

**The POSTGRADUATE PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT (PPD) PROGRAMME
QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) STRAND**

TECHNICAL REPORT TO TDA



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CUREE would like to acknowledge and thank the following people for their contributions, guidance and support in the production of the Postgraduate Professional Development Quality Assurance Strand report:

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- Michael Jopling (University of Wolverhampton)
- Dr Sue Ainslie (Edge Hill University)
- Dr Lorna Earl (University of Toronto)
- Liz James
- Christopher Noden

The CUREE staff involved in this first year of the evaluation include:

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- Miranda Bell
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**PPD Technical Report to TDA
TDA Postgraduate Professional Development (PPD) Quality
Assurance Strand**

Contents

Introduction 4
Budget Statement..... 4
CUREE Research Team 6
Sample..... 6
Partnership Managers Conferences and Development Group Meetings 7
Methodology..... 7
 Desk Research..... 7
 Site Visits 7
 Student Portfolio Reviews..... 9
 Student Telephone Interviews 9
 Report Writing 10
Proposed Changes for Year 2 10
 Project Management 10
 Relationships Management 11
 Methodology..... 11
 Drilling Down into CPD Processes..... 12
 Exploring Partnership and its Implications for PPD Provision 12
 Recruitment but not Retention? 13
 Possible Future Research 13
Appendix 1. Student Portfolio Review Grid..... 15
Appendix 2. Student Telephone Interview Questions 16

List of Tables

Figure 1. PPD Year 1 Budget Review..... 4
Figure 2. Breakdown of Costs for Year 1 4
Figure 3. PPD Year 1 Timeline 5
Figure 4. Breakdown of Site Visit Information 8
Figure 5. Number of Student Portfolios Reviewed per Site 9
Figure 6. Number of Telephone Interviews Conducted per Site..... 9

Introduction

1. The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) was commissioned by TDA in July 2006 to undertake a three-year evaluation of the PPD programme to monitor the quality and impact of the scheme. The evaluation was also intended to contribute to the evolution of the programmes, through working collaboratively with course providers to increase understanding of effective CPD and to use this to guide the development of the provision.
2. The evaluation aimed to identify, highlight and communicate examples of good practice and areas where provision could be strengthened, and inform the nature and direction of further research.

Budget Statement

Figure 1. PPD Year 1 Budget Review

The total budget for the three years of the evaluation is:

Year 1	2006-07	£94,475
Year 2	2007-08	£74,877
Year 3	2008-09	£67,623
Total	3 years	£234,972

Figure 2. Breakdown of Costs for Year 1

Project element	Duration	Original estimate	Actual cost
Project set up and planning	August 2006 - November 2006	£2,914	£2,758
Database Development of database and analytic framework, build, testing and population Desk research - data extraction of submissions documents, data returns, impact evaluations and any additional documentation	September 2006 - February 2007	£13,153	£14,567
Site Visits Site visit preparation, visits, data input following visits, travel and subsistence	February 2007 - June 2007	£31,189	£26,607
Telephone interviews with students	April 2007	£10,650	£12,110
Student portfolio review	April 2007	£9,959	£6,650
Data analysis and writing reports	May 2007 - July 2007	£4,649	£11,755
Project administration Project co-ordination, project board meetings, attendance at partnership managers conferences, steering group meetings, project advisory board	August 2006 - July 2007	£21,960	£27,542
	Total	£94,474	£101,988

Figure 3. PPD Year 1 Timeline

Week Date	August				September				October				November				December				January 2007				February				March				April				May				June				July						
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			
31/07/2006	07/08/2006	14/08/2006	21/08/2006	28/08/2006	04/09/2006	11/09/2006	18/09/2006	25/09/2006	02/10/2006	09/10/2006	16/10/2006	23/10/2006	30/10/2006	06/11/2006	13/11/2006	20/11/2006	27/11/2006	04/12/2006	11/12/2006	18/12/2006	25/12/2006	01/01/2007	08/01/2007	15/01/2007	22/01/2007	29/01/2007	05/02/2007	12/02/2007	19/02/2007	26/02/2007	05/03/2007	12/03/2007	19/03/2007	26/03/2007	02/04/2007	09/04/2007	16/04/2007	23/04/2007	30/04/2007	07/05/2007	14/05/2007	21/05/2007	28/05/2007	04/06/2007	11/06/2007	18/06/2007	25/06/2007	02/07/2007	09/07/2007	16/07/2007	23/07/2007
Project set up and planning	[Shaded]																																																		
Database						[Shaded]								[Shaded]																																					
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Student portfolio review																					[Shaded]																														
Data analysis and writing reports																									[Shaded]																										
Project administration	[Shaded]																																																		

