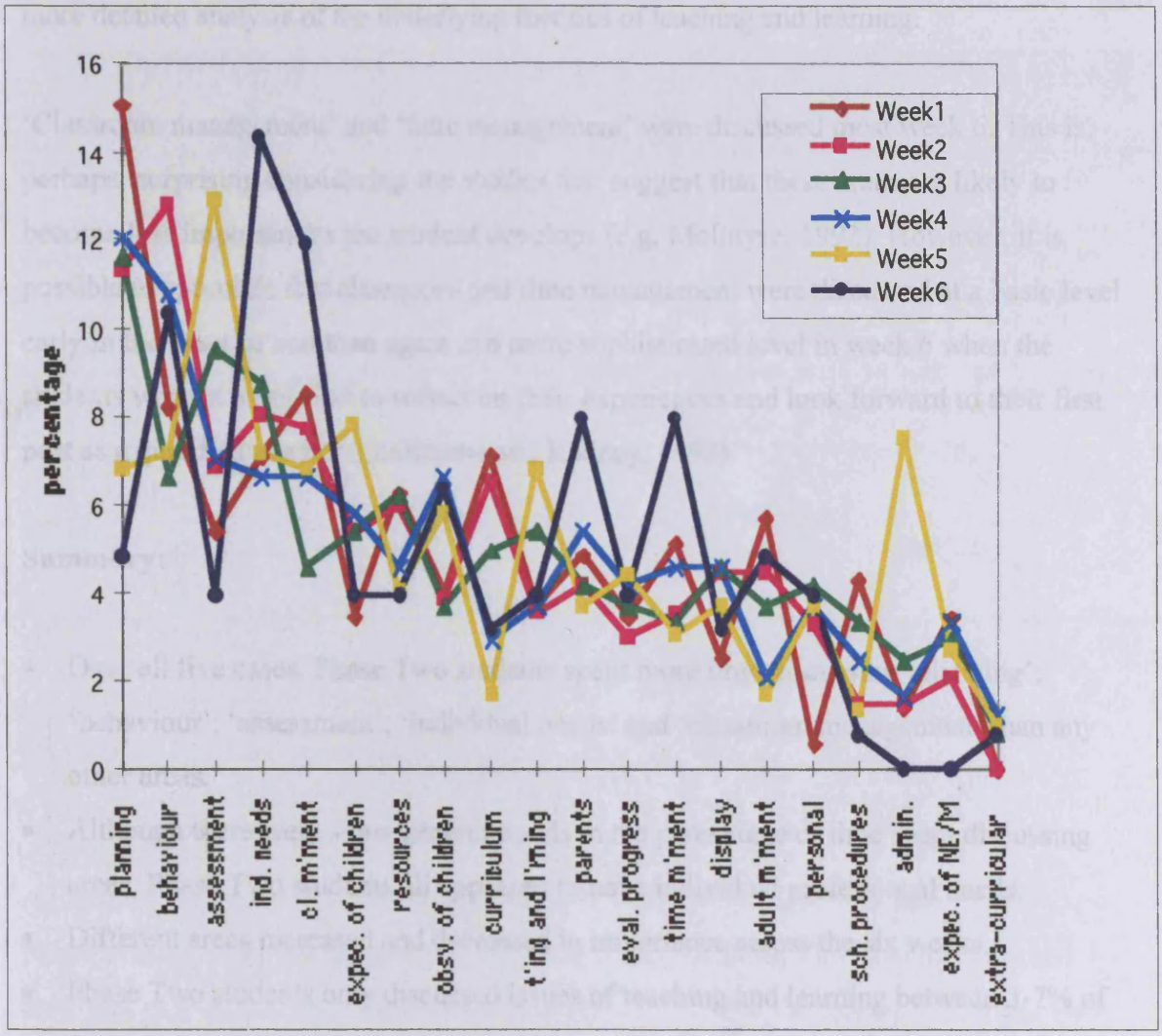
Areas E, I, J, L, R and T were discussed in relatively equal amounts (the spread across the five students for these areas being no more than 4%). Other areas were discussed in different amounts by different students, for example, there were relatively large individual differences seen in the amount of time spent discussing 'classroom management' (3-11%), 'behaviour' (6-15%) and 'assessment' (3-13%).

For all students, 'teaching and learning' was perceived to have been discussed relatively infrequently (3-6%) as was the area 'expectations of student/mentor' (1-5%).

It can be seen that 'adult management' was a area discussed in different amount by different students. Students in Schools 6, 7 and 10, rarely discussed it (0-2%), however, students in Schools 8 and 9 discussed it 5% and 6% of the time respectively. It is possible that this difference can be accounted for by the fact that the students in Schools 8 and 9 were both placed in nurseries and as such were more likely to come into contact with other adults, in particular nursery nurses.

Different areas were discussed in different amounts over the six-week period as shown in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4. Changes in areas perceived to have been discussed during Phase Two (amount expressed as a percentage of the total amount of mentoring for the week).



The percentage of time per week spent discussing 'school procedures', 'resources', 'adult management', and 'expectations of mentor/student' was highest in week 1. This is as might be anticipated, with students at the start of the teaching practice being in need of information about the school, the classroom and the practice.

The percentage of time per week spent on discussing 'planning' generally decreased across the six weeks. The percentage of time per week spent discussing 'assessment/record keeping', was highest in week 5. This possibly reflects the fact that by week 5, students generally had sole control of the class.

'Teaching and learning' was discussed most in week 5. This is consistent with the work of Kagan (1992) who suggests that once the student has reached a level of basic competence the mentoring focus should shift from aspects of classroom management to a more detailed analysis of the underlying theories of teaching and learning.

'Classroom management' and 'time management' were discussed most week 6. This is, perhaps, surprising considering the studies that suggest that these areas are likely to become less important as the student develops (e.g. McIntyre, 1992). However, it is possible to speculate that classroom and time management were discussed at a basic level early in the practice and then again at a more sophisticated level in week 6 when the students were in a position to reflect on their experiences and look forward to their first post as a qualified teacher (Guillaume and Rudney, 1993).

Summary:

- Over all five cases, Phase Two students spent more time discussing 'planning'; 'behaviour'; 'assessment'; 'individual needs' and 'classroom management' than any other areas.
- Although there were some general trends in the percentage of time spent discussing areas, Phase Two students all appeared to have individual professional needs.
- Different areas increased and decreased in importance across the six weeks.
- Phase Two students only discussed issues of teaching and learning between 3-7% of the mentoring time. The percentage of time spent discussing 'teaching and learning' was highest in week 5.

Comparison of the mentor/NE perceptions recorded in the logs

Both mentors and students were asked to complete weekly logs. In the three cases where mentors and students both completed logs their perceptions of the amount of mentoring and the areas discussed were generally similar as demonstrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Comparison of student and mentor estimates of amount of formal, informal and total amount of mentoring (in minutes).

	Week 1			Week 2			Week 3			Week 4			Week 5			Week 6		
	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T	F	I	T
School 7																		
Mentor	25	120	**145**	15	180	**195**	30	120	**150**	25	120	**145**	20	90	**110**	0	30	**30**
Student	25	150	**175**	15	180	**195**	35	150	**185**	25	150	**175**	20	120	**140**	0	40	**40**
School 8																		
Mentor	30	180	**210**	0	180	**180**	30	90	**120**	20	180	**200**	30	180	**210**	0	180	**180**
Student	30	180	**210**	30	180	**210**	0	150	**150**	30	150	**180**	30	180	**210**	0	180	**180**
School 10																		
Mentor	120	300	**420**	180	240	**420**	150	180	**330**	120	180	**300**	210	180	**390**	0	0	**0**
Student	120	300	**420**	120	240	**420**	130	150	**280**	200	280	**480**	180	260	**440**	0	0	**0**

F= formal; I= informal; T= total

(The mentors in Schools 6 and 9 did not complete logs)

Agreement between the mentor and student pairs was very close with no systematic biases evident either for formal or informal mentoring. Although there were individual instances of disagreement, these seem to be best characterised as random variation. This provides support for the policy of regarding the additional two student logs from Phase Two as being representative of the missing mentor logs. Mentors and students also appeared to have generally similar perceptions of the areas discussed during Phase Two as shown in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5. Comparing mentor and student perceptions of the areas discussed during Phase Two: number of sessions on each area ordered by student-mentor difference.

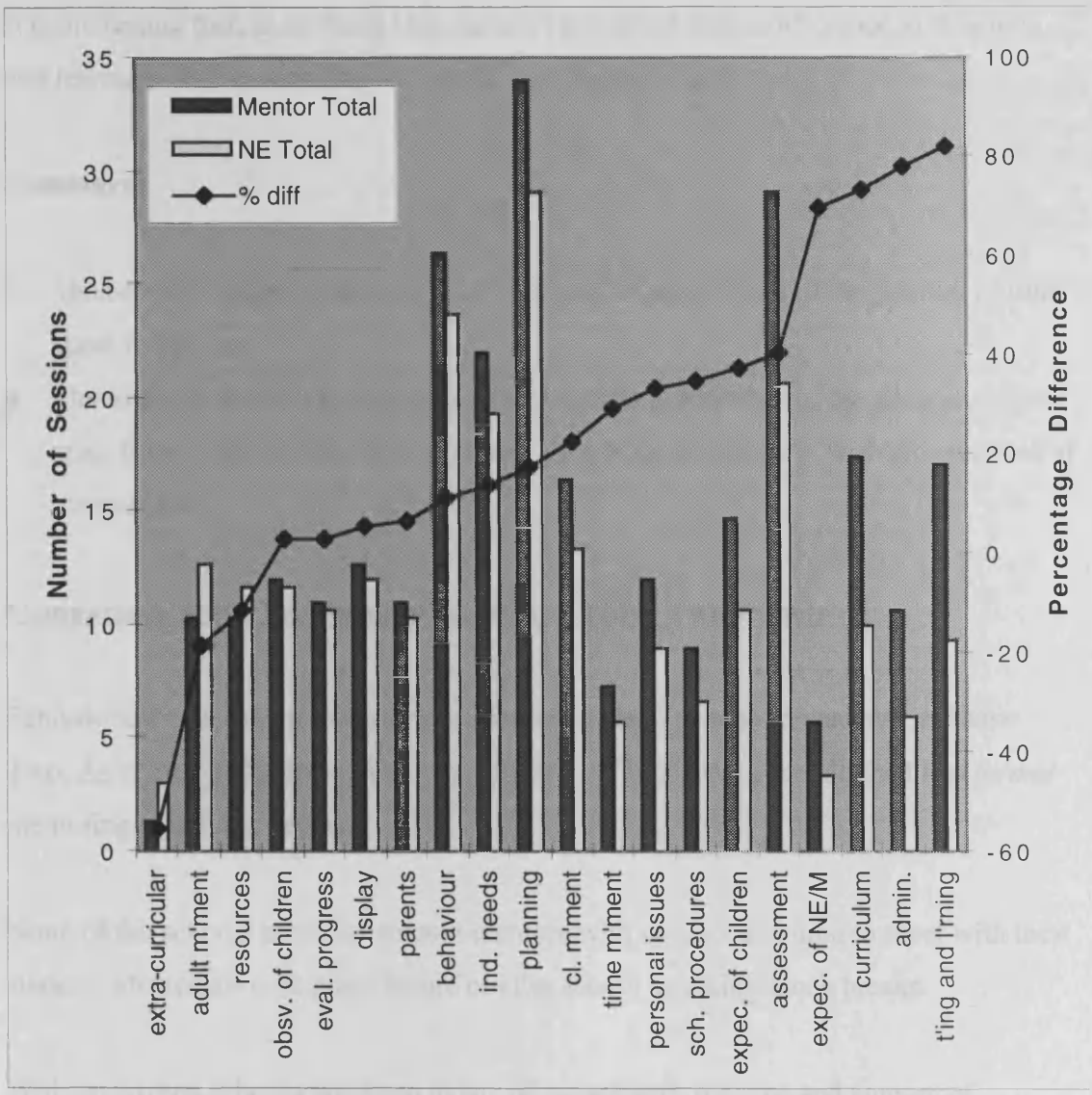


Figure 4.5 shows the estimated total number of sessions of mentoring in different areas as perceived by both the mentor and student. For each area, the percentage difference *between* mentor and student estimates was calculated. It can be seen that students perceived that the areas of 'extra-curricular', 'adult management' and 'resources', had been discussed more frequently than their mentors did. In all other areas the mentor perceived that more discussion had taken place. Apart from in four areas, the mentors' estimates were no more than 40% greater than the students' estimates. However, in the areas: 'extra-curricular', 'expectations of NE/M', 'curriculum', 'administration' and

'teaching and learning' the mentor's estimates were about 70-80% greater than those of the students.

It is interesting that, as in Phase One, mentors perceived such a difference in 'teaching and learning' and 'expectations of NE/M' (see Figure 3.5).

Summary:

- Mentors and students recorded relatively similar perceptions of the amount of time spent mentoring.
- Mentors and students recorded relatively similar perceptions of the areas discussed apart from the areas: adult management' ,'teaching and learning' and 'expectations of mentor/ NE'.

Comparison of the mentoring structures in Phase Two schools

Schools had a variety of mentoring structures in place to support students in Phase Two. As shown in Table 4.6, schools involved in Phase Two generally had few *formal* mentoring structures in place.

None of the schools provided student mentors with non-contact time to meet with their student. Mentorials took place before or after school or during lunch breaks.

With no written school guidelines in any of the schools, the type and amount of mentoring was almost entirely determined by the individual mentor. In three of the schools, guidelines were in the process of being developed (see analysis of individual case studies).

In three of the schools, headteachers said that they selected mentors using certain criteria and suggested that members of staff were turned down if they were thought to be unsuitable for the role. However, in the other two schools, mentors were asked to volunteer and all volunteers were accepted.

Table 4.6. Formal mentoring structures for supporting students in Schools 6-10 (Phase Two)

	School 6	School 7	School 8	School 9	School 10
Mentor guidelines	No	* University guidelines used (sch. guidelines being developed)	No	No (sch. guidelines being developed.)	* University guidelines used (sch. guidelines being developed)
Non-contact time	No	No	No	No	No
Group mentoring meetings	One - Head Teacher	No	No	One - HT	No
Mentoring Co-ordinator	Yes - Deputy Head (not known to student)	Yes	No	Yes (not known to student)	Yes - Deputy Head (not official)
Selection of mentors	volunteers	Head Teacher and mentoring co-ordinator	volunteers	volunteers / Head Teacher had final say	volunteers / Head Teacher had final say
Criteria for selection of mentors	none	strong role model; good practitioner	none	good practitioner and experienced teacher	good practitioner and good interpersonal skills

* All schools had copies of the university teaching practice guidelines and had a flexible learning mentoring pack. However, only in Schools 7 and 10 were these guidelines referred to as being widely used.

Summary:

- Phase Two schools had few formal mentoring structures in place to support students.
- No Phase Two schools had written mentoring guidelines and the type of mentoring support provided was essentially left up to the individual mentor to decide although in three of the five schools, policies were being developed..
- None of the Phase Two schools provided non-contact time for the mentors.
- Schools in Phase Two were split into schools that had no criteria for selection of mentors and schools where selection of appropriate mentors appeared to be carefully considered by the headteacher but not against written criteria.

- In all five cases, the schools either did not have an official mentoring co-ordinator or the position was limited to the allocation of students to classes before the teaching practice started.

The Mentor/NE relationship

NEs were asked whether they perceived their relationship with their mentor to essentially be a professional or a personal relationship (Campbell and Kane, 1996). In all cases they held similar perceptions, as shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Mentors' and students' perceptions of their relationship in Phase Two linked to students' ratings of quality of mentor support received (rating taken from questionnaire survey).

	Mentor and NE description of their relationship	NE perception of mentor support
School 6	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	excellent
School 7	Professional	very good
School 8	Professional and Personal	excellent
School 9	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	excellent
School 10	Essentially professional but with some personal elements	excellent

The relationship in Phase Two appeared to essentially be professional in nature but with some personal elements. Three of the mentors discussed the importance of establishing a relationship that would allow the mentor to both support and criticise:

> You need to find some kind of relationship that will allow you to be candid without undermining of the individual's confidence. (Mentor - Kate)

> I think it is both personal and professional. I get on well with her but I think when you have a more formal meeting, you do have to sit down and say this is what we are going to talk about, this is what I have seen. You have to try and be

> professional about the meetings or you couldn't pull out of them what you wanted to. (Mentor - Lindsey)

> I think if you're over friendly and the student is not preparing their work adequately or thinking through what they are doing, then it's more difficult... there's a boundary, you've got to stay friendly and approachable so that they feel confident if they have a problem they can ask for advice but you have to keep a distance to an extent as you do with children. There's a sort of line, I suppose. (Mentor - Sandra)

Four of the students perceived that their relationships had some personal elements. However one of these students suggested that these personal elements were not essential, that a good relationship for a Phase Two mentor and student could be purely professional and just as effective:

> Someone can be a good mentor but not get on with you at a personal level. You may not necessarily be friendly but it doesn't make them a bad teacher-mentor. (Student - Tamsin)

The importance of the relationship and its influence on the mentoring is explored further in the analysis of the individual case studies and the questionnaire survey.

Summary:

- The mentor-student relationship in Phase Two was perceived to essentially be a professional relationship with some personal elements.

<u>The mentor role</u>

The interviews explored participants' perceptions of a Phase Two mentor's role. These are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Headteachers', mentors' and students' perceptions of the roles a mentor should fulfil during Phase Two (including students' perceptions of the roles they perceived their mentors actually did fulfil).

Role	School 6				School 7				School 8				School 9				School 10			
	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	*	HT	M	NE	
Personal																				
to be a friend				*		✓						*		✓	✓		✓			
Structural																				
to induct		✓		*										✓						
to facilitate				*		✓						*								
Professional Supporter																				
to encourage	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to reassure		✓		*	✓	✓						*		✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to listen	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to support in classroom	✓		✓	*	✓	✓		*	✓		✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
Professional Trainer																				
to protect																			✓	*
to role model	✓	✓		*		✓		*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓		*	✓	✓	✓	*
to train				*		✓		*	✓								✓			*
to discuss	✓	✓	✓	*	✓		✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*			✓	*		✓	✓	*
to advise	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to identify needs	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*
to focus			✓	*		✓				✓				✓		*				
to clarify									✓			*								*
to be a critic			✓	*		✓								✓						*
to help reflect		✓		*	✓	✓	✓	*				*				*		✓		*
Professional Educator																				
to set targets		✓		*	✓	✓		*		✓	✓	*	✓			*		✓		
to rel practice to theory						✓						*				*				*
to challenge	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	
Professional Assessor																				
to evaluate	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	✓	*

* students' perception of the roles the mentor actually had, taken from their responses in the questionnaire survey using a pre-determined set of categories (see Chapter 2).

The categories in Table 4.8 came directly from the interview responses. The responses had enough similarities to be grouped together into 21 categories. The categories/roles were then grouped together in three *role domains:*

- Personal
- Structural
- Professional

The professional role domain is sub-divided into four *role elements* - Professional Supporter; Trainer; Educator and Assessor (see Chapter Two for further details).

There was unanimous agreement among the Phase Two participants that the mentor needed to fulfil roles associated with all elements of the Professional domain. The roles of 'encouraging', 'listening', 'advising', 'challenging' and 'assessing' were unanimously agreed to be appropriate roles for a Phase Two mentor. However, two of the headteachers did voice concerns about the 'assessor' role:

> I think it needs to be kept quite separate from the advising and counselling otherwise there is confusion about what is being done when, there is a danger that the mentor will not be asked for advice because the student will perceive that there will be a mark against them. (Headteacher - School 7)

The role of 'challenger' was perceived to be an appropriate role by all of the Phase Two participants although many participants were quick to stress that this was challenging in a positive sense, that any challenging had to be constructive not destructive:

> I think it's very difficult to get the balance... it's like with a child you don't destroy their spirit you just pick up some things so I think with a student you have to look for major areas where they need help and be careful that at the end of a session you don't criticise everything... you have to be aware that you are challenging in a constructive way and in systematic way. (Mentor - Sandra)

> You've got to do it in such a way that it's constructive challenge or constructive criticism - I think it's a fine technique to do it correctly and get the right result. If you're too heavy handed or you don't do it right, you can do an awful lot of damage. (Mentor - Lindsey)

> It's extending you, like with a child, but it has to be done in the right way and at the right time. (Student - David)

The role of 'friend' was rarely perceived to be important. Two of the participants who did suggest 'friend' as an appropriate role qualified it by describing the role as 'a critical friend'. Participants appeared to be in general agreement that a Phase Two mentor's main role was to support the student's professional development.

The roles 'induct' and 'facilitate' were mentioned rarely.

Only one participant suggested that a Phase Two mentor should have the role of relating practice to theory.

In all cases, the students suggested (in their responses to the questionnaire survey), that their mentors had fulfilled every role that they had expected and wanted a Phase Two mentor to have. All the five mentors were rated by the students as providing 'very good' or 'excellent' support.

Videoed observations of each mentor/NE pair involved in a mentorial allowed for the analysis of roles mentors were perceived by the researcher to fulfil in practice. The roles were taken from the interview data. However, only the roles associated with the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Educator elements were coded and analysed because it was felt that the roles in the other domains - Structural, Personal and associated with the Assessor element - would be unlikely to be demonstrated to any great extent within the context of a mentorial (see Chapter Two for further details on the coding and analysis).

As can be seen from Table 4.9, all the mentors fulfilled a wide variety of roles across the role domains, although the greater percentage of the time was spent with the mentor

fulfilling roles associated with the Trainer element of the Professional domain. Although all the mentors were individual in the roles they were observed to fulfil, the role 'to advise' was observed to have been frequently fulfilled by all mentors.

Table 4.9. The roles Phase Two mentors were observed to fulfil during a videoed mentorial (amount expressed as a percentage of the total number of coded interactions)

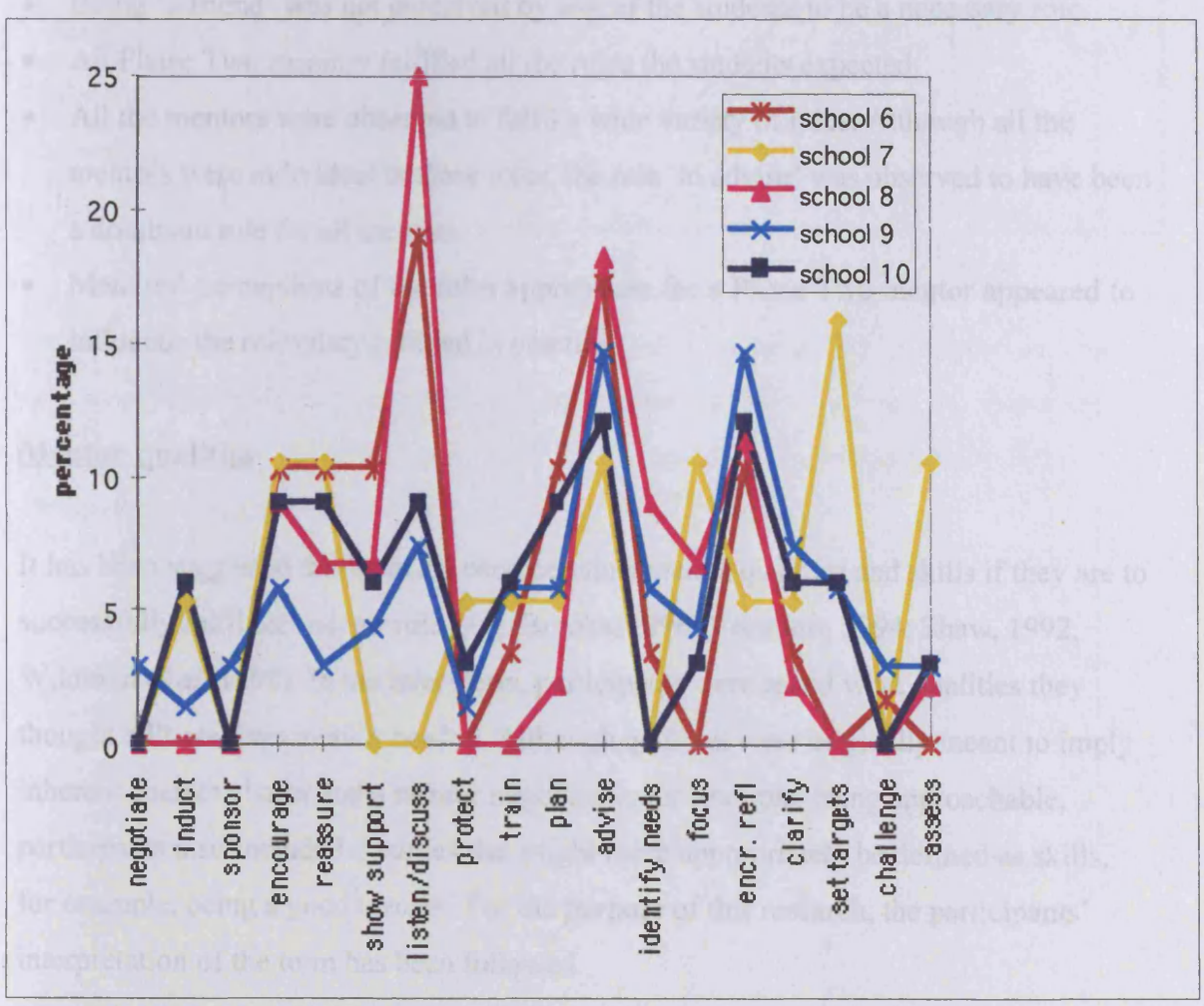
Role Element	School 6 %	School 7 %	School 8 %	School 9 %	School 10 %
Prof. Support					
to encourage	13%	14%	12%	10%	16%
to reassure	9%	4%	6%	3%	3%
Train					
to protect	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
to train	6%	3%	8%	11%	7%
to advise	29%	14%	35%	27%	21%
to identify needs	13%	6%	11%	8%	4%
to focus	0%	12%	6%	5%	6%
to clarify	1%	6%	2%	2%	7%
to be a critic	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
to help reflect	18%	13%	9%	17%	21%
Educate					
to set targets	2%	7%	4%	3%	6%
to rel practice	1%	8%	1%	5%	3%
to theory					
to challenge	7%	13%	5%	9%	4%

N.B. Three roles were not included in this table that are included in Table 4.8. 'To role model' was removed from the categories for video analysis because it is a role generally associated with action rather than talking; 'to listen' was removed because it was decided to focus on the mentors' spoken interactions and the role 'to discuss' was removed because it was felt that it was a role that could overlap with many of the other categories and could therefore not be coded reliably.

When Table 4.9 is compared to Table 4.8, it can be seen that, at a broad level at least, the mentors' perceptions of appropriate mentor roles corresponded with the roles they were observed to fulfil.

Using journals, mentors were asked to record the roles they had *intended* to fulfil during mentorials. Mentors were asked to select the roles they perceived they had intended to fulfil during each mentorial from a list of 22 pre-determined categories that had been developed from analysis of initial data (see Chapter Two). The journal categories correspond closely, although not exactly, with the 22 roles that were perceived by Phase Two interview participants to be appropriate roles for a Phase Two mentor to have.

Figure 4.6. Mentors' perceptions of the individual roles they had intended to fulfil during mentorials in Phase Two (expressed as a percentage of the total number of roles they intended to fulfil).



It is clear from Figure 4.6 that mentors perceived they had intended to fulfil a wide variety of roles during mentorials.

Only two out of the five mentors ever intended to 'challenge' during mentorials. Two out of the five mentors never intended to 'set targets' or to 'identify needs'.

All five mentors intended at some point to 'encourage'; 'reassure'; 'plan'; 'advise'; 'encourage reflection' and 'clarify'.

Summary:

- All participants perceived that mentors need to fulfil many roles.
- Although exact perceptions of the nature of these roles varied, participants generally emphasised the importance of the roles in the Professional domain.
- Being 'a friend' was not perceived by any of the students to be a necessary role.
- All Phase Two mentors fulfilled all the roles the students expected.
- All the mentors were observed to fulfil a wide variety of roles. Although all the mentors were individual in these roles, the role 'to advise' was observed to have been a dominant role for all mentors.
- Mentors' perceptions of the roles appropriate for a Phase Two mentor appeared to influence the roles they fulfilled in practice.

Mentor qualities

It has been suggested that mentors need certain personal qualities and skills if they are to successfully fulfil the mentor role (e.g. Brooks, 1996; Yeomans, 1994; Shaw, 1992; Wildman *et al*, 1992). In the interviews, participants were asked what qualities they thought a Phase Two mentor needed. Although qualities were originally meant to imply inherent characteristics that a mentor might have, for example, being approachable, participants also included qualities that might more appropriately be defined as skills, for example, being a good teacher. For the purpose of this research, the participants' interpretation of the term has been followed.

All respondents agreed that mentors needed certain qualities as shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10. The personal and professional qualities that Phase Two headteachers, mentors and students perceived were important for mentors to have.

Qualities	School 6			School 7			School 8			School 9			School 10		
	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE
Personal Qualities															
approachable	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
accepting			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
committed	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓					✓	✓
empathetic				✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓		
open-minded			✓			✓	✓						✓	✓	
patient			✓	✓										✓	✓
sense of humour			✓								✓				✓
positive		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
confident		✓	✓		✓					✓	✓				
Prof. Qualities															
available	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		✓			
good teacher				✓						✓			✓		
experienced teacher			✓	✓						✓					
understands NE 's prof. needs			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
constructive		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
good communicator	✓			✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
good listener				✓			✓			✓		✓	✓		
able to challenge		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									

The categories in Table 4.10. were directly derived from the interview responses. The responses were the result of an open-ended question without probing. All responses could be coded into one of the categories. The perceived qualities appeared to fall broadly into two categories:

- Personal qualities
- Professional qualities

(see Chapter Two for a more detailed description of the categories)

The majority of participants emphasised that the mentor needed both personal and professional qualities, perceiving that Phase Two mentors needed to be: 'approachable' (15 out of 15), 'positive' (11), 'constructively critical' (11) and 'accepting' (9).

All five students perceived that mentors needed to have a 'good understanding of a student's needs'. Four mentors also suggested that this was an important quality.

> Being able to judge just how much to give and then stopping to see how they have got on and recognising achievements, then building on that again. (Mentor - Mark)

> It's being able to lead the students through different stages, knowing what to focus on when. (Mentor - Kim)

Being 'accepting' was perceived as an important quality by four of the students, three of the headteachers and three of the mentors. Being accepting included allowing the student to take over the class and allowing students to make their own mistakes and try things their own way:

> Someone who stands back for long enough to let the student find out for themselves, not jumping in... for me the best mentors are those who have the ability to get the student to come up with their own solutions rather than imposing their ideas. (Headteacher - School 6)

> It is literally someone who can support without being judgmental but somebody who can make a judgement when they need to and offer support when they need to. (Headteacher - School 8).

Only one student perceived that experience was an important quality. Interpersonal qualities such as being 'approachable' and professional qualities such as being 'constructively critical' were mentioned far more frequently:

> Having had a new mentor and then a very experienced one they both had very similar qualities really, it's basically just getting the feeling that you can approach them at any time... they let you tell them what had happened and what you felt before they tell you what you should have done. (Student - Penny)

Summary:

- All participants perceived that mentors needed a variety of personal and professional qualities.
- The quality most frequently perceived as important was being 'approachable'.

Individual Case Studies

This section describes each case in detail, exploring support received by the student; the underlying factors that influenced the support the student received; the student and mentor's evaluation of the support and from this evaluation, drawing out the student and mentor's perceptions of the student's needs.

Each case study is divided into three sections:

- School support.
- Mentor support.
- Summary of the findings for each school.

School 6

Mentor: Mike
Student: Tamsin

School Support

The headteacher in School 6 had a positive attitude towards mentoring: 'we have always taken mentoring seriously... mentoring is the mentor's first commitment.' Mentors were only used occasionally as supply cover and decided for themselves how much time they would spend out of the classroom and what they would do with that time. Tamsin valued Mike being available: 'he was always there when I needed him.' Mike believed that it was important for mentors not to be used as supply cover:

> If schools have committed themselves to helping the students then it shouldn't be seen as cheap supply... they should let you get on with it... to be fair there hasn't been too much, under our previous head we used to be used constantly.

The headteacher made himself available to the students if their mentors were unavailable. Tamsin perceived that the headteacher: '...was really nice. He was very approachable and you could contact him at any time.' However, although Tamsin received informal support from the headteacher both Mike and Tamsin perceived that there were no formal mentoring structures in the school:

> As far as I am concerned, as a general member of staff, there is nothing formally in place, it has never been an issue, it has never been brought up at staff meetings as far as I am aware the only mentoring structures that I have come across have been from the University. (Mike)

> There was nothing formal, I don't think... it was very informal really. (Tamsin)

The headteacher appeared to have a slightly different perception suggesting that there was a mentoring co-ordinator - the deputy head - who was in charge of organising student mentoring in the school and that: 'mentors are given a clear indication of what is involved, made clear that it is a major commitment, that it is not an easy option.' However, Mike, perceived that not all members of staff shared an understanding of the workload involved in mentoring a student:

> I think the school generally needs to adopt a sympathetic attitude to mentors, there have been times when mentors have been late into staff meetings and people have been quite grouchy about the fact... I don't think the amount of work involved in mentoring is recognised... it's a large commitment if you are going to do it properly.

Tamsin received little informal mentoring from other staff members. Mike suggested that having written guidelines would make members of staff without students more aware of the responsibilities and commitment involved and would hopefully lead to mentors feeling being better supported.

Both Mike and Tamsin perceived that mentors at the school needed to be more familiar with university requirements:

> If we are going to be expected to work with the university than there needs to be more provision for the university handbook to be more readily available (Mike)

> I think perhaps it would have helped for them to have more sharply defined knowledge of what the University expected of students (Tamsin)

Mentor Support:

Tamsin was very satisfied with the support she received from Mike. She rated his support as 'excellent' (questionnaire survey). She attributed the success of the mentoring to Mike's personal and professional qualities:

> He was straight down the line, open to discussion, he would be flexible, approachable... he would pin it down, he was encouraging but specific... he was supportive of you but making sure that with the children you highered your expectations.

Mike and Tamsin perceived that they had a good working relationship that was essentially professional with some personal elements: 'it was very professional but he was still very approachable' (Tamsin). Tamsin perceived that generally with a mentor and student, the professional relationship was far more important than the personal: 'someone can be a good mentor but not get on with you at a personal level. You may not necessarily be friendly but it doesn't make them a bad teacher-mentor.' Mike emphasised that the success of the mentoring relationship had been influenced by Tamsin's attitude: 'she has been extremely positive about the practice... she has taken on board my advice, she puts it into practice.'

Mike and Tamsin shared similar expectations of the mentor role, perceiving that the mentor needed to provide personal and professional support and that the professional support needed to include roles in the Structural and Professional domains (see Table 4.8). Both Mike and Tamsin perceived the need for the mentor to be both positive and challenging:

> People thrive generally on positivity and I would say that one of the big things in mentoring is to be positive as much as you possibly can at the same time as keeping your expectations high and being constructive. (Mike)

> It's important that they give constructive criticism rather than just be supportive. When you're praised all the time it doesn't mean anything. (Tamsin)

Mike and Tamsin perceived the role needed to change over the six weeks. As Tamsin became more confident she asked to be left alone more with the class and Mike was willing to give her the freedom she wanted: 'I said to her, this is your chance to try things out... I asked her right the way through what she wanted'. Tamsin perceived that it was very important for mentors to be able to adapt to meet the changing needs of the student:

> Mentors have to react to your experiences - it's no good saying they should be like this or this - you could be at different stages in your professional development and it's up to them to react to your needs.

Summary of findings in School 6:

- Although the headteacher believed mentoring to be important and offered the students informal support, the mentor perceived that other staff members were not always as supportive or as understanding as they could have been. He suggested written guidelines might help improve the situation.
- The headteacher and mentor had different perceptions of whether there were any formal mentoring structures in school.
- Both mentor and student valued the mentor being able to be available when necessary and not being used as supply cover.
- Both mentor and student perceived that there needed to be close communication between school and university.
- The student perceived that the mentor's personal and professional qualities were an important factor in influencing the success of the mentoring.
- Mentor and student perceived they had a good working relationship that was essentially professional in nature with some personal elements. This relationship was perceived by both the mentor and the student to have been an important factor in the success of the mentoring. The student suggested that the mentor-student relationship need not necessarily be a personal relationship to be effective, however, the mentor needed to be approachable. The mentor perceived that the student's personality and attitude were important in influencing the success of the mentoring relationship.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor was perceived by the student as taking on the expected roles, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.
- Both mentor and student perceived that the role needed to change over the practice. Near the end of the practice, the student perceived that she needed space to have the class on her own and appreciated the mentor giving her that space and yet being available if needed.

School 7

Mentor: Kate
Student: David

Kate was part of the senior management team and perceived that mentoring was perceived as important by the management in School 7:

> We talk at senior management about it and it's perceived very positively and as having something to contribute to the school as a whole and to the professional development of the teachers in the school (Kate).

However, the mentor role did not take priority over the mentors' other school duties. Mentors were regularly taken out of the classrooms and according to the headteacher one of the criteria used when selecting mentors was to choose:

> The best teachers who can be used to do their other work around the school... we look on students as a most important resource to release our staff to do other things... it is important that they made best use of the time and attend to their other priorities as well as having time to be with the student. (Headteacher)

The headteacher in School 7 was away for much of the teaching practice, however, he suggested that he normally took an active role in mentoring students:

> I would normally mentor the students on issues I think I can help best with, policy, for example, and discipline. There are some areas that heads are better able to provide quality mentoring than staff. If I hadn't been away I would have spent a long time talking with them about discipline issues in the classroom along with the mentor... The class teacher as mentor has only a limited amount of time and when a student needs a lot of help, this is difficult... I like to work with them as much as I can.

There were some formal structures in School 7 with others apparently in the process of being developed. The university mentoring pack was used as a guideline for mentors. According to the headteacher the school was in the process of developing a set of written school guidelines for both mentors and students. Kate took on the role of mentoring co-ordinator as part of her role as staff development co-ordinator. However, once the students were in school, Kate as mentoring co-ordinator did not appear to have much of a role unless there were problems: 'they were mentored by their own teachers... I would be prepared to act as a funnel to provide a chance to talk to another teacher if necessary.' Mentors were selected by the headteacher and Kate using certain criteria: 'we put them with teachers who give a very strong role model... the best teachers who can be used to do other work around the school.' (Headteacher)

The headteacher perceived that there was an informal network of mentoring support available for students because of the collaborative nature of the school:

> In our school now, everybody has to work in teams so they are much better at working collegially... they are happy to be supported, and be supportive, and a student can get into that really quickly.

However, Kate suggested that the students received most of their mentoring from their mentor: 'other staff don't really mentor my student because it's not really necessary.' David also perceived this, suggesting that although the other staff were friendly, their support was generally limited to making the students feel accepted: 'you know, just general staffroom banter.'

The mentors' time out of the classroom was 'carefully planned' (Headteacher) by the senior management. This practice of taking mentors out of the classroom did not appear to have concerned either Kate or David. Kate, as mentoring co-ordinator, had been involved in the planning, it is possible that other mentors in the school might have felt differently about having their time organised in such a way. David perceived that when Kate was out of the classroom (in the last two weeks) he was ready to have freedom in the classroom and that he felt she was always available if needed.

Mentor Support:

David was generally positive abut the mentoring he received from Kate. He rated her support as 'very good' (questionnaire survey) and felt that he had learnt a lot from her: 'all the advice she's given me will stay with me.' Kate and David shared similar expectations of the mentor role, perceiving that the mentor needed to provide personal and professional support and that the professional support needed to include roles associated with all elements of the Professional domain. Both saw the need for the mentor to challenge as well as encourage:

> If you can' t challenge then it's difficult to move the student forward into a more professional attitude. It's much too easy to say to people 'That's going really well' and leave it at that, but you have to follow that up with 'Now what I want you to think about is... people can never have done enough in teaching and must be prepared to acknowledge that there is always something more they can do. (Kate)

> I don't like people to skirt issues. If I've gone wrong or am not doing things as well as I should, they should, I want them to be honest and direct... they need to be direct but make it a direct conversation not a telling off. (David)

David appreciated being allowed to have almost complete control of the class in the last few weeks of the practice:

> I felt I had the personal space needed at the end.. I'd had the good advice earlier on and then I had this space to do it and to see it for myself. If Kate had been in the classroom, I wouldn't have done it myself. I'd have felt restricted. But it was good that she went out but I would know she was still there or available if I wanted her.

Kate and David perceived that they had established a good working relationship that was essentially professional rather than personal. Kate suggested that it was important that a relationship was established that allowed the mentor to challenge the student and

suggested that David's attitude had been important in making the mentoring relationship a success: 'one of the very good things is that he's been very open to support and that has made the whole process to me much more effective and worthwhile.'

Although David appeared to be generally happy with the support he had received from Kate and from the school, he did suggest that sometimes he found the formality of Kate and the school to be rather restrictive, particularly when compared to the informal attitude of the mentor and school on his first teaching practice:

> Kate is so organised - she'd pick up on a lot of things like going into assembly early enough. She said 'Get in early otherwise people will be waiting and will be looking at you when you arrive late'. That wouldn't have bothered my first mentor, she was more relaxed about that kind of thing, I didn't always feel I was allowed to be myself... I had developed through partnership and TP1 but it seemed to me that they wanted to change that. In my last school I had a lot more freedom to plan lessons from the start but here I was given an outline plan that I had to fit into. I was able to put more of myself into the planning before.

However, he did perceive that there were some advantages to having mentoring that was more formal:

> It was good to sit in on lessons, observing, and making sure things are right, it was good that that was organised - it's the last chance you are going to get for when you go out into the real world. Sitting at the back and taking notes and then talking through where things went well and went wrong was really useful and constructive... it didn't happen at my last school.

Summary of findings in School 7:

- The headteacher perceived that mentoring was important and certain formal structures had been set up to support students in school.
- The mentor perceived that mentors and students were well supported by the school, however, it is possible that she held this perception because she was actually

involved in the organisation of mentoring within the school - other staff members may have felt differently.

- Although mentoring was not given higher priority than the mentor's other responsibilities, it was given at least *equal priority* with them and the student felt well-supported, perceiving that the mentor was available when needed. It is possible that mentoring needs to have at least equal priority with the mentor's other school responsibilities if the student is to feel well-supported by the school.
- The headteacher perceived that there was an informal network of support for the student in school. However, beyond making the student feel welcome, other members of staff were not involved in mentoring or supporting the student.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor was perceived by the student as taking on the expected roles, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.
- Mentor and student perceived they had a good working relationship that was essentially professional in nature. This relationship was perceived by both the mentor and the student to have been an important factor in the success of the mentoring. The mentor perceived that the student's personality and attitude were important in influencing the success of the mentoring relationship.
- The student perceived that, despite his general satisfaction with the school and his mentor, he had felt restricted by the formality of both. It appears that a student's personality will play a part in determining how highly he/she rates the mentoring support received. A student who preferred a formal approach may well have perceived the formality of the school and mentor to be desirable.

School 8

Mentor: Lindsey

Student: Theresa

School Support:

The headteacher of School 8 perceived mentoring as 'important', and appears to have overseen the process without getting actively involved:

> If ever I've had other commitments, for example there was a day when I was interviewing for the deputy headship, the odd meeting to go to, times when I haven't been able to be around the nursery, the Head has asked me if I feel somebody else should be put over here in the supporting role so I think she sees it as a necessary supporting role. (Lindsey)

Mentors in School 8 were only rarely used as supply cover. Being available for the students was perceived by the headteacher to be important: 'they work near the student so they are on-call if needed.' However, there appeared to be no formal mentoring structures in School 8. Student mentors were self-selected and mentoring was largely left up to the individual mentor to organise.

The headteacher perceived that other staff in the school perceived mentoring to be mainly informal:

> They see it as a job to be done... they don't see it as a structured role... they don't see it the same was as they see appraisal because there isn't a system for mentoring as there is for appraisal. (Headteacher).

Lindsey perceived that there was little informal support from other staff members for her as a mentor. She did not appear to mind this lack of support although suggested that this might not be the case if she was a less experienced teacher:

> I don't necessarily feel I have needed support from the school as I have had the time because of having the student perhaps if I were an inexperienced teacher myself in my first three or four years then perhaps I would have wanted to seek support from elsewhere but I feel I have the experience to do it anyway so I

> don't feel I need support... they do understand though, after all, most have had students themselves.

Theresa received informal support from the nursery nurses but little from other members of staff:

> I chatted with the nursery nurses quite a lot, sometimes about general things, sometimes about a particular child or how the children usually behave or good strategies for dealing with individual children and the home background of the children, it was really useful. (Theresa)

Theresa perceived that the support offered by the school had been very satisfactory and that her experiences in the school had been: 'positive, I couldn't have asked for anything more.' Although, later in the interview she did suggest that it might be helpful for the mentors and the school to be more aware of university requirements.

Mentor Support:

Theresa was very satisfied with her mentor, rating her support as 'excellent'. Lindsey and Theresa shared expectations of the mentor's role, both perceiving that the mentor needed to provide personal and professional support and that the professional support needed to include roles associated with all elements of the Professional domain. Both Lindsey and Theresa perceived that the mentor's role needed to be to encourage but at the same time to set targets:

> I think you have to manage to set targets for the student whilst still being positive about everything the student has done... I've said that we're not going to use any words like weak but we're still going to pull targets out. (Lindsey)

> You need someone who's friendly, who you feel you can approach about anything, someone who is positive, someone who will listen to what you want help with but who will also look at you and your file and see things that need

> improving because there could be things that I think are going fine but really they are not. (Theresa)

Both perceived that the role of the mentor needed to change over the practice:

> We've had different focuses I think throughout the practice. We started off by trying to give the student a feel of the whole story, so first of all I prepared the activity and then she started working on activities, differentiating them and setting objectives and now although she has worked out how to plan activities she hadn't really cracked being able to administer them within the framework of a calm nursery so we worked on the calm nursery. I think the role of the mentor is to see clearly what is going on because I don't think the student can. (Lindsey)

> I think, at the beginning, role model was important... particularly with younger ones I think you need to carry on in quite similar ways.... by the end, you need to be stretched, she was doing that the last couple of sessions. (Theresa)

Lindsey and Theresa perceived that they had established a very good working relationship, that was both personal and professional. Theresa suggested that the personal, supportive side of their relationship enabled her to accept being challenged: 'we got on really well, we would chat about everything not just school business... I felt I could talk to her about things, it was easier to take criticism from someone like that.' Lindsey emphasised the need to maintain some professional distance: 'I think you have to try and be professional about the meetings or you couldn't pull out of them what you wanted to.' Lindsey also suggested that Theresa's attitude had been an important factor in making the relationship work: 'she certainly gives the appearance of responding very well... she takes on board what I've said, she is very willing to accept advice.'

Summary of findings in School 8:

- There was limited informal support for the mentor in School 8. However, as an experienced mentor and a teacher she did not perceive that she needed support from

other staff members. She did, however, believe that other staff members shared an understanding of the workload involved.

- The student felt well supported by the school. However although she received informal support from other staff within the nursery she received little support from staff in the rest of the school. It is possible that receiving support from the staff in the nursery - her immediate working context - was enough. The headteacher acknowledged that support from other staff members was largely informal.
- The student perceived that the school needed to communicate with the university more.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor took on those roles, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's satisfaction with the mentor's support.
- A good working relationship that was perceived to be both personal and professional in nature was perceived by the mentor and the student to have been an important factor in the success of the mentoring. The mentor emphasised the importance of being able to maintain a professional distance during mentorials and perceived that the student's personality and attitude had been important in influencing the success of the mentoring relationship.

School 9

Mentor: Sandra
Student: Sophie

School Support:

The headteacher of School 9 had a positive attitude towards mentoring: 'a teacher must realise that it's not just a rest for six weeks, but that there is specific input needed' and she took an active role in the mentoring process, selecting the mentors, holding an initial meeting for the students and monitoring the mentoring during the teaching practice while perceiving that she often did not manage to be as involved as she would have liked or as she had planned to be, due to other duties, including being an OfSTED inspector.

Mentors were, in theory, not used as supply cover. However, Sandra was used as supply cover for one week and then was away on a school trip for most of the student's last week.

The headteacher and mentor had different perceptions of whether there were any formal mentoring structures in place in the school. The headteacher perceived that there were, suggesting that meetings were arranged with the students and either herself or other members of staff and that a mentoring co-ordinator had been appointed: 'we do have a school mentor... she deals with NQTs, students, etc. or she'll deal with PGCE students who might have problems with the class teacher.' She also suggested that a formal policy for mentoring was in the process of being developed in the school:

> As it moves more away from the University really, more into the hands of the school, I think schools have got to begin to write policies... it is what we are trying to do... I think it will become not necessarily part of appraisal, but part of the development plan.

According to Sandra and Sophie, however, there were no formal mentoring structures for students: 'none... none at all' (Sophie); 'nothing' (Sandra). Neither perceived that there was a mentoring co-ordinator. Sophie had been to one meeting: an initial meeting with the headteacher at the start of the practice. Sandra perceived that mentoring was left very much up to the individual mentor: 'I would say that the head would consider it our responsibility to complete what is required of us.' She perceived that it would be useful for the school to have specific guidelines for mentors and students:

> A certain set of criteria laid down... hopefully if it's written down then it's read and you know you've not missed anything... I think it might be useful for the student to know what the school expects of them.

Sophie received informal mentoring support from the Nursery Nurse: 'she acted as a mentor too... she gave me advice when Sandra wasn't available.' However, she received little informal mentoring from outside the nursery.

Sandra perceived that there was a need for closer communication between the school and university particularly in the area of how to assess the student:

> Different places give you different amounts of guidance and at the end of the day, what will you write down. I think you need the support from the institution that's sent the student.

Mentor Support:

Sophie rated Sandra's support as 'excellent'. She emphasised how important having a good relationship had been to the success of the teaching practice: 'because I had a good relationship with my teacher, I found it really enjoyable - the whole of the experience was enjoyable really.' Both Sandra and Sophie perceived that they had established a good working relationship that was essentially professional with some personal elements:

> A professional relationship certainly, more than personal... you need to be able to criticise, not in a harmful way but in a positive way. (Sandra)

> I think it was more professional than personal we did chat about things we did the night before but I spoke to her more about professional things than about personal ones (Sophie).

Sandra suggested that Sophie's attitude had been an influential factor in making the relationship a success: 'I think if you get someone who finds it difficult to follow advice or do anything, you can get a lot of problems.'

Sophie suggested that it was important to get a balance between being friendly and yet keeping enough distance to still be able to criticise:

> I think if you're over friendly and the student is not preparing their work adequately or thinking through what they are doing, then it's more difficult to criticise. You've got to stay friendly and approachable so that they feel confident

> if they have a problem they can ask for advice... But, yet, I suppose you have to keep a distance to an extent as you do with children. There's a sort of line, I suppose.

