

**REPORT TO
THE TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY**

**MINORITY ETHNIC AND OVERSEAS
STUDENT TEACHERS IN SOUTH-EAST
ENGLAND:
an exploratory study.**

**Janet Stuart and Mike Cole, with
Graham Birrell, Donna Snow and Viv Wilson,**

**The Study was carried out as part of the National Partnership Project:
Phase II, by**

- **Sussex Consortium for Teacher Education and Research,
University of Sussex**
- **School of Education, University of Brighton**
- **Canterbury Christ Church University College,**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BME	British Minority Ethnic
DH	Dual Heritage
EAL	English as an Additional Language
GTTP	Graduate Teacher Training Programme
HEI	Higher Education Institute
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
MFL	Modern Foreign Language
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
OTT	Overseas Trained Teachers
OTTP	Overseas Trained Teachers Programme
PGCE	Post-graduate Certificate in Education
PSHE	Personal Social and Health Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
RTP	Registered Teachers' Programme
SMT	Senior Management Team
TTA	Teacher Training Agency

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rationale

This was an exploratory study undertaken to investigate the barriers – cultural, linguistic, racial – faced by student teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds in Britain or from other countries, carried out by researchers at three Institutions:

- Sussex Consortium for Teacher Education and Research, University of Sussex (Dr. Janet Stuart)
- School of Education, University of Brighton (Dr. Mike Cole)
- Canterbury Christ Church University College, (Graham Birrell, Donna Snow and Viv Wilson)

The study was designed in relation to the TTA S.E. Regional target LT 03

‘Expand collaboration so as to raise the ITT profile of the ethnic minorities in the region’.

Research aims

The study aimed to

1. Explore how British Minority Ethnic (BME)¹ and Overseas Students experience their teacher education programmes, with respect to
 - a) Content and structure of the overall course
 - b) The teaching and support offered, respectively, by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the schools
 - c) Particular difficulties they encountered because of language, culture or racism.
2. Identify examples of good practice
3. Make recommendations to Training Providers and disseminate these

Target groups

1. British Minority Ethnic and Overseas Students currently enrolled on Post-graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), Graduate Teacher Training Programmes (GTTP) or Overseas Trained Teachers Programmes (OTTP) at the participating institutions.
2. Training Providers, both HEIs and schools, preparing such students

Research Methods

A total of 28 student teachers and 3 Deputy Heads were interviewed across the 3 institutions, between February and May 2003, supplemented by informal interviews with Education tutors.

The student sample included 17 from Sussex, 6 from Brighton and 5 from Canterbury. There were 18 studying for the PGCE, 6 doing the GTTP, 3 on the OTTP and one doing a Registered

¹ There are ongoing debates about the best terminology to use. For this report, we selected the phrase ‘British Minority Ethnic’ as an overall term, though in the text we also refer to students of Asian and black origin, or of Dual (mixed) Heritage. The word ‘British’ distinguishes them from the Overseas Students group, some of whom were also black or Asian, but who had distinctly different experiences.

Teachers Programme. There were 10 students from British Minority Ethnic (BME) or Dual Heritage (DH) groups and 18 from other countries, including Britain, Poland, Finland, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Ghana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, in addition to those from France, Germany and Italy training as Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teachers. The overseas students were mainly studying at Sussex.

FINDINGS

1. PGCE

With respect to the three aspects investigated, the PGCE students' experience was mainly positive in all three institutions.

- They found the content and structure of the course in general appropriate, but more differentiation was needed to meet specific linguistic and cultural needs
- The school support and training was effective, particularly where mentors were selected who understood some of the cultural differences
- Those already familiar with UK society were able to deal with the xenophobia and racism encountered.

Suggestions for improvement included:

- More differentiation is needed to give, where necessary, individual support in language, voice and self-presentation, and study skills.
- Overseas students, including the Modern Foreign Languages group, need more information on the UK school system.
- The time given to 'Equality and Equal Opportunities' education is inadequate to raise the general level of awareness about multi-cultural issues and racism
- All mentors need to be fully aware of such issues.

All those interviewed had jobs by the end of the course. However, by February we found some of the target group students had dropped out: 2 from Sussex, and one each from Brighton and Canterbury. This suggests that we had only been able to interview the more successful ones, and that a year-long study to monitor students throughout the course is needed.

School-based Routes: GTTP and OTTP

At Sussex, students on the GTTP and in particular the OTTP course reported far more difficulties, viz:

- The context and structure of the course provided by the University was insufficient or inappropriate for their needs.
- The schools were not always willing or able to provide the necessary training and on-going support, so that the student teachers were often over-loaded
- Most of the overseas teachers experienced considerable culture shock, compounded by the xenophobia and/or racism in the schools, which some were able to handle and some were not.
- Those on school-based courses often needed time extensions before gaining QTS; one failed to complete.

Good practice on the GTTP is exemplified by a Training School that took on the student as supernumerary and treated her just like a PGCE student. But some Overseas GTPs landed up in schools in very challenging circumstances, to fill a vacancy, and got little mentoring while teaching well over the 60% load suggested.

The OTTP course needs developing, and lengthening, to cater for those educated in very different systems. They need not only more information about the curriculum, but also about the aims and values of the English education system, the pedagogy and assessment frameworks that underlie it, and the classroom norms and expectations within which they will work.

Findings from the Canterbury group were more similar to those from the PGCE students; British Minority Ethnic (BME) students had fitted in well, while the African student needed more information on the UK system. All complained, however, of too high a teaching load.

Culture Shock.

Whatever their national or cultural origin, students from the target groups who were well-integrated into British society, through birth, marriage, or their own schooling, found the problems no worse than their peers. Those from Western European countries also found only marginal differences. However, teachers recently arrived from countries with very different school cultures – from Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia - had great problems in adjusting to classrooms where pupils often do not want to learn and where respect for teachers is not given as of right. The Polish teacher found pupil behaviour *'quite shocking ... at home a good teacher is one who can give knowledge; here it is one who controls well.'* Some of the Africans interviewed were horrified by the pupils' behaviour. A common reaction was: *'If they don't want to learn, why should we bother?'*

Racism, Xenophobia and Ignorance in the schools

The evidence suggests a mixed picture. British Asian and black students reported little racism and when they encountered racist remarks from pupils such as *'nigger'* and *'Mr. Blackface'*, they were able to handle them, often on their own initiative. By contrast, some Africans often experienced repeated name-calling, animal noises, or rude puns. Where there were such overt, noticed or reported racist remarks, these were strictly dealt with by senior staff by punishing – sometimes excluding – the individual concerned, but covert racism – *'You hear them say things as you pass'* – continued.

