The role and effectiveness of reflective practices in programmes for new academic staff: a grounded practitioner review of the research literature

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Contents

Executive Summary

Scope

This report outlines a literature review of the role and effectiveness of specific approaches to reflective practice in programmes for new members of academic staff. Rather than focusing on a simple notion of 'reflective practice' we operate at a more detailed level by considering specific forms of reflective thinking as applied to given aspects of practice. This literature review has as broad aims to:

- Ascertain the role and effectiveness of specific approaches to reflective practice in programmes of initial professional development for new members of academic staff.
- Trial and evaluate a review methodology based around practitioner collaboration.

The review was funded by the Higher Education Academy between October 2005 and May 2006. The Academy clearly has an interest in the subject of this review, given its role in accrediting programmes for new academic staff and in framing national standards within the UK. It is clear also that the effectiveness of these programmes is an issue of wide interest within the sector.

Overview of the report

- Clarifies the purposes that were established for the review.
- Discusses the complex methodological approach employed.
- Provides a conceptual introduction to reflective practice.
- Offers an overview of the included literature and an analysis of the emerging findings.
- Looks at initial changes in their practice proposed by the reviewers in light of the review work.
- Concludes by considering implications for practice, policy and research.
- Appendices include an interim evaluation of the approach given its innovative nature in helping to establish a dialogue between theory and practice; and a study in the state of practice within programmes for new academic staff.

Methodological features

The review can be best be characterised as a **grounded practitioner review**, with the grounded elements emerging more strongly as the review unfolded.

We sought to create a mediating discourse between both theory and the research literature more broadly, and the development of practice. To support this discourse, a range of features were included within the review:

- A study to assess the current state of practice within the field. The purpose of this study was to explore the use of the concepts 'reflection' and 'reflective practice' within current programmes for new academic staff, thereby raising key issues in relation to the review itself.
- Use of programme directors from such programmes within the UK to carry out the review.
- Reviewers completed proformas for the studies they had chosen, indicating whether the study possessed scope for fostering learning on the part of the practitioner or policy maker, or for influencing future practice or policy.

- The initial criterion for inclusion within the review was the extent to which identified papers were relevant to each of six overlapping aspects of reflective practice, as interpreted by an initial statement from a consultant to the review; allowing flexibility in lines of enquiry.

The initial basis for the review sought to draw on a range of established reviewing methodologies, including realist reviews where the aim is to discover the outcomes to which specific approaches or mechanisms are likely to lead in a range of contexts (see Pawson *et al*, 2005). The positivist associations of this approach, however, proved problematic in the given practitioner context, and an approach based more directly on grounded theory was thus adopted (see Glaser, 1998), while still retaining categories of approach, context and outcomes derived from realist reviewing, as a basis for the data extraction from the included studies.

Grounded theory was employed to analyse the extracted data within the proformas, and to provide a basis for further theoretical sampling, resulting through the method of constant comparison in the creation of nested sets of categories, which taken together provide a framework of understanding through which the studies could be interpreted. We primarily base the synthesis on insights from studies that showed links between the sub-categories, and also from a specific set of twelve studies identified as both most relevant to our context and that contributed most to this framework. This resulted in a theoretical synthesis of the studies; which could also be contrasted with insights emerging from the study into the state of practice in the field.

We hence measure quality not in a direct way, through robustness of methodology or effect size, but primarily in terms of contribution to development of understanding, as viewed through a practitioner lens. Judgements on effectiveness or on the strength or reported outcomes are thus made in light of the framework.

Developing conceptions of reflective practice

Our starting point for defining the term 'reflection' is shaped by Dewey, who considered it to involve deliberation in relation to knowledge or beliefs in light of the supporting grounds and the further conclusions to which it tends (1933, p. 9). This definition, however, even when applied to practice, remains wide open, and many theorists have thus introduced further terms in order to clarify the territory. We consider contributions from Schön; van Manen; Mezirow; Hatton and Smith, Moon and others.

These considerations required the review to operate at a commensurate level of detail in order to generate convincing conclusions. We thus generally prefer the term 'reflective process' to reflection or reflective thinking, by which we mean a specific course or train of reflective thinking with a given set of characteristics, in order to emphasise that a range of different reflective processes are possible. We retain the term 'reflective practice' to describe the field as a whole.

Summary findings of the review

The included studies cover only 12 focused on programmes for new academic staff, given the limited number of immediately relevant studies addressing the concerns of the review. As a result, further studies were included from related domains: 18 for development of academics more widely, 20 within initial teacher training, 10 within medical or health related practice and eight other contexts. The main countries contributing studies were UK and Australia. The review makes no claim for

comprehensive coverage; in particular studies that consider reflective practice as a single approach were less likely to be included within the review. The grounded approach to the analysis further ensures that the studies contribute to varying extents to both the framework and the narrative synthesis.

Enabling a reflective process: the grounded framework

Our approach led to six major categories with which to code the data. We list these here, with short definitions and summary comments as relevant:

Theoretical underpinnings:
: The studies are underpinned by a wide range of theories of both reflective practice, and practice. Overlaps identified during the coding process between reflective processes and social, programme, workplace or professional considerations point to the importance of social relations both within reflective processes themselves and for learning how to engage in reflective processes, as for instance explored by Vygotsky.

Core reflective process (task and focus):
: Task: Subjects within the studies are asked to complete a range of tasks in relation to specific aspects of practice (e.g. peer observation). Any given task may include a number of constituent parts (e.g. action research) or may be combined with other tasks, whether in a cycle or to ensure progression.

: Focus: This term describe the specific aspect(s) of practice at which the task is directed, including practice itself, bases for practice and reflective processes. The focus is further shaped by such factors as timing in relation to practice.

Social basis:
: Dialogue in particular, whether with fellow participants, colleagues facilitators or others, is seen to play a key role in problematising practice, with further sub-categories comprising voicing experience and the views of others, modelling of good practice, challenges, prompts, questioning, crossing of boundaries, use of literature and specialist language, the role of technology and feedback. In part these features allow a sustained focus on problematic issues in relation to practice, and in bringing insights to bear that will allow for the transformation of that practice. A positive social atmosphere is further seen as an important factor in enabling such dialogue.

Personal basis:
: A reflective process is directly affected by the way in which a person engages with the task, to such an extent that one might say that the process can become inherently different as individual abilities, qualities and identities vary. Ownership, level of experience, professional identity and roles are all important factors in this.

Wider context:
: The wider context incorporates the programme context (e.g. addressing accreditation, the use of rhetoric within documentation and masters level issues), the workplace context (e.g. addressing factors such as the workplace as a site for reflective processes, the role of constraints on practice, and models of engagement) and institutional factors (given institutional control of programmes).

Outcomes:
: Covering changes in practice, ability to engage in reflective practice, and other outcomes; at both personal and collective levels.

These categories, however, should not be viewed in isolation from each other. In particular, the core reflective process and all of the remaining categories must lead or point in the same direction if a targeted and sustained process of problematic deliberation is to result. It is clear within a pedagogic context that the task and focus both need to fit with the social and personal basis, the wider context and the desired outcomes; with theoretical perspectives underpinning categories and thus assisting the alignment.

What we see here, then, is a model that combines considerations from both pedagogy and reflective practice itself in order to do justice to the complexity of how practitioners learn to engage in reflective processes. We term this model 'a directed reflective process' with the choice of the term 'directed' emphasising the way in which the process must both be targeted and supported, enabling it to achieve the necessary depth.

Conclusions on the strength of outcomes

What conclusions can we draw from the outcomes emerging from the highlighted studies, and from the wider of outcomes across all of the included studies? It is reasonable to claim that specific reflective processes applied to practice on programmes for new academic staff can yield changes in capacity for practice or for the ability to engage in specific categories of reflection on practice, to the extent that these can be claimed as learning outcomes for the programme.

Beyond this, specific interventions are seen to lead to further outcomes, although the extent to which it can be claimed that these outcomes are evident across an entire cohort is harder to establish, as for instance in relation to changes in professional identity or with the ability to engage in premise or critical reflection. Programmes seeking to lay claim to such outcomes, for instance in shaping professional identity, may thus find it difficult to substantiate such claims laying them open to concerns over the use of rhetoric for institutional or accreditation purposes. At the least, it will be important for such programmes to focus more selectively on outcomes that are regarded as central to the programme, and to ensure that specific strategies are employed to effect these outcomes.

Insights for the practice of the reviewers

One of the aims of the review was to see whether findings would impact on the practice of the reviewers in particular. We were able to see ways in which a greater insight into the nature and pedagogy of reflective practice can influence the practitioner, leading to immediate changes on a programme, greater awareness of key issues that influence one's practice more widely, a common mind with colleagues, seeds of more extensive developments on a programme, and recognition of the need to adapt one's own behaviour and connections with existing issues of which one is already aware. There is an evident richness of possibilities for practice that enhanced understanding yields, especially when an active attempt is made to integrate that understanding with practice.

These insights stem both from the reviewers' own review work and from their interactions with colleagues on the review team. Colleagues seeking to learn from this report might thus find it helpful to pursue a time-limited enquiry within their own programme team, using the report to provide an overview, and following this up with a detailed reading of specific studies that are of interest, but particularly those studies highlighted during this review.

Conclusions and recommendations

Implications for practice

We contend that the grounded framework developed during the review offers an accessible means to shape practice on programmes for new academic staff, and elsewhere, enabling directed reflective processes that effectively result in desired outcomes.

The report thus recommends that practitioners should either spell out the meaning of the notion 'reflective practice' or introduce terminology that reflects a more differentiated usage, given the open nature of this notion. Furthermore, in looking towards 'directed reflective processes' practitioners may wish to consider drawing on the framework for understanding developed within this review, to ensure that dialogue, factors that support personal engagement, the wider context and the intended outcomes are appropriately aligned with each other, and designed to support the core reflective process, ensuring that this core process is both targeted and sustained, and at the appropriate depth.

This directedness is particularly important given the context of professional education. Practitioners involved in related areas of education, where students are being inducted in complex open-ended practices may thus also find this of interest. The challenge is to ensure that reflective processes are supported by appropriate pedagogic considerations, for instance in relation to the social construction of reflective thinking, that further take due account of the context in which this thinking occurs.

Wider recommendations

A further set of broader recommendations also emerge from the study, with regard to practice, policy and research within the field, as relevant to a range of stakeholders:

- For those involved in running programme for new academic staff, professional development emerges as critical.
- Institutions themselves need to be aware of ways in which support for or strategies to control a programme affect the unfolding of reflective processes; there is also scope to apply reflective processes at departmental and institutional levels.
- Approaches to developing continuing professional development in relation to reflective practice for academic staff in general will benefit from considering directed reflective processes, while strategies to encourage staff to engage with the research literature may benefit from use of studies that can be highlighted on a similar basis to those within this study, so that the focus is initially on developing understanding rather than on evidence as such.
- Those involved in the accreditation of programmes for new academic staff should consider how their accreditation requirements might impact on the way in which reflective practice is interpreted on programmes.
- Further research into the effectiveness of programmes for new academic staff should take into account the wide variation of practices employed under the term 'reflective practice', rather than simply combining these approaches under one term.

Implications for the methodology

We see in this report the development of an innovative approach to reviewing research literature, based on practitioner engagement and drawing on grounded theory. We

suggest there is scope for grounded reviews to make a significant contribution to review methodology, allowing for the development of understanding rather than simply to provide empirical evidence for interventions. Professional education into reflective processes applied to practice, it seems, is too complex a subject for straightforward answers to these questions that can be routinely applied in other contexts.

It is evident also that a grounded review moves the methodology away from the positivist aspects of the established reviewing methodologies, which the interim evaluation of the methodology indicated were problematic for this practitioner review. Clearly, though, a grounded review is only one way in which to move away from these positivist elements: it would be fascinating to consider how approaches from other research methodologies might lead to further reviewing methodologies, which have hitherto been dominated by positivist approaches.

1. Introduction

The notion of 'reflective practice', by which we broadly mean the extended consideration of problematic aspects of practice, is now widely employed across higher education, especially in professional contexts and in personal development planning for students. It has also been widely used within programmes of initial professional development for new members of academic staff on teaching, or academic practice more broadly.

Participants on these programmes include full-time academic staff, as well as those staff in dedicated teaching roles or in a range of roles that involve offering support for learning. Within the UK, the large majority of these programmes lead to the award of a Masters-level postgraduate certificate (at a notional 600 hours of learning). While developing their own understandings of reflective practice, these programmes have also focused on this notion, at least within the UK, in part as a result of accreditation requirements of the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) and the Higher Education Academy, as well as one of the Academy's predecessor bodies, the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. Such programmes are often compulsory for new members of academic staff; making their effectiveness an issue of considerable interest within the sector, especially given the recent development of national standards for teaching in higher education.

This report outlines a review of the literature on the role and effectiveness of various approaches to reflective within programmes for new members of academic staff. Rather than focusing on a single notion of 'reflective practice', we operate at a more detailed level by considering specific approaches to reflective practice. The literature considered is described in detail later in this report but broadly covered published work in journals and grey literature, principally handbooks and web-based material emanating from the programmes themselves.

The review was commissioned and funded by the Higher Education Academy as part of a series of literature reviews, beginning in October 2005 and concluding in May 2006. The Academy clearly has an interest in the subject of this review, given its role in accrediting programmes for new academic staff and in framing the national standards. Furthermore, practice and policy in regard to such programmes directly impacts on teaching and support of learning across the sector, and thus on the student learning experience. The Academy was also interested in considering the effectiveness of different reviewing methodologies, and thus reviews taking other approaches were also funded during the same period.

In this report we first clarify the purposes that were established for the review, Section 2 then provides a conceptual introduction to the notion of reflective practice. The report then addresses at some length in Section 3 the complex methodological approach we developed both prior to and during the review. The appendices also include an interim evaluation of the approach given its innovative nature in helping to establish a dialogue between both theory and the research literature more broadly, and practice. While this focus on methodology is of clear value in interpreting the findings, some readers may prefer to rely on the overview of the methodology provided within the Executive Summary. Section 4 summarises the included literature, and then presents the main findings of the review. Rather than initially focusing on seeking to assess the strength of reported outcomes within studies, the findings section instead begins by developing from these studies a framework through which to conceptualise practice in

this area; at the same time aspects of this framework are contrasted with insights into the state of practice in the field. Judgements on effectiveness are then made in light of this framework. Section 5 looks at initial changes in their practice proposed by the reviewers in light of the review work. The report concludes in Section 6 with a consideration of the implications for practice, policy and research, taking account of changes proposed by the reviewers in their own practice and the implications for reviewing methodology.

Purposes for the review

This literature review set out to achieve two broad aims:

- To ascertain the role and effectiveness of specific approaches to reflective practice in programmes of initial professional development for new members of academic staff.
- To trial and evaluate a review methodology based around practitioner collaboration.

More specifically, within the context of programmes for new academic staff, the review aimed to consider the purposes to which specific forms of reflective practice are put, the effectiveness of the approaches involved in given contexts, pedagogy employed in relation to reflective practice and the relationship between the research literature that has been reviewed and the current state of practice within the field. The state of practice was taken from an analysis of handbooks and other available materials relating to current professional programmes in England. Such a consideration of the current state of practice within the field was further intended to connect emerging findings and recommendations to the actual uses of specific forms of reflective practice within the programmes concerned. In order to underpin these aims, the review looked at the ways in which reflection is conceived within the reviewed literature and in the practice on these programmes, and, where relevant, within professional practice more broadly.

While such consideration of reflective practice forms the main focus for the review, the review also aimed to trial an innovative reviewing methodology, building on earlier work by Kahn and Macdonald (2005). While the methodology incorporates elements from established methodologies, such as realist reviews (e.g. Pawson, 2001), a focus on the practitioner emerges as the key feature of the methodology, a focus supported in part by the use of grounded theory. In the case of this review, it is also worth pointing out that there is an overlap between the general review area (reflective practice) and the evaluation of the methodology, which clearly involves a reflective element.

Given these aims for the review, we further set out to realise them through the following objectives:

1. Identifying underlying definitions and conceptualisations of reflective practice, as employed within the research into, and practice on, programmes for new academic staff and, where relevant, in professional practice more widely; and the key variables that arise from the reviewed literature.

2. Narrative summary of the review outcomes, based on a critical appraisal of relevant literature in relation to the aims of the review, with initial indication of the possible impact of these review outcomes on specific programmes for new academic staff, as well as for policy makers and researchers in the field.

3. Database of grey and published literature, providing an annotated bibliography of key literature, with a critical appraisal of each study or publication.

4. An evaluation of the effectiveness of this review methodology in establishing a discourse between theory and practice, providing insight for future reviews.

5. Enhanced understanding by Programme Directors of Postgraduate Certificates of Higher Education (and practitioners in related roles) of the ways in which reflection is conceptualised, models are applied in programmes for new academic staff, and the impact of approaches to reflective practice within these programmes; to inform decision making about such programmes.

6. Dissemination more broadly across the sector, through conference presentations at the Higher Education Academy annual conference, the British Educational Research Association annual conference, the Standing Conference on Academic Practice, and subsequently through two peer reviewed journal publications.

2. Conceptual perspectives: beyond 'reflection'

The initial task in this review is to establish an understanding of the notions of reflection and reflective practice. The focus of this review is shaped in overall terms by Dewey's seminal conception of reflection or reflective thinking:

> *active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends.* (1933, p. 9)

Hatton and Smith (1995) further emphasise the problematic aspects of this deliberation: reflection generally addresses practical problems, allowing for doubt and uncertainty before possible solutions are reached. We see here the idea that reflective thinking focuses on problems that cannot be easily resolved, thus allowing evident scope for learning, as Moon (1999) emphasises.

Reflective practice

If we are to take further the notion of reflection and reflective thinking in relation to the professional programmes under consideration then we need to clarify the way in which reflective thinking is applied to practice.

Professional practice, in particular, has evident scope for both practical problems and intriguing situations that offer scope for experimentation. In this the open-ended nature of the practice is important to consider. Kember (2000), relying on Schön, observes that it is 'now widely recognised that most of the work of professionals deals with issues or problems which have been variously described as ill-defined, wicked, messy, indeterminate or occupying the swampy lowland'. The problems are not clearly identified, have multiple facets and do not have ideal solutions.

Indeed, Schön (1987) observed that many professional education courses had not recognized the nature of professional practice, and so used a technical-rational approach which taught procedures for solving well-defined problems with unique solutions. He argued that a professional education should instead equip students to become reflective practitioners who could deal with multi-faceted problems.

These problems and situations thus need to be considered in relation to beliefs and knowledge. So we can view reflective practice as a process carried out by professionals through which aspects of practice are both brought into consideration and adapted, involving the creation of meaning around that practice, as Brockbank and McGill (1998, p56) propose. Brookfield (1995) further took the view that reflective practice is inherently collaborative at some level – a vital insight if meaning is to be created. This understanding then provides a starting point for adapting practice: Hatton and Smith (1995) point out that most writers are interested in professional action combined with reflective thinking; involving 'the implementation of solutions once problems have been thought through.' (p34).

The need for clarity

Dewey considered a reflective experience to have a proper sequence, including: "perplexity, confusion, [or] doubt" from the situation reflected on; a "conjectural anticipation and tentative interpretation" of aspects of the situation; an "examination … of all attainable considerations" in a process of definition; the "elaboration of …hypothesis suggestions"; and "doing something" about, or at least planning an

outcome (1973, pp.494-505). Despite such an elaboration, the definition of reflective thinking provided by Dewey remains wide open. Many theorists thus introduce further terms in order to clarify the territory.

One of the angles taken is to go beyond a consideration of reflective thinking as problematic deliberation to a more obviously critical stance. Mezirow, for instance, points out the importance of considering on what one is reflecting (1990, p6): the content, the process or the premises. The underpinnings of this classification stem from critical theory, as expounded by Habermas (1973), and which considers how our sense of meaning can be transformed by recognising ways in which our practice is shaped by the values and beliefs that we receive from society around us. He uses the term *premise reflection* to describe reflective thinking that involves: 'the critique of assumptions about the content or process of problem solving' (Mezirow, 1991, p105). And it is here, with such possibilities for the transformation of meaning, that Mezirow concentrates. *Content* reflection, meanwhile, is concerned with reflective thinking in relation to what we perceive or act upon – in our case academic practice. Finally, *process reflection* pertains to how one carries out the functions of thinking or acting, and an evaluation of adequacy in so doing.

van Manen (1977) meanwhile identifies a related classification of different forms of reflective thinking. In this case *technical reflection* refers to an examination of the means that have been used to achieve certain goals, although these goals are not themselves open to question. *Practical reflection* involves a wider examination of these ends themselves, as well as the means that have been employed to achieve them; also taking in a consideration of the related assumptions and outcomes. Finally, *critical reflection* further includes judgments that relate to professional ethics, justice and fairness; as well as the wider political or social environment in which the practice occurs. Critical reflection can thus be seen to take in the wider environment within which professional practice occurs, also providing a link to motives that underpin practice. Other theorists, however, question the extent to which it is possible to separate critical and practical dimensions, as with Elliott (2005).

It is also helpful to consider specific terms that allow us to refer to forms of written reflection, as with Hatton and Smith (1995). The challenge faced is to pick out different forms of reflection that can reliably be identified within texts. *Descriptive writing* is used to refer to writing that does not reach the level of reflection. And indeed other theorists introduce terms to characterise an essentially non-reflective process, including Wellington and Austin (1996) who talk of an immediate orientation to reflection, where the practitioner 'places emphasis on pleasant survival', effectively circumventing any problematic focus. *Descriptive reflection* includes justification for practice, going beyond a mere description of what occurred; while *dialogic reflection* involves an analytical discussion that draws on different alternatives. Of course, it may be possible to draw on other viewpoints without tackling issues that concern justice or the wider environment, so that Hatton and Smith further include *critical reflection* within their scheme. In each case where reflection is involved, it is possible to incorporate either only one perspective or a series of viewpoints. We see here issues that relate to depth of different forms of reflection, with a link to the depth of associated learning, as Moon (1999, p123) emphasises in referring to Biggs' (1988) taxonomy of learning outcomes.