CUREE Research Team

3. The CUREE research team comprised:

Project Directors	Philippa Cordingley (Chair Project Board) Julie Temperley (Fieldwork and Project Management) Miranda Bell (Data Analysis and Reporting)
Project Co-ordinator	Holly Mitchell
Senior Researcher	Clare Buntić
Database Design	Paul Crisp
Information Officer	Lauren Goodchild
Researcher	Donald Evans
Researcher	Kate Holdich
Researcher	Colin Isham
Researcher	Michael Jopling (University of Wolverhampton)

4. A Project Advisory Group comprising Dr Sue Ainslie, Edge Hill University; Professor Mark Hadfield, University of Wolverhampton; and Dr Lorna Earl, Aporia Consulting Ltd, was established to advise on the development of the evaluation methodology, to provide quality assurance of data collection and to review the data analysis and findings of year 1 of the evaluation.

Sample

5. A stratified sample of 20 course providers/partnerships was selected for detailed investigation in the first year of the evaluation. The year 1 sample included the following 20 partnerships:
- Bury LA;
 - Canterbury Christchurch University College;
 - CIMT (Centre for Innovation in Mathematics Teaching);
 - CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education);
 - College of St. Mark and St. John (SWIFT (Marjon));
 - DATA (Design and Technology Association);
 - Dyslexia Action;
 - East Midlands Partnership;
 - Institute of Education (1) - University of London;
 - Middlesex University (MIDWHEB);
 - NASSEA (Northern Association of Support Services for Equality and Achievement);
 - North East Consortium - Durham LA;
 - Open University;
 - Oxford Brookes;
 - Sheffield Hallam University;
 - SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust);
 - University of Birmingham;
 - University of Cambridge;
 - University of Sussex; and
 - York St. John University.

Partnership Managers Conferences and Development Group Meetings

6. During year 1 of the evaluation, CUREE team members regularly attended TDA Partnership Managers Conferences:

- 19th September 2006;
- 5th & 7th December 2006; and
- 13th March 2007.

These provided an opportunity for partnership managers to meet the CUREE research team, to learn about the project and to ensure that it was appropriately connected to other related development work.

7. CUREE Directors attended TDA Development Group meetings on:

- 14th November 2006;
- 14th February 2007; and
- 17th April 2007.

These meetings served as a vehicle through which to report back to TDA on the progress of the evaluation and to enable the Development Group to offer strategic advice for evaluation.

8. CUREE also regularly contributed to TDA communications such as e-newsletters and advised on and co-presented a development seminar on impact evaluation for Partnership Managers.

Methodology

Desk Research

9. CUREE developed an analytic framework, in association with the Project Advisory Board and in consultation with TDA, based on an adapted version of the EPPI systematic review data extraction tool to analyse documentation. The analytic framework is based on 3 key evaluation objectives and predictive indicators. It was designed to be capable of storing and analysing multi-method data types.

10. The evaluation objectives were:

- Evaluation Objective 1: Effectiveness, quality and impact of course preparations;
- Evaluation Objective 2: Effectiveness of participant recruitment and preparation activities; and
- Evaluation Objective 3: Provider performance funding criteria and quality threshold.

The evaluation objectives were subdivided into level 1 and level 2 indicators; these were developed from cumulative knowledge and expertise in the field of effective professional development.

11. The 'desk research' phase of the project took place in autumn 2006 this involved the qualitative and quantitative analysis of documentation submitted to TDA by the partnerships. The documents analysed included submissions documents, impact evaluations and data returns.

12. A PPD database was designed and built to store and analyse data collected by the researchers.

Site Visits

13. Site visits were undertaken by the CUREE researchers between February and March 2007. This fieldwork phase allowed the researchers to collect further data on the sites, to

clarify any ambiguities thrown up by the desk research and to gain an experience of the partnership 'on the ground'.

16. Site visits for the larger more complex partnerships (15+ partners) were conducted over two days and for smaller partnerships visits lasted one day.