There seems, in many schools, a considerable degree of xenophobia. Remarks such as *'we hate all foreigners'* or *'go back to your own country'* were directed at white, European student teachers as well as foreign Asian and black ones. Some Germans still encounter hostility. What comes out most strongly, though, is that many pupils are very ignorant about the world and its people beyond their own communities. This can take racist forms as when pupils believe all Africans live in mud huts and are uneducated.

Strategies for dealing with racism and xenophobia

As the above evidence shows, the schools do not seem to welcome diversity, nor to have strategies for constructively incorporating these 'different' teachers into their community. Few schools used the students as resources to change pupils' attitudes or to widen their horizons. Some primary schools invited them to contribute to theme weeks or to talk about racial diversity. A few secondary students tried to use their own background in their own lessons but none were invited to visit Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship or even Geography classes. There seems some fear among Senior Management Teams (SMT) that opening up debates will create more trouble, though our evidence is that, handled sensitively, openness is the better strategy. Some of our Asian and black interviewees – both British-born and from overseas - recounted amusing, often moving, and positive examples of how they had talked to pupils about differences in physical appearance, answering their questions and defusing the tensions. After that, skin colour ceased to be an issue and the children could accept the teacher as a person.

Pupils often react against new accents. Good practice includes giving on-going tuition in English pronunciation and vocabulary for English as Additional Language (EAL) speakers. One confident (European) student told us how making jokes about her mispronunciation, and asking the class for their help, created a positive relationship with the pupils.

We suggest that all student teachers are taught strategies for dealing with pupils' xenophobic or racist reactions, just as they are taught behaviour management strategies.

Attitudes among staff.

Staff in general were seen as very supportive, though a couple of instances of ignorance, lack of awareness or sensitivity were reported. For example, one mentor invoked genetics to explain what s/he had perceived to be a personality trait of the student's dual heritage. On the other hand, mentors who could help break down the barriers and mediate between the cultures were highly praised. For teachers from other cultures, some English norms of social interaction sometimes come over as lack of friendliness.

Recruitment of Overseas Teachers

The UK is currently recruiting from other countries to fill its vacancies. If teachers are not given the support and training they need to convert their qualifications, this raises serious ethical questions, as well as being counter-productive in terms of pupils' experiences. We believe that all Overseas GTTPs and OTTs need at least 2 weeks orientation, partly in a school, to absorb both the information and the cultural approaches.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rationale

The Study was undertaken because we had some evidence that student teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds in Britain or from other countries face barriers – cultural, linguistic, racial – that make their teacher education experience particularly problematic, leading sometimes to drop-out or failure. We felt that more knowledge/understanding was needed about why and how this occurs, and what could be done about it. It was undertaken by researchers at three Institutions:

- Sussex Consortium for Teacher Education and Research, University of Sussex (Dr. Janet Stuart)
- School of Education, University of Brighton (Dr. Mike Cole)
- Canterbury Christ Church University College, (Graham Birrell, Donna Snow and Viv Wilson)

The study was designed in relation to the South East Regional TTA target LT 03 *'Expand collaboration so as to raise the ITT profile of the ethnic minorities in the region'*.

Research aims

The study aimed to

1. Explore how British Minority Ethnic (BME) and Overseas Students experience their training, with respect to
 - a) Content and structure of the overall training course
 - b) The teaching and support offered, respectively, by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the schools
 - c) Particular difficulties they encountered because of language, culture or racism.
2. Identify examples of good practice
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Target groups

1. British Minority Ethnic and Overseas Students currently enrolled on Post-graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), Graduate Teacher Training Programmes (GTTP) or Overseas Trained Teachers Programmes (OTTP) at the participating institutions; those recently graduated from or dropped out of such courses.
2. Training Providers, both HEIs and schools, preparing such students

Overview

The report will first review some recent work on Minority Ethnic students and on racism. It will describe briefly the sample of students and schools, outline the courses they were following, and then discuss the findings. Problems concerned with the teacher education itself will be discussed separately for the two types of courses – the PGCE and the school-based routes - but as both types of students experienced xenophobia and racism to some degree, these will be discussed as a whole.

2. REVIEW OF SOME RELEVANT SOURCES.

There has to date been little research carried out in this field. The most relevant report we found was that by Bruce Carrington et al (n.d.) on 'Ethnicity and the Professional Socialisation of Teachers' carried out for the TTA between 1998-2000. This was a national study of PGCE students and NQTs from minority ethnic backgrounds, using 16 teacher education institutions and collecting data through both questionnaire and interview. The report includes a useful review of the other – very few – key studies in this area.

The Carrington research deliberately chose institutions in urban areas which recruited a relatively high proportion of minority ethnic students. However, many of the conclusions are also relevant to other areas, and in general are confirmed by our study. Carrington *et al* showed, for example, that while many of the difficulties and stresses involved in learning to teach are common to all students, those from minority ethnic groups encounter particular problems. Such students tend to be older, many having given up more lucrative careers in the belief that teaching would offer them more intrinsic rewards and a chance to contribute to society. For this reason they may suffer more financial hardship, and seek a course near their home to minimise costs. They are initially apprehensive about their reception in predominantly white schools, but in the main their experiences were positive and they felt well supported by HEI and school staff. Yet 1 in 4 had experienced some racial harassment, mainly verbal abuse from pupils, in their school placements and/or first posts. The report concludes by stressing the value of having teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds in all schools, including those in 'all-white' communities, as living demonstrations that Britain is a multicultural and ethnically diverse society, and to enhance pupils' understanding of and respect for people from different backgrounds.

Our small local study, in a predominantly white, rural area, confirmed the general picture as far as the PGCE British Minority Ethnic students are concerned. However, whereas Carrington *et al* recommend that more students be recruited from overseas, our study shows that such students may encounter far more difficulties because they are unfamiliar with the culture of British schools, that they are more likely to encounter racism and xenophobia and to be less able to deal with it. Therefore our study encompassed GTTP and OTTP students and suggests that they are in general much less well supported than the PGCE students.

The attitudes of pupils in predominantly white schools have been reported by Chris Gaine (1987, 1995). He produced clear evidence of the ignorance, racism and stereotyped attitudes of the majority of children in such schools, and suggested a number of practical strategies for tackling them. In our study we did not collect equivalent data from pupils, either by observations or in writing. The perceptions of our interviewees, and the anecdotes they reported, suggest that things have not changed much for the better.