These distinctions as to the nature of reflection largely refer to the focus of the reflective thinking. Schön also considers the timing in relation to practice during which the reflective thinking occurs, whether subsequent to action (reflection on action) or during the action (reflection in action). van Manen (1995) however, highlights

problems with the temporal aspects of reflection-in-action: "how reflective is the active moment …? Or how reflective can it be?" (p.34).

It is further possible to specify in greater detail the nature of the process that is involved in reflecting. Kolb (1984) provides one established model, considering a process that incorporates concrete experience, reflection, generalisation and active experimentation. Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985, p30) meanwhile consider a model that involves: describing an experience; surfacing the feelings associated with the experience; evaluating the experience. This evaluation involves association (relating the new data to what is already known); integration (seeking relationships within the data); validation (assessing the authenticity of the ideas and feelings); and appropriation (making the knowledge one's own).

We can also consider the context of professional formation. Schön (1983, p. 295) described a reflective practitioner as someone who 'recognises that his … expertise is embedded in a context of meanings'. As van Manen (1995) recognises, the challenge is to deal with the relation of knowledge and action in teaching, a relation mediated by what he calls 'pedagogical tact'. For van Manen a reflective process can lead to the 'attitudinal state of mind' of 'tolerant forbearance' toward students that may comprise 'tactful action'. This takes us beyond a view of reflection as a very largely cognitive process:

> *The cognitive approach of reflective practice and modelling, in which a computational mind refreshes or reconstructs a worldview based on the processing of inputs, is then probably not the whole story.* (Swanwick,2005, p.861)

And van Manen convincingly contends that the knowledge-in-action of teachers 'belongs phenomenologically more closely to the whole embodied being of the person as well as to the social and physical world in which this person lives' (1995, p.46).

It is evident even within this selection, then, that a range of theorists have seen the need to qualify the usage of the term 'reflective practice' with further distinctions; these have particularly been seen in relation to the material towards which reflection is directed, as Moon (1999, pp18-19) observes. The complexity of reflective practice is thus evident, a complexity that contrasts with a more technical approach to practice, in which we consider how to carry out certain techniques. Such technical considerations are important, although less inherently problematic than a consideration of the grounds for practice.

So it will be important that this review, in its conceptual overview and subsequent analysis, works at this more detailed level. We thus generally prefer the term 'reflective process' to reflection or reflective thinking, by which we mean a specific course or train of reflective thinking with a given set of characteristics, in order to emphasise that a range of different reflective processes are possible; while still retaining the term reflective practice as the established term to describe the field as a whole.

3. Methodology: creating a grounded practitioner review

In recent years a range of approaches have been developed for reviewing research literature, whether for research purposes or to inform practice. There is now an extensive literature that takes in research synthesis (Cooper, 1998), best-evidence synthesis (Slavin, 1986), considerations of signal versus noise in reviewing (Edwards *et al*, 1998), systematic reviews (see Gough, 2004) and realist synthesis (Pawson, 2000). A realist review, for instance, involves a process of theory-building. The aim here is to discover the outcomes to which specific processes or mechanisms are likely to lead in a range of contexts (see Pawson *et al*, 2005). Such a methodology aims to combine theoretical insight with empirical evidence, yielding understanding of a range of interventions. This avoids the tendency, seen for instance in systematic reviews, to merge programme mechanisms, oversimplify outcomes and conceal contexts. The review sought to learn from these existing methodologies.

In considering how to move forward it was also important to consider the growing use of evidence-based practice within medicine (see Sackett *et al*, 2000). Insights from this territory are important, in that the aim is for practitioners themselves to access research literature. Evidence-based medicine involves practitioners framing specific questions and interrogating the evidence base in a structured format, thus taking into account the reality that practitioners have limited time. Yet perhaps the key insight is that if reviews are to inform practice then practitioners themselves need to be involved in accessing the research literature.

In establishing the early basis for this review, Kahn and Macdonald (2005) were clear that medical research, however, has a clear basis in natural science, with its widely generalisable laws, and with an extensive evidence base on which to draw. A significant degree of uncertainty characterises human behaviour as both Knight (2004) and MacIntyre (1984) contend. Gustavsen (2001) further draws on the thought of Habermas (1973) to argue that theory cannot be straightforwardly applied to practice. Indeed, in Harbermas' thought the development of theory and improvement of practice reside within separate discourses. Gustavsen proposes that we require a mediating discourse, which concentrates on establishing relationships between practitioners, and to which theory and research more broadly makes a contribution. In effect Gustavsen highlights a concern that Pawson (2000) has already identified for realist reviews: the nature of their reception amongst policy makers, and, we might also add, amongst practitioners.

The initial basis for the methodology

The initial approach taken in this review involved an attempt to establish such a mediating discourse, while also drawing on these more established reviewing methodologies; realist reviewing methodology in particular.

Practitioner angles and established approaches

The initial point is that practitioners themselves carry out the review: all of those involved in carrying out the review are programme directors of postgraduate certificate programmes for new members of academic staff within the UK. Clearly this also adds complications, as we shall see in the next section, with practitioners likely to view studies in relation to their own personal practice or in the light of established patterns of thinking; but it also facilitates more immediate connections between the literature and practice.

The review also incorporated a study to assess the current state of practice within the field, specifically carried out in relation to the areas of the review and the conceptual basis for practice. This would allow direct links to be made between the analysis of the studies and practice. This research, which is included in Appendix **, relies on analysis of programme documentation, and serves to highlight key issues rather than provide a comprehensive overview of practice.

The review team further employed a standard proforma for data extraction (see Appendix 1) in critically appraising each study included within the review, in line with established reviewing methodologies. The proforma was designed in light of the understanding, highlighted within realist approaches, that the research literature is based on theory: with the proforma ensuring that data is collected on the approach employed, the theoretical basis for the approach, the context in which the approach is employed and the outcomes resulting. Pawson (2000) argues 'what convinces is our ability to draw upon an implicit, much used and widely useful theory'

Within this proforma, to help sustain a dialogue between theory (and the research literature) and practice, reviewers were additionally asked to indicate whether the study possessed scope for fostering learning on the part of the practitioner or policy maker, or for influencing future practice or policy. Indeed, part of the value of the review lies in identifying studies that may challenge existing conceptions of practitioners, providing a theoretical basis for practice. In order to further support these aspects of the review, each reviewer was to indicate at the end of their review work the extent to which future practice on their programme might change.

The initial criteria for inclusion within the review was the extent to which identified papers were relevant to each of these areas, as interpreted by the initial statement. Within each of the areas scope was also to be allowed to supplement studies related to programmes for new academic staff with key papers or reviews from related disciplines, such as initial teacher education or professional education more broadly.

It was also initially intended that reviewers would also assess strength of the findings of each study, specifically in relation to both objective and subjective outcome measures, and the quality of each study, in relation to the robustness of its methodology; although these elements were subsequently modified, as explored in the next section.

Beyond 'reflective practice'

The approach, however, must be suited to the particular area of literature under review, and thus it is important first of all to address the implications from our earlier conceptual overview. Given the wide ranging nature of the review, it was decided to subdivide the identification and critical appraisal of studies into six areas. In addition to the area on the state of practice, the review covered: 1) Purposes and outcomes for reflection; 2) Reflective processes with a personal dimension; 3) Reflective processes with a social dimension; 4) Assessment; and 5) The pedagogy of reflective practice (see Appendix 2). As well as allowing an appropriate division of workload, this ensured from the start a focus on reflective processes at the detailed level, in that reviewers were looking for studies that illuminated specific aspects of reflective practice. This ensures that the search strategy did not specifically target studies that consider reflective practice as a single method. We have thus not attempted to ascertain the extent to which an undifferentiated notion of 'reflective practice' might be effective as compared to other intervention strategies, along the lines of Gilbert and Gibbs (1999).

This approach has a number of advantages, although it does move the review away from a more fully comprehensive coverage of the field. Kreber [2004], in particular, is critical of studies that display a lack of theorizing in relation to reflection. From this perspective it is perhaps not surprising that previous studies have found inconclusive evidence in relation to the effectiveness of programmes for new academic staff that promote 'reflective practice'. The review by Prebble *et al* (2004, p43), citing also the review by Gilbert and Gibbs (1999), reports that it failed to locate intensive studies that demonstrated changed teaching practice. It is interesting to note in this regard that a study such as Ho [2000], which focuses on conceptual change, was included within our set of highlighted studies. Approaches based on conceptual change are often distinguished in the literature from approaches termed 'reflective practice', but within the context of this study Ho provides a clear case of a programme that strongly ties in to our grounded framework, thus warranting inclusion at a more detailed level of description as a programme that employs specific reflective processes as applied to aspects of practice.

In addition a consultant was to be brought in to help articulate the sub-division and to shape an initial statement for each area. This initial basis for the review provided a critical factor in shaping the search strategy. These statements provide a relatively open basis for each area of the review, and also allowed interchanges between the consultant and the reviewers to assist in developing their understanding of the territory of the review. It is also worth highlighting the actual choice of the consultant, Dr Jenny Moon, given both her expertise in reflective practice and her experience of working with practitioners; helping to ensure further dialogue between the research literature and practice (see Appendix 2). It is evident that the questions provide the focus for each of these areas, but additionally the consultant offered a range of advice as to how to go about interpreting these questions in the context of the review, thus providing further guidance for the reviewers.

Towards a community of practice

It is finally worth noting the collaborative dimension to the project, with scope for the practitioner reviewers to support each other. Indeed, at the outset the intention was to develop aspects of a community of practice within the reviewing team (see Lave and Wenger, 1991). Given that they were based at different institutions, however, this was likely to prove a challenge. Initial work thus ensured that roles were clearly defined within the project. The use of web-based software to exchange documents and facilitate communication was initially planned, although face-to-face meetings could supplement this.

Beyond this, the review team also sought to engage peripheral participation within the review from other practitioners and policy makers in which publications to include and in reviewing the implications emerging from the review. A key body in this is the Postgraduate Certificate Leaders North, with all of the review team active in this regional network. The steering group further provided a forum to facilitate such participation, as well as to provide forum in which to comment on the process employed and on emerging findings. In addition to the Project Director and Associate Director this group included: Professor Ranald Macdonald (Chair); Helen Bulpitt as a representative from an Academy subject centre with a strong tradition of engagement in the area of the review; Andria Hanbury as a representative from the Academy; and an additional practitioner member, Alice Sheridan.

Adapting the initial approach: grounding the review

It soon became clear, however, as the review began that practitioner reviewers were finding it difficult to make detailed judgements on the quality of studies and the strength of outcomes measures. Significant further work would be required, going beyond their capacity to commit to the review. The proforma was thus adapted during the initial period of the review, effectively to leave aside detailed assessments of the strength of outcomes measures or the quality of the studies. It also became apparent that there were only a limited number of studies that might provide comprehensive evidence against the criteria for a realist review. Given these two factors, it was evident that there was a danger that the methodology for this review would move to the narrative approach criticised by Pawson (2000). However, we still regarded it as essential to reach a suitable synthesis in a theoretically rigorous manner.

In order to further assure the rigour of the analysis in particular, we decided to base the analysis of extracted data within the proformas on techniques and perspectives from grounded theory (Glaser, 1998), linking as this methodology does to practitioner research. During the analysis stage grounded theory leads to the creation of nested sets of categories through the method of constant comparison, which involves a search for common ideas, issues or factors across all of the relevant data.

It should be noted that the grounded analysis was thus based on data extracted with the proforma fields already based in part on the core categories for realist reviews of approach, context and outcomes; although this was ameliorated in part by scope for the reviewers to include further information that within their summary of the findings, which they felt was important in relation to the study. Even still, this this means that the selection of categories for the review would be derived in part from these categories from realist reviews; although it should be noted that these categories remain quite general, typifying much of the data reported in an educational intervention. A tension though remains in this adapted approach, in that a full theoretical sampling would not be in evidence. As we shall consider in possible extensions to the reviewing methodology, one would ideally want both to shape the fields within the proforma for the data extraction to match core categories emerging from pilot work and to include studies within the review on the basis of their contribution to these emerging core categories.

It is important also to emphasise that the creation of the grounded framework relies on seeking for common issues and ideas within the completed proformas, thus involving the secondary analysis of qualitative data. Part of the value of such secondary analysis lies in the way in which this allows studies, even those from related areas of practice, to be viewed through a practitioner lens (as for instance with the coding extending to the insights for policy and practice that reviewers recorded for each study). This secondary analysis of data is, though, complemented by primary analysis of each abstract (as included in each proforma) and, in the case of the specific set of highlighted studies, the full paper (with theoretical sampling thus in evidence in this way).

The resulting sets of nested categories, however, still clearly provide a framework through which the included studies can be interpreted. We are then able to base the narrative synthesis on insights from proformas highlighting links between the sub-categories, and significantly from a specific set of studies identified as both most relevant to our context and that contribute most to the framework. This results in a theoretical synthesis of the studies rather than, for instance, the looser approach to narrative synthesis criticised by Pawson (2000). We thereby move closer to identifying

and synthesising the best-evidence. The quality of a study is, however, not measured directly through such factors as robustness of methodology or effect size (as for Slavin, 1986, or Edwards *et al* ,1998), but rather indirectly through contribution to the grounded framework. In effect, our methodology ensures that each study included within the review is seen, or weighed up, in relation to insights from all of the other studies. One might say that this results in a further lens through which to look at a study, comparable to the practitioner lens; highlighting the contribution to the review from research and theory.

It is worth pointing out that this involves a clear shift away from positivist approaches to reviewing, which typify the established methodologies outlined above. Realist reviews, for instance, focus on establishing the effect of specific theoretical approaches under given conditions, rather than seeking a more open pattern of understanding. Indeed, the evaluation of our methodology (Appendix 4) found that the difficulties reviewers faced in assessing the strength of outcomes reflected in part an unease with positivist approaches to research. The reviewers came from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, including such disciplines as history, languages and natural sciences.

In conclusion, though, it is evident that the analysis of the completed proformas represents a key stage in the methodology for the review, with this carried out by the Project Director and Associate Director, drawing on work completed by the review team, and with drafts reviewed by the rest of the core team, the steering group and the consultant.

Identification, Selection and Analysis of the Literature

Given this basis for the review methodology, we can now systematically outline the approach employed in identifying, selecting and analysing the literature:

- **Foci for the review** - sub-division of the review into six areas with a statement outlining the conceptual focus of each area, to allow an appropriate division of workload between the members of the core team. (See Appendix 2 for details of this initial focus for the review.)

- **Sources of evidence** - The literature falling within the scope of the review includes studies published within relevant journals, presentations at relevant professional conferences or other meetings, and texts; with the related research into the state of practice focusing on unpublished handbooks from programmes for new academic staff. Understanding of the state of practice is further developed in light of Prosser *et al* (2006). The review took the literature identified within a recent review of the impact of academic development programmes on students' academic success and programme completion as an important starting point (Prebble *et al*, 2004). The journals *Reflective Practice, Studies in Higher Education, International Journal of Academic Development* and *Teaching in Higher Education* were also identified as key sources. Studies from related areas of practice were also to be included given the expectation that only a limited number of studies would be found directly relevant to programmes for new academic staff, although coverage of these other areas would clearly be selective.

- **Inclusion criteria** - The primary grounds for inclusion within the critical appraisal was relevance to the focus of each sub-review; this was carried out with a view to making judgements within the proforma in terms of the strength of its contribution to the review (see Appendix 1). This approach leaves evident scope for the

reviewers to focus on studies felt to be of most relevance to their own practice or to the practice of their colleagues. Further studies that were located for this review, but not analysed given time limitations, are provided in the associated database.

- **Critical appraisal** - Completion of a standard proforma for each study: allowing reviewers to highlight data relevant to the approach taken, the context, and the outcomes, as well as other issues within the perceived as relevant to their practice; an assessment of the scope for impacting practice, policy and for leading to professional learning on the part of practitioners; and data related to key wording and mapping. The proforma is provided within Appendix 1, along with the guidance notes that accompanied it.

- **Grounded narrative synthesis** – Analysis of the completed proformas and abstracts drawing on the methodology of grounded theory through the method of constant comparison and subsequent theoretical sampling of key papers, linked to the practitioner focus and tied into the core categories provided within realist reviewing. We use a grounded approach to generating a set of themes or issues, termed categories/sub-categories, via the method of constant comparison. This is accompanied by memoing on relevant connections (made by the researcher to him or herself), and sorting to generate a report. In addition to highlighting studies within the context of the resulting framework for understanding (thus further allowing limited primary analysis of the full paper), the analysis work is informed by conceptualisations of reflective practice, and with matches to the study on the state of practice within the UK (which are picked out within boxed text alongside the findings from the literature).

4. Findings: developing a framework for understanding

Overview of included literature

Relatively few studies were located that provided a detailed consideration of specific reflective practices within programmes for new academic staff. The studies included within the review cover 12 focused on programmes for new academic staff, 18 for development of academics more widely, 20 within initial teacher training, 10 within medical or health related practice and 8 other contexts; as indicated in Figure 1 below. All told some 68 papers are included within the review, although the grounded approach to the analysis ensures that the studies contribute to varying extents to both the framework and the narrative synthesis (see below for the outline of the way in which specific studies contribute to the review). Two journals provided a large number of studies relevant to the review, with the journal *Reflective Practice* contributing 18, and *International Journal for Academic Development* contributing 9. Twenty-five other journals are also represented.
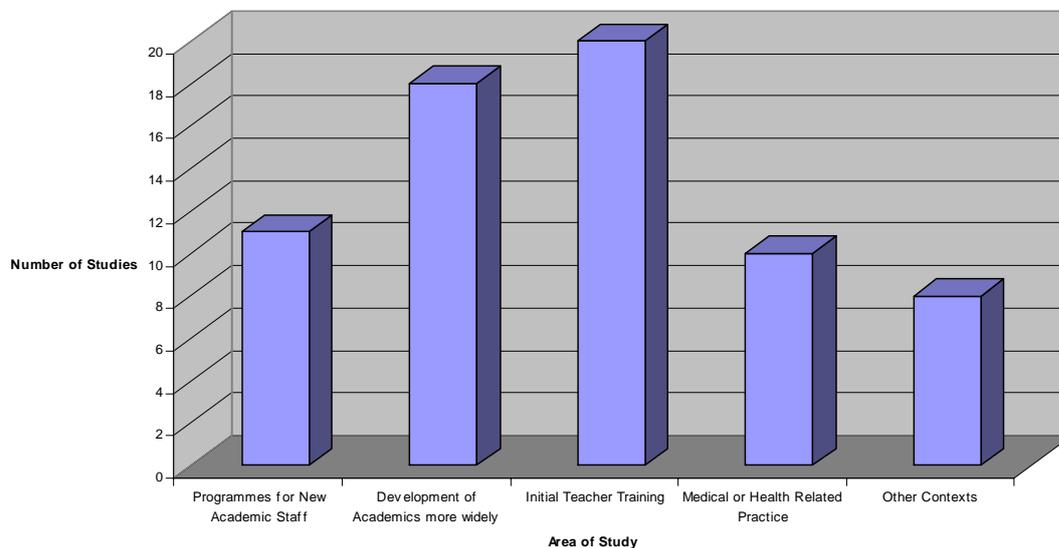
Figure 1: Number of studies for each area of literature covered by the review

This overview of the included literature is therefore relatively brief, as a fuller mapping would offer relatively little additional insight for research into reflective practices for programmes for new academic staff given the limited number of directly relevant studies that were identified. Furthermore, this review makes no claim that the literature selected from the adjacent fields of initial teacher training, medical or health related

practice and other contexts is comprehensive of its coverage of reflective practice within these fields.

We do, however, provide an indication of the countries in which the studies were carried out, both for the studies as a whole (see Figure 2) and for the studies that specifically relate to programmes for new academic staff (see Figure 3). This serves in particular to indicate the range of countries covered by the studies, although also noting that a significant body of the research was conducted with the UK, Australia and the USA.
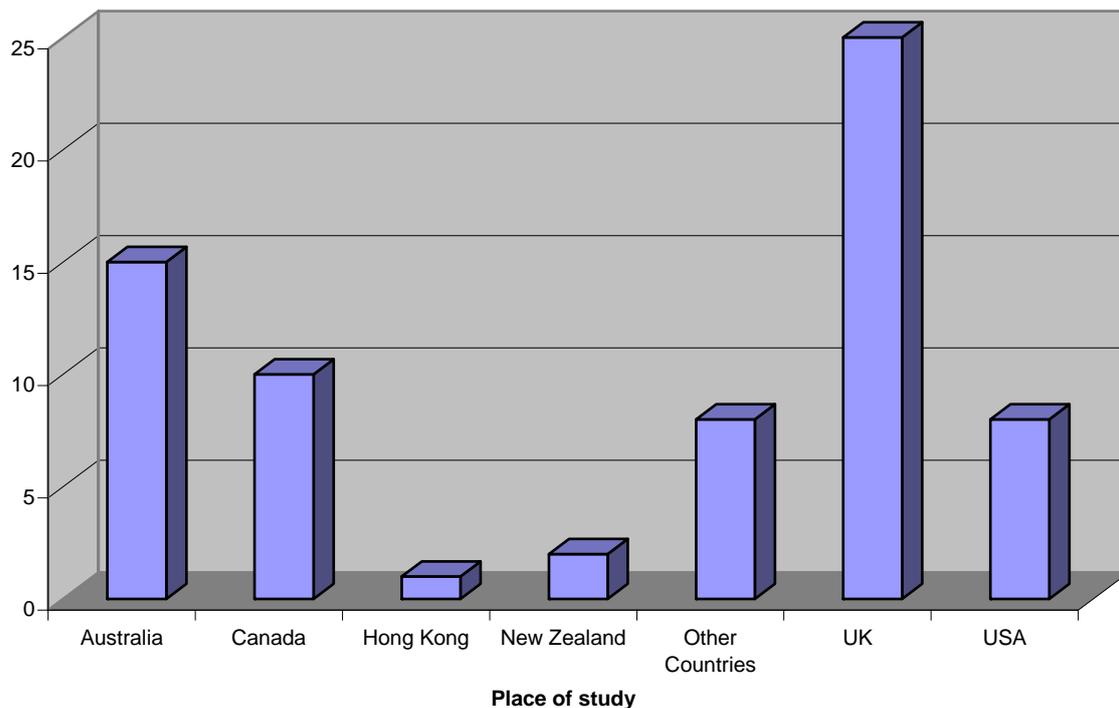
Figure 2: Number of studies included within the review for each country, for all studies included within the review

Overview of the grounded framework

The review thus concentrates initially on developing a nested set of categories through which to make sense of the relevant literature and to understand the pedagogy of reflective practice: we term the resulting categories with the insights that are related to each category a framework for understanding or grounded framework. It is primarily through this framework, which we may also refer to as a model, that we then make wider judgements as to the role and effectiveness of reflective processes that are applied to practice in programme of initial professional development for new academic staff.