Figure 4. Breakdown of Site Visit Information

Site Name	No. days for visit	Date of visit	QA (researcher accompanied by CUREE Director)
Bury LA	1	13 th March	
Canterbury Christchurch University College	2	6 th , 7 th March	QA
CIMT (Centre for Innovation in Mathematics Teaching)	2*	16 th March	
CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education)	1	29 th March	QA
College of St. Mark and St. John (SWIFT (Marjon))	1	15 th March	
DATA	1	2 nd March	
Dyslexia Institute	1	23 rd March	
East Midlands Partnership	2	5 th , 26 th March	QA
Institute of Education (1) - University of London	1	9 th March	QA
Middlesex University	2**	1 st March	QA
NASSEA	1	19 th March	QA
North East Consortium - Durham LEA	2	22 nd , 23 rd March	QA
Open University	1	21 st March	
Oxford Brookes	1	15 th March	
Sheffield Hallam University	2	6 th , 7 th March	QA
SSAT	1	22 nd February	QA
University of Birmingham	1	7 th March	
University of Cambridge	1	12 th March	
University of Sussex	1	26 th February	QA
York St. John University	1	27 th March	

* CIMT site report was 1 day as the partnership was actually smaller than it appeared on documentation: two key partners (CIMT and University of Plymouth) and 26 University Practice Departments (schools).

** Two CUREE Directors conducted this site visit on the same day.

16. For each of the 20 sites the researchers met with and interviewed the Partnership Manager, they also interviewed a selection of other key staff from the different partners involved in the provision. These included course tutors, administrative staff, business managers, LA staff, CPD co-ordinators and current students. In order to quality assure the site visits phase, researchers were accompanied on half (10) site visits by a senior member of the research team in order to ensure consistency in the fieldwork.
17. The data collected from the site visits was entered into the PPD database and from this the researchers wrote 20 individual Site Reports. The reports present both an outline of the findings across the sample as a whole and the more detailed findings for each site (copies of the 20 site reports are available in the full year 1 report submitted to TDA).

Student Portfolio Reviews

18. The sample providers were requested to provide five portfolios of student work for review from each site (some sites were unable to provide five student portfolios, others provided more than five). In total, 100 portfolios of student work were reviewed against 10 criteria developed from the analytic framework for (see Appendix 1 for Portfolio Review Grid):

- intended learning focus for student (teachers) and pupils;
- type of student work (e.g. action research, evaluation, literature review etc.);
- evidence of building on existing knowledge;
- focus of work and processes; and
- evaluation of impact.

Figure 5. Number of Student Portfolios Reviewed per Site

Site Name	No. student portfolios reviewed
Bury LA	6
Canterbury Christchurch University College	6
CIMT (Centre for Innovation in Mathematics Teaching)	5
CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education)	5
College of St. Mark and St. John (SWIFT (Marjon))	6
DATA	5
Dyslexia Institute	5
East Midlands Partnership	5
Institute of Education (1) - University of London	6
Middlesex University	2
NASSEA	3
North East Consortium - Durham LEA	0*
Open University	6
Oxford Brookes	6
Sheffield Hallam University	5
SSAT	6
University of Birmingham	6
University of Cambridge	5
University of Sussex	6
York St. John University	6

* No student portfolios were reviewed for the North East Consortium due to late submission of student work.

Student Telephone Interviews

19. Sample providers were asked to provide 10 student volunteers to take part in a telephone interview.

Figure 6. Number of Telephone Interviews Conducted per Site

Site Name	No. telephone interviews conducted
Bury LA	6
Canterbury Christchurch University College	2
CIMT (Centre for Innovation in Mathematics Teaching)	3
CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education)	7
College of St. Mark and St. John (SWIFT (Marjon))	10

DATA	7
Dyslexia Institute	6
East Midlands Partnership	11
Institute of Education (1) - University of London	5
Middlesex University	5
NASSEA	5
North East Consortium - Durham LEA	4
Open University	5
Oxford Brookes	7
Sheffield Hallam University	6
SSAT	3
University of Birmingham	8
University of Cambridge	5
University of Sussex	4
York St. John University	2

20. The researchers found the telephone interviews with students one of the most difficult types of data to access. Initially CUREE had intended to conduct 200 telephone interviews. However, the researchers were able to complete just over half of these (111 interviews in total). This was due to a combination of factors, including:

- incorrect contact details;
- students being unavailable; and
- difficulties with organising times around the school day and teachers' working hours to conduct interviews.