However, official and public attitudes do at last seem to be changing. The Macpherson Report (1999) acknowledged the existence of institutional racism in British society, and

the Race Relations (Amendment) Act of 2000 has strengthened previous legislation by placing a

positive duty on all public authorities, including schools and institutions providing ITE, to be *proactive in promoting racial equality*. It requires them to work to avoid unlawful discrimination *before it occurs*, and to promote equality of opportunity *and good relations between people of different racial groups*. (ARTEN 2002 p.vi, our italics)

This statement provides a clear rationale for developing antiracist strategies for all students within teacher education, which may also contribute to combating racism and xenophobia in schools. Useful guidance for all Training Providers is given in the Framework for Anti-racist Teacher Education (ARTEN 2002). This handbook sets out the issues and offers both principles and guidelines for action in relation to various aspects of teacher education, including ‘recruitment, selection and retention of students, the ITE curriculum, school experience, and racial harassment’. It also contains a useful summary of recent legislative changes (see also Nixon, 2002). The aims of such antiracist strategies are to engage and involve the majority ethnic group, as well as minority ethnic groups so that everyone can live and work successfully and satisfyingly in a multiethnic Britain and Europe.

A Note on Current Definitions of Racism

Contemporary racism might best be thought of as forming a matrix of biological and cultural racism. Such a matrix would show that racism can be based purely on biology (as in notions of the intellectual superiority of white people over black) or purely on culture (as in contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia). Quite often, however, it is not easily identifiable as either, or is a combination of both. A good example of the latter is when Margaret Thatcher, at the time of the Falklands/Malvinas war referred to the people of that island as ‘an island race’ whose ‘way of life is British’ (Cole, 1998, p. 40).

While it is the case that such discourse is quite clearly racist, there are forms of racism, which are quite unintentional. One example might be the use by some people, *out of ignorance*, of the word ‘Pakistani’ to refer to everyone whose mode of dress or accent, for example, suggests they come from the Indian sub-continent term².

In other situations, seemingly positive attributes ascribed to an ethnic group will probably ultimately have racist implications. For example, the sub-text of describing a particular group as having a strong culture might be that ‘they are swamping our culture’. In still other situations, racism may well become apparent given certain stimuli (racist sentiments from a number of peers who might be collectively present at a given moment, for example). Stereotypes of ethnic groups are invariably problematic and, at least potentially, racist (ibid).

Elsewhere, one of the authors of this report has advocated a definition of racism, which includes individual or personal as well as institutional racism; intentional as well as

² The use of the term Pakistani out of ignorance is not the same as using the term ‘Paki’, since the latter is usually used in an intentionally racist way.

unintentional racism; biological as well as cultural; and negative as well as seemingly positive (Cole 1998). We would now extend this definition even further to include, dominative racism (explicit and intentional) as opposed to aversive racism (that which surfaces when put to the test; Kovel 1988; Cole, 2004). It seems important that all training providers are aware of such aspects of racism and impart this understanding to all student teachers.

3. THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY : THE THREE INSTITUTIONS

Sussex

The Sussex Consortium for Teacher Education and Research is the smallest of the three, but has the most diverse student body. It runs the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), the Graduate Teacher Training Programme (GTTP) and the Overseas Trained Teachers' Programme (OTTP)

Postgraduate Certificate in Education

The Sussex PGCE is well-established and has a highly selective intake, currently numbering around 150. Most of the partnerships with schools are of long standing, there is regular mentor training and good lines of communication. There are many mature entrants, and special courses are run in the summer vacation for Maths and Science graduates who want subject upgrading; these include 'taster' days in schools.

Graduate Teacher Training Programme

The GTTP started at Sussex in 2000 and grew rapidly, so that during 2002 a total of 80 teachers gained QTS in the course of the year. Students get a salary of £12,000 and a training budget of £4000, shared between the University and the school. The University provides a 3-day induction course in September, and students attend university courses each Friday during Term 1 for Professional Studies and individual tutorials. They can also join the appropriate PGCE Curriculum groups on that day. For the following two terms they attend alternate Fridays. They are entitled to one curriculum tutor visit per term and one 'pastoral' visit in Term 1. The rest of the training is carried out in the schools by the Professional Tutor and mentor, who are required to observe their teaching and report termly. Three assignments are expected in addition to the normal Skills Tests, and final assessment is done by an external Assessor.

Overseas Teacher Training programme

The OTTP course grew out of the GTTP, but is so far less formalised or documented. In theory these teachers are already trained, and so are entitled only to a one-term training grant of £750. During this time they follow an individualised training programme and build up a portfolio of evidence. Fortnightly 'twilight' sessions on relevant Professional Studies topics (e.g. National Curriculum and legal aspects of teaching in UK) are provided at a central venue. They have one curriculum and one pastoral visit. Experience suggests that many OTTs are not ready for assessment after one term and ask for extensions.

School of Education, University of Brighton

In addition to PGCE courses, Brighton runs a GTTP course and Primary, Secondary and Upper Primary/Lower Secondary B.A (Hons). courses. It also has a Centre for Continuing Professional Development. In this research, only the GTTP and PGCE courses were considered

PGCE Primary: this had 100 full-time students and 33 part-time, of which two fell into our target groups

PGCE Secondary: this had 270 full-time students and 16 part-time. There were 12 potential interviewees.

There were no students on GTTP in our target groups.

Canterbury Christ Church University College

The Faculty of Education at Canterbury runs a 3-year BA (Hons) education degree, with an option for a 4th year which offers Masters' credits, together with a number of postgraduate courses, both college- and school-based. For this research, only the Postgraduate courses were used.

There were 225 students on the PGCE primary course and 75 on the PGCE KS2/3 programme. The records showed 25 'self-declared' Minority Ethnic students on these courses. There is also a part-time PGCE, whose students were not contacted. In the GTTP programme 10 were recorded as falling within our target groups.

Schools

The schools where the students were teaching were in Sussex and Kent, and had very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Most of the schools were regularly used by the HEIs for school experience, but some of the GTTP and OTTP students were in outlying schools without regular contact with the Universities.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

Access

There were considerable problems accessing students in the target categories. The Registries in Sussex and Brighton University, quoting the Data Protection laws, felt able only to give out a list showing the numbers enrolled on Education courses by ethnic group, though they offered to send out a letter on our behalf to relevant students. We therefore contacted the students through Course Convenors and Subject Tutors, by email and telephone. At Sussex the research coincided with the 2-week university-based block, so it was easier to follow this up personally and arrange interviews. At Brighton the students were out in schools, and they were less responsive. At Canterbury, the researchers were given access to student records and contacted their sample themselves by letter. However, there was a very low response rate, owing perhaps to pressure of work, or perhaps unwillingness to make an issue of their ethnicity in these terms.