At various points alongside the sub-categories, we also outline relevant implications from the state of practice study. These implications are stated in separate boxed text, as indicated above. It is important to emphasise in this that the state of practice study was not been designed to provide a comprehensive overview of all programmes within the UK, but rather as a means to raise issues that are relevant to practice within the

programmes, that may further serve to stimulate a dialogue with the findings from the review of the included literature.
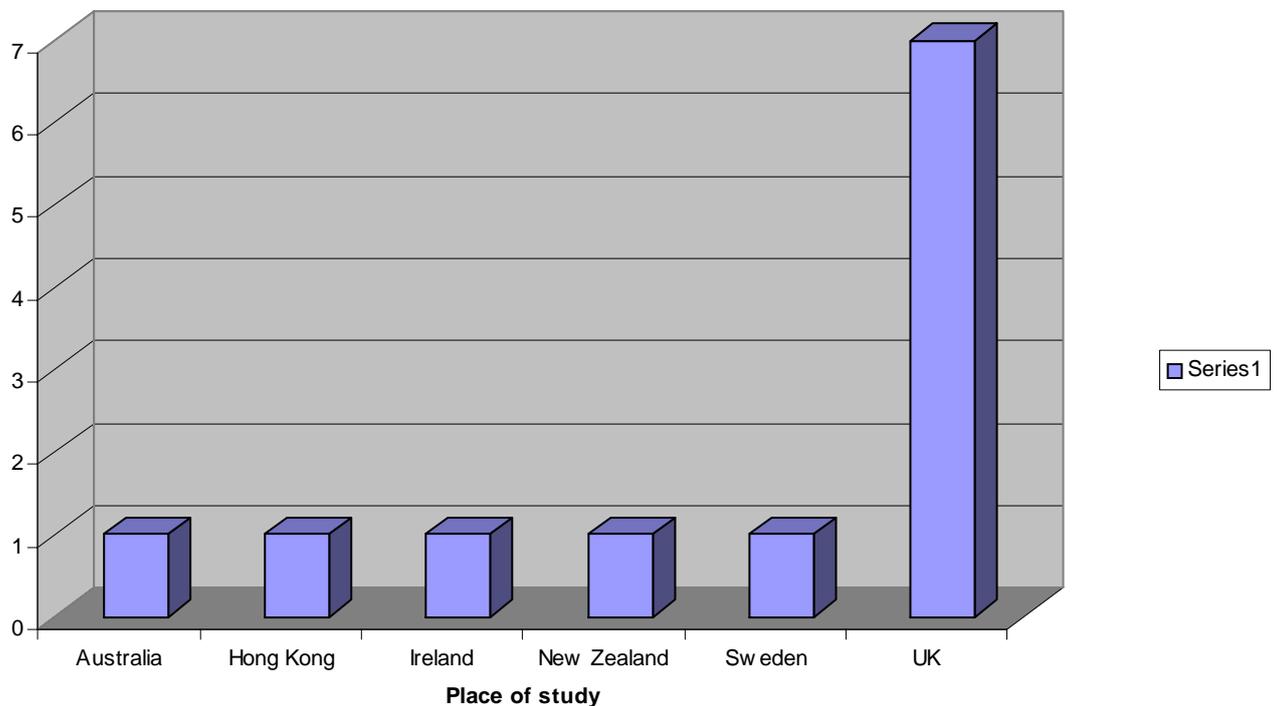
Figure 3: Number of studies included within the review for each country, for studies that focus directly on programmes for new academic staff.

Making sense of reflective processes

The grounded approach taken within the analysis led to the creation, through the method of constant comparison, of six major categories with which to code the data. Figure 4 below provides an indication of the frequency with which each of these categories was coded (with 634 occurrences of the categories in total). Before providing full detail on each category and its subcategories in the sub-sections that follow, it will help to outline the major categories as follows:

- **Theoretical basis:** It is evident the studies are underpinned by a wide range of theories of both reflective practices and practice more broadly.

- **Core reflective process:** the core elements of a reflective process applied to practice are seen as the task and the focus:

  - *Task:* Subjects within the studies are asked to complete a range of tasks that incorporate reflective processes in relation to specific aspects of practice. Any given task may include a number of constituent parts, including a cycle of different activities, as may occur when carrying out a piece of action research.

o *Focus:* We primarily use the term 'focus' to describe the specific aspect(s) of practice at which the reflective process is directed. In addition to the practices themselves that are involved in teaching, research, administration or outreach activity, at both personal and social levels, we also consider within this category the underlying basis or grounds for practice, such as the understanding in relation to subject or pedagogy, as well as personal qualities and the premises on which their practice is founded. Reflective thinking can finally be directed at reflective processes themselves, as well as one's ability to engage in reflective processes. Timing of reflection in relation to practice is also covered within this category, as this closely affects the focus.

- **Social basis:** Reflective processes often involve a social dimension, shaping as this does the nature of the process, which in the context of this review will involve participants on programmes engaging in dialogue with each other, facilitators, colleagues within their department, school or other place of work.

- **Personal basis:** A reflective process is directly affected by the way in which a person engages with the task, to such an extent that one might say that the process can become inherently different as the personal basis varies. The personal basis thus refers to individual abilities, qualities and identities that affect processes.

- **Wider context:** The wider context also incorporates three main elements, namely the workplace context and or pedagogic context. The context is seen here as 'wider in that the personal and social basis can be seen both to form part of the reflective process and the immediate setting within which the reflective process occurs.

  o *Workplace context:* As with these other contextual factors, the workplace context of department, school or institutional setting affects reflective processes on these programmes, particularly where the workplace becomes a site within which a reflective process is set, but also where other factors are concerned, such as the scope to change practice.

  o *Programme context: The context of the programme for new academic staff also influences a reflective process as it unfolds, with such factors as whether or not it is compulsory or assessed playing an important role. Further factors such as the level of resources available on the programme are also relevant.*

- **Outcomes:** The studies indicate that a range of outcomes may result from following a specific reflective process within given contexts, including those outcomes that concern changes in practice and ability to engage in reflective processes, as well as personal and collective outcomes.

These major categories are evidently related to the categories that correspond to realist reviews (reflective process, context, outcomes), although it became evident while comparing the data that significant overlap was evident between a reflective process and its context, particularly in relation to social and personal considerations.
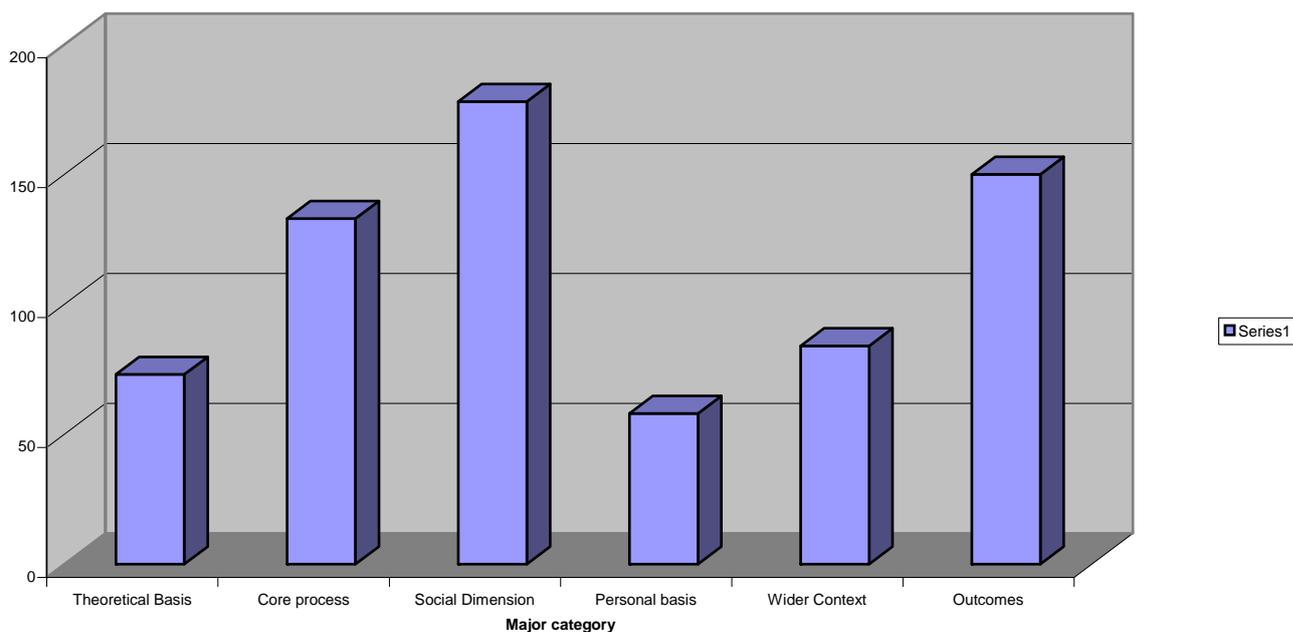
Figure 4: Number of times that the respective major categories were classified during the coding

Enabling the reflective process: a framework

These categories, however, should not be viewed in isolation from each other. In particular, the core reflective process and all of the remaining categories must lead or point in the same direction, if a targeted and sustained process of problematic deliberation is to result.

It is clear within a pedagogic context that the task and focus both need to fit with the social and personal basis, the wider context and the desired outcomes; with theoretical perspectives underpinning categories and thus assisting the alignment. For instance, dialogue may perform an essential function in sustaining a problematic focus; while a clear set of intended outcomes will allow a facilitator or peers to target the dialogue. The workplace context meanwhile will affect the extent to which a participant is personally willing to engage with the process.

What we see here, then, is a model of the reflective process that combines considerations from both pedagogy and reflective practice itself in order to do justice to the complexity of how practitioners learn how to engage in reflective processes. The aim is to develop a approach to reflective practice directly suited to use within programmes for new academic staff, or related programmes where professional education may be considered a key factor. Given that the primary teaching strategy identified with the state of practice review was experience of engaging in reflective processes, it is clearly important to consider how a reflective process might be best shaped to suit this pedagogic context.

This suggests a definition in relation to reflective practice that is more suited to use within programmes for new academic staff, or related programmes where professional education may be considered a key factor:

A directed reflective process that is applied to practice may be considered as extended deliberation on specific problematic aspects of practice and their foundations; deliberation that is both characterised and made possible, especially as one initially masters the process, by dialogue, personal and professional commitment, a receptive wider context and an awareness of the intended outcomes.
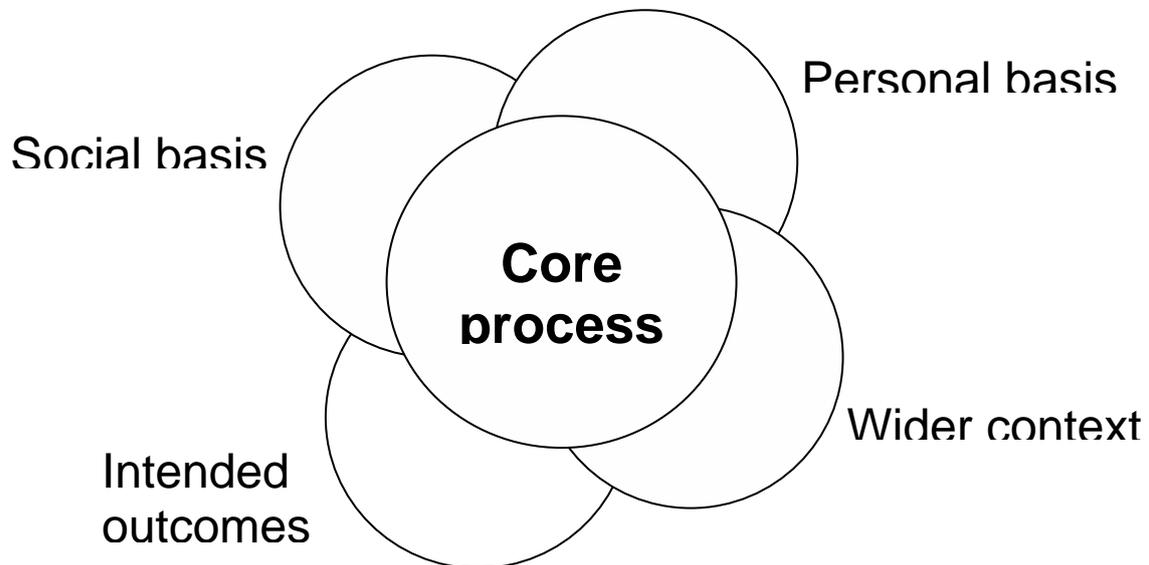
Figure 6: Inter-relationships between the core reflective process and social, personal and wider context and the intended outcomes.

In effect by combining issues related to pedagogy and to reflective practice more directly we have developed a synthesis that highlights certain key aspects of reflective processes. We term this model 'a directed reflective process' with the choice of the term 'directed' emphasising the way in which the process must both be targeted and supported, enabling it to achieve the necessary depth, as evident in Figure 7. This prevents the process from turning into 'metacognitive rambles on minor technical aspects of teaching', in the telling phrase from Grushka *et al* (2005). We can say that the choice is between wandering aimlessly or following a mapped-out route. Both Bell (2001, a study which is included within the review) and Johns (1994, cited in Moon, 1999), with their notions of supported reflective practice and guided reflection similarly introduce a pedagogic aspect alongside reflective processes. While Johns' notion remains a more limited conception through its reliance on questions to guide reflection, there are wider resonances with Bell's conception, covering as it does such issues as support, structure and collegiality.

It is instructive to compare this model with other syntheses developed within the literature, especially where the focus is on enabling a reflective process to occur. Brockbank and McGill (1998) refer to five requirements for reflection in the context of learning in higher education: dialogue, intention, process, modelling and personal stance. Intentionality, for instance, links to a concern within the reflective process for achieving the desired outcomes, while the modelling emphasises the role of the tutor

in providing an example that can be emulated by students. We see here a combination of personal and social considerations that overlap with our framework, although our model provides a more immediate place for the professional context, while also emphasising the need for each of its elements to help target and sustain the reflective process. Moon (1999) meanwhile identifies a number of conditions for reflection, covering the learning environment, management issues and the qualities of tasks that encourage reflection.

Wider context

Intended outcomes

Core reflective process

Social basis

Personal basis
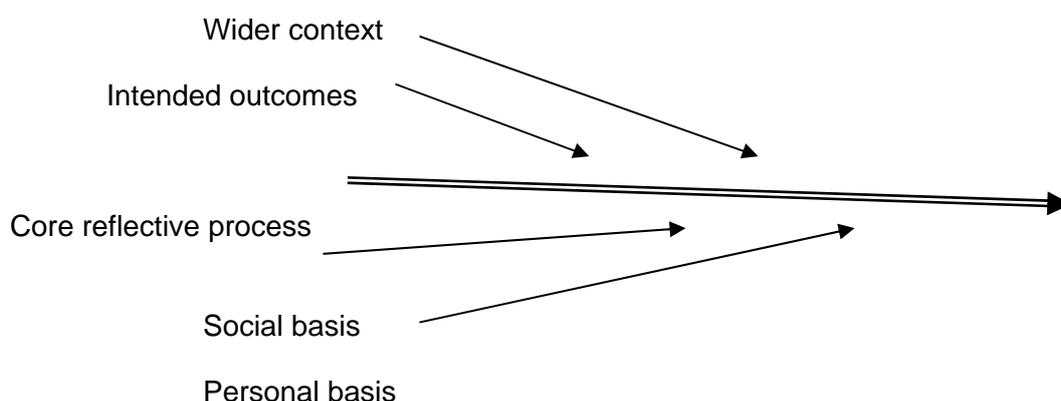
Figure 7: The elements of a directed reflective process

Goodman (1984, cited in Loughran, 1996, p13) further considers a more explicit overlap between a reflective process and the conditions for reflection, when calling for educational practice that addressed the focus of reflection, the process of reflective thinking and the attitudes necessary for an individual to engage in reflection. We have taken a similar approach in highlighting, more comprehensively, ways in which the reflective process should be shaped in the light of pedagogic and professional considerations, as well as issues such as the task taken and focus in relation to practice. Indeed, Loughran (1996, p13) specifically highlights the need to link the theory of reflection to the practices used in professional practice; in his case teacher education. The processes are complex, dialogical, embedded in specific contexts, and are not simply cognitive.

Highlighted studies: relevance and fit to framework

In the detailed explanation of the categories that follows, we will use the included studies to illustrate the categories and to draw conclusions in relation to the role and effectiveness of specific reflective processes. Note that included studies are referred to through the use of square brackets around the date of the study, with wider papers that inform the report itself cited through the convention of round brackets.

In particular, we will rely most heavily on 12 studies that both contribute most to the categories and remain closest to the context of programmes for new academics. We term these the 'highlighted studies'. The studies that directly focus on programmes for new academics which we foreground in this way are Bell [2001], Booth and Anderberg [2005], Clegg et al [2002], Ho [2000] and Staniforth and Harland [2003]; studies that focus more generally on the professional development of academic staff are Boud

[1999], Kreber [2004], Lyons [2006] and MacKinnon [2001]. Finally we also include three further studies Korthagen and Vasalos [2002] and Manoucheri [2002] which focus on initial teacher training, and the more general synthesis by Boud and Walker [1998]. Some of these studies are further introduced through a summary table at convenient points within the main narrative.

Each of these studies draws out a range of sub-categories, thus demonstrating the quality of the study in relation to the framework for understanding. For instance, Bell [2001], a study focusing on a programme for new academic staff in relation to teaching development, contributed on 18 occasions to the sub-categories developed for the review: Peer observation, Action-research; Action-planning; Theory of reflective practice; Theory of practice; Facilitator; Feedback; Questioning; Views on practice; Peers; Respect; Cycles; Novice/expert; Course resources; Capacity for reflection; Capacity for practice; Personal qualities; Collegiality. Each of the highlighted studies similarly affords significant overlap with the framework of categories.

Further studies are also drawn on to illustrate the framework, particularly where an insight resulted in a link made between two categories; this use of the studies stems from writing memos in relation to the studies during the process of carrying out grounded research. It is thus evident that many studies will help to illustrate one or two aspects of the framework, particularly where they afford particular insight on a specific topic, as with Bain *et al* [2002] in relation to feedback, Lyon and Brew [2003] for timing or Ruth-Sahd [2003] for outcomes.

In the respective sections of the grounded framework that now follow we use a bold typeface to indicate the sub-categories of the major categories, and an italicised bold typeface to indicate sub-sub categories.

Theoretical perspectives

We have already provided a basic overview of some of the key theoretical thinkers. It will help, however, to gain an appreciation for the range of theorists identified by the reviewers, without attempting a full survey. Schön was cited most frequently (on 25 occasions), with Van Manen (10 occasions) and Dewey (10 occasions). A range of others including Boud, Mezirow and Hatton and Smith also featured somewhat less frequently, with at least 60 further theorists also identified; around 40 of these were reported as cited in only one study. All but seven of the studies employ some basis for their work either in a **theory of reflective practice** or in a **theory of practice** (with these seven studies often addressing a different agenda, as with Edwards and Nicoll [2006] which draws instead on theory related to rhetoric). The process of coding also indicated a clear overlap between theories of reflective practice, and theories of practice – in that how you theorise a practice (as for Van Manen in identifying technical, practical and critical dimensions to practice) directly affects the reflective process, affecting the extent to which the focus is inherently problematic.

It is further clear from the highlighted studies that each draws on a range of theorists in order to cover pedagogic considerations, the nature of practice, theory underpinning the reflective process, issues relates to the workplace or other aspects of the context, and issues related to the task. Indeed some of the interworkings of theoretical perspective can be seen across Bell [2001], helping to ensure that the elements of the framework are all aligned with each other. Table 1 below summarises major issues from this study in relation to each of the major categories. Kreber [2004], meanwhile, combines both a theory of practice and a theory of reflection that combine to good

effect in articulating reflective outcomes for experienced academics; with the use of both Mezirow's classification of reflection and a theory of scholarship, as well as theories of learning. In addition theories of change are also relevant, as for Ho [2000] in terms of conceptual change, and Boud [1998,1999] in terms of change within the workplace.

These considerations clearly reveal the complexity of the theoretical underpinnings of the field. They also suggest that a more general theory of learning might have a great deal to offer in bringing cohesion across our entire framework, particularly given the pedagogic context of staff who are new to reflective practice. It is interesting to note that the theoretical basis for the included studies fits with the research carried out by Tight (2004), which indicated that the study of higher education to a certain extent was an a-theoretical discipline.