Sandra and Sophie shared similar expectations of the mentor's role, with both emphasising the roles associated with the Professional Supporter element, in particular the role of listening and the need for the mentor to be positive. Sandra perceived that mentors should challenge their students but suggested that this was a difficult thing to do and should be done very constructively and only when appropriate. She perceived that Sophie had needed a lot of encouragement, particularly initially:

> You've got to do it in such a way that it's constructive challenge or constructive criticism... if you're too heavy handed or you don't do it right, you can do an awful lot of damage. Initially, I felt that this student was very worried about any of the negative things I had to say, even, you know, there was lots of positives, she would always pick the negatives and worry too much.

Summary of findings in School 9:

- The headteacher perceived mentoring as important and suggested that a formal policy was in the process of being developed. The headteacher and mentor both saw the need for this formal policy, with the mentor believing that mentors and students needed to know what was expected of them.
- The headteacher and mentor had different perceptions about the mentoring structures that were in place in school with the mentor perceiving that mentoring was informal and left up to the individual mentor.
- The student valued the informal mentoring support she received from the nursery nurse highly, particularly when the mentor was away/out of the classroom. It is possible that support from other staff members becomes more important to the student if the mentor is unavailable. The student did not perceive that she had needed support from other members of staff outside of the nursery. It is possible that as long as students perceive they receive good support within their immediate working environment then they do not perceive they need support from elsewhere.

- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor was perceived by the student as taking on the expected roles, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.
- Mentor and student perceived they had a good working relationship that was essentially professional in nature. with some personal elements. This relationship was perceived by both the mentor and the student to have been an important factor in the success of the mentoring. The mentor emphasised that the student's personality and attitudes had influenced the success of the mentoring relationship.

School 10

Mentor: Kay
Student: Penny

The headteacher in School 10 perceived that mentoring was important. She believed that it was very important for the student to receive effective mentoring support: 'I did take a student from a teacher once and I really gave the teacher what for because she didn't give the student the support the student was asking for.' The headteacher was involved in the mentoring, both in the selecting of the mentors and in observing Penny when Kay was away. Mentors were only used as supply in an emergency and were allowed to decide on the use of their time, with the senior management perceiving that their first priority should be to be available for the student if needed: 'they are initially there to support the student, they are not there to do their own thing, they haven't got a student so they can have some free time' (Headteacher). This availability was valued by both Penny and Kay.

There were no formal structures in School 10. There was no official mentoring co-ordinator, although Kay perceived that she was unofficially taking on that role as part of her responsibilities as deputy head. There were no meetings and no guidelines. The headteacher perceived that it was the mentor's responsibility to read the university guidelines. However, Kay was in the process of developing school guidelines for both students and mentors:

> I am actually doing some work on now, I'm compiling a pack for students, what information they need before they actually come to the school and also what information they need once they are within the school... I am also writing a job description for mentors because I think people need to think about what qualities they have to offer and also what they will get out of the experience, if they are aware that they are going to get something very positive out of the experience then perhaps they will offer to do it... I want to lay on the line very clearly what will be expected of them.

Mentors were initially self-selected but the headteacher had the final say: 'I let people be self-selective but if someone came who I felt wasn't suitable to have a student I would say no.' The headteacher perceived that it was important for mentors to be senior members of staff with good professional and interpersonal skills: 'somebody who has demonstrated that they are a good practitioner and that they are good at passing on information and at listening and supporting.'

Penny received informal support from the other member of staff in her immediate year-group team but little from other members of staff: 'informally I was mentored by the other year four teacher.' Kay perceived that although she, as a mentor, was supported by the headteacher, some of the other staff in the school were not supportive, failing to appreciate the workload involved:

> I think that a lot of people have a student will release them from class and they need to realise that it is not as straightforward as that... people pass comments, usually glib comments on the time that you get out of the classroom each day... if someone has not done it before I don't think they understand.

She hoped that by having school guidelines then there would be a greater level of understanding and support from other members of staff in the school.

Mentor Support:

Penny rated Kay's support as 'excellent'. She attributed the success of the support to Kay's personal qualities and the relationship they established:

She was friendly but professional, she was very helpful and wanted to get on with you but she said 'we've got to be able to work together, I've got to be able to turn round to you and say that didn't work and you've got to be able to take it.' If I was upset about something or having difficulties I could talk to her as a friend but at the same time if things needed sorting out she would do it.

Kay also suggested that the relationship was important and that one of the factors behind their good relationship was Penny's willingness to take advice and to be open to suggestions.

Kay and Penny shared expectations of the mentor's role, perceiving that the mentor needed to provide personal and professional support and that the professional support needed to include roles in all elements of the Professional domain. Both perceived that Penny's needs changed over the practice and the mentoring changed accordingly.

Although it did not influence her rating of her mentor's support, Penny suggested that there were problems with having a mentor who was deputy head, both in terms of Kay having other commitments in the school and the attitude of the other staff towards Penny in the staffroom:

> The problem I did find was time at the beginning when she had to take over the Head's role and I still wasn't very confident with the class and I did find that very difficult... sometimes she did have to be out of the classroom when I needed help and I think maybe with the other teachers knowing I was her student, I would walk into the staffroom and it would go quiet.

Summary of findings in School 10:

- The headteacher's active involvement in and promotion of mentoring was appreciated by the mentor, however other staff in the school were less supportive and were perceived by the mentor as not always having a clear understanding of the mentor's role. The mentor perceived that having school guidelines on mentoring would help rectify the situation. The headteacher did not appear to perceive the need to have formal structures in place.
- Both mentor and student valued the mentor being available when needed.
- The student valued the support she received from the other member of staff within her immediate year group particularly when the mentor was out of the classroom involved in other school duties. It is possible that support from other staff members becomes more important to the student if the mentor is unavailable. The student did not perceive that she had needed support from other members of staff outside of her immediate year group. It is possible that if students perceive they receive good support within their immediate working environment then they do not perceive they need support from elsewhere.
- The student perceived that the mentor's personal qualities had been an important factor influencing the success of the mentoring.
- The mentor and the student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor was perceived by the student as taking on the expected roles, perhaps one of the factors that influenced the student's high rating of the mentor's support.
- Mentor and student perceived they had a good working relationship that was essentially professional in nature with some personal elements. This relationship was perceived by both the mentor and the student to have been an important factor in the success of the mentoring. The mentor perceived that the student's attitude were important in influencing the success of the mentoring relationship.
- The student suggested that there were problems having a mentor who was deputy head both in terms of availability and the attitude of other staff members.

Summary of main findings from the Phase Two individual case studies

Mentoring Structures in Schools:

- All Phase Two headteachers suggested that they perceived mentoring to be important and in most cases they were actively involved in the mentoring process in some way. Headteachers' active involvement in and promotion of mentoring was appreciated by mentors. However, support from other staff members in schools was not always forthcoming.
- With no school guidelines in any of the schools (although three schools were in the process of developing them), mentoring of students was almost entirely determined by individual mentors. Three of the five mentors suggested that other staff members in school did not always appreciate the mentor's role and the workload involved and suggested the need for written school guidelines to help clarify the situation.
- In all Phase Two schools mentoring was given at least equal priority with the mentors' other school duties. Mentors and students appreciated the mentor being available for the student when needed. As long as this availability was assured then both mentors and students were happy for the mentor to be out of the classroom.
- Students valued the support they received from other members of staff within their immediate surroundings, particularly when their mentors were unavailable. Students generally did not perceive that they needed support from other members of staff outside of their immediate surroundings. It is possible that as long as students perceive they receive good support within their immediate working environment then they do not perceive they need support from elsewhere.
- In all Phase Two schools there was only limited informal support from other members of staff for mentors and students.
- One student suggested that there were problems having a mentor who was deputy head both in terms of availability and the attitude of other staff members.
- Headteacher and mentor perceptions of the mentoring support structures that were in place in their schools often differed.
- In three cases, mentors and students perceived that there needed to be better communication between their school and the university.

The Mentor/Student Relationship:

- Students and mentors perceived that the mentoring relationship was important in determining the success of the mentoring support provided by their mentor.
- Mentors perceived that the student's attitude and personal qualities were important in influencing the success of the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors emphasised the importance of being able to maintain a professional distance and to establish a relationship that allowed the mentor to challenge as well as support. One student suggested that the mentor/student relationship need not necessarily be a personal relationship to be effective, although she said that the mentor needed to be approachable.
- One student perceived that, despite his general satisfaction with the school and his mentor, he had felt restricted by the formality of both. It is possible that a student's personality plays a part in determining how highly he/she rates the mentoring support received. A student who preferred a formal approach may well have perceived the formality of this particular school and mentor to be desirable.

The Mentor Role:

- It appeared that regardless of the students' exact expectations of the mentor role, providing the mentor and the student shared expectations of the roles a mentor should have and the mentor was perceived as fulfilling these roles, then the quality of the mentor's support was rated highly by the student.

Mentor Personal Qualities:

- Students perceived that the mentor's personal qualities were an important factor in influencing mentoring success.

Questionnaire Survey Findings

Questionnaires were used to investigate students' perceptions of mentoring across a larger sample of 140 students undertaking their PGCE during the academic year 1996-7. Phase Two questionnaires were distributed in the week after the student's final teaching practice. Questionnaires were distributed by university tutors. A total of 109 questionnaires were completed and returned, a return rate of 78%.

Mentor support

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of the mentoring support they had received from their mentor on a five-point scale.

Table 4.11. Number of students giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in Phase Two

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	109 (100%)	30 (28%)	32 (29%)	22 (20%)	16 (15%)	9 (8%)

As shown in Table 4.11, students perceived that they received mentoring support that varied in quality.

Reasons for ratings of mentor support

Students were asked to give reasons for their rating of the mentor's support. The reasons they gave had enough similarities to be grouped into 20 categories for the purpose of coding and analysis. These categories were split between positive statements and negative statements as shown in Table 4.12.

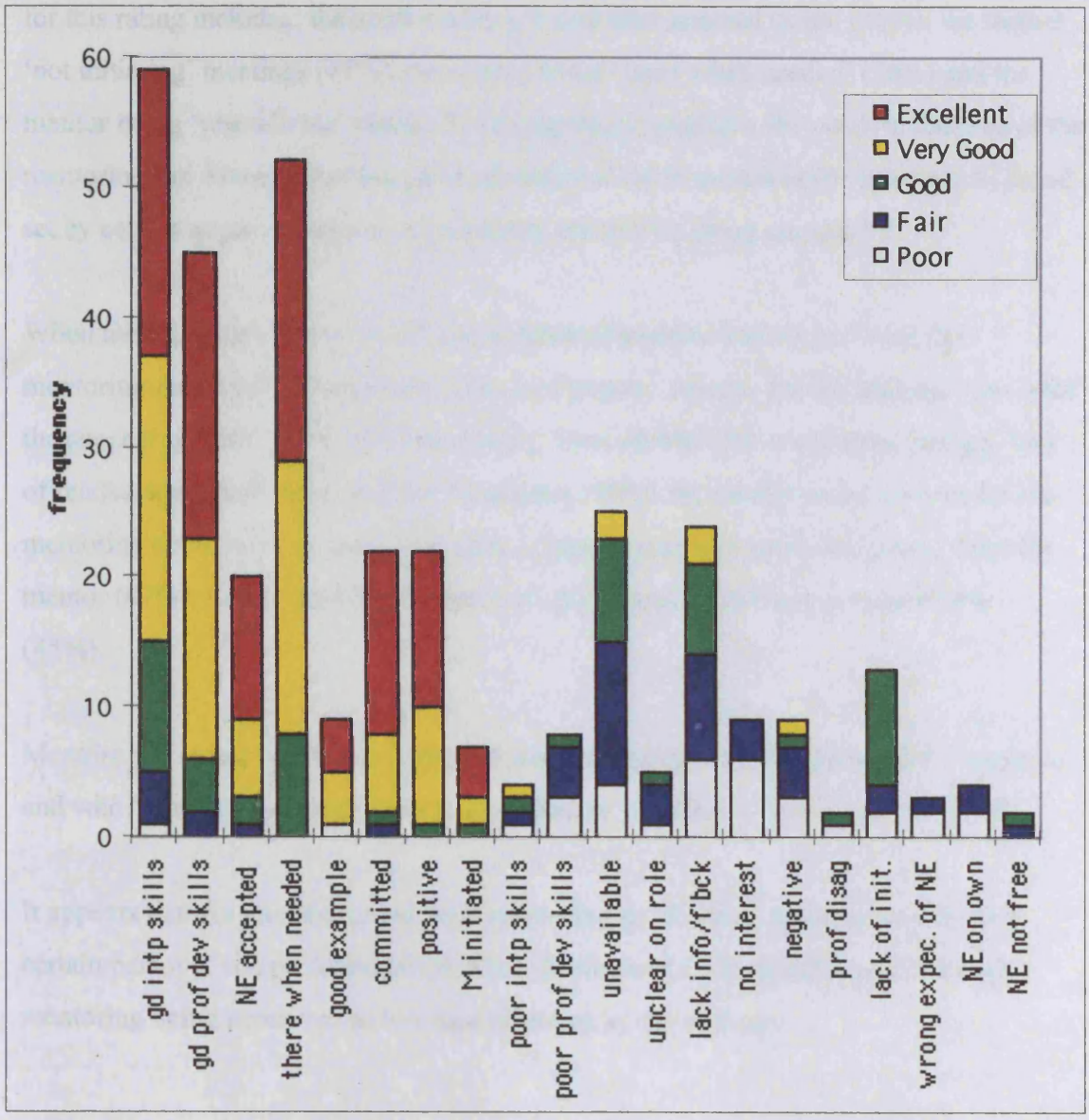
Table 4.12. Reasons students gave to explain their rating of the mentor support they received in Phase Two.

Positive Statements	Negative Statements
mentor had good interpersonal skills	mentor had poor interpersonal skills
mentor had good professional development skills	poor professional development skills
mentor accepted student	mentor was often unavailable
mentor was there when needed	mentor was unclear about role
mentor was a good example	mentor gave little information/feedback
mentor was committed to mentoring	mentor showed lack of interest in NE
mentor was positive	mentor was negative
mentor initiated support	professional disagreement
	mentor did not initiate support
	mentor had wrong expectations of NE
	NE was left too much on own
	NE was not allowed enough freedom

The positive statements appeared to refer to the mentor having certain desirable personal and professional qualities and skills. The negative statements referred to the lack of desirable personal and professional qualities and skills, to the lack of availability of the mentor and the mentor having inappropriate expectations of the student and the mentor role. Figure 4.7 shows how these statements related to ratings of support.

Most students gave a number of reasons to explain the rating they had given to their mentor, in many cases there was a combination of positive and negative statements. The exception to this being the students who rated their mentor as 'excellent'. The statements for this group were all positive. The most popular reasons being given for this rating included 'the mentor was there when needed' (77% of the students in this group gave this as a reason); the mentor had 'good professional development skills' (73%) and the mentor had 'good interpersonal skills' (73%).

Figure 4.7. Reasons given for mentor support ratings by Phase Two students



The students who rated their mentors' support as 'very good' listed reasons that were nearly all positive with the exception of three negative reasons: there being a 'lack of feedback and information' from the mentor; mentor being 'unavailable' and mentor being 'negative'. These three statements together were given by just 2% of the students in this group. The most popular reasons being given for the 'very good' rating included: the mentor having 'good interpersonal skills' (69%); the mentor being a 'good example' (66%) and the mentor having 'good professional development skills' (53%).

The students who rated their mentor's support as 'good' listed a wider mix of positive and negative factors than the above two groups. The most popular reasons being given for this rating included: the mentor having 'good interpersonal skills' (45%); the mentor 'not initiating' meetings (41%); the mentor being 'there when needed' (36%) and the mentor being 'unavailable' (36%). For this group of students, the positive features of the mentoring, for example, having good professional development skills, appeared to be off-set by certain negative features, for example, the mentor being unavailable.

When the rating fell below 'good', the number of positive statements about the mentoring decreased substantially. The most popular reasons for the students who rated the support as 'fair' included: mentor being 'unavailable' (69%) and there being a 'lack of feedback and information' from the mentor (50%). the most popular reasons for the mentoring being rated as 'poor' included: a 'lack of feedback and information' from the mentor (67%); mentor showing 'no interest' (67%) and mentor being 'unavailable' (45%).

Mentors who were perceived by their students as being 'there when needed'; 'positive' and who 'initiated' meetings were always rated as 'excellent', 'very good' or 'good'.

It appears that for students to perceive mentoring as effective, mentors need to have certain personal and professional qualities. Absence of these qualities resulted in the mentoring being perceived as less than effective by the students.

Mentor/NE relationship

Respondents were asked to rate their relationship with their mentor on a five-point scale ass shown in Table 4.13. These ratings were then correlated with the ratings for support.

The two ratings of support and relationship were highly correlated $r(107) = 0.856$. As found in the case studies, the mentor/NE relationship appears to be an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of how effective the mentoring was.

Table 4.13. Comparison of the ratings of the mentor support received and the relationship the student had with the mentor in Phase Two.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	109 (100%)	30 (28%)	32 (29%)	22 (20%)	16 (15%)	9 (8%)
Relationship rating	109 (100%)	30 (27%)	32 (29%)	29 (27%)	12 (11%)	6 (6%)

Amount of time

Students were asked how often they met formally and informally with their mentors.

Table 4.14. Number of students giving each of the five different frequency ratings for formal and informal mentoring in Phase Two.

	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Informal mentoring	109 (100%)	82 (76%)	14 (13%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)	4 (4%)
Formal mentoring	109 (100%)	10 (9%)	12 (11%)	49 (45%)	14 (13%)	24 (22%)

As shown in Table 4.14, informal meetings tended to be daily whereas formal meetings tended to be weekly. There is only a weak correlation between these two frequencies r (107) = 0.268. Having many informal meetings would appear to be no guarantee of many formal meetings. This would appear to confirm similar findings in the case studies.

Both these frequencies are correlated with the earlier support ratings:

$r(107) = 0.463$ for informal

$r(107) = 0.417$ for formal

The amount of time spent on mentoring appears to be an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of the effectiveness of the mentoring. The amount of informal mentoring would appear to be slightly more predictive of mentoring success than formal mentoring.

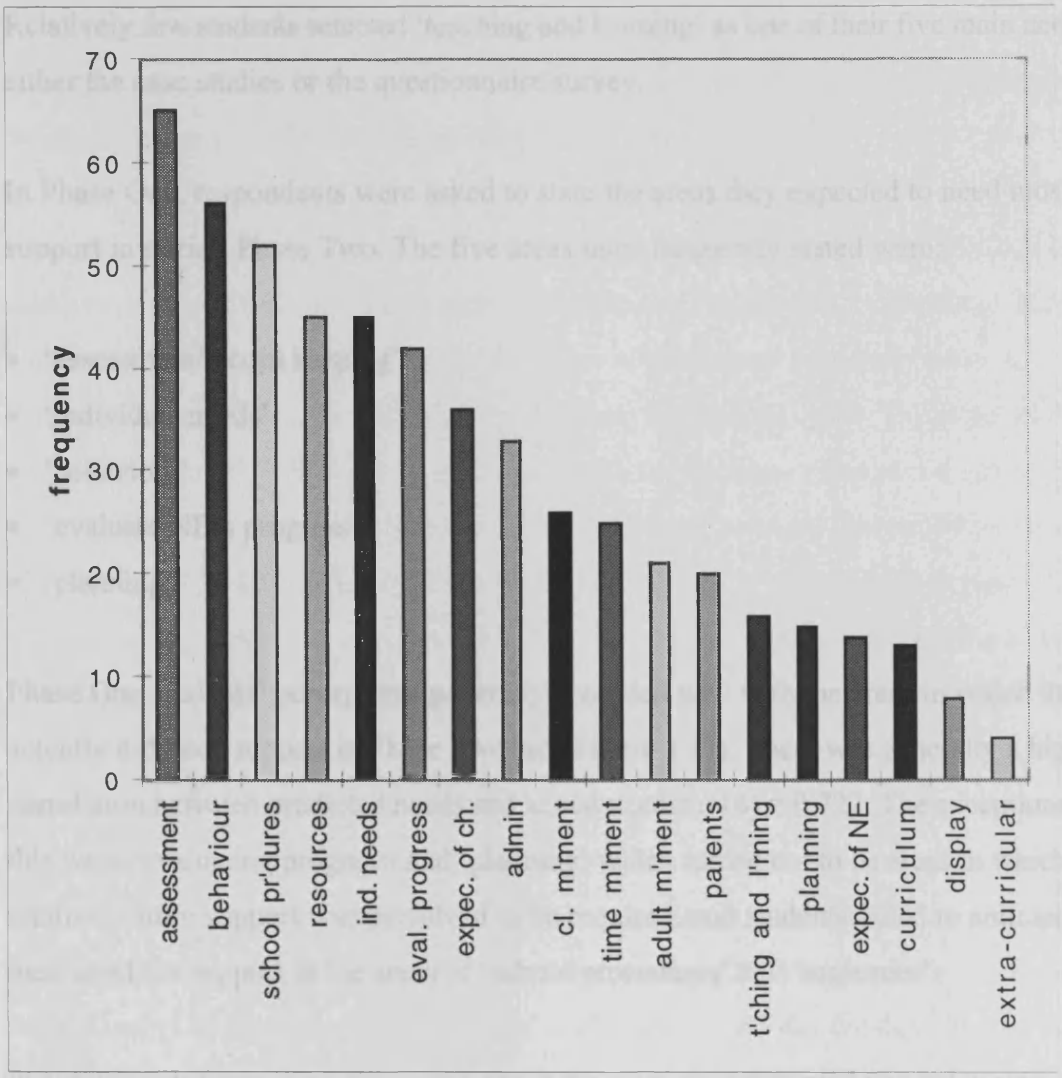
Areas Phase Two students perceived they needed the most mentor-support

Respondents were asked to select the five areas from a pre-determined list in which they perceived they had needed the most support in Phase Two (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the definitions and origins of these categories).

It can be seen in Figure 4.8., that the five main areas in which Phase Two students perceived they had needed support were:

- 'assessment/record keeping'
- 'behaviour'
- 'school procedures'
- 'resources'
- 'individual needs'

Figure 4.8. Phase Two students' perceptions of the areas in which they needed the most support.



It is interesting to compare Figure 4.8 with Figure 4.3 showing the areas perceived to have been discussed in the Phase Two case studies. In both figures, 'assessment/record keeping' and 'behaviour' were high. However, there are many differences. 'Planning' - the most often talked about area in the case studies is only placed fourteenth in the list above. 'Resources' and 'school procedures' are placed much higher in Figure 4.8. As with Phase One, these differences can possibly be accounted for because the questionnaire data was collected *after* the teaching practice while the case study data was collected *during* the teaching practice. However, in no other area is there such a marked difference between case study and questionnaire findings. The difference could also be due to the fact that each student's professional needs are individual (Elliott and

Calderhead, 1993), therefore the small number of cases may have resulted in the data from the case studies being unrepresentative of a larger sample.

Relatively few students selected 'teaching and learning' as one of their five main needs in either the case studies or the questionnaire survey.

In Phase One, respondents were asked to state the areas they expected to need most support in during Phase Two. The five areas most frequently stated were:

- 'assessment/record keeping'
- 'individual needs'
- 'behaviour'
- 'evaluate NE's progress'
- 'planning'

Phase One students' perceptions generally accorded well with the areas in which they actually did need support in Phase Two (see Figure 4.11). There was generally a high correlation between predicted needs and actual needs: $r(16) = 0.722$. The exceptions to this were 'evaluating progress' and 'planning' which turned out to be areas in which relatively little support was perceived to be required, and students failed to anticipate their need for support in the areas of 'school procedures' and 'resources'.

Phase Two students were also asked about the areas they expected to need most help with in Phase Three. The areas most frequently stated were:

- 'assessment / record keeping'
- 'school procedures'
- 'curriculum'
- 'behaviour'
- 'classroom management'
- 'long term planning' (a distinction was made between long term planning and lesson planning, the former was stated relatively frequently as a future need, the latter was not).

Role of the mentor

Respondents were asked to select all the roles that they perceived their mentors had fulfilled during Phase Two, from a pre-determined list (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the categories and their origins).

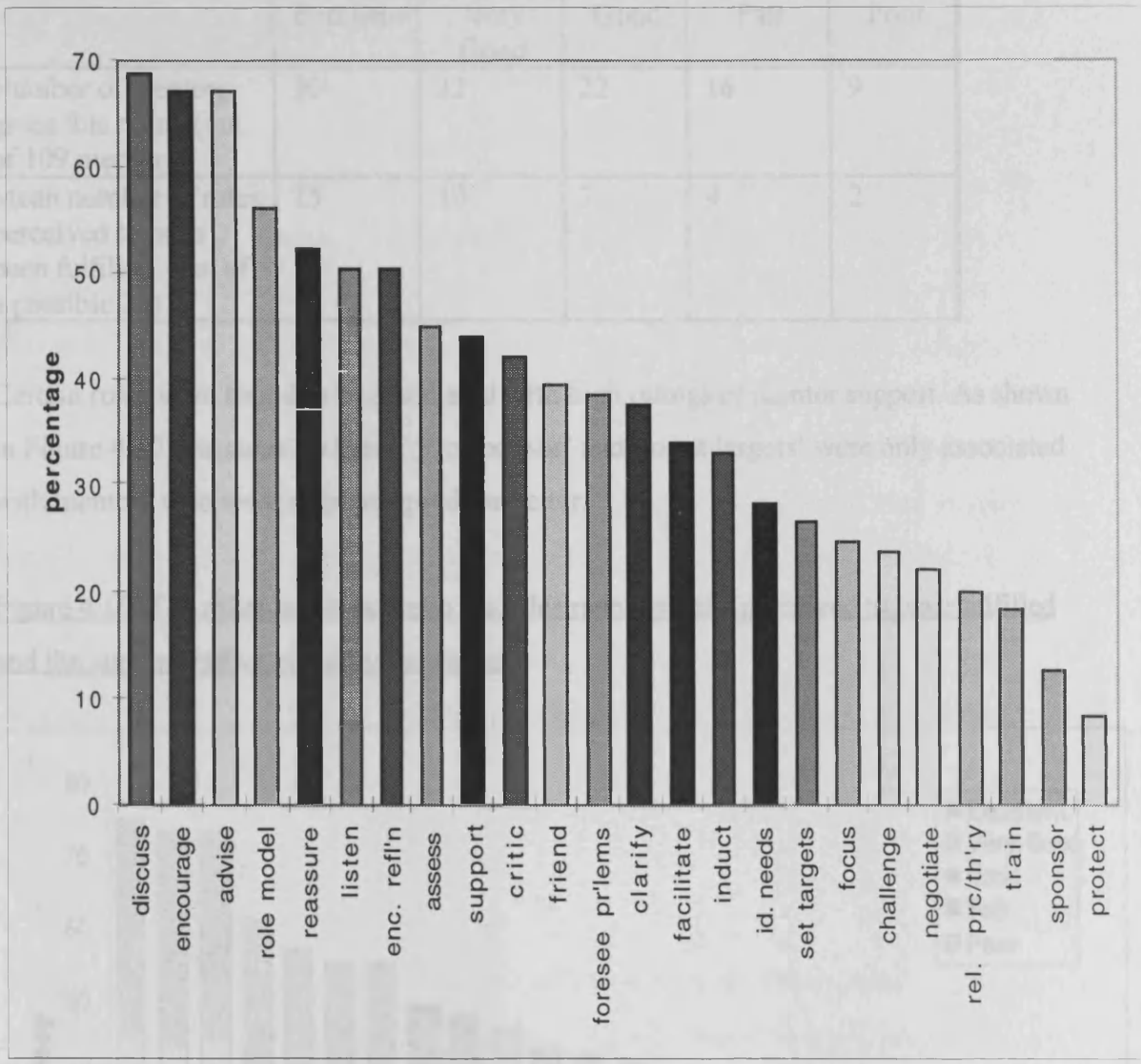
As shown in Figure 4.9, the roles most frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors in Phase Two were roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements of the Professional domain. The roles selected most frequently were 'to discuss', (69% of mentors were perceived to have fulfilled this role) 'to advise' (67%) and 'to encourage' (67%). Roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. 'to set targets', 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to challenge' were not frequently perceived to have been fulfilled. It would appear that, from the students' perceptions at least, relatively few Phase Two mentors actually developed the mentor role to become a 'challenger' or 'co-enquirer' (Maynard and Furlong, 1993; McIntyre and Hagger, 1993).

When Figure 4.11 is compared to Table 4.8 it can be seen that although the role 'to challenge' was perceived by students involved in the questionnaire survey to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently, all mentors involved in the case studies were perceived by their students to have fulfilled the 'challenger' role. In the case studies, the mentors were all rated as 'excellent' or 'very good' and had been selected for their interest in mentoring (see individual case studies). This may account for the difference.

The roles in the Structural domain - 'to facilitate', 'to induct', 'to negotiate', 'to sponsor' - were not perceived to have been frequently fulfilled. This may reflect the students failing to realise that the mentors were taking on these roles on their behalf or may reflect that the mentors did not, in actual fact, fulfil these roles.

39% of students perceived that their mentors had fulfilled the role of 'friend'.

Figure 4.9. Roles that students perceived their mentors fulfilled during Phase Two (expressed as a percentage of the total number of student responses).



There was a relationship between the number of roles the mentors were perceived to have fulfilled and students' perceptions of the support as shown in Table 4.15.

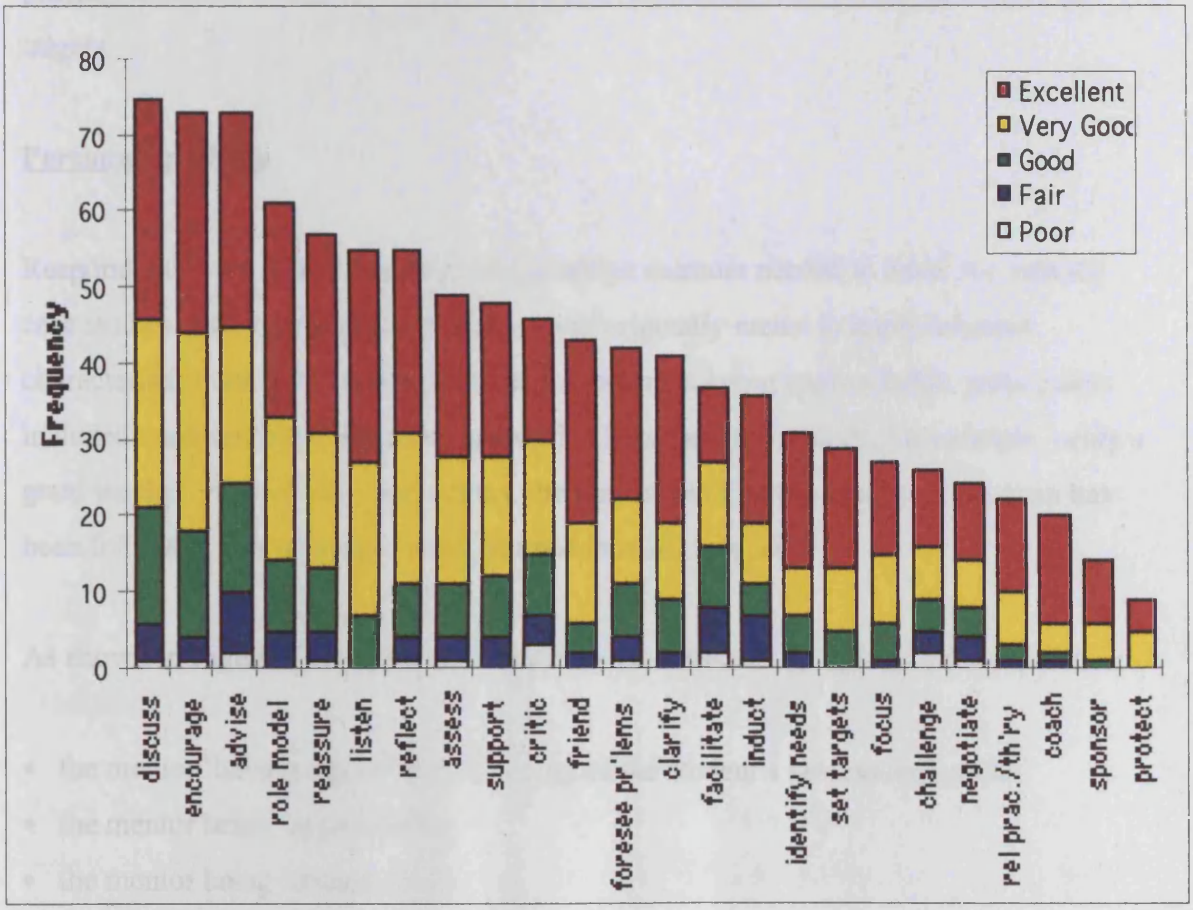
It can be seen that the better the rating for the mentoring the greater the mean number of roles perceived to have been fulfilled. This suggests that the mentors who provide the perceived best levels of support take on more roles than other mentors.

Table 4.15. Mean number of roles mentors were perceived to have had during Phase Two, broken down according to the overall support rating given.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of mentors given this rating (out of 109 mentors)	30	32	22	16	9
Mean number of roles perceived to have been fulfilled (out of a possible 25)	15	10	7	4	2

Certain roles were found to be associated with high ratings of mentor support. As shown in Figure 4.10, the roles 'to listen'; 'to sponsor' and 'to set targets' were only associated with mentors who were rated as 'good' or better.

Figure 4.10. The relationship between the roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled and the support rating given by the student.



Although the majority of mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived to have fulfilled the role of 'friend' (80%), 20% of this group were not perceived to have fulfilled this role. The mentor being a friend does not therefore appear essential for the mentoring to be perceived as effective by Phase Two students.

Only 30% of mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived to have fulfilled the role 'to challenge'. This is surprising, considering the theoretical models that suggest that challenging is an essential role for mentors to have if they are to effectively assist students' professional development (e.g. Calderhead, 1987; McIntyre and Hagger, 1993). 22% of students who rated their mentor as 'poor' and 18% of students who rated their mentor as 'fair' perceived that their mentor also fulfilled the role 'to challenge'. This may reflect the concerns voiced by the mentors and students involved in the case studies (see p.146) who stressed the dangers of challenging in a negative sense and emphasised the need for any challenging to be constructive not destructive. Similarly, out of the other roles within the educator element, only 40% of mentors rated as 'excellent' related practice to theory and 53% of mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived to have set targets.

Personal qualities

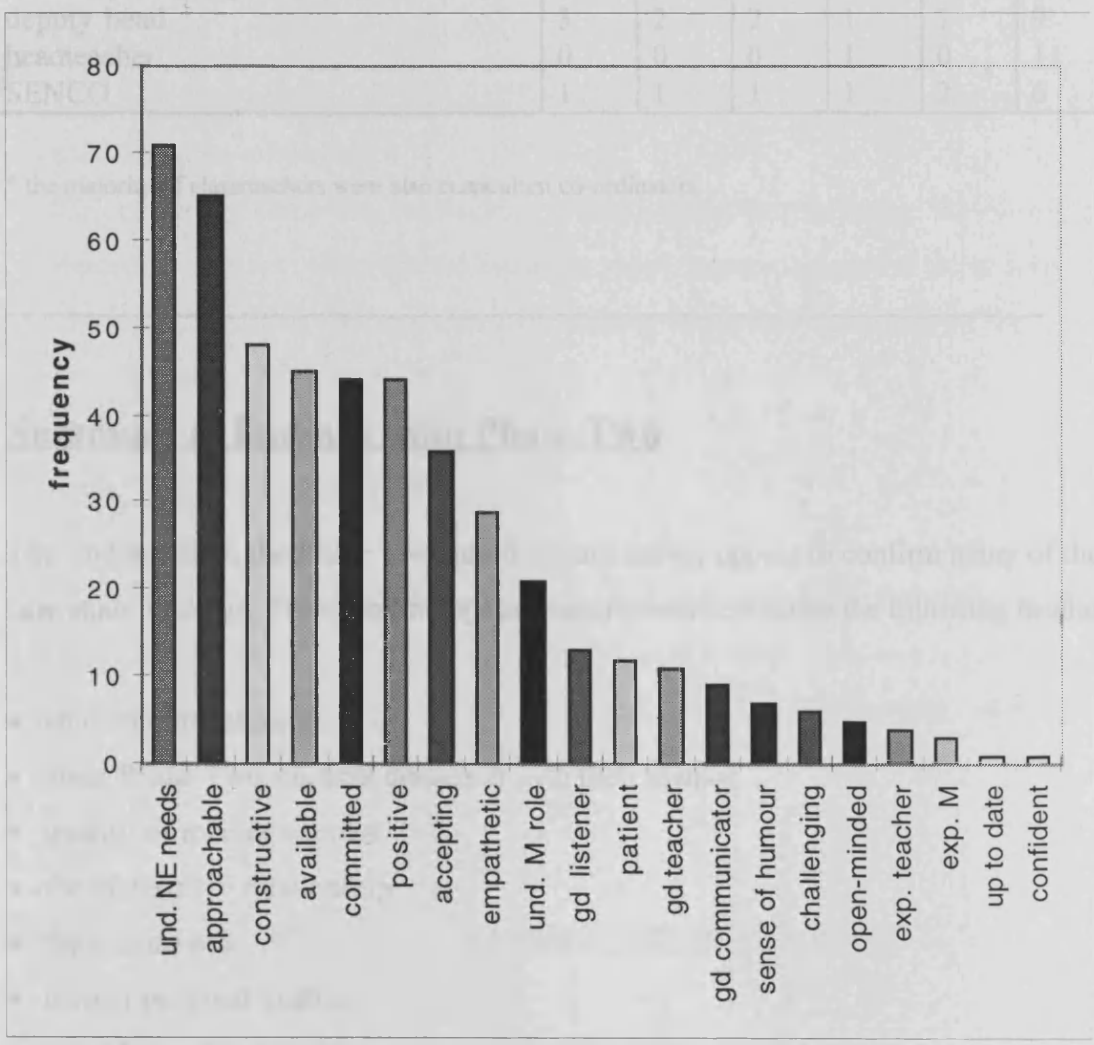
Respondents were asked what personal qualities mentors needed to have. As with the case studies, although personal qualities were originally meant to imply inherent characteristics that a mentor might have, for example, being approachable, participants included qualities that might more appropriately be defined as skills, for example, being a good teacher. As with the case studies, the respondents' interpretation of the term has been followed. The responses were grouped into 20 categories.

As shown in Figure 3.11, Phase Two students most frequently mentioned the qualities:

- the mentor 'having a good understanding of the student's professional needs'
- the mentor being' approachable'
- the mentor being 'constructive'.

These qualities, being both personal (i.e. 'approachable') and professional (i.e. 'constructively critical' and 'understanding the student's professional needs') appear to reflect the participants' perceptions that Phase Two mentors need to offer both personal and professional support.

Figure 4.11. Phase Two students' perceptions of the personal qualities mentors need to have.



Selection of mentor

Phase Two students were asked about their mentors' status within the school. As shown in Table 4.16, a high rating of mentor support did not appear to be related to the mentor having any particular role/status within the school. Other factors such as

personal and professional qualities and availability may be more important in determining mentoring success.

Table 4.16. Phase Two mentors' status compared to support rating

Mentor Status	exc.	v. gd	gd	fair	poor	Total
classteacher*	16	26	16	10	5	73
head of year group/Key Stage/ nursery	8	2	5	3	2	20
deputy head	3	2	2	1	1	9
headteacher	0	0	0	1	0	1
SENCO	1	1	1	1	2	6

* the majority of classteachers were also curriculum co-ordinators

---

Summary of findings from Phase Two

The findings from the Phase Two questionnaire survey appear to confirm many of the case study findings. The main findings are summarised here under the following headings:

- amount of mentoring
- areas Phase Two students discussed with their mentor
- quality of mentor support
- the mentor/NE relationship
- the mentor role
- mentor personal qualities
- school mentoring structures

For each of the above areas, findings are reported under the following sub-headings:

- findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey
- findings from case studies only
- findings from questionnaire survey only

Amount of mentoring

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase Two students received varying amounts of mentoring.
- The majority of Phase Two students received both formal and informal mentoring, with the majority receiving informal mentoring daily and formal mentoring at least once a week.
- The students who received the most formal mentoring did not necessarily receive the most informal mentoring.
- The amount of mentoring the student received appeared to influence the student's perceptions of how effective the mentor's support was - the greater the amount of mentoring received, the more likely the student was to rate the quality of the mentor's support as high.

Findings from case studies only:

- Mentoring, both formal and informal, decreased in amount from the beginning of the teaching practice to the end, although the decrease in both cases was not a steady, week by week decrease but rather each individual student had moments when the mentoring peaked and dipped across the six weeks.

Areas Phase Two students discussed with their mentors

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- 'Assessment/record keeping' and 'behaviour' were frequently mentioned by Phase Two students as the areas in which they needed most mentor support (case studies) and actually needed most help with (questionnaires).
- Although there were some general trends in the percentage of time spent discussing areas, Phase Two students all had individual professional needs.

- 'Teaching and learning' was perceived to have been discussed relatively infrequently in the case studies (3 - 7% of the time) and was selected relatively infrequently by questionnaire respondents as one of the five main areas in which they perceived they had needed mentor support (it was selected by only 17% of respondents).

Findings from case studies only:

- Different areas increased and decreased in importance across the six weeks.
- Over all five cases, Phase Two students were most likely to discuss: 'planning'; 'behaviour'; 'assessment'; 'individual needs' and 'classroom management'.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Phase Two students most frequently perceived that they needed support in the areas of: 'assessment/record keeping'; 'behaviour'; 'school procedures'; 'resources' and 'individual needs'.
- Phase Two students' perceptions of the areas they would need support in on Phase Two (collected during Phase One) generally accorded well with the areas in which they actually did need support in Phase Two - there was a high correlation between predicted needs and actual needs.
- The areas that Phase Two students perceived that they would need most support in, during the NQT year, were: 'assessment/record keeping'; 'school procedures'; 'curriculum'; 'behaviour' and 'classroom management'.

Quality of mentor support

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Phase Two students perceived that they received mentoring support varying widely in quality.

The Mentor/NE relationship

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- The mentor/NE relationship appears to have been an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of how effective the mentoring was, the relationship rating was highly correlated with the rating for quality of mentor support.

Findings from case studies only:

- The mentor/student relationship in Phase Two was perceived by mentors and students to be essentially a professional relationship with case study students perceiving that the mentoring relationship should ideally be both professional and personal.
- Mentors perceived that a student's personal qualities and attitudes could affect the success of the mentoring relationship.
- Mentors emphasised the importance of being able to maintain a professional distance, of setting up a relationship that would allow the mentor to both support and challenge. One student suggested that the mentor-student relationship need not necessarily be a personal relationship to be effective, although the mentor needed to be approachable.
- One student perceived that, despite his general satisfaction with the school and his mentor, he had felt restricted by the formality of both. It is possible that a student's personality will play a part in determining how highly he/she rates the mentoring support received. A student who preferred a formal approach may well have perceived the formality of the school and mentor to be desirable.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- 80% of the mentors rated as 'excellent' in the questionnaire survey were perceived to have been a 'friend'. However, the mentor being 'a friend' does not appear to have been essential for the student to rate the mentoring as 'excellent'.

The mentor role

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Mentors who were perceived as having fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element were more likely to be rated highly by their students.

Findings from case studies only:

- All students and the majority of headteachers and mentors perceived that Phase Two mentors needed to fulfil roles associated with all elements of the Professional domain.
- All students perceived that their mentors had fulfilled roles associated with the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Educator elements of the Professional domain.
- When mentor and student shared similar expectations of the mentor's role and the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled these roles, the mentor's support was rated highly by the student *regardless of the exact nature of the roles fulfilled.*
- All mentors were observed to fulfil a wide variety of roles. Although mentors were individual in the roles they were observed to fulfil, the role 'to advise' was observed to be a dominant role for all mentors.
- Mentors' perceptions of the roles appropriate for a Phase Two mentor appeared to influence the roles they fulfilled in practice.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- The mentors who were perceived to have provided the best levels of support fulfilled more roles than other mentors.
- The roles most frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors in Phase Two were roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements of the Professional domain.
- The majority of mentors were not perceived to have fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. 'to set targets', 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to challenge'.

Mentors that did fulfil these roles were more likely to be rated highly by their students. However, mentors who did not fulfil these roles also received high ratings, suggesting that all students did not perceive these to be important roles.

Mentor personal qualities

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase Two students perceived that the mentor's personal qualities were an important factor in influencing mentoring success.
- The qualities most frequently mentioned as important by students were 'being approachable'; 'understanding the student's professional needs' and 'being constructive'.

Findings from case studies only:

- Headteachers, mentors and students all perceived that mentors needed a variety of personal and professional qualities.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Absence of certain personal and professional qualities resulted in the mentoring being perceived as less effective by the student. As the number of negative qualities associated with the mentor increased, the student's rating of the mentor's support fell.

School mentoring structures

Findings from case studies only:

- Phase Two schools had few formal mentoring structures in place to support students and their mentors although in three of the five schools, policies were being developed.
- Headteacher and mentor perceptions of the mentoring support structures that were in place in their schools often differed.

- None of the Phase Two schools provided non-contact time for the mentors.
- In all Phase Two schools mentoring was given at least *equal priority* with the mentors' other school duties. Mentors and students appreciated the mentor being available for the student when needed. As long as this availability was assured then both mentors and students were happy for the mentor to be out of the classroom.
- Schools in Phase Two were split into schools that had no criteria for selection of mentors and schools where selection of appropriate mentors appeared to be carefully considered but not against written criteria.
- There were no school guidelines in any of the schools and mentoring of students was almost entirely determined by individual mentors. Three of the five mentors suggested that other staff members in school did not always appreciate the mentor's role and the workload involved and suggested the need for written school guidelines to help clarify the situation.
- All Phase Two headteachers suggested that they perceived mentoring to be important and in most cases they were actively involved in the mentoring process in some way. Headteachers' active involvement in and promotion of mentoring was appreciated by mentors, however, it did not automatically result in support from other staff being forthcoming.
- Students valued the support they did receive from other members of staff within their immediate surroundings, particularly when their mentors were unavailable. Students generally did not perceive that they needed support from other members of staff outside of their immediate surroundings. It is possible that as long as students perceive they receive good support within their immediate working environment then they do not perceive they need support from elsewhere.
- One student suggested that there were problems having a mentor who was deputy head both in terms of availability and the attitude of other staff members.
- In three cases, mentors and students perceived that there needed to be better communication between their school and the university.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- A high rating of mentor support did not appear to be related to the mentor having any particular role/status within the school. Other factors such as personal and professional qualities and availability may be more important in determining mentoring success.

CHAPTER FIVE: Findings from Phases Three and Four

Introduction

This chapter reports findings about the type and amount of mentoring support received by and perceived to be necessary for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) in Phases Three and Four. Findings in this chapter are reported under two headings - Case Studies and Questionnaires. Comparisons between the two sets of data are explored in more detail in Chapter Six.

Case Studies

Case studies were undertaken of eight NQTs and five mentors in four different primary schools. In two of the schools, NQTs shared the same mentor. Case study participants were undertaking their first year as qualified teachers from September 1996 to July 1997 with data for Phase Three being collected at the end of the first term (December 1996) and data for Phase Four being collected at the end of the third term (June 1997). Comparisons were made across the cases to investigate general patterns and trends in the amount and type of mentoring support received and of headteacher, mentor and NQT perceptions of the amount and type of mentoring support required. Detailed analysis of the individual case studies then explored mentor and NQT perceptions in greater depth and investigated the personal and contextual factors that influenced the mentoring support received by the NQTs in each school. Data was collected largely through interviews with additional supporting material from logs, mentor journals, videoed mentorials and NQT questionnaires.

Questionnaires

Findings from the case studies about NQTs' perceptions of their mentoring requirements and their perceptions of the mentoring they received during Phase Three and Phase Four were investigated by two questionnaire surveys of 60 respondents who were undertaking their first year as qualified teachers from September 1997 to July 1998. Data

for Phase Three was collected at the end of the first term (December 1997) and data for Phase Four was collected at the end of the third term (June 1998). All questionnaire respondents had completed a PGCE at the University of Leicester in July 1997. During their period of initial training, Phase Three and Four respondents had taken part in the Phase One and Phase Two questionnaire surveys (reported in Chapters Three and Four).

Case Studies

Table 5.1. Case study participants in Phases Three and Four.

	Mentor *	NQT *
School 11	Paula	Kathy
School 12	Claire	Jayne
School 13	Matthew	Anna Naomi Alison
School 14	Harold Colin (also the headteacher)	Sarah Connie Peter

* Pseudonyms used throughout.

Although all participants were interviewed and videoed at least once, there were individual differences in data collected for each mentor/NQT pair and across the two phases as shown in Table 5.2.

The findings from the case studies are reported under two headings:

- The mentoring support received by NQTs across all five cases. A comparison of the mentoring support received by the eight NQTs and of perceptions of the mentoring support required, including: the amount of mentoring received by the NQTs; the areas discussed by the NQTs and mentors; the mentoring structures in the schools; the nature of the mentor/NQT relationship; the perceptions of the roles the mentor had/needed to have; the perceptions of personal qualities the mentor needed.

- Individual case studies. A detailed analysis of each case exploring the support provided for the NQT in each school; the underlying factors that influenced the support the NQTs received; the NQTs' and mentors' evaluation of this support and from these evaluations, drawing out conclusions about the NQTs' perceived mentoring requirements.

Table 5.2. Summary of data sources for Phase Three/Four case study participants.

	Phase 3 Journal	Phase 3 Log	Phase 3 Video	Phase 3 Int.	Phase 3 Qu.	Phase 4 Int.	Phase 4 Qu.
School 11							
Mentor	✓		✓	✓		✓	
NQT		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Headteacher				✓		✓	
School 12							
Mentor		✓	✓	✓		✓	
NQT		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Headteacher				✓		✓	
School 13 *							
Mentor			✓	✓		-	-
NQT (Anna)			✓	✓		-	-
NQT (Naomi)			✓	✓		-	-
NQT (Alison)			✓	✓		-	-
Headteacher				✓		-	-
School 14							
Mentor (Harold)			✓	✓		✓	
Mentor (Colin**)			✓	✓		***	
NQT (Sarah)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NQT (Connie)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NQT (Peter)			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* School 13 was the same school as School 1 (Phase One)

** Colin was also the headteacher of School 14.

*** Colin left School 14 at the end of Term 2. His mentoring role with Peter was taken over by the acting headteacher (Steven). However, it was not possible to interview Steven in Term 3, due to pressures on his time.