This raises a more general issue. It appears that not all students indicate their ethnicity on the registration form, because they do not wish to identify themselves in this way (cf Carrington *et al* n.d.). One black student at Canterbury who was interviewed stoutly maintained that his British identity was more important than his colour, and a recent GTTP graduate from Sussex declined to be interviewed for similar reasons.

Samples

A total of 28 student teachers and 3 Deputy Heads were interviewed across the 3 institutions, between February and May 2003. Informal interviews with Education tutors provided background information and additional perspectives in each site.

Sussex: The sample of 17 included 10 Secondary PGCE students, 3 on the Graduate Training Programme (GTTP), 3 on the Overseas' Teachers' Training Programme (OTTP) and one doing the Registered Teachers' Programme (RTP); this represented over 2/3 of self-declared British Minority Ethnic and Overseas Students currently registered for ITE at Sussex. Countries of origin included Britain, Poland, Finland, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Ghana, Zimbabwe, South Africa, in addition to those from France, Germany and Italy training as Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teachers. The three Deputy Heads came from contrasting secondary schools: one Training School, one recently out of Special Measures, and one in 'challenging circumstances'

Canterbury: The sample of 5 (out of 35 identified from registry records) included two PGCE (1 primary, 1 secondary) and three on GTTP (1 primary, 2 secondary). Four were from British Minority Ethnic (BME) or Dual Heritage (DH) groups and one from Zimbabwe.

Brighton: the sample of 6 PGCE (1 primary, the others secondary) students (out 14 registered) included one from Norway; the others were BME or DH

In most cases, individual semi-structured interviews were held in mutually convenient places, usually in the Universities, occasionally in schools, or with some GTTPs during half term at a private house. At Sussex four MFL students were interviewed as a group. Interviews lasted between 40-60 minutes, and tape-recorded. Transcripts or detailed notes were made, and sent to interviewees for checking. Basic schedules are in the Appendix.

Limitations

The overall sample is small, and the findings must be regarded as indicative rather than definitive. The disappointingly low response rate in two of the institutions may be attributed to difficulties in contacting students on placement, their workloads, and perhaps some reluctance to identify themselves; the samples here are in effect self-selective. A further limitation was that the research began half way through the academic year, and therefore included only those students who had survived so far. At Sussex two PGCE students, one from Asia and one from Eastern Europe, had recently dropped out of the course; on the tutors' advice these were not followed up. At Canterbury one African GTTP student was known to have recently withdrawn. At Brighton, one black student was intercalating and one Asian student withdrew during the interview period. It is likely then, that we reflect a more positive view of the situation than might be uncovered in a larger study that monitored the students throughout the year.

5. FINDINGS 1: PGCE

Course content and structure

Overall, the interviewees in all three institutions expressed satisfaction with the content and structure of their PGCE courses and would recommend them to others, albeit in some cases with certain provisos. Most of the problems they mentioned were those common to all student teachers, such as the stress and work overload. They felt well supported by the tutors and lecturers. However, the following specific issues were raised.

Language support: Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may need more help than is realised. For example, a student originally from a foreign country, but

with a UK maths degree and 20 years of working in England, failed his first assignment. He maintained he did not understand what was required of him, having little experience of sustained writing; the markers said the English was poor. Good practice would ensure that such problems are picked up in the first two weeks and provision is made for individual linguistic support. This should, of course, apply to all students, wherever they come from.

Information about the UK school system: Students newly arrived from Western Europe, or elsewhere, need an induction session about the structure of the school system, the National Curriculum, the exam system and so on. The Modern Foreign Language students suggested spending a few days in an English school prior to the course so they become familiar with the terms and acronyms of the UK system, as well gaining a preliminary insight into current approaches to teaching and learning.

More on multicultural issues and racism. 'Equality and Equal Opportunities' features in all the courses, but is seldom given enough time, and there seems little emphasis on the diverse nature of modern British society. For example, one Dual Heritage student said she felt quite isolated in her group, and was disappointed to have no opportunity to share her own background and experiences with other students. Another similar student, with a fair skin but proud of her African roots, felt offended when the tutor said in a seminar: 'We're all white and middle-class here'; the tutor seemed unaware of the assumptions being made.

Support in the Schools

In general there were very few complaints about the way the course was delivered in the schools. The interviewees saw school support largely in terms of their relationship with their mentor, and most stressed how helpful they had been. The MFL group mentioned particularly how useful it was when their mentor had first hand experience of their own country and could mediate between the different cultures.

A few of the Asian and black students, however, hinted at problems. One talked of a 'bad relationship' with his first mentor, which he felt *may* have had racist undertones. The student, who appeared confident in dealing with racist issues, told us how he 'took control of the situation' and negotiated a change of mentor. One of the primary student teachers had sensed racism in the behaviour of her class teacher, but the mentor had provided strong support. The most disturbing report was of one mentor invoking genetics to explain what she had perceived to be a personality trait of one of her mixed cultural heritage students. These incidents, although few, suggest that there is a need for the awareness of all mentors to be raised.

Jobs

We believe that all the PGCE students interviewed had jobs by the end of the course. One black student from Sussex got five job offers, and says that in at least two cases, the school said outright that the fact that he was black was one of the reasons they wanted him.

Drop-outs

As explained above, at Sussex two potential interviewees had left the course by February. One came from South East Asia, and when observed during the first term she needed both language support and help in using her voice effectively. The pupils found it difficult to understand her and became hard to control. The other student was from Eastern Europe and may have found the classroom culture very different from her own experience, though reports from the schools indicated a general unsuitability for teaching. We were not able to interview either of these two, but in these cases it would seem that personal difficulties were compounded by the cultural differences.

It was heartening to find that, in general, the students studied, in all three institutions, found the PGCE courses stimulating and supportive, and that most were able to cope with such a demanding professional education. However, it is also clear more time should be given to issues of Equality and Equal Opportunities, in order to increase students' understanding of multicultural diversity and racism. Nor are all mentors fully aware of the issues. The courses should offer Overseas Students, including the MFL group, better introduction to the English school system in all its aspects. More differentiation is needed to ensure that *all* students have access to individual support in languages, study skills, and 'Voice and Self-Presentation' techniques.