Reference	Bell, M [2001] 'Supported reflective practice: a programme of peer observation and feedback for academic teaching development', *International Journal for Academic Development* **6**(1), 29-39
Abstract	The outcomes of the evaluation of a structured, peer-supported teaching development programme for academic staff are reported. Supported reflective practice forms the conceptual framework for the programme, which includes feedback on observed teaching and feedback on reflection. Key themes identified are the effectiveness of the supported reflective practice process, improvements to teaching practice, developing confidence and congruent espoused theory and theory-in-use, ongoing professional development and developing collegiality. Factors that facilitate the programme are explored, including the support triangle, the role of the educational developer in providing feedback and monitoring, and the role of the support colleague. Suggestions for implementation of similar programmes are offered.
Core process	Action research is employed to aid reflection on practice in relation to observation of teaching. A report is written by the novice teacher to explore the development overall and produce action planning. The reflection focuses on two areas: external technical – related to techniques of teaching; internal reflective – about theories, assumptions and philosophy. Four action research cycles are undertaken; each cycle involves planning, observation, feedback and reflection.
Theoretical basis	The task develops from theories by Schön on reflection in the workplace and Boud on peer learning, drawing on Lewin in relation to action research.
Social basis	The article explores in detail the influence and role of the two supporting 'others' in enabling the action research: participants are paired up with a more experienced peer, and an educational developer forms a third in the triangle, with a specific role to provide additional feedback on reflective processes the pedagogy etc. The peer and developer question and challenge, in relation to the desired areas for reflection, but also maintain integrity and do not confront. A report on completion of the cycle is submitted to the educational developer who comments on pedagogy and reflection, stimulating further reflection. The peer-support colleagues receive guidance – written and oral on their role; the input

	and feedback to the novice is formal, written and one-to-one to maximise the learning.
Personal basis	The study principally concerned novice teachers in higher education, and these demonstrated evident willingness to engage. A limited number of experienced teachers were involved, and these gained much less from the programme, in one case with clear reluctance to engage.
Wider context	Support colleague from the same department or faculty. Teaching sessions carried out within the usual departmental setting, and identifies the issue of the development of academic leadership for the peer; drawing on Boud. Component of a longer academic development course.
Outcomes	Three key areas of improvement identified for the novice: technical, pedagogical, and reflective, with long-term benefits claimed. Benefits also evident for the peer.

Table 1: Links between Bell [2001] and the major categories of the grounded framework

Beyond the immediate theoretical perspectives provided within the included studies, however, the extent to which the social dimension dominates the occurrences of our categories, accounting for over one third, suggests that it will help to draw on Vygotsky (as for instance in (1978)) to inform our interpretation of the framework. While only one of the included studies was directly seen to refer to this theorist (Manoucheri, 2002), the overlaps identified during the coding process between pedagogy and reflective processes, and between reflective processes and social, programme, workplace or professional considerations all point to the importance of social relations both within reflective processes themselves and for learning how to engage in reflective processes.

For Vygotsky it is social relations that structure both our thinking processes and the way in which we learn these processes. Vygotksy (1978) indicates that processes occur first between people and are only then internalised, resulting in the ability to carry out thought processes, termed schemes. It is particularly interesting to note that this process of internalisation applies to voluntary attention, the formation of concepts and, indeed, to 'all the higher functions' (p57) which would include our practice, grounds for practice and ability to carry out reflective processes. Vygotksy thus contends that with the assistance of others (termed 'scaffolding') we are able to display significantly greater development. It is interesting to note in this regard that the review into the state of practice (see Appendix 3) identified a task based around social constructivism as a fundamental basis for pedagogy on these programmes.

A social basis for reflection necessarily brings up issues of language and the origins of meaning, and being clear about their philosophical basis will enable us to be more incisive in our following findings and recommendations.

Newman (1996) provides a valuable analysis of Schön's epistemological account of the nature and teaching of reflective practice. He makes explicit "the theory of meaning and view of language which is implicit in Schön's work. In particular … the

relationship between Schön's account of convergence of meaning, and that given in Wittgenstein' s later writings" (p.298). Thus Wittgenstein's perspective

> "supports Schön's mention of context and action [Schön, 1987, pp.100-101] (and, indeed, gives them far greater significance than that for which Schön argued) but that, … the third 'essential feature' [reciprocal reflection-in-action on tacit knowing-in-action] becomes redundant." (p.302)

Such an analysis significantly alters our understanding of both the process and teaching of "reflection-in-action". It also provides a philosophical basis for van Manen's (1995) work on the same issue. For example, in enabling beginning (university) teachers to develop knowing-in-action and an ability to reflect on this knowing, it thus becomes essential for them to engage in both practice and active use of language in dialogue with members of the 'language-game' (Wittgenstein, 1969/1975, sect. 18, p.4e) within which reflection may take place. As Newman says (p.302) "Reflection here describes a behaviour *within* a language-game where it makes sense to doubt and give reasons for certain beliefs and actions"

The complexity of the theoretical picture might, however, discourage programmes from drawing on theory so directly. Indeed, it was clear in the documentation that, while implicit understanding of various theoretical positions was apparent in the programmes, explicit reference to underpinning theories for reflective practice was minimal in the documentation itself. While the study also recognises that time is likely to be set aside to explain various theoretical positions, this also suggests that there is greater scope to use underpinning theory to help ensure coherence across both extended reflective processes and the programme as a whole. Without this coherence it is hard to see how the necessary depth will be achieved in the reflective processes involved. Clear choices thus need to be made about the nature of the reflective processes that any programme would wish to promote, and how specific theories might offer support.

The task employed

The reviewers identified a range of tasks within the studies. These were grouped together under 18 specific categories as follows:

- **Action research** meanwhile figures in nine studies, with three of these in programmes for new academic staff. Action research is sometimes associated with longer term research projects, but Bell [2001] provides an example that is suited to a programme for new academic staff with four action research cycles based around the observation of teaching. Booth and Andenberg [2005] employ teaching development projects.

- **Learning journal** – a diary, personal record or log book that allows the participant to collate many reflective pieces of writing over a period of time. (We do not seek to distinguish here between diaries, journals and logs, although see Moon (1999) or Bolton (2001) for the respective nuances. We, though, do separately distinguish learning journals from portfolios, which Moon (1999) also includes in this category.) These were identified within eight of the studies, although none of these relate to a programme for new academic staff (although see Table 3). In appropriate contexts,

they can be effective, for instance, in providing a view of a specific practice over an extended period of time [Manoucheri, 2002] or providing scope for tutor feedback [Bain *et al*, 2002]. Given extensive usage in other domains (as Moon (1999) indicates), additional investigation would be worthwhile to help assess whether adaptations might be possible for new academics programmes.

- **Portfolio** – typically consisting of a set of evidence with accompanying reflective commentary; such portfolios can provide a measure of coherence across a range of tasks, allowing a focus to be sustained over a period of time (as is clear within Bell, [2001]). The use of a portfolio was noted in six separate studies, with two of these studies directly on programmes for new academic staff. Lyons [2006] emphasises that portfolio making must be supported; it is clear that an open-ended portfolio might otherwise might lack any clear focus. It is interesting to note that the state of practice study indicated that, as well as being used to present evidence against learning outcomes, portfolios were used both to collate a range of assessment tasks; in this latter case reflective commentary might not be included.

- **Action planning** figures in five studies, four of which are situated within programmes for new academic staff, although in each case such planning followed on after other tasks rather than being used as a separate exercise, whether action research (as in Bell [2001]), short activities (Ho [2000]) or so on.

- A range of other tasks are also covered within the studies (with 52 further uses coded), in relation to: **peer observation, peer review, mentoring, coaching, narrative, philosophy of teaching, other writing tasks, projects, action learning, co-observation, concept mapping, critical incident analysis, short activities** and **publication**. In part these activities are to direct the attention of the subject of the reflective process to the desired area of practice, over a suitable period of time. Rule [2004] for instance employs projects in this way.

We can further see each of these specific tasks as building blocks to create more sophisticated tasks. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the tasks that are most commonly employed (action research, learning journals and portfolios) are themselves substantial tasks, involving a range of sub-tasks, and thus helping to give shape to an extended reflective process. It is clearly possible to combine several of these tasks at the same time and as, for instance, Gransden [2004] shows with peer observations the subject of further action research, encouraging greater depth to the reflective process. The need for **coherence** across a range of tasks was clearly recognised, though, in 10 studies.

One option is to revisit a task more than once, allowing further reflection in relation to the same problematic area of practice. **Cycles** can thus play an important part (seen in four studies), with repeated use of a given activity, although in this case it would be important to ensure that progression actually resulted so that more was done than simply repetition. Bell [2001], for instance, employed four action research cycles involving the observation of teaching, with scope to develop practice over the period of the cycles. Over a period of time, a set of reflective processes can then make increasing demands on the participants, so that progression occurs. Given the pedagogic context of programmes for new academic staff, progression is clearly an essential feature in developing the ability to engage in reflective processes. But this does not necessarily mean a linear progression that concludes with critical or premise reflection. Kreber [2004] suggests that given the difficulty of attaining these patterns of

reflection when working with academic staff, it may be important to begin with this focus from the outset.

A task can be structured in ways that reflect a theoretical basis. Russell [2005] suggests that where there is a lack of **structure** weak outcomes are likely to result (with 10 other studies also addressing these issues). We see again in Lee-Baldwin [2005] clear links between structure and the nature of the reflection that occurs, linking directly to the outcomes. A wide range of elements can be structured into the process, many of which we have already considered, although a overly structured task can result in recipe following, as Moon (1999, p172) cautions.

The state of practice study indicated how programmes typically employ a range of tasks, although the extent to which they build on each other was less evident. Clearly some tasks may foster this more than others, as for the more extended tasks of completing a learning journal and action research. Peer and self assessment, however, can also allow this to occur.

Programmes which have not adopted tasks that inherently build in progression may face a challenge in fostering the more extended forms of reflection that achieve the necessary depth for substantive outcomes. The various above strategies seen in the literature provide clear ways forward to deal with this challenge. It may help, for instance, to consider how tasks within a programme build on each other in relation to the same basis for practice or in relation to problematic issues raised at earlier stages but not fully resolved. One might for instance think of combining peer observation with co-teaching, in a cycle that allows issues to be taken forward over a more extended period. We need to see quite directly how the chosen tasks foster one or more specific and extended processes that involve problematic deliberation at the appropriate depth.

The structure of the programmes is also relevant in this, in that extended reflective processes may need to be coordinated over relatively long periods of time. The modular structure of some programmes, as seen in the state of practice study, may make this more difficult, although learning activities and assessment that span more than one module should still be considered. Similarly programmes that combine central and local elements may find it more challenging to coordinate an extended reflective process. Perhaps a potentially more serious issue is the use of several days of block induction to begin a programme, with further learning on the programme occupying entire days. The state of practice study indicated that both approaches were common in the programmes considered. It seems that programmes are designed to allow participants to work intensively for short periods, and then to leave the programme aside in the intervening period. Again this approach may make it more difficult to sustain a reflective process. While any one of these issues might not represent a challenge, where several such factors operate at once it may well be the case that programmes avoid the use of more extended reflective processes.

The application to practice: focus

The immediate focus

The choice of what to reflect on – where to focus your attention – is clearly a key issue; with our categorisation (with the relevant issues seen as specifically raised on 32 occasions in total) here based on content, premise and process reflection.

As far as content is concerned, the task employed will often ensure a focus on some aspect of **practice** (specifically seen as raised in 12 studies). It is easier, for example, to use peer observation to focus attention on classroom performance rather than curriculum design. As far as initial teacher training is concerned the focus is most commonly on performance in the classroom; but for academic staff other aspects of practice are also important, favouring consideration of a broader range of foci that takes in, as appropriate, the full range of academic work. *Collaborative practice* was considered in three of the studies, typical of such work as curriculum design or development projects.

A focus only on practice as it unfolds, however can remain limiting and unproblematic, as there may be little stimulus to explore alternative or variant practices; there is little reason to move beyond Wellington and Austin's immediate orientation to reflective practice (1996). Focusing on the basis for practice by contrast is more likely to throw up issues that need to be resolved. Taken together the studies in general indicate a wide **basis for practice** (19 occasions), with further sub-categories of this category evident in *pedagogic understanding, personal qualities, emotions* and *further premises* (which would include conceptions of teaching, any values not covered by personal qualities, assumptions underpinning practice and so on).

We can see that any individual basis for practice may be contested or gaps may be present between an espoused basis and actual practice, allowing scope for problematic deliberation. We can also seek to prioritise different elements of this basis, whether personal qualities (as for Korthagen and Vasalos [2005]) or conceptions of teaching (as Ho [2000]). Booth and Andenberg [2005] employ a form of learning journal and teaching development projects, in ways that allow them to target the problematic deliberation towards pedagogic understanding. It is clear, however, within the state of practice review that less attention is devoted in relation to personal qualities, emotions and further premises within these programmes, as compared to practice or pedagogic understanding.

The final category in where to focus one's attention concerns **the reflective process** itself, addressing the idea of process reflection. Bain *et al* [2002], for instance, uses regular feedback from the tutor to draw the attention of the participants to the level of the reflection that they have attained; although this still remains a more indirect approach to focusing on the reflective process. This is the typical approach in evidence within the studies, so that Bell [2001] appears unusual in highlighting how the reflection provided by the facilitator itself serves to stimulate further reflection by the participant. This is the only study thus identified indicating practice that falls directly within this category.

The state of practice study was clear in indicating how the programme documentation expected participants to develop competence in the six areas of activity required by the Higher Education Academy, of which four concern practice itself, one the ability to reflect on practice and one on scholarship more broadly. It would be interesting to explore further whether the implicit emphasis on competence might draw attention away from scrutinising the basis for practice.

However, while the basis for practice in pedagogy and subject knowledge was clearly addressed in the programmes, as one might expect of study set at masters level, it was evident that none of the programmes claimed to address the role of personal qualities or emotions in establishing a basis for practice; the collective basis for practice was similarly addressed only occasionally. It is, however, clear that there is

scope for programmes to reconsider the way in which they conceptualise the basis for practice, perhaps drawing on further theories of practice in this. This might also allow new approaches to exploiting the gap between espoused and actual practice, thus helping to sustain a problematic focus, and indeed helping to transform practice. For instance, the way in which education may depend on a collaborative basis is clearly evident on a practical level, as explored by Kahn and Walsh (2006, pp15-18). Such a focus could allow more direct attention to the vested interests that form part of the subject matter of critical reflection, as for Brookfield (1995).

Giving shape to the focus

The extent to which a reflective process draws on any of these three main foci will particularly depend on the **timing in relation to practice** (as identified in 14 studies). Schön (1987) earlier distinguished reflection-in-action (where a reflective process occurs at the same time as the professional action) from reflection-on-action (where a reflective process occurs separately from any action).

Various theorists have questioned the extent to which it is possible to give extended consideration to a problem as practice itself unfolds. Other theorists, however, have argued that the extended analysis required for reflection-on-action can take one too far away from practice itself, so that attention to reflection-in-action seen as a necessary corrective to this tendency. Reflection during action will thus promote more intuitive tasks, while reflection on action allows greater scope for more extended analysis, and for dialogue. During reflection-in-action, noticing and intervening take precedence, so that professional knowledge then operates in a different way, in determining what we notice and the action that should follow. Lyon and Brew [2003] in considering the learning of medical students within an operating theatre found that students who paid attention to a range of considerations were best placed to take on an active role, and thus learn more effectively. The teacher education literature gives widespread attention to skills in 'noticing'. It will clearly be a challenge in many contexts to first enact reflection-in-action on a social basis, although Schön specifically considers this question (1987, p163-66). The use of video-supported dialogue might be one way forward, in re-presenting the action; as Powell [2004] employs.

It is further apparent from the study of the state of practice that reflection on action dominates the conceptions of reflective practice that are in evidence within the documentation. Programmes may wish to consider ways to focus attention on reflection-in-action, There is, for instance, significant scope for work focused on noticing and intervening within practice. It is worth noting that Schön emphasised reflection-in-action (1987, pxi) rather than reflection-on-action as the key to new forms of professional education; drawing also on the idea of a 'reflective practicum', which enables a dialogue between coach and student. One option is to simulate practice in a setting that offers more scope for reflection, as with the technique of 'Teaching Process Recall' employed within one of the programmes, which involves group discussion based around short videos of participants' teaching.

It is finally worth considering how different foci might be combined within the same task or programme to best achieve the desired outcomes. Ho [2000] uses a series of short activities. She combines a focus on the actual nature of the practice that is occurring with a focus on premises that underpin this practice, as more fully indicated in Table 2 against the major categories. Problematisation occurs in large part by exploiting the gap between actual practice and perceived premises.

One might think of other ways in which different foci can be combined to help problematise practice. There are clearly more grounds for teaching than one's conception of teaching – several studies consider the values that academics bring with them to their teaching. Similar gaps between espoused values and actual practice may be evident in relation to values, qualities and relationships with students; although it might be more difficult for any one programme for new academic staff to focus, say, on relationships with students in an era of mass higher education.

Bain *et al* [2002] further recognises that support can be tailored quite directly at the **level** or depth of the reflection (seen in six studies). Again it is clear that theoretical considerations loom large in considering this level of reflection as Hatton and Smith (1995), Kember [2000] and Shönwetter *et al* [2002] all indicate. What one theorist views as a level or a certain depth of reflection, another theorist may view as a different category of reflection. Hatton and Smith (1995) prefer to side for different categories of reflection, with depth resulting from whether the reflection is complex, sustained, multi-dimensional and insightful; this approach sits more naturally with the emphasis on a range of reflective processes adopted within this review.

Reference	Ho, A. S. P. [2000] 'A conceptual change approach to staff development: a model for curriculum design', *International Journal for Academic Development* **5**(1), 30-41
Abstract	With the rapid expansion in tertiary education in the past decade, coupled with the rising emphasis on accountability, teaching quality has become an important issue in higher education worldwide. The increasing emphasis on quality has placed new demands on staff development, in particular to find promising models and methodologies that will guide development tasks. The paper describes an innovative task to staff development that was synthesized from four theories about conceptual change or change in general. This conceptual change approach is based on the hypothesis that changing teachers' conceptions of teaching towards more elaborated levels will bring about improvement in their teaching practices. A short course derived from this model is outlined.
Core process	Short course to focus on conceptual change, with activities over a period of four weeks, such as use of an article on teaching and learning conceptions to encourage description and reflection; questions on espoused theories and actual practice. Incorporates seven explicit stages: Engage participants on espoused conceptions of teaching and actual teaching practice; Confront participants with inconsistencies; Instil the need to resolve these inconsistencies; Expose participants to alternative conceptions of teaching; Facilitate participants' understanding of deep and surface tasks to learning; Facilitate participants formulation of conceptions of teaching conducive to deep learning; Engage participants in planning changes. The focus covers grounds for practice: conceptions of teaching; related areas of practice.
Theoretical basis	The article explores literature about teacher perceptions, change theory, theories of action (Argyris & Schön), theories of conceptual change and then draws together a model that is applied within a series of short course activities. This outline of the theories would benefit those seeking

	to inform their own considerations and structuring of change initiatives. For example, Argyris and Schön (1974) looks at a process of increasing professional effectiveness involves building and rebuilding of one's theories of action. Single loop leads to reinforcing existing beliefs; double loop means fundamental change. Lewin (1947) envisages group as community held together by interconnecting forces which have to be pushed out of balance to unfreeze them so that change can occur.
Social basis	Considers how we might structure social reflective practice situations to support the process of reflection and change. Draws on levels of dilemma: incongruity, internal inconsistency and effectiveness that prompt us to revisit treasured beliefs. Considers the role of self awareness, confrontation with dilemmas, exposure to alternative conceptions and commitment to action; with peers, critical others and expert facilitation supporting the process.
Personal basis	The target groups for the programme are experienced teachers.
Wider context	Commitment to introducing change in practice is seen as an important element. Non-accredited short course taken on a voluntary basis.
Outcomes	Focus on transformational aspect of reflective practice. Programme brought about detectable conceptual change or development in two thirds of teachers in the study.

Table 2: Links between Ho [2000] and the major categories of the grounded framework

Constructing reflection: social perspectives

The social dimension to reflective processes emerged from the coding process as the category identified most frequently within the studies, with 247 occurrences out of the 634 in total. Indeed, the predominance was already apparent during the initial searching for studies, as it became apparent to the reviewer with responsibility for personal approaches that the social dimension remained essential. Sub-categories are allocated to dialogue (123 mentions), peers also involved in the reflective process (22 occurrences), facilitators of reflective processes (17 occurrences, all in different studies) and the social atmosphere (16 mentions). Also included within this overall total for the social dimension, although covered in later sections of the report, are wider issues that relate to social aspects of the workplace (with 57 occurrences) and the programme (12 occasions).

In assessing this observation that the social dimension is central to the reflective processes considered, it is worth remembering that the literature covered focuses heavily on professional education, with the included studies covering the use of reflective processes with practitioners who are relative novices, both in relation to practice itself and to reflective processes as applied to their practice. There is thus a clear overlap in the categories between the pedagogy of reflective practice and reflective practice itself, suggesting further a social construction of reflective practice.

The centrality of dialogue

The social interactions that figure most prominently within the studies primarily concern **dialogue**. This exchange of ideas has already been seen as central to reflective processes (as for instance in Brockbank and McGill (1998, p57) and Brookfield (1995, p140), but we contend that this is doubly so where initial professional development in relation to these processes is concerned. A range of studies recognise this, including those cited for specific contributions to this aspect. For instance Manoucheri [2001] recognises the importance of dialogue in providing an environment in which learners are able to develop. In Staniforth and Harland [2003] a sustained pattern of communication was required for participants to become familiar with a new pattern of research, and to become familiar with an approach where contestation was regularly involved.

The overall approach adopted will help to shape the extent of this social dimension. For instance, collaborative activity provides a natural basis for dialogue. Collaborative curriculum design, as for instance advocated by Cranton and Carusetta [2002] and McIntyre [2001] intrinsically requires negotiation on the part of those involved; as would co-observation where those observing are required to agree a joint report. The scope for contention and problematisation in these situations is clearly significant.

It is clear that dialogue enables those involved to give extended consideration to problematic aspects of practice. It can first of all help to problematise practice, with sub-sub-categories comprising voicing experience and the views of others, modelling of good practice, challenges, prompts, questioning, crossing of boundaries, use of literature, specialist language and feedback. It also supports ongoing engagement in the process through sustaining a suitable atmosphere and through encouragement. At its best, a sense of a shared journey is apparent. Each of these characteristics of the reflective process is also essential within more personal reflection, but is made possible at first for the learner through the social interactions.