21. Considerable effort and time, originally earmarked for interviews had to be allocated to making initial contact and to organising and reorganising interviews to fit into the rhythm and unpredictability of teachers' working lives.

22. The interviews lasted between 20 and 30 minutes and focused on the following key areas (see Appendix 2 for Student Telephone Interview questions):

- students' motivation to participate in postgraduate study;
- barriers to study;
- marketing and availability of information about the course; and
- impacts of studying at M level.

Report Writing

23. The CUREE team collated all the data collected from the different phases of the year 1 evaluation (submissions documents, impact evaluations, data returns, student portfolio data, student telephone interview data, site visit data including interview data, additional documentation and observation data) and analysed and synthesised evidence across the different data strands to produce this report. The PPD database was used to run comparative queries from the content for indicators (Level 1) and predictive indicators (Level 2). The analysis and synthesis phase of the year 1 evaluation distilled the main findings, illustrating these with examples from the partnerships. A full report with appendices was submitted to TDA on 31 July 2007.

Proposed Changes for Year 2

Project Management

24. The evaluation has broadly gone to plan, with deadlines met and spending kept within sight of original estimates. However, timing and costs were put under considerable pressure in the gathering of student perception data through telephone interviews. The

project team identified the problem in time to put in place recovery plans, which were agreed with TDA, but we are keen to arrive at alternative strategies next year and have identified the two specific issues that affected delivery. They were (i) logistical issues associated with tracking down teachers which are explored in more detail in the section on student interviews earlier on this page, and (ii) timing issues in that there was insufficient elapsed time between the end of the site visits where names were obtained and the deadline for sending individual site reports out to allow for the logistical issues in (i).

25. **Proposal:** (i) *Involve partnership managers more actively in the recruitment to student interviews by asking them to arrange appointments. The CUREE research team will organise itself to meet those appointments.* (ii) *Move site visits to earlier in the academic year to create a longer period for student interviews, analysis and reporting. Given that the development work for the evaluation has been largely completed this year we think this is feasible from a project management point of view. We would suggest a four month window for visits from 01 November 2007 to 28 February 2008. This would add about 6 weeks to the period available for student interviews.*

Relationships Management

26. TDA had some concerns at the outset that the evaluation had the potential to damage relationships with providers that they had been nurturing over time and asked CUREE to manage carefully their interactions with Partnership Managers and others.. We think that we have been successful in this respect, for instance we have paid careful attention to ensuring that evidence collection has not been intrusive and have encountered widespread positive reactions to both the design and the execution of the evaluation so far.
27. We can infer from the small number of changes that providers are suggesting in their validation of the individual site reports that providers are satisfied that they are a true record of their participation. However, our focus on delivering a programme wide analysis in the closing stages of the first year has left no time to seek proper feedback on whether they found have found their participation in the evaluation in any way useful.
28. **Proposal:** *Early in the Autumn Term, TDA or CUREE to seek feedback from Partnership Managers to find out to what plans they have to use their site report This will also suggest any possible changes/improvements that could be made to the report format.*

Methodology

29. Our design for this evaluation is innovative in that it deploys, for the first time, the outcomes from the (now) four systematic reviews of effective CPD as quality criteria nested within the evaluation questions posed by TDA of PPD. There are inevitably a range of technical refinements that we expect to make to the analytic frame, to the database and to our specific approach to analysis and synthesis in the second year of the programme. For instance, we propose to specify more accurately the range of student work that we would like to examine next year, and in particular to filter out literature reviews, which do not test our hypothesis that teachers are evaluating and reporting the impact of their engagement in PPD through their work with their own pupils. These are detailed conversations that the research team will undertake in preparation for next year and any significant changes will be discussed with TDA if they have the potential to affect the brief in any way. But we do think there are three key issues that we need to think about now.