N.B. As was noted in Chapter Two, School 12 only participated in the research during Phase Three.

The mentoring support received by Phase Three/Four NQTs across all five cases

Amount of mentoring

As with Phases One and Two, mentors and NQTs involved in the case studies in Phase Three were asked to complete logs to record the amount of mentoring received. However, relatively few participants managed this and in Phase Four this method of data collection was abandoned (see Chapter Seven – Critique of methodology). Data on the amount of mentoring received was therefore collected through interviews and through the questionnaires that the NQTs completed. All NQTs received both formal and informal mentoring as shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Average amount of formal and informal mentoring Phase Three/Four NQT case study participants perceived that they had received in each phase.

	NQT	Phase 3		Phase 4	
		formal	informal	formal	informal
School 11	Kathy	weekly	daily	none	daily
School 12	Jayne	weekly	daily	none	daily
School 13	Anna	fortnightly	weekly	No data available	
	Naomi	fortnightly	daily		
	Alison	fortnightly	weekly		
School 14	Sarah	fortnightly	daily	none	weekly
	Connie	fortnightly	daily	none	weekly
	Peter	fortnightly	weekly	twice in term	weekly

Phase Three NQTs all perceived that they received formal mentoring at least once a fortnight. Five out of the eight NQTs received informal mentoring daily, the other three NQTs received it weekly. In Phase Four, only one NQT received any formal mentoring although all still received informal mentoring at least once a week. There were differences between NQTs in the same schools. In School 13, Naomi received informal mentoring daily as compared to the other two NQTs who received informal mentoring weekly, in the interviews Naomi suggested that this was because she worked in the same year group

team and area of school ad her mentor while the other NQTs worked in different year groups. In School 14, Peter received informal mentoring on a weekly basis, he suggested this was because his mentor was the headteacher and less available then Sarah and Connie's mentor.

In the interviews, NQTs suggested that the amount of mentoring had decreased over the three terms.

Three out of the five NQTs interviewed in Phase Four and all of the mentors perceived that the decrease in amount of formal mentoring was acceptable:

> I've not had any problems and so haven't needed the support but I know she would be there if I needed her. (NQT - Kathy)
>
> I need less help now... I'm less dependent. (NQT - Jayne)
>
> The mentoring is much less now, I need less help. (NQT - Peter).
>
> It started off quite intensely and I think that's fairly common but she is fine now so we haven't really needed to meet... I still keep in touch with her and when it's things like open night I make a point of going round and saying "are you alright?" (Mentor - Paula)
>
> We did have a spell right at the beginning of term... but, I feel she's now like a fully-fledged, capable teacher. (Mentor - Claire).

From these comments, it would appear that the majority of Phase Three/Four mentors and NQTs perceived that once the NQT had settled into the school, mentor support was only needed if there were problems or concerns. This contrasts with the theoretical models of mentoring which propose that mentors should have an important role in guiding the NQT's professional development (e.g. Bleach, 1999; Vonk, 1996).

Summary:

Within these case studies:

- All NQTs in Phase Three received both formal and informal mentoring, receiving informal mentoring at least weekly and formal mentoring at least fortnightly.
- Mentoring, both formal and informal, decreased in amount across the NQT year. In Phase Four, only one NQT received any formal mentoring and informal mentoring was received on a weekly basis.
- Three out of the five NQTs and three out of the three mentors interviewed in Phase Four, suggested that the decrease in formal mentoring over the NQT year was acceptable.
- In Phases Three and Four, the amount of informal mentoring received appeared to be influenced by certain factors - the mentor's status in school and whether the mentor worked nearby or in the same year group as the NQT.

The areas NQTs discussed with their mentors

In the interviews, Phase Three/ Four NQTs were asked which areas they thought they had needed most mentor support in. (The areas were generated by the NQT and not selected from a pre-determined list.)

Table 5.4. Areas in which Phase Three NQTs perceived they had needed the most mentor support.

School 11 Kathy	School 12 Jayne	School 13 Anna	School 13 Naomi	School 13 Alison	School 14 Sarah	School 14 Connie	School 14 Peter
resources	resources	assessment /rec keeping	behaviour	assessment /rec keeping	school procedures	planning	behaviour
school procedures	school procedures	individual needs	resources	individual needs	evaluate progress	school procedures	time m'ment
behaviour	behaviour	evaluate progress		evaluate progress	behaviour	OfSTED	planning
	assessment / rec keeping				OfSTED	parents	assembly
						evaluate progress	OfSTED

As shown in Table 5.4, the areas most frequently perceived in Phase Three as important were:

- behaviour
- school procedures
- resources
- assessment / record keeping

(and OfSTED in one school)

The areas perceived by NQTs to be important changed between Phases Three and Four, as shown in Table 5.5. The areas most frequently perceived in Phase Four as important were:

- assessment/record keeping
- parents

As might have been expected by Phase Four the areas of 'behaviour'; 'school procedures' and 'resources' were mentioned less frequently as areas of need (Ballantyne *et al*, 1995; Carré, 1993).

Table 5.5. Areas in which Phase Four NQTs perceived they had needed the most mentor support.

School 11 Kathy	School 12 Jane	School 13 Anna	School 13 Naomi	School 13 Alison	School 14 Sarah	School 14 Connie	School 14 Peter
assessment /rec keeping	curriculum	no data	no data	no data	assessment/ rec keeping	reports	behaviour
admin.	parents				reports	parents	time m'ment
	admin.				parents	assessment/ rec keeping	assessment/ rec keeping
	individual needs						

Comparison of the mentoring structures in Phase Three/Four schools.

Schools involved in Phases Three/Four varied in the amount and type of mentoring structures in place to support NQTs, as shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6. Formal mentoring structures for supporting NQTs in Schools 11-14 (Phases Three/Four).

	School 11	School 12	School 13	School 14
Mentor guidelines	Meeting with Head Teacher to discuss expectations	No	Meeting with Head Teacher to discuss expectations	No
NQT guidelines	No - LEA guidelines used*	No - LEA guidelines used*	Meeting with Head Teacher to discuss expectations	Yes - limited
Non-contact time	Yes - Phase 3 only 35 mins a week	No	No	No
Group mentoring meetings	One mentor meeting in Phase 3	No (only 1 NQT)	Yes - fortnightly in Phase 3.	Yes - fortnightly in Phase 3.
Mentoring Co-ordinator	No	No (only 1 NQT)	Yes (Head Teacher)	Yes (Head Teacher)
Selection of mentors	Selected by senior management	Selected by senior management (including mentor)	Selected by Head Teacher	In job description of team leaders
Criteria for selection of mentors	Experienced teacher and if possible from within year group team	Head of Key Stage with good interpersonal skills.	Personal and professional qualities	Head of Year

* Local Education Authority guidelines were provided by the LEA for all NQTs

Three out of the four schools involved in Phase Three/Four had some formal mentoring structures in place although there were differences between schools in the support provided. Other studies have also found a wide variety of provision for NQTs (Carney and Hagger, 1996; Wall and Smith, 1993). Phase Three mentors were all selected by the headteacher, either because of personal and professional qualities or because they held a senior position in the school. Group mentoring meetings where mentors or NQTs got together were held regularly in two of the schools in Phase Three.

Despite research suggesting that there is a need for written guidelines in school (Frost, 1993) only one school had any form of written school guidelines for mentors or NQTs and this was limited to listing a variety of areas that the NQTs were expected to find information on during Phase Three.

Only one school provided NQTs and their mentors with non-contact time to meet. The three mentors who did not receive non-contact time (Paula, Clare and Harold) perceived that they would have liked non-contact time to meet with their NQT(s) and to be able to go and observe their NQTs teaching. Clare and Harold suggested that not being able to do this limited the support they provided:

> I don't think I have really challenged her but some of that is because I haven't ever really observed her. (Clare)

> How do you reassure somebody when you haven't actually seen them? Yes you can reassure them about displays and things by going into the room and I try and see them at least every morning and in the evenings to see if everything is OK but you can't do much more, the positive encouragement is always second hand. (Harold)

None of the headteachers provided time for mentors to observe their NQTs. When interviewed in Phase Four, all NQTs perceived that they would have liked to have been observed and to have had feedback on their teaching. One NQT (Connie) suggested that:

> To tell you the truth I quite liked it when OfSTED came in, they were in loads but they gave me lots of positive feedback and that was really good.

None of the NQTs were provided with non-contact time to observe their mentor or other members of staff teaching.

Summary:

Within these case study schools:

- Three out of the four schools had some formal mentoring structures in place to support NQTs.
- Two schools organised group meetings for NQTs and/or mentors to meet up during Phase Three.
- In all schools in Phase Three/Four, mentors were selected rather than volunteering with the selection being based on certain criteria, including personal and professional qualities and/or position within the school although these criteria were not written down in any of the schools.
- Only one Phase Three/Four school had any form of written school guidelines for NQTs.
- Only one Phase Three/Four school provided non-contact time for NQT mentors to meet with their NQTs.
- None of the NQTs were observed teaching by their mentors. All NQTs perceived that they would have liked to have been observed. None of the NQTs were provided with non-contact time to observe other teachers teaching.

The Mentor/NE relationship

As with students and their mentors, studies have suggested that establishing a successful mentor/NQT relationship is one of the key factors in effective mentoring for NQTs (e.g. Bush *et al*, 1996; Carré, 1993). In the interviews, NQTs and mentors were probed about their relationship. They were asked whether they perceived it to be more of a professional or personal relationship.

When interviewed in Phase Three, the majority of mentors and NQTs perceived that their relationship was both personal and professional. The exception to this were the relationships between Harold and Sarah and Harold and Connie in School 14. Sarah and Connie perceived that their relationships with Harold had been purely professional.

All mentors and NQTs perceived that their relationship changed over the course of the year, in general becoming more informal and relaxed by Phase Four (see individual case studies).

Summary:

- The mentor/NQT relationship in Phase Three was generally perceived to be a professional relationship with some personal elements.
- The relationship was perceived to change over the year becoming more of a personal relationship by Phase Four.

The mentor role

The interviews in Phase Three explored headteachers, NQTs and mentors' perceptions of the Phase Three/Four mentor's role. These are shown in Table 5.7 The categories in Table 5.7 were derived directly from the interview responses. The responses had enough similarities to be grouped together into 21 categories. The categories/roles were then grouped together in three *role domains:*

- Personal
- Structural
- Professional

The professional role domain is sub-divided into four *role elements* - Professional Supporter; Trainer; Educator and Assessor (see Chapter Two for further details).

There was general agreement among the Phase Three/Four participants that a Phase Three/Four mentor needed to fulfil roles within the Structural domain and roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements in the Professional domain.

Table 5.7. Headteachers', mentors' and NQTs' perceptions of the roles a mentor should fulfil during Phases Three/Four.

Role	School 11			School 12			School 13					School 14				
	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE (An)	NE (N)	NE (Al)	HT	M	NE (S)	NE (C)	NE (P)
Personal																
to be a friend	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Structural																
to induct		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
to facilitate							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Professional Supporter																
to encourage	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
to reassure				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
to listen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
to support in classroom								✓		✓						
Professional Trainer																
to protect					✓		✓					✓	✓			
to role model							✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	
to train												✓				
to discuss					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
to advise	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
to id. needs		✓					✓					✓	✓		✓	✓
to focus							✓					✓				
to clarify						✓	✓					✓			✓	
to be a critic		✓													✓	
to help reflect		✓			✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	
Professional Educator																
to set targets												✓				
to rel pr to th												✓				
to challenge	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
												✓				
Professional Assessor																
to evaluate												✓	✓			

The role 'to induct' was perceived by the majority of participants to be appropriate (three out of four headteachers; all the mentors and seven out of eight NQTs). As one NQT said:

> It's all those silly little things you need to know in a school, like one lunchtime when I was out, I suddenly realised that no-one had told me how to blow the whistle. (NQT - Jayne)

Out of the roles associated with the Educator element, the role 'to challenge' was suggested most frequently as an appropriate role: three out of four headteachers; one out of four mentors and all the NQTs perceived this role to be appropriate. All the participants who did suggest that mentors should have the 'challenge' role stressed the need for any challenging to be constructive and well-timed:

> You've got to be able to be critical in the open-minded sense of the word, not criticising but critical. .. it's being able to let them think about their practice and consider their practice and look for the strengths in it, look for the weaknesses, look for where you can improve. (Mentor - Paula)

> It's not challenging like putting you on the spot make me think about the way I'm doing things. (NQT - Kathy)

> Not necessarily now but later on to challenge you further as you are developing as a teacher... I don't mean necessarily say "why did you do this that's an awful way of doing it" but to help develop you, stretch you that little bit further but that has to come at the right time I think if she started doing it to me now I wouldn't like it. (NQT - Jayne)

> To bring about improvement by observing, advising, listening... a challenging situation should not be a threatening situation. (Headteacher/Mentor - Colin)

Three of the mentors did not perceive the role to be appropriate:

> I feel that generally teachers are very critical of themselves anyway and I think she can do that for herself... I might say what's your thinking behind that but not really. (Mentor - Claire)

> A mentor should be more friendly than challenging. (Mentor - Matthew)

Despite the headteachers having a general acceptance of the challenge role in theory, mentors were not provided with non-contact time in which to observe their NQT(s) and, in practice none of the NQTs perceived that their mentors had fulfilled the challenge role (see Table 5.8 below) Yet, it has been suggested that the challenge role is vital if NQTs are to have their professional development best supported, without challenging it is likely that they will rely on inflexible strategies and will to fail to move towards deeper, critical self-reflection (Tickle, 1996).

Only one participant - a headteacher - suggested that the roles 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to set targets' were appropriate roles.

The role of 'friend' was perceived by nine of the sixteen participants to be an appropriate role.

Being a 'role model' was perceived by five of the 16 participants to be appropriate, however, in none of the cases were the NQTs provided with non-contact time to officially observe their mentor. Six of the NQTs perceived that this was not an appropriate role suggesting that NQTs needed to develop their own style of teaching:

> I don't know because everyone is different with their teaching. (Kathy)
>
> Not necessarily... you have to find your own way. (Sarah)

The role of 'assessor' was seldom mentioned. When probed three out of the four mentors suggested that they would have been unhappy to have had the assessor role:

> It would introduce an element of worry. (Paula)
>
> I think if she felt I was going to be passing her or failing her she wouldn't feel free to show the cracks. (Claire)
>
> I wouldn't like it at all, a mentor should be friendly. (Matthew).

The mentors' attitudes appear consistent with the work of Vonk (1996) who suggests that mentors should not have the assessor role in case it interferes with the supportive nature of the role.

In the questionnaires, Phase Three/Four NQTs were asked to select all the roles they perceived their mentors had actually fulfilled from a pre-determined list of roles (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the categories).

Table 5.8. NQTs' perceptions of the roles their mentors actually fulfilled during Phases Three and Four (taken from questionnaires).

Role	School 11 Kathy		School 12 Jayne		School 14 Sarah		School 14 Connie		School 14 Peter	
	Ph.3	Ph.4	Ph.3	Ph.4	Ph.3	Ph.4	Ph.3	Ph.4	Ph.3	*Ph.4
Support										
to be a friend	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	-
Structural										
to induct	✓		✓		✓				✓	-
to negotiate			✓							
Prof. Support										
to encourage			✓						✓	-
to reassure			✓	✓					✓	-
to support	✓	✓	✓						✓	-
Train										
to protect			✓						✓	-
to train			✓						✓	-
to discuss	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			-
to advise	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	-
to identify needs			✓						✓	-
to focus			✓						✓	-
to clarify	✓		✓	✓					✓	-
to help reflect			✓						✓	-
Educate										
to set targets	✓									-
to rel pr to th										-
to challenge										-
Assess										
to evaluate										-

Ph.3 = Phase 3; Ph.4 = Phase 4

* No data available due to questionnaire not being completed

(There is no data from School 13, because the NQTs in School 13 did not complete their questionnaires)

As shown in Table 5.8, three out of the four were not perceived by their NQTs to have fulfilled roles within the Educator element. The remaining mentor was perceived to have taken the role 'to set targets' only in Phase Three. None of the NQTs perceived that their mentors had challenged them or had related practice to theory.

Two out of the five NQTs perceived that their mentor had fulfilled the role 'to encourage reflection'. However, this role was fulfilled in Phase Three only.

None of the mentors were perceived to have fulfilled an 'assessor' role, this is consistent with the mentors' perceptions that such a role would be inappropriate (see Table 5.7).

Harold, the mentor in School 14, was perceived to have fulfilled comparatively few roles by his two NQTs. Neither NQT was happy with the support he provided (see individual case study analysis).

In all cases the number of roles the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled decreased between Phases Three and Four.

Videoed observations of each mentor/NE pair involved in a mentorial allowed for the analysis of the roles mentors were perceived by the researcher to fulfil in practice. The roles were taken from the interview data. However, only the roles associated with the Professional Supporter, Trainer and Educator elements were coded and analysed because it was felt that the roles in the other domains - Structural, Personal and the Assessor element - would be unlikely to be demonstrated to any great extent within the context of a mentorial (see Chapter Two for further details on the coding and analysis).

As can be seen from Table 5.9, all the mentors spent the greater percent of the time fulfilling roles from within the Supporter domain, although the role 'to advise', associated with the Trainer elements in the Professional domain, was also frequently fulfilled. There was no observation of target setting in any of the mentorials and observed and almost no observation of mentors relating practice to theory. The roles mentors fulfilled were essentially related to offering professional support and not to supporting the NE's professional development.

Table 5.9. The roles Phase Three/Four mentors were observed to fulfil during a videoed mentorial (amount expressed as a percentage of the total number of coded interactions)

Role	School 11 %	School 12 %	School 13* %	School 14* %
Prof. Support				
to encourage	36%	31%	27%	8%
to reassure	19%	24%	24%	18%
Train				
to protect	2%	5%	4%	9%
to train	0%	10%	0%	7%
to advise	12%	21%	37%	38%
to identify needs	0%	0%	0%	0%
to focus	3%	3%	0%	0%
to clarify	1%	0%	0%	0%
to be a critic	0%	0%	0%	0%
to help reflect	14%	6%	8%	12%
Educate				
to set targets	0%	0%	0%	0%
to rel practice to theory	0%	0%	0%	0%
to challenge	13%	0%	0%	8%

* In the two schools with more than one NQT taking part in the research, mentors met with all their NQTs at the same time and so a 'group-mentorial' was observed.

N.B. Three roles were not included in this table that are included in Table 3.7: 'to role model' was taken out of the categories for video analysis because it is a role generally associated with action rather than talking; 'to listen' was taken out as it was decided to focus on the mentors' spoken interactions and the role 'to discuss' was taken out as it was felt that it was a role that could overlap with many of the other categories and could therefore not be reliably coded.

When Table 5.9 is compared to Table 5.8, it can be seen that, at a broad level at least, the mentors' perceptions of appropriate mentor roles corresponded with the roles they were observed to fulfil.

Summary:

Within these case studies:

- All participants perceived that Phase Three/Four mentors needed to have many roles.
- The majority of participants emphasised roles in the Personal domain, Structural domain and roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements in the Professional domain.
- Challenging was perceived by most of the headteachers and NQTs to be an appropriate role, however, it was never perceived by the NQTs to have happened in practice.
- NQTs rarely perceived that their mentors had actually fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element.
- The roles mentors were observed to have fulfilled were most frequently associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements. Roles associated with the Educator element were rarely observed.
- The number of roles that NQTs perceived that their mentors fulfilled decreased from Phase Three to Phase Four.

Mentor qualities

It has been suggested that Phase Three/Four mentors need certain personal qualities and skills if they are to successfully fulfil the mentor role (Early and Kinder, 1994; Stammers, 1993). In the interviews, mentors, NQTs and headteachers were asked what qualities they perceived that a Phase Three/Four mentor needed. Although qualities were originally meant to imply inherent characteristics that a mentor might have, for example, being approachable, participants also included qualities that might more appropriately be defined as skills, for example, being a good teacher. For the purpose of this research, the participants' interpretation of the term has been followed.

All participants agreed that mentors needed certain qualities, as shown in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10. The personal and professional qualities that Phase Three/Four headteachers, mentors and NQTs perceived were important for mentors to have.

Qualities	School 11			School 12			School 13					School 14				
	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE	HT	M	NE (An)	NE (N)	NE (Al)	HT	M	NE (S)	NE (C)	NE (P)
Personal Qualities																
approachable	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
accepting					✓		✓	✓		✓		✓				
committed						✓									✓	
empathetic	✓			✓			✓									
open-minded			✓			✓	✓	✓		✓						
patient												✓				
positive						✓		✓				✓			✓	
confident				✓			✓					✓	✓		✓	
Prof. Qualities																
available	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
experienced teacher	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓					✓				
experienced mentor	✓															
good teacher				✓			✓			✓		✓			✓	
understands NE's prof. needs																
good communicator							✓					✓	✓	✓	✓	
good listener					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
constructive												✓			✓	
status in school		✓		✓			✓					✓				
able to challenge		✓										✓				

The categories in Table 5.10 came directly from the interview responses. The responses were the result of an open-ended question without probing. All responses could be coded into one of the categories. The perceived qualities appeared to fall broadly into two categories:

- Personal qualities
- Professional qualities

(see Chapter Two for a more detailed description of the categories)

All participants (n=16) suggested that a Phase Three/Four mentor needed to be 'approachable'. The majority of respondents also perceived that a Phase Three/Four mentor needed to be 'available' (11), and 'a good listener' (9). Participants variously

mentioned that a mentor should be: 'a shoulder to cry on'; 'a big sister'; 'someone who will listen'; ' a friendly person to go to when they're feeling low and confused.'

Only three participants suggested that a mentor needed to be 'constructive' and only one suggested that a mentor needed to be 'able to challenge'. This would appear to reflect participants' perceptions that a Phase Three/Four mentor's role was essentially one of offering support rather than one of supporting professional development.

Only one NQT perceived that experience was an important quality. Interpersonal skills and professional skills were generally perceived as being far more important.

Summary

- Participants perceived that mentors needed a variety of personal and professional qualities.
- The quality most frequently mentioned was being 'approachable'.
- Availability was perceived to be important, possibly linking to the fact that none of the mentors had non-contact time to meet with the NQT: time for mentoring therefore had to be found at breaks or before/after school.

Individual Case Studies

This section describes each case in detail, exploring support received by the NQT; the underlying factors that influenced the support the NQT received; the NQT and mentor's evaluation of the support and from this evaluation, drawing out the NQTs' and mentors' perceptions of the NQTs' needs.

Each case study is divided into three sections:

- School support.
- Mentor support.
- Summary of the findings for each school.

School 11

Mentor: Paula
NQT: Kathy

School Support:

In School 11, there were three NQTs and three mentors, although only one NQT (Kathy) and one mentor (Paula) were involved in this research. The headteacher perceived that mentoring was very important: 'I see it as essential to the good development of teachers.' Paula and the headteacher both reported that there had been staffing problems in the school with the deputy head being away on long-term sick leave and another member of senior management being on maternity leave. The headteacher suggested that, because of these problems, she had been less actively involved in the NQT mentoring than she would have liked:

> Unfortunately I have had less involvement than I normally would have been because of the absence of senior members of staff. I've been very office-bound and I have been fairly isolated from all the staff including the NQTs... in a normal year I certainly would have got into the classroom and worked alongside the NQTs.

There were some formal mentoring structures in School 11. At the beginning of Phase Three, there was one group meeting arranged for the mentors to clarify expectations of the mentor's role. Thirty minutes non-contact time was allocated to each mentor and NQT so that they could meet together once a week. However, in practice, this happened only in the first term. NQT mentors were selected by senior management, generally being an experienced teacher selected from the NQT's year group team. There was no mentoring co-ordinator in the school and no school mentoring guidelines for NQTs, although mentors and NQTs were encouraged to use the NQT guidelines produced by the LEA.

Kathy received informal mentoring from other teachers in her year group team. She took any day to day problems and questions to other Year One teachers, suggesting that this was possibly because Paula (a Year Two teacher) was in a classroom some distance away.

The headteacher and Paula had different perception of how mentoring was viewed by the rest of the school. When asked about the way the rest of the staff viewed mentoring the Headteacher suggested that other staff saw mentoring as: 'an essential part of the development of NQTs' and suggested that 'all get involved'. She perceived that due to the collaborative ethos of the school there was an informal network of support for NQTs and their mentors: 'I think mentoring fits very well with the ethos of this school... we all work together and are here to help each other - it is just part of that process.' However, Paula and Kathy perceived that although NQTs received informal support from other members of staff within their year group teams, there was little support across the years. Paula, said about other members of staff: 'I shouldn't think some of them are actually aware of the mentoring.' Both Paula and Kathy perceived that it would have been helpful for formal meetings to have been arranged for all the mentors and NQTs.

Paula suggested that the support received by NQTs in the school varied. The headteacher agreed, suggesting that the NQT who had joined the school at the same time as Kathy had 'a rough deal... it's been a bit of hit and miss' because the other members of her year group team (both senior members of staff) had been away for much of the year. Two NQTs who had joined the school in the third term (April 1997) did not receive any mentoring.

Paula perceived that more non-contact time needed to be provided to give 'time to observe them actually teaching and more time in that first week.' Kathy agreed that non-contact time to allow the mentor to observe the NQT teaching would have been beneficial. Paula also suggested that there was a need for school guidelines formalising and clarifying the mentor's role:

> It would help if school had general structure of where they wanted you to get them at the end... you need to know what to do if you see another NQT having a problem. Are you supposed to intervene or not? I'm not sure what the Head wants from the teachers in school.

Paula perceived that mentors needed to have a certain status within the school if they were to be in a good position to negotiate and facilitate: 'I think you also need a bit of clout within the school.'

Mentor Support:

Paula and Kathy both perceived that they had a good relationship. Initially, both Paula and Kathy perceived that it was essentially a professional relationship with a slight distance:

> Because of the time restriction we do tend to keep to the point. (Paula)

> It's more professional really, I don't know whether that's because of the age difference or not, I feel as though I can talk easier to others sometimes, although I know she's there if I have a problem. (Kathy)

However, by Phase Four both perceived that it had become a more-relaxed, 'colleague' relationship: 'it is more as colleagues now, somebody else in the staffroom.' (Kathy)

Paula and Kathy generally agreed in their perceptions of the role an NQT mentor should have, both emphasising the roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements (see Table 5.7). When interviewed in Phase Three, both perceived that an NQT mentor should have the role 'to challenge': 'it's still at the level of talking about the curriculum, how are you getting on with your class but I would hope towards the end that it was starting as critical thinking and evaluating performance,' (Paula). However, when interviewed in Phase Four, neither Kathy or Paula perceived that Paula had fulfilled the challenge role: 'I think because everything's been fine really we've just been going along... there's been no challenging really,' (Kathy). Neither appeared to perceive

that this lack of challenging affected the quality of the mentoring, although Kathy did suggest that it might have been useful to have had some formal observation and feedback. Paula visited Kathy's classroom in the second term but these visits did not involve any systematic or formal observation:

> When I had the student and I was at a loose end I would go round and help, just things like that.... no feedback really, it was just me as member of staff looking round and seeing what was going on in different classrooms. It was no different than when I went into anyone else's class.

Paula suggested that she would have liked more non-contact time for observation but also suggested that if formal observation of the NQT by the mentor was to take place then there needed to be clarification of this within school guidelines so that both parties had clear expectations and the mentor would not be open to accusations of interference.

Both Paula and Kathy perceived that the nature of the mentor role had changed over the year becoming increasingly informal:

> I still keep in touch with her and when it's things like open night I make a point of going round and saying "are you alright?". It's just a supportive role now really. (Paula)

> I think it's got more informal, we've obviously got to know each other a bit better, and as I say we have not had the time together for meetings but I still know that if I had a problem I would be able to go to her. (Kathy)

Summary of findings:

- The quality of mentoring received by NQTs in School 11 appeared variable. The headteacher perceived that this was due to unusual school circumstances that particular year.
- The headteacher assumed that mentors and NQTs would informally support each other. However, according to the NQT and mentor this support needed to be more

formalised. Both suggested it would have been helpful to have had group mentoring meetings for all the mentors and NQTs and for the school to have had written guidelines on the mentor role.

- The mentor perceived there was a need for mentors to have status in school in order to be able to negotiate successfully on the NQT's behalf.
- The NQT received informal support from other members of her year group team.
- Mentor and student perceived that they had a good relationship that developed over the year from being a professional, slightly distant relationship in Phase Three to being 'colleagues' by Phase Four.
- The mentor and NQT shared similar expectations of the mentor role with both placing the emphasis on the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements of the role.
- The nature of the mentor's role changed over the year, becoming more informal.
- Although in Phase Three both mentor and NQT perceived that an NQT mentor should 'challenge', no challenging was perceived to have taken place in either Phase Three or Phase Four. The mentor suggested this was partly because of lack of time for observation.
- The NQT suggested that she would have liked formal observation and feedback from her mentor. The mentor suggested that if this was going to happen then it needed to be clearly set down in school guidelines, so as not to leave the mentor open to charges of interference.
- The mentor perceived that it might be beneficial for the mentor to be in the same year group as the NQT to allow more opportunities for informal observation.

School 12

Mentor: Claire
NQT: Jayne

School Support:

In School 12 there was one NQT (Jayne) and one mentor (Claire). The headteacher was informally involved with mentoring Jayne: 'I've helped with curriculum areas and she's

asked for help when she's needed it.' Jayne valued this support: 'I do appreciate it when she comes in and says something nice, she's always there if I need her.'

There were few formal structures set up in School 12. The headteacher and Claire suggested that this was because Jayne was the first NQT the school had employed for five years (since the current headteacher took up her position). The headteacher chose Claire to be the mentor through discussion with Claire (Head of Key Stage 2) and Duncan (the deputy head and other only other teacher in Key Stage 2 apart from Jayne). It was decided that Claire would be Jayne's mentor because she had taught most of Jayne's children the year before and had taken a counselling course. The headteacher also perceived that 'Claire has always been good with students... I think people in school automatically go to her if they need help.'

There were no school guidelines although Claire and Jayne made use of the LEA guidelines and at the start of the year a meeting was organised by Claire with Jayne and Duncan to discuss the support that would be provided: 'when I first started Claire and Duncan said to me 'what do you need? what do you want?' not 'this is what we've got to offer, but what are your needs?'"(Jayne). Thirty minutes of non-contact time was provided once in Phase Three for Claire and Jayne to meet. However, this was not part of formal structures but organised by Claire: 'I pointed out to the Headteacher that there was that expectation *(of having non-contact time with NQT)* and that it was difficult for us to get together.' Although there was generally no formal meeting time structured Claire and Jayne tried to meet once a week after school in Phase Three as well as having many quick chats throughout the day. In Phase Four, all meetings were informal.

Despite the apparent lack of formal structures when the school was inspected by OfSTED (November 1996) it was praised for its effective mentoring structures. Claire and the headteacher attributed this to the informal support structures that were established in the school for all the staff:

> The staff all support each other, there's nothing formal but I would expect everyone to help everyone else. (Headteacher)

> We're a small friendly school... because it's a small school curriculum responsibilities have to be spread across everyone so it's not as if there's a management layer and nobody else has responsibilities, we've all got responsibilities for different things.... I think we see each other as all having different strengths and go to each other when we need to. (Claire)

Jayne perceived that she had received support from all the staff, in particular from certain curriculum co-ordinators, from the headteacher and from Duncan: 'he's always there to have a quick chat or joke with... to start with I used to pop in and see him quite often... everybody's very keen to help new members of staff settle in.'

The Head left the organisation of the mentoring up to Claire and Jayne, letting them decide on the amount and type of mentoring support and how to allocate the budget allotted to mentoring. This arrangement appeared to work well. However, Jayne was never observed.

In School 12 the headteacher, Claire and Jayne all perceived that it would be beneficial for mentors to have non-contact time to meet with NQTs. Claire commented on the time commitment in Term 1: 'you don't realise it but it all really adds up... it's surprising how much there is... it would be nice to have time...time to talk not after school.' In the second term, Claire had a student in her classroom and Jayne suggested that this meant that Claire had less time to spend with her.

Claire and Jayne both perceived that Jayne had been effectively supported by the school:

> I think we've done quite a good job with Jayne I hope she does! (Claire)

> I always felt if I needed support it was there. (Jayne).

Mentor Support:

Claire and Jayne both perceived that they had developed a good relationship. In Phase Three, they both perceived that their relationship was both professional and personal in nature:

> It is basically a professional relationship but I think it's got a lot of the qualities of a personal relationship... she knows I've got my limitations and I think she knows what she can get out of me and what it's more appropriate to go to others for. (Claire)

> By Phase Four both perceived that the relationship had become more of a colleague relationship: 'it's just like she's any team member' (Claire).

Claire and Jayne shared generally similar expectations of the mentor role (see Table 5.7.). Jayne described Claire as 'a shoulder to cry on.' Claire saw herself as: 'a friendly person to go to if she's feeling low or confused... I'm there to help her sort things out.' In Phase Three, Jayne perceived that a mentor should have a challenging role: 'to help develop you, stretch you that little bit further.' However, by Phase Four, she had changed her mind: 'I haven't really needed it, there's been no problems.' Claire did not perceive that the challenge role was appropriate: 'I feel that generally teachers are very critical of themselves anyway and I think she can do that for herself... I might say what's your thinking behind that but not really.'

The mentoring support decreased over the year. In Phase Four there was no formal mentoring. Informal mentoring also decreased:

> Initially it was quite intense... there was a lot of time at the beginning showing her the ropes and she was quite demanding because she wanted some positive feedback and reassurance so she would often say "come and look at this, what do you think of this?" but now it's just when things come up like Mothering Sunday... ... I feel she's now like a fully-fledged, capable teacher... now she makes her own decisions about things. (Claire - Phase Four).

I need less help now... I'm less dependent. (Jayne - Phase Four)

Jayne did suggest later in the interview: 'I know I'm not perfect, that I've still got a lot to learn.' It would appear that Jayne realised that she needed to continue to develop professionally, but by Phase Four she was not associating this development with mentor support. Both Jayne and Claire perceived that by Phase Four it was getting difficult to know when Claire was 'mentoring' and when she was offering the support she would offer to any colleague because of her position as Head of Key Stage and Humanities co-ordinator.

Neither Jayne nor Claire perceived that a Phase Three/Four mentor should have an assessor role. Claire suggested: 'assessing would be bound to change the relationship... I think if she felt I was going to be passing her or failing her she wouldn't feel free to show the cracks.'

Summary of findings:

- There was a strong system of informal support established throughout School 12 and mentoring appeared to fit into these existing structures very effectively with many members of staff providing support for the NQT. This was possibly because the school was small and the NQT soon knew all members of staff well.
- The NQT valued the informal support provided by the headteacher and other staff members.
- The nature of the mentor and NQT relationship changed over the year becoming more that of a 'colleague' relationship by Phase Four.
- The mentor and NQT shared generally similar expectations of the mentor role with both placing the emphasis on roles associated with the Professional Supporter element. Although in Phase Three the NQT perceived that an NQT mentor should 'challenge' by Phase Four she shared the mentor's perceptions that this was not an appropriate role. By Phase Four, neither mentor nor NQT perceived that the mentor had a role to play in the NQT's professional development.

- The mentor support decreased over the year; NQT and mentor perceived that this was because the NQT had no problems with the assumption being that support was only needed if there were problems or concerns.
- By Phase Four, both mentor and NQT perceived that it was difficult to distinguish between mentoring and the support the mentor provided as part of her responsibilities as Key Stage Two co-ordinator and Humanities co-ordinator.

School 13

Mentor: Matthew
NQTs: Anna, Naomi, Alison

(data from Phase Three only)

School Support:

There were three NQTs in School 13 who all shared the same mentor. Naomi was in the same year group team as Matthew, the other two NQTs were in different year group teams. Mentoring had a high priority in School 13. The headteacher perceived mentoring as 'essential... it is a crucial role, a role that involves a balance between the needs of different people and the expertise in school.' She was actively involved in overseeing the NQT mentoring by holding regular meetings for all the NQTs and the mentor and for the mentor on his own. She emphasised the need for school management to support for the mentor:

> They should talk through mentoring with the mentor and be prepared to support them... the role and duties of the mentor need to be made clear to the mentor... it is important that mentors are aware of information they need to give to NQTs.

There were some formal mentoring structures for NQTs in School 13. Although there were no written school guidelines, at the start of Phase Three the headteacher held a meeting for the NQTs and Matthew to ensure that there were clear expectations of the

mentor's role. Regular group meetings were held for the NQTs with the headteacher and Matthew was responsible for organising group meetings with curriculum co-ordinators for the NQT. He took one of these meetings himself being the PE co-ordinator but generally did not attend the meetings held by other curriculum co-ordinators. Although arranged for the NQTs, these meetings were open to all staff if they wished to attend. Matthew was selected to be the NQT's mentor by the headteacher and then approached to see if he would agree. The headteacher selected him because he was an experienced teacher and good classroom practitioner and she perceived that it would be useful for his own professional development. Matthew was initially slightly reluctant to be the mentor: 'I had my arm twisted but I agreed.' There was no non-contact time provided and Matthew rarely met formally with the NQTs suggesting that they 'approach me when they need to.'

The headteacher perceived that much of the mentoring that the NQTs received was informal and linked to the existing support structures within the school: 'we have a whole school support system - the more people the better to share their skills.' Teachers were expected to communicate and support each other both within their year groups and across the whole school. All three NQTs confirmed that this collaboration did happen in reality. They received informal mentoring from other staff members, particularly those within their year group and double year group teams and certain curriculum co-ordinators. All three NQTs appeared to value this support, particularly Anna and Alison who were working in separate areas to Matthew:

> The way the school is arranged in teams helps because the teams are all so supportive... you don't keep your problems for the meetings, if you have a problem it's solved straight away. (Anna)

> There's a lot of support already built into how the school actually works... it's support for all the staff... it's very relaxed, you don't feel that you can't go and ask somebody something. (Alison)

Both Anna and Alison perceived that they would be more likely to initially approach other members of their team if they needed support than to go to Matthew. However,

they valued the role he had and perceived that it might be particularly useful if they had been having problems within their teams or if their team members were less supportive:

> If I didn't have the support I felt I needed in year three to know that he was actually my mentor then I'd probably go and ask him more because I'd know that that was what he was there for. (Alison)

The headteacher perceived that she like to be able to offer more support to mentors in terms of time: 'it would be ideal to give mentors time to meet with NQTs in school time instead of after school but it is difficult.' She also suggested that she would like to release mentors to talk to their new entrants whether students or NQTs before the New Entrant starts in school. All three NQTs also perceived that mentors needed time to meet up with the NQTs with Alison and Anna suggesting that it would be beneficial for mentors to have non-contact time so that they could observe the NQTs teaching. Both perceived that they would have liked some feedback with Alison suggesting that other staff were possibly reluctant to come in and observe:

> I think the rest of the teachers here tend to worry that if they send someone into your class then we're going to feel really put off by it but it doesn't bother me... we're quite used to it from last year really... I think that it's been so long since a lot of the teachers here had anything like that they think it's a bit alien.

Naomi did not mention the need for feedback. This was possibly because she worked closely with Matthew on a day to day basis, sharing the same open-plan area.

The headteacher and Matthew both suggested that it might be a good idea to have more than one mentor so that the mentors too could benefit from mutual support:

> It might be an idea to have a mentor in each year group to share the load and it might be better for the NQTs. (Matthew)

> Shared mentoring is a good idea, maybe having a mentor in each year group, the mentors would then get a chance to meet and talk just like the NQTs do. (Headteacher)

Mentor Support:

The three NQTs all perceived that they had a good relationship with Matthew and were all satisfied with the support he provided. Alison and Anna perceived that it was more of a personal than professional relationship - a relationship based on friendship:

> Matthew is a friend really. (Anna)

> I guess he's an advisor but the main thing for me is just being able to go up to him and chat, it doesn't have to be about a problem at school, you can just go up and chat and feel comfortable, he's so friendly. (Alison)

Naomi perceived that the relationship was a mixture of being personal and professional, possibly because she had to work closely with Matthew as colleagues within their year group team. Matthew himself perceived that his relationship with all three NQTs was that of: 'a friend and a colleague rather than someone set above them.'

Matthew essentially perceived that his role was to be a friend and to facilitate meetings with other members of staff. The NQTs agreed with these perceptions. Matthew suggested that his role was slightly different with Naomi than with the other NQTs. Because he saw her on a day to day basis he was more likely to be involved with offering her advice and discussing problems with her. He also offered her practical support in the classroom by taking a disruptive child from her class into his.

Although two of the NQTs (Alison and Anna) perceived that they would have liked the opportunity for him to have given them feedback on their teaching Matthew did not see this as part of the mentor role. He perceived that mentors should not have an evaluative role with the NQTs: 'I wouldn't like to do that... a mentor should be more friendly.'

Summary of findings:

- The headteacher's active involvement in, and promotion of, mentoring appeared to help ensure that mentor and NQTs felt well supported in School 13.
- All NQTs received informal mentoring from other members of staff. This support was valued, particularly in cases where the mentor was not working in the same area.
- Mentoring appeared to link very effectively with the established systems of support within the school. It is possible that this was so because of the highly collaborative ethos in the school.
- The NQTs valued having formal group meetings arranged.
- Both the headteacher and mentor suggested that having more than one NQT mentor might be of benefit.
- The mentor perceived that appropriate roles were those within the Structural and Personal domains and those associated with the Professional Supporter element. Two of the NQTs perceived that they would have liked feedback on their teaching. However, generally none of the NQTs appeared to perceive that the mentor should have a particular role in their professional development.

School 14

Mentor/Headteacher: Colin
NQT: Peter

Mentor: Harold
NQTs: Sarah and Connie

School Support:

In School 4 there were three NQTs, all of whom were taking part in the research. Colin, a mentor and the headteacher, perceived that mentoring was important:

> If we are appointing an NQT we are investing in that person and if we wish them to become good quality teachers we don't see that we can leave them in isolation - they need support.

There were some formal mentoring structures in School 14. There were school guidelines for NQTs - an 'aide-memoir', however this was limited to listing 20 areas that the NQTs were supposed to find out information about over the first term. These guidelines were used in Phase Three to help guide NQT meetings. Group meetings for all the NQTs and the two mentors were held fortnightly in the first term, twice in the second term and not at all in the third term (by which point Colin had left the school). Colin was the mentoring co-ordinator. Mentoring was part of the team-leaders' job descriptions and so NQTs normally had their team leader as their mentor. However, the NQTs perceived that, apart from the group meetings, there were few formal structures in the school:

> I haven't seen much structure - it's just been grab somebody when and if. (Sarah)

> It's just been a continual informal chat. (Connie)

> There are the fortnightly meetings but even they are quite informal once you get there, more of a chat. (Peter).

All three NQTs suggested that they would have liked formal structures in place to ensure that they were observed and given feedback. Connie suggested that:

> When I know what goes on in other schools I feel a bit angry, I haven't had any meetings, not seen any other schools, not had any reports.. ... I really needed someone to come in every now and then and say yes, that's right.... I've not had any lessons evaluated, my work's not been criticised or praised... I've had no feedback on displays or assembly... I'd like to be observed or to go and observe other people, I've asked for it every week but he just says you'll have to take it up with the Head and the Head just says yes, yes but nothing's ever done about it.

In the second term, Connie was observed by Colin one morning. She had not been told that she was going to be observed and felt the experience had been a negative one:

> I had the Head in one morning this term, it was a nightmare because I had a course in the afternoon and it was the last Friday before we went off on a week's residential course so I was trying to sort my room out and finish off all this work and he just appeared. Some of his comments were quite useful.. but to be honest I only think he came in because he found he had a couple of hours free, I suggested maybe I could see him teach or someone else and he said oh yes but we'll see.

In the third term, Peter was observed twice by the acting headteacher. He perceived that this was 'very useful' however, suggested that it would have been even more use if it had happened in the first term. He suggested that he felt he would have benefited from more frequent observations:

> I think I would have liked a lot more of me watching other teachers and them watching me, that hasn't really happened at all... I've not been into anyone else's class to see them teach and I would have liked that but I suppose it is time and money.

Harold perceived that NQTs should be observed, however, suggested that this did not happen because of the problems of finding the money to give the mentor some non-contact time. Sarah and Connie did not appear aware that he would have liked to have observed them if it had been possible.

Colin and Harold both perceived that the school had a strong collaborative ethos and that mentoring fitted into the existing support structures within the school:

> Informally any issue that any member of staff has they are more than welcome to talk to anyone who has the expertise and knowledge in the school... that is the collaborative culture that we work in... it is a very strong culture.... people are always willing to offer advice and support. (Colin)

> Mentoring is not perceived as mentoring by the staff, it's part of collaboration, we don't work in isolation, we're team-based... everyone asks other people for help if they need it that's part of the school ethos... mentoring is not just for the NQTs but for anybody. (Harold)

All three NQTs perceived that they received informal support from other members of staff, particularly from members of staff who have been in the next door classroom and from various curriculum co-ordinators. All three NQTs valued this support.

Apart from perceiving that it would have been beneficial to have been observed, in Phase Three Peter and Sarah were generally satisfied with the support they had received. Connie, however, was unhappy:

> When I started last year I didn't have a mentor and the head only came into my classroom once, I could have been doing anything - it's appalling... it's all words, no actions.

By Phase Four, Peter and Sarah were also expressing reservations about the lack of formal structures:

> I have had loads of experiences that would have been brilliant for feedback but they've just been wasted (Sarah)

> We've not really had any of the formal sessions for a long, long time which is a shame (Peter).

Mentor Support:

Sarah and Connie were both unhappy with their mentor's support. Sarah suggested: 'neither of us have had much in the way of help from him.' Sarah and Connie perceived that Harold had poor interpersonal skills and that his professional advice was of limited use:

> The other day I tried to talk to him when we were walking down the corridor and he just walked off... he doesn't really know what I'm doing. I haven't had any help with planning at the meetings we do all the work and we're the two NQTs... I don't really have any faith in what he does...it need to be someone you can have confidence that they know what's going on in the school and what's the right way to behave. (Connie)

Sarah and Connie both perceived that a Phase Three mentor should have roles within all domains - Personal, Structural and Professional - and including all elements of the Professional domain (see Table 5.7). In theory, Harold appeared to agree with these perceptions:

> Somebody who they're prepared to talk to... somebody who they can relate to... a listener, a shoulder to cry on, someone to take the flack if it goes wrong, to help, to always be there.. someone to listen and give advice, somebody who they're prepared to talk to, somebody who they have confidence in the answers, somebody who they can relate to.

In practice, however, he was not perceived by Connie and Sarah as having these roles. In Phase Four, Connie and Sarah suggested that they felt a lack of respect for Harold as a teacher:

> It's all been a real farce because he's the one who didn't do fantastically at OfSTED and he's the one who consequently had to have help so it's really been ridiculous, he's just completely the wrong person. Really I think a mentor should ideally be someone who has been teaching about five years, who is going places... I'm not looking for Superman but some sort of role model, not someone to be in awe of but someone to think, yes I would like to be like that someday. (Connie)

Although in Phase Three, Harold perceived that mentors should have the role of challenger by Phase Four he did not perceive this to be an appropriate role: 'I think the

school challenges them, I don't think they need me as well.' Harold perceived that his role changed over the year as the NQTs became more confident: 'things have evolved, that's probably the best way to describe it. They've got themselves sorted out a lot more... they try and be one step ahead of themselves and me... they ask more questions now.' However, Sarah and Connie perceived that Harold's role had changed only in as much as they no longer relied on him for help and support:

> Before I used to think well he must know what he's doing but now I can't take anything he says, I find it hard to act on it, the more I've got to know him, the more I dismiss it. (Sarah)

In Phase Three, Sarah perceived that it was difficult having a mentor with senior management responsibilities: 'it's no good having someone who's got too may other responsibilities, I just feel guilty tying him up really.' Harold seems to appreciate this problem: 'the time that they want the help is usually the time that you are not available... getting together can be difficult because of management commitments.'

Peter and Colin's expectations of the mentor's role matched and Peter perceived that Colin had fulfilled many of the roles he had expected him to have. He did not perceive that having a headteacher as a mentor had adversely affected the mentoring, perceiving that Colin had been approachable and available when needed: 'I might not always go to him for every little thing but I feel when it's necessary I can approach him... he's always willing to help.' Peter also had the support of his year group team leader whereas Colin was Sarah and Connie's team leader as well as their mentor.

In Phase Three, Harold perceived that although the mentoring relationship with an NQT could be a more personal relationship, he had a professional relationship with Connie and Sarah:

> With the NQTs this year the relationship is professional... the two girls, they will speak to people nearer their own age usually the same sex... when I've done it before it can be of a very personal nature, thinking of the NQT I had two years ago, we still keep in touch.

In Phase Three, Sarah agreed that the relationship was professional. Connie did not feel she had a relationship with Harold: 'what relationship? he's just someone we know and have to work with.'

In Phase Three, Peter perceived that his relationship with Colin was a professional relationship, although he did suggest that after they had been on a week's residential course together in the second term they had got to know each other better.

Summary of findings:

- In School 14 the NQTs were divided in their satisfaction with the support provided by the management. One NQT felt let down by the management because the support offered had not fulfilled her expectations of the support that was needed. By Phase Four, all felt that they would have benefited from having more formal mentoring structures.
- All three NQTs suggested that they would have liked to have been observed.
- All three NQTs received informal mentoring from other members of staff and valued it. However, this informal support was not, on its own, sufficient to make the NQTs feel well supported. This appeared partly due to the fact that all three NQTs perceived the need for formal observation and feedback.
- Two of the NQTs in School 14 did not perceive that their mentor had fulfilled the roles they expected him to have and they felt let down because of this. It would appear that in order for NQTs to feel positively about the mentoring they receive their expectations about the structures and the mentor have to be met.
- One of the NQTs who was unhappy with her mentor's support perceived that having a mentor who was a member of senior management - deputy head - could cause problems because the mentor was often unavailable. The NQT who was satisfied with his mentor's support perceived that having the headteacher as a mentor had caused no problems.
- The two NQTs who felt let down by their mentor particularly identified his lack of interpersonal skills, his inability to give what they considered to be good professional advice and their lack of respect for him as a teacher as factors that led to them rating his support negatively.

Summary of main findings from the Phase Three/Four individual case studies

Mentoring Structures in Schools:

- Headteacher involvement appeared to help ensure that both the mentor and the student felt generally well supported.
- All NQTs received informal support from members of staff other than their mentor. All the NQTs perceived that this support had been important, particularly so in cases where the mentor was physically distant, i.e. in a classroom in another part of the school or the mentor was perceived as failing as a mentor.
- Mentoring was often perceived by the headteacher to be informally linked to the existing support structures in school but this only appeared to happen in schools where there was a strong ethos of collaboration. In other schools, where teachers worked more individually, mentors and NQTs suggested that there was little evidence of informal support and perceived that it would have been beneficial to have had more formalised structures in place.
- None of the NQT mentors were provided with non-contact time to observe their NQT(s) and only one was provided with regular non-contact time to meet with her NQT. None of the NQTs were provided with non-contact time to observe other teachers teaching.
- One mentor, who was not a member of senior management, perceived there was a need for mentors to have status in school in order to be able to negotiate successfully on the NQT's behalf.