6. FINDINGS 2: SCHOOL-BASED ROUTES TO QTS

In contrast to the PCGE, these courses are relevantly new, and the OTTP in particular is not yet fully developed. Some of those interviewed had recently passed, some were making good progress with their courses, and a few were facing considerable difficulties. While the experiences of this group varied greatly, the problems encountered by these students in general seemed much worse than for the PGCE students. Most of the data in this section comes from the Sussex sample, all of whom were in the 'Overseas' category. The two BME interviewees from the Canterbury GTTP were, by contrast, much more positive about their course.

Structure and content of the University courses

Those on the GTTP were in general the most satisfied. The main problem was lack of sufficient release time, and many were teaching well above the suggested 60% time-table. One exceptionally talented and hard-working GTTP completed everything in 3 ½ months, in spite of holding down a demanding job as Head of Department, and found the University course 'relevant and enjoyable'.

Those on the programme for OTTs held rather different views. In the words of one, they felt they 'are getting only bits and pieces'. Schools cannot afford to give them much release time – the best offered was five days – and some found it difficult to travel to the twilight sessions. The University did not at that time provide a Handbook for the OTTP, and often they were not clear about exactly what assignments they had to do. Most were teaching almost a full load.

The OTT programme as it stands seems seriously to underestimate the amount such teachers need to learn. Firstly they have to become knowledgeable about the National Curriculum, its programmes of study and assessment systems. They need to understand how the school system functions and the legal frameworks within which teachers work. But they also need a much fuller orientation to the approaches to learning, and teaching methods, used in UK schools, which may be very different in philosophy and practice from those they are used to. In particular, those newly arrived may need much longer to adjust to these cultural differences. Some of these points of course may also apply to GTTPs from overseas; the African in the Canterbury group had found it very difficult to understand all the terms and acronyms, which everyone expected him to know.

A general criticism was that there was not nearly enough communication between the university and the schools. For example, it was not clear who should help them prepare for the Skills Tests. In the Sussex case, schools with GTTPs and OTTs were often outside the Training Consortium and therefore did not have the regular contacts provided by the PGCE partnership. One OTT had herself to provide all the Programme information for the school.

Support in schools

It should be noted that a number of Overseas Teachers on the school-based routes needed time extensions to gain QTS, and one failed to complete. To a very large degree the school support determined the progress and eventual success of the students on both programmes, and schools varied enormously in their training capacity.

The best provision was given in a designated Training School. With their extra resources and experience, the school was able to take on their GTTPs as supernumerary teachers, and provide support for them very similar to PGCEs i.e. the students begin by observing and build up gradually to a 60% time-table. There was excellent trained mentor support from the whole department. The Professional Tutor thought it was easier to prepare GTTPs because they were in school almost all the time, unlike the PGCEs, and a more coherent programme could be organised. In this case, the student described her experience as 'brilliant' and had made excellent progress.

It is noteworthy that this Training School is very reluctant to take OTTs because they cannot be treated as supernumerary. Their slogan is: 'every trainee must be a wanted trainee', which means there must be money and time for the mentors to carry out their job properly. This raises the issue of where the OTTs can find good places to train.

More typically, the schools taking overseas GTTPs, and in particular OTTs, are poorly resourced, and often facing challenging circumstances. Their staff may not have received mentor training. Some schools appear not to be aware of what their responsibilities are. As one student said, of a primary school, 'They really don't know what they are supposed to do with OTTs'. In the larger primary schools, or in secondary schools, the students are expected to join NQT sessions, and some said these were useful, especially where they dealt with classroom management, but they were not geared to OTTP needs.

A particular problem was noted in connection with Design Technology departments, where each member of staff may have a different type of expertise, and there may not be anyone suitable as a mentor. One student teaching Food Technology was being mentored by a teacher from the Art and Design side.

As one successful and generally very well integrated respondent reflected:

When you first come in, you are very vulnerable to many things: personal space, accents, food, people, are all different. The school needs to be more aware of this. Few schools are as prepared as they make out to be.

One further example of this is the African in the Canterbury group. Although he had good support and experienced no racism in his DT Department, he found it hard to assert himself strongly enough to ask all the questions he needed to, and to press for a reduction in his teaching load. He located the reasons for this partly in his colonial experience, where in his youth one did not question or assert oneself to white people. A greater awareness of the roots of racism on the part of the school would have been helpful in this case.

It seems, then, that the school-based routes to QTS are much less successful in providing good induction and support, especially for Overseas Teachers from diverse cultural and/or ethnic backgrounds. The context and structure of the course provided by the University was insufficient or inappropriate for their needs, and the schools were not always willing or able to provide the training and on-going support. Most of the overseas teachers experienced considerable culture shock, compounded by the xenophobia and/or racism in the schools, which some were able to handle and some were not, as shown in the final part of our findings.

7. FINDINGS 3: CULTURE SHOCK AND RACISM³ IN THE CLASSROOM

Differences in the School Culture

Whatever their national or cultural origin, and whichever course they were following, overseas students who were well-integrated into British society, perhaps by marriage, or were familiar with UK schools from their own experience or those of their children, found the problems no worse than their British peers. Those from Western European countries also found only marginal differences. However, teachers recently arrived from countries with very different school cultures – in Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia - had great problems in adjusting to classrooms where pupils often do not want to learn and where respect for teachers is not given as of right. The Polish teacher found pupil behaviour, as she told us, ‘.....quite shocking. In Poland, a good teacher is defined one who has much knowledge to pass on to pupils, rather than one who can control the class’. She disliked having to shout at children to make them behave.

³ See A Note on Current Definitions of Racism in Section 2 above

Many of the Africans interviewed were horrified by the pupils' behaviour. A common reaction was: 'If they don't want to learn, why should we bother?' We were told that a number of Zimbabwean trained teachers had given up, the women going into nursing and the men becoming taxi-drivers if nothing better was available. One African science graduate, secondary-trained, moved into infant teaching because she could not tolerate the behaviour among older children.

For those who persevered – through love of teaching, or determination not to be beaten – they had a very difficult time, and had to learn completely new approaches. One, who took nearly two years to gain his QTS, put it this way:

Where I come from, you prepare for the academic challenges, here you have to prepare for the social ones.... The more work I gave them, the more they hated me! ... I almost gave up. I knew what I had to do as a teacher, and I wasn't doing it.....

He thought the course had not done enough at the start to explain the challenges and what standards to expect. This was backed up by the schools, who thought that a short 'taster' experience in another school would be useful. Here overseas teachers could find their feet, and if they made mistakes these would not irrevocably blight their relationship with their future classes.