The studies thus indicate a range of strategies to problematise practice in this way, or more widely simply to support the reflective process. Of the 123 occurrences of this category, 'dialogue', 24 considered dialogue at the broader level, while the remaining 99 were at this more specific level of detail. When combined with other strategies to problematise practice (such as employing a combination of foci that reveal gaps between espoused positions and action) it becomes clear that we can expect to see genuine induction into reflective practices, rather than hopeful attempts.

Voices

A reflective dialogue will often involve giving voice to one's own view of the situation, perhaps by describing some aspect of practice. This further serves to externalise the situation, perhaps through some form of *description*, (something that can also occur through writing) opening it up to problematic deliberation and to discussion with others (as is evident for Burchell and Dyson [2005]).

In particular, this opens out the possibility of hearing *other voices* in relation to the practice (a strategy identified within 12 studies). The realisation that others see the situation differently provides an important step in problematising practice, as it becomes clear that alternative practices, grounds or reflective processes are possible or even desirable. Indeed this links to the depth of reflection as Donaghy [2000], Hatton and Smith (1995) and others indicate. For instance, Brookfield (1995, pxiii) sees the ability to think and work through different lens as the core element of

reflective processes that are able to identify and scrutinize the assumptions, especially those that mask the exercise of power or those that work against our best interests, that underpin professional practice. We can represent the voices of others within the dialogue in several ways. One straightforward way is to ensure that a written record of the views of others is incorporated into the process. One might draw on findings from student feedback surveys, or take written comments from colleagues within a peer observation.

Such views may help in problematising practice, but it is also clear that they may be relatively easy to discount. We may assume that others have missed part of the picture, they may have seen little of interest, or we may rather avoid the issue in hand – particularly if feeling threatened. It will thus also be important to represent the views of others more directly, by allowing partners to the dialogue to voice their views on the practice in question (as with Loughran 2002). This occurs naturally in collaborative curriculum design, as exploited by Cranton and Carusetta [2002]. Similarly, where someone sees a colleague engaged in different patterns of practice, then this can also impinge upon them more forcefully, opening up further possibilities with peer review or co-observation. Ideally this would be accompanied by exposing the basis for this practice at some point alongside the practice.

Where we can combine presence within both the dialogue and the practice, then the voices within the dialogue are likely to speak with greater authority and can be discounted less easily. And a voice is likely to be even more powerful if the dialogue occurs with someone who was an equal partner in the action, rather than someone viewing the action from outside or the subject of the action, or where an element of mutuality has been introduced. Co-teaching (McIntyre [2001]), collaborative curriculum design or action research projects thus offer evident scope for a dialogue that gives powerful expression to other voices, linking directly to deeper levels of reflection.

A voice may also be more powerful in problematising practice where it comes from a different perspective (a strategy further considered in four studies). One of the main boundaries that it is important to cross is that formed by a discipline, as established practices may remain rooted with a specific workplace. An expert facilitator can help in *crossing boundaries*, if they are aware of the ways in which these boundaries limit reflection on practice, although peers may themselves more naturally represent a specific disciplinary perspective, challenging the approach taken by a colleague from a different discipline. This does, however, also open up the possibility of tailoring the dialogue directly so that participants are encouraged directly to think about disciplinary boundaries, an approach argued for by Rowland [2001]. Working across disciplines may thus be important not so much as a convenience for designers, but for the way in which this opens up challenges from different perspectives.

Challenge

However, it is still evident that the inclusion of varied voices may not necessarily lead to a problematisation of practice. Perhaps it is not surprising that more attention was seen in the studies directly in relation to the *challenge* that dialogue can enable. Seventeen studies specifically considered the way in which challenge functions within a process of dialogue, with eighteen further studies focusing more directly on the related use of *questioning*.

Ho [2000] shows that questioning can help to problematise teaching, causing the participant to undertake further exploration of the situation. Ho uses this strategy to particular effect by focusing questions on the possibility of a gap between espoused

grounds for practice and practice itself, with clear links to the resulting outcomes. It is also clear that dialogue can be shaped consciously in the light of specific theoretical models or levels of reflection, leading to linked outcomes. Questions can further draw attention to a theoretical framework (as for Powell [2004]) or allow insight into the view point of the person questioning, contributing to construction of knowledge. A related category is provided by *prompts* (as specifically identified in 3 cases), although as well as consisting of questions they can also comprise gestures, or be verbal or written. Kreber [2004], for instance, employs prompts to help participants question themselves or each other.

Language

Dialogue is further served by the *language* employed (specifically identified as occurring in seven studies), both in enabling an exchange to occur and in providing concepts that can illuminate problematic aspects of practice, whether relating to the content of the discipline, the grounds for practice or the reflective process itself. Clearly without this process of illumination, it will be more difficult to sustain a problematic deliberation. Dialogue in particular serves to ensure that those involved are required to employ and agree on concepts with which to frame the discussion (as seen by Wittgenstein, 1953, sect. 347 etc., cited in Newman, 1996), ensuring a more direct grasp on grounds for practice, something that we also see exemplified in Manoucheri [2002] with co-observation of teaching.

We thus need to consider how best to allow participants on these programmes to acquire this language, as Griffin [2003], Newman [1999] and Edwards and Nicoll [2006] all consider. One element is to pay attention to the clarity of the meaning of terms, as Fernsten and Fernsten [2005] argue, although we also require an insightful application to practice of the terms or concepts employed.

Ultimately what is required is participation in a group that speaks a common language. This can occur both within the context of a programme or a department, although some departments will include colleagues who are unwilling or unable to participate in this, at least as far as teaching is concerned. Where a reflective process is able to either establish (as in MacDonald [2001]) or take advantage of an existing grouping then there are clearly advantages. It is also apparent in this that language allows dialogue to take place on a professional level, allowing a group to communicate with each other, while excluding outsiders to the profession.

Literature

We can further consider the related role of *literature*, particularly that pertaining to the basis for practice, in generating a problematic consideration of an aspect of practice or in exposing suitable grounds for practice; with a particular role in substantiating any challenge. This can act as a further voice within the reflective process, as Brookfield (1995) argues. For instance, Smyth [2005] provides an example of this occurring with the use of work by Carl Rogers, linking directly to capacity for improved practice, while Ho [2000] is clear in the context of conceptions of teaching that, when contrasting a basis for action with action itself, understanding must be developed of the basis that makes for effective teaching or practice more widely, or it will easily be ignored. Booth and Andenberg [2005] further use research on student learning in relevant disciplines to target the reflective process towards an understanding of student learning, while also helping to sustain the problematic dimension to the process.

Clearly this recourse to the literature requires an existing understanding on the part of any facilitator, peers on the programme or colleagues in the department; who will then be able to point towards specific ideas and texts. And, as Ho [2000] is clear, such targeted use of the literature then supports the given reflective process. We need to do more than expect that participants will be able to go away and pick out the most relevant aspects of the literature simply from a general reading list; instead building recourse to the literature within early social interaction on the course.

Feedback

We see that *feedback* can provide an additional aspect of a dialogue (as seen on nine occasions), serving both to challenge those involved and provide encouragement or support for the process. Bain *et al* [2002], for instance, provides advice on structuring feedback, based on varying the level of challenge proffered, and on shifting the focus between practice and the reflective process. Use of feedback is typically embedded on programmes for new academic staff - offering significant scope for adaptations, with feedback directly linked to the desired outcomes from the programme. Bain was also clear that feedback directed at the reflective process itself was more effective than that directed at practice. MacKinnon [2001] points out that there is a need to avoid overly prescriptive proposals within feedback, particularly given a link between feedback and a teacher's identity as a professional.

Technological support

Relatively little attention (only four occurrences) was seen to *support from technology* for reflective processes. Where studies included within this review considered it, the concern was as a means to support a dialogue between those involved. For instance, the use of video allows a re-presentation of practice that then facilitates discussion, with consideration possible of quite specific elements of practice. Given the use of video in programmes for new academic staff for microteaching, process recall, and interactive guidance it is perhaps surprising that they did not feature more strongly in the studies reviewed, although Powell [2004] was a clear exception. Shared video-based investigation is a related process, and has been shown to support a change in focus from practice to interpretation (Armstrong and Curran, 2006).

It is also possible to support dialogue through online discussion, although this again received relatively little attention within the included studies. Similarly, although the use of electronic personal development portfolios is now widespread, there seems to be little peer-reviewed research relating them to the pedagogy of reflective practices.

The social atmosphere

Dialogue is always carried out within an **atmosphere**, whether of tension, conflict, competitiveness or mutual support (as identified on 16 occasions).

The need for *mutual respect* emerges within six studies. Clearly, without trust participants are more likely to sanitise their emerging reflections (as Fernsten and Fernsten [2005], for instance, make clear), making them palatable to their audience, whether on the programme or within their department. Bell [2001] argues that the peer(s) and facilitator need to both question and challenge, while maintaining integrity and not confronting. This is particularly true for critical reflection that might impact on others, linking also to the degree of scope to introduce change within the workplace. Part of establishing this atmosphere is to pay attention to the initial basis for the social environment within which the reflective process(es) are set to occur. Learning

contracts are one way to approach this, as is a mutual agreement on the character of this environment, as Boud and Walker [1998] also emphasise through the use of ground rules, clarity on acceptable practices by the teacher, space for learners to make their own meaning, and so on.

A supportive atmosphere also needs to incorporate *encouragement* (as eight studies specifically found). Such encouragement can also serve to sustain exploration of a problematic issue, as for instance MacKinnon [2001]. Overly negative responses to early attempts to engage in a reflective process can clearly be counter-productive in the longer term. Any challenges that are made also need to be carried out in a sensitive fashion. The aim is not so much to confront someone, as to encourage them to explore their practice further, causing them to see for themselves any gaps, inconsistencies or inadequacies, any mismatch with between their practice and accepted grounds for practice. If one were to point out these gaps more directly, then a defensive reaction would be likely (see Bell [2001]).

There is also a need also to balance support with the demands of privacy, as Wright [2005] is clear. Clearly where an atmosphere encourages trust, then greater *disclosure* is possible. But a range of risks as in Boud [1998] is apparent, whether relating to the exercise of power, inappropriate disclosure or an inappropriate facilitator/tutor response.

Facilitators and Peers

We now come to the actors within reflective processes: **facilitator(s)** and **peers** (seen on 39 occasions in total). Other colleagues may also feature, although we consider these within the workplace context. The primary function of these actors seen within the studies was evidently to hold the dialogue, thus establishing and supporting problematic deliberation. This also allows *modelling* of the process to occur (an approach directly seen in 6 of the studies) thus supporting learning through social interaction; as most immediately evident within a dialogue. We see here how the ability to engage in a reflective process is a socially constructed. The importance of modelling is particularly evident within the wider literature on reflection. Loughran (1996) places particular emphasis on modelling within programmes of teacher training, in that he argues reflective processes need to be made evident through such strategies as thinking aloud and offering personal examples. The model proposed by Brockbank and McGill (1998) outlined above also incorporates modelling as a major element; although clearly within our grounded framework it does not merit this profile.

Further functions of the facilitator may also stem from their wider role within the programme and from their expertise. The facilitator is likely to take specific concern for the development of those participating, as well as for the operation of the process (Harrison *et al* [2005]). Greater knowledge of the reflective process being followed, or of aspects of practice, can enable the facilitator to target their contributions more effectively. Harrison *et al* [2005] indicates that facilitation should aim for deeper forms of reflection, by channelling the attention of the participant onto specific aspects – perhaps contrasting them with each other. The facilitator can further exploit gaps between espoused theories and theories in use, as with Ho [2000] or Korthagen and Vasalos [2005]. There are clear implications from this for the professional education of staff involved in delivering these programmes, in enabling them effectively to target questions, feedback, prompts and challenge, or to clarify language, recommend literature and so on.

Yet peers can also provide many of these elements, particularly where certain approaches are adopted, and without threatening the identity of their colleagues. Bell [2001], for instance, employs experienced colleagues as the peers in teaching observations. Manoucheri [2002], though, emphasises that where such use is made of peers attention will need to be paid to developing their reflective skills. Such a role for peers can further ensure greater ownership and relevance. Particular concern is paid to the organisation of the interaction involving peers, whether the creation of more stable **communities** (six occurrences), **groups** more generally (four occurrences) and **pairings** (identified twice in the studies).

The social dimension was seen as a key factor in all of the programmes considered within the state of practice study, with participants engaging in dialogue with each other, facilitators and colleagues within their department, school or other place of work. Only rarely, however, are the characteristics of dialogue that would support a reflective process explicitly explored within the documentation, as the focus is rather on the tasks that participants are asked to carry out or in simply detailing the interactions themselves (whether tutorials, the use of mentors and so on). We have seen above, in contrast, that the studies included within the review place a primary emphasis on the nature of the dialogue that occurs, and in exploring the ways in which this dialogue supports the reflective processes involved. There is significant scope, therefore, for programmes to consider more directly how both established and new patterns of dialogue might support these processes.

The personal basis: what the participant brings

It is evident that reflective processes are sensitive to the manner in which a participant engages in them, as significant personal investment is required to problematise teaching. The way in which a participant personally chooses to engage with reflective processes is seen in the studies as particularly influential (with 58 occurrences identified). This links quite directly to motivation and the willingness to persist in the face of difficulty (issues related to self-efficacy are thus also relevant) or discomfort (see Boud and Walker [1985]). Vygotsky (1978) is also clear that the social interaction can only be supportive if the person involved is ready and motivated to engage.

The related sub-category of **ownership** was identified within ten studies. In this the perceived relevance to the participant is an important factor, as Kreber [2004] and Davis [2003] note. Kreber, for instance, found that motivation to engage in a particular category of reflection (such as content, process or premise reflection) depended on whether staff felt it was relevant to them; and in this disciplinary background was found to be more relevant than length of experience. This also links to the scope to set their own agenda (which may also occur when the practice is located within their own workplace where they exercise relatively greater control in comparison to the facilitator). Some tasks, particularly those located more directly within the workplace, allow greater scope for this; including projects and publications, as Boud [1999] describes. Flexibility was a major factor identified within the state of practice review in terms of programme design.

However, the participant also needs to be capable of engaging in any given reflective process. In particular, the **expert/novice** divide is seen (within twelve studies) as an important consideration. It may be more difficult for novice practitioners to engage in certain forms of reflective practice. If they are initially concerned with basic issues of

competence then they may be less willing to consider more directly the grounds for their practice or the nature of reflective processes. Some forms of reflective practice may thus be more appropriate for continuing professional development. These considerations are important in transferring lessons from the studies included within the review, as many of these involved more experienced members of staff.

The **ability to engage in reflective processes** is also relevant (as seen in seven studies), since participants may also be novices or experts in relation to this. We thus connect to wider **personal qualities** (10 occurrences), grasp of specialist language and so on. Some participants may already have engaged in extensive reflection on professional practice prior to the programme, perhaps within their disciplinary or work context.

Issues that relate to personal and professional identity are further important. **Personal identity** is particular associated with gender and culture, although these surfaced within the studies less frequently than one might have expected – on only two occasions. The **professional identity** that participants bring with them is also an essential element (as seen on four occasions). Clearly if someone is convinced that some aspect of their role is not worth developing and that an existing basic competence is sufficient, then it will be difficult to convince them to engage in reflective processes that are designed to develop their practice. Language, understanding and values dedicated to this aspect of their role will similarly be hard to justify in the absence of this professional context. In such contexts programmes will need to consider these issues quite directly, given that the state of practice review indicates that the rhetoric of professionalism is employed frequently on the programmes, but without always more direct attention to exploring its usage. For instance, it is important to consider ways in which professional identity can be shaped, considering the relevance of the workplace in shaping this identity. MacKinnon [2001] considers the role that feedback can play in helping to shape professional identity.

The issue of professional identity is particularly complicated in an academic setting, where **multi or dual professional roles** are often in evidence, encompassing disciplinary research, professional disciplinary practice, administration, and teaching. Nor do these roles develop in a balanced manner, as significant expertise will often be developed within the main research discipline or area of professional practice, while little or no prior professional expertise has been developed for teaching; with all the implications for professional identity. Gransden [2004] highlights possible tensions, including impatience, striving for perfection, and self-criticality, as well as a rich vein of personal insights that resulted.

When research dominates within a particular institutional setting, then teaching emerges as a particularly difficult area within which to apply reflective processes. Prosser *et al* (2006, p30) quotes the experience of some participants to the effect that professional development in relation to teaching 'could have a negative impact on professional development in terms of taking time away from research development'. Specific adjustments will need to be made to allow for such considerations for tasks and pedagogic support developed in single professional contexts.

It will be important to develop a clear set of approaches to manage such tensions. One option is to undertake a more holistic approach to reflective practice, seeking to focus on the interactions between distinct areas of professional work (as with Kane *et al* [2004]). It is perhaps more difficult to direct someone's attention to her/his work as a whole, given that it is hard to problematise within a single reflective process such a

wide ranging set of practices, although this does not mean that it is not possible to pick out elements that cut across their whole role and use these as a focus for reflection. Subject knowledge is often taken as given, but reflection on this knowledge also has the potential to link to the participant's research, so that their practice is approached in a more integrated fashion; as do interactions between research and teaching.

Part of the challenge in dealing with reflective practice when working with new academics, is to reach common agreement on the extent to which it is necessary to have an articulated basis for practice as regards teaching. Issues around professional identity are important in this regard, affecting the extent to which an academic is ready to examine the basis for their teaching. In some ways this problematic focus is more naturally embodied within practice related to research, where peer review processes and scholarly traditions of critique are already fundamental, while couched in different language. In this case Boud and Walker [1998] are clear that a reflective process that seeks to address any basis for practice will be difficult to contain, with attention needed for pretexts (legitimation) and subtexts (values not normally articulated).

Clearly if the value of reflection on the basis for practice is not established, it will be hard to justify the need for a reflective process, as it might reasonably be argued that technical advice leads more efficiently to technical improvements. Manoucheri [2002], Bell [2001] and Mackinnon [2001] all emphasise the need for new practitioners to gain technical confidence before addressing the underpinning assumptions of their practice, but recognise that this can only take the practitioner so far.

Many participants are required to attend programmes, as was evident in the state of practice study. Given that ownership of the process was identified as the most prominent sub-category it is clearly important for programmes to consider how they will promote ownership of reflective processes; otherwise there will be little reason for the participant to sustain the process at the appropriate level. It is clear also that the programmes may need to take account of a range of professional roles, as the state of practice study was clear that programmes were aimed at both full and part time staff.

The wider context

Workplace

Practice clearly occurs within the **workplace** (with 57 occurrences identified), which for new academic staff would typically be a department or school. In some studies the reflective process was set within the department rather than in some detached or central setting.

The workplace thus becomes a site or *location* for a reflective process (see in 6 studies), helping to shape the process. Boud [1999], for instance, adopts for its task two major elements of academic workplace practice, projects and publication; both of which place particular demands on staff. It is interesting to note that Høyrup [2004] also focuses on the need for developmental or challenging work as a basis for reflective processes.

But even where the workplace is not employed directly as a site for reflection, its nature will still influence proceedings; if a programme seeks to develop or transform practice it needs to take account of the setting in which this practice occurs. Indeed,

Connolly (2004) points out that it is helpful to supplement Vygotsky's with sociological theories that take greater account of ways in which social structures and hierarchies of power both influence social interactions, drawing on ideas from Bourdieu (1993) and Elias (1994).

It is evident that some tasks will be more suited to being located within the workplace than others – where control resides in this location or where natural social interaction occurs alongside the task. Curriculum design projects, for instance, fall into this category (with formal institutional approval usually required for implementation and with the need to negotiate and collaborate during the process), as would such activity as publication and grant writing. But it is also the case that practice within the classroom is often determined by the departmental setting as much as by the individual practitioner.

Constraints

There are, however, a range of constraints in this setting. Academic staff have a range of duties, and any one set of responsibilities may take priority over others; as with *research dominance* (as cited in seven studies) in relation to teaching, especially in research intensive institutions. Staff may thus be reluctant to devote sufficient time to engaging in the reflective process, a factor that Prosser *et al* (2006, p29, p31) picks out in accounting for some concerns from participants on programmes within research intensive settings; with initial pressures on new academics to establish research profiles only adding to the burden. The availability of *time* is a key issue in these settings, as seven studies were seen to highlight. *Distractions* may also be evident, and these will need to be addressed, perhaps through the provision of time and physical setting away from work, as Burchell [2005] explores. Part of the challenge is to create a space for reflection within a *dominant culture* (as considered in three studies). Staniforth and Harland [2003] provide a description of a range of these factors at work on a programme for new academic staff, as indicated within Table 3, affecting a range of the major categories.

Finally, the *scope to introduce change* into practice is important (as seen in 13 studies), both in cases where reflective processes occur within the department or in a setting more closely aligned with the programme. Brookfield (1995, p217) in particular argues that reflection 'must always be linked to how the world can be changed', so that issues of power and control become very real questions. Lyon [2003] is clear that there is often no scope to change practices that are socially situated with a department. Issues of power are thus relevant (as considered in nine of the studies), as for instance Boud [1999] where project work is particularly like to be influenced or determined by its exercise. But the exercise of power will also influence what is discussed, as well as who participates and who leads.

Care is needed in suggesting change, as negative consequences may follow for a participant's own working environment or career. Some aspects of practice are, of course, more within the academic's own control than others. It will thus be important for reflective processes to assess fairly directly this scope for change, with clear links to the critical reflection that is required in order to open up the issues. This would enable the participant to manage more directly any conflicts that do emerge.

Models of engagement

Given these varied advantages and constraints, it is essential to consider the various models of engagement between programme and workplace. One evident possibility is of a *partnership* between the professionals present in both situations, as with Day

[1999] and Walkington [2005] (as also in two other studies), although it may be the case that the structural basis for teacher education encourages this kind of partnership between educator and workplace more directly than for programmes involving new academics, given the significantly greater time involved for programmes of initial teacher training. Such partnerships were already evident within the review of the state of practice, with elements of programme being run within departments and with the use of departmental mentors.