The Mentor/NE Relationship:

- NQTs perceived that the mentoring relationship was important in determining the success of the mentoring support provided by their mentor.
- The mentor/NQT relationship in Phase Three was perceived essentially to be a professional relationship with some personal elements. By Phase Four the relationship was likely to have become more of a personal relationship.

- In one case, the NQT perceived that the mentor's senior management responsibilities hindered the support he could offer. However, in other cases having a mentor who was part of the senior management team did not appear to cause the NQTs any problems.

The Mentor Role:

- The nature of the mentor role appeared to change over the year, becoming more informal by Phase Four.
- All the NQTs perceived that they would have liked some observation and feedback. However, even without this, many of them still rated the mentor's support highly, suggesting that to the NQTs, the supportive nature of the mentor role was more important that the professional development role.
- In one case, although the NQT perceived in Phase Three that the role 'to challenge' was an appropriate role for a mentor to have, she received no challenging and by Phase Four she perceived that this was not an appropriate role.
- When mentor and the NQT shared similar expectations of the mentor's role *and* the mentor was perceived by the NQT to be fulfilling that role, the mentor's support was rated highly.
- Mentors generally appeared to fulfil roles that they perceived were appropriate, although in some cases they perceived that lack of support from the school limited the support they could provide, for example, lack of non-contact time meant no opportunity to observe the NQT and give feedback on the NQT's teaching.
- By Phase Four, some NQTs and mentors perceived that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between the mentor fulfilling the mentor role and the mentor fulfilling other roles such as curriculum or key-stage co-ordinator.

Mentor Personal Qualities:

- NQTs perceived that their mentor's personal qualities were an important factor in influencing mentoring success.

Questionnaire Survey Findings

Questionnaires were used to investigate NQTs' perceptions of mentoring across a larger sample of 60 NQTs during the academic year 1997-8 (after Phase Two, NEs were asked if they would be prepared to fill in two questionnaires during their NQT year, these 60 NQTs were all those that replied in the affirmative). Participants had all completed a one year PGCE course at Leicester University in June 1997. Questionnaires were distributed twice in the year. The first questionnaire was distributed in December 1997 (Phase Three). A total of 28 questionnaires were completed and returned - a return rate of 47%. The second questionnaire was distributed in June 1998 (Phase Four). A total of 20 questionnaires were completed and returned - a return rate of 33% (these return rates are discussed in Chapter Seven).

Findings from the two questionnaires are reported together. Comparisons between the two sets of data are explored in more detail in Chapter Six.

All Phase Three respondents had been allocated an official mentor and completed the questionnaire with reference to this designated mentor. Four of the Phase Four respondents completed the questionnaire with reference to an 'informal' mentor i.e. not an officially designated mentor. In two of these cases the NQT had never had a designated mentor. In one case, an NQT had been allocated a designated mentor initially but this mentor had left the school on maternity leave and although a new mentor had not been officially appointed, another member of staff had taken over the mentor role. In one case, an NQT had been allocated an official mentor but this mentor had shown no interest in the NQT and so the NQT chose to complete the questionnaire with reference to the member of staff who had informally taken over the role as mentor.

Mentor support

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of the mentoring support they had received from their mentor on a five-point scale. NQTs in Phases Three and Four perceived that they received mentoring support that varied in quality as shown in Table 5.11 and Table 5.12.

Table 5.11. Number of NQTs giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in Phase Three.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	28 (100%)	7 (25%)	7 (25%)	6 (21%)	6 (21%)	2 (7%)

Table 5.12. Number of NQTs giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in Phase Four.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	20 (100%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	3 (15%)

In all cases where an NQT was rating an informal mentor the support was rated as 'good' or better (see above).

Reasons for ratings of support

NQTs were asked to give reasons for their rating of their mentor's support. The reasons they gave had enough similarities to be grouped into 18 categories in Phase Three and sixteen categories in Phase Four for the purpose of coding and analysis. These categories were split between positive statements and negative statements as shown in Table 5.13 below.

The positive statements appeared to refer to the mentor having certain desirable personal and professional qualities and skills. The negative statements referred to the lack of desirable personal and professional qualities and skills, the lack of availability of the mentor; the mentor having inappropriate expectations of the mentor role and the mentor status. Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 show how these statements related to ratings of support.

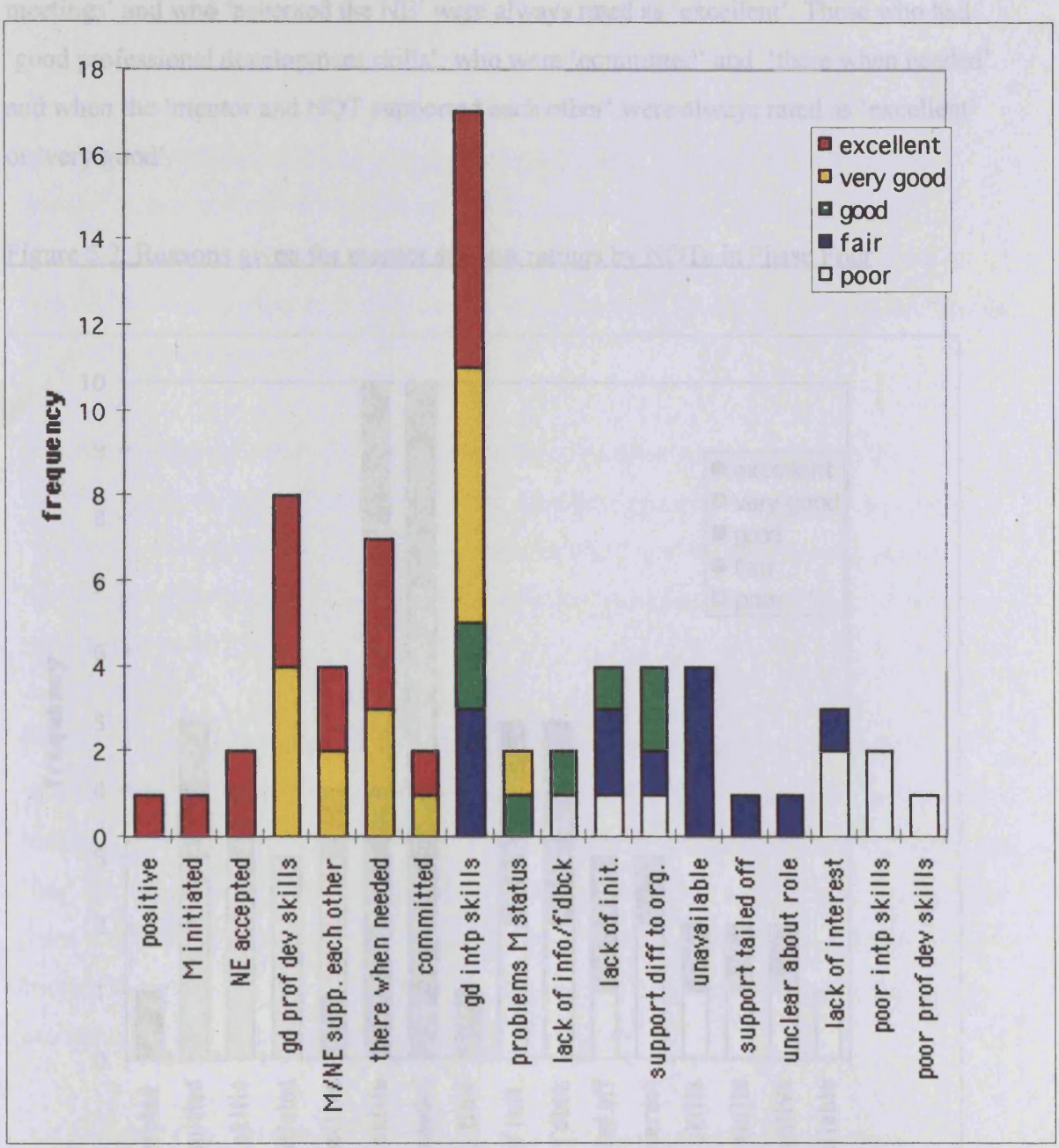
Table 5.13. Reasons NQTs gave to explain their rating of the mentor support they received in Phase Three.

Positive Statements	Negative Statements
mentor was positive mentor initiated meetings mentor accepted NE good professional development skills good interpersonal skills mentor was committed to mentoring mentor was there when needed mentor and NQT supported each other	lack of information / feedback mentor did not initiate meetings support good but difficult to organise time mentor unavailable support tailed off mentor was unclear about role mentor not interested in NQT poor professional development skills poor interpersonal skills problems approaching mentor because of mentor status e.g. being headteacher

NQT respondents generally gave a number of different reasons to explain the rating they had given to their mentor, in many cases a combination of positive and negative statements were given; the exception to this being the NQTs who rated their mentor as 'excellent' (n=7). The statements for this group were all positive. The most popular reasons being given for this rating included 'the mentor had good interpersonal skills' (six of the NQTs in this group gave this as a reason); the mentor had 'good professional development skills' (4) and 'mentor was there when needed' (4).

The NQTs who rated their mentors' support as 'very good' (n=7) listed reasons that were nearly all positive with the exception of one negative reason: the NQT perceiving that it was difficult to approach the mentor because of the mentor's status in the school, i.e. being a headteacher or deputy head. The most popular reasons being given for the 'very good' rating were the same as for the 'excellent' group: the mentor had good interpersonal skills' (6 of the NQTs in this group gave this as a reason); the mentor had 'good professional development skills' (4) and the mentor was 'there when needed' (3).

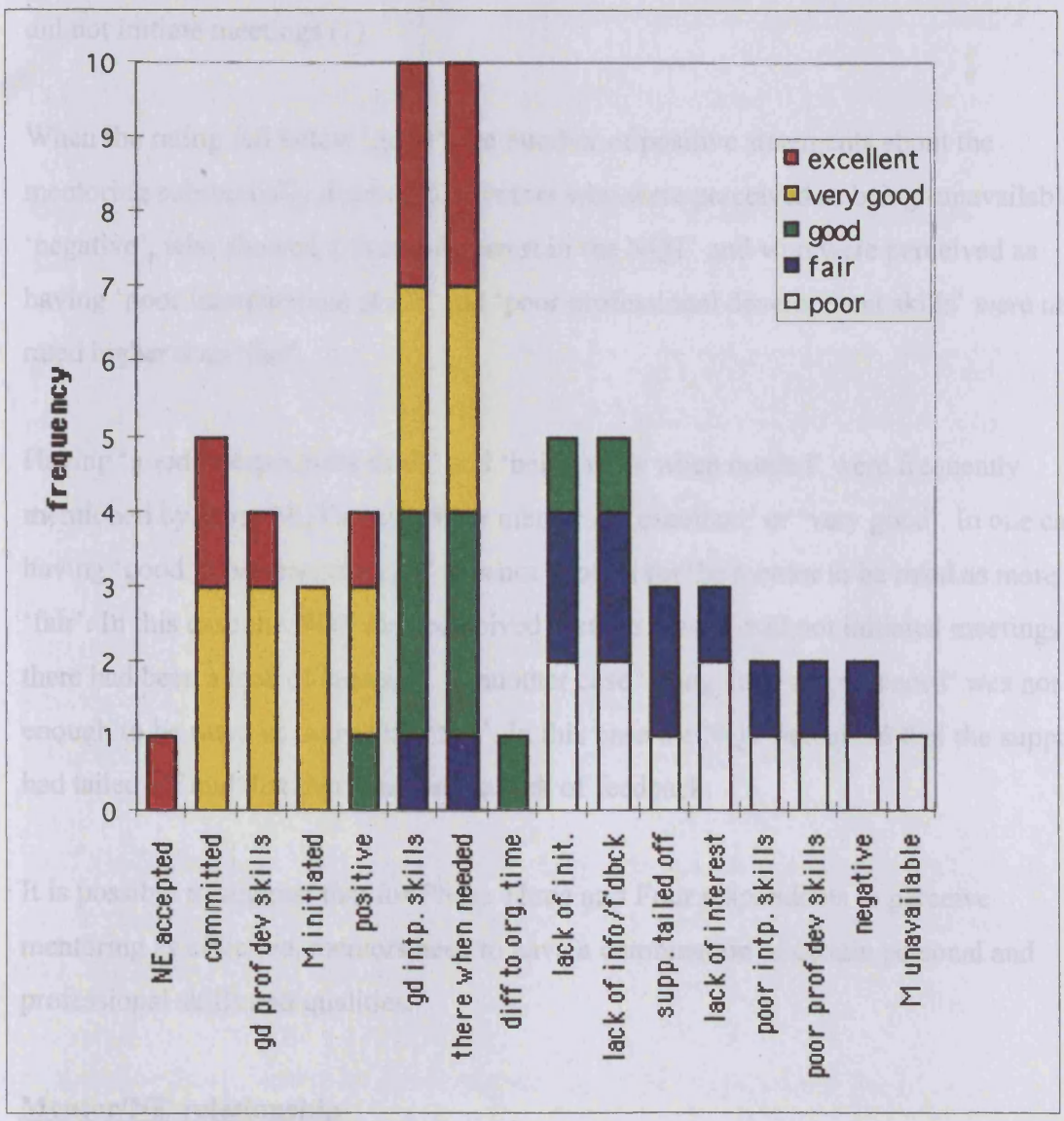
Figure 5.1. Reasons given for mentor support ratings by NQTs in Phase Three.



When the rating fell below 'very good', the number of positive statements about the mentoring substantially decreased. Mentors who were perceived as being 'unavailable', 'unclear about role' and where 'support tailed off' were always rated as 'fair'. Mentors who had 'poor interpersonal skills' and 'poor professional development skills' were always rated as 'poor'. Mentors who showed 'a lack of interest' in the NQT were never rated higher than 'fair'.

Mentors who were perceived by their NQTs as being 'positive', who 'initiated' meetings' and who 'accepted the NE' were always rated as 'excellent'. Those who had 'good professional development skills', who were 'committed' and 'there when needed' and when the 'mentor and NQT supported each other' were always rated as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Figure 5.2. Reasons given for mentor support ratings by NQTs in Phase Four



As in Phase Three, each NQT generally gave a number of reasons to explain the rating they had given their mentor. The NQTs who rated their mentor as 'excellent' (n=4) and 'very good' (n=4) listed only positive statements. The most popular reasons being given for these two ratings included 'the mentor had good interpersonal skills' and 'the mentor

was there when needed' (three of the NQTs in each group gave these as reasons for their rating).

The NQTs who rated their mentor's support as 'good' (n=5) frequently listed the reasons: 'the mentor had good interpersonal skills' and 'the mentor was there when needed' (three of the NQTs in this group gave these as reasons for their rating). However, NQTs in this group also listed negative statements: 'support was good but it was difficult to organise time' (1); 'lack of information and feedback' (1) and the mentor did not initiate meetings (1).

When the rating fell below 'good', the number of positive statements about the mentoring substantially decreased. Mentors who were perceived as being 'unavailable', 'negative', who showed a 'lack of interest in the NQT' and who were perceived as having 'poor interpersonal skills' and 'poor professional development skills' were never rated higher than 'fair'.

Having 'good interpersonal skills' and 'being there when needed' were frequently mentioned by those NQTs rating their mentor as 'excellent' or 'very good'. In one case, having 'good interpersonal skills' was not enough for the mentor to be rated as more than 'fair'. In this case the NQT also perceived that the mentor had not initiated meetings and there had been a lack of feedback. In another case 'being there when needed' was not enough to be rated as more than 'fair'. In this case the NQT perceived that the support had tailed off and that there had been a lack of feedback.

It is possible to suggest that for Phase Three and Four respondents to perceive mentoring as effective, mentors need to have a combination of certain personal and professional skills and qualities.

Mentor/NE relationship

Phase Three respondents were asked to rate their relationship with their mentor on a five-point scale, the results are shown in Table 5.14. These ratings were then correlated with the ratings for support.

Table 5.14. Comparison of the ratings of the mentor support received and the relationship the NQT had with the mentor in Phase Three.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	28 (100%)	7 (25%)	7 (25%)	6 (21%)	6 (21%)	2 (7%)
Relationship rating	28 (100%)	8 (29%)	7 (25%)	11 (39%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)

The ratings of support and relationship are highly correlated r(26) = 0.827.

Table 5.15. Comparison of the ratings of the mentor support received and the relationship the NQT had with the mentor in Phase Four.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Support rating	20 (100%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	3 (15%)
Relationship rating	20 (100%)	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)

The ratings of support and relationship are highly correlated r(18) = 0.84. As found in the case studies, the mentor/NE relationship appears to be an important factor in influencing the student's perceptions of how effective the mentoring was.

NQTs in Phase Four were asked whether they felt that their relationship with their mentor had changed over the year. Ten out of the twenty respondents perceived that it had. The reasons given included:

- it had become more of an equal relationship (4 NQTs perceived this)
- the NQT knew their mentor better on a personal level (3)
- the NQT and mentor now gave each other 'mutual support' (2)
- the NQT felt less dependent on their mentor (1)

Of those NQTs who had rated their mentor support as 'fair' or 'poor' only one NQT perceived that the relationship had changed. With the mentors rated 'excellent', three out of four of the NQTs perceived that the relationship had changed and with the mentors rated as 'very good' all four NQTs perceived that the relationship had changed. It appears that when the mentor/NQT relationship changed and developed across the three terms, the NQT was more likely to perceive that the quality of the mentoring support had been high.

Amount of time

NQTs were asked how often they met formally and informally with their mentors. The results are shown in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16. Number of NQTs giving each of the five different frequency ratings for formal and informal mentoring in Phase Three.

	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Informal mentoring	28 (100%)	12 (43%)	9 (32%)	3 (11%)	3 (11%)	1 (4%)
Formal mentoring	28 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	8 (28%)	4 (14%)	15 (54%)

These two frequencies correlate r(26) = 0.483. In Phase Three, NQTs who had frequent informal meetings with their mentor generally had more frequent formal meetings with their mentor than those NQTs who did not have frequent informal meetings.

54% of Phase Three NQTs received formal mentoring less than every two to three weeks.

Both these frequencies are correlated with the earlier support ratings:

r(26) = 0.494 for informal

r(26) = 0.526 for formal

It would appear that amount of time spent mentoring was an important factor in influencing the NQT's perceptions of the effectiveness of the mentoring. For Phase Three respondents the amount of *formal* mentoring appeared to be slightly more predictive of perceived mentoring success than informal mentoring.

Table 5.17. Number of NQTs giving each of the five different frequency ratings for formal and informal mentoring in Phase Four.

	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Informal mentoring	20 (100%)	9 (45%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)
Formal mentoring	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	13 (65%)

There is only a weak correlation between these two frequencies r (18) = 0.247. In Phase Four having many informal meetings would appear to be no guarantee of many formal meetings.

The amount of both formal and informal mentoring decreased from Phase Three.

In Phase Four, 65% of NQTs received formal mentoring less than every two to three weeks.

Both these frequencies are correlated with the earlier support ratings:

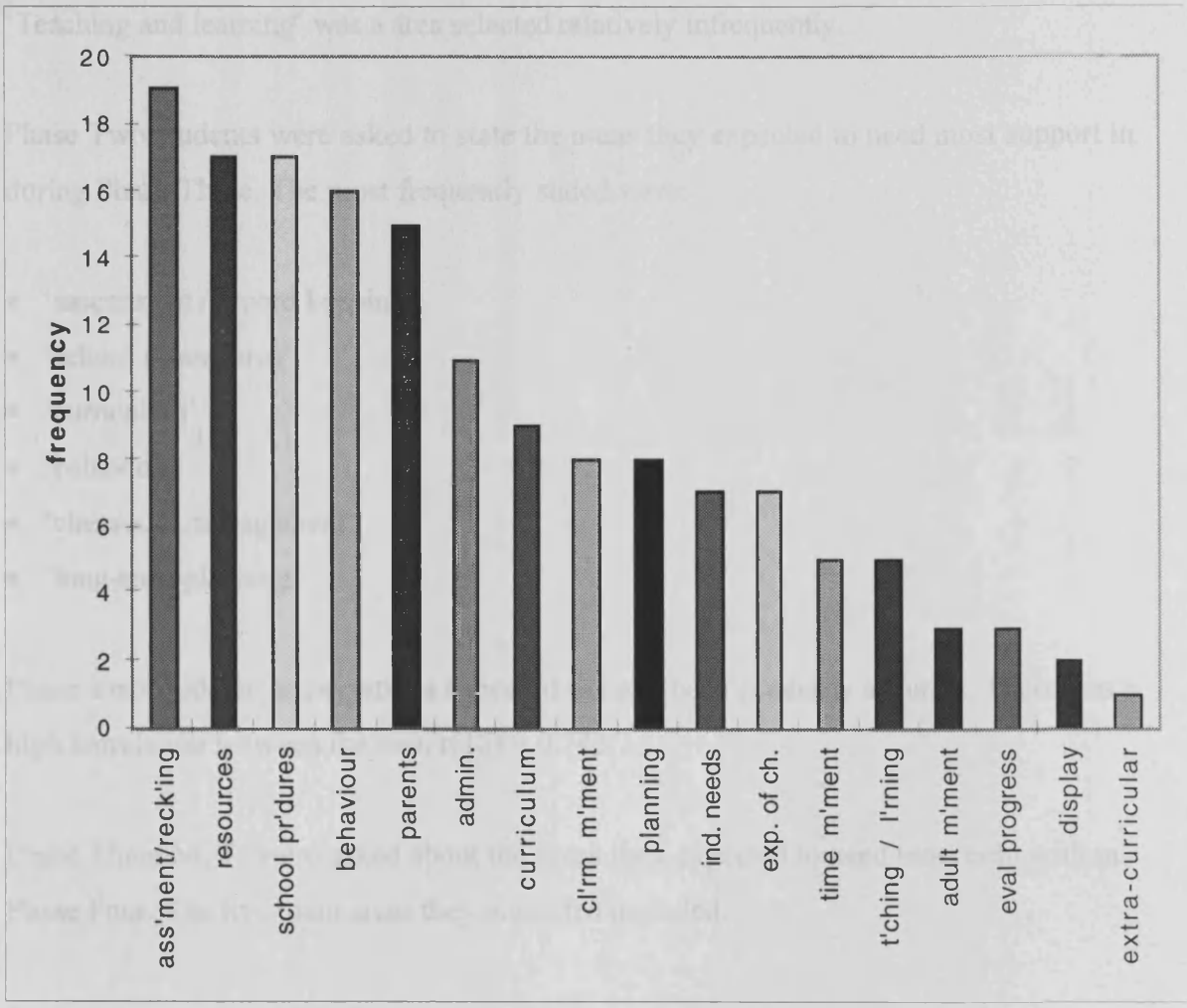
r(18) = 0.463 for informal
r(18) = 0.229 for formal.

The amount of time spent on mentoring appears to be an important factor in influencing Phase Four respondents' perceptions of the quality of the mentoring support.

Areas Phase Three/Four NQTs perceived they needed the most mentor-support

Respondents were asked to select the five areas from a pre-determined list in which they perceived they had needed the most support in Phases Three and Four (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the definitions and origins of these categories).

Figure 5.3. Phase Three NQTs' perceptions of the areas in which they had needed the most mentor support.



As shown in Figure 5.3, the five main areas in which Phase Three NQTs perceived they had needed support were:

- 'assessment / record keeping'
- 'resources'

- 'school procedures'
- 'behaviour'
- 'parents'

The frequent selection of 'resources' and 'school procedures' might be expected bearing in mind that NQTs were working in a new environment. The frequent choice of 'behaviour' is consistent with other studies that have found this to be an area of particular importance to NQTs (Tischer, 1984).

'Teaching and learning' was a area selected relatively infrequently.

Phase Two students were asked to state the areas they expected to need most support in during Phase Three. The most frequently stated were:

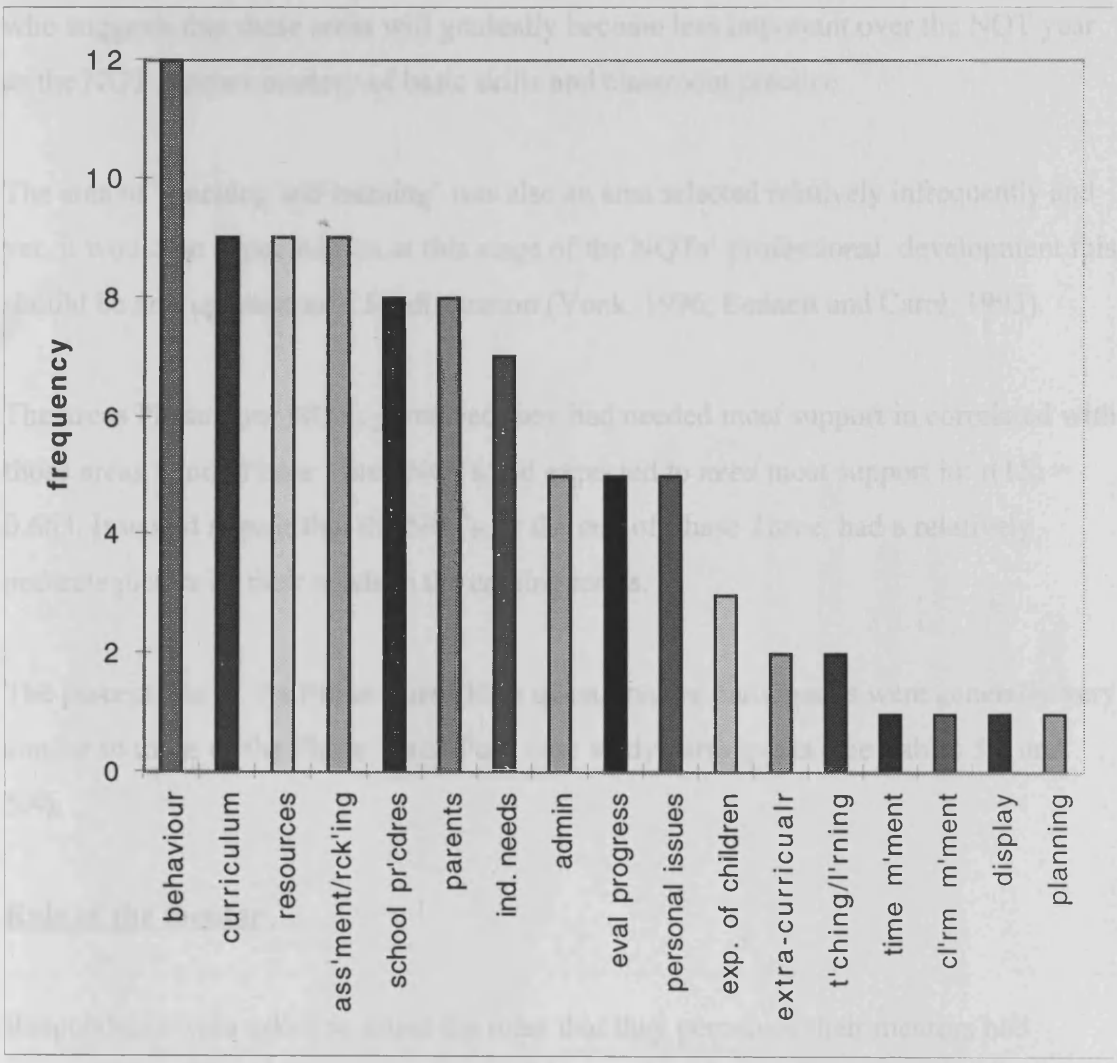
- 'assessment / record keeping'
- 'school procedures'
- 'curriculum'
- 'behaviour'
- 'classroom management'
- 'long-term planning'

Phase Two students' expectations appeared to have been generally accurate. There was a high correlation between the two: $r(15) = 0.743$.

Phase Three NQTs were asked about the areas they expected to need most help with in Phase Four. The five main areas they predicted included:

- 'assessment/record keeping'
- 'curriculum'
- 'behaviour'
- 'individual needs'
- 'expectations of children'

Figure 5.4. Phase Four NQTs' perceptions of the areas in which they needed the most support.



As shown in Figure 5.4, the five main areas in which Phase Four NQTs perceived they had most needed support were:

- 'behaviour'
- 'curriculum'
- 'resources'
- 'assessment and record keeping'
- 'school procedures'

The areas of 'classroom management and 'time management' were selected relatively infrequently by Phase Four NQTs, consistent with the work of Ballantyne *et al* (1995) who suggests that these areas will gradually become less important over the NQT year as the NQT reaches mastery of basic skills and classroom practice.

The area of 'teaching and learning' was also an area selected relatively infrequently and yet, it would be expected that at this stage of the NQTs' professional development this should be an important area for discussion (Vonk, 1996; Bennett and Carré, 1993).

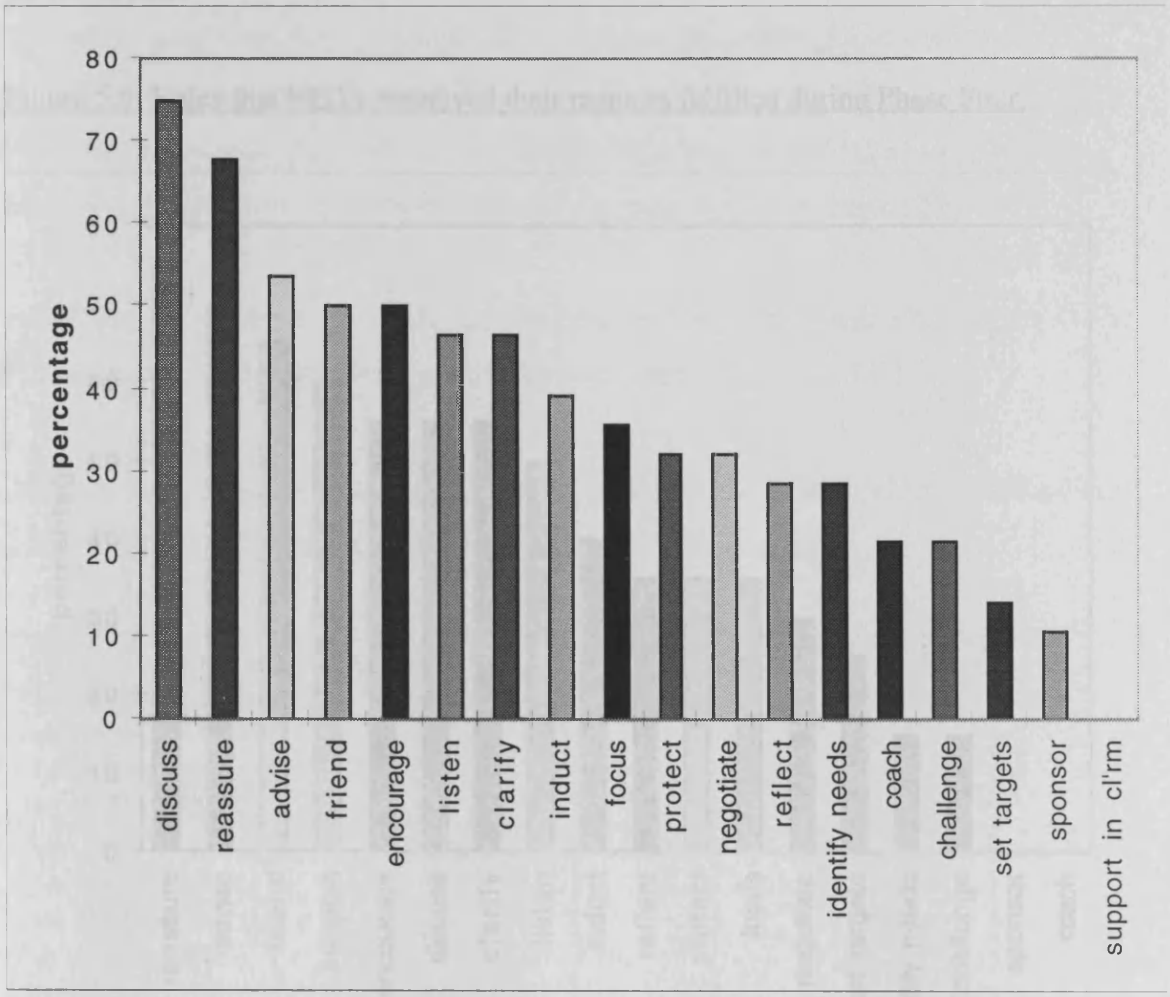
The areas Phase Four NQTs perceived they had needed most support in correlated with those areas which Phase Three NQTs had expected to *need* most support in: $r(15) = 0.663$. It would appear that the NQTs, at the end of Phase Three, had a relatively accurate picture of their needs in the coming terms.

The perceptions of the Phase Three/Four questionnaire participants were generally very similar to those of the Phase Three/Four case study participants (see Tables 5.3 and 5.4).

Role of the mentor

Respondents were asked to select the roles that they perceived their mentors had fulfilled during Phase Three and Phase Four from a pre-determined list (see Chapter Two for a more detailed explanation of the categories and their origins).These categories do not correspond exactly with the categories used in Phase One and Two questionnaire surveys - there are five missing categories: 'to assess'; 'to be a critic'; 'to be a role model'; 'to facilitate' and 'to assess' (see Chapter Seven for further discussion).

Figure 5.5. Roles that NQTs perceived their mentors fulfilled during Phase Three (expressed as a percentage of the total number of student responses)



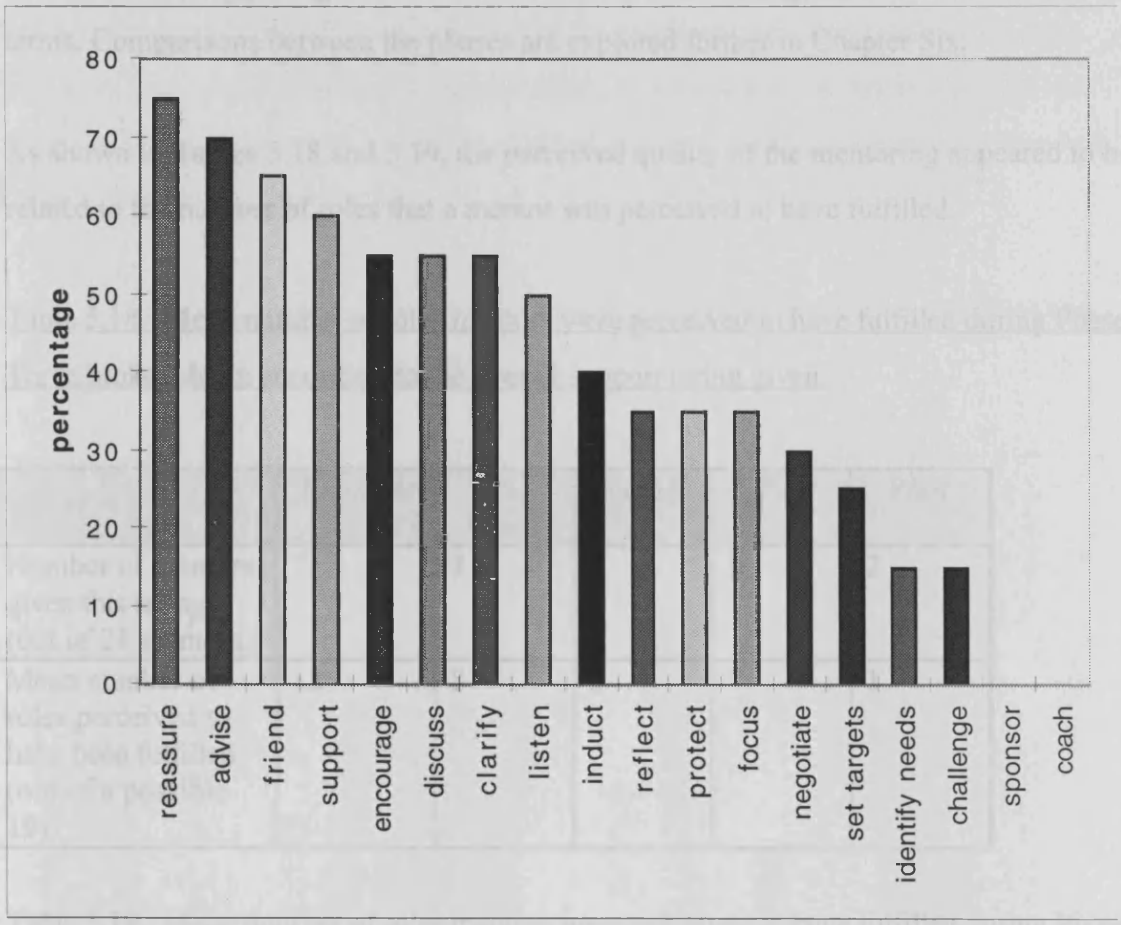
As shown in Figure 5.5, the roles most frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors in Phase Three, were roles from the Personal domain and roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements of the Professional domain. NQTs generally did not perceive that their mentors had fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. 'to set targets' (only four out of 28 NQTs perceived that their mentor had fulfilled this role - 14%) and 'to challenge' (only six out of 28 NQTs perceived that their mentor had fulfilled this role - 21%).

The roles to 'identify needs', 'to focus' and to encourage reflection' were perceived to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently.

50% of Phase Three NQTs perceived that their mentors had been 'a friend'.

39% of Phase Three NQTs perceived that their mentors had fulfilled the role 'to induct', this is perhaps surprising bearing in mind that the NQTs were working in new environments.

Figure 5.6. Roles that NQTs perceived their mentors fulfilled during Phase Four.



As shown in Figure 5.6, the roles most frequently perceived to have been undertaken by Phase Four mentors were roles from the Personal domain and roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements of the Professional domain. NQTs generally did not perceive that their mentors had fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element. Only three out of the twenty mentors were perceived to have 'challenged' the NQT (15%) and only five out of the twenty mentors to have 'set targets' (25%).

The roles to 'identify needs', 'to focus' and 'to encourage reflection' were perceived to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently.

65% of Phase Four NQTs perceived that their mentors had been 'a friend' (13 out of 20 NQTs).

The roles Phase Three NQTs perceived their mentors to have fulfilled were highly correlated with the roles that Phase Four NQTs perceived their mentors to have fulfilled: r (15) = 0.833, suggesting that the roles mentors fulfilled changed little over the three terms. Comparisons between the phases are explored further in Chapter Six.

As shown in Tables 5.18 and 5.19, the perceived quality of the mentoring appeared to be related to the number of roles that a mentor was perceived to have fulfilled.

Table 5.18. Mean number of roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled during Phase Three broken down according to the overall support rating given.

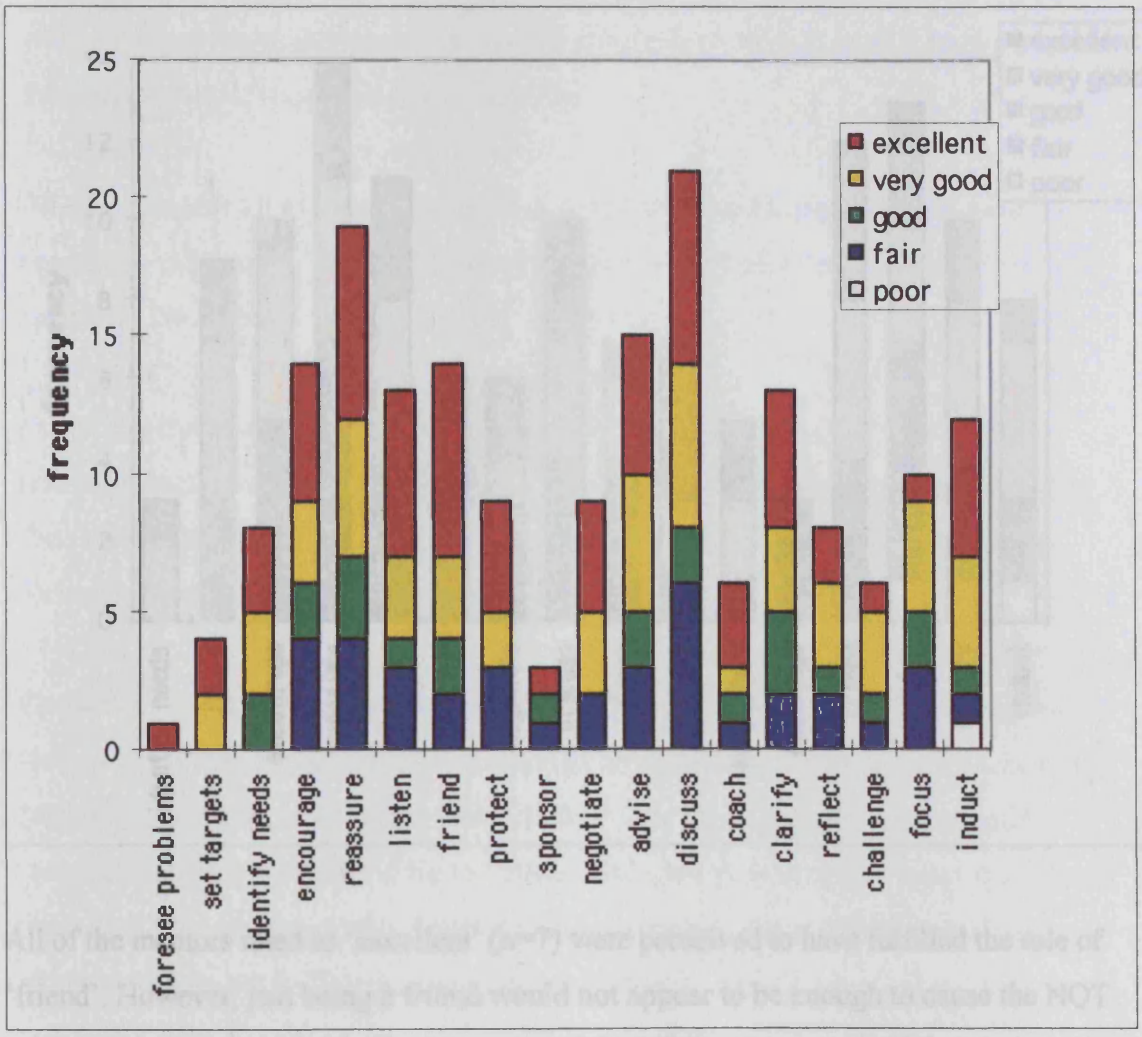
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of mentors given this rating (out of 28 mentors)	7	7	6	6	2
Mean number of roles perceived to have been fulfilled (out of a possible 19)	12	8	5	7	1

Table 5.19. Mean number of roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled during Phase Four, broken down according to the overall support rating given.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Number of mentors given this rating (out of 20 mentors)	4	4	5	4	3
Mean number of roles perceived to have been fulfilled (out of a possible 19)	10	12	10	5	1

Generally in Phases Three and Four, the better the rating of mentor support, the greater the mean number of roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled. In Phase Three, the exception to this was the group of respondents who rated their mentor as 'fair'. In this group, the mean number of roles selected was higher than that of the group of respondents who rated their mentor as 'good'. In Phase Four, the mean number of roles selected by the group of respondents who rated their mentor as 'excellent' fell below that of the mean number of roles selected by the group of respondents who rated their mentor as 'very good'. These discrepancies are possibly due to the smaller sample size of Phases Three and Four as compared to the sample size of Phase One and Two, where no such discrepancies were noted.

Figure 5.7. The relationship between the perceived roles the mentor had and the support rating given by the NQT in Phase Three.

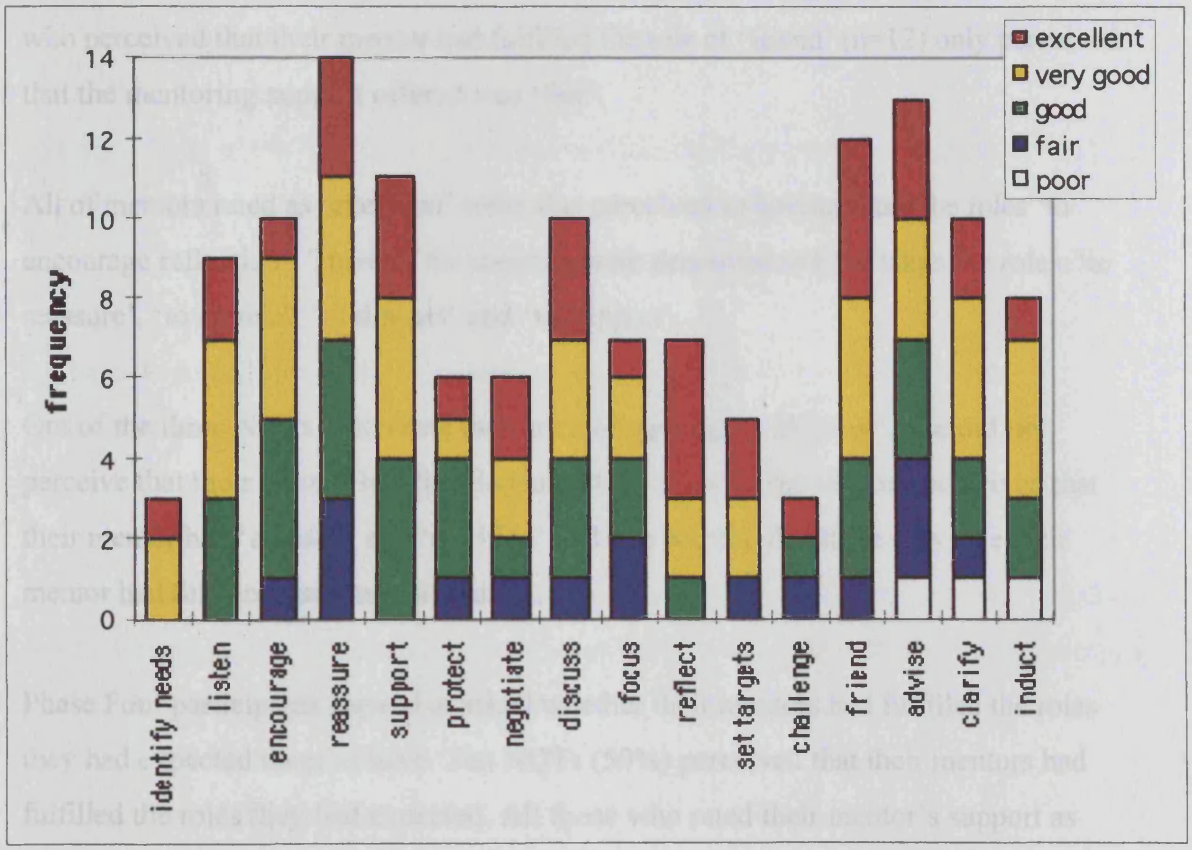


Certain roles were found to be associated with high ratings of mentor support as shown in Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8

The roles 'to foresee problems'; 'to identify needs' and 'to set targets' were only found with mentors who were rated as 'good' or better.

Out of the two NQTs who rated their mentoring support as 'poor', one did not perceive that their mentor had fulfilled any of the roles on the list and the other perceived that the only role their mentor had fulfilled had been 'to induct'.

Figure 5.8. The relationship between the perceived roles the mentor had and the support rating given by the NQT in Phase Four.



All of the mentors rated as 'excellent' (n=7) were perceived to have fulfilled the role of 'friend'. However, just being a friend would not appear to be enough to cause the NQT to rate the mentoring support highly - two of the NQTs who perceived that their mentor

had fulfilled the role of 'friend' (n=14) only perceived that the mentoring support offered was 'fair'.

All of mentors rated as 'excellent' were also perceived as having fulfilled the roles 'to reassure' and 'to discuss'. Six of the mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived to have fulfilled the role 'to listen' and five of the mentors rated as 'excellent' were perceived to have fulfilled the role 'to encourage', 'to advise', 'to induct' and 'to clarify'.

In Phase Four, the roles 'to listen'; 'to identify needs', 'to encourage reflection' and 'to support' were only found with mentors who were rated as 'good' or better.

All of the Phase Four mentors rated as 'excellent' (n=4) were perceived to have fulfilled the role of 'friend'. However, as in Phase Three, just being a friend would not appear to be enough to cause the NQT to rate the mentoring support highly - one of the NQTs who perceived that their mentor had fulfilled the role of 'friend' (n=12) only perceived that the mentoring support offered was 'fair'.

All of mentors rated as 'excellent' were also perceived as having taken the roles 'to encourage reflection'. Three of the mentors were perceived to have taken the roles: 'to reassure', 'to advise', 'to discuss' and 'to support'.

Out of the three NQTs who rated their mentoring support as 'poor', one did not perceive that their mentor had fulfilled any of the roles on the list, one perceived that their mentor had 'advised' and 'clarified' and one perceived that the only role their mentor had fulfilled had been 'to induct'.

Phase Four participants were also asked whether their mentors had fulfilled the roles they had expected them to have. Ten NQTs (50%) perceived that their mentors had fulfilled the roles they had expected. All those who rated their mentor's support as 'excellent' or 'very good' and two of those who rated their mentor's support as 'good' perceived their mentors had fulfilled the roles expected. The rating of support and whether mentor had fulfilled expectations were highly correlated; $r(18) = 0.818$. It

would appear that when the mentor fulfilled the roles the NQT expected them to fulfil then the NQT was more likely to perceive that the quality of mentoring was high.

Out of the ten NQTs who perceived that their mentors had not had the roles expected, eight out of the ten suggested that they would have expected their mentors to have challenged them more.

Phase Four NQTs were asked whether NQTs needed challenging and asked to give reasons for their response. Thirteen respondents (65%) indicated that NQTs needed challenging with the reasons below being given:

- to help set targets (8 of the NQTs in this group gave this response)
- to help reflect on practice (3)
- all teachers should be challenged (3)
- to give new ideas for practice (1)

The remaining seven NQTs indicated that NQTs should possibly be challenged, with the comments:

- only if it was sensitively done (5)
- depends on individual NQT - in some cases encouragement might be more appropriate (3)
- only if there were problems (1)

Despite all Phase Four respondents perceiving that NQTs should be or should possibly be challenged by their mentor, very few perceived that they had actually been challenged by their mentor (see Figure 5.5 and 5.6).

Observation of NQT

Phase Three and Phase Four respondents were asked whether their teaching had been observed.

Fourteen out of the 28 Phase Three NQTs (50%) had been observed by their mentor. An additional six of the 28 respondents indicated that they had not been observed by the mentor but by the headteacher or deputy head. Twenty out of the 28 NQTs perceived that they would be observed in the future (71%).

Four of the 20 Phase Four NQTs had been observed by their mentor in the second term (20%). An additional one of the 20 respondents indicated that she had not been observed by the mentor but by the headteacher.