Teachers from school cultures where children are expected to sit quietly and listen or take notes all the time, have particular problems. They have encountered no role models for the type of energetic, interactive, and controlling teacher strategies which are necessary to manage classes with the less docile or disruptive children in UK. They may see their mentors using these, but it is hard for them to adopt them, particularly if they have taught many years in their own country, and some may lack skills in the nuances of the English language. At Sussex, the tutor for 'Voice and Self-presentation' was asked to give extra support to Asian and African teachers who had not been provided with the skills to assert themselves forcefully in class.

By contrast, those from Western Europe, whether on PGCE or GTTP, typically did not find such big cultural differences. 'The systems are different but the kids are the same', said one. The main problem was getting used to different teaching methods and to the need for differentiation in each class. Some felt that in their home country teachers are somewhat more respected, but all agreed classroom behavioural problems are also common there. Some noted very positive differences in the UK, such as the attempt to 'make learning fun' and the emphasis on building up pupils' self-esteem.

Racism, xenophobia and ignorance among pupils.

On the evidence we have, the picture is mixed. In a few schools Asian and black teachers could say: 'no one was ever rude to me'. The Canterbury group in particular felt racism had not been an issue for them. One Brighton student noted that as a 'Black Dance Teacher' she benefited from seemingly 'positive stereotyping', which ensured her respect from the pupils. Elsewhere, there were a few examples of intentional, biological racism (Cole, 1998, 2004) such as calling a student 'nigger', 'blackface' or making rude puns on an

African name. Where there were such overt, noticed or reported racist remarks, these were strictly dealt with by senior staff by punishing – sometimes excluding – the individual concerned. Covert racism exists however, almost everywhere. Three of our interviewees mentioned: ‘You hear them say things as you pass’, or ‘making animal noises’, but nothing is done about it. Senior management seem aware of these undercurrents but unable, or unwilling, to counter such behaviour through developing an openly antiracist ethos throughout the school.

There is, apparently, in certain schools, a considerable degree of xenophobia. Remarks such as ‘we hate all foreigners’ or ‘go back to your own country’ were directed at white, European teachers as well as black. What comes out most strongly, though, is that many pupils are very ignorant about the world and its people beyond their own communities. They know little about European countries and one thought Polar bears came from Poland! An Asian teacher was ‘asked the most amazing questions, like did I ride on elephants and whether we have cars.’ Pupils regularly confused African teachers with Jamaicans, making ill-natured jokes about drug-smuggling and reggae.

There is much ‘misinformation’ among pupils (cf Gaine 1995). Some of the African teachers are deeply concerned by the image of Africa presented by the media, which focuses – sometimes in well-meaning ways - on poverty and deprivation. One consequence is that the pupils think all Africans still live in mud huts, and know nothing of modern life. The Zimbabwean teachers of food technology brought photos of their own homes in to persuade the children that yes, they did have experience of electric stoves and micro-waves. One said, comparing these pupils’ stereotypes with their behaviour:

‘We were teaching in civilised schools, where kids will make sure they are neat, they will fix their tie before they say ‘Morning ma’am’ with respect. They behave like ladies and gentlemen, but people here think we are like animals’.

Countering racism and xenophobia

We found it very disappointing that the schools seldom seemed to use the pupils’ natural curiosity and interest proactively in the interests of increased awareness of and positive views on diversity, and indeed, to widen their horizons overall. Perhaps understandably the primary schools scored best on this point. Both primary students at Canterbury were invited to contribute to ‘Theme Weeks’, on Sikhism and Africa respectively. Two Sussex PGCE secondary students – both black - on short primary placements were used ‘as a resource’ to talk to the pupils about their origins and about racial diversity. Some PGCE secondary students tried on their own initiative to use their own background in lessons (e.g. teaching about slavery, incorporating Asian or black dance in the curriculum) but none were invited to visit PSHE, Citizenship or even Geography classes. All said they would have been very happy to do so.

One Asian student with much experience of other countries commented on how conservative she found the children when she tried to introduce some elements from her culture into her teaching. ‘In some ways they are keen to learn, but anything that is

mysterious is change, and dangerous to explore with some of the kids. They find the introduction of things they don't understand quite hard.'

One interviewee suggested that SMT in the secondary schools were 'scared' to have such issues openly debated. Interviewees with Deputy Heads confirmed that some felt vulnerable; they were worried that by talking about racism they might unintentionally encourage pupils to express their racist views more openly. It is true that such issues need to be handled carefully – one student from Western Europe tried to illustrate Nazi racism and found it backfired on him - but some schools visited had an ethos of accepting and celebrating diversity, in ways that made it safe to oppose racist attitudes more openly.

Self-confident Asian and black students, either born here or well-integrated into the norms of British society, appear to be able to deal themselves with the issues as they arise. One, finding himself in a totally white school remarked:

It didn't bother me too much; I've been brought up and went to school in this country, have friends, I'm Western, that's who I am; even though I look different on the outside, on the inside I'm the same as everyone else.... But sometimes it did occur to me that I was the only one...

At the first secondary school placement he had 'no problem, no funny comments, no racist remarks'. But at the Primary school placement, a 6-year old called him 'Mr. Blackface'. As a result the school gave him the opportunity to lead a discussion with year 6 (who had heard the comment) on racism and about treating everyone with equal respect. As a result of this positive experience, he would like to see all schools using teachers from minority ethnic groups as a resource to talk about racism.

Even the teachers from Europe regretted that they were not invited to talk more about their countries, their histories and their cultures. This quote from a German PGCE student illustrates some of the boundaries that were drawn:

I liked it when they responded in nice ways, asking questions about traditions, schools, and music in Germany. I thought it was a big advantage to them to know that I'm not British.... I can teach them through the different cultures; it was a shame not to be open about it. But one or two made remarks about Nazi Germany.'I found that very difficult to deal with; the advice from the mentor was never to tell them that I was German, to avoid this kind of reaction. In one class there was a kid constantly calling out 'Hitler' ...I told him it wasn't funny and then kicked him out.[*what did the school do?*] The teacher gave the boy detention and threatened more action. [*but it was not taken as an opportunity to open up a debate?*] No. Another child drew a swastika; when I pointed it out, the teacher said the girl didn't know what she was doing, and shouldn't be told off, so it was swept under the carpet'

One of the MFL students was an olive-skinned man from one of the French overseas territories, who considered that 'being different somehow helps to attract the pupils' interest' and that coming from a different culture it was he who had to adapt. However,

although he claimed to have had overall very positive experiences, he had also experienced being called 'Paki' and 'Froggie'.