> Partnerships between central and local providers in the programmes were seen in five cases within the state of practice study, with a further four programmes making use of mentors, presumably based within the participant's subject area or department. Some scope may be present for programmes that do not employ these approaches to develop the work-based aspects of their provision.

Reference	Staniforth D and Harland T [2003] 'Reflection on Practice: collaborative action research for new academics', *Educational Action Research* **11**(1) 79-92
Abstract	This article examines the experiences of recently appointed academics at two universities, one in the United Kingdom and the other in New Zealand. The groups at each university used collaborative action research methods during an academic year to support their transition. Our study looks at the outcomes of the project and reports on the experiences of establishing an academic career. These experiences are characterised by continually having to rise to new challenges such as getting research programmes under way, dealing with lecture preparation and high teaching loads. New starters reported problems associated with academic identity, lack of support and exploitation. We review our attempts to use collaborative action research to support professional development. In providing a safe community away from departments, we hoped that individuals would systematically enquire into their own practice. The group also served to provide an audience for the publication of this form of research, and as a critical community for contesting ideas and action.
Core process	On-line action research; reflective diaries also recommended. The reflexive process of action research was seen to address wider issues of the search for social change.
Theoretical basis	Considers situated learning, but does not discuss more fully the nature of reflective practice
Social basis	Sustained pattern of communication, with the group providing an opportunity to become familiar with this form of research and a critical community for contesting ideas and action. Monthly meetings resulted in asynchronous on-line discussion with facilitators. Discussions were based on participants needs. At the end of the year a 'lightly structured' interview was given.
Personal basis	Recently appointed lecturers in Sheffield, UK and Otago, NZ: reporting problems with identity, lecture preparation, high teaching loads, etc.

Wider context	Problems included: issues about identity and a sense of disaffection and injustice. For new staff in research-intensive universities it was felt that teaching and research do not have clear boundaries, as teaching becomes a full time activity. Paradoxically it gave great concern but the greatest satisfaction to all but one participant. There was a sense that research was the single activity that offered status and reward. Regular monthly meetings provided an element of structure. These new staff felt 'leaned on' to cover teaching. Voluntary programme involving 15 participants.
Outcomes	Only rarely was there evidence of practice being informed by the discussion on the project in the online discussion. The face to face relationships were much richer than the online ones which were seen as 'relatively sterile'. New staff began to see themselves as change agents. The authors concluded that the shaping of the individual academic identity amongst rapid change needs to be developed through careful reflection on practice over time.

Table 3: Links between Staniforth and Harland [2003] and the major categories of the grounded framework

Alternative models also seek to establish a community of practice within the workplace setting. Clegg et al [2002] focuses on such an alternative, with situated learning occurring in this setting. MacDonald [2001] similarly draws on the ideas of teaching community, based within the workplace. Such tasks may have the added advantage of making collaborative tasks to reflection a more realistic possibility. In these cases, however, the processes involved will need to value elements that will sustain the necessary relationships. This suggests a more direct focus on professional and personal qualities, such as respect, courage and so on, as advocated by Clayton [2005].

Programme

The **programme** itself is the second main context within which the reflective processes unfold, although this emerged as a lesser concern than links with the workplace in the studies considered (with 12 occurrences of the relevant categories).

One of the major features of many programmes for new academic staff is that attendance or completion is made *compulsory* by the institution. Clearly certain tasks will be more suited to use within a compulsory environment. Choice, for instance, will be particularly important to foster where possible. Other tasks, such as an intensive action research project may be harder to sustain in this context, given scope for conflict in relation to change agendas, as Burbank and Kauchak [2003] explored.

The availability of *resources* will also affect the extent to which certain tasks can be employed, such as those that involve departmental mentors or significant time contributions from facilitators. Bell [2001], for instance, makes extensive use of both departmental mentors and facilitators.

The *academic context* of the large majority of the programmes is further relevant, as programmes are often set at masters level. This in turn introduces a clear expectation

to engage with literature and practice at the forefront of the discipline. Furthermore, the ability to talk about practice may be more important than the ability to carry out practice in a masters level programme or an accredited programme, as Fanghanel [2004] argues.

The assessment of reflective practice meanwhile has been identified within the literature as a major issue, as evident also in the studies included within the wider database for this review. Assessment criteria play an important part in this with a challenge in particular evident in measuring both the depth of reflection and desired characteristics of the reflection. Hatton and Smith (1995), for instance, consider assessing reflective writing in terms of whether it is sustained and complex, multidimensional and insightful, while also focusing on different forms of reflection. While it was initially intended to include studies that considered this issue, and a team member was allocated this responsibility, resource constraints ensured that no studies were included within the review itself.

Five studies further identified issues in relation to **accreditation** of the programmes, with associated issues in relation to rhetoric. The Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education and, more recently, the Higher Education Academy have both accredited courses within the UK, as has the Staff and Educational Development Association; with the state of practice review clearly indicating that the accreditation was given a high profile within the programme documentation. The studies suggest that some programmes may espouse the notions of reflective practice and professionalism for accreditation purposes, as exposed in Edwards and Nicoll [2006] and Clegg [2002].

Five studies further suggest that **rhetoric** is employed to serve wider purposes. Edwards and Nicoll [2006], for instance, look at the way in which the rhetoric of reflective practice is used to motivate participants towards particular outcomes.

The institutional setting

It further helps to pick out the **institutional context**, as programmes for new academic staff are offered by institutions to their own employees. Such programmes thus operate under a somewhat unusual set of constraints within professional education, where academic programmes of study are run or quality assured by universities rather than the employer itself. There is thus significant scope in this context for institutional influence on the nature of the programmes. Prosser *et al* (2006, p23) found that the programmes for new academic staff covered were linked to varying extents through links with institutional missions or learning and teaching strategies, although these were only specifically identified once in the included studies. Where teaching and learning is concerned a programme might need both to promote certain tasks for use by participants, but also employ these tasks on the programme itself.

At the same time, **institutional support** can be significant for a programme, a factor seen in three studies. For instance, if members of staff are given release from their duties in order to participate, then issues related to the time required for reflective processes become easier to manage. Support may be possible for staff to introduce change resulting from reflective processes applied to practice, as Boud and Walker [1998] emphasises, and measures needed to manage other tensions within the workplace can be similarly faced quite directly at this level, whether in relation to distractions, the relative demands of research and teaching, and so on.

National influences also emerged in two studies – in relation to issues around quality and professional competence; organisations themselves are sensitive to wider *political agendas*, linked as they are to funding.

One of the central findings to emerge from the state of practice study was the way in which the notion 'reflection' was central to the headline purpose of all the programmes: whether to develop a 'reflective approach to the practice of teaching and the support of learning in higher education', the 'Use of reflection as a tool for critical thought on the teaching and learning process' or so on. It was further clear that terms such as 'reflection' or 'reflective practice' were rarely unpacked within the documentation. While such unpacking might well occur during the programme itself, this suggests that at the least this language may perform a rhetorical function either in relation to participants as they embark on a programme or for other purposes to which the documentation is put, as with accreditation. It is was indeed clear that all of the programmes had been designed to take account of the requirements of accreditation by the Higher Education Academy, and in some instances the Staff and Educational Development Association.

We can further see that a direct link was made in all of the programmes between reflective practice and professional development. For instance, the documentation often argued that professional development for teaching and learning had now become a necessity. Indeed, all of the programmes took on a developmental emphasis, with the use of reflection to support self-improvement, lifelong development and adaptation of practice all prevalent to varying extents. This was typically set within a context of the changing wider context of teaching higher education, whether fee-paying students or widening participation. There is, however, a danger in employing the language of reflective practice in this manner to help underpin an argument for professional development, in that programmes need to deliver on these longer term intended outcomes.

Outcomes of reflective processes

It is worth emphasising that this review does not seek to provide empirical evidence of the strength of the reported outcomes within the studies. Some studies involve small samples, while others rely on subjective (as in Russell [2005] with the use of student feedback) rather than objective outcome measures. Prebble *et al* (2004) already indicated that the impact of programmes for new academic staff was typically seen through indirect measures (such as beliefs that teachers hold) rather than direct measures on the impact of student learning. If the research base were more substantive, it might be possible to include a stronger empirical dimension to the review, but this was not the case; and indeed with a grounded practitioner task would have been less directly relevant. Rather we attempt to develop understanding of the extent to which outcomes are linked to reflective processes that are applied to practice.

Identified outcomes

A range of outcomes was identified within the studies, with outcomes most commonly identified in relation to increased **capacity for reflective processes** (21 studies) and enhanced **capacity for practice** (30 studies), whether capacity to engage in, become aware of, or understand aspects of practice; which would include the grounds for

practice. For instance, Lyons [2006] demonstrates how the creation of a reflective teaching portfolio enabled university teachers to redirect their practice in line with their new insights, establishing a link in this case between capacity to engage in a specific reflective process and enhanced capacity for practice.

Other outcomes for individual subjects within the studies include those related to **personal qualities** (16 studies), **professional identity** (seven studies) and **emotions** (identified in two studies). For instance, the personal qualities that Korthagen and Vasalos [2002] were seeking to develop included self-confidence, courage and goal directedness, while still allowing a focus on practice as well. The review by Ruth-Sahd [2003] from nursing education is further worth highlighting, as this study identified a range of outcomes, including increased social and political emancipation and assisting students to develop their knowledge and skills. It is interesting that the analysis of studies for this review did not identify specific research in relation to student outcomes, an observation similarly made by Prebble *et al* (2004).

It was also clear in several studies (as identified in 16 cases) that collective outcomes were linked to reflective processes. Within this we can pick out **collective practice** and **capacity for collective practice**, which are clearly linked to each other. Boud [1999] in particular provides evidence that taking account of the collegial nature of academic work within a reflective process then leads to aligned outcomes. We see here a natural synergy arising from the alignment of context and reflective process, generating the desired outcomes in relation to collective practice. Prosser *et al* (2006, p3, p24) further note evidence that programmes for new academic staff more widely can have a significant impact at the departmental level, although that these outcomes were typically more limited than for individuals. The shift might be said to move from dependency to inter-dependency, as Harrison [2005] found. Outcomes that are linked to qualities are also important for this collective dimension, allowing it to be sustained. We also see here reflective processes leading to establishment of relationships between those involved, with relationships between peers of particular importance (see Grushka *et al* [2005]).

Outcomes can finally also relate to the **transformation of practice** (as identified on three occasions) or gradually developed; or to the extent to which they are sustained in the **long term** (as seen in four studies). Burchell [2005] for instance notes that this is particularly affected by the situation within the workplace, while Clegg *et al* [2002] note that more immediate changes may well relate to practice rather than the basis for practice.

At this point it is further clear that there is significant overlap in evidence between the foci of a reflective process and its outcomes. We can see connections between a focus on the   programme simply addresses technical issues in relation Clearly this overlap is by no means complete: the reflective process need not, for instance, focus on the quality of the reflection being carried out, but the ability to engage in reflective processes might still result as an outcome. One would also expect that focusing attention on the basis for practice would also lead to increased capacity for practice. This does, however, point in particular to the need to consider quite carefully how these two elements of the framework are aligned when designing a reflective process.

Evidence from the highlighted studies

It is helpful at this point, though, to consider more directly the evidence from the studies within the review for any claim that reflective processes on programmes for new academic staff might be said to be effective, with attention also to the terms in

which any such claim might be made. The methodology followed within this review has involved highlighting 12 studies that each display significant overlap with the grounded framework that resulted from all the included studies. Given the choice of these studies, and linking also to other areas of reviewing methodology that recognise the need to prioritise studies when assessing any such evidence, we base our response to this issue, which is fundamental to the review, on these highlighted studies.

In overall terms the highlighted studies that reported outcomes did so at a more specific level than simply that of recording changes in practice or in capacities related to grasping an appropriate basis for practice, as indicated in Table 4 below. Critical or premise reflection, along with outcomes associated with such reflection was less common than other forms of reflection, suggesting that if programmes intend to develop related learning outcomes then they will need to design this in quite directly. Other outcomes include longer-term impact on professional development and changes in professional identity, although evidence for these changes is less in evidence across whole cohorts, coming typically from consideration of individual cases. It is also, however, evident when entire cohorts are considered that there is significant variation in the outcomes for individual members of staff, ranging from little or no change in practice to extensive change.

Highlighted study	Outcomes
Bell [2001]	Based on self-reports from 28 participants on a programme for new academic staff. For more than three quarters: development of ideas about teaching and skills for teaching; changes to teaching introduced in some form (e.g. technical, pedagogic or critical); developing collegiality (e.g. through willingness to support colleagues in future). For most participants: improved confidence. Towards one half: an influence on longer-term professional development. For less than one quarter: critical reflection identifying a gap between theories in practice and espoused theories. A small number of academics claimed not to find the programme useful.
Booth and Anderberg [2005]	Most new members of academic staff on the programme reported changing their teaching, with changes reported ranged from extensive to limited. Authors sought to link these changes to the ability to apply theory to practice, and that of bringing knowledge of student learning to bear on teaching practices.
Boud & Walker [1998]	Study as a synthesis rather than reporting on specific interventions.
Boud [1999]	Two short descriptions of interventions rather than full reports.
Clegg *et al* [2002]	Research sought to develop understanding of practice on two programmes for new academic staff (one for supervisors and one programme on teaching and learning) rather than to introduce an intervention. Reflective practice seen as a strategic task for assessment purposes. Immediate changes to practice in the case

	of novice teachers or more holistic development for supervisors; delayed reflection seen as more likely to lead to holistic tasks.
Ho [2000]	Conceptual change in two thirds of the participants on the programme for new academic staff. All these participants changed their teaching practices in the following academic year. For one half of the teachers who changed conceptions a positive impact was observed on their students' approaches to learning.
Staniforth and Harland [2003]	Some evidence from self-reports that some participants on the programme for new academic staff began to see a change in their academic identity, viewing themselves as change agents. Only occasional direct evidence for changed practice, with participants not fully able to articulate what they might have felt were benefits.
Kreber [2004]	One of the two studies indicated that content reflection occurred for all participants (who were generally experienced members of academic staff, but with some new staff also involved); process reflection occurred for two thirds in relation to instructional and pedagogic knowledge, but only for one fifth in relation to curricular knowledge; premise reflection was rare. Gap evident between making a claim to ability to reflect and capacity to demonstrate this ability.
Korthagen and Vasalos [2002]	Descriptive study rather than reporting on outcomes of an intervention.
Lyons [2006]	Three individual cases that demonstrate reconceptualisation of teaching, greater awareness of teaching, increased student focus, changes in practice, and intentions to change practice.
MacKinnon [2001]	Case study of one individual demonstrating changes to teaching, increased expectations of students, enhanced professional identity and confidence as a teacher and sense of self-efficacy, although more attention was devoted in the study to technical and pedagogic aspects of reflection.
Manoucheri [2002]	Two individual cases demonstrate development of professional knowledge, ability to engage in reflection characterised by theorising and restructuring, and motivation to engage in further exploration of subject and pedagogy.

Table 4: Reported outcomes from the highlighted studies

Conclusions on the strength of outcomes

It is interesting to note that these indications of more substantive evidence for changes in capacity for both practice and reflection on practice (although not usually involving premise or critical reflection) as compared to the wider range of outcomes matches the balance of the analysis for the coding. The category for changes in capacity for

practice and for reflective ability dominated, with a disparate range of outcomes identified less frequently.

Taken together these above considerations suggest it is reasonable to claim that specific reflective processes applied to practice on programmes for new academic staff can yield changes in capacity for practice or for the ability to engage in specific categories of reflection on practice, to the extent that these can be claimed as learning outcomes for the programme. At the same time, though it is important to recognise that there is likely to be significant variation in the extent to which any individual has achieved these outcomes, variation will also depend on the specific programme concerned.

Beyond this, specific interventions are seen to lead to further outcomes, although the extent to which it can be claimed that these outcomes are evident across an entire cohort is harder to establish, as for instance in relation to changes in professional identity or with the ability to engage in premise or critical reflection. Indeed, this is not surprising as the programmes for new academic staff are typically of relatively limited duration, certainly in comparison to professional education within professions such as school teaching or medicine. Programmes seeking to lay claim to such outcomes, for instance in shaping professional identity, may thus find it difficult to substantiate such claims laying them open to concerns over the use of rhetoric for institutional or accreditation purposes. At the least, it will be important for such short programmes to focus more selectively on outcomes that are regarded as central to the programme, and to ensure that specific strategies are employed to effect these outcomes, drawing in particular on carefully constructed patterns of dialogue, supported both locally and institutionally.

It is worth further trying to understand why it might be so challenging to realise the more demanding outcomes. In the related area of action research, Carr and Kemmis (2005) themselves refer to difficulties in realising their vision of criticality. They argue that technical means-end approaches reflect the ideology sustaining the culture of modernity, a culture which can be seen to be in crisis (as analysed, for instance, by McIntyre, 1983). Any vision of reflective practice at odds with this dominant ideology will provide a real challenge to participants, as with critical reflection or with premise reflection in a political context, for instance (Newman, 1996, p.308). In light of this, John Elliott (2005) highlights the need to put one's ideals effectively into operation if any change is to result, omething he found lacking in relation to the vision of Carr and Kemmis (1983) for critical action research. He argued that much more is needed than a transformed consciousness if one is to exercise agency in a given context. Knight (2006) makes a similar point.

More specifically, a vision of reflective practice at odds with the dominant institutional culture will also involve a struggle, as may often occur when considering tensions between teaching and research. Space for dialogue in particular will need to be created within these wider cultures of institution and society if programmes are effectively to promote specific forms of reflective practice. Only then will aspirations for reflective practice find realisation.

We can contrast this view of what can be claimed in regard to the outcomes that stem from the included and highlighted studies with the picture evident in the state of practice study. It is clear in the documentation that the ability to engage in reflective

practice is not simply an end in itself in these programmes. Other intended outcomes flowing from the use of reflective practice are all referred to, including changes in practice, ability to innovate, the willingness to take risks, a framework for career long development.

We can see that there is a gap between the outcomes claimed to result from the programmes and the evidence emerging from the literature. Even carefully targeted programmes with quite detailed understanding of specific sets of reflective processes found limited evidence for widespread attainment of these broader outcomes. We argue that this gap adds weight to the use of the term 'rhetoric' for some language employed within certain programmes, supported as this is by the earlier comments on the rhetorical function within the programme, and indeed by literature included within the review. Perhaps this is not surprising, as many of these outcomes address issues that relate to established patterns of practice or cultures; one would need also to address such issues before expecting to see significant shifts in participants.

5. Insights for the practice of the reviewers

One of the aims of the review was to see whether findings would impact on the practice of the reviewers in particular. At this point, evidence for any such impact has only been gathered in relation to the reviewing carried out for the distinct area of the review for which each reviewer was responsible, and the associated interactions with reviewer colleagues; rather than for the review, or the framework, as a whole.

Rather than providing a systematic overview of what was in any case a small group of reviewers, we highlight the practice of two particular reviewers. We can see that specific studies yielded insights, and that a range of changes overall have either already been introduced or are intended for introduction. More specifically, the first of these accounts (Reviewer 1) highlights the changes that can result from a more developed understanding of the nature of reflective practice and how best to support it. The second account (Reviewer 2) illustrates the highly personal nature of the insight that resulted, and the proposed changes. This account is thus given in the reviewers' own words.

Reviewer 1: Drawing on enhanced understanding

The reviewer who took on the focus on personal approaches to reflective practice made a number of changes in work with academic staff. These changes stemmed in large part from an increased awareness of the need to support the reflective process, and to make adequate space for it. Alongside this there was a clear recognition that social factors played an important role in developing the ability to reflect, although individual studies also led to specific changes.

One set of changes was introduced into his postgraduate certificate programme for academic staff during April 2006. This programme involved an intensive week of teaching, and some significant changes were made to the materials and presentation, to ensure more direct scaffolding of reflective processes. The handbook for this week was re-written to focus on tasks that the participants would engage in, rather than on the list of learning outcomes. Furthermore, the sessions were more directly linked to assessment tasks that incorporated reflective elements; feedback from participants showed that this approach was well received. In this, the article Bell [2001] was used to focus attention on specific levels of reflection, helping to address overly descriptive reflection in earlier portfolios. The week further incorporated additional time for discussion amongst the participants, as well as time to prepare for written tasks; and follow up group discussion was also specifically planned for. Feedback was also introduced for these individual tasks (with insights stemming from Bain *et al* [2002]), rather than simply leaving feedback for the final portfolio stage.

Changes were also made to other programmes for new academic staff in which this reviewer was involved. On one programme the team decided to include a module specifically based around reflection, to encourage an overall synthesis and to support reflection the on participants' teaching. On another programme, participants were to receive more feedback on their ability to engage in reflective processes, and a more structured approach generally, particularly during a second week of workshops.

For the longer term, this reviewer also intended to look for ways to strengthen the reflective elements in his programmes, and to ensure a common understanding within

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the programme teams of the meaning of the term 'reflection'. This would further mean greater clarity in documentation and explanations as to what was meant by reflection. But more generally, the reviewer had gained greater confidence in making informed contributions to shaping future practice across a number of areas in his development work with academic staff.

Reviewer 2: A personal account

Where to start – there were many! This study has certainly enriched my understanding of the use and development of reflective practice. I have many ideas from the articles. However I also have a serious fear that many of these would also be a nightmare to actually make successful on our campus. For instance, the on-line discussions are a great idea, but I'm finding it difficult to create 'pull' factors for involvement in our new VLE. Given that 'time' is mentioned frequently as a problem it remains difficult to get staff engaged in any more activity. Various plans or possibilities, though, for changes include:

1. New activity around creating teaching philosophies planned.

2. More awareness and crafting of rhetoric of reflective practice.

3. Better explanations of purpose and intended outcomes of using reflective practice

4. Ensure reflective practice truly embedded

5. More collaborative activity

6. Re-think how to get more takers for action research projects

7. Think through issue of assessing reflective practice – difference between real reflective practice and writing up as submission document

8. Develop teaching communities.

9. Think through implication of reflective practice and professional standards (again!)

10. Think of way of offering more peer professional partnerships – e.g. in 'supervisions'.

11. Using peer observation as 'distancing' tool for mitigating pain of facing difficult personal issues that might be faced in self-critique.