Two of the 20 Phase Four NQTs had been observed by their mentor in the third term (10%). An additional five of the 20 respondents indicated that they had not been observed by the mentor but by the headteacher.

Respondents were asked for their perceptions of the amount of observation they had received.

In Phase Three, five of the NQTs who had not been observed by anyone (n=8) perceived that they would have liked to have been observed; three of the NQTs who had not been observed by anyone perceived that they would *not* have liked to have been observed.

In Phase Four, eight of the NQTs who *had not* been observed (n=12) perceived that they *would* have liked to have been observed. Four of the NQTs who had not been observed by anyone perceived that they *would not* have liked to have been observed. Out of the eight NQTs who had been observed by either their mentor or the headteacher/deputy head, two indicated that they would have preferred less observation because they perceived that the feedback they had received had been negative and had damaged their confidence:

> My mentor severely undermined my confidence through her comments about myself and the children in my class. (NQT: Phase Three)

> My headteacher observed one lesson in the first term where he gave constructive criticism but then observed a lesson in the second term and gave negative criticism which has de-motivated me completely. (NQT: Phase Four)

Respondents were asked to rate how important they perceived observation to be for an NQT on a five-point scale. The results are shown in Table 5.20. In Phase Three, 25 of the 28 respondents gave a rating. In Phase Four, all 20 respondents gave a rating.

Table 5.20. Phase Three NQTs' perceptions of the importance of observation.

	Total	Essential	Very Important	Important	Quite Important	Not important
Phase Three	25	4	9	5	6	1
Phase Four	20	1	8	3	6	2

As found in the case studies, the majority of respondents wanted to be observed. In Phase Three, 72% of respondents perceived observation to be 'important', 'very important' or 'essential'. In Phase Four, 60% of respondents perceived observation to be 'important', 'very important' or 'essential'.

A minority of NQTs perceived observation as 'not important' or only 'quite important', suggesting a certain lack of awareness of the role of observation in professional development.

Respondents gave reasons for their ratings. Their responses were similar enough to be grouped into eight categories for Phase Three NQTs and ten categories for Phase Four NQTs. Respondents sometimes gave more than one reason for their rating.

As shown in Table 5.21 and 5.22, the most frequently mentioned reason for observation being perceived as important was for the NQT to have feedback on their practice in order to assess their progress and identify their needs. However, other reasons given suggest that Phase Three/Four NQTs were possibly not as aware as they should have

been of their need for continued professional development and the role of observation in this professional development.

Table 5.21. Phase Three NQTs' reasons for observation ratings.

reason for observation rating	essential (n=4)	very imp. (n= 9)	imp. (n=5)	quite imp. (n=6)	not imp. (n=1)	Total
need feedback to help identify needs	4	8	3	1	0	13
praise for good practice	3	4	1	0	0	8
practical advice and suggestions	1	4	0	1	0	7
reassurance	0	3	2	1	0	7
obsv. should not be too often	0	0	2	1	0	3
to stop bad habits	0	2	0	0	0	2
to ensure fitting in with school ethos	0	0	0	2	0	2
obsv. only necessary if NQT having problems	0	0	0	0	1	1

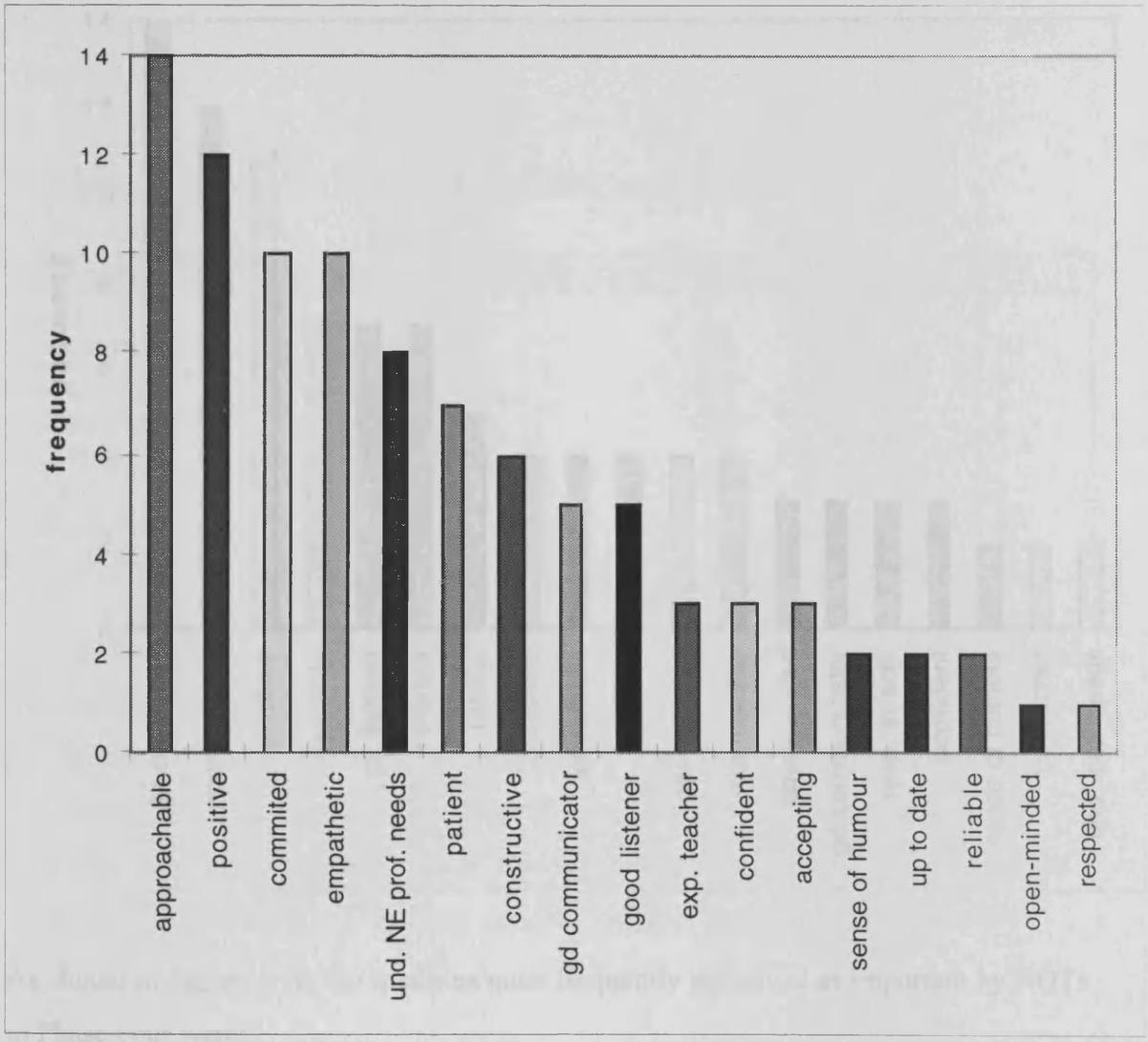
Table 5.22. Phase Four NQTs' reasons for observation ratings.

reason for observation rating	essential (n=1)	very imp. (n=8)	imp. (n=3)	quite imp. (n=6)	not imp. (n=2)	Total
need feedback to help identify needs	1	7	2	1	0	11
praise for good practice	0	4	1	1	0	6
practical advice and suggestions	1	2	1	1	0	5
reassurance	0	2	2	1	0	5
obsv. should not be too often	0	0	0	2	1	3
to stop bad habits	0	1	0	0	0	1
obsv. only nec. if NQT having problems	0	0	0	3	0	3
helps NQT feel valued	0	2	0	0	0	2
no need - informal HT assessment	0	0	0	0	1	1
no need - enough on teaching practice	0	0	0	0	1	1

Personal Qualities

Respondents were asked what personal qualities mentors needed to have. As with the case studies, although personal qualities were originally meant to imply inherent characteristics that a mentor might have, for example, being approachable, respondents included qualities that might more appropriately be defined as skills, for example, being a good teacher. As with the case studies, the respondents interpretation of the term has been followed. The responses were grouped into 17 categories for Phase Three and 18 categories for Phase Four.

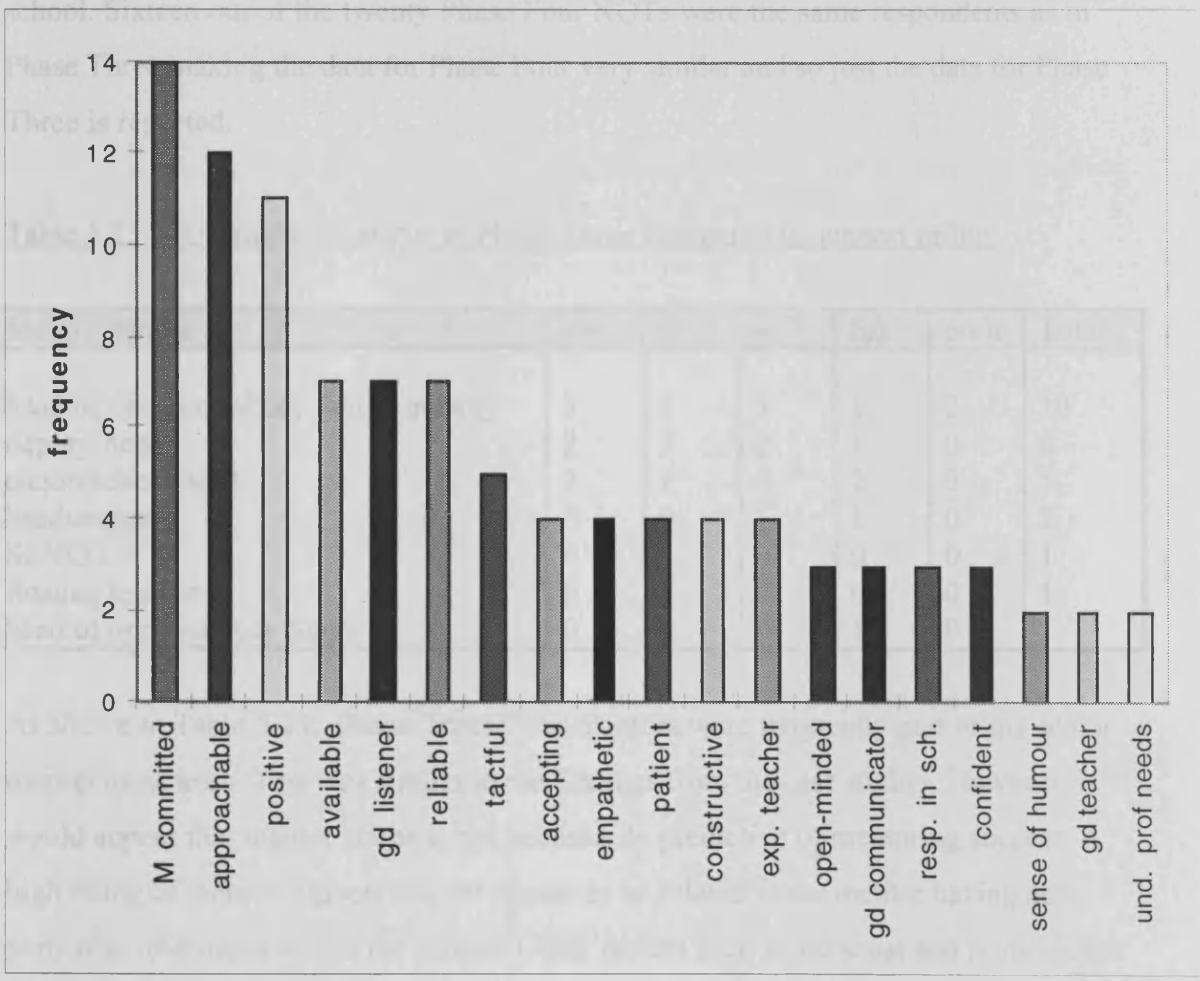
Figure 5.9. Phase Three NQTs' perceptions of the personal qualities mentors need to have.



As shown in Figure 5.9, the qualities most frequently perceived as important by NQTs in Phase Three were:

- the mentor being approachable
- the mentor being positive
- the mentor being committed to mentoring
- the mentor being empathetic (remembering what it was like to be an NQT)
- the mentor understanding the NQT's professional needs

Figure 5.10. Phase Four NQTs' perceptions of the personal qualities mentors need to have.



As shown in Figure 5.10, the qualities most frequently perceived as important by NQTs in Phase Four were:

- the mentor being committed to mentoring
- the mentor being approachable
- the mentor being positive
- the mentor being available
- the mentor being a good listener

It appears likely that these qualities reflect the NQTs' general perception of the role being to offer support rather than to challenge or extend.

Selection of mentor

Phase Three and Phase Four NQTs were asked about their mentors' status within the school. Sixteen out of the twenty Phase Four NQTs were the same respondents as in Phase Three making the data for Phase Four very similar and so just the data for Phase Three is reported.

Table 5.23. NQT mentors' status in Phase Three compared to support rating.

Mentor Status	exc.	v. gd	gd	fair	poor	Total
head of year group/Key Stage/ nursery	3	1	3	1	2	10
deputy head	2	3	2	1	0	8
classteacher nearby	2	1	0	2	0	5
headteacher	0	0	1	1	0	2
SENCO	0	1	0	0	0	1
floating teacher	0	1	0	0	0	1
head of opposite Key Stage	0	0	0	1	0	1

As shown in Table 5.23, Phase Three/Four mentors were frequently part of the senior management team. This was similar to the findings from the case studies. However, it would appear that mentor status is not necessarily predictive of mentoring success. A high rating of mentor support did not appear to be related to the mentor having any particular role/status within the school. Other factors such as personal and professional qualities and availability may be more important in determining mentoring success.

Table 5.24. Selection of NQT mentors in Phase Three compared to support rating.

Reason for mentor selection	exc.	v. gd	gd.	fair	poor	Total
designated by headteacher	0	2	2	2	0	6
mentor working near to NQT	2	0	3	0	0	5
volunteer	1	1	0	0	0	2
experience and status in school	1	0	1	0	0	2
in mentor's job description (senior management)	1	1	0	0	0	2
floating teacher	0	1	0	0	0	1
recently qualified teacher	1	0	0	0	0	1
teacher relatively new to school	0	0	0	1	0	1
mentor's personal qualities	1	0	0	0	0	1
mentor in opposite Key Stage	0	0	0	1	0	1

In four out of the 28 cases NQTs were involved in the selection of the mentor. In these four cases the mentoring was never rated less than 'good'.

NQTs were asked why their mentor had been selected, five did not know but the others gave reasons as shown in Table 5.24.

It would appear that Phase Three/Four mentors were chosen for a variety of reasons.

Summary of findings from Phase Three/Four

The findings from the Phase Three/Four questionnaire surveys appear to confirm many of the case study findings. The main findings are summarised here under the following headings:

- amount of mentoring
- areas Phase Three/Four students discussed with their mentor
- quality of mentor support
- the mentor/NE relationship
- the mentor role
- mentor personal qualities

- observation
- school mentoring structures

For each of the above areas, findings are reported under the following sub-headings:

- findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey
- findings from case studies only
- findings from questionnaire survey only

Amount of mentoring

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase Three/Four NQTs received varying amounts of formal and informal mentoring.
- Most Phase Three and Phase Four NQTs received informal mentoring, with the majority in Phase Three receiving it at least two to three times a week (75% of respondents in the questionnaire survey; 5 out of 8 case study NQTs) and the majority in Phase Four (65%) of respondents also receiving it at least two to three times a week.
- Mentoring, both formal and informal, decreased in amount between Phases Three and Four i.e. over the NQT year.
- Having many informal meetings did not guarantee having many formal meetings.

Findings from case studies only:

- All Phase Three NQTs received formal mentoring at least fortnightly.
- Three out of the five NQTs and three out of the three mentors interviewed in Phase Four, suggested that the decrease in formal mentoring over the NQT year was acceptable.
- In Phases Three and Four, the amount of informal mentoring received appeared to be influenced by certain factors - the mentor's status in school and whether the mentor worked nearby or in the same year group as the NQT.

Findings from questionnaires only:

- The majority of Phase Three NQTs (54%) and Phase Four NQTs (65%) received formal mentoring less than once every two to three weeks.
- The amount of time spent mentoring appears to be an important factor in influencing the NQT's perceptions of how effective the mentoring support was. In Phase Three the amount of formal mentoring appeared to be more predictive of mentoring success. In Phase Four it was the amount of informal mentoring that appeared to be more predictive of mentoring success.

Areas Phase Three/Four NQTs discussed with their mentors

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- 'Assessment/record keeping'; 'resources'; 'school procedures' and 'behaviour' were most frequently mentioned by Phase Three NQTs as the areas in which they needed most mentor support in (case studies) and actually needed most help with (questionnaires). 'Assessment/record keeping' and 'parents' were frequently mentioned by Phase Four NQTs as the areas in which they needed most mentor support in (case studies) and actually needed most help with (questionnaires).

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- In Phase Two, respondents had been asked about the areas they expected to need most support in during Phase Three. Their perceptions generally accorded well with the areas in which they actually did need support in Phase Three - there was a high correlation between predicted needs and actual needs. This was also found with respondents in Phase Three - respondents' perceptions of the areas they would need most support in generally accorded well with the areas in which they actually did need support in Phase Four.

Quality of Mentor Support

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase Three/Four NQTs perceived that they received mentoring support varying widely in quality.

The Mentor Role

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- The roles most frequently perceived to be appropriate for and to have been taken by mentors in Phase Three and in Phase Four were roles associated with Trainer and Professional Supporter elements in the Professional domain. It was rare for mentors to have roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. 'to set targets', 'to relate practice to theory' and 'to challenge'.
- The number of roles that NQTs perceived that their mentors fulfilled decreased from Phase Three to Phase Four. The nature of the mentor role appeared to change over the year, becoming more informal by Phase Four.
- When mentor and the NQT shared similar expectations of the mentor's roles *and* the mentor was perceived by the NQT to be fulfilling those roles, the mentor's support was rated highly, *regardless of the exact roles fulfilled.*

Findings from case studies only:

- All headteachers, mentors and NQTs perceived that Phase Three/Four mentors needed to have many roles.
- Mentors were less likely than headteachers or NQTs to perceive that Phase Three mentors should have the challenger role.
- All the NQTs perceived that they would have liked some observation and feedback. However, even without this, many of them still rated the mentor's support highly, suggesting that to the NQTs, the supportive nature of the mentor role was more important that the professional development role.

- Mentors generally appeared to fulfil roles that they perceived were appropriate although in some cases they perceived that lack of support from the school limited the support they could provide, for example, lack of non-contact time meant no opportunity to observe the NQT and give feedback on the NQT's teaching.
- The roles mentors were observed to have fulfilled were essentially related to the idea of offering professional support and not to supporting professional development with roles associated with the Educator elements being fulfilled very infrequently.
- By Phase Four, some NQTs and mentors perceived that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between the mentor fulfilling the mentor role and the mentor fulfilling other roles such as curriculum or key-stage co-ordinator.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Mentors who were perceived as fulfilling roles associated with the Educator element received a variety of different ratings for their support ranging from 'excellent' to 'fair'.
- In Phases Three and Four, the mentors who provided the perceived best levels of support took on more roles than other mentors.
- Out of the Phase Four NQTs who perceived that their mentors had not fulfilled the roles they had expected, 80% suggested that they would have expected their mentors to have challenged them more, 65% of participants in Phase Four perceived that NQTs needed challenging.

The Mentor/NE Relationship

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- The mentor/NE relationship appears to have been an important factor in influencing the NEs' perceptions of how effective the mentoring was.
- The mentoring relationship was perceived to change over the NQT year in the majority of cases.

Findings from case studies only:

- The mentor/NQT relationship in Phase Three was generally perceived to be a professional relationship with some personal elements. The relationship was perceived to become more of a personal relationship by Phase Four.
- In one case, the NQT perceived that the mentor's senior management responsibilities hindered the support he could offer. However, in other cases having a mentor who was part of the senior management team did not appear to cause the NQTs any problems.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- In Phase Four, 50% of respondents suggested that the mentoring relationship had changed over the year. 90% of these had rated their mentor as 'excellent' or 'very good'. It would appear that when the mentor's support is rated highly by the NQT, the relationship is not a static one but is continually developing.
- In both phases all of the mentors rated 'excellent' were perceived to have been a 'friend'. However, just being a friend would not appear to be enough to cause the NQT to rate the mentoring support highly - two of the NQTs in Phase Three who perceived that their mentor had fulfilled the role of 'friend' (n=14) and 1 of the NQTs in Phase Four who perceived that their mentor had fulfilled the role of 'friend' (n=12) perceived that the mentoring support offered had only been 'fair'.

Observation

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Observation of the NQT by the mentor did not appear to be standard practice in either Phase Three or Phase Four.
- The majority of NQTs in Phases Three and Four suggested that they would have liked to have been observed and perceived observation as important.

Findings from case studies only:

- Although headteachers all perceived that mentors should have a role in the professional development of the NQTs, none of the mentors were provided with non-contact time and so none of them had the chance to observe their NQT(s).

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Some Phase Three/Four NQTs were not observed by their mentor but were observed by a member of senior management.
- The majority of Phase Three/Four NQTs who perceived that observation was important, generally perceived that feedback would identify their needs and help them develop professionally. However, a minority of NQTs perceived that the principle reason for observation was to give praise, encouragement and reassurance. This would suggest that Phase Three/Four NQTs were possibly not as aware as they should have been of their need for continued professional development.

Mentor Personal Qualities

Findings from case studies confirmed by questionnaire survey:

- Phase Three and Four students perceived that the mentor's personal qualities were an important factor in influencing mentoring success.
- The quality most frequently mentioned as important by students were 'being approachable'. This appears to reflect that the Phase Three and Four NQTs perceived that their mentor's role was essentially to provide support for them rather than to guide their professional development.

Findings from case studies only:

- Headteachers, mentors and students all perceived that mentors needed a variety of personal and professional qualities.

- Availability was perceived to be important, possibly linking to the fact that none of the mentors had non-contact time to meet with the NQT, time for mentoring therefore had to be found at breaks or before/after school.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Absence of certain personal and professional qualities resulted in the mentoring being perceived as less effective by the NQT. As the number of negative qualities associated with the mentor increased, the NQT's rating of the mentor's support fell.

School Mentoring Structures

Findings from case studies only:

- Three out of the four schools had some formal mentoring structures in place to support NQTs.
- In all schools in Phase Three/Four, mentors were selected rather than volunteering with the selection being based on certain criteria, including personal and professional qualities and/or position within the school although these criteria were not written down in any of the schools.
- Only one Phase Three school had any form of written school guidelines for NQTs.
- Only one Phase Three school provided non-contact time for NQT mentors to meet with their NQT(s). None of the NQTs were provided with non-contact time to observe other teachers teaching.
- Headteacher involvement appeared to help ensure that both the mentor and the NQT felt generally well supported.
- All NQTs received informal support from members of staff other than their mentor. All the NQTs perceived that this support had been important, particularly so in cases where the mentor was physically distant, i.e. in a classroom in another part of the school or the mentor was perceived as failing as a mentor.
- Mentoring was often perceived by the headteacher to be informally linked to the existing support structures in school but this only appeared to happen in schools

where there was a strong ethos of collaboration. In other schools, where teachers worked more individually, mentors and NQTs suggested that there was little evidence of informal support and perceived that it would have been beneficial to have had more formalised structures in place.

- One mentor, who was not a member of senior management, perceived there was a need for mentors to have status in school in order to be able to negotiate successfully on the NQT's behalf.

Findings from questionnaire survey only:

- Phase Three/Four mentors were frequently part of the senior management team.
- A high rating of mentor support did not appear to be related to the mentor having any particular role/status within the school. Other factors such as personal and professional qualities and availability may be more important in determining mentoring success.

CHAPTER SIX: Comparing Phases One, Two, Three and Four

Introduction

This chapter compares the type and amount of mentoring support received by and perceived to be needed for NEs across the four phases. Findings are reported under the following headings:

- quality of mentor support
- mentor/NE relationship
- amount of time
- areas where support was needed
- mentor roles
- mentor qualities
- mentor and headteacher perceptions of student/NQT differences
- school mentoring structures

In general, comparisons are made using data from the questionnaire surveys rather than from the case studies. The larger sample size of the surveys allows for more sophisticated analysis of the data and as reported in the previous three chapters, the questionnaire surveys, in all phases, essentially confirmed the case study findings. Data from the case studies have been included when the case studies provide information additional to the questionnaires, in particular in the areas of mentor/headteacher perceptions and school mentoring structures.

The number of participants who provided data across all four phases in the questionnaire surveys is comparatively small (n=6). Therefore, for the purpose of analysis, the data from the questionnaire surveys is treated as independent across phases unless stated otherwise.

Quality of Mentor Support

Participants were asked to rate the quality of the mentoring they had received from their mentor on a five-point scale, as shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in each phase.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Phase One	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	25 (32%)	15 (20%)	13 (17%)	5 (6%)
Phase Two	109 (100%)	30 (28%)	32 (29%)	22 (20%)	16 (15%)	9 (8%)
Phase Three	28 (100%)	7 (25%)	7 (25%)	6 (21%)	6 (21%)	2 (7%)
Phase Four	20 (100%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	3 (15%)

Across all four phases NEs received mentor support that varied in perceived quality. Although the support ratings appear to decrease slightly in quality over the four phases, a one-way-between-groups analysis of variance with four levels, demonstrates that there were no significant differences between the four phases in overall quality of support, $F(3,231) = 0.719$, $p>0.05$.

NEs were asked to give reasons for their rating of their mentors' support. As discussed in the previous three chapters, the reasons given were grouped into a number of categories for the purpose of coding and analysis. These categories were split between positive and negative statements that related to the mentor's personal and professional qualities (see Tables 3.12, 4.12 and 5.13).

Table 6.2. Reasons given by NEs in each phase to explain their rating of their mentor's support when they perceived that this support had been of a *high* quality (and number expressed as a percentage of all NEs giving high quality ratings).

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	χ^2	
M had gd interpersonal skills	34	44	12	6	N/A	
%	77.3	71.0	85.7	75.0		
M had good prof dev skills	36	39	8	4	N/A	
%	81.8	62.9	57.1	50.0		
M accepted NE	29	17	2	1	N/A	
%	65.9	27.4	14.3	12.5		
M there when needed	32	44	7	6	N/A	
%	72.7	71.0	50.0	75.0		
M was a good example	3	8	0	0	N/A	
%	6.8	12.9	0.0	0.0		
M was committed	21	20	2	5	8.0	*
%	47.7	32.2	14.3	62.5		
M was positive	23	21	1	3	9.95	*
%	52.2	33.9	7.1	37.5		
M initiated meetings	4	6	1	3	N/A	
%	9.1	9.7	7.1	37.5		
M had poor intp skills	0	1	0	0	N/A	
%	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0		
M had poor prof dev skills	0	0	0	0	N/A	
%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
M was often unavailable	1	2	0	0	N/A	
%	2.3	3.2	0.0	0.0		
M was unclear about role	0	0	0	0	N/A	
%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
Lack of info/feedback	1	3	0	0	N/A	
%	2.3	4.8	0.0	0.0		
M had no interest in NE	1	0	0	0	N/A	
%	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0		
M was negative	0	1	0	0	N/A	
%	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0		
Professional disagreement	0	0	0	0	N/A	
%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		
M did not initiate meetings	0	0	0	0	N/A	
%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		

* denotes $p<0.05$

M = mentor

N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Comparisons were made across phases of a) the statements given by NEs who perceived that their mentors' support had been of a *high* quality (i.e. support rated as 'excellent' or 'very good') and b) the statements given by NEs who perceived that their mentors' support had been of a *low* quality (i.e. support rated as 'fair' or 'poor'). To decide whether the frequencies of category use in each case differ from chance, χ^2 statistics were calculated for each category across the four phases. Where the obtained χ^2 with three degrees of freedom is less than 7.82 the changes in frequency are assumed to be not significantly different from chance. However, in most cases χ^2 could not legitimately be calculated because the expected frequency for a particular category was less than 5 for more than one phase. As can be seen in Table 6.2, in all phases, negative statements were rarely given by NEs who perceived that the quality of mentor support had been high. For most of the statements, chi-squared could not be calculated. However, two of the reasons: 'mentor being committed to mentoring' and 'mentor being positive' were suggested as reasons significantly more in certain phases than others.

'Mentor being committed to mentoring', χ^2 (3) = 8.04, $p<0.05$, was selected as a reason for the mentor's high support rating relatively infrequently in Phase Three as compared to the other phases. It was stated as a reason most frequently in Phase 4 when approximately 62% of students who rated their mentor highly suggested this as one of the reasons for their rating. It is possible that the 'mentor being committed to mentoring' was perceived as less important in Phase Three because there were more likely to be formally organised school structures to support NEs in this phase than in Phase Four, for example group meetings for the NQTs, time set aside for mentor and NE to meet (see case studies) and therefore the mentor's own commitment might be less important in ensuring that the NE felt supported. However, it is possible to speculate that in Phase Four, when formally organised mentoring did not appear to be in place any longer, the amount of mentor support offered would depend to a greater extent on the mentor's commitment to mentoring. This would appear to link with the statement 'mentor initiated meetings'. Although the differences across phases could not be statistically tested for this reason, at a basic numerical level it can be seen that it was stated more frequently as a reason for mentors being rated highly in Phase Four than in the other three phases. It is possible that as the formal mentoring structures decreased it became more important to have a mentor who initiated meetings.

'Mentor being positive, χ^2 (3) = 9.95, $p<0.05$, was selected as a reason for the mentor's high support rating relatively infrequently in Phase Three as compared to the other phases.

Although not statistically tested, at a basic numerical level, there were interesting changes across phases in the following areas: 'mentor accepted NE' and 'mentor was a good example'.

'Mentor accepted NE', was stated as a reason for a high rating, relatively frequently in Phase One but in the following phases was given as a reason less frequently. It is possible that NEs, in the early stages of their professional development, are likely to feel insecure about their status as a teacher and will therefore value mentors who accept them and make them feel confident with their new position.

'Mentor was a good example' was stated as a reason in Phases One and Two (when the NEs were students) but never in Phases Three and Four (when the NEs were NQTs); as might be expected this might, in part, have been due to the different situations of the NEs. In the vast majority of cases in Phases One and Two, the NE was working in their mentors' classroom and therefore had many opportunities to observe their mentors' teaching. However, in Phases Three and Four the NE and the mentor each had his/her own class and the opportunities for observation were less.

As shown in Table 6.3, for mentoring perceived to have been of a low quality, both positive and negative statements were given. It might appear incongruous that a positive statement such as having 'good interpersonal skills' was given as a reason for mentors whose support was rated low, however in the cases where positive statements were given they were always combined with negative statements, most often 'the mentor was often unavailable' (see previous chapters for more detailed discussions of these combinations of statements). In all phases, as might be expected, the reasons given for a low rating of mentoring support were more likely to be negative.

Table 6.3. Reasons given by NEs in each phase to explain their rating of their mentor's support when they perceived that this support had been of a low quality (and number expressed as a percentage of all NEs giving low quality ratings)

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	χ^2
M had gd interpersonal skills	6	5	3	1	N/A
%	33.33	20	37.5	14.29	
M had good prof dev skills	4	2	0	0	N/A
%	22.22	8	0	0	
NE accepted by M	0	1	0	0	N/A
%	0	4	0	0	
M there when needed	2	0	0	1	N/A
%	11.11	0	0	14.29	
M was a good example	0	1	0	0	N/A
%	0	4	0	0	
M was committed	1	1	0	0	N/A
%	5.56	4	0	0	
M was positive	2	0	0	0	N/A
%	11.11	0	0	0	
M initiated meetings	0	0	0	0	N/A
%	0	0	0	0	
M had poor intp skills	3	2	2	2	N/A
%	16.67	8	25	28.57	
M had poor prof dev skills	7	7	1	2	N/A
%	38.89	28	12.5	28.57	
M was often unavailable	8	15	4	1	N/A
%	44.44	60	50	14.29	
M was unclear about role	2	4	1	0	N/A
%	11.11	16	12.5	0	
Lack of info/feedback	10	14	1	4	N/A
%	55.56	56	12.5	57.14	
M had no interest in NE	5	9	3	3	N/A
%	27.78	36	37.5	42.86	
M was negative	3	7	0	2	N/A
%	16.67	28	0	28.57	
Professional disagreement	1	1	0	0	N/A
%	5.56	4	0	0	
M did not initiate meetings	4	4	3	4	N/A
%	22.22	16	37.5	57.14	

M= mentor

N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Chi-squared could not be calculated for any of the statements (see above). However, it can be seen that at a basic numerical level, there were interesting changes across phases in the following areas: 'mentor had poor interpersonal skills', 'mentor was often unavailable', 'there was a lack of information and/or feedback given', 'the mentor was negative' and 'the mentor did not initiate meetings'.

'Mentor had poor interpersonal skills' was stated more frequently as a reason for the low rating of mentor support in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two. This would appear to link to the case study findings which suggested that the role of 'friend' was more likely to be considered as appropriate and important by NEs in Phases Three and Four than NEs in Phases One and Two.

'Mentor was often unavailable', was stated less frequently in Phase Four than in any other phase. In the case studies, it was found that, by Phase Four, NEs perceived that they needed less intensive support from their mentor (see Chapter Five). It is therefore possible, that having a mentor who was often unavailable in this phase, would have been less likely to affect the rating of the mentor's support.

'Mentor did not initiate meetings', was stated as a reason most frequently in Phase Four. This would appear consistent with the finding discussed above, that 'mentor initiated meetings' was most likely to be stated as a reason for a mentor's support being perceived as of a high quality in Phase Four (see Table 6.2).

Mentor/NE relationship

Participants were asked to rate the relationship they had had with their mentor on a five-point scale where 1= poor and 5 = good. The results are shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor relationship ratings in each phase.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Phase One	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	35 (45%)	11 (14%)	9 (12%)	3 (4%)
Phase Two	109 (100%)	30 (27%)	32 (29%)	29 (27%)	12 (11%)	6 (6%)
Phase Three	28 (100%)	8 (29%)	7 (25%)	11 (39%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
Phase Four	20 (100%)	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)

Although the relationship ratings appear to decrease in quality over the four phases, a one-way-between-groups analysis of variance with four levels demonstrates that there are no significant differences between the four phases in overall quality of relationship, $F(3,231) = 0.458$, $p>0.05$.

Ratings of the relationship were correlated with the ratings for mentor support. There were high correlations between support and relationship ratings observed for all four phases; Phase 1, $r(75) = 0.809$; Phase 2, $r(107) = 0.856$; Phase 3, $r(26) = 0.827$; Phase 4, $r(18) = 0.840$. To test for differences between these correlations, individual correlations were adjusted using Fisher's z transformation and a z statistic was calculated for each possible pairing. None of these correlations were significantly different from each other across the four phases (maximum $z = 1.02$, $p= 0.15$). The relationship between the support rating and the relationship rating thus appears to be stable across all four

phases. In all phases, it appeared that when the mentor/NE relationship was rated highly by the NE then it was likely that the mentor's support would also be rated highly.

When interviewed, the NEs and mentors involved in the case studies suggested that the nature of the mentoring relationship changed over the phases. In Phases One and Two it was seen as being essentially a professional relationship with some personal elements. In Phase Three it was seen as being both professional and personal. In Phase Four, NEs perceived that the relationship had generally become more relaxed and informal. In the interviews, mentors and headteachers and NQTs were asked if and how the mentor/NE relationship differed with students and NQTs. All perceived that there was a difference.

> With an NQT it's much more of a peer relationship, that's the difference. (Mentor - School 12)

> With an NQT it's much more of a fellow-professional relationship whereas with a student and a class teacher there is an element of hierarchy in there somewhere although hopefully it is not the dominant aspect of mentoring. (Headteacher - School 3)

> I feel more professional - that's the difference. (NQT - School 11)

Amount of Time

NEs were asked to estimate how often they had met formally and informally with their mentor. The results are shown in Table 6.5 and Table 6.6.

As shown in Table 6.5, the frequency of formal mentoring decreased across the phases.

As shown in Table 6.6, informal mentoring occurred more frequently than formal mentoring across all phases. The frequency of informal mentoring was substantially higher in Phases One and Two than in Phases Three and Four. When asked about the differences between mentoring students and NQTs all headteachers and mentors

perceived that there *was* a difference. Many attributed it to the time-scale, with student mentoring being perceived as a far more 'intense' process:

Table 6.5. Number of NEs giving each of the five different frequency ratings for *formal* mentoring across phases.

	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Phase One	77 (100%)	10 (13%)	17 (22%)	27 (35%)	7 (9%)	16 (21%)
Phase Two	109 (100%)	10 (9%)	12 (11%)	49 (45%)	14 (13%)	24 (22%)
Phase Three	28 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	8 (28%)	4 (14%)	15 (54%)
Phase Four	20 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	13 (65%)

Table 6.6. Number of NEs giving each of the five different frequency ratings for **informal** mentoring across phases.

	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Phase One	77 (100%)	59 (76%)	13 (17%)	2 (3%)	3 (4%)	0 (0%)
Phase Two	109 (100%)	82 (76%)	14 (13%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)	4 (4%)
Phase Three	28 (100%)	12 (43%)	9 (32%)	3 (11%)	3 (11%)	1 (4%)
Phase Four	20 (100%)	9 (45%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)

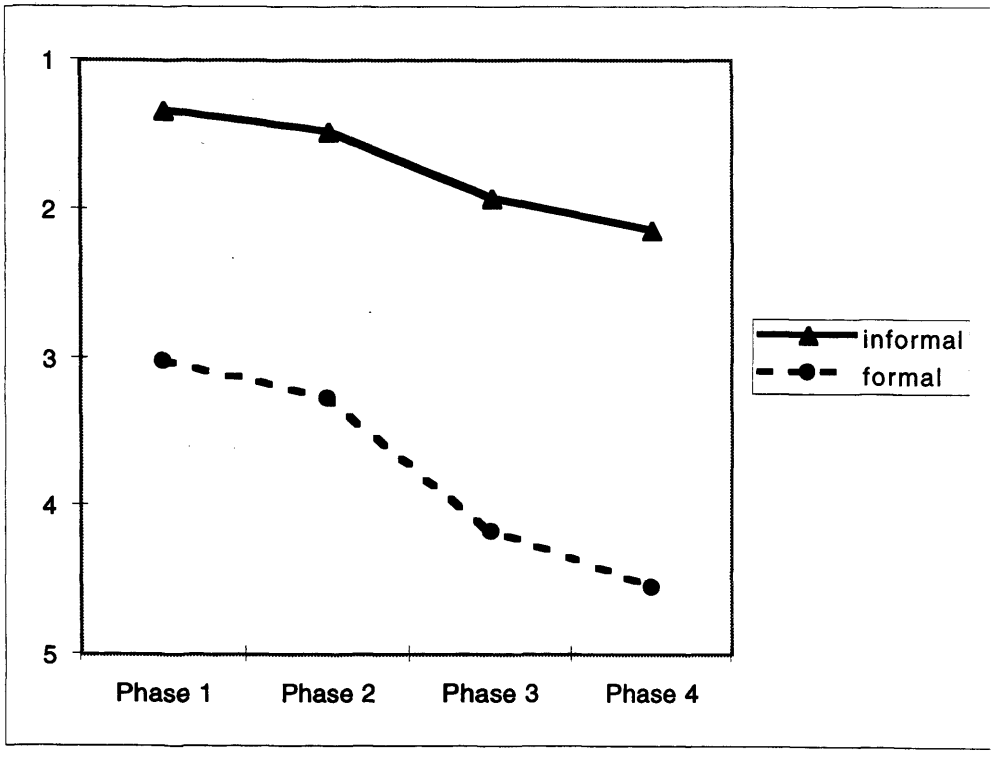
> Students are only in school for a limited time, their needs are concentrated whereas with an NQT the mentoring has to be sustainable over a period of time. (Headteacher - School 11)

> Teaching practice has a start and a finish, as a student you're planning for supporting them for a short time but with an NQT you're looking at the next twenty or thirty years and whatever you do has to be sustainable. (Headteacher - School 3)

> Students are under pressure in a way that you are not in a classroom situation... they plan on the basis of impressing everyone and it's like a six week run at the Haymarket, they come to 'suck it in and see'... NQTs have to pace themselves and the mentor has to help them do that. (Headteacher - School 9)

To conduct more formal analysis on this data, means were calculated as shown in Figure 6.1 and a two-way analysis-of-variance was used to investigate the significance of any changes across phases.

Figure 6.1: Mean amount of formal and informal mentoring over the four phases (category 1 = 'daily' and category 5 = 'less than every 3 weeks')



Treating the ratings as parametric and independent across phases for the purposes of analysis a two-factor analysis of variance was conducted with one within subjects factor (mentoring type - formal/informal) and one between subjects factor (phase). The analysis revealed a significant main effect of mentoring type, $F(1,230) = 363.7$, $p < 0.01$ (i.e. in all four phases there was significantly more informal than formal mentoring); a significant main effect of phase, $F(3,230) = 15.3$, $p<0.01$, (i.e. there was a significant reduction in the amounts of formal and informal mentoring over the four phases), and no significant interaction between the two, $F(3,230) = 2.6$ (implying that the difference between the amount of formal and informal mentoring is roughly equal across all four phases).

Post-hoc comparisons of the differences between the four phases using the Newman-Keuls method revealed that NEs received significantly more mentoring in Phases One and Two than in Phases Three and Four ($p<0.01$). However, the overall amount of mentoring was not significantly different between Phase One and Phase Two, or between Phase Three and Phase Four.

Ratings of the amount of time spent on formal and informal mentoring were correlated with the earlier ratings for mentor support. These ratings were found to be correlated at each of the four occasions on which they were obtained; Phase 1, $r(75) = 0.428$ (informal), $r(75) = 0.316$ (formal); Phase 2, $r(107) = 0.463$ (informal), $r(107) = 0.417$ (formal); Phase 3, $r(26) = 0.494$ (informal), $r(26) = 0.526$ (formal); Phase 4, $r(18) = 0.463$ (informal), $r(18) = 0.229$ (formal). Detailed analysis reveals that the difference in correlation between formal and informal mentoring is not significant for any of the four phases, $t(74) = 0.892$, $t(106) = 0.457$, $t(25) = 0.192$, $t(17) = 0.881$, all $p>0.05$, and that the correlations are not significantly different from one another from one phase to the next (maximum z for informal = 0.36, $p = 0.36$, maximum z for formal = 1.11, $p = 0.13$). The relationship between the support rating and the amount of time thus appears to be stable across all four phases, and roughly equal whether formal or informal mentoring is assessed. In all phases, it appears that when the amount of mentoring, whether formal or informal, received by the NE is high, then the NE's rating of the mentor's support is also likely to be high.

In the case studies it was found that the amount of mentoring decreased over each phase. Mentors in all phases perceived that this decrease was appropriate:

> As the teaching practice progresses the role is still there but not as intense, towards the end of the practice I am there if needed but not around so much as at the start. (Mentor - School 5)

> In the last few weeks the student has basically pushed me out of the classroom which is fair enough. (Mentor - School 6)

> I think for NQTs the need for support decreases from the Spring term. (Mentor - School 4)

> It started off quite intensely and I think that's fairly common but she is fine now so we haven't really needed to meet... I still keep in touch with her and when it's things like open night I make a point of going round and saying "are you alright?" (Mentor - School 11)

NEs in Phases One and Two were divided in whether this decrease in amount of mentoring was appropriate with some perceiving that it enabled them to have the freedom to take over the class and others suggesting that they wished the support hadn't decreased:

> I felt it had got to the point where my tutor had come in and said I had passed and from that point on there was a sliding off that I didn't want... I still wanted to be extended and felt that by that point I was confident enough for someone to criticise me more strongly and that would have taken me on to a new stage of development. (Student - School 2)

Most NEs in Phase Three/Four, appeared to perceive that a decrease was appropriate:

> I need less help now... I'm less dependent. (NQT - School 12)

> The mentoring is much less now, I need less help. (NQT - School 14).

Areas where Support was Needed.

Participants were asked to select five areas from a pre-determined list in which they perceived they had needed the most mentor support in the four phases. Their responses are shown in Table 6.7.

As shown in Table 6.7, there are significant changes over the four phases in how often five of the areas - 'curriculum', 'evaluating the NE's progress', 'children's individual needs', 'parents' and 'planning' - were selected as areas in which the NEs perceived mentor support was needed. The more theoretically interesting of these are discussed below.

'Curriculum', χ^2 (3) = 17,15, $p<0.01$, was selected more frequently in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two. This is as might be expected, bearing in mind that in Phases Three and Four NEs have complete responsibility for a class and for ensuring that all their curriculum needs are met. The increase in Phase Four is consistent with the Phase Four case study findings which suggest that by Phase Four mentors and the NEs often find it difficult to distinguish between when the mentor is advising the NE in their role as a mentor and when the mentor is advising the NE in their role as curriculum co-ordinator (see Chapter 5). It is possible that by Phase Four NEs are looking more towards their mentors for curriculum advice than for professional guidance.

'Planning', χ^2 (3) = 9.49, $p<0.05$, was selected most frequently in Phases One and Three. In Phase One, NEs were in the very early stages of their professional development and it would therefore be anticipated that they might need considerable support with the planning of lessons. It is possible to speculate that the relative frequent selection of this category in Phase Three is due to the NEs perceiving that they needed support with longer term planning, i.e. planning for the whole term and for the year. When Phase Two respondents were asked about the areas they perceived they would need support in during Phase Three they distinguished between lesson planning and long-term planning, with the latter being selected more frequently.

Table 6.7. NEs' perceptions of the areas in which they needed the most mentor support across all four phases (and expressed as the percentage of NEs in each phase selecting the area).

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	χ^2	
administration	21	33	11	5	1.67	
%	27.27	30.28	39.29	25		
Adult management	6	21	3	0	N/A	
%	7.79	19.27	10.71	0		
Assessment/record k'ing	42	65	19	9	2.99	
%	54.55	59.63	67.86	45		
Behaviour	51	56	16	12	4.13	
%	66.23	51.38	57.14	60		
cl. management.	20	26	8	1	4.48	
%	25.97	23.85	28.57	5		
Curriculum	11	13	9	9	17.15	**
%	14.29	11.93	32.14	45		
Display	6	8	2	1	N/A	
%	7.79	7.34	7.14	5		
Evaluate NE's progress	31	42	3	5	9.71	*
%	40.26	38.53	10.71	25		
Expectations of ch.	29	36	7	3	4.47	
%	37.66	33.03	25	15		
Expectations of NE	7	14	0	0	N/A	
%	9.09	12.84	0	0		
Extra-curricular	0	4	1	2	N/A	
%	0	3.67	3.57	10		
Individual needs	42	45	7	7	8.53	*
%	54.55	41.28	25	35		
Parents	14	20	15	8	19.36	**
%	18.18	18.35	53.57	40		
Planning	21	15	8	1	9.49	*
%	27.27	13.76	28.57	5		
Resources	24	45	17	9	7.72	
%	31.17	41.28	60.71	45		
School procedures	27	52	17	8	6.38	
%	35.06	47.71	60.71	40		
Teaching and learning	9	16	5	2	N/A	
%	11.69	14.68	17.86	10		
Time management	19	25	5	1	4.06	
%	24.68	22.94	17.86	5		

* denotes $p<0.05$

** denotes $p<0.01$

N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

As might be expected, 'parents', χ^2 (3) = 19.36, $p<0.01$, was selected more frequently in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two. It would appear likely that this is due to the change in the NE's status from being a student teacher to being the classteacher and therefore being in closer contact with parents.

Considering the substantial body of research that suggests that issues of 'teaching and learning' should become increasingly important as the NE develops professionally (e.g. Ballantyne *et al*, 1995; Bleach, 1997; Kagan, 1992; Maynard and Furlong, 1995) it is interesting that NEs' selection of this area did not change significantly over the four phases. Similarly, it has been suggested that 'classroom management' will become less important as the NE develops (Kagan, 1992). However, although there was a decrease in the frequency with which the area of 'classroom management' was selected in Phase Four compared to the other three phases, selection of 'classroom management' was remarkably consistent across Phases One, Two, Three.

In Phases One, Two and Three, participants were asked to state the areas they expected to need most support in, during the following phase. These expectations were then correlated with the perceived actual needs. Correlations between predicted needs and actual needs were high across all four phases. [Phase One expected needs to Phase Two actual needs r(16) = 0.722; Phase Two expected needs to Phase Three actual needs r(16) = 0.743; Phase Three expected needs to Phase Four actual needs r(16) = 0.663.] NEs, in all phases, appeared to have an accurate perception of their future needs (as they will later perceive them).

Mentor Roles

In all the phases, NEs, mentors and headteachers involved in the case studies were asked what they perceived appropriate mentor roles to be. As can be seen from Table 6.8, in

all phases, the role 'to advise' was unanimously perceived to be appropriate and the roles 'to listen' and 'to encourage' were generally perceived to be appropriate.

Table 6.8. Headteachers', mentors' and NEs' perceptions of appropriate mentor roles in Phases One, Two and Three (expressed as the percentage of participants in each phase suggesting each role).

Role	Phase 1			Phase 2			Phases 3/4*		
	HT (%)	M (%)	NE (%)	HT (%)	M (%)	NE (%)	HT (%)	M (%)	NE (%)
Support									
to be a friend	20	20	40	20	40	20	75	50	50
Structural									
to induct	100	80	80	0	40	0	75	100	88
to facilitate	20	40	0	0	20	0	50	50	38
Prof. Support									
to encourage	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	75	63
to reassure	40	80	80	40	80	40	75	75	63
to listen	80	80	100	100	100	100	100	100	75
Train									
to protect	20	40	40	0	0	20	50	50	0
to role model	100	100	20	80	100	40	50	25	25
to train	60	0	0	40	20	0	25	0	0
to discuss	100	100	100	60	40	100	50	75	50
to advise	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
to identify needs	100	100	100	100	100	80	50	50	25
to focus	0	80	80	0	60	20	50	0	0
to clarify	0	0	0	20	0	0	50	0	25
to be a critic	0	0	0	0	40	20	0	25	13
to help reflect	60	80	80	20	60	20	50	50	25
Educate									
to set targets	20	40	0	40	80	20	25	0	0
to rel practice to theory	40	20	20	0	20	0	25	0	0
to challenge	80	20	80	100	100	100	75	25	100
Assess									
to evaluate	100	100	100	100	100	100	25	25	0

* Phase Three and Four case study participants were the same people.

There were some differences in perceptions across the phases. The role 'to evaluate' was unanimously believed to be important when the NE was a student in Phases One and Two but mentioned relatively infrequently when the NE was an NQT. Some mentors expressed reservations about whether having an assessor role would interfere with the supportive side of the role (See Chapter 5).

'Role model' in Phase One and Two was perceived to be appropriate by the majority of headteachers and mentors. However, the majority of Phase One and Two NEs did not perceive it as an appropriate role, suggesting that they did not want to simply 'copy' someone else's teaching methods and techniques.