Drilling Down into CPD Processes

30. Our logic for using the characteristics of effective CPD in the evaluation was that by establishing a connection between PPD and effective CPD we might feel more confident than is usual in inferring a connection between the effective CPD and improved pupil learning. Our ability to make these connections depended on access to data about CPD processes within PPD programmes e.g. modelling and demonstration, opportunities for teachers to experiment with and practise new approaches, peer support to complement access to specialist expertise etc. What we found early on was that there was no data on CPD processes in the documentation. It seemed possible that this might be a function of the application and self-evaluation requirements, and not necessarily indicative of sites' understanding or approaches. In visiting each site and asking explicit questions about CPD processes we hoped to discover the extent to which providers were modelling effective adult learning for their students.
31. What we learned was that the reason the CPD processes don't appear in the documentation is that there is little evidence of a discourse within the programme of effective models for adult learning that we have been able to discover so far. This is not the same as saying that the adult learning processes are ineffective or even that they don't share the EPPI characteristics. All we can say at the moment is that we were not able to surface through interviews evidence of explicit and self-conscious attention to analysing or requiring the detail of CPD processes beyond a high level commitment to practitioner enquiry on our visits in the vast majority of cases.
32. **Proposal:** *We think we need to create this discourse by 'seeding' conversations with Partnership Managers about the detail of the proposed learning processes they are facilitating. We could do this in a number of ways. In our original proposal we suggested regional seminars for representatives (we would suggest going beyond the lead organisation) to learn about the EPPI outcomes and we still think that this would be the best way to stimulate the kinds of conversations about adult learning that would unlock and make explicit the CPD processes that are currently supported tacitly in much PPD provision. Such seminars would also afford opportunities for focus group interviews to explore cross-partnership issues. An alternative might be to include questions about CPD processes in the self-evaluation process. Another would be to ask Partnership Managers to prepare for site visits by conducting a mini enquiry into the learning models in their programmes, using a simplified version of the overall analytic frame underpinning the evaluation.*

Exploring Partnership and its Implications for PPD Provision

33. We think we have learned some interesting things about partnership as it is manifest in the PPD programme, the features that seem to add value and the challenges that remain. But we have only scratched the surface and we think that the partnerships themselves have too. For instance, a theme emerging from the enquiry was that effective partnership working seemed to facilitate greater alignment between individual, school and locality (e.g. LA) development needs and CPD/PPD provision. But we are not clear what it is about partnership that creates the conditions for this to occur. In other words, we can describe what we have observed but not yet why or how it works. We also think there is still much to learn about the effects of different configurations of organisations within partnerships. Are small, homogenous partnerships more or less likely to secure benefits for teachers and students than large and diverse ones? Are there key interventions that Partnership Managers can make to strengthen their partnership and maximise its effectiveness?

34. **Proposal:** *More detailed work on partnership could usefully be done next year, but two things would need to happen to facilitate it. First, we would need to do some additional development and research with Partnership Managers to arrive at more secure and stable concepts and models of partnership within the programme. Knowledge of the research evidence and considerable practical expertise in our team exists to enable this to happen. If TDA decides to prioritise this and allocate resources to it, we would suggest altering the existing approach to fieldwork to choose from next year's sample. This might involve, for example, much deeper and closer case study work with perhaps just four sites involving visits of up to five days each to really immerse ourselves in the partnerships and to understand them in detail. We would suggest identifying partnerships at different stages of development so that lessons and images would transfer across the programme. An additional benefit would be that the in-depth case study approach would also help with the in-depth analysis of CPD processes. In this model, the remaining sites in the sample would be included in the documentary analysis, the student interviews and the review of student work, but not receive a visit in order to enable the additional work to happen within the overall budget.*

Recruitment but not Retention?

35. Partnerships are much exercised by the issue of recruitment and there was lots of evidence about the effects of different approaches. But there was little evidence of exploration of retention or plans to secure it. In some ways, this is an inevitable feature of the evaluation design which took a retrospective look at the first year of a 3 year programme. But the research evidence about the impact of M level study is clear on the importance of retention, and we think there may be features in the wider context for CPD (devolved funding to schools, a growing emphasis on in-school learning, the arrival of TLA) and in the PPD programme infrastructure (funding, partnership, evaluation etc) that could have an effect on whether teachers choose to pursue their studies beyond the first 60 credits, which are often offered free of charge. There are also interesting issues emerging about how many teachers complete a module (and therefore attract funding) often with high levels of engagement in the process, yet do not submit work for accreditation. It is not obvious to us how we might identify continuing students from existing datasets.

36. **Proposal:** *Discuss with TDA and the Development Group the best way to discover how many students in this year's cohort were new and how many continuing. Choose from among the Y2 sample a range of partnerships with interesting retention data and explore, through interview, possible reasons behind them in more detail.*

Possible Future Research

37. Finally, we were asked in this report to make recommendations for additional work or research that we think might be helpful in the coming year. Two of the proposals we have discussed already - the seminars to prompt explicit exploration of CPD processes and the more in-depth approach to case studies in order to explore partnership working - could be managed as alternative ways of allocating existing resources or as additional strands of work. We think there are two additional areas, which might be important.