Dealing with diversity

Two particular aspects of new teachers that pupils react to are *appearance and accent*. Strategies for dealing with these need to be clearly thought out and used up-front.

Appearance

The Asian and black teachers we interviewed, whether from UK or from overseas, were not happy when schools tried to ignore physical differences in colour and appearance, and all wanted the opportunity to talk openly about 'race' rather than pretending it did not exist. One said:

We are different, come on, look at me! I am black, I stand out! Schools can benefit from taking advantage of this. I am an African, I could talk about the continent.

Here is how she reported her handling of questions in the infant school:

[The child] said: 'Your skin is dark', I said: 'Yes, my skin is dark, it's darker than yours'. He said: 'Your hair is black'. I said: 'Yes, it is'. Then I waited to see what else he would say, but he just walked away. He just needed me to say: It's OK to talk about our differences. When I went to the classroom next day he came back and said: 'Your skin is like DJ's' (a little mixed-race boy). So I said: 'Yes, but DJ's skin is slightly lighter than mine'.... Then we just started talking, saying some people have dark skins, some have light skins. Then we started talking about eye colour, and I took another child and said: 'Look at his eyes'. Then I said: 'People are not the same, we are all different in different ways'. And that was the last conversation that we had, but he understood that people are different, it's no big deal, but people are different.

Then another little boy said: 'Were you put in an oven? When Mummy's baking, the biscuits are light when she puts them into the oven but when they come out they are brown.' The teacher in the room was so horrified that she left, but I thought that was not good enough; if you leave, you are saying he has said something wrong, but he hasn't, he wants to understand. So I said; 'If I were to put you in an oven, would you survive?' He thought about it and said: 'No.' So I said: 'I wasn't put in an oven, I was born like this, and my children are like this. This is our skin colour. People have different skin colour.' He understood. To them I am Miss X nothing else. They will run to me, just like they would run to their teacher, give me a cuddle, or chat to me. Because I explained. Sometimes people say: oh no, you shouldn't talk about that, then the kids think: there is an issue here. It becomes a big thing. So we should talk to them, tell them people are different. Talk about eye colour, or hair texture, so they know we are different, not only in skin colour but in other ways too, then it isn't an issue.

At secondary the pupils are much more cautious, but a similar approach was successfully used by a black PGCE student, originally from Africa and now settled here, married to a white Englishwoman.

I walked into the class, I wasn't nervous at all. They all bonded to me straight away; they found me different...they asked me funny questions, seeing my colour, such as if I liked reggae – they always confuse the African and Caribbean cultures. Seeing a picture of my little boy, they asked 'Oh, is his mother like you?' They couldn't actually ask if he was white or black...so it became an education for them. They asked me 'Where are you from? Oh, where is that?' They hadn't heard of (my country) before...so I changed the maths slightly into geography.... So they learnt where (my country) is, and that they have schools there...they were really interested and that got me off to a good start Most people I have met are not racist, rather they are ignorant and attitudes change when they get to know you.

Accent

Among those whose mother tongue was not English, some spoke accurate but heavily accented English. Most children will pick up and mimic accents; Irish and Northumbrian students reportedly have been subject to the same treatment. Where children genuinely cannot understand, they become confused and then behaviour can deteriorate. One Asian student asked her tutor to go through the class registers with her as she did not know how to pronounce the names, and the pupils were taking advantage of this to play up.

Both schools and students emphasised the importance of dealing positively with the issue of accents. In the most successful case reported, the school recognised the difficulty early on, and organised support for the student from the whole department to help her pronounce words in ways that the pupils could understand. The student gained the self-confidence to laugh at herself: after she had pronounced 'chaos' as 'cows', this became an in-joke between her and that particular class, which helped build up a positive relationship. Several other students also managed this by asking the children for advice with pronunciation, even when it wasn't entirely necessary.

Attitudes among colleagues

On the whole, our respondents reported good relationships with their colleagues in the staff room, though in general other teachers did not seem particularly interested in their background or experiences. The Polish teacher was surprised her colleagues did not know that Chopin was Polish. An Asian remarked how reserved they were compared to her colleagues at home. One African commented that people did not commonly greet each other, and that although she had made friends, after a year and a half there were still people in the staff room who had not spoken to her.

Yet it seems not all staff are fully aware of their own stereotyped attitudes. One mentor commented to a Dual Heritage student that because he was born in Africa 'he was naturally disposed to be slightly more optimistic and happy-go-lucky' – which may have been kindly meant, but is nonetheless an example of unintentional biological racism (Cole, 1998, 2004).

One further example of institutional racism was reported to have occurred during the recruitment period. A mature applicant who had lived for many years in UK, but whose English remained somewhat accented, made a telephone enquiry to one of the institutions about studying for a PGCE. He was immediately told he would need a GCSE in English – in reality, he already held an English Degree. He withdrew his application.

The incidences of xenophobia and racism reported here are deeply disturbing. So is the apparent failure of many schools to develop pro-active strategies to counter such attitudes. Further, the study raises questions about the curriculum and how it helps or hinders the promotion of a multicultural society. The ways in which pupils are taught about Britain's imperial past, about slavery, or the Holocaust – to take a few relevant examples – may well impact on their attitudes to black and Asian people, British-born or not, to Germans, and to foreigners in general.

8. RECRUITMENT FROM ABROAD

We did not collect systematic evidence of how the Overseas Teachers were recruited. However, anecdotal information suggests some concerns. The Polish teacher had replied to a TTA advertisement, and her only contact with the school was by letter; she later much regretted her choice. Even though the TTA has discontinued this practice, LEAs are actively recruiting abroad, mainly for posts which British teachers do not want. They then end up in schools which cannot offer them good conditions for gaining QTS.

Commercial agencies operate in countries like South Africa. We heard of one black teacher who left Johannesburg in early January and was expected to start teaching two days later – in a place, culture and weather that were totally new to her. Not surprisingly, she was unable to cope. By contrast a white South African interviewee had at her own expense flown to UK for interview so she could check out the school, which later assisted her to take the OTT course, and where she is teaching successfully. Few applicants can afford this.

The UK is currently recruiting from other countries to fill its vacancies, but if these teachers are not given the support and training they need to convert their qualifications, this raises serious ethical questions, as well as being counter-productive in terms of pupils' experiences. We believe that all Overseas GTTPs and OTTs need at least 2 weeks orientation, partly in a school, to absorb both the information and the cultural approaches they need to start teaching effectively..