Across all phases, mentors were more likely to suggest roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements of the Professional domain as being appropriate mentor roles than roles associated with the Educator element. This was particularly so in Phases Three/Four.

NEs in all phases generally perceived that the role 'to challenge' was an appropriate role. However, mentors rarely perceived that this was an appropriate role in Phases One and Three/Four. Research suggests that once NEs have reached a level of basic competence and confidence the challenging role becomes increasingly vital if mentors are to effectively promote NEs' professional growth. It would appear that the Phase Three/Four mentors did not, therefore, have appropriate perceptions of the mentor role. They appeared to perceive that their role was essentially to provide personal and professional support but not to promote professional development. As one Phase Three mentor said: 'a mentor should be more friendly than challenging.' (Mentor - School 13)

In the questionnaire surveys, NEs were asked to select the roles they perceived their mentors had actually fulfilled at each phase from a pre-determined list. χ^2 statistics were calculated for each role across the four phases. Where the obtained χ^2 with three degrees of freedom is less than 7.82 the changes in frequency are assumed to be not significantly different from chance. However, in some cases χ^2 could not legitimately be calculated because the expected frequency for a particular category was less than 5 for more than one phase.

Table 6.9. Roles that NEs perceived their mentors to have fulfilled across phases (and expressed as the percentage of NEs selecting each role in each phase).

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	χ^2	
friend	21	43	14	13	11.58	**
%	27.27	39.45	50	65		
Encourage	65	73	14	11	15.46	**
%	84.42	66.97	50	55		
Reassure	48	57	19	15	5.41	
%	62.34	52.29	67.86	75		
Listen	45	55	13	10	1.74	
%	58.44	50.46	46.43	50		
Protect	6	9	9	7	N/A	
%	7.79	8.26	32.14	35		
Induct	20	36	11	8	2.61	
%	25.97	33.03	39.29	40		
Sponsor	5	14	3	0	N/A	
%	6.49	12.84	10.71	0		
Negotiate	10	24	9	6	6.13	
%	12.99	22.02	32.14	30		
Advise	59	73	15	14	5.40	
%	76.62	66.97	53.57	70		
Discuss	61	75	21	11	5.51	
%	79.22	68.81	75	55		
Coach	12	20	6	0	N/A	
%	15.58	18.35	21.43	0		
Identify needs	21	31	8	3	1.62	
%	27.27	28.44	28.57	15		
Clarify	26	41	13	11	3.78	
%	33.77	37.61	46.43	55		
Reflect	51	55	8	7	14.81	**
%	66.23	50.46	28.57	35		
Focus	25	27	10	7	2.31	
%	32.47	24.77	35.71	35		
set targets	19	29	4	5	1.85	
%	24.68	26.61	14.29	25		
Challenge	16	26	6	3	0.86	
%	20.78	23.85	21.43	15		

** denotes $p<0.01$

N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

As can be seen in Table 6.9, perceived mentor roles were remarkably consistent across all four phases. Only three roles were selected significantly more frequently in some

phases than others. These roles included: 'to be a friend', 'to encourage' and 'to encourage reflection'.

'To be a friend', χ^2 (3) =11.58, $p<0.01$, was a role perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently by mentors with each successive phase.

'To encourage', χ^2 (3) =15.46, $p<0.01$, was a role perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently in Phase One.

'To encourage reflection', χ^2 (3) =14.81, $p<0.01$, was a role perceived to have been fulfilled less frequently in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two. Considering the wealth of studies that suggest that reflection plays a vital role in professional growth (e.g. Dunne and Harvard, 1993; Smith and Aldred, 1993; Frost, 1993), it is perhaps worrying that more Phase Three and Four mentors were not perceived to have fulfilled this role, particularly bearing in mind the research that suggest that NQTs often show little evidence of critical thinking and need guidance of they are to develop the ability to reflect in depth (e.g. Bush et al, 1996; Tickle, 1996).

The two roles associated with the Educator element - 'set targets' and 'challenge' - were perceived to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently across all four phases (15-27%).

It is perhaps surprising that the three roles in the Structural domain were not perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently, particularly the role 'to induct', bearing in mind that all NEs need basic information about their schools.

Comparisons were made across phases of a) the roles attributed to mentors by NEs who perceived that their mentors' support had been of a *high* quality (i.e. support rated as 'excellent' or 'very good') and b) the roles attributed to mentors by NEs who perceived that their mentors' support had been of a *low* quality (i.e. support rated as 'fair' or 'poor'). To decide whether the frequencies of category use in each case differ from chance, χ^2 statistics were calculated for each category across the four phases. Where the obtained χ^2 with three degrees of freedom is less than 7.82 the changes in frequency are assumed to be not significantly different from chance. However, in most cases χ^2 could

not legitimately be calculated because the expected frequency for a particular category was less than 5 for more than one phase.

As can be seen in Table 6.10, across all phases, certain roles were frequently perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors rated highly. These included the roles: 'to reassure', 'to listen', 'to advise' and 'to discuss'. These roles correspond relatively well with those roles perceived by case study participants as appropriate (see Table 6.8).

Although not statistically tested, it can be seen that at a basic numerical level, there were potentially interesting changes in many of the other roles. The more theoretically interesting of these are discussed below.

The role of 'friend', was perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors whose support was rated as of a high quality more frequently in Phases Three and Four. This appears to be consistent with case study findings that suggest that NEs in Phases Three and Four are more likely to perceive the role of 'friend' as an appropriate mentor role (see Table 6.8).

The roles 'to challenge' and 'to coach' were perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors whose support was rated as of a high quality less frequently in Phase Four than in the other phases.

The role 'to protect' which includes foreseeing problems was a role perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors whose support was rated as of a high quality more frequently in Phase Three than in the other phases. It is possible to speculate that this is due to the NE working in an unfamiliar environment and having total responsibility for a class for the first time, therefore valuing mentors who foresaw problems.

It is, perhaps surprising, that the roles associated with the Educator element: 'to challenge' and 'to set targets', were not perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently by mentors whose support was rated highly.

Table 6.10. Roles fulfilled by mentors in each phase when mentor support was perceived to have been of *high* quality (and expressed as the percentage of these NEs selecting each role in each phase).

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Chi Squared
encourage	41	55	8	5	N/A
%	93.18	88.71	57.14	62.5	
Reassure	34	44	12	7	N/A
%	77.27	70.97	85.71	87.5	
Listen	33	48	9	6	N/A
%	75	77.42	64.29	75	
Friend	17	37	10	8	N/A
%	38.64	59.68	71.43	100	
Protect	5	9	6	2	N/A
%	11.36	14.52	42.86	25	
Induct	14	25	9	5	N/A
%	31.82	40.32	64.29	62.5	
Sponsor	4	13	1	0	N/A
%	9.09	20.97	7.14	0	
Negotiate	8	16	7	4	N/A
%	18.18	25.81	50	50	
Advise	40	49	10	6	N/A
%	90.91	79.03	71.43	75	
Discuss	42	54	13	6	N/A
%	95.45	87.1	92.86	75	
Coach	11	18	4	0	N/A
%	25	29.03	28.57	0	
Identify needs	20	24	6	3	N/A
%	45.45	38.71	42.86	37.5	
clarify	22	32	8	6	N/A
%	50	51.61	57.14	75	
Reflect	37	44	5	6	N/A
%	84.09	70.97	35.71	75	
Set targets	17	24	4	4	N/A
%	38.64	38.71	28.57	50	
Focus	20	21	5	3	N/A
%	45.45	33.87	35.71	37.5	
Challenge	13	17	4	1	N/A
%	29.55	27.42	28.57	12.5	

N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Table 6.11. Roles fulfilled by mentors in each phase when mentor support was perceived to have been of *low* quality (and expressed as the percentage of these NEs in each phase).

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Chi Squared
Encourage	7	4	4	1	N/A
%	38.89	16	50	14.29	
Reassure	6	5	4	3	N/A
%	33.33	20	50	42.86	
Listen	4	0	3	0	N/A
%	22.22	0	37.5	0	
Friend	2	2	2	1	N/A
%	11.11	8	25	14.29	
Protect	1	0	3	1	N/A
%	5.56	0	37.5	14.29	
Induct	1	7	1	1	N/A
%	5.56	28	12.5	14.29	
Sponsor	0	0	1	0	N/A
%	0	0	12.5	0	
Negotiate	1	4	2	1	N/A
%	5.56	16	25	14.29	
Advise	11	10	3	4	N/A
%	61.11	40	37.5	57.14	
Discuss	9	6	6	1	N/A
%	50	24	75	14.29	
Coach	1	1	1	0	N/A
%	5.56	4	12.5	0	
Identify needs	1	2	0	0	N/A
%	5.56	8	0	0	
Clarify	2	2	2	2	N/A
%	11.11	8	25	28.57	
Reflect	8	4	2	0	N/A
%	44.44	16	25	0	
Set targets	0	0	0	1	N/A
%	0	0	0	14.29	
Focus	2	1	3	2	N/A
%	11.11	4	37.5	28.57	
Challenge	2	5	1	1	N/A
%	11.11	20	12.5	14.29	

N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Chi-squared could not be calculated for any of the statements (see above).

As can be seen in Table 6.11, the role to 'be a friend' was associated with about 11% of mentors who support was rated as low in Phase Three. It is possible that in Phase Three, although NEs perceive being a friend as being important, they do not perceive that just being a friend is enough for the mentor to be rated highly.

Across all phases mentors whose support was rated as low were rarely perceived to have 'set targets' for their NEs.

The number of roles a mentor was perceived to have fulfilled appears to have influenced the support rating.

Table 6.12. Mean number of roles mentors were perceived to have fulfilled during each phase broken down according to the overall support rating given.

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Phase One	Mean no. roles (out of 25 roles)	14	11	6	5	3
	No. of mentors given this rating (out of 77 mentors)	19	25	15	13	5
Phase Two	Mean no. roles (out of 25 roles)	15	10	7	4	2
	No. of mentors given this rating (out of 109 mentors)	30	32	22	16	9
Phase Three	Mean no. roles (out of 22 roles)	12	8	5	7	1
	No. of mentors given this rating (out of 28 mentors)	7	7	6	6	2
Phase Four	Mean no. roles (out of 22 roles)	10	12	10	5	1
	No. of mentors given this rating (out of 20 mentors)	4	4	5	4	3

It can be seen from Table 6.12, that generally the greater the number of roles the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled, the better the perceived quality of the mentor's support.

Mentor Qualities

Participants were asked about the personal qualities they perceived that mentors should have. The responses were grouped into a number of categories for the purposes of coding and analysis. χ^2 statistics were calculated for each role across the four phases. Where the obtained χ^2 with three degrees of freedom is less than 7.82 the changes in frequency are assumed to be not significantly different from chance.

Many of the qualities suggested by NEs were stated relatively equally across the four phases with the quality 'being approachable' being selected particularly frequently in all phases. However, there are significant changes over the four phases in how often six of the qualities were suggested - 'accepting', 'available', 'committed', 'empathetic', 'constructive' and 'understands NE's professional needs'.

Being 'accepting', χ^2 (3) = 9.67, $p<0.05$, was suggested more frequently in Phase One. This appears to link with the finding discussed above that in Phase One, NEs were more likely to state mentor 'being accepting' as a reason for a high rating of mentor support. Similarly, being 'empathetic', χ^2 (3) = 20.91, $p<0.01$, was suggested more frequently in Phase One than in the other phases.

Being 'available', χ^2 (3) = 16.24, $p<0.01$, was suggested most frequently in Phase Two. The case studies suggest that Phase Two mentors were often taken out of the classroom to fulfil other school duties, the assumption being that a student on final teaching practice was able to cope. Students, however, often perceived that although they valued the time in the classroom on their own, they still wanted their mentor to have mentoring as a priority and to be available as and when needed (see Chapter Four, individual case studies). This possibly accounts for the quality 'being available' becoming so important in this phase.

Table 6.13. NEs' perceptions of the personal qualities mentors need to have across phases (and expressed as the percentage of NEs in each phase)

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	χ^2	
Accepting	31	36	3	4	9.67	*
%	40.26	33.03	10.71	20		
Approachable	58	65	14	12	7.67	
%	75.32	59.63	50	60		
Available	20	45	1	7	16.24	**
%	25.97	41.28	3.57	35		
Committed	20	44	3	14	22.26	**
%	25.97	40.37	10.71	70		
Empathetic	44	29	10	4	20.91	**
%	57.14	26.61	35.71	20		
Open-minded	12	5	1	3	N/A	
%	15.58	4.59	3.57	15		
Patient	12	12	7	4	N/A	
%	15.58	11.01	25	20		
Positive	37	44	12	11	2.07	
%	48.05	40.37	42.86	55		
Sense of humour	4	7	2	2	N/A	
%	5.19	6.42	7.14	10		
Constructive	49	48	6	4	22.07	**
%	63.64	44.04	21.43	20		
Experienced teacher	15	4	3	4	N/A	
%	19.48	3.67	10.71	20		
Experienced mentor	3	3	0	0	N/A	
%	3.9	2.75	0	0		
Good communicator	14	9	5	3	N/A	
%	18.18	8.26	17.86	15		
Good listener	12	13	5	7	N/A	
%	15.58	11.93	17.86	35		
Good teacher	12	11	0	2	N/A	
%	15.58	10.09	0	10		
Understands M role	9	21	0	1	N/A	
%	11.69	19.27	0	5		
Respected in school	0	0	1	3	N/A	
%	0	0	3.57	15		
Understands NE's needs	46	71	8	2	29.36	**
%	59.74	65.14	28.57	10		
Up to date	0	0	2	1	N/A	
%	0	0	7.14	5		
Reliable	0	0	2	7	N/A	
%	0	0	7.14	35		
Confident	4	0	3	3	N/A	
%	5.19	0	10.71	15		
Challenging	3	6	0	2	N/A	
%	3.9	5.5	0	10		
Tactful	0	0	0	5	N/A	
%	0	0	0	25		

M= mentor, * denotes $p<0.05$, ** denotes $p<0.01$, N/A denotes cases where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one category and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Being 'constructive', χ^2 (3) = 22.07, p<0.01, and 'understands NE's professional needs', χ^2 (3) =29.36, p<0.01, were suggested as important qualities more frequently in Phases One and Two (when the NEs were students) than in Phases Three and Four (when the NEs were NQTs).

Being 'committed to mentoring', χ^2 (3) =22.26, p<0.01, was suggested most frequently in Phase Four. This appears to link with the finding discussed above, that in Phase Four NEs were more likely to state this as a reason for mentoring support being rated highly.

Mentor and Headteacher perceptions of student/NQT differences

Research suggests that mentors and headteachers are likely to perceive that students and NQTs have very different mentoring needs (e.g. Bush *et al,* 1996; Carney and Hagger, 1996). All of the mentors and headteachers involved in the case studies perceived this to be the case. There was a strong emphasis on students as 'learners' with mentors and headteachers generally suggesting that the difference between students' and NQTs' mentoring needs was that students needed their mentors to have a critical role:

> Students are much more primed to have a critical session. (Mentor - School 12)

> To a certain extent with NQTs it is an equal relationship, with students the mentor is more of a teacher trainer - that's the difference. (Headteacher - School 14)

> Students come in and expect to learn. (Mentor - School 11)

It was widely suggested that NQTs were qualified professionals and had to 'sink or swim':

> Students have a class teacher to fall back on, NQTs are on their own... if you muck it up when you're a student there's a classteacher in the background to

piece it all together but with NQTs it's their class and they have to sort it out. (Mentor - School 14)

NQTs have to face the harsh realities of life... it's die or flourish, sink or swim (Headteacher - School 14)

Students are only in school for a limited period of time, the class is not their own. NQTs have a class for a whole year and have all the responsibilities of that class. It is like having a baby, practising is never going to be the same as having to do everything yourself, making mistakes, learning how to cope. (Headteacher - School 10)

As an NQT you are a teacher ,you can get away with less... you are perceived by the parents and the school as a complete professional and there are very different expectations... from a school's perception it's much more of a sink or swim situation but it shouldn't be like that. (Mentor - School 14)

School Mentoring Structures

Mentoring support structures in place in participating schools were investigated mainly through case studies with additional supporting material concerning opportunities for observation of NEs collected across Phases Three and Four.

Formal mentoring structures:

It was found that schools had a wide variety of mentoring structures in place regardless of phase, although schools in Phases Three/Four appeared more likely to have some formal mentoring structures in place to support NEs than in Phases One and Two (see Tables 3.6, 4.6 and 5.6).

Across all phases, criteria for selecting mentors were generally vague or non-existent, and yet much has been written about the importance of choosing mentors carefully with

reference to their personal and professional qualities and skills (Carney and Hagger, 1996; Campbell and Kane, 1996; Yeomans, 1994).

With no written school guidelines on the mentor's role in any of the schools, the type and amount of mentoring was largely determined by the individual mentor. Mentors from all phases suggested the need for guidelines to clarify the role and to clarify the perceptions of mentoring within the school.

Only one of the schools across all the phases provided non-contact time for mentors to meet with their NEs. With no non-contact time it was impossible for Phase Three/Four mentors to observe their NEs. In Phases One and Two, NEs were all working within their mentors' classrooms and opportunities for observation were found.

The role of mentoring co-ordinator, where it existed appeared to vary widely in remit from school to school.

Across Phases Three and Four there was a decrease in the number of NEs who were observed. In both phases the numbers of NEs who were observed by their mentors was lower than might have been expected, with no more than 50% of Phase Three NEs being observed by their mentors and no more than 20% of Phase Four NEs being observed by their mentors.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of observation on a five-point scale. In both phases a minority of NEs perceived that observation was only 'quite important' or 'not at all important' suggesting that some NEs, at least, might have a certain lack of awareness of the role of observation in professional development (see Table 5.20)

Many student mentors were given additional school duties which they and their NEs perceived affected their ability to fulfil the mentor role.

Phase One/Two mentors were sometimes taken out of the classroom by the headteacher/senior management to fulfil other school duties such as supply cover or to spend time on areas of curriculum responsibility. In cases where mentoring was

perceived to be of at least equal priority to these other school duties then students generally suggested that this hadn't affected the quality of the mentoring. However, if other school duties were perceived to have taken priority over mentoring then mentors and their NEs perceived that removing the mentor from the classroom had affected the mentor's ability to effectively fulfil the mentor role.

Across all phases, headteacher and mentor perceptions of the formal structures that were in place in their schools often differed.

Informal mentoring support

Informal mentoring support was generally offered to NEs by staff other than the official mentor. Phase Three/Four NEs generally perceived that they received more informal support than students did although in all phases the amount of informal support offered varied greatly from school to school. In all phases informal support appeared to be influenced by the headteacher's attitude towards mentoring in each school. In schools where the headteacher was actively involved in the mentoring process, NEs received more informal support from other members of staff than in schools where this was not the case.

NEs in Phases Three and Four appeared to value the informal support of other staff members more than did NEs in Phases One and Two. It is possible to speculate that this is because the majority of students were teaching in their mentor's classroom and had access to their mentor and opportunities for contact most of the time whereas NQTs and their mentors had their own classroom and were often working in a different part of the school. Support was therefore needed from members of staff in the surrounding areas and was highly valued. In the one case where a student perceived that the mentor was not providing good support she highly valued the support of the other staff, similarly the two NQTs who perceived that their mentor was not providing good support also highly valued the support of other staff members (see Chapter Three, individual case studies).

In all phases, it appeared that informal mentoring support systems could not be left to happen by chance. Across all phases, there were cases where headteachers perceived that there was an informal support system in their schools to support the NEs but NEs perceived that there was not. Effective informal support systems appeared more likely to be in place if the school had a strong ethos of collaboration.

Summary of findings

Mentor Support

- Across all phases, NEs received mentor support that varied in perceived quality. There were no significant differences across the four phases in overall quality of support received.
- Across the phases, the reasons 'mentor was committed to mentoring' and 'mentor was positive' were suggested as reasons for mentor support being perceived as being of a *high* quality, significantly more frequently in certain phases than others. At a basic numerical level there were interesting changes across phases in the areas: 'mentor accepted NE', 'mentor was a good example' and 'mentor initiated meetings' (see Table 6.2)
- There were no significant changes across phases in the reasons given for mentor support being perceived as being of a *low* quality. However, at a basic numerical there were interesting changes across phases in the following areas: 'mentor had poor interpersonal skills', 'mentor was often unavailable', 'there was a lack of information and/or feedback given', 'the mentor was negative' and 'the mentor did not initiate meetings'(see Table 6.3).

Mentor/NE Relationship

- There were no significant differences between the four phases in overall quality of mentor/NE relationship.
- In all phases, there was a correlation between rating for mentor support and rating for mentor/NE relationship - when the mentor/NE relationship was rated highly by the NE then the mentor's support was also likely to be rated highly.

- NEs and mentors involved in the case studies suggested that the nature of the mentoring relationship changed across phases.

Amount of Time

- NEs received significantly more mentoring in Phases One and Two than in Phases Three and Four. However, the overall amount of mentoring was not significantly different between Phase One and Phase Two, or between Phases Three and Phase Four (see Figure 6.3)
- There was significantly more informal than formal mentoring across all four phases (see Figure 6.3)
- There was a significant reduction in the amounts of formal and informal mentoring over all four phases (see Figure 6.3) This was generally perceived to be appropriate by mentors and by NEs in Phases Three/Four but less likely to be seen as appropriate by NEs in Phases One and Two.
- In all phases, the amount of mentoring was correlated with the mentor support rating - when the amount of mentoring, whether formal or informal, received by the NE was high then the NE's rating of the mentor's support was also likely to be high (see Figure 6.3)

Areas where mentor support was needed

- There were significant changes over the four phases in how often five of the areas - 'curriculum', 'evaluating the NE's progress', 'children's individual needs', 'parents' and 'planning' - were selected as areas in which NEs perceived mentor support was most needed. (see Table 6.7) Apart from in these areas, NEs concerns appeared to remain remarkably stable across the four phases.
- NEs selection of the area 'teaching and learning' did not change significantly over the four phases, neither did 'classroom management' (see Table 6.7)
- In all phases NEs appeared to have accurate perceptions of what their future needs would be.

The Mentor Role

- Across all four phases, headteachers, mentors and NEs involved in the case studies unanimously perceived that the role 'to advise' was an appropriate mentor role; the roles 'to listen' and 'to encourage' were generally perceived to be appropriate mentor roles (see Table 6.8).
- The Personal domain was perceived to be more appropriate in Phases Three/Four than in Phases One and Two (see Table 6.8).
- Across all four phases, the mentor roles associated with the Educator element were generally less likely to be perceived as appropriate mentor roles than roles associated with the Trainer and Professional Supporter elements.
- Roles associated with the Educator element were selected by mentors as appropriate mentor roles most frequently in Phase Two (see Table 6.8).
- Across all four phases, NEs and headteachers generally perceived that the role 'to challenge' was appropriate. Mentors, particularly those in Phase One and Phases Three and Four were less likely to perceive that this was an appropriate role (see Table 6.8).
- In the questionnaire survey, NEs perceived that their mentors had fulfilled relatively similar roles across all four phases. Only three roles changed significantly across the phases: 'to be a friend', 'to encourage' and 'to encourage reflection' (see Table 6.9).
- The three roles in the Structural domain - 'to induct', 'to sponsor' and 'to negotiate' - were perceived to have been fulfilled less frequently than might have been expected across all four phases (see Table 6.9).
- The role 'to identify needs' was perceived to have been adopted relatively infrequently by Phase Three/Four mentors.
- Across all phases, certain roles were perceived to have been frequently fulfilled by mentors rated highly: 'to reassure', 'to listen', 'to advise' and 'to discuss'. The role of 'friend', was perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors whose support was rated highly more frequently in Phases Three and Four. Across all phases, the roles associated with the Educator element: 'to challenge' and 'to set targets', were not perceived to have been fulfilled frequently by mentors whose support was rated highly.

- In general, the greater the number of roles the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled, the better the perceived quality of the mentor's support (see Table 6.10).

Mentor Personal Qualities

- The quality 'being approachable' was selected particularly frequently across all phases (see Table 6.11).
- There were significant changes over the four phases in how often six of the qualities were suggested - 'accepting', 'available', 'committed', 'empathetic', 'constructive' and 'understands NE's professional needs' (see Table 6.11). The two qualities associated with supporting professional development - 'constructive' and 'understands NE's professional needs' - were stated significantly less frequently in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two.

Mentoring Structures:

- Schools had a wide variety of mentoring structures in place regardless of phase, although schools in Phases Three/Four were more likely to have some formal mentoring structures in place to support NEs in Phases One and Two (see Tables 3.6, 4.6 and 5.6).
- Across all phases the type and amount of mentoring was almost entirely determined by the individual mentor. Mentors from all phases suggested the need for guidelines to clarify the role and to clarify the perceptions of mentoring within the school.
- The role of mentoring co-ordinator, where it existed appeared to vary widely in remit from school to school.
- Phase One/Two mentors were often given additional school duties. If mentoring was not perceived to have at least equal priority with these other duties than mentors and their NEs perceived affected their ability to fulfil the mentor role.
- Across all phases, headteacher involvement appeared to help ensure that both the mentor and the NE felt well supported by the school.
- Across all phases, headteacher and mentor perceptions of the formal structures that were in place in their schools often differed.

- NEs in all phases generally received informal support from members of staff other than their designated mentor. NEs in Phases Three/Four appeared to receive more of this support than NEs in Phases One and Two and also appeared to value this support more.
- Across all phases, there were cases where headteachers perceived that there was an informal support system in their schools to support the NEs but NEs perceived that there was not. Effective informal support systems appeared more likely to be in place if the school had a strong ethos of collaboration.
- Across the Phases Three and Four there was a decrease in the number of NEs who were observed. In both phases the numbers of NEs who were observed by their mentors was lower than might have been expected (see Chapter Five).
- It appeared that some NEs were not fully aware of their need for continued professional development and of the role of observation in this professional development.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Validation Study

Introduction

A second set of questionnaires was used to investigate the perceptions of a new cohort of NEs for the purposes of validation of the main research findings. This second cohort undertook a one-year, primary PGCE course at the University of Leicester between September 1997 and July 1998 (i.e. the year after the main cohort) and were NQTs between September 1998 and July 1999. This chapter compares the main findings across these two cohorts. The cohorts are referred to as Cohort One (the main study) and Cohort Two (the replication data). Findings are reported under the following headings:

- quality of mentor support
- mentor/NE relationship
- amount of time
- areas where support was needed
- mentor roles
- mentor qualities
- observation

Questionnaires were distributed at the same points in time for the second cohort as used in the main study i.e. Phase One questionnaires were distributed and completed in the week after the first teaching practice (April); Phase Two questionnaires were distributed and completed in the week after final teaching practice (June) and Phase Three questionnaires were distributed at the end of the first term as an NQT (December). Phase Four questionnaires were not sent to Cohort Two because the month before the questionnaires would have been sent out the participants were contacted as part of a separate University of Leicester research study on the experiences of NQTs and it was thought that two similar surveys in the space of a month from the same institution would place too great a burden on NQTs. Certain changes were expected between the

cohorts in Phase Three due to the introduction of Career Entry Profiles for NQTs in September 1998 (TTA, 1997). With the emphasis placed by Career Entry Profiles on target-setting for continuing professional development, it was expected that differences, particularly in mentor roles, would be found across the two cohorts.

For Phase One, Cohort Two, 146 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 97 completed and returned - a return rate of 66%. In Phase Two, 146 questionnaires were distributed and 124 were completed and returned - a return rate of 85%. In Phase Three, 110 questionnaires were distributed and 34 were completed and returned - a return rate of 31%.

At the end of this chapter is a critique of the methodology.

Additional Survey

Quality of Mentor Support

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of the mentoring they had received from their mentor on a five-point scale. Responses are shown in Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3.

Table 7.1. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in *Phase One* for the two cohorts.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Cohort One	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	25 (32%)	15 (20%)	13 (17%)	5 (6%)
Cohort Two	97 (100%)	45 (46%)	27 (28%)	14 (15%)	6 (6%)	5 (5%)

Table 7.2. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in *Phase Two* for the two cohorts.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Cohort One	109 (100%)	30 (28%)	32 (29%)	22 (20%)	16 (15%)	9 (8%)
Cohort Two	124 (100%)	39 (31%)	32 (26%)	21 (17%)	21 (17%)	11 (9%)

Table 7.3. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor support ratings in *Phase Three* for the Two Cohorts.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Cohort One	28 (100%)	7 (25%)	7 (25%)	6 (21%)	6 (21%)	2 (7%)
Cohort Two	33 (100%)	10 (30%)	10 (30%)	6 (18%)	4 (12%)	3 (9%)

Both cohorts of NEs received mentor support that varied in perceived quality across the phases. To conduct more formal analysis on this data, means were calculated and analysis-of-variance was used to investigate the significance of any changes between the two cohorts at each phase. Although the main effect of cohort was marginally significant, with Cohort Two tending to give better ratings of support than Cohort One, $F(1,463) = 3.45$, $p = 0.064$, there was no main effect of phase or interaction between phase and cohort in support ratings - the perceived quality of mentor support was consistent across the two cohorts.

Mentor/NE relationship

Respondents were asked to rate the relationship they had with their mentor on a five-point scale where 1= 'poor' and 5 = 'good'. Responses are shown in Tables 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6.

Table 7.4. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor relationship ratings in *Phase One* for the two cohorts.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Cohort One	77 (100%)	19 (25%)	35 (45%)	11 (14%)	9 (12%)	3 (4%)
Cohort Two	97 (100%)	41 (43%)	37 (38%)	9 (9%)	9 (9%)	1 (1%)

Table 7.5. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor relationship ratings in *Phase Two* for the two cohorts.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Cohort One	109 (100%)	30 (27%)	32 (29%)	29 (27%)	12 (11%)	6 (6%)
Cohort Two	124 (100%)	37 (30%)	43 (35%)	24 (19%)	13 (10%)	7 (6%)

Table 7.6. Number of NEs giving each of the five possible mentor relationship ratings in *Phase Three* for the two cohorts.

	Total	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Cohort One	28 (100%)	8 (29%)	7 (25%)	11 (39%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)
Cohort Two	33 (100%)	12 (36%)	8 (24%)	10 (30%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)

Both cohorts of NEs perceived that their relationships with their mentors varied in quality across the phases. To conduct more formal analysis on this data, means were calculated and a two-way-analysis-of-variance was used to investigate the significance of

any changes between the two cohorts at each phase. Although the main effect of cohort was marginally significant, with Cohort Two tending to give better ratings of relationship than Cohort One, $F(1,462) = 3.29$, $p = 0.071$, there was no main effect of phase or interaction between phase and cohort in relationship ratings - the perceived quality of the mentor/NE relationship was consistent across two cohorts.

Ratings of the relationship were correlated with the ratings for mentor support. There were high correlations between support and relationship ratings observed for all four phases for both cohorts:

Cohort One: Phase 1, $r(75) = 0.809$; Phase 2, $r(107) = 0.856$; Phase 3, $r(26) = 0.827$
Cohort Two: Phase 1 $r(95) = 0.79$; Phase 2, $r(122) = 0.858$; Phase 3, $r(31) = 0.75$

To test for differences between these correlations, individual correlations were adjusted using Fisher's z transformation and a z statistic was calculated for each cohort pairing. None of these correlations were significantly different from each other between the two cohorts. The relationship between the support rating and the relationship rating thus appears to be stable across the two cohorts. In both cohorts, it appeared that when the mentor/NE relationship was rated highly by the NE then it was likely that the mentor's support would also be rated highly.

Amount of Time

NEs were asked to estimate how often they had met formally and informally with their mentor.

As shown in Tables 7.7 and 7.8, for both cohorts the frequency of informal mentoring was higher in Phases One and Two than in Phases Three and Four and informal mentoring occurred more frequently than formal mentoring.

Table 7.7. Number of NEs giving each of the five different frequency ratings for *formal* mentoring across the phases for each of the two cohorts.

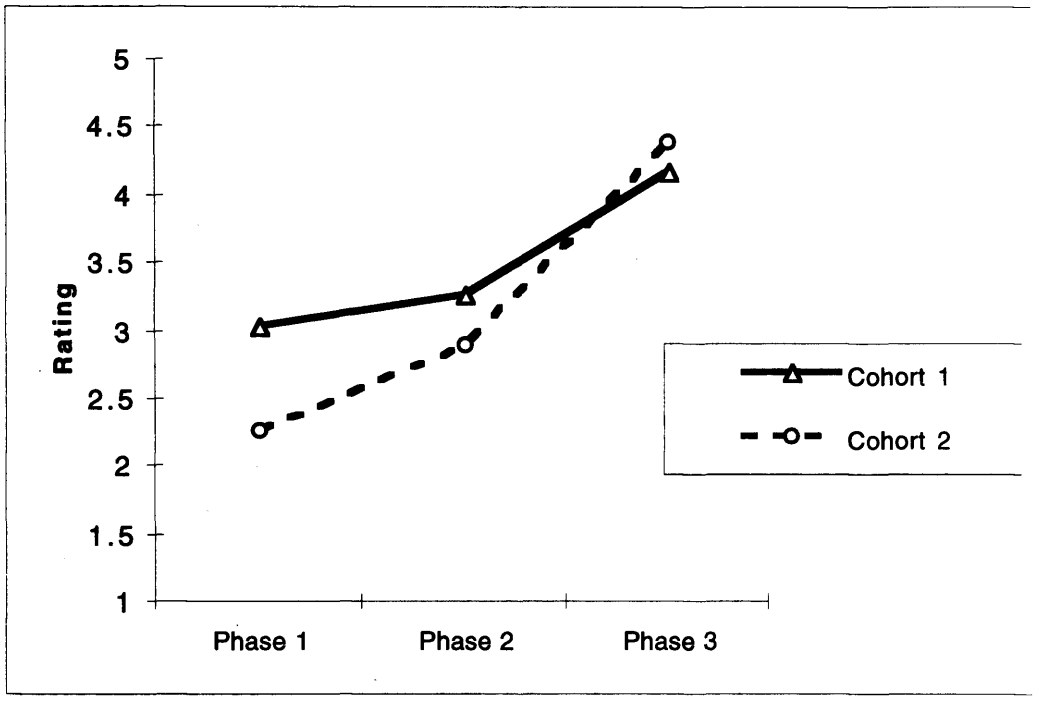
[illegible]	[illegible]	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Phase One	Cohort One	77 (100%)	10 (13%)	17 (22%)	27 (35%)	7 (9%)	16 (21%)
	Cohort Two	96 (100%)	31 (32%)	25 (27%)	29 (30%)	8 (8%)	3 (3%)
Phase Two	Cohort One	109 (100%)	10 (9%)	12 (11%)	49 (45%)	14 (13%)	24 (22%)
	Cohort Two	124 (100%)	22 (18%)	26 (21%)	40 (32%)	16 (13%)	20 (16%)
Phase Three	Cohort One	28 (100%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	8 (28%)	4 (14%)	15 (54%)
	Cohort Two	33 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	7 (21%)	4 (12%)	22 (67%)

Table 7.8. Number of NEs giving each of the five different frequency ratings for *informal* mentoring across the phases for each of the two cohorts.

		Total	Daily	2-3 times per week	Weekly	Every 2-3 weeks	Less
Phase One	Cohort One	77 (100%)	59 (76%)	13 (17%)	2 (3%)	3 (4%)	0 (0%)
	Cohort Two	96 (100%)	79 (83%)	10 (10%)	4 (4%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)
Phase Two	Cohort One	109 (100%)	82 (76%)	14 (13%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)	4 (4%)
	Cohort Two	124 (100%)	90 (73%)	15 (12%)	13 (10%)	4 (3%)	2 (2%)
Phase Three	Cohort One	28 (100%)	12 (43%)	9 (32%)	3 (11%)	3 (11%)	1 (4%)
	Cohort Two	33 (100%)	24 (73%)	3 (9%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	4 (12%)

Formal mentoring means for the two cohorts are shown in Figure 7.1. A two-way analysis-of-variance on this data revealed a main effect of cohort (with Cohort One generally receiving less formal mentoring), $F(1,462) = 5.61$, $p<0.05$, a main effect of phase (with a reduction in mentoring in later phases), $F(2,462) = 56.09$, $p<0.01$, and an interaction between cohort and phase as apparent in Figure 7.1, $F(2,462) = 4.69$, $p<0.01$, with Cohort Two showing a greater decrease in formal mentoring time over the phases than Cohort One.

Figure 7.1. Mean ratings of time spent on formal mentoring over the phases for each of the two cohorts.



For informal mentoring there was again a main effect of phase (with a reduction in mentoring in later phases), $F(2,462) = 9,39$, $p<0.01$, but no main effect of cohort or interaction between cohort and phase. Despite the small interaction for formal mentoring, in general the amount of formal and informal mentoring received by NEs was relatively consistent across the two cohorts, showing rapid reductions in both formal and informal mentoring time from phase to phase.

Ratings of the amount of time spent on formal and informal mentoring were correlated with the earlier ratings for mentor support. These ratings were found to be correlated at each of the four occasions on which they were obtained for each cohort:

Cohort One: Phase 1, $r(75) = 0.428$ (informal), $r(75) = 0.316$ (formal); Phase 2, $r(107) = 0.463$ (informal), $r(107) = 0.417$ (formal); Phase 3, $r(26) = 0.494$ (informal), $r(26) = 0.526$ (formal).
Cohort Two: Phase 1, $r(95) = 0.579$ (informal), $r(95) = 0.467$ (formal); Phase 2, $r(122) = 0.616$ (informal), $r(122) = 0.421$ (formal); Phase 3 $r(31) = 0.697$ (informal), $r(31) = 0.319$ (formal)

Detailed analysis reveals that the difference in correlation between formal and informal mentoring is not significant for any of the four phases, $t(74) = 0.892$, $t(106) = 0.457$, $t(25) = 0.192$, $t(17) = 0.881$, all $p>0.05$, and that the correlations are not significantly different from one another from one phase to the next (maximum z for informal = 0.36, p = 0.36, maximum z for formal = 1.11, p = 0.13).

The relationship between the support rating and the amount of time thus appears to be stable across the two cohorts, and roughly equal whether formal or informal mentoring is assessed. In both cohorts, across all phases, it appears that when the amount of mentoring, whether formal or informal, received by the NE is high then the NE's rating of the mentor's support is also likely to be high.

Areas where Support was Needed

Participants were asked to select five areas from a pre-determined list in which they perceived they had needed the most mentor support. Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using χ^2 comparisons as shown in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9. NEs' perceptions of the areas in which they needed the most mentor support across all phases (and expressed as the percentage of all NEs in each phase).

	Phase 1			*Phase 2*			*Phase 3*		
Cohort	*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*	
time management	19	26		25	23		5	6	
%	24.68	26.8		22.94	18.55		17.86	17.65	
cl'rm management	20	29		26	33		8	7	
%	25.97	29.9		23.85	26.61		28.57	20.59	
Curriculum	11	18		13	25		9	11	
%	14.29	18.56		11.93	20.16		32.14	32.35	
resources	24	38		45	50		17	21	
%	31.17	39.18		41.28	40.32		60.71	64.71	
Behaviour	51	41	**	56	52		16	14	
%	66.23	42.27		51.38	41.94		57.14	41.18	
Individual needs	42	31	**	45	41		7	4	
%	54.55	31.96		41.28	33.06		25	11.76	
Assessment/record k'ing	42	66		65	59		19	20	
%	54.55	68.04		59.63	47.58		67.86	61.76	
Display	6	9		8	14		2	2	
%	7.79	9.28		7.34	11.29		7.14	5.88	
Lesson planning	21	17		15	25		8	4	
%	27.27	17.53		13.76	20.16		28.57	11.76	
expectations of children	29	39		36	32		7	3	
%	37.66	40.21		33.03	25.81		25	8.82	
Expectations of student	7	11		14	17		0	2	
%	9.09	11.34		12.84	13.71		0	5.88	
School procedures	27	39		52	51		17	18	
%	35.06	40.21		47.71	41.13		60.71	55.88	
Administration	21	20		33	40		11	17	
%	27.27	20.62		30.28	32.26		39.29	52.94	
Parents	14	20		20	37	*	15	14	
%	18.18	20.62		18.35	29.84		53.57	41.18	
Extra-curricular	0	0		4	5		1	1	
%	0	0		3.67	4.03		3.57	2.94	
Adult management	6	10		21	25		3	3	
%	7.79	10.31		19.27	20.16		10.71	8.82	
Evaluate NE's progress	31	39		42	36		3	7	
%	40.26	40.21		38.53	29.03		10.71	20.59	
Teaching and learning	9	13		16	6	*	5	5	
%	11.69	13.4		14.68	4.84		17.86	14.71	

Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using chi-squared comparisons, * means that the difference between cohorts is significant, $p<0.05$, ** if $p<0.01$. No significance testing was done for comparisons where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one cell and chi-squared could not be calculated, this had most effect on Phase Three where the number of respondents was relatively small.

Table 7.10. NEs perceptions of the areas that they were going to need most mentor support in during the subsequent phase (and expressed as the percentage of all NEs).

	Phase 1			*Phase 2*			*Phase 3*		
Cohort	*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*	
time management	5	5		8	6		1	3	
%	6.49	5.15		7.34	4.84		3.57	8.82	
cl'rm management	14	7	*	15	8		2	2	
%	18.18	7.22		13.76	6.45		7.14	5.88	
curriculum	6	10		21	28		7	3	
%	7.79	10.31		19.27	22.58		25	8.82	
resources	4	6		15	14		1	2	
%	5.19	6.19		13.76	11.29		3.57	5.88	
Behaviour	17	16		16	12		6	3	
%	22.08	16.49		14.68	9.68		21.43	8.82	
Individual needs	19	17		14	20		5	7	
%	24.68	17.53		12.84	16.13		17.86	20.59	
Assessment/record k'ing	53	58		55	56		10	19	
%	68.83	59.79		50.46	45.16		35.71	58.82	
Display	0	2		0	0		0	0	
%	0	2.06		0	0		0	0	
Lesson planning	16	16		0	4		2	0	
%	20.78	16.49		0	3.23		7.14	0	
Expectations of children	12	17		11	10		5	1	
%	15.58	17.53		10.09	8.06		17.86	2.94	
expectations of NE	0	4		8	0		3	0	
%	0	4.12		7.34	0		10.71	0	
School procedures	13	7	*	34	22	*	5	1	
%	16.88	7.22		31.19	17.74		17.86	2.94	
Administration	5	4		6	10		4	8	
%	6.49	4.12		5.5	8.06		14.29	23.53	
Parents	5	1		14	12		3	3	
%	6.49	1.03		12.84	9.68		10.71	8.82	
Extra-curricular	0	2		0	2		0	0	
%	0	2.06		0	1.61		0	0	
Adult management	5	7		2	2		1	1	
%	6.49	7.22		1.83	1.61		3.57	2.94	
Evaluate NE's progress	17	10	*	4	4		2	4	
%	22.08	10.31		3.67	3.23		7.14	11.76	
Teaching and learning	5	6		2	5		1	1	
%	6.49	6.19		1.83	4.03		3.57	2.94	

Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using chi-squared comparisons, * means that the difference between cohorts is significant, $p<0.05$, ** if $p<0.01$. No significance testing was done for comparisons where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one cell and chi-squared could not be calculated, this had most effect on Phase Three where the number of respondents was relatively small.

There are few significant differences between the two cohorts in the areas that NEs perceived they needed the most mentor support. However, the significant differences that do emerge between the two cohorts are relatively small in magnitude and do not appear to represent any theoretically consistent pattern across categories or phases. In general then, perceptions of areas where mentor support was needed were consistent from year to year.

NEs were asked to state the areas that they expected to need most mentor support in during the subsequent phase. The expectations was compared across the Two Cohorts, as shown in Table 7.10.

As in Table 7.9, there are few significant differences between the two cohorts in the areas that NEs perceived they were going to need the most mentor support during the subsequent phase. One interesting exception is in the area of 'school procedures' which Cohort Two seemed to be less concerned about than Cohort One. The reason for this is not clear. In general, perceptions of areas where mentor support was going to be needed were consistent from year to year.

Mentor Role

NEs were asked to select the roles they perceived their mentors to have actually fulfilled at each phase from a pre-determined list. Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using χ^2 comparisons as shown in Table 7.11.

Although there are few significant differences between the two cohorts in Phases Two and Three in the roles that NEs perceived their mentors had fulfilled, there are significant differences between cohorts in selection of seven of the roles in Phase One. As discussed above, it might have been expected that differences would have been observed between the two cohorts because of the introduction of Career Entry Profiles (TTA, 1997). However, the impact of Career Entry Profiles on the roles Phase Three mentors fulfilled appears to have been relatively small based on these data.

Table 7.11. Roles NEs perceived their mentors to have fulfilled during each phase (expressed as the percentage of NEs selecting each role in each phase).

	Phase 1			*Phase 2*			*Phase 3*		
Cohort	*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*	
Encourage	65	77		73	80		14	24	
%	84.42	79.38		66.97	64.52		50	73.53	
Reassure	48	69		57	66		19	23	
%	62.34	71.13		52.29	53.23		67.86	70.59	
listen	45	67		55	85	**	13	24	*
%	58.44	69.07		50.46	68.55		46.43	73.53	
Friend	21	53	**	43	58		14	21	
%	27.27	54.64		39.45	46.77		50	64.71	
Induct	20	39	*	36	40		11	11	
%	25.97	40.21		33.03	32.26		39.29	32.35	
Sponsor	5	14		14	16		3	3	
%	6.49	14.43		12.84	12.9		10.71	8.82	
Negotiate	10	35	**	24	26		9	6	
%	12.99	36.08		22.02	20.97		32.14	17.65	
Advise	59	75		73	88		15	21	
%	76.62	77.32		66.97	70.97		53.57	64.71	
Discuss	61	81		75	91		21	23	
%	79.22	83.51		68.81	73.39		75	70.59	
Foresee problems	39	55		51	55		10	15	
%	50.65	56.7		46.79	44.35		35.71	44.12	
Coach	12	33	**	20	29		6	5	
%	15.58	34.02		18.35	23.39		21.43	14.71	
Identify needs	21	29		31	40		8	6	
%	27.27	29.9		28.44	32.26		28.57	17.65	
Clarify	26	52	**	41	45		13	16	
%	33.77	53.61		37.61	36.29		46.43	47.06	
Reflect	51	60		55	69		8	11	
%	66.23	61.86		50.46	55.65		28.57	32.35	
Set targets	19	47	**	29	42		4	9	
%	24.68	48.45		26.61	33.87		14.29	26.47	
Focus	25	37		27	31		10	7	
%	32.47	38.14		24.77	25		35.71	20.59	
Challenge	16	41	**	26	41		6	9	
%	20.78	42.27		23.85	33.06		21.43	26.47	

Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using chi-squared comparisons, * means that the difference between cohorts is significant, $p<0.05$, ** if $p<0.01$. No significance testing was done for comparisons where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one cell and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Table 7.12. NEs' perceptions of the personal qualities mentors need to have across phases (and expressed as the percentage of all NEs in each phase)

	Phase 1			*Phase 2*			*Phase 3*		
Cohort	*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*		*One*	*Two*	
Accepting	31	21	**	36	29		3	9	
%	40.26	21.65		33.03	23.39		10.71	26.47	
Approachable	58	66		65	65		14	28	**
%	75.32	68.04		59.63	52.42		50	85.29	
Available	20	24		45	29	**	1	16	**
%	25.97	24.74		41.28	23.39		3.57	47.06	
Committed to m	20	52	**	44	55		3	18	**
%	25.97	53.61		40.37	44.35		10.71	55.88	
Empathetic	44	31	**	29	20		10	17	
%	57.14	31.96		26.61	16.13		35.71	50	
Open-minded	12	10		5	18	*	1	11	**
%	15.58	10.31		4.59	14.52		3.57	32.35	
Patient	12	15		12	11		7	6	
%	15.58	15.46		11.01	8.87		25	17.65	
Positive	37	53		44	64		12	14	
%	48.05	54.64		40.37	51.61		42.86	41.18	
Sense of humour	4	9		7	3		2	0	
%	5.19	9.28		6.42	2.42		7.14	0	
Constructively critical	49	54		48	71	*	6	9	
%	63.64	55.67		44.04	57.26		21.43	26.47	
Experienced teacher	15	3	**	4	5		3	3	
%	19.48	3.09		3.67	4.03		10.71	8.82	
Good communicator	14	10		9	9		5	2	
%	18.18	10.31		8.26	7.26		17.86	5.88	
Good listener	12	24		13	22		5	7	
%	15.58	24.74		11.93	17.74		17.86	20.59	
Good teacher	12	10		11	20		0	1	
%	15.58	10.31		10.09	16.13		0	2.94	
Understands role of M	9	10		21	8	**	0	1	
%	11.69	10.31		19.27	6.45		0	2.94	
Understand prof needs	46	50		71	73		8	10	
%	59.74	51.55		65.14	58.87		28.57	29.41	
Up to date	0	1		0	3		2	0	
%	0	1.03		0	2.42		7.14	0	
Challenging	3	3		6	14		0	2	
%	3.9	3.09		5.5	11.29		0	5.88	

Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using chi-squared comparisons, * means that the difference between cohorts is significant, $p<0.05$, ** if $p<0.01$. No significance testing was done for comparisons where expected frequencies less than five were present in more than one cell and chi-squared could not be calculated.

Mentor Qualities

Participants were asked about the personal qualities they perceived that mentors should have. The responses were grouped into a number of categories for the purposes of coding and analysis (see Chapter Two). Responses for the two cohorts have been compared at each phase using χ^2 comparisons as shown in Table 7.12.

At each phase there are small but significant differences in how often four different qualities were stated by respondents, however, these differences do not appear to be consistent across the phases and no clear pattern emerges to suggest any systematic differences in qualities between the two cohorts. Across both cohorts, regardless of phase, the quality 'being approachable' was the quality most frequently stated. Being positive was also consistently regarded as being important by both cohorts at each phase.

Observation of NQT

Phase Three NQTs were asked whether their teaching had been observed.

- 14 of the 28 Phase Three NQTs (50%). had been observed by their mentor in Cohort One.
- 15 of the 33 Phase Three NQTs (45%) had been observed by their mentor in Cohort Two.

The percentage of NEs observed over the two cohorts appears stable.

Respondents were asked to rate how important they perceived observation to be for an NQT on a five-point scale. In Cohort One, 25 out of a total of 28 respondents gave a response to this question. In Cohort Two, 31 out of a total of 33 respondents gave a response to this question as shown in Table 7.13.

Table 7.13. Phase Three NQTs' perceptions of the importance of observation in Cohorts One and Two.