38. First was the recommendation we raised following the earlier research on Barriers to Participation for Teachers from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups and Teachers with Disability to do follow up work with two case study sites. They were:

- i. The London Centre for Leadership Learning based at the Institute of Education where they are working to alter approaches in their accredited and unaccredited

CPD to reflect the diversity of the teaching workforce in London, and to ensure that programmes of study in the Institute take more accurate account of multi-dimensional classroom settings of London schools.

- ii. Haringey, where a programme has been designed by the Haringey National Strategies team in partnership with Middlesex University and a number of Heads of CPD from borough schools. In Northumberland Park Community School (NPCS), 12 teachers from the school have participated in the programme and the school's GCSE results have leapt significantly since teachers were involved in the Haringey Leading Teachers Programme (HLTP).
39. Further possibilities for special sites include the list of 'Champion' authorities, which participated in producing a resource for local authorities implementing the Disability Equality Duty. These include Hackney, Bolton, Worcestershire and a small number of District Councils, identified by the Improvement and Development Agency to work with the Office of Public Management and the Disability Rights Commission.
 40. Second, the fourth EPPI review will be published in the Autumn Term. In it, the role of specialist support in CPD in securing learning benefits for teachers and their pupils and the skills of CPD facilitators are explored in some detail. This new evidence has obvious implications for PPD programmes, and we think there may be some significant and helpful material in here for Partnership Managers who are working with a wide range of tutors and associates to deliver their provision. We think we could usefully discuss with TDA the implications of EPPI 4 for PPD providers and how/whether to share those in the PPD programme and to research the ways in which PPD provision is organised in relation to specialist contributions and the skills of providers.

Appendix 1. Student Portfolio Review Grid

Site name	
Student name	
Assignment title	
1. What kind of project is this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action research • Literature review • Evaluation • Case study • Portfolio of activity/evidence • Journal • Resource development • Description 	
2. What was the intended learning for students (teachers)?	
3. What was the intended learning for pupils? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did they hope to improve? 	
4. Has the project built on what is already known in field?	
5. What was the intervention – what did they do?	
6. What processes were involved? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching • Mentoring • Collaborative enquiry • Individual enquiry 	
7. What was the focus? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogy • Subject • Curriculum • Student characteristics 	
8. Was impact evaluated? If so, how?	
9. Are assertions supported by evidence? If so, what?	
10. Is there any consideration of contradictory evidence? If so, what?	

Appendix 2. Student Telephone Interview Questions

This interview schedule is intended to guide the researcher in the areas that they should cover with the students when conducting interviews. The main focus of the telephone interview is student's experience of the course (section 3) so please could you spend the most time on this section, the other information is to flesh this out.

Key areas to be covered in the telephone interview:

- motivation to participate;
- barriers to participation and possible solutions;
- visibility and marketing of PPD programmes; and
- impact of participation.

1. Information about the interviewee	
1. Name	
2. What is your role in school?	
3. How many years have you been teaching?	
4. What phase do you teach?	
5. What PPD course are you studying?	
6. What is the focus of your research or study? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation • Research masters 	
2. Getting involved in PPD	
7. What motivated you to become involved in PPD and why this course? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career • Improve knowledge in a certain area 	
8. What is it you hope to learn?	
9. How did you find out about this course?	
10. Was the course well advertised and did you have access to enough information about the course?	
11. Can you see any ways of improving the marketing of the course to get more people involved?	
12. What barriers have you had to overcome to take part in this PPD course?	
13. In what way could the course be made more accessible for you and other teachers?	
14. Do you have any financial support?	
15. Have you been tempted/tried to involve other colleagues?	

3. Students experiences of the course	
16. What parts of the course do you enjoy? Why?	
17. What parts of the course do you enjoy the least? Why?	
18. How is the course structured and organised? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timings • Locations • Who sets the agenda 	
19. How would do you characterise the teaching on the course and how helpful is this to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures • Seminars • Tutorials 	
4. Students and their schools	
20. Does your school support your involvement in PPD? If so, in what practical ways?	
21. Has taking part in the course influenced your practice, colleagues' practice and pupils? What have you done differently as a result?	
22. Have you drawn any benefits from engaging with research?	
23. Have you been encouraged to share this with others?	