9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study was exploratory in nature and some of the findings were not exactly as expected. We were pleased to find such a high level of satisfaction among PGCE students, and to note that in most cases they had received exemplary support from both schools and HEIs. However, for those taking the school-based routes provision was

much more varied, and in particular the study revealed glaring gaps in the support offered to Overseas Trained Teachers wishing to acquire QTS.

The most depressing findings were the extent of racism and xenophobia, compounded by ignorance and misinformation, among many pupils in the South East of England. This inevitably impacts on students who look or sound ‘different’ from the white English norm. Those students brought up in Britain, or long familiar with its schools, knew, or quickly learnt, how to cope. But those from overseas and from different cultural traditions of schooling often found the pupils’ attitudes very difficult indeed.

While all the schools were reported to deal with individual racist behaviour very strictly, few were taking seriously the injunction of the Race Relations Amendment Act to ‘promote... good relations between people of different racial [or cultural] groups’. On the other hand, we were inspired by some of the ways the interviewees, mostly on their own initiatives, were trying to do this, and we would like to see such strategies developed and disseminated through all the schools..

As all teacher educators know, students differ in aptitude, ability and determination. It is difficult to separate the effects of ‘culture’, language or ‘race’ from other aspects of the student, such as intelligence and personality. People who have the characteristics of ‘good teachers’, and the determination to succeed, will probably do well, but being from a minority ethnic group or from another country with different traditions of schooling does add more problems to what is already a challenging course. Our findings suggest that in such cases you need to be just that much more determined, and tougher, to succeed in gaining Qualified Teacher Status.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

These are some of the strategies which the research has suggested to us. They derive from good practice we have found, or suggestions made to us, and we believe they are all eminently practical. Many of them are relevant to all students and NQTs.

Training Providers generally

- Be more aware of the needs and vulnerability of Minority Ethnic and Overseas students
- Ensure there are antiracist policies in place and that these are well-publicised, and acted on in accordance with the Race Relations Amendment Act.

HEIs

- Increase recruitment of BME students, as they have the potential to act as role models and to enhance the diversity of our schools.
- Raise awareness of racism and xenophobia among all students, as part of the ‘equality and equal opportunities’ topics *and throughout the whole teacher education curriculum*, and among mentors as part of mentor training.

- ‘Differentiate without discriminating’ so as to meet individual needs e.g. knowledge of the UK system, language support, or Voice and Self-Presentation techniques
- Teach all students clear, practical strategies for dealing with xenophobic and racist comments and behaviour in open and constructive ways, (on similar lines to strategies for dealing with classroom control)
- Develop OTTP and GTTP courses to meet the needs of those from different countries and cultures

Schools

- Raise awareness of racism and xenophobia among all staff
- Work pro-actively to create an ethos that welcomes diversity, seeing BME and Overseas teachers as ‘resources’ with contributions to make, rather than ‘problems.’
- Select mentors who have appropriate understanding of cultural differences (for example for foreign MFL students).
- Support student teachers with accents in constructive ways to enhance their pronunciation.

Individuals

- Develop strategies for dealing with xenophobia, racism and ignorance in appropriate and constructive ways
- Seek support and advice from SMT and mentors over accent, misunderstanding, etc.
- Report racism and xenophobia promptly and as accurately as possible, in accordance with the Race Relations Amendment Act.
- Consider what contribution they can personally make to dispelling ignorance, xenophobia and racism, both through the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities, where this can be done sensitively and with the school’s support.
- Adapt one’s their teaching style to the norms of UK schools without losing their own integrity as a teacher

Training Schools

- Work with local clusters on the above strategies
- Offer incoming teachers from other countries or cultures time in their schools for orientation/acclimatisation purposes before they start teaching elsewhere, or early on in the course

Recruitment strategies.

- Newly arrived OTTs should be given more orientation *before* going to work in any school: introduction to National Curriculum, approaches to teaching/learning used here; expectations within teacher-pupil relationships, classroom management techniques, etc. This could be done through 1-2 week placements in Training Schools.

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Appendix: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES (these were adapted slightly by each institution)

PGCE STUDENTS

Basic Biodata: ensure one has, from documents or by asking, information re:

- approx. age, country of origin, where they went to school/university; length of time in UK;

Reasons for entering teaching here

- any other work experience?

Experiences of training

- how is the course going? / how did you find the course?

Is it as you expected? Better, worse?

What have you found particularly helpful? /

Are there areas you feel have not been treated fully enough?

[here pick up from answers and explore themes such as: problems with language, cultural differences; racism; relationship to previous training/knowledge/experience; while staying open to others that students may raise]

TP/ training school

Can you tell me a bit about your school placement

What have been the good experiences?

What's been difficult for you?

How do/did you find the kids? Were they different from what you expected?

[again pick up and probe themes concerning language, culture, racism; plus others; mention the primary placement if they don't.]

Support

Where have you received most help from? - and others who have been helpful?

How did the school help (or where was help lacking?)

How did the College help (what more would you like them to have done?)

Ending questions:

If you had your time again, would you take this course? Why.....

What would you recommend to the schools, to the colleges, to support people in your position?

Anything else you'd like to say?

Any questions you'd like to ask me?

GTP/OTT students.

- Prior to interview give subjects the list of topics so they are prepared. (p.3)

Basic Biodata: ensure one has, from documents or by asking, information re:

- approx. age, country of origin, where they went to school/university; length of time in UK, what experience of teaching or other work they have had.

Reasons for entering teaching

- a) in country of origin (if relevant);
- b) why GTP here

Experiences of training

- how is the course going? / how did you find the course?
 - Is it as you expected? Better, worse?
 - What have you found particularly helpful? /
 - Are there areas you feel have not been treated fully enough?

[here pick up from answers and explore themes such as: problems with language, cultural differences; racism; relationship to previous training/knowledge/experience; while staying open to others that students may raise]

Training school

Can you tell me a bit about the school where you work: how did you choose it?]

- What have been the good experiences?
- What's been difficult for you?
- How do/did you find the kids? How are they different from what you expected?
- How do they treat you?

[again pick up and probe themes concerning language, culture, racism; plus others]

Support

- Where have you received most help from? - and others who have been helpful?
 - How did the school help (or where was help lacking?)
 - How did the College help (what more would you like them to have done?)
 - What's been the best bit of help / the best bit of advice you've been given?

Ending questions:

- If you had your time again, would you take this course? Why.....
- What would you recommend to the schools, to the colleges, to support people in your position?
- Anything else you'd like to say?
- Any questions you'd like to ask me?