	Total	Essential	Very Important	Important	Quite Important	Not important
Cohort One	25 (100%)	4 (16%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)	6 (24%)	1 (4%)
Cohort Two	31 (100%)	13 (42%)	11 (35%)	4 (13%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)

It can be seen from Table 7.13 that perceptions did appear to change slightly across the two cohorts with NEs in Cohort Two being more likely to perceive that mentoring was 'essential' or 'very important' (77% as compared to 52%).

Conclusion

The replication of the questionnaire study on Cohort Two has explored a very wide range of individual perceptions for the two cohorts. In a number of specific instances there were significant differences between the two cohorts. However, the differences that were observed were relatively small and did not appear to represent any systematic changes between cohorts. Overall the replication has produced results extremely close to those obtained from Cohort One and the second cohort serves to successfully validate the main research findings from Cohort One.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Critique

Learning to teach is a complex process that requires support (Maynard and Furlong, 1993, McIntyre and Hagger, 1993). It involves acquiring a set of skills, a coherent view of children, an understanding of the curriculum and a knowledge of how to support children's learning in a complex and variable setting (Edwards and Collison, 1996). It involves a substantial investment of self and the NE's own images and beliefs will have a powerful influence on the process (Elliott and Calderhead, 1993; Frost, 1993; Smith and Aldred, 1993).

When considering how the process of learning to teach can best be supported, it is useful to refer to the learning theories of Vygotsky and his followers (see, for example, Mercer, 1995; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's work on learning principally focuses on children. However, the processes he describes apply equally to the adult learner (Tharp and Gallimore, 1998).

Vygotsky proposed that learning is essentially a social activity - learners become more knowledgeable as they engage in mutual activities with expert others. Central to Vygotsky's view of learning is the zone of proximal development (ZPD) - the distance between the learner's actual development and his or her potential level of development with assistance from a more expert other. Through assistance the learner accomplishes something that would not have been achievable alone and therefore is intellectually accelerated (Wood, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978). The guidance of an 'expert' is vital as the learner moves from a position of needing support to being able to operate independently:

> Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in co-operation with his peers [sic]. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement. (Vygotsky, 1978: 90)

Vygotsky's ideas were developed by Bruner and his colleagues who proposed the concept of 'scaffolding' (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976). The term 'scaffolding' refers to the range of activities an expert might use when supporting a learner in achieving goals that would otherwise be beyond the individual, i.e. when assisting the learner to reach a potential level of development. As the learner becomes more proficient the expert is able gradually to remove the scaffolding. Eventually the learner will no longer need that support and will be able to operate autonomously until the next new learning situation.

Taking this view of learning, the mentor can be seen to have a crucial role in supporting the NE's professional development and research has shown that if student-teachers are placed in classrooms without a mentor then learning is likely to be minimal (Dunne and Harvard, 1993). As discussed in Chapter One, Maynard and Furlong (1995) propose that mentors need to adapt their role to meet the changing needs of the NE, initially giving the student information about teaching through acting as a role model in the stage 'Beginning Teaching' and then moving to the stage of 'Supervised Teaching' where they assist the student's learning through planning with the student, giving the student manageable tasks with small groups, coaching and training, gradually moving through the stage of 'From Teaching to Learning' where less assistance is given to the point of 'Autonomous Teaching' where the student develops into becoming a fully autonomous professional. In such a way, the mentor is 'scaffolding' the student's learning.

Although there is much to agree with in Maynard and Furlong's model, it is debatable whether this progression from 'Beginning Teaching' to 'Autonomous Teaching' will be completed within the period of ITE. Other research has suggested that NQTs may not be as advanced in their professional development as this model suggests (e.g. Tickle, 1993, 1996; Vonk, 1996). Of more use is a model of mentoring that spans the period of ITE and the NQT year.

For the purposes of this research study, an adapted version of Sampson and Yeoman's (1994) theoretical model of mentoring is proposed that applies to NEs whether students or NQTs (see page 14). Within the role of being a mentor it is suggested that there are three domains of support a mentor needs to provide:

- **personal support** i.e. being a friend
- **structural support** i.e. inducting the NE into school life
- **professional support** i.e. assisting the NE's professional development.

When operating within the 'professional support' domain, the mentor will need to take on a variety of roles in order to scaffold the NE's learning, essentially moving from the position of *trainer* i.e. where the mentor offers intensive support through coaching, instructing, telling, guiding and encouraging reflection in order for the NE to gain in competence and confidence, and then to the position of *educator* i.e. where the mentor continues to assist professional development through challenging the NE's thinking and guiding him/her towards a deeper reflection on practice and towards a wider understanding of the theoretical, ethical and political issues of teaching. Additionally, if mentors are to work effectively within the professional support domain, research suggests that it is very important that they offer support i.e. to listen to the NE and to support the NE emotionally (e.g. Bleach, 1999; Bush et al, 1996). They may also be required to assess the NE. The 'professional support' domain is therefore subdivided into four role elements:

- 'Professional Supporter'
- 'Trainer'
- 'Educator'
- 'Assessor'

Each of the domains and elements are associated with individual mentor roles as shown in Table 2.6 (page 49).

Tharp and Gallimore suggest that within a Vygotskian framework learning does not occur uniformly or in a set of discrete stages:

> The life-long learning by any individual is made up of regulated ZPD sequences - from other-assistance to self-assistance - recurring over and over again for the development of new capacities. For every individual, at any point in time, there

> will be a mix of other regulation, self-regulation and automised processes. (1998: 103)

Similarly, it is not suggested here that there is a simple linear progression from supporter to trainer to educator to assessor but rather that the dominance of each of these elements, just as the dominance of the separate domains, will continually change and shift depending on the context of the learning. As Sampson and Yeomans suggest 'the mentor's role is complex and multifaceted and the way it is performed can change rapidly within the course of a few minutes.' (1994: 63) If, as Tharp and Gallimore state, 'teaching can be said to occur when assistance is offered at points in the ZPD at which performance requires assistance' (1998: 106), then it is vital that mentors operate flexibly, continually selecting the roles that will best meet their NEs' changing needs.

It is possible to criticise the above model of the mentoring role as being too simplistic and to suggest that such a model has only limited use in the analysis of a complex social phenomenon such as mentoring. However, while accepting that some of the richness of the data would indeed be lost, the focus of the research was on the comparison of mentoring across phases and it was believed in order to be make *valid* comparisons of the data across phases, a system needed to be developed in order to allow the data to be coded and analysed in as systematic and structured a way as possible. The gains, within the context of this research project were therefore felt to outweigh the losses. A further possible criticism of such a model is that the list of individual roles is not wide-ranging or comprehensive enough and that the categories could have been defined further to include, for example, actions. However, it was found that the more the roles were broken down the greater the level of subjectivity in coding the data and this would necessarily call into question the validity and reliability of the conclusions drawn.

Methodology Critique

Because this was an exploratory research study, aiming for insight into and interpretation of a highly complex social phenomenon, it was felt that an essentially

qualitative approach was the most appropriate. Qualitative approaches have the advantage of allowing the researcher to keep as open a mind as possible with the data to be subject-driven rather than researcher-led (Bogdan and Birklen, 1992; Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). It is expected that as data is collected and analysed the focus will become progressively more defined. This was indeed what happened with the initial case study findings informing the development of the questionnaire surveys and the questionnaire surveys themselves developing from phase to phase (although it was felt important to keep them similar enough that valid comparisons could be made across phases).

It was decided that a multi-site case study combined with a series of questionnaire surveys would best meet the research aims - to investigate the mentoring received and perceived to be necessary for NEs across four different phases of professional development. The case studies allowed a detailed picture to be built up of the complex interactions between individuals within the school setting. However, with case studies there is the danger is that the findings are unique to the situation or individuals studied and it may be difficult to make generalisations for the general population. As the aim of the research was to look at NEs in general, a questionnaire survey was included as well. The questionnaires provided the opportunity to explore case-study findings across a broader population by gathering data suitable for statistical analysis. In most cases the findings of interest did appear to generalise to the populations used, allowing us some confidence that these findings are at least general to NEs coming out of the University of Leicester's School of Education in this period. However, having a sufficiently large sample size to make such inferences necessitates reducing the data analysed for individuals to a relatively simplistic, numerical format. While this does allow generalisation of broad findings to the population it may often obscure the reality of the situations experienced by real mentors and NEs. By using questionnaire surveys combined with a case study approach, it was possible to generalise the findings (albeit only to a certain, limited extent - see above) and to investigate how these findings actually applied in specific situations.

Although each of the methods described above has its own particular strengths, there is the danger of getting an incomplete or inaccurate picture of the situation if data are

collected in only one way and/or from only one person. A key limitation of observational research is that the focus is on perceptions. As Dey suggests:

> We cannot rely on subjects to give a rational account of their intentions, nor can we infer intentions unequivocally from their behaviour. Neither in action nor in intention can we find an unequivocal guide to interpreting behaviour and such interpretations are therefore inherently contestable. (Dey, 1994: 37)

However, through developing a set of triangulated data and replicating findings, greater claims for reliability can be made (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Cohen and Manion, 1989). The concept of triangulation - between-individuals and between-methods - is essential to this research. In order to ensure that as accurate a picture as possible was built up, data was collected in a number of different ways - through logs, journals, interviews, videos, questionnaires - and from a number of different sources - headteacher, mentor and NE perceptions. In this way a set of triangulated data was developed, allowing greater researcher confidence in the reliability of the data gathered and additionally, highlighting areas where different individuals or instruments provided interesting insights of their own.

As made clear in Chapter One, one of the fundamental aims of this research was to explore NEs' perceptions of the mentoring support they receive and perceive that they need. As such it was to be expected that the research findings would rely to a large extent on the perceptions of the NEs themselves. It is, however, acknowledged that NEs' perceptions may not represent a complete and balanced evaluation of the quality of mentoring. While it may be reasonably assumed that NEs' perceptions are likely to be accurate in the evaluation of the quality of personal mentor support received, it cannot be assumed that NEs will necessarily be able to accurately evaluate the quality of the mentor support in assisting their professional development for, as a variety of studies have found, NEs do not necessarily have accurate perceptions of their professional long-term needs (Carney and Hagger, 1996; Vonk, 1996; Tickle, 1990). However, while acknowledging this limitation, it is also important to accept that there is no simple way of objectively measuring the quality of mentoring and for an exploratory study it was considered that the reliance on perceptions was justified. It is, none the less, important

to remain aware that perceptions are merely an attempt to tap an underlying construct of mentoring quality.

It is important to recognise that this is a piece of observational research and, as such, there may be fundamental limitations to the conclusions that can be drawn. While it is possible to measure associations between variables of interest, it cannot be concluded which causal links are actually operating. For this, experimental or quasi-experimental designs, in which one or more of the variables of interest are actively manipulated, are necessary. It should of course be noted that such experimental designs are rarely practically or ethically possible in the classroom setting (Miller, 1991; Swanson and Chapman, 1994).

It is also important to recognise that this was an exploratory study seeking to investigate a complex social phenomenon and by using different methods of data collection and analyses it might have been possible to have gone deeper into the problematic nature of mentoring.

Woods talks of social reality operating at 'many different levels' (1996: 38) and suggests that, for research to be meaningful, there is a need to go beyond straight forward description to use 'thick' description (Geertz, 1973), i.e. to provide a fully interpretative, richly-detailed text that 'gives the context of the experience, states the intention and meanings that organised the experience and reveals the experience as a process' (Woods, 1996: 58) or as Denzin suggests 'plunges the reader into the interior, feeling, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching worlds of subjective human experience' (1995: 16).

Within the context of this research, the analysis of the mentor/NE interactions is limited to identification of the roles mentors operated in. Through using 'thick description' it would have been possible to go deeper into the complex nature of the interactions - to attempt to peel away the 'many layers of meaning' (Berger, 1966: 34). An initial attempt to provide a more detailed analysis of interactions was attempted on a sample of the videos collected. A sequential data analysis software package called MACSHAPA (Sanderson *et al*, 1994), that allows quantitative representation of interactive patterns in

video data, was used to examine critical sequential dependencies i.e. to explore patterns in the roles being undertaken by the mentor and the strategies used by the mentor over the course of each mentorial and also to collect basic quantitative data such as the number of words spoken, the mean number of words per utterance and the number of openings/initiations by the mentor and by the NE.

However, although this analysis undoubtedly provided detailed and interesting information about the nature of the individual mentoring interactions, it was decided not to report or extend this method of analysis in the context of the current research project. There are a number of generally accepted difficulties with interpreting richly detailed, 'thick' descriptions. Critical issues here are the distinct possibility of researcher bias, and the question of generalizability of findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

In order to claim maximum reliability and validity for any 'rich, thick' analysis it is necessary to use explicit systematic methods of analysis to draw conclusions and test them carefully. The methods adopted clearly need to be credible, dependable and replicable in qualitative terms. Although MACSHAPA provides a credible and systematic framework within which to record and analyse interactions, the reliability, interpretability, and generalizability of any analysis would always depend critically on the degree to which individual interactions were truly representative of the broader population of interactions within the group being studied. One of the features of the data throughout this research has been the wide variety of experiences for individual NEs and the variable approaches to mentoring adopted by different mentors and schools. Although this has proved to be an important finding, it creates problems for any form of analysis where the sample size is unavoidably small. It is always difficult to determine whether an interaction of apparent significance represents an important general issue, or a chance event occurring because of a rare combination of individuals, events, and policies. This is of particular importance when there is a possibility that the interactions being observed may themselves be influenced by the presence of a camera in the first place.

The central aim of research was to study *changes* in mentoring across different stages in development. In such a situation, the problem of chance variation becomes particularly

important. Clearly comparisons between an observation of one Mentor/NE pair at one phase with an observation of a different pair at a later phase cannot be interpreted unequivocally as providing information about changes across phases. Since Mentor/NE pairings would change between the student and NQT phases, there was no way simply to follow the same pairings across all four phases of interest. After initial analysis of the data, it became clear that it would be interesting to have two videoed observations of each NE/Mentor pair - one at the beginning of each phase and one near the end of each phase - thus, enabling an examination of how the mentoring interactions changed for each pair within each phase. However, by the time this was realised, it was considered to be too far into the research study to change the methodology. A second problem was the difficulty in recording equivalent interactions in the second phase of the NQT study (Phase Four). By this phase no formal mentorials were taking place. Any interactions which would be recorded would thus have either been a 'staged' mentorial which would not have actually been representative of the everyday mentoring behaviours of the participants, or would have involved recording in a very different context to the three previous phases. Either approach would lead to difficulties in interpreting changes in interaction as being caused by genuine development, rather than simple changes in context.

All the above problems could be appropriately addressed by the careful selection of a large sample of interactions from varying phases, ideally involving the repeated observation of the same pairings wherever possible. However, for issues of reliability and generalizability to be satisfactorily resolved a large sample of interactions, and intensive work on coding is clearly a prerequisite. While such a study would clearly be of considerable benefit, is clearly fell well beyond the resources available in this research project and there seemed to be little value in persevering with a limited analysis of just a few interactions.

Changes to original research design:

There were certain changes to the original research design that had to be made because of circumstances that arose:

1. Although it was intended that Phase Three NEs and mentors would all take part in Phase Four, one school (School 13) withdrew between Phases Three and Four due to time pressures and other commitments placed on the mentor.
2. In another Phase Three school (School 14), the headteacher (also a mentor) left the school in the Spring term on grounds of ill health. The acting headteacher felt unable to participate in the research.

There were several unforeseen problems with the data collection and analysis:

Logs and Journals

It was intended that mentors and NEs involved in the case studies would complete proforma logs and journals. It was expected that this would provide quantitative data that could be compared across the phases. However, time pressures prevented Phase Three and Four NEs completing their logs and journals and therefore the quantitative case study comparisons were only able to be made between Phases One and Two. The questionnaire survey provided quantitative data that *could* be compared across the phases, but the questionnaires were only collected at the end of each phase and therefore did not provide information about the changes that happened during each phase.

Videos

It was intended that each mentor/NE pair involved in the case studies would be videod once during each phase. However, in Phase Four, only one mentor and NE pair met formally. It was decided that asking them to meet simply so that a video could be made would provide a false picture of the reality of mentoring. Instead, the finding that they didn't meet formally was regarded as interesting in its own right.

Questionnaires

It was originally intended that the same cohort of NEs would be followed from Phase One through to Phase Four so that within-subjects analysis could be carried out investigating how perceived needs changed *for the same NEs* across the phases.

However, the number of NEs who completed questionnaires across all four phases was too low for such analysis to be carried out (n=9). Comparisons across phases were able to be made but only using between-subjects analysis.

The return rate for questionnaires in Phases Three and Four was disappointingly low, despite two reminder letters being sent. Considering that mentoring needs appear to be highly individual, a larger sample would have been preferable in case the small sample had the effect of skewing the results in these two phases. However, when the data collected from the two cohorts were compared it was reassuring to see that there were few significant changes between the two cohorts, suggesting that there were reasonable grounds for assuming that the findings in the main study had a certain degree of validity.

An intention for the validation was of course to replicate all four phases on Cohort Two. As described earlier, practical considerations made it undesirable to distribute an additional Phase Four questionnaire to Cohort Two participants. This limits the validation in that the full sample of four phases has not been validated. However, given the low return rates in Phase Four of the original cohort, and the relatively close agreement between Phases Three and Four in that sample, there is no reason to suggest that if Phase Four had been completed for Cohort Two any additional information would have been gained beyond the generally close replication obtained at Phase Three.

One specific issue making comparison across phases difficult was the fact that the study developed from phase to phase. Certain roles initially used in the questionnaire in Phases One and Two were changed in Phase Three to more closely reflect the changed roles for NQTs. This meant that certain roles were available in Phase Three which did not appear in the earlier phases and vice versa. Although the revised questionnaire was probably better than the original, problems arose when comparing across phases, since the changed roles could no longer be directly compared with earlier phases. Because of this problem it was decided to revert back to the original questionnaire for Phase Four. To allow direct comparisons across phases, the analyses in Chapters Six and Seven have thus omitted the small number of roles which were not consistently provided on questionnaires for all four phases.

None of the above problems appear to seriously compromise the major findings from the study. In contrast the broad validation provided by the second cohort supports the generality of the results which are discussed in detail in Chapter Nine.

The Induction Year

In light of the recent introduction of the Induction Year, it is important to consider the implications of this research study. From June 1999, all NQTs working within maintained or non-maintained schools in England are required to complete an induction programme which includes being assessed against a set of standards determined by the Secretary of State.

Circular 5/99 suggests that the Induction Year should 'provide well-targeted support in the first year...it will also provide a foundation for the newly qualified teacher's long-term continuing professional development' (Introduction: para. 1) It is also expected that NQTs will be designated an 'induction tutor' who will be responsible for the day to day monitoring and support of the NQT. The headteacher - who has overall responsibility for the NQT's supervision and training - may be the induction tutor or the role may be given to 'a suitably experienced teacher who has considerable contact with the NQT' (Circular 5/99: para. 23). As well as providing day to day monitoring and support the induction tutor is expected to:

> make rigorous and fair judgements about the newly qualified teacher's performance in relation to the requirements of the satisfactory completion of the induction period and to provide or co-ordinate guidance and effective support for the NQT's professional development. (Circular 5/99: para. 24)

The induction tutor is expected to provide formative assessment and, in many cases, to also be involved with summative assessment at the end of the induction period.

This 'induction tutor' role therefore appears to be very compatible with the mentor role proposed in the model above (see page 320) i.e. offering day to day support and supporting the NE's professional development with the model above suggesting that this will best happen through combining the elements of supporting, training, educating and assessing. However, a criticism of Circular 5/99 is that it fails to take into account the attitudes towards induction and provision of induction in schools. In this research study few NQTs had mentors who were perceived as educating or assessing and in the case studies NQTs and their mentors generally expressed the opinion that once an NQT was 'coping' the mentor's support was no longer necessary. If the current induction proposals are to improve the situation for NQTs then it is vitally important that schools and the induction tutors are made clearly aware of the role the induction tutor has to play in 'scaffolding' their NEs' learning. It is essential that induction tutors recognise that their role goes beyond supporting the NE to the point of 'coping' and includes educating the NE into the wider issues of teaching and professional learning.

An additional criticism is the general assumption in the guidelines that the induction tutor will be able to naturally combine the roles of supporter and assessor. Paragraph 43 of Circular 5/99 briefly acknowledges that these two role might be split between two individuals 'where this suits the structures and systems of the school'. However, in general the guidelines assume that one person will fulfil both roles. Vonk (1996) argues that mentors should not be responsible for assessing NQTs in case this compromises the supportive nature of the mentor's role with NQTs being unwilling to reveal their weaknesses to a person who is responsible for formally assessing them. This appears particularly relevant in the light of the current induction year where NQTs, at the end of their induction period, will be assessed against a set of standards on a pass/fail basis. NQT mentors in this research study were generally not responsible for assessing their NQTs and the majority suggested that they would be unhappy with such a role. It appears that more thought needs to be given as to how and whether these two roles can be effectively combined within the current climate in schools.

This is not to say that the two roles cannot be combined. Much has been written about the need for schools to become 'learning communities' where professional development is expected, encouraged and supported and where monitoring and assessment, as part of

this process, are accepted and routine (e.g. Campbell and Kane, 1996; Edwards and Collison, 1996; Glover and Mardle, 1996; McIntyre and Hagger, 1996). In such schools, it is possible that a mentor's or 'induction tutor's' role might very naturally include the assessor role. Indeed, NEs themselves rarely expressed anxiety about the existence of assessment, indeed, many seemed to positively relish feedback - in one case even welcoming the Ofsted inspectors (School 14). It may be that the reluctance of the mentors to assess, stems in part from the pervading culture in schools in which they themselves have been rarely assessed whereas the NEs, coming straight from ITE, generally found feedback easier to accept and actually expected it. A weakness of Circular 5/99 is that it fails to recognise that schools with a genuine culture of collaboration and professional development are the exception and not the rule. Until more schools recognise the potential for mentoring as a whole-school activity and begin to develop an ethos of continuing professional development, then this research suggests that it is distinctly questionable how effective the Induction Year and the role of the induction tutor will be.

CHAPTER NINE: Discussion

Summary of main findings

From the previous chapters, the following findings about the type and amount of mentor support received and perceived to be needed by NEs to primary teaching have emerged:

The quality of mentor support

In all four phases, NEs received support that varied widely in quality. There was no significant difference in quality of support across the phases.

When asked to give reasons to explain their rating of their mentors' support, the majority of NEs in all phases stated personal qualities of their mentors and/or the availability or unavailability of their mentors. Across all phases, NEs who rated their mentors' support as high, frequently stated the reason: 'the mentor had good interpersonal skills'.

There were few significant changes across the phases in terms of the reasons given for high and low rating of mentor support. Only two reasons were stated significantly more frequently in some phases than in others, these being: 'the mentor being committed to mentoring' and 'mentor was positive'. Both these reasons were selected relatively infrequently in Phase Three as compared to the other three phases. There were also noticeable changes across the phases in the reasons: 'mentor accepted NE', 'mentor was a good example' and 'mentor initiated meetings'.

Although none of the reasons associated with low quality of mentoring changed significantly across the four phases, the reason 'mentor had poor interpersonal skills' was stated as a reason for low support more frequently in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two.

The amount of mentoring

There was a significant reduction in the amount of both formal and informal mentoring over the four phases with NEs receiving substantially more mentoring in Phases One and Two than in Phases Three and Four.

In all four phases, there was significantly more informal mentoring than formal mentoring.

In all phases, there was a high correlation between support rating and the amount of time given to mentoring. When the amount of mentoring was high then the NE's rating of the mentor's support was also likely to be high. However, the exact amount of mentoring needed for mentoring to be rated highly became less with each successive phase. It is possible to speculate that at each phase in the NE's development, there may be a 'critical' amount of mentoring needed for mentoring to be rated highly.

In Phases One, Two and Three the amount of informal mentoring was more predictive of success than formal mentoring. In Phase Four, the amount of formal mentoring was more predictive.

In the case studies, it was found that the weekly amount of mentoring decreased during each phase. Mentors perceived that this decrease was acceptable. NEs in Phases Three/Four generally agreed, suggesting that once an NE had settled into the school and was 'coping', mentor support was only needed if there were problems or concerns. However, NEs in Phases One and Two were divided in their opinions about this decrease. Some suggested that they valued being given 'space' in which to take greater responsibility for the class. Others stated that they would have liked the mentor to have taken a more active, 'challenging' role in the last few weeks of the practice.

The mentor/NE relationship

In all four phases, NEs perceived that their relationships with their mentors varied widely in quality. There was no significant change in the overall quality of relationships across the phases.

In all phases, there was a high correlation between support rating and relationship rating. It was found that when the mentor/NE relationship was rated highly by the NE then the mentor's support was also likely to be rated highly.

The exact nature of a 'good' relationship changed from phase to phase. In Phases One and Two the relationship was perceived to be essentially professional in nature. By Phase Three it was both a professional and a personal relationship. By Phase Four it had become a more personal, informal relationship - a relationship described as 'between equal colleagues'. When the mentor/NE relationship was perceived to have developed between Phases Three and Four, the mentor's support was likely to be rated highly.

Phase One and Two mentors suggested that the NE's attitude and personality were important factors in determining the success of the mentoring relationship. Phase Three and Four mentors did not mention this. It is possible that this difference between the phases related to the fact that all Phase One and Two mentors shared their classroom with the NE and therefore worked closely with the NE on a daily basis.

The mentor role

NEs perceived that their mentors had adopted relatively similar roles across all four phases. Only three roles were perceived to have been adopted significantly more frequently in some phases than others. These roles included: 'to be a friend', 'to encourage' and 'to encourage reflection'.

The role 'to be a friend', essentially a role linked to providing personal support, was perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently by mentors in Phases Three and Four than by mentors in Phases One and Two. In contrast, the role 'to encourage reflection',

was perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently by mentors in Phases One and Two than by mentors in Phases Three and Four.

Across all phases, the roles: 'to encourage', 'to reassure', 'to advise', 'to listen' and 'to discuss' were frequently perceived to have been adopted by mentors. These roles are associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements of the Professional domain. In contrast, mentors were rarely perceived to have fulfilled roles associated with the Educator element, i.e. the roles 'to challenge and 'to set targets'. Across all four phases, only a minority of NEs (14-27%) perceived that their mentors had adopted these two roles.

Consistent with this finding, case study mentors in all phases were *observed* to adopt roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements more frequently than roles associated with the Educator element and when case study participants were asked about their *perceptions* of a mentor's role, the roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements were more frequently suggested by mentors as appropriate roles than those associated with the Educator element.

Across all the phases, mentors were more likely to suggest that the roles associated with the Educator element were appropriate in Phase Two. Consistent with this finding, mentors were more likely to be observed to fulfil the roles associated with the Educator element in Phase Two than in other phases. However, in the larger survey, there appeared to be little difference across the phases in the percentage of mentors fulfilling these roles.

Across the phases, all case study participants were more likely to perceive that the role of 'friend' was appropriate in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two.

Across all phases, certain roles were consistently fulfilled by mentors whose support was perceived to have been of a high quality, these included: 'to reassure', 'to listen', 'to advise' and 'to discuss'.

There were no significant differences across the phases in the roles associated with high or low ratings of mentor support, although there were some interesting differences at a basic numerical level. Of particular note, the role of 'friend', was perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently by mentors rated highly in Phases Three and Four than in Phases One and Two. It appears that in Phases Three and Four, NEs are particularly likely to value their mentors providing personal support.

In general, it was found that the greater the number of roles the mentor was perceived to have adopted, the better the perceived quality of mentor support.

The case studies suggested that when mentors and NEs shared similar expectations of the mentor's roles and the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled those roles then the NE was likely to perceive that the mentor had provided a high quality of support - *regardless of the roles the mentor actually fulfilled.*

Mentors' expectations of the mentor role appeared to influence the roles they were observed to fulfil in practice.

The roles in the Structural domain - 'to induct', 'to sponsor' and 'to negotiate' - were perceived by questionnaire respondents to have been fulfilled less frequently than might have been expected across all four phases (no more than 40% of mentors were perceived to have had the role 'to induct' in any phase).

The mentor's personal and professional qualities

Participants in all phases suggested that mentors needed to have certain personal qualities. Headteachers', mentors' and NEs' perceptions of the personal qualities needed were generally similar. Regardless of phase, NEs most frequently suggested that it was necessary for a mentor to be 'approachable.'

There was a general consistency in the mentor qualities perceived to be important across the phases. Six qualities changed significantly in the frequency with which they were

selected: 'being accepting', 'being available', 'being committed', 'being empathetic', 'being constructive' and 'having an understanding of NEs' professional needs'. The latter two qualities, both connected with the supporting of professional development, were stated significantly more frequently in Phases One and Two than in Phases Three and Four.

The areas where mentor support was most needed

NEs were asked to select the areas they had needed most mentor support in from a pre-determined list. There were significant changes over the four phases in how often five areas - 'curriculum', 'evaluating the NE's progress', 'children's individual needs', 'parents' and 'planning' - were selected. Apart from in these areas, perceptions remained stable across the four phases. Of particular interest, the areas of 'classroom management' and 'teaching and learning' did not change significantly over the four phases and yet, according to theoretical models of professional growth, as NEs develop the focus should shift from classroom management and the NE's performance to a deeper consideration of the children's learning (Kagan, 1992).

In the case studies it was found that, although there were some general trends in the areas actually discussed at each phase by mentor and NEs, there were distinct individual differences between NEs.

Areas changed in importance for NEs across each phase, for example, in Phases One and Two 'teaching and learning' was likely to be most frequently discussed near the end of the phase.

In Phases One and Two, mentors and students generally held very different views on how frequently the area of 'teaching and learning' had been a topic for discussion. Mentors were more likely then students to perceive that this was an area that had been discussed.

School Support

Schools had a variety of mentoring structures in place. Schools in Phases Three/Four were more likely to have some formal mentoring structures in place to support NEs than schools in Phases One and Two.

None of the schools involved in the case studies had written guidelines on the mentor role although three Phase Two schools were in the process of developing these. With no guidelines, the type of mentoring provided was largely determined by the individual mentor. Mentors from all phases suggested the need for guidelines to clarify the role and to clarify the perceptions of mentoring within the school.

All headteachers perceived the mentor's role to be multi-faceted and complex, yet criteria used to select a mentor were generally vague or non-existent. In no schools were criteria for mentor selection written down.

The role of mentoring co-ordinator, where it existed appeared to vary widely in remit from school to school. Most commonly it was limited to the placing of students with classteachers.

Headteachers', mentors' and NEs' perceptions of the formal and informal structures that were in place in their schools often differed. Across all phases, there were cases where headteachers and mentors had different perceptions of whether there were any formal mentoring structures in place in the school with headteachers generally suggesting there were formal structures and mentors perceiving that there were not. Similarly, there were cases where headteachers suggested their schools had informal support systems in place to support NEs and mentors, but mentors and NEs perceived that little informal support had been forthcoming. Effective informal support systems appeared more likely to be in place if the school had a genuinely strong ethos of collaboration.

Across all phases, headteacher involvement in mentoring appeared to help ensure that both mentor and NE felt well supported by the school. Although all headteachers suggested that mentoring was important, it was in schools where headteachers' words

were backed up by their active involvement, either formally or informally, in the mentoring process that mentors and NEs felt best supported.

Phase One/Two mentors were sometimes used as supply cover or were taken out of the classroom by the headteacher/senior management to spend time on areas of curriculum responsibility. In cases where mentoring was perceived to be of at least *equal priority* to these other school duties, students and mentors tended to suggest that this did not affect the overall the quality of the mentoring. However, if other school duties were perceived to have taken priority over mentoring then NEs and mentors were likely to perceive that the mentoring *had* been adversely affected. Headteachers in Phases One and Two who were actively involved in the mentoring process were more likely to give mentoring at least equal priority with the mentor's other school duties and to take the mentor out of the classroom less.

In Phase Three and Phase Four, the number of NEs who were observed by their mentor was lower than might have been expected (no more than 50% in Phase Three and 20% in Phase Four). The majority of NEs in Phases Three and Four suggested that observation was important and desirable. However, some NEs in both phases stated that they did not think observation was important and that they did not want to be observed, suggesting a certain lack of awareness of the need for continued professional development and the role of observation in this professional development.

Only one of the case study schools provided non-contact time for mentors to meet with/observe their NEs. None of the case study schools provided NEs in Phases Three and Four with non-contact time to observe other teachers teaching.

Mentors and headteachers generally suggested that students and NQTs had different mentoring needs. There was a strong emphasis on students as 'learners', needing mentors to take a critical role. NQTs, on the other hand, were viewed as qualified professionals who, although they needed a certain level of personal and professional support, had full responsibility for a class and had to either 'sink or swim'.

Discussion

It can be seen from the above findings that the type and amount of support received by NEs within each phase and across the phases varied widely. In many cases this was not consistent with the type and amount of support theoretically necessary. This was particularly noticeable with regard to the mentor role.

The Mentor Role

As discussed in Chapter One, it is widely accepted that the main purpose of the mentoring is to facilitate the professional development of the NE. Exactly how this can best be achieved is a matter of some debate. However, a growing body of research suggests that for effective professional development to occur the mentor will need to both support and *challenge* the NE (e.g. Bush *et al,* 1996; Daloz, 1986; Vonk, 1993).

Many studies have documented the stressful nature of pre-service teaching experience and the first year as a qualified teacher (e.g. Maynard and Furlong, 1993; Menter, 1995). During these periods, the mentor has an important role in offering the NE personal and professional support (Bennett *et al*, 1993; Yeomans, 1994). Indeed, if this support is not forthcoming then the mentoring relationship may well break down and the opportunity for the mentor to assist in the NE's professional development be lost.

Participants in this research appeared to have a good understanding of the supportive domain of the mentor's role. In all phases of the NE's development, the roles most likely to have been fulfilled by mentors were the roles: 'to encourage', 'to reassure', 'to advise', 'to listen' and 'to discuss'. These roles are associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements of the Professional domain and can be characterised as essentially being linked to the giving of personal and professional support rather than supporting professional development.

Consistent with this, case study mentors in all phases were most frequently *observed* to fulfil roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements. When case

study participants were asked about their *perceptions* of a mentor's role, the roles associated with the Professional Supporter and Trainer elements were frequently suggested as appropriate mentor roles. Across all phases, the roles 'to reassure', 'to listen', 'to advise' and 'to discuss' were perceived to have been fulfilled by mentors whose support was rated highly. This finding is consistent with other research which suggests that NEs particularly value mentors who provide personal and emotional support, who offer ideas and resources and who are willing to discuss professional concerns and problems (Abell *et al*, 1995; Ballantyne *et al*, 1995).

However, if the mentor is to fulfil the potential of the role and effectively support the NE's professional development providing personal and professional support is not enough - the mentor must also challenge the NE. A substantial body of research suggests that NEs who do not have their thinking challenged will be likely to remain at a very basic level of competence, operating from a simplistic knowledge base and using a limited range of strategies (e.g. Calderhead, 1987; Tickle, 1993; Maynard and Furlong, 1993). It is suggested that challenging will help the NE develop the ability to reflect critically and in depth and move towards becoming a 'self-directing professional' (Vonk, 1996). Challenging is therefore seen as a vital mentor role and yet evidence from this research suggests that NEs, headteachers and mentors do not fully appreciate its importance.

The roles associated with the Educator element - 'to challenge' and 'to set targets' - were fulfilled relatively infrequently regardless of phase (only 14% - 27% of mentors were perceived to have fulfilled these roles). Case study mentors in all phases were rarely *observed* to adopt these roles in practice.

It has been suggested that the role of challenger will become increasingly important as the NE gains in competence and confidence (Maynard and Furlong, 1995). However, no evidence was found to suggest that as the NE developed professionally mentors increasingly adopted the challenge role. Indeed, the role 'to challenge' was perceived to have been adopted *less* frequently in Phases Three and Four than in Phase Two.

21% of Phase One mentors were perceived to have fulfilled the challenge role. According to Maynard and Furlong's model of professional development, an increase in this role

would have been expected in Phase Two as NEs gained in competence and confidence. An increase *was* seen in the incidence of this role in Phase Two, however, it was only an increase of 3%. By this stage in the NEs' professional development, Maynard and Furlong suggest that most NEs should be ready to be challenged, indeed *need* to be challenged if they are to become 'a self-developing teacher'. The finding in Phases Three and Four are even more surprising - the percentage of mentors perceived to have fulfilled the challenge role *decreased* in Phase Three (to 22%), and then decreased further again in Phase Four (to 15%). If, as Vonk (1996) suggests, without challenge NQTs are likely to develop only inflexible strategies and to fail to move towards deeper, critical self-reflection, then this lack of challenging must raise concern.

When perceptions of the challenge role were investigated in the case studies, an interesting picture emerged. While the majority of headteachers, NEs and all Phase Two mentors perceived that 'to challenge' was an appropriate mentor role, the majority of Phase One mentors and Phase Three/Four mentors did not share these perceptions. As might be expected, the mentors who did not perceive the role 'to challenge' as appropriate, never intended to fulfil this role during mentorials (mentor journals) and were never observed to fulfil this role in practice (videoed mentorials). Mentors who did perceive it to be appropriate were more likely to intend to fulfil this role during mentorials (mentor journals) and were observed to fulfil this role in practice (videoed mentorials). It would appear that mentors, particularly those in Phases Three and Four, need to be made more aware of the appropriateness of challenge.

Although the majority of Phase One headteachers perceived that challenging was an important role, near the end of Phase One when it might have been expected that the students would have been ready to be challenged, the mentors in three schools were removed from the classroom to undertake other duties around the school and the opportunities for challenge, following observation of practice were therefore lost. Similarly, despite the majority of Phase Three headteachers perceiving that the challenge role was appropriate for Phase Three mentors, none of the mentors were provided with non-contact time in which to observe their NQT(s).

This lack of understanding about the potential and importance of the challenge role appears to link to the decrease in the amount of mentoring observed during each phase. As found in other studies, the amount of mentoring decreased over time (Ballantyne *et al,* 1995; Early and Kinder, 1994). Headteachers, mentors and NEs generally appeared to perceive that this decrease was acceptable. However, although it might be reasonable to expect the mentoring to become less intense after the first few weeks (Bleach, 1999), if mentors are effectively to extend and challenge their NEs a certain level of mentoring contact needs to be maintained. There appears to be a need for recognition of this across all phases.

NEs' perceptions of the challenge role appear complex. In the case studies all but one of the NEs believed challenging to be an appropriate mentor role. However, across all phases there were examples of case study mentors, whose support was perceived by their NEs to have been of a high quality, who were not perceived to have adopted this role. This finding was replicated in the questionnaire survey. In all phases, NEs consistently rated their mentors' support highly even when mentors were not perceived to offer challenge. It appears that for NEs, although challenging may be perceived as appropriate, it was not perceived to be an *essential* mentor role.

Interestingly, a certain percentage of mentors whose support was rated as low quality were also perceived by their NEs to have fulfilled the challenge role (11% -14% across the phases). When NEs were asked whether challenging was important, all NEs who considered that mentors should or should possibly challenge, stressed that any challenging should be positive and constructive (as was also emphasised by case study participants). It is possible that when the challenge role was associated with mentors whose support rating was low, the challenging had been perceived by the NEs to have been destructive rather than constructive. Additional comments made by some participants suggested this to be the case.

It appears that although NEs are often aware of the potential of the challenge role, they believe that it is more important for mentors to offer personal and professional support. In all phases, when NEs asked to suggest the personal qualities that a mentor needed to have, the quality 'being approachable' was suggested most frequently.

Although NEs in all phases, appeared to believe that it was more vital for a mentor to offer support than to assist with professional development, there were differences across the phases in the importance of the professional development role. When asked what qualities a mentor needed, Phase Three and Four NEs were significantly less likely to suggest that mentors needed to be 'constructive' and needed to 'have a good understanding of NEs' professional needs' than NEs Phase One and Two NEs. Both these qualities are associated with the mentor's professional development role rather than with the supporter role.

Similarly, NEs in Phases Three and Four were also significantly more likely to link the role 'being a friend' with a high rating of mentor support than NEs in Phases One and Two (100% of Phase Four mentors who were rated highly were perceived to have fulfilled this role as compared to 39% of mentors in Phase One). By Phase Four, case study NEs stated that they no longer needed mentor support because they were 'coping'. They did not appear to consider that Phase Four mentors might have a valuable role to play in assisting their continued professional development at this stage in their career.

NEs' perceptions of the mentor role appear similar to those held by the majority of mentors and headteachers and link to certain other areas: the assessor role; the decrease in the amount of time spent mentoring in across phases; the lack of observation of NE in Phases Three and Four; the change in the mentor/NE relationship across the phases as well as general perceptions of student and NQT differences.

The Assessor Role

The role 'to assess/evaluate' was unanimously perceived to be important for students but was mentioned relatively infrequently for NQTs. Three of the four Phase Three/Four mentors expressed concern that assessing would interfere with the supportive nature of the role. They appeared to agree with Vonk: 'the roles of the mentor and assessor are hard to combine' (1996: 130).

The Amount of Mentoring

In all phases the amount of mentoring, both formal and informal, appeared to decrease significantly between Phases One/Two and Phases Three/Four. In the case studies in Phase Four, only one NQT received any *formal* mentoring. Mentors and NEs generally felt that formal mentoring was not necessary because there were no problems and the NE was 'coping'. As discussed above, neither mentors nor NQTs, appeared to consider the possibility that Phase Four mentors might have a valuable role to play in assisting the NQTs' continued professional development.

Observation in Phases Three and Four

In Phase Three and Phase Four fewer NEs were observed by their mentors than might have been expected (50% of questionnaire respondents in Phase Three, 20% in Phase Four). The majority of questionnaire respondents who had not been observed suggested that they would have liked to have been. However, when asked why observation was important, many suggested that it provided an opportunity for reassurance and praise rather than that it provided an opportunity for critical appraisal of their practice. It appears that some NEs may not be sufficiently aware of the role of critical feedback in supporting their professional development. Consistent with the work of Carney and Hagger (1996), Gratch (1998) and Tickle (1993), NEs may not always be the best judges of their own needs. As discussed above, although all the Phase Three/Four headteachers in the case study schools appeared to perceive that the mentor should assist the NE's professional development, in none of the schools was the time provided for the mentor to observe the NE.

The Mentor/NE relationship

When interviewed, the NEs and mentors involved in the case studies suggested that the nature of the mentoring relationship changed over the phases. In Phases One and Two it was seen as being essentially a professional relationship with some personal elements. This is consistent with the mentors' and NEs' perceptions in these phases that the mentor should both support the NE and assist professional development. However, in

Phase Three the relationship was perceived to be equally professional and personal and by Phase Four NEs and mentors perceived that the relationship had become much more informal and personal, that of 'equal colleagues':

> With students they are students still and I'm the person who is qualified. With an NQT it's a peer relationship, they're qualified too, it's just that I've been around a bit longer. (Mentor - School 14)

Perceived differences between students and NQTs

Mentors and headteachers generally suggested that students and NQTs had different mentoring needs. There was a strong emphasis on students as 'learners', needing mentors to take a critical role. NQTs, on the other hand, were viewed as qualified professionals who, although they needed a certain level of personal and professional support, had full responsibility for a class and had to either 'sink or swim'.

> As an NQT you are a teacher, you can get away with less... you are perceived by the parents and the school as a complete professional and there are very different expectations... from a school's perception it's much more of a sink or swim situation but it shouldn't be like that. (Mentor - School 14)

In general, although studies in the literature suggest that the mentor's role should change and adapt to meet the changing needs of the NE (e.g. Ballantyne *et al,* 1995; Bleach, 1999; Maynard and Furlong, 1995), remarkably few significant differences were found across the phases and the differences that *were* observed were not always the differences that might have been theoretically expected.

Only three mentor roles - 'to be a friend', 'to encourage' and 'to encourage reflection' - changed significantly across the phases. The role 'to encourage reflection' was perceived to have been fulfilled significantly less frequently by mentors in Phases Three (29%) and Four (35%) than by mentors in Phases One (66%) and Two (51%). Considering that a substantial body of research suggests that, without guidance, NQTs are likely to only reflect at a superficial level and will develop limited personal theories based on their own

narrow experiences, it is perhaps worrying that such a small proportion of mentors were perceived to have fulfilled this role in these phases (Tickle, 1993).

The roles in the Structural domain - 'to induct', 'to negotiate', 'to sponsor' - were perceived to have been fulfilled relatively infrequently across *all* four phases with the roles 'to negotiate' and 'to sponsor' being perceived to have been fulfilled by no more than 32% of the mentors in any phase. It is possible that these two roles were not often perceived to have been adopted because they generally involve the mentor and other members of staff and NEs may simply have failed to realise that their mentors were undertaking these roles on their behalf. However, data from the case studies suggested that mentors across the phases rarely suggested that these roles were appropriate mentor roles. Bearing in mind that NEs in Phases One, Two and Three were all working in unfamiliar environments, it is surprising that the role 'to induct' was not perceived to have been fulfilled more frequently (no more than 40% of mentors in any phase were perceived as having fulfilled this role). It would appear that mentors need to have a clearer understanding of the roles within the Structural domain.

Areas in need of mentor support

As with the mentor roles, the changes in the areas discussed most frequently by NEs in different phases were not always as might have been expected.

It has been suggested that as NEs develop professionally they move through a series of 'stages' of development, each stage having its own focal concerns (Calderhead, 1987; Fuller and Bown, 1975; Maynard and Furlong, 1995).

In the case study investigations it was found that although there were certain patterns in the areas discussed at each phase, there were distinct individual differences between NEs. As Elliott and Calderhead suggest learning to teach 'is idiosyncratic and personal' (1993: 173) with NEs having their own unique needs. However, despite these individual differences in the case studies, in the larger sample of NEs who participated in the questionnaire survey, certain commonalties in the areas where mentor support was

perceived as most necessary were seen in each phase with, to some extent, these areas changing across phases.

The questionnaire surveys found significant changes over the four phases in how often seven of the 18 areas were selected by NEs as the areas most in need of mentor support. One of these areas was 'classroom management'. Kagan (1992) suggests that as the NE develops professionally, classroom management will become less of an important issue and by Phase Four it was being selected as an area where mentor support had been needed significantly less than in the other three phases. However, it was identified as an area of need relatively consistently in Phases One (35% of NEs selected it), Two (29%) and Three (34%). This consistency possibly reflects the fact that in each of these phases, NEs were working in a new classroom with a new group of children. Maynard and Furlong (1995) also argue that although students develop across a series of broad stages of developments, the progression across these stages is not linear and particular concerns or areas are re-visited. As one of the NEs in the case studies suggested:

> Each time you start all over again in a new school. At the start of this teaching practice my needs were just the same again. (Student - School 6)

Interestingly there was no significant change in how often the area of 'teaching and learning' was discussed across the phases and yet it has been argued that as NEs develop their focus will shift the specifics of their own classroom practice to a deeper consideration of the children's learning and the theoretical underpinning of practice (e.g. Calderhead, 1987; Kagan, 1992; Maynard and Furlong, 1995; Vonk, 1996). It might, therefore, have been expected that the area of 'teaching and learning' would be seen to become increasingly important across the four phases. However, the frequency with which this area was identified actually *decreased* with each successive phase (26% of NEs perceived it to be a role in which they most needed mentor support in Phase One and only 10% in Phase Four). Bearing in mind the current trend towards increasing the school-based element of ITE, this is a finding worthy of note.

In the case study logs, Phase One and Two mentors and their NEs had very different perceptions of how much time they spent discussing 'teaching and learning' with the

mentors' estimates being almost 80% higher than the students' in both phases. It is possible that when mentors thought they were discussing general pedagogical principles, students felt that they were discussing specific classroom incidents.

Considering the conclusions drawn from the case studies that clarifying NE's expectations may have an important role in helping to ensure that the NE perceives the mentoring as successful (see below), it is interesting that the area 'expectations of the NE', was rarely discussed in the case studies in Phases One and Two.

Personal and Contextual factors

As suggested in the literature, certain personal and contextual factors were found to influence the perceived quality of the mentoring support. At a broad level, these factors were generally perceived to have an effect on mentoring regardless of phase. However, the exact nature of each factor often changed from phase to phase. For example, the NE's rating of the mentor's support was found to be closely correlated with the NE's rating for the mentor/NE relationship in all phases although the exact nature of a 'good' mentor/NE relationship changed from phase to phase. The personal and contextual factors identified by this research are discussed below. If successful mentoring is to occur, then it is vital that mentors and schools are made fully aware of these factors' influence on the mentoring process.

The Mentor Role

When mentor and NE shared similar expectations of the mentor's roles and the mentor was considered to have fulfilled these roles then the NE was likely to perceive that the mentor had provided high quality mentor support, regardless of the exact nature of these roles.

NEs perceived their needs did not remain constant but changed during each phase and that, because of this, they needed their mentors to fulfil many different roles:

> Mentors have to react to your experiences, it's no good them saying you should be like this and this, they have to react to your needs as they change. Is that too demanding? (Student - School 6)

Consistent with this, the greater the number of roles the mentor was perceived to have fulfilled, the better the perceived quality of mentor support.

The Mentor/NE relationship

In all phases, when the mentor/NE relationship was rated highly by the NE then the mentor's support was also likely to be rated highly. However, the exact nature of the relationship changed from phase to phase, becoming increasingly personal and informal with each successive phase.

Questionnaire data suggest that when the mentor/NQT relationship changed between Phases Three and Four, the NQT was more likely to perceive that the quality of the mentoring support had been high. It appears that having a relationship that develops, just as having a mentor whose role develops (see above), may be an important factor in determining mentoring success.

Personal Qualities

Across all phases it appeared that for NEs to perceive mentoring as effective, mentors needed to be perceived as having certain personal and professional qualities. Absence of these qualities resulted in the mentoring being perceived as less effective by the NE. The exact qualities changed slightly across the phases, in particular between Phases One and Two and Phases Three and Four.

In all phases, the quality 'being approachable' was most frequently selected by NEs as a quality mentors needed to have. In Phase One NEs were more likely to suggest that mentors needed to be 'accepting' and 'empathetic'. Maynard and Furlong (1995) suggest that NEs, in the early stages of their professional development, are likely to feel insecure about their status as a teacher. It seems likely, therefore, that at this stage students will

particularly value mentors who make them feel confident with their new position and who appear to appreciate the stresses they are under.

Mentors in Phases One and Two were more likely to suggest that mentors needed to be 'constructive' and needed to 'understand NEs' professional needs' than mentors in Phases Three and Four, reflecting an underlying assumption about the mentor's role.

Being 'available', was suggested most frequently in Phase Two. In general, it was found that mentors were more likely to be out of the classroom at this stage, with students being perceived as being competent enough to have responsibility for the class. It is possible that this accounts for the importance attached to availability in this phase. It is interesting that this quality was selected so infrequently in Phase Three (only 4% of NEs suggested it) considering Early and Kinder's study (1994) which found that NQTs particularly valued availability.