12. Helping staff to negotiate divides between their position and institution – reflective practice should be more empowering – not just another box to tick.

13. Think through dual professionalism issues again – e.g. for Health Scientists

14. … and many more!

Last but not least the need to really meaningfully use reflection-in-action. I am actually a very reflective teacher but as the pace of life gets ever faster the emotional energy to

continue reflective practice gets eroded. I need to be more systematic and also to operate reflective practice more deliberately in professional practice beyond teaching e.g. running meetings.

In both cases we can see ways in which a greater insight into the nature and pedagogy of reflective practice can influence the practitioner. This insight can lead to immediate changes on a programme, greater awareness of key issues that influence one's practice more widely, a common mind with colleagues, seeds of more extensive developments on a programme, recognition of the need to adapt one's own behaviour and connections with existing issues of which one is already aware. Perhaps the point to emphasise here is the richness for practice that enhanced understanding yields, especially when an active attempt is made to integrate that understanding with practice.

These insights stem both from their own review work (as with use of specific papers that they identified), and from their interactions with colleagues on the review team (as with discussions within the review team around the open-ended nature of the term 'reflection'). Early indications from the interim evaluation also suggested that both of these sources would be important in any impact on practice (see Appendix 4).

It is though, worth considering further how one acquires professional understanding. In these two cases it is clear that understanding was acquired in a way that respected the professional context. Eraut (1994) argues that professional knowledge cannot be characterised apart from the manner in which it is both learnt and used.

If so, this is as true for the staff delivering programmes for new academics as it is for their participants. In a report on the effectiveness of postgraduate certificate programmes in learning and teaching for academic staff, Knight (2006, p. 8) pointed to arguments that

> … the degree of tacit knowledge is directly related to skilful performance … [it] tends to be specific and situated, and is often acquired unintentionally in the course of doing a job or some other activity. If this analysis is persuasive, then there are significant implications for those concerned with professional training and formation in general: what would a curriculum look like that favoured the development of certain implicit and tacit knowledge?

This suggests that the flexibility the reviewers had to seek out studies that matched their own professional interests helped to ensure that they were able to develop relevant understanding, and facilitated its application. We can thus see in the conduct of this review an example of enquiry-based learning suited to a professional context, allowing as it does both scope for determining one's own lines of enquiry and for support from colleagues in the process. This flexibility does of course also affect the nature of the review itself, perhaps encouraging reviewers to follow up more recently published studies that address current concerns, rather than a more balanced approach to inclusion with regard to the publication date of the study.

While this support from colleagues may not have fully led to the creation of a community of practice, which would need to be sustained over a longer time frame, we at least see what Campbell *et al (*2004) term a 'critical community', which provides a focus over a time-limited period for an engagement together in a piece of work that also fosters their own learning. Kahn and Walsh (2006, p87) further note that the

success of this kind of critical community depends in significant part on personal networks, as was again evident in this review.

In these two accounts we can further see that the immediate contribution of theory to practice rests primarily in the use of concepts developed within a wider theoretical setting, whether teaching communities, rhetoric, knowing-in-action, action research and so on. It is evident again that language is a key factor in enabling us to move practice forward.

Colleagues seeking to learn from this report might thus find it helpful to pursue a time-limited enquiry within their own programme team or other grouping, using the report to provide an overview, and following this up with a detailed reading of specific studies that are of interest, but particularly those studies highlighted during this review. This would, for instance, provide a clear basis for discussion amongst the team members about possible ways forward for the programme.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The approach taken in this review has been to develop an understanding of the role and effectiveness of reflective practices in programmes for new academic staff, while at the same time understanding in relation to the outcomes of reflective practices on these programmes has emerged. This primarily results in a framework for understanding of why various practices are likely to be effective, linking to the wider context in which they can be employed and the outcomes to which they lead, rather than recommendations that specific reflective processes as applied to practice should be adopted in any given situation. In doing so, we have moved away from more positivist approaches to reviewing methodology, seeking to open up understanding for practice on programmes for new academic staff, and for related forms of professional education.

We contend that the grounded framework developed during the review offers an accessible means to shape practice on programmes for new academic staff, and elsewhere, enabling directed reflective processes that effectively result in desired outcomes. Indeed, we saw that it is reasonable to claim that specific reflective processes applied to practice on programmes for new academic staff can yield changes in capacity for practice or for the ability to engage in specific categories of reflection on practice, to the extent that these can be claimed as learning outcomes for the programme.

We have further seen how the reviewers have each begun to draw on relevant insights to adapt their own practice. It is thus hoped that this review will provide a means to enable programmes to create this space to put into operation specific forms of reflective practice. We see here a form of practical reasoning, which may still incorporate a critical dimension that, according to Elliott (1987), offers a clear way forward. Our framework is intended to help create this space that will enable participants to develop the necessary motivation and capabilities that Elliott (2005, p362) sees as essential for exercising agency.

It is thus evident that a dialogue has characterised this review itself, in returning from insights within the literature to practice within the field. It would clearly be worth considering a further study to see how the insights within this review might further be operationalised within programmes. We have already seen this with the review team, but a different dynamic will clearly be present as the review is received more widely within the sector.

We hope that the lessons of this review will have an impact on practice, both within programmes for new academic staff and more widely. Indeed, programmes for new academic staff have significant scope to influence higher education as a whole, as each year sees yet further intakes of new members of academic staff. It is noteworthy that a study on the effectiveness of postgraduate certificate programmes in learning and teaching (Knight, 2006) should highlight comparable considerations (p.45) from the perspective of the general professional formation of higher education teachers.

Recommendations for practice on programmes for new academic staff

It is clear from the research carried out within this review, as well as from Prosser *et al* (2006), that directors of PGCHE programmes face a particular challenge in assisting new academic staff to develop expertise in applying reflective processes to their

practice. This can be particularly true for natural scientists as an interviewee in Knight (2006) explains: "My Science background and the notion of self reflection is rather novel and … awkward. [ellipsis in original]".

We have shown above that those who rely on adopting a specific task, such as employing a portfolio or making use of critical incidents, miss the opportunity to support and direct the reflective process along more targeted and productive lines. Indeed, Russell [2005] earlier noted a lack of strategies to help practitioners engage in reflective practice, suggesting that 'Fostering reflective practice requires far more than telling people to reflect and then simply hoping for the best' (p203). He concludes that 'Further research on strategies for teaching reflective practice should prove valuable for professional educators.' (p204) The initial recommendations from this review thus concern the pedagogy of reflective practice.

Recommendation 1: beyond 'reflective practice'

Either spell out the meaning of the notion 'reflective practice' or introduce terminology that reflects a more differentiated usage, given the open nature of this notion (as Kreber [2004] also recommends).

Recommendation 2: looking towards 'directed reflective processes'

Draw on the framework for understanding developed within this review, to ensure that dialogue, factors that support personal engagement, the wider context and the intended outcomes are appropriately aligned with each other, and designed to support the core reflective process.

In drawing on this framework, it will help practitioners, both those running programmes for new academic staff as well as all staff teaching in higher education, to consider more directly the practical implications for their own work, with specific changes in view. For instance, one might employ a proforma, as given in Appendix 5 for a general educational context, with which to analyse one's own practice against the framework. This will further allow for the creation of understanding in relation to the actual practice that the practitioner is seeking to develop, linking to the practitioner's own interests. As we have already seen with the changes made to their practice by the reviewers, such flexibility in application is essential in the development of professional knowledge.

This directedness is particularly important given the context of professional education. Practitioners involved in related areas of education, where students are being inducted in complex open-ended practices may thus also find this of interest. The challenge is to ensure that reflective processes are supported by appropriate pedagogic considerations, for instance in relation to the social construction of reflective thinking, that further take due account of the context in which this thinking occurs. The issue in some ways less of the specific nature of the reflection that is promoted – rather that a clearly articulated concept is promoted on the programme.In supporting the application of this framework it will further help to consider recommendations under each of its major components.

Recommendation 3: theoretical basis

Practice within programmes should be established on a clear theoretical basis, encompassing theory in relation to academic practice, reflective processes and pedagogy, and specifically helping to ensure a coherent approach to and sustaining the core reflective process at an appropriate depth.

Recommendation 4: task

Consider combining tasks or cyclically revisiting one or more tasks, as this may help to ensure progression, and support an extended deliberation of the given aspect(s) of practice; this approach is particularly worth considering for those programmes that employ shorter tasks. The use of learning journals, for instance, warrants further consideration.

Recommendation 5: the focus of a reflective process

A clearly defined focus should be sought during a reflective process, taking into account the aspect of the practice concerned, the bases for practice and so on. There is also greater scope evident for approaches that draw reflection-in-action.

Recommendation 6: social basis

Dialogue should be planned to enable, support and direct the reflective process, taking into account the voices represented, the place of challenge, the role of language, connections to specific literature, aligned feedback, technological support, the social atmosphere and the role of facilitators and peers.Recommendation 7: personal basis Programmes should take specific account of the factors that affect personal engagement, including the professional identities that participants bring with them, as well as the roles they perform.

Such an approach would also foster a more direct consideration of the nature of professionalism within academic work. This might warrant consideration of the nature of professional development opportunities in relation to teaching prior to any programme for new academic staff, such as for the graduate teaching assistants, development during doctoral programmes or in other contexts. Such an approach is vital to securing personal engagement with reflective processes.

Recommendations 8: workplace context

There is further scope for engagement with the workplace environment of participants on these programmes, whether through partnerships with departments or disciplinary perspectives, and respecting the integrated nature of academic work; while also ensuring that the reflective processes employed take due regard of related factors, such as the scope for the participant to introduce change within their workplace, potential distractions or the space for reflective thinking. The implications of any such engagement clearly goes beyond an immediate programme team to also involve senior managers and departmental staff.

Recommendations 9: programme context

The ways in which programmes themselves shape reflective processes should be recognised explicitly, whether through assessment, compulsion to attend or rhetoric employed for accreditation purposes.

Recommendations 10: institutional context

Consideration needs to be provided within the wider institutional context to other drivers for professional identity with regard to teaching in particular, especially in career paths, which serve to motivate professional development.

Unless such fundamental issues are addressed in relation to professional identity it is difficult to see how a short course such as a typical programme for new academics will lead to a shift in identity; certainly in relation to teaching.

Recommendations 11: outcomes

Programmes should be realistic and selective in which outcomes they seek to develop; taking due concern of the need to select learning outcomes that can be achieved by all participants on a programme.

These will need to link to further consideration of the factors influencing individual engagement in reflective processes applied to practice, as for instance, considering the integrated nature of academic practice or taking into account dual roles. This will particularly be the case where a programme is seeking to develop more substantive or fundamental outcomes, touching for instance on professional identity or categories of reflection that this review has indicated are achieved more rarely by participants, such as critical or premise reflection.

The sector has long been aware of the challenges of combining a more traditional focus on disciplinary content with pedagogic considerations. Many lecturers concentrate on their disciplinary content, while theoretical models rarely directly incorporate disciplinary considerations into proceedings. We have seen in the framework for understanding a specific approach to integrating professional and pedagogic considerations within the same framework for understanding.

Recommendation 12: integrating disciplinary and pedagogic considerations

Other practitioners may wish to draw on the grounded framework to consider similarly directed processes in relation to the pedagogy of specific forms of disciplinary or professional thinking, as opposed to reflective thinking. One might think of the process of solving a complex problem in a specific field, processes related to the development of subject autonomy or so on.

Recommendations for policy and research within the field

More broadly a wider set of recommendations emerge with regard to practice, policy and research within the field:

Recommendation 13: professional development of programme teams

Professional development opportunities are essential for those running these programmes (see also Boud [1999]). Such professional development should explore engaging these practitioners in the literature base identified for this review, especially those studies identified as linking most directly to the theoretical framework and to programmes for new academic staff. The complexity of professional education in this

field further suggests that research and scholarship be given a high priority for those running such programmes, perhaps accessed through doctoral programmes in educational development. This may also have implications for the location of programme teams within institutions, as to whether they are based in a personnel or academic department, as Rowland (2003) also notes.

Recommendation 14: institutional control

The way in which an institution seeks to support or control the programme has clear implications for the way in which reflective processes can be employed on a programme. Institutions should specifically consider ways in which these interactions affect the nature of their programme(s). This relates to policy on such issues as release from other duties to engage in an appropriate way with the programme, and links between the programme and institutional context, as in Recommendation 10 above.

Recommendation 15: continuing professional development

We have seen in this review the potential of employing directed reflective processes within initial professional education. A similar principle will also apply to continuing professional development. This will be as true of specific programmes as of institutional processes, such as appraisal, annual review or quality assurance and enhancement systems more broadly. For instance, an annual review that asks staff to 'reflect' on the previous year clearly remains unfocused. Instead clear decisions need to be made in order to target and sustain the desired reflective process.

Recommendation 16: departmental and institutional performance

It is clear that reflective processes can be applied to practice at departmental and institutional level, as well as at the level of an individual or teaching team. There may be ways in which groups of staff can support each other in analysing performance at these higher levels, for instance in relation to student satisfaction. Institutions may wish to build in features from our framework into practice in relation to these levels, for instance incorporating patterns of dialogue within quality assurance mechanisms.

Recommendation 17: engaging with research literature

Evident learning occurred for the practitioners in the review team by engaging in the relevant research literature. While it might in some ways be ideal for other practitioners to engage at this level, it was evident that significant time was required to locate suitable studies. Further approaches to encouraging staff more widely to engage with research literature relevant to practice might profitably focus on identifying key studies in targeted areas; and then making this accessible to the sector. If this were combined with specific reasons to engage with these studies, whether through continuing professional development for experienced staff, quality assurance processes or curriculum development, then significant gains might accrue.

Accreditation requirements affect programmes in explicit and implicit ways. For example, an undifferentiated usage of the term 'reflective practice' might translate at programme level into rhetoric for accreditation purposes rather than pedagogy with a

rigorous basis. Too heavy an emphasis on summative assessment and its rigour may militate against the development of tacit or 'embodied' knowledge. Additionally a (perhaps implicit) conception of practice (as for instance in dividing practice into a number of areas) will influence how participants engage with specific reflective processes.

Recommendation 18: accreditation

Those involved in the accreditation of programmes for new academic staff (such as the Higher Education Academy and SEDA) should consider how their accreditation requirements, including the language used, might impact on the way in which reflective processes are implemented (or not) on programmes.

Recommendation 19: further research into 'reflective practice'

Further research into the effectiveness of programmes for new academic staff should take into account the wide variation of practices employed under the term 'reflective practice', rather than simply combining these approaches under one term. It will also be worth exploring links between learning and reflection.

Recommendations for reviewing methodology

We have seen in this report the development of an innovative approach to reviewing research literature, developed through a dialogue amongst the team members. Indeed, it is clear that there is further scope for reviews to develop understanding of the territory covered, rather than simply to provide empirical evidence that certain approaches will always work in certain situations. Professional education into reflective processes applied to practice, it seems, is too complex a subject for straightforward answers to these questions that can be routinely applied in other contexts. Instead, we have argued that significant progress can be made by enhancing the understanding of the educators involved.

It is, of course, interesting to see interactions between the methodology and the subject of the review. Indeed, this provided fascinating grounds for discussion during the conduct of the review, as team members sought to make sense of these interactions. For the reader who has not been able to follow this process in real time, it remains to be seen what is taken from this review, but we hope that practitioners have been challenged to consider how best to combine considerations relating to pedagogy with disciplinary or professional processes; and that researchers will consider how they might develop or extend our methodology.

The methodology that was developed for this review clearly evolved over the period of the review. It was clear within the interim evaluation (see Appendix 4) that tensions remained present between the elements of the review methodology that were drawn from established methodologies, as for instance realist reviews, and the practitioner and emerging grounded approach. The most obvious extension would be to base the methodology more fully on grounded theory. Such an approach would have significant scope for developing new theoretical perspectives within an area of the literature.

Recommendation 20: reviewing methodology

Explore the further development of what we term here a 'grounded practitioner reviews', drawing on the methodology of grounded theory, and seeking to establish a dialogue between both theory and the research literature more broadly, and practice.

We can see that this might be realised in the following ways:

- Theoretical sampling of studies for inclusion within the review, with the inclusion criteria established more fully in relation to the choice of core categories that stem from an initial conceptualisation of the review area.
- The review team members could each focus either on a discrete area of literature initially or on a set of information resources, pooling their initial selection of material relevant to practice and policy.
- Analysis of data resulting from these initial selections, through the method of constant comparison, would lead to the creation of an initial set of core categories.
- These categories would shape the main phases of selecting studies to include within the review and data extraction, perhaps through employing an appropriately designed proforma. These new categories would replace the core categories of approach, context and outcomes derived from realist reviews.
- It would also help if there were an enhanced level of interaction between the team members, as the interim evaluation also concluded. This would clearly be particularly important in the context of a grounded approach, allowing all of those involved to both contribute to and own the emerging framework.

Such a use of grounded theory within reviewing need not, of course, focus directly on practitioner concerns, but a clear symbiosis does exist between grounded and practitioner perspectives. Indeed, in the case of this review, relying on a more grounded approach helped to ease tensions between the practitioner and researcher roles, which emerged as an issue early in the review. It is interesting to note that a similar tension has already been identified by Wareham (2002, p96) within programmes for new academic staff, where academic staff may experience a tension between their disciplinary identity and the requirement to draw on pedagogic theory or educational research more widely. Thus a related option would be for professional reviewers or researchers to employ a grounded approach without seeking to create a clear dialogue between both theory and the research literature more broadly. and practice. However, as with a realist review one could build in engagement with practitioners alongside the review, or build in a separate study of the state of practice on which to make connections and recommendations.

In considering whether to employ a grounded review in a practitioner context, it is also worth noting that the inclusion criteria within this current review were relatively open, with practitioner judgements playing an important role. These judgements would clearly be informed by their own experience of practice, and perhaps a readiness to settle into using additional criteria to simplify their task. A more fully grounded approach would have the advantage of allowing the practitioners to own the core categories for the review more fully, rather than work with categories imposed on them from the outset. Gaps in the literature covered that might otherwise remain within the review would also be addressed through theoretical sampling, which would help to determine the sample more directly.

It is evident that this would move the methodology more fully away from positivist aspects of the established reviewing methodologies, which the interim evaluation of the methodology indicated were problematic, particularly in the early stages of the

review. It is also important to consider the nature of the literature in deciding whether to employ a grounded review. An area such as reflective practice takes in studies from a wide range of disciplinary and cultural backgrounds. As such they will incorporate a wide range of methodologies, making it a challenge to synthesise them along more positivist lines. The advantages of a methodology that relies more directly on interpretation are thus clear.

A grounded review is only one way in which to move away from these positivist elements. It would be fascinating to consider how approaches from practitioner research, action research, hermeneutics, critical theory, and postmodernist perspectives might be employed in developing yet further reviewing methodologies. Such reviewing approaches could help to develop understanding within a range of fields, helping to shape practice and to create new theories or frameworks.

Acknowledgements

Attributions

Appendix 2 provides the main elements of the initial statements for the sub-reviews, as developed by the review consultant, Jenny Moon, on the basis of discussions with the review team and initial proposals. Linda Rush carried out the State of Practice section of the review, provided in Appendix 3. The collaborative researcher, Terry Wareham, principally authored the interim evaluation of the methodology, as provided in Appendix 4.

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Appendix 1: Review methodology

Fields contained within the proforma/Endnote database

Author;
Year;
Title;
Journal;
Place of Study;
Publisher and Place of publication;
Volume;
Issue;
Pages;
Type of study;
Electronic Resource number;

Search;
Robustness of study;
Findings;
Scope for fostering learning;
Scope for influencing future practice or policy;
Keywords;
Abstract/Summary;
Code words: reflective practice;
Code words: context;
Code words: outcomes;
Availability - public or private;
Access;
Review;
Language.

Proforma guidance notes for main fields

Type of study[#]

Theoretical: **the study involves an exploration of relationships or statistical associations in order to build a theory or hypothesis**. This might involve exploring a causal explanation as to why a certain reflective practice leads to a specific outcome.

Description: **the study seeks to describe the characteristics of a set of practices, policy or other phenomenon**. No attempt is made to evaluate the practice or to explain its relationship to some other variable. For instance, a case study might simply try to portray someone's experience of introducing a new reflective practice in a programme.

[#] These categories have been drawn from the keywording strategy developed for the EPPI-Centre systematic reviews.

Evaluation: **the study seeks to evaluate a practice, policy or intervention in terms of its educational outcomes, feasibility, acceptability or other outcome**. The study might seek to measure the level of reflective ability that a certain practice typically enables a participant to display.

Synthesis: **the study seeks to draw together findings or insights from a range of other studies, situations or experiences**. A review article in a journal is an obvious example of a work of synthesis, but this category also includes synthesis based on professional experience or on practitioner literature.

Robustness of study

For peer-reviewed papers, the basic assumption is that major methodological flaws have already been ruled out. For studies or other publications that have not appeared in a peer reviewed journal, please pass the paper on to the Project Director, Associate Director or other appropriate team member for a further check. Methodological flaws that might be apparent within the paper include: overall study design not appropriate to aims; little or no rationale provided for the methodology; for quantitative studies that possible confounding variables not adequately dealt with; conclusions not warranted by evidence.

Findings in relation to the sub-review

Please describe the findings of the study in relation to the sub-review, paying attention as relevant to the following:

- The nature of the reflective practice(s) or approach(es) employed.
- The specific theory or theories underpinning the reflective practice(s) or approach(es)
- The context in which the reflective practice(s) or approach(es) have been promoted or employed.
- The outcomes (whether successful or negative) to which the reflective practice(s) or approach(es) have led.