Mentors in Phases One and Two suggested that NEs' personal qualities influenced the success of the mentoring relationship. As reported by Yeomans (1994), mentors valued NEs who were open to advice and criticism and who had good interpersonal skills.

The Amount of Mentoring

In all phases, when the amount of mentoring, whether formal or informal, received by the NE was high then the NE's rating of the mentor's support was also likely to be high. However, the exact amount of mentoring needed for mentoring to be rated highly varied from phase to phase, with NEs perceiving they needed more mentoring in Phases One and Two than in Phase Three and Four. It appears that at each phase there may be a *critical* amount of mentoring needed if the mentoring support is to be rated highly.

School Support

Mentors being taken out of the classroom to fulfil other duties had an adverse affect on the mentoring process according to mentors and NEs. The exception to this was when mentoring was perceived to have equal or greater priority than the other duties, in these

cases, students and mentors generally did not perceive an adverse affect. It is possible that in these cases the NE felt that the mentor's support was there if needed.

Phase Three and Four mentors need to be provided with non-contact time if they are to have the opportunity to observe NEs. Without observation any professional guidance is likely to be limited.

Factors that Influence Mentoring Support Provided

Certain contextual factors were found to have an influence on the type and amount of mentoring support provided.

Mentors' expectations of the mentor role

Mentors' expectations of the mentor role appeared to influence the roles they actually adopted in practice and therefore, the support they provided. Mentors generally adopted roles that they perceived to be appropriate. However, in some cases, they perceived that lack of support from the school limited the support they could provide, for example, a lack of non-contact time meant they had no opportunity to observe the NQT.

Headteacher expectations of the mentor role

The headteacher's perceptions about mentoring influenced the structures that were in place in school to support the NE, for example, the provision of non-contact time and the selection of mentors. Only one of the case study schools provided non-contact time for mentors to meet with/observe their NEs. None of the case study schools provided NEs in Phases Three and Four with non-contact time to observe other teachers teaching. This lack of non-contact time limited the mentoring opportunities. As Bush *et al* suggest: 'lack of time is a significant potential weakness of mentoring' (1996: 127).

Headteachers who perceived that mentoring was important *and* who backed this up in practice by being actively involved in the mentoring process were more likely to ensure

that structures, whether formal or informal, were in place to support the mentor and NE and were less likely to take Phase One and Two mentors out of the classroom for long periods of time. Effective informal support systems appeared more likely to be in place if the school had a genuinely strong ethos of collaboration and professional growth. However, few schools were found to have such a culture. In many schools, mentors and the students essentially operated individually within one classroom. As Edwards (1997) writes:

> Teachers in schools are asked to adjust their relationships with the students they mentor in school contexts which are not yet geared to recognise the demands or potential of those relationships. Consequently, mentors and students are all too frequently desert-islanded together in the ocean of school life. (1997: 66)

With no guidelines in any of the schools, the mentoring provided was largely determined by the individual mentor and the mentors' expectations of mentoring varied considerably. Mentors from all phases suggested the need for guidelines to clarify the role and to clarify the perceptions of mentoring within the school.

Implications

1. There is a need for clear guidelines for headteachers, mentors and NEs so that all involved in the mentoring process share appropriate expectations of the mentor's role.

It was found that NEs often did not receive the type of mentoring support theoretically thought necessary. This was particularly so in Phases Three and Four.

Considering the importance of mentor and headteacher expectations in determining the support that is provided, it appears vital that the role of the mentor is clarified in schools. All involved in the mentoring process need to have an appropriate understanding of the mentor's role, i.e. to realise that the mentor should provide personal

and professional support and also support the NE's *continuing* professional development from pre-service training to the NQT year and beyond.

In particular, those involved with the mentoring process need to become more aware of the importance of the challenge role in promoting professional development. It needs to be made clear that mentoring an NE will be seen to be more than simply supporting the NE until they 'coping' but supporting them as they move towards the ultimate goal of becoming 'self-developing professionals' (Maynard and Furlong, 1995).

Official school guidelines would help ensure that NEs received mentoring that was less variable in perceived quality and also enable the mentor's role to be clearly understood throughout the school, thus avoiding the situations mentioned in case studies where mentors perceived that other staff members believed that having a student was an 'easy option'.

2. There is a need for time to be made available.

It is important that headteachers recognise the importance of mentor availability and the need for mentors in Phases Three and Four to have non-contact time to observe the NE and to meet with the NE to give feedback on practice.

Phase One and Two mentors need to be available for their NE. Although, it is not necessary for mentors to be in the classroom all the time (students in the case studies perceived they needed to be left on their own for at least some of the time), if the mentor is effectively to assist the student's professional development and provide the professional support the student perceives he/she needs, then it is important that they are free to spend time in the classroom when that time is needed. Students should *not* be seen as cheap supply cover.

Phase Three and Four mentors need time to observe their NE and ideally, although it is acknowledged that this may not always be practical, to have time set aside to meet formally with their NE.

3. There is a need for mentors to be carefully selected.

NEs' believed that it was important for mentors to have certain personal and professional qualities. With this in mind, it is vitally important that mentors are selected carefully for the personal qualities and professional skills they possess.

4. There is a need for accepted mentoring structures.

It was found that NEs, particularly those in Phases Three and Four, valued receiving informal support from other staff members. However, although the vast majority of headteachers perceived that informal support systems existed in their schools and that the NEs would draw on these support systems, in many cases NEs perceived that this had not been the case and in such schools, a more formalised system of structures may need to be in place.

An effective system of informal support was more likely to be found in schools where a collaborative ethos was genuinely established. Schools need to be encouraged to foster a climate that encourages collaboration and professional growth, so that mentoring support for all mentors and NEs is provided as a matter of course.

5. There is a need for headteachers and mentors to recognise the continuous professional development between ITE and the NQT year.

In recent years, the idea of continuing professional development has become increasingly prominent with many writers emphasising that development should be seen as continuous from the period of ITE into the first year of teaching and beyond. No longer is the NQT perceived to be a 'fully-finished' teacher but instead a teacher who has still much learning and developing to do (Sidgwick, 1996; Stammers, 1993; Tickle, 1996; Vonk, 1996). However, it would appear that some headteachers and mentors still

perceive there to be a huge difference between NQTs and students in terms of their needs and abilities:

> Students need an awful lot of support in all ways but hopefully when they come into the school as an NQT they can manage without too much support. (Headteacher - School 7).

There needs to be a change in attitudes, with headteachers and mentors being made to recognise that NQTs still need support, particularly in the area of continual professional development, for without this support, as Vonk (1996) suggests, it is likely that NE's will rely on inflexible 'survival strategies' rather than developing a deeper pedagogical understanding.

It will be interesting to see how the introduction of a statutory 'Induction year' will affect NQT mentoring. Unless headteachers and mentors fully understand the need for there to be a continuation from ITE and begin to perceive that NQTs are still teachers in the making rather than 'complete professionals', it may well be found that the proposals will have only limited effect.

Extensions

One of the first limitations highlighted for this research was the question of generalisability (i.e. to what degree these research findings would hold for other schools or other areas of the country). Clearly the participants in this study were limited to those completing, or who had completed, a PGCE course at the University of Leicester. It would thus be desirable to replicate some parts of the study (perhaps the questionnaires) on a sample of students drawn from other universities and schools elsewhere in the country.

A key limitation of the research was the focus on perceptions. Clearly the lack of objective outcome measures for mentoring is a difficulty in this area. One possible outcome measure which would at least possess some degree of face validity, would be

the short to medium term retention of NQTs within the profession. One attractive possibility might be to follow up the participants in this or similar studies some years down the line, to see whether those who rated their experiences of mentoring as positive were indeed more likely to remain within the profession.

One limitation imposed by the sampling used in this research was that the students and mentors in each phase and cohort were different. To maintain a more complete picture of the development of both NEs and mentors it would be of interest to conduct longitudinal studies both of individual NEs as they pass through the various phases and of individual mentors as they too gain in experience. This type of data would allow greater insights into synergistic building up of experience accrued in different institutions and from different individuals. As well as allowing a fuller picture of the development of individual NEs a longitudinal study of the development of individual mentors might provide valuable insights into the development of expertise in the field of mentoring with ensuing predictions and implications for mentor training.

In an ideal world one could test the true ability of improved structures within a school to enhance mentoring by doing a controlled experimental study over a period of three years where, for example, four schools were studied - two control schools where a longitudinal study within the school, was carried out, looking at the year to year experiences of mentors and NEs (both students and NQTs). In two experimental schools additional resources would be provided to allow for structures such as non-contact time to be developed and a formal school policy would be drafted on mentoring policy. The experiences and satisfaction of NEs within the four schools could be contrasted over the period of the research to test formally whether this intervention affected the quality of mentoring received.

Of course with all field research it is difficult to conduct fully controlled studies because of the ever changing policies of governments and educators, although this creates a problem it also provides a valuable opportunity for naturalistic quasi-experimental designs. With the imminent introduction of new legislation for the induction of NQTs many schools will be required to adopt more formal mentoring practices and policies.

This provides an unparalleled opportunity to observe changes in NE perceptions before and after the introduction and implementation of the relevant legislation.

Conclusion

It was found that NEs often did not receive the type and amount of mentoring support theoretically thought to be necessary and that the type and amount of support did not change developmentally from phase to phase in the way theory suggests is appropriate.

This was particularly seen to be true in Phases Three and Four where mentors provide personal and professional support but do not appear to effectively support the NE's professional development. If this situation is to be rectified then it is vitally important that the need for this role is made clear to mentors and the full extent of this role is made clear to headteachers so that mentors are able to provide the support necessary.

NEs perceive that their mentoring needs, i.e. the roles they want their mentor to have and the topics they want to discuss, change from phase to phase. However, there are certain personal and contextual factors that affect the perceived quality of mentor support regardless of phase: the quality of the mentoring relationship; the mentor having certain personal qualities; the mentor fulfilling a wide variety of roles; the mentor fulfilling the roles the NE expects and the amount of time spent on mentoring. These factors although consistently influential, change in nature across the phases of professional development. In particular, NEs' perceptions of the appropriate mentor roles change from phase to phase, with NEs in Phases Three/Four (i.e. NQTs) perceiving that having a mentor who offers professional and personal support is more important than having a mentor who supports their professional development. As suggested by Maynard (1996) it appears that NEs are often not the best judge of their own professional needs.

Considering the factors that were seen to influence the quality of mentoring, in particular headteachers' and mentors' perceptions of the mentor role, it is vital that expectations of

all involved in the mentoring process are clarified and the role of mentors in assisting NEs' professional development is made clear.

Maybe then, and only then, will headteachers, mentors and NEs realise that advising and reassuring are only part of the whole complex mentoring role; that the principle concern should *not* be advising the NE how to blow the whistle at lunchtime break but a critical analysis of what is happening in the NE's classroom when the children are back inside.

APPENDIX A

Sample Log and Journal Proformas

WEEKLY LOG (NE)

Date _____

RECORD OF INFORMAL MENTORING

Approximate number of informal sessions in the week _____

Approximate number of sessions initiated by **Mentor** _____ by **NE** _____

Approximate amount of time spent in the week _____

	Topic/ Issue	**Number of times topic/ issue arose in week**
1	time management	
2	classroom management	
3	curriculum	
4	behaviour/ discipline	
5	individual children	
6	assessment of children	
7	record keeping	
8	expectations of children	
9	observations of children	
10	planning lessons	
11	planning problems	
12	teaching and learning	
13	display	
14	extra-curricular	
15	adult management	
16	parents	
17	administration	
18	school procedures	
19	resources	
20	expectations of NE/M	
21	evaluate NE's progress	
22	personal issues	
23	teaching file	
24	assembly	
25	other (please specify)	

RECORD OF FORMAL MENTORING

Date	Length of session	Initiated by?	Topic/ Issue	Usefulness * (straight after)	Usefulness * (one week later)

* **Usefulness** = how useful you feel the session to have been on the rating scale below:

0	1	2	3	4	5
not at all useful	slightly useful	quite useful	useful	very useful	extremely useful

RECORD OF OTHER MENTORING

	Date	Length of session	Initiated by?	Usefulness (straight after)	Usefulness (one week later)	Comments (including topic/ issue)
Mentor observing you						
You observing mentor						
Observing someone else (specify who)						
Being mentored by someone else (specify who)						

WEEKLY LOG (MENTOR)

Date _____

RECORD OF INFORMAL MENTORING

Approximate number of informal sessions in the week _____

Approximate number of sessions initiated by **Mentor** _____ by **NE** _____

Approximate amount of time spent in the week _____

	Topic/ Issue	**Number of times topic/ issue arose in week**
1	time management	
2	classroom management	
3	curriculum	
4	behaviour/ discipline	
5	individual children	
6	assessment of children	
7	record keeping	
8	expectations of children	
9	observations of children	
10	planning lessons	
11	planning problems	
12	teaching and learning	
13	display	
14	extra-curricular	
15	adult management	
16	parents	
17	administration	
18	school procedures	
19	resources	
20	expectations of NE/M	
21	evaluate NE's progress	
22	personal issues	
23	teaching file	
24	assembly	
25	other (please specify)	

RECORD OF FORMAL MENTORING

Journal Ref.	Date	Length of session	Initiated by	Issue/ Topics covered

RECORD OF OTHER MENTORING ACTIVITY

	Date	Length of Session	Initiated by	Comments
M observes NE				
NE observes M				
NE observes person other than M (please specify who)				
NE is mentored by person other than M (please specify who)				

MENTOR JOURNAL

Date _____

Ref. _____

WHY SESSION OCCURRED/ HOW ISSUE AROSE.

1. timetabled session ❑
2. post-lesson meeting ❑
3. pre-lesson meeting ❑
4. specific problem - session initiated by M ❑
5. specific problem - session initiated by NE ❑
6. specific problem - initiated by both ❑
7. other (please specify below) ❑

TOPICS COVERED.

1. time management ❑
2. classroom management ❑
3. curriculum ❑
4. behaviour/discipline ❑
5. individual children ❑
6. assessment of children ❑
7. record keeping ❑
8. expectations of children ❑
9. observation of children ❑
10. planning lessons ❑
11. planning problems ❑
12. teaching and learning ❑
13. display ❑
14. extra-curricular activities ❑
15. adult management ❑
16. parents ❑
17. administration ❑
18. school procedures ❑
19. resources ❑
20. expectations of NE/M ❑
21. evaluate NE's progress ❑
22. personal issues ❑
23. teaching file ❑
24. assembly ❑
25. other ❑
(please specify below)

WHAT WERE THE MENTOR'S INTENTIONS.

1. to encourage ❑
2. to reassure ❑
3. to offer/ show support ❑
4. to counsel (listen/empathise) ❑
5. to sponsor (promote) ❑
6. to induct (initiate/ inform) ❑
7. to plan (lessons/ days/ weeks) ❑
8. to negotiate (on behalf of NE) ❑
9. to assess NE ❑
10. to advise (ideas/ suggestions) ❑
11. to discuss ❑
12. to protect (foresee problems) ❑
13. to clarify (make clear/ explain) ❑
14. to train (coach/ teach) ❑
15. to focus NE (on issues/ problems/needs) ❑
16. to identify NE's needs/ weaknesses ❑
17. to analyse NE's needs/ weaknesses ❑
18. to help NE reflect on classroom practice ❑
19. to help NE reflect on children's learning ❑
20. to challenge (question) ❑
21. to action plan (set targets) ❑
22. other (please specify below) ❑

MENTOR JOURNAL

Date _____

Ref. _____

HOW WAS THE ISSUE DEALT WITH BY THE MENTOR (e.g. what strategies were used/ what advice was given).

WHAT OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN AGREED FOR MENTOR/ NE (including any targets that have been set).

MENTOR'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (i.e. what the mentor has gained from the session).

MENTOR JOURNAL

Date _____

Ref. _____

MENTOR'S SATISFACTION (please circle)

How useful do you think the mentoring was? (rating immediately after session)

not at all useful	slightly useful	quite useful	useful	very useful	extremely useful
0	1	2	3	4	5

How useful do you think the mentoring was? (rating one week later)

not at all useful	slightly useful	quite useful	useful	very useful	extremely useful
0	1	2	3	4	5

ANY FURTHER COMMENTS

APPENDIX B

Sample Questionnaire Proformas

MENTORING EXPERIENCES - First Teaching Practice

NAME.....

TUTOR GROUP .....

1. Was your teacher-mentor the class teacher?

2. How would you rate your relationship with your mentor? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

3. How would you rate the overall support of your mentor? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

4. What are your reasons for these ratings?

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

5. How often did you talk informally with your mentor? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

6. How often did you talk formally with your mentor? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

7. Please tick the five main areas in which you felt you needed mentor support:

1. time management ❑
2. classroom organisation ❑
3. curriculum ❑
4. resources ❑
5. behaviour/ discipline ❑
6. individual needs ❑
7. assessment/ record keeping ❑
8. display ❑
9. lesson planning ❑
10. expectations of children ❑
11. expectations of student ❑
12. school procedures ❑
13. administration/ organisation ❑
14. parents ❑
15. extra-curricular activities ❑
16. adult management ❑
17. evaluating progress ❑
18. teaching and learning ❑
19. other (please specify) ❑

8. In which areas do you think you will mainly need mentor support on final TP?

9. Please tick any of the roles that your mentor had:

1. encourager ❑
2. reassuror ❑
3. listener ❑
4. friend ❑
5. protector ❑
6. inductor (initiating into school) ❑
7. sponsor (promoting within school) ❑
8. negotiator (with adults in school) ❑
9. facilitator (arranging) ❑
10. role model ❑
11. advisor (making suggestions) ❑
12. someone to discuss things with ❑
13. someone to foresee problems ❑
14. critic ❑
15. coach (training) ❑
16. someone to identify your needs ❑
17. someone to clarify (explaining) ❑
18. someone to help you reflect critically ❑
19. someone to help you set targets ❑
20. someone to relate practice to theory ❑
21. someone to help you focus ❑
22. challenger (questioning) ❑
23. supporter in classroom ❑
24. assessor (evaluating progress) ❑
25. other (please specify) ❑

10. What personal qualities do you think a mentor needs?

11. How useful did you find the meetings with your mentor? (please circle)

extremely useful/ very useful / quite useful / slightly useful / not useful

12. What was it that made the meetings like this?

13. Did you receive any support from other members of staff? If so, how useful was this?

14. Please make any further comments on your experiences of having a teacher-mentor.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

MENTORING EXPERIENCES (FINAL TEACHING PRACTICE)

NAME _____

TUTOR GROUP _____

1. Was your teacher-mentor the class teacher?

❑ yes, if so, did your teacher-mentor have any management responsibilities?

❑ yes, please specify what _____
❑ no

❑ other member of staff, please specify who _____

2. How would you rate the overall support of your mentor? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

3. How would you rate your relationship with your mentor? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

4. What are your reasons for these ratings?

5. How often did you talk informally with your mentor? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

6. How often did you talk formally with your mentor? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

7. Please tick the five main areas in which you felt you needed support on your final Teaching Practice:

1. time management ❑
2. classroom organisation ❑
3. curriculum ❑
4. resources ❑
5. behaviour/ discipline ❑
6. individual needs ❑
7. assessment/ record keeping ❑
8. display ❑
9. lesson planning ❑
10. expectations of children ❑
11. expectations of student ❑
12. school procedures ❑
13. administration/ organisation ❑
14. parents ❑
15. extra-curricular activities ❑
16. adult management ❑
17. evaluating progress ❑
18. teaching and learning ❑
19. other (please specify below) ❑

8. In which areas do you think you will mainly need support as a Newly Qualified Teacher)?

9. Please tick any of the roles below that your mentor had:

1. encourager ❑
2. reassuror ❑
3. listener ❑
4. friend ❑
5. protector ❑
6. inductor (initiating into school) ❑
7. sponsor (promoting within school) ❑
8. negotiator (with adults in school) ❑
9. facilitator (arranging) ❑
10. role model ❑
11. advisor (making suggestions) ❑
12. someone to discuss things with ❑
13. someone to foresee problems ❑
14. critic ❑
15. coach (training) ❑
16. someone to identify your needs ❑
17. someone to clarify (explaining) ❑
18. someone to help you reflect critically ❑
19. someone to help you set targets ❑
20. someone to relate practice to theory ❑
21. someone to help you focus ❑
22. challenger (questioning) ❑
23. supporter in classroom ❑
24. assessor (evaluating progress) ❑
25. other (please specify below) ❑

10. What personal qualities do you think a final Teaching Practice mentor needs?

11. How useful did you find your meetings with your mentor? (please circle)

extremely useful / very useful / quite useful / slightly useful / not useful

12. What are your reasons for this rating?

13. How do you think the management in your school perceived mentoring?

essential / very important / important / quite important / not important

14. What are your reasons for this rating? Is there anything else you would have liked them to have done?

15. How much support did you have from other members of staff in the school?

a lot / some / hardly any / none

16. What was this support for?

17. How important was this support from other members of staff?

essential / very important / important / quite important / not at all important

18. Please make any further comments on your experiences of having a teacher-mentor.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

If you would be prepared to continue taking part in this research please fill in the details below, taking part will involve filling in two similar questionnaires during your NQT year (one questionnaire after the Christmas term and one questionnaire at the end of the year).

Do you have a job already?

- ❑ **yes, if yes, whereabouts will you be working?**
- ❑ **no**

Where can you be contacted? _____

_____

_____

_____

(home/work?)

If you do not have a contact address at present but you would like to continue taking part in this research please could you send your contact details to Linda Chapman, School of Education, 21 University Road, Leicester LE1 7RF.

Thank you very much.

NQT MENTORING EXPERIENCES 1

SECTION A: General Information

1. Do you have a designated Mentor?

❑ no (If no, please fill in as much of the rest of the questionnaire as you feel is relevant to your situation)

❑ yes, if so, what is your official relationship with your Mentor e.g. Head of your Year Group?

2. How was your Mentor chosen? Were you involved in this decision in any way?

3. How would you rate the overall support of your Mentor? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

4. How would you rate your relationship with your Mentor? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

5. What are your reasons for these ratings?

6. How much support have you received from other members of staff?

a lot / some / hardly any / none

7. How important was this support from other members of staff?

essential / very important / important / quite important / not at all important

8. How do you think the management in your school perceived mentoring?

essential / very important / important / quite important / not important

9. What are your reasons for this rating? Is there anything else you would have liked them to have done?

SECTION B: Time Issues

1. How often do you meet formally with your Mentor? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

2. How often do you meet informally with your Mentor? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

3. How useful did you find your meetings with your Mentor? (please circle)

extremely useful / very useful / quite useful / slightly useful / not useful

4. What are your reasons for this rating?

5. Have you been observed by your Mentor? If so, how often and what for?

❑ no, if not, would you have liked to have been observed? ❑ yes ❑ no

❑ yes, if so, how often and what for?

6. Do you think that you will have chance to be observed in the future?

❑ no
❑ yes

7. How important do you think it is for an NQT to be observed?

essential / very important / important / quite important / not at all important

8. Please give reasons for the above rating:

SECTION C: Issues Discussed

1. Please tick the 5 main areas in which you have needed mentor support this term?

1. time management ❑
2. classroom organisation ❑
3. curriculum ❑
4. resources ❑
5. behaviour/ discipline ❑
6. individual needs ❑
7. assessment/ record keeping ❑
8. display ❑
9. lesson planning ❑
10. expectations of children ❑
11. expectations of student ❑
12. school procedures ❑
13. administration/ organisation ❑
14. parents ❑
15. extra-curricular activities ❑
16. adult management ❑
17. evaluating progress ❑
18. teaching and learning ❑
19. other (please specify) ❑

2. In which areas do you think you will mainly need support in the next two terms?

SECTION D: The Role of the Mentor

1. Tick any of the roles below that your Mentor has had this term:

1. encourager ❑
2. reassuror ❑
3. listener ❑
4. friend ❑
5. protector ❑
6. inductor (initiating into school) ❑
7. sponsor (promoting within school) ❑
8. negotiator (with adults in school) ❑
9. facilitator (arranging) ❑
10. role model ❑
11. advisor (making suggestions) ❑
12. someone to discuss things with ❑
13. someone to foresee problems ❑
14. critic ❑
15. coach (training) ❑
16. someone to identify your needs ❑
17. someone to clarify (explaining) ❑
18. someone to help you reflect critically ❑
19. someone to help you set targets ❑
20. someone to relate practice to theory ❑
21. someone to help you focus ❑
22. challenger (questioning) ❑
23. supporter ❑
24. assessor (evaluating progress) ❑
25. other (please specify below) ❑

2. Are there any roles from this list that you consider that your Mentor has not had so far but that you think he/she may have in the following two terms?

3. What personal qualities do you think an NQT mentor needs?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. If you have any further comments on your experiences of being mentored please add them below.

NQT MENTORING EXPERIENCES 2

SECTION A: General Information

Name: _____

1. Have you been in the same school all year?

❑ yes
❑ no (If not, when did you start at your present school? _____

2. Have you had the same Mentor all year?

❑ yes
❑ no (If not, please give details below. When you are answering the remaining questions please refer to the Mentor who you feel has been the most influential.)

3. How would you rate the support of your Mentor in the last two terms? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

4. How would you rate the support of your Mentor over the whole year? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

5. What are your reasons for these ratings?

6. How would you rate your relationship with your Mentor in the last two terms? (please circle)

excellent / very good / good / fair / poor

7. Has your relationship with your mentor changed over the year, if so, how?

8. How much support did you receive from other members of staff over the last two terms? (please circle)

a lot / some / hardly any / none

9. How important was this support? ? (please circle)

essential / very important / important / quite important / not at all important

---

SECTION B: Time Issues

1. How often have you met formally with your Mentor over the last two terms? ? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

2. How often have you met informally with your Mentor over the last two terms? ? (please circle)

daily / 2-3 times a week / weekly / every 2-3 weeks / less than every 2-3 weeks

3. Has the amount of time spent with your Mentor changed over the three terms, if so, how?

4. Were you observed by your Mentor in the second term?

- ❑ no
- ❑ yes, if so, how often and for what?

5. Were you observed by your Mentor in the third term?

- ❑ no
- ❑ yes, if so, how often and for what?

6. Please tick the statement below that most accurately reflects your feelings:

- ❑ I would have liked to have been observed more.
- ❑ I would have liked to have been observed less.
- ❑ I felt the amount of observation I received was about right.

7. How important do you think it is for an NQT to be observed? (please circle)

essential / very important / important / quite important / not at all important

8. Please give reasons for the above rating:

SECTION C: Issues Discussed

1. Please tick the 5 main areas in which you have needed support over the last two terms:

1. time management ❑
2. classroom organisation ❑
3. curriculum ❑
4. resources ❑
5. behaviour/ discipline ❑
6. individual needs ❑
7. assessment/ record keeping ❑
8. display ❑
9. lesson planning ❑
10. expectations of children ❑
11. expectations of student ❑
12. school procedures ❑
13. administration/ organisation ❑
14. parents ❑
15. extra-curricular activities ❑
16. adult management ❑
17. evaluating progress ❑
18. teaching and learning ❑
19. other (please specify) ❑

2. How have your needs changed over the whole year?

SECTION D: The Role of the Mentor

1. Please tick any of the roles that your Mentor has had over the last two terms:

1. encourager ❑
2. reassurer ❑
3. supporter ❑
4. protector (foreseer of problems) ❑
5. inductor (initiating you into school) ❑
6. sponsor (promoting you in school) ❑
7. negotiator (on your behalf) ❑
8. advisor (ideas/ suggestions) ❑
9. someone to clarify (explain) ❑
10. someone to listen ❑
11. someone to discuss ideas with ❑
12. trainer (coach/ teacher) ❑
13. planner (helping you to plan) ❑
14. someone to identify your needs ❑
15. someone to analyse your needs ❑
16. someone to help you focus on specifics ❑
17. someone to help you to reflect critically ❑
18. someone to help you set targets ❑
19. someone to challenge you (question you) ❑
20. a friend ❑
21. a counsellor (on personal matters) ❑
22. other (please specify) ❑

2. Over the three terms, has your Mentor had the roles that you expected an NQT Mentor to have? If not, why not?

3. Do you feel that your Mentor has challenged your teaching over the three terms? If so, has this challenge been positive or negative?

4. Do you feel that NQTs need their teaching challenged? Why/why not?

5. What personal qualities do you think an NQT mentor needs?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

If you have any further comments on your experiences of being mentored please write them below.

APPENDIX C

Coding Scheme for Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRE CODING SCHEME

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Management responsibilities:

1. Deputy Head
2. Headteacher
3. Head of Key Stage
4. Co-ordinator
5. SENCO
6. Senior management team

Reasons for support rating:

1. good interpersonal skills - friendly; approachable; sense of humour
2. good professional development skills - gives good advice; analyses well; reflects
3. NE accepted by Mentor - included, allowed freedom, M lets go of class
4. Mentor there when needed - available; carefully timed support
5. good example - good teacher
6. committed to mentoring - interested in NE's prof development
7. positive
8. poor interpersonal skills - ignores NE; gives one word answers; unfriendly
9. poor professional development skills - vague/superficial advice/feedback
10. unavailable
11. unclear about the Mentor role
12. lack of information/advice/feedback for NE
13. lack of interest in NE
14. negative
15. mentor had wrong expectations of NE
16. professional disagreement
17. Mentor did not initiate meetings/feedback
18. Mentor would not let go of class/ did not give NE freedom.
19. NE left on own too much.
20. Mentor and NE supported each other.
21 Problems because of Mentor having high status in school.
22. Support difficult to organise.
23. Support tailed off.

Mentor Qualities:

1. accepting
2. approachable
3. available
4. committed to mentoring

5. empathetic (sensitive)
6. open-minded
7. patient
8. positive
9. sense of humour
10. constructive
11. experienced teacher
12. experienced mentor
13. good communicator
14. good listener
15. good teacher
16. understands role of Mentor
17. respected in school
18. understands NE's professional needs
19. up to date
20. challenging
21. confident
22. reliable

Reasons for usefulness of meeting rating:

1. good interpersonal skills of Mentor
2. constructive criticism
3. a chance to discuss plans
4. helped identify needs
5. Mentor was positive
6. good advice
7. helped evaluate progress
8. set targets
9. too infrequent/none
10. too rushed
11. little interest in Sts professional development
12. little feedback/evaluation
13. Mentor lacked knowledge about university requirements
14. Mentor negative
15 Mentor too vague
16. superficial advice
17 limited feedback

Reasons for management rating:

1. whole school support
2. mentoring generally seen as imp
3. HT offered practical support
4. structures in place e.g. time for meetings
5. Mentor used as supply
6. Student used as supply
7. no guidelines for Mentor
8. no management interest in Students
9. staff ignored student - St felt isolated/alienated

Support given by other staff:

1. general encouragement
2. tips/advice
3. planning
4. resources - finding/using
5. dealing with difficult children
6. subject areas
7. teaching with
8. stress
9. school information - policies, documents
10. teaching strategies
11. observation

Reasons for observation rating(NQTs):

1. need feedback to help identify needs
2. praise for good practice
3. practical advice and suggestions
4. reassurance
5. obervation. should not be too often
6. to stop bad habits
7. to ensure that fitting in with school ethos

8. there is a need for observation only if the NE is having problems
9. it helps NEs feel valued
10. there is no need for observation because HT makes continual assessment.
11. there is no need for observation because there was enough on teaching practice.

APPENDIX D

Coding Scheme for Videos

Video Analysis - PROFESSIONAL ROLE DIMENSION

Role Elements	Code	Strategies	Code	Suggested Actions	Examples
Prof. Supporter	**S**	To Encourage	**1**	praising (general)	"good"
		To Reassure	**2**	listening positively	nodding; "yes"; "u-huh"
				offering prac. support	"I'll take a group"
				offering prof. support	with parents, backing up
				waiting	anticipatory silence
				neutral comment	"oh well"; laugh; OK
				telling	"you should"; "do this"
				sharing prof. perceptions	of children/ school
				questioning (prompt)	"what about that group"
				empathising	"I understand/remember"
				allaying doubts	'don't worry"
Trainer	**T**	To Train	**3**	praising (specific)	"that was good"
(procedural)		To Protect	**4**	listening positively	to make comments
		To Advise	**5**	listening negatively	still, closed body posture
		To Identify Needs	**6**	suggesting	"you could"; "I would"
		To Focus	**7**	telling	"you should"; "do this"
		To Clarify	**8**	explaining (procedural)	"this is because..."
		To be a Critic	**9**	criticising constructively	"this didn't work, that did"
		To Help Reflect	**10**	criticising negatively	"it didn't work"
				modelling (suggestion)	"you could do it like this"
				modelling (expectation)	"do it like this"
				modelling (arrangement)	"I'll do it on Monday"
				questioning (open)	"how do you feel it went"
				questioning (closed)	yes/no answer
				questioning (prompt)	"what about that group"
				questioning(rhetorical)	"shall we look at..."
				giving background info	about children
				stating	
Educator	**E**	To Set Targets	**11**	suggesting	"you could"; "bear in mind"
		To Relate Practice to Theory	**12**	explaining (rationale)	reasoning behind actions
		To Challenge	**13**	questioning (open)	"how do you feel it went"
				generalising	about context
				questioning (prompt)	"what about that group"
				questioning (open but limiting)	"you could do this... or this..."
				questioning (rhetorical)	"shall we..."
				extending (suggestion)	"would you like to try doing an assembly"
				extending(expectation)	"you can do the assembly"
				setting targets (suggestion)	"you could concentrate on..."
				setting targets (expectation)	"so you'll concentrate on..."
				setting targets (NE)	"what will you concentrate on?"
				sharing prof. knowledge	"I've done"; "I think"

REFERENCES

Abell, S.K., Dillon, D., Hopkins, C.J., McInery, W.D. and O'Brien, D.G. (1995) Somebody to count on: Mentor/intern relationships in beginning teacher internship programme. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 11, (2): 173 - 188.

Anderson, E.M. and Lucasse Shannon, A. (1988) Towards a conceptualisation of mentoring. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 39, (1): 38 - 42.

Bailey, T. and Brankin, M. (1992) Establishing criteria for mentoring. In M. Wilkin (Ed.), *Mentoring in Schools.* London: Kogan Page.

Ballantyne, R., Hansford, B. and Packer, J. (1995) Mentoring beginner teachers: A qualitative analysis of process and outcomes. *Educational Review,* 47, (3): 297 - 307.

Beardon, T., Booth, M., Hargreaves, D. and Reiss, M. (1992) School-led teacher training: The way forward. *Cambridge Education Papers,* 2. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Department of Education.

Bennett, N. and Carré, C. (Eds.) (1993) *Learning to Teach.* London: Routledge.

Bennett, N., Carré, C. and Dunne, E. (1993) Learning to Teach. In N. Bennett and C. Carré (Eds.) *Learning to Teach.* London: Routledge.

Berger, P.L. (1966) *Invitation to Sociology.* New York: Doubleday.

Bleach, K. (1997) The importance of critical reflection in mentoring newly qualified teachers. *Mentoring and Tutoring*, 4, (3): 19-24.

Bleach, K. (1999) *The induction and mentoring of Newly Qualified Teachers.* London: David Fulton.

Bogdan, R.C. and Birklen, S.K. (1992) *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods.* London: Allyn and Bacon.

Brooks, V. (1996) Mentoring: The interpersonal dimension. *Teacher Development,* February: 5 - 10.

Burn, C. (1992) Collaborative teaching. In M. Wilkin (Ed.) *Mentoring in Schools.* London: Kogan Page.

Bush, T., Coleman, M., Wall, D. and West-Burnham, J. (1996) Mentoring and continuing professional development. In D. McIntyre and H. Hagger (Eds.) *Mentors in Schools: Developing the profession of teaching.* London: David Fulton.

Calderhead, J. (1987) The quality of reflection in student teachers' professional learning. *European Journal of Teacher Education,* 10, (3): 269-278.

Calderhead, J. (1988) Learning from introductory school experience. *Journal of Education for Teaching.* 14, (1) 75 - 83.

Calderhead, J. (1989) Reflective Teaching and Teacher Education. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 5, (1): 43 - 51.

Calderhead, J. and Robson, M. (1991) Images of teaching: student teachers' early conceptions of classroom practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 7: 1 - 8

Cameron-Jones, M. and O'Hara, P. (1995) Mentors' perceptions of their roles with students in initial teacher training. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 25 (2): 189 - 199.

Cameron-Jones, M. and O'Hara, P. (1997) Support and challenge in teacher education. *British Educational Research Journal,* 23, (1): 15 - 23

Campbell, A. and Kane, I. (1996) Mentoring in Primary School Culture. In D. McIntyre and H. Hagger (Eds.) *Mentors in Schools: Developing the Profession of Teaching.* London: David Fulton.

Carney, S. and Hagger, H. (1996) Working with Beginning Teachers: the impact on schools. In D. McIntyre and H. Hagger (Eds) *Mentors in Schools: Developing the Profession of Teaching.* London: David Fulton.

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986) *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and acttion research.* Lewes: Falmer/Deakin University Press.

Carré, C. The first year of teaching. In N. Bennett and C. Carre *Learning to Teach* London: Routledge.

Cohen and Manion (1989) *Research Methods in Education.* (Third edition). London: Routledge.

Cole, A.L. (1991) Relationships in the work place: Doing what comes naturally. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 7, (5/6): 415 - 426.

Collarbone, P. and Farrar, M. (1993) 'Induction revisited - a life-time in the Profession?' in *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 19, (1): 23 - 28.

Collison, J. and Edwards, A. (1994) How teachers support pupil's learning. In I. Reid, H. Constable and R. Griffiths *Teacher Education Reform: The research evidence.* London: Paul Chapman.

Cross, R. (1995) The role of the mentor in utilising school support for the newly qualified teacher. *School Organisation*, 15, (1): 35 - 42.

Daloz, L. (1986) *Effective teaching and mentoring.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Dart, L. and Drake, P. (1996) Subject Perspectives in Menotring. In D. McIntyre and H. Hagger (Eds.) *Mentors in Schools: Developing the Profession of Teaching.* London: David Fulton.

Denzin, N.K. (1995) The experential texts and the limits of visual understanding. *Educational Theory,* 45, (1): 7 – 18.

DES (1984) *Initial Teacher Training: Approval of courses.* Circular 4/84, London: DES.

Department for Education (1992) *Initial teacher training (Secondary Phase).* Circular 9/92, London: HMSO

Department for Education (1993) *The initial training of primary school teachers: New criteria for Courses.* Circular14/93, London: HMSO

Department for Education and Employment (1997) *Excellence in schools.* The White Paper. July. London: DfEE.

Department for Education and Employment (1998) *Teaching: High status, high standards.* Circular 4/98, London: DFEE.

Department for Education and Employment (1999) *The Induction period for Newly Qualified Teachers.* Circular 5/99, London: DfEE.

Dey, I. ((1993) *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User-Friendly Guide for Social Sciences.* London: Routledge.

Dunne, E. and Dunne, R. (1993) The purpose and impact of school-based work: the class teacher's role. In N. Bennett and C. CarrÇ(Eds.) *Learning to Teach.* London: Routledge.

Dunne, R. and Harvard, G. (1993) A model of teaching and its implications for mentoring. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Earley, P. (1993) Initiation rights? Beginning teachers' professional development and the objectives of induction training. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 19, (1): 5 - 11.

Early, P. and Kinder, K. (1994) *Initiation rights: Effective induction practices for new teachers.* Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research.

Elliott, B. (1995) Developing relationships: significant episodes in professional development. *Teaching and Teacher Development,* 1 (2): 247 - 264

Elliott, B. and Calderhead, J. (1993) Mentoring for teacher development: possibilities and caveats. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Edwards, A. (1995) Teacher education: Partnerships in pedagogy? *Teaching and Teacher Education.* 11, (6): 595 - 610.

Edwards, A. and Collison, J. (1996) *Mentoring and developing practice in primary schools.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Edwards, A. (1997) Possible futures for initial teacher education in the primary phase. In A. Hudson and G. Lambert (Eds.) *Exploring Futures in Initial Teacher Education.* London: Bedford Way Papers.

Edwards, A. and Ogden, L. (1998) Constructing curriculum subject knowledge in primary school teacher training. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 14, (7): 735 - 747.

Edwards, D. and Mercer, N. (1987) *Common knowledge: The development of understanding in the classroom.* London: Methuen.

Evans, L., Abbot, I., Goodyear, R. and Pritchard, A. (1996) Developing the mentoring role: Some research recommendations. *Mentoring and Tutoring,* 4 (1): 38 - 46.

Feiman-Nemser, S., Parker, M.B. and Zeichner, K. (1993) Are mentor-teachers teacher educators? In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Feiman-Nemser, S. and Buchman, M. (1987) When is student teaching teacher education? *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 3: 255 - 273.

Fidler, B. and Lock, N. (1994) *Mentorship and whole-school development.* London: Longman.

Fish, D. (1995) *Quality mentoring for student teachers.* London: David Fulton.

Frost, D. (1993) Reflective mentoring and the new partnership. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Fuller, F.F. and Bown, O.H. (1975) Becoming a Teacher. In K. Ryan (Ed.) *Teacher education: The seventy-fourth year book of the National Society for the Study of Education.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Furlong, J. (1994) The rise and rise of the mentor in British initial teacher training. In Yeomans, R. and Sampson, J. (Eds.) *Mentorship in the Primary School.* London: Falmer Press.

Gardner, P. (1993) The early history of school-based teacher training. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Geertz, C. (1973) 'Thick descripyion: towards an interpretative theory of culture' in C. Geertz (ed.) *The Interpretaion of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz.* New York: Basic Books.

Glover, D. and Mardle, G. (1996) Issues in the Management of Mentoring. In D. McIntyre and H. Hagger (Eds.) *Mentors in Schools: Developing the Profession of Teaching.* London: David Fulton.

Gratch, A. (1998) Beginning teacher and mentor relationships. *Journal of Teacher Education,* 49, (3): 220-227.

Guillaume, A, and Rudney, G. (1993) Student teachers growth towards independence: An analysis of their changing concerns. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 9, (1): 65 - 80.

Hawkey, K. (1998) Mentor pedagogy and student teacher professional development: a study of two mentoring relationships. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 14, (6): 657 - 670.

Hillgate Group (1989) *Learning to teach.* London: Claridge Press.

Holly, P. and Southworth, G. (1989) *The Developing School.* Lewes: Falmer Press.

Hyland, T. (1993) Training, competence and expertise in teacher education. *Teacher Development*, 2, (2) 117 - 122.

Jacques, K. (1992) Mentoring in initial teacher education. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 22, (3): 337 - 350.

Kagan, D. (1992) Professional Growth among preservice and beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research,* 62, (2): 129 - 169.

Kelly, M., Beck, T. and apThomas, J. (1992) Mentoring as a staff development activity. In M. Wilkin (Ed.) *Mentoring in Schools.* London: Kogan Page.

Kirkham, D. (1992) The nature and conditions of mentoing practice. In M. Wilkin (Ed.) *Mentoring in Schools.* London: Kogan Page.

Kuzmic, J. (1994) A beginning teacher's search for meaning: Teacher socialization, organisational literacy and empowerment. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 10,(1): 15 -27.

Lawlor, S. (1990) *Teachers mistaught.* London: Centre for Policy Studies.

Little, J.W. (1990) The mentor phenomenon and social organisation of teaching. In C. Cazden (Ed.) *Review of Research in Education,* Washington DC: America Educational Research Association.

Maykut, P. and Morehouse, R. (1994) *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide*. London: The Falmer Press.

Maynard, T. and Furlong, J. (1993) Learning to teach and models of mentoring. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Maynard, T. and Furlong, J. (1995) *The growth of professional knowledge: Mentoring student teachers.* London: Routledge.

Maynard, T. (1996) Mentoring subject Knowledge in the primary school in D. McIntyre and H. Hagger (Eds.) *Mentors in schools: Developing the profession of teaching.* London: David Fulton.

McIntyre, D. (1992) Theory, theorizing and reflection in initial teacher training in J. Calderhead (Ed.) *Conceptualizing reflection in teacherdevelopment.* London: Falmer.

McIntyre, D., Hagger, H. and Wilkin, M. (Eds.) (1993) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

McIntyre, D. and Hagger, H. (1993) Teachers' Expertise and Models of Mentoring. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

McIntyre, D. and Hagger, H. (Eds.) (1996) *Mentors in schools: Developing the profession of teaching.* London: David Fulton.

McBride, R. (Ed.) (1996) *Teacher Education Policy: Some issues arising from research and practice.* London: Falmer Press.

Menter, I. (1995) What newly qualified teachers really need: Evidence from a suppport group. *Teacher Development,* Oct: 15 - 22.

Mercer, N. (1995) *The Guided Construction of Knowledge: Talk amonst teachers and learners.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Miller, D. C.(1991) *Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement* (5th ed) Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Mountford, B. (1993) Mentoring and initial teacher education. In P. Smith and J. West-Burnham (Eds.) *Mentoring in the effective school.* Harlow: Longman.

Moyles, J., Suschitsky, W. and Chapman, L. (1998) *Teaching fledglings to fly...? Mentoring and support systems in primary schools.* Leicester: Association of Teachers and Lecturers/University of Leicester.

Moyles, J., Suschitsky, W. and Chapman, L. (1999) 'Mentoring in primary schools: Ethos, structures and workloads.' *Journal of In-Service Education.* 25 (1): 161 - 172.

O' Hear, A. (1988) *Who teaches teachers?* London: Social Affairs Unit.

O' Hear, A. (1991) *Education and Democracy.* Lomdon: Claridge Press.

Oppenheim, A.N. (1992) *Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude Measurement.* London: Cassell.

Patton, M.Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd ed.), Beverley Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Reid, L., Bullock, R. and Howarth, S. (1988) *An introduction to primary school organisaton.* London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Robson, C. (1993) *Real World Research.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Sampson, J. and Yeomans, R. (1994) Analysing the work of mentors: The role. In R. Yeomans and J. Sampson (Eds.) *Mentorship in the primary school.* London: Falmer Press.

Shaw, R. (1992) *Teacher training in secondary schools.* London: Kogan Page.

Schön, D. (1987) *Educating the reflective practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Shulman, L. (1987) Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review,* 57, (1): 1- 22.

Siegel, S. and Castellan, N. J. (1988). *Nonparametric statistics for the behavioral sciences.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sidgwick, S. (1996) Government Policy and the Induction of New Teachers. In R. McBride (Ed) *Teacher education policy: Some issues arising from research and practice.* London: Falmer Press.

Smith, R. and Aldred, G (1993) The impersonation of wisdom. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Smith, P. and West-Burnham, J. (Eds) (1993) *Mentoring in the effective school.* Harlow: Longman.

Stammers, P. (1993) Maintaining that first year dream. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 19, (1): 29 - 35.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990) *Basics of qualitative research:grounded theory procedures and techniques.* London: Sage.

Swanson, J. and Chapman, L. (1994) Inside the black box: Theoretical and Methodological issues in conducting evaluation research using a qualitative approach. In J.M. Morse *Critical Issues in Qualitative Research Methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Teacher Training Agency (1997) *Career Entry Profile for Newly Qualified Teachers.* London: TTA.

Teacher Training Agency (1999) *Supporting induction. Part One: An overview.* London: TTA.

Tharp, R. and Gallimore, R. (1988) *Rousing Minds to Life.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tharp, R. and Gallimore, R. (1998) A theory of teaching as assisted performance in D. Faulkner, K. Littleton and M. Woodhead (Eds.) *Learning Relationships in the Classroom.* London: Routledge.

Thompson, M. (1993) The weakest link: ATL's proposals. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 19, (1): 12 - 15.

Tickle, L. (1989) On probation: Preparation for professionalism. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 19, (3): 277 - 285.

Tickle, L. (1993) The wish of Odysseus? New teachers receptiveness to mentoring. In D. McIntyre, H. Hagger, M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Mentoring: Perspectives on school-based education.* London: Kogan Page.

Tickle, L. (1996) Reflective teaching: embrace or illusion? In R. McBride (Ed.) *Teacher education policy: Some issues arising from research and practice.* London: Falmer Press.

Turner, M. (1993) The role of mentors and teacher tutors in school based teacher education and induction. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 19, (1): 36 - 45.

Veenham, S. (1984) Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research,* 54: 143 - 178.

Vonk, J.H.C. (1993) Mentoring beginning teachers: mentor knowledge and skills. *Mentoring,* 1 (1): 31 - 41.

Vonk, J.H.C. (1994) Teacher induction: The great omision in education. In M. Galton and B. Moon (Eds.) *Handbook of teacher education in Europe.* London: David Fulton.

Vonk, J.H.C. (1996) A knowledge base for mentors of beginning teachers: results of a Dutch experiment. In R. McBride (Ed.) *Teacher education policy: Some issues arising from research and practice.* London: Falmer Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978) *Mind in Society* edited by M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner and E. Souberman. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wall, M. and Smith, P. (1993) Mentoring and newly qualified teachers. In P. Smith and J. West-Burnham (Eds.) *Mentoring in the effective school.* Harlow: Longman.

Waterhouse, A. (1993) Mirror, mirror, on the wall, what is the fairest scheme of all? Reflections on the induction needs of newly qualified teachers. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 19, (1):16-21.

Watkins, C. and Whalley, C. (1993) Mentoring beginner teachers: issues for schools to anticipate and manage. *School Organisation,* 13, (2): 129 - 138.

West-Burnham, J. (1993) Mentoring and Management Development. In P. Smith and J. West-Burnham (Eds.) *Mentoring in the effective school.* Harlow: Longman.

Wildman, T.M., Magliaro, S.G., Niles, R.A. and Niles, J.A. (1992) Teacher mentoring: an analysis of roles, activities and conditions. *Journal of Teacher Education,* 43 (3): 205 - 213.

Wilkin, M. (1990) The development of partnership in the United Kingdom. In M. Booth, J. Furlong and M. Wilkin (Eds.) *Partnership in Intial Teacher Training* London: Cassell.

Wilkin, M. (Ed) (1992) *Mentoring in schools.* London: Kogan Page.

Wood, D.J. (1988) *How Children Think and Learn.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Wood, D.J. and Bruner, J.S. and Ross, G. (1976) The role of tutoring in problem-solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry,* 17: 89 – 100

Wood, P. (1996) *Researching the art of teaching: Ethnography for educational use.* London: Routledge.

Yeomans, R. (1994) Relationships: Mentors and Students. In R. Yeomans and J. Sampson (Eds.) *Mentorship in the Primary School.* London: Falmer Press.

Yeomans, R. and Sampson, J. (Eds.) (1994) *Mentorship in the Primary School.* London: Falmer Press

Zeichner, K. and Liston, D. (1987) Teaching student teachers to reflect. *Harvard Educational Review,* 57, (1): 23 - 49.

Zeichner, K., Liston, D., Mahlios, M. and Gomez, M. (1988) The structure and goals of a student teaching programme and the character and quality of supervisory discourse. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* 4, (4): 349 - 363.