The description of findings would normally be structured in relation to whichever of these four categories are most relevant, with connections made where possible between findings in the relevant categories. For instance:

- A theoretical study might focus on the theoretical approach employed and to the contexts that have produced successful outcomes or negative outcomes.
- An evaluation might link a description of reflective practice (or approach(es) to teaching reflective practices) in a certain context with an indication of outcomes.
- A descriptive study might be a case study that outlines the nature of the approach(es) employed and the context in which it was employed.
- A work of synthesis, such as a review, might point out common features, findings or issues across a range of practices, underpinnings, contexts or outcomes.

Further comments:

- This categorization as such is most applicable to the sub-review areas that focus on personal and social approaches, as well as on assessment. The sub-review on pedagogy will consider approaches used to support learning under each of these categories, but in relation to the reflective practices that are being promoted at the same time. The sub-review on outcomes and purposes will particularly seek to link the nature of the practices with their outcomes, but

additionally in relation to the purposes served by the reflective practices. The sub-review on the state of practice will focus on the nature of the practice occurring, matching this also to the context in which it occurs and any underpinning theory.

- The nature of a reflective practice: What are its key characteristics? What process is followed as the practice unfolds? What definition of reflective practice underpins the practice?
- Theoretical underpinnings: What theory underpins the practice? How do they do so? Does this link to a particular definition of reflective practice?
- Context: What is the focus of the programme in which the reflective practices are employed, the nature of the institution concerned, the disciplinary/generic balance, its compulsory of voluntary nature, the numbers of staff on the programme or the status of the staff involved?

Criteria to indicate the strength of findings (note – not included within database)

0   A study that makes only a limited contribution to the categories under which the findings are detailed; or of marginal relevance to the area of the sub-review.

1   A study that contributes significant insight into at least one of the categories in a way that is directly relevant to the sub-review.

2   A central study within the area covered by the sub-review that provides substantial evidence against several of the categories and makes clear connections between the categories.

Note: These basic critieria will provide assistance in where to focus the narrative summary for the final report, and to indicate the extent to which the final report relies on a larger or smaller number of papers. It is not intended to serve as a fully reliable or valid rating of the relative strength of the papers.

Scope for fostering learning on the part of a practitioner or policy maker

Please describe the scope that the study has for fostering learning on the part of a practitioner or policy maker.

This could include attention to whether the study opens up avenues or further literature for the practitioner or policy maker to explore, provides an insightful overview of the field to help guide future learning, is accessible in its language and approach, draws attention to the nature of the connections between different aspects of the field, is likely to assist the practitioner in changing their conceptions or attitudes, provides indications of good practice that can be applied, or explores issues of relevance to the practitioner or policy maker.

Scope for influencing future practice or policy

Please describe the scope that the study has for influencing future practice or policy.

This could include attention to whether the study addresses relevant needs (as highlighted by the state of practice sub-review, by the experience of the practitioner or through another means), the desirability of introducing the practice (e.g. the strength and direction of reported outcomes, fit with current cultures), or the feasibility of introducing the practices into a programme or in implementing the policy (*e.g.*

guidance is provided to assist the practitioner in implementing the practice, the practice is modest in demands on resources or other factors support the use of the practice).

Appendix 2: Statements on areas of the review

The state of practice in the field

A consideration of the state of practice was designed to help stimulate the dialogue between theory and practice. A clearly defined research study would draw on programme documentation and contact with those who are working on programmes for new academic staff. This study would include a focus on each of the further agreed areas of the review to provide an immediate focus for the dialogue. The following points further give an initial focus for this element of the review, agreed in outline by the review team and finalised by the consultant:

- In what ways is reflective practice being utilised as a concept and in practice in the current programmes for new academic staff?
- To what extent are clear definitions of reflective practice employed within the programmes? If not, what are the implications?
- What purpose does the reflective practice exist to serve in the programmes concerned? Are they there because of fashion, or because there is a sense of the potential of real value?
- To what extent is there a separation between rhetoric and real practice, particularly in regard to the quality of reflection and the extent to which it might be stereotyped by reference to a rigid theoretical stance.

1.   Purposes and outcomes for reflection

- Why are participants on programmes for new academic staff, or related programmes using reflective practices, and to what extent are they aware of this? What are the purposes to which these reflective practices put? Is there a wide range of purposes identified or is there only one? Are practitioners really thinking this through or just picking up a buzz word?
- What are the longer and shorter term outcomes for these professional programmes? What is it that people are expected to get out of reflecting or being reflective practitioners? Have different people got different conceptions of the outcome?

    (The shorter term outcomes are what learners can do at the end of the module or programme. The longer term outcomes are what happens in practice once the learner has finished the programme. Is it useful to use reflective practices on a programme if they have no longer term impact?)

- Is the reflection on a programme in order to enable the learner to learn content or the process of reflection?

2.   Reflective practices that involve personal reflection

- What are the mechanisms for encouraging learners in personal reflection?

    (e.g. journals, reflective notes, critical incident, work with story etc. Note that these are not separate categories, as for instance journals and critical incident work can coincide. The level of supervision or structuring in these mechanisms can make an enormous difference to their operation – and whether or not they are to be assessed is very important in the determination of their nature.)

- To what extent are these methods successful in the context in which they work and what are the constraints?

    (Note that there are complications here. Journals may sometimes be excellent for supporting learning of various sorts, but the reality is that they would be very hard work in a group of 150 students because of the support and assessment implied – but with careful thinking these difficulties can be overcome by dedicated and caring staff).

3.   Reflective practices that involve social dimensions

- What are mechanisms for reflective practice that are based on social interaction and how do these relate to the individual and her ultimate learning and practices?

    (The writer of this section will need to address the way in which reflection is essentially individual but that we make meanings sometimes in collaboration that we either take on or use as material for further reflection. These issues may occur differently for different kinds of methods. In this section, there might be included collaborative journaling, the use of story in professional development; dialogue journals, various forms of group work, critical incident work in groups, inquiry based learning, collaborative research processes, human inquiry workshops, action research situations, peer mentoring, discussions by e-mail, some supervisory practices and so on….)

- To what extent are these methods successful in the context in which they work and what are the constraints?

4.   Assessment

- What are the issues in the idea of assessment that are relevant to reflective practices in the curriculum?
- What assessment practices are successful and which are limited in their success – and how are they limited?

    (Whenever I deal with assessment I want to go back to basics and ask 'what is assessment for – because people do not often think about this. A lot of what we do as 'assessment' is actually about the enhancement of learning – but it is not seen in this way. Of course, in this respect, there will be an overlap of this category with the last one (pedagogy). It is particularly important to consider assessment for this area of the curriculum – reflective practice - which is sometimes not actually assessed. When it is not assessed you have the danger that some people will not follow it……even teachers themselves!)

5.   The pedagogy of reflective practice

- It is apparent that some people think that they cannot reflect. What is meant by this and what needs to be done to get people started with reflective work.
- It is a common observation that many learners who are asked to do reflective tasks can manage descriptive reflection, but not deeper reflection. What do we need to do to deepen reflective activity?

(I do not know where ethical issues fits into what you are doing – but I believe that the issue should be mentioned. I have found that some teachers are frightened to use reflective methods because they think that some students may 'uncover nasties' that they – the teachers- cannot cope with. Where does emotion fit into reflection?

I think that the issue of marking of primary or secondary reflection is an important issue. If primary reflection is marked it is like marking the lecture notes of students. In the marking of secondary reflection you have encouraged the students to learn a great deal from their initial reflections and you have something like a report or an essay that can be marked more easily.)

Appendix 3: Study on the 'state of practice'

The approach taken

The purpose of this study into the state of practice has been to explore the use of the concepts 'reflection' and 'reflective practice' within current programmes of study aimed primarily at new academic staff. Rather than to provide a comprehensive view of practice in these programmes the study focuses on raising key issues in relation to these concepts, as these issues may then be contrasted with the findings of the review of the research literature.

Given the context of a literature review, it was clear that this study would be taken forward through a detailed review of programme documentation, helping to provide a basis for comparison with the rest of the review. As a starting point, we identified documentation from 15 institutions: 12 with consent from the Postgraduate Certificate Leaders North web sites; and 3 with consent via the World Wide Web from the south of England. All of the programmes considered were postgraduate certificates with a primary focus on teaching and learning, rather than, for instance, non-award bearing courses, which occur on a much more limited basis. We provide a brief outline of these 15 programmes in Table 1.

Reference	Type of institution	Region
P1	New university	Northern
P2	New university	Southern
P3	New university	Northern
P4	New university	Northern
P5	Old university	Northern
P6	Old university	Southern
P7	New university	Southern
P8	New university	Northern
P9	Old university	Northern
P10	Old university	Northern

P11	Old university	Northern
P12	Old university	Northern
P13	Old university	Northern
P14	New university	Northern
P15	College of higher education	Northern

Table 1: Characteristics of the institutions whose programmes are covered by the study

We thus effectively concentrate our study on the pedagogy of reflective practice, as this is the immediate context afforded by the documentation; which is intended for programme participants (as well as for institutional and accreditation purposes). With this in mind, we initially framed our approach with five broad questions (see Appendix 2):

1. In what ways is reflective practice being utilised as a concept and in practice in the current programmes for new academic staff?

2. Is it stereotyped (eg by reference to a rigid theoretical stance) or is it the product of real thinking?

3. What kind of concern is there for the quality of reflection (is it lip-service or considered?)

4. For what purpose does the reflective practice exist? Is it there because of fashion, or because there is a sense of the potential of real value.

5. Are there agreed definitions – and, if not, does that matter – what are the implications for the practitioners?

This reviewer, however, felt a tension in using a set of predetermined questions as a starting point, representative of hypothetico-deductive approaches, where quality research is seen to hang on a well formed question or precisely specified hypothesis. Rather, a more freely inductive approach was preferred, where materials are collected and explored without the need to start from a specific hypothesis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995).

The preference towards this approach stemmed, in the first instance, from a concern about the reviewer's own biases as a programme leader and her existing personal cognitive structures in relation to reflection. A freely inductive approach, by contrast, allows a degree of open exploration of, and sensitivity towards, others' perspectives on reflection.

We thus began by considering in detail a randomly chosen sub-sample ($n = 5$) of the programme documentation; freely exploring the documentation by reading it through

several times. We were interested in exploring general programme features in terms of reflection and in deviations from the norm. Having reviewed the sub-sample of programme documentation and identified themes, we would then be in a position to return to an extended review of the entire sample to develop richer descriptions of practice.

An initial reading of the documentation indicated a range of more subtle messages being conveyed within (1) the mechanistic layout of the documentation, (2) the generic Masters-level terminology and (3) the quality assurance-driven structuring of practice. The wider context in which such programmes sit, is likely to have some impact on the way in which reflection is being conceptualised – quite possibly in some cases stereotypically, by reference to a rigid theoretical stance with little evidence of 'real thinking'. Such conceptualisation would need to be interrogated further with a view to accessing the *particular* use and application of ideas, in respect of reflection – demanding this more free inductive approach.

This approach to the study is also supported by our overall approach to the review, which requires the scrutinising and making sense of data in terms of *all* five categories used in the literature review, many of which overlap because of their close relationship with one another. This means a focus on a detailed level of theoretical understanding.

Before, however, we look at the themes that emerged from our analysis of the documentation, it helps also to consider those learning behaviours associated with being 'reflective'. For the purpose of this study we draw on Claxton's (2002) view that to be able to reflect is "to be strategically aware of one's own learning". This definition explains what reflection is in terms of *product* (to become more strategic about one's learning) and *process* (a qualitative shift from being a 'learner' to a 'learner about learning'). It also implies a particular style of pedagogic practice, central to which is the promotion of an 'understanding seeker' (as opposed to a 'knowledge seeker' – Entwistle, 1992) whereby the learner is encouraged, for instance, to: relate information or approach to own experience or to restructure for personal meaning.

Optimal support of an *understanding* seeking learner demands a particular view on behalf of tutor and student of how learning takes place and the way in which it is mediated. Mortimore (1999) discuss pedagogy in terms of a 'pact' in which the interdependence of the teacher and learner is highlighted, and which involves an open-ended discourse where communication is orientated towards both meaning and perspectives of others. Such an approach falls in line with the thinking of Vygotsky and Bruner, both of whom strongly suggest the importance, alongside experience, of the social and cultural context, and of interaction with others (Pollard, 1997) in learning.

Both these more personal perspectives, and the discussions related to the process of the rest of the review, help to underpin our analysis of the programme documentation that follows, serving in particular to highlight the connection between learning and reflection. In this, we seek primarily to raise issues rather than provide a fully systematic analysis.

Findings from the documentation

We outline our statement of the issues that emerged from this reading of the documentation under the following seven categories:

1. Intended Audience

2. Structure

3. Context

4. Design and Planning of Learning (including course 'philosophy')

5. Definitions of reflection

6. Purposes of Reflection

7. Techniques for putting reflection into practice

In reality there was significant overlap between the emerging themes and the broad questions posited at the outset. Nonetheless, as researcher/reviewer, it felt more comfortable with the themes emerging out of an exploration than a pre-determined set of questions, helping to expose a wider range of issues that could contribute to the dialogue within the review as whole between the research literature and practice.

Theme 1: Audience

It was evident, first of all, that the programmes take a broad view of teaching.

The programmes considered are aimed at both full-time and part-time staff whose work includes the design, delivery, assessing & evaluation of teaching. For all programmes, the view of 'teaching', however, is broad, and takes in research staff, administrative staff and learning support staff as illustrated in the following:

> *It is intended to accredit the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) learning of all those involved in the delivery and support of learning, teaching and assessment, including lecturing, technical and learning support staff (P8)*

> *You do not have to be a member of academic staff to apply – for example research associates or administrative staff with teaching commitments are welcome to participate (P13)*

> *…it has been increasingly recognised that a range of other professionals (e.g. library, media services, careers service staff) have an important role in supporting student learning and should also have the opportunity for related training (P15)*

Compulsion, timing and programme role in CPD

In 8 of the 15 institutions, lecturers are required to attend the programme as part of their induction.. Five of the programmes (P3, P4, P7, P8, P13) are also aimed at more experienced staff (including those not on academic contracts) with a view that they, too, may find engagement with such CPD activity a valuable learning and development experience.

The duration of programmes varies between 1 year (five instances, i.e. $n = 5$), 2 years ($n = 5$), 3 years ($n = 3$), and 4 years ($n = 1$). Such variation is linked to varying lengths of institutional probationary time-frames and/or extra time (usually 1 year) being given for portfolio write-up. One programme (P12) does not stipulate a time-frame for completion, but presumably there is a time limit for registration. P9 links duration with probation without stating what the probationary period is. As such, the delivery of the PGCHE varies with some delivered as part of institutional induction/orientation and/or as part of initial or on-going CPD within varying periods. A few programmes are open to partner colleges who have lecturers teaching on their validated courses.

Theme 2: Structure

Modular patterns

The structuring/accumulation of the 60 M-level credits varies between programmes. For example, 8 programmes comprise two 30-credit modules and one programme comprises one 40-credit module and 1 20-credit module. P13 is made up of three modules comprising one 30 credit and two 15 credit. Three programmes consist of four 15 credit modules (P5, P6, P14). P1 comprises six modules - module 1 (10 credits) and module 2 (20 credits) being linked to university orientation. On successful completion of modules 1 and 2 participants may engage with the remaining 4 modules with a total credit bearing of 30 masters level. In contrast to the modular structure, two programmes discuss the structuring of learning in terms of various types of tasks & activities with notional study hours and credit attached to each. Specifically, P2 discusses its teaching and learning in terms of two intensive programmes (a week in September and three days in the inter-semester break), independent study, action learning sets, four review sessions during the year and the use of the university's VLE. P8 comprises "… five themes developed across three phases of study…" Each theme carries a credit rating of 5 or 10 points, depending on the phase of study being engaged with.

Typical delivery patterns

All programmes are offered as part-time study (the proportion of face-to-face contact varying significantly) and the content is strongly influenced by areas of professional practice in higher education as defined by the HEA and/or SEDA.

It is worth noting that some kind of block induction (ranging from two to five days) is a common feature of 8 programmes and, often, this initial induction is followed-up at some other point in the academic year (usually Semester 2) with another block of face-to-face study. Delivery of the programme comprises a combination of 'central' and 'local' provision for 5 programmes (P3, P4, P6, P8, P13). A distributed/shared approach to course delivery and/or facilitation of learning is also assisted via the use of a 'mentor' in 6 programmes, a critical friend in P4 and a Liaison Officer in another P13. The following details for Programmes 2, 3 and 4 give more comprehensive illustrative examples of structure.

Variation in delivery pattern

There is a range of variation evident within the delivery of the programmes, although it is clear that relatively long sessions are used quite heavily (ranging typically from half a day to several days in length). We can illustrate this range with reference to specific programmes as follows, highlighting key features:

- The course schedule of **P2** starts with an *intensive week* in September, followed by *Action Learning Set* (ALS) meetings (3hrs long) and two review sessions. January sees another intensive period of face-to-face (3 days), once again, followed by regular ALS meetings, plus 1 review session. Peer assessment and presentations are embedded into the teaching/learning structure of P2. A basic requirement for participants of P2 is the engagement in some depth over the year with 8 (learning) packs (6 core packs and 2 optional packs). Participants are recommended to do this on a 3 weekly cycle, using the start dates in the course schedule, and spending 20 hours on each pack.

- **P3** has a *generic vs. discipline-based focus* in its programme –learning takes place centrally and locally. Central provision gives a university-wide dimension

and is managed by the programme team, whilst local provision is School-based and overseen by *School-based mentors*. Mentors have an entitlement of 20 hrs. Workshops (including block induction week) are a requirement for all members, but at times the workshops are open to various other colleagues in the academic community.

- **P4** mirrors this notion of *central and local provision* in terms of its use of centralised interactive workshops alongside school-/area-based support. The latter is linked to discipline-specific study supported by Work-Based Staff whose remit is one of 'critical friend'. In P4 study block/workshops are interspersed with Peer Learning Group sessions for peer and tutorial support and further block study. Online conferencing allows participants, programme team and School/work area to share reflections and experiences and to gain feedback on work in progress. The VLE is claimed as an integral feature of the programme.

- For each module of **P5**, four *full day workshops* culminate in one review day. Attendance of three Learning & Teaching series workshops/seminars and reflection on them is also required of participants. Alternatively, participants may attend the Teaching Innovations project Presentation day and reflect on the possible impact on learning/teaching of projects presented. *Reciprocal observation of peers* (4 in total – 2 in September, followed by 2 in January) is also requested.

Target Awards

For 14 programmes, successful completion of a study route, option, phase, stage, level or pathway (as it is variously described) leads to a postgraduate certificate at masters level, comprising 60 m level credits. The exception is P1 which comprises 30 'M' level credits and 30 level 3 credits. All programmes are externally accredited by the HEA (of which 3 explicitly provide for both Associate and Full membership – P4, P8, P12).

Theme 3: Context

International and national contexts

All programmes make the case that professional development in learning and teaching practice of the professional academic has become a necessity. P9 makes reference to Light & Cox (2001) who argue that the need for change within the professional development of the HE practitioner has been driven by an 'academic storm' in an age of 'super-complexity', taking in a transition to a mass HE system, rising global market competition, pressure for enhanced graduate employability and so on.

So for example, in its programme document P15 posits:

> *…there is now a recognition that it is a complex and demanding role for which formal training is important. (…) This will provide the opportunity for staff to encounter the scholarship of learning and teaching in the HE context, which is essential if the development of the profession is going to be founded on evidence-based practice.*

And P12 suggests that:

> *Whilst the majority of academics nationally do not hold such a teaching qualification, there is growing evidence that participation in teaching*

programmes… is assisting participants in gaining promotion and posts both within this institution and other universities …

UK initiatives and organisations

Particular reference is made (the exception being P2) to the Dearing Report, the establishment of the Higher Education Academy and the likely expectation that all teachers be accredited by 2006. More specifically, all programmes have been designed, in part, to take account the requirements of the HEA accreditation and, in some instances, the Staff Educational Development Association (SEDA). This means that successful completion of the accredited route, option or phase of study entitles participants to apply for HEA membership - something that all institutions in which the programmes sit appear to be strongly committed to.

HEA and SEDA recognition of programmes requires they be underpinned by a set of professional values. One of these may be considered to relate to the notion of being a "reflective practitioner":

> *'continued reflection on professional practice' (SEDA)* and

> *'a commitment to continued reflection and evaluation and consequent improvement of (…) own practice' (HEA)*

This latter was altered in the final UK professional standards (2006) to:

> *'Commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice'.*

Institutions and programmes

Given such accreditation requirements, the notion of 'reflection' has been central to the rhetoric concerning the 'headline' purpose of all programmes, as set out in the programmes' statements of values, aims, outcomes or course philosophies. It is worth illustrating an example from each programme, as provided in Table 2 below.

Programme (with source indicated)	*Illustrative quote*
P1 (Aim)	The aim of the Certificate is to develop a discipline-based and reflective approach to the practice of teaching and the support of learning in higher education.
P2 (Course philosophy and ethos)	The 'reflective practitioner' ethos is fundamental to the course...intended to support you as you develop your role as teacher
P3 (Aim)	To provide a framework which enables university academic staff to reflect upon their professional experiences, and, via this process, set their own targets for professional development.

P4 (Aim)	To promote effective self-reflection
P5 (Aim)	To support the development of a community of reflective practitioners based on scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice in learning and teaching.
P6 (Objective)	Use reflection as a tool for critical thought on the teaching and learning process
P7 (Course learning outcome)	To reflect on their own personal and professional practice and development needs and make a plan for their continuing professional development.
P8 (Aim)	Promote, develop and reflect upon the core knowledge and professional values associated with their work
P9 (Aim)	*Encourage you to undertake focused reflection on your learning and teaching practice with a view to its continual improvement.*
P10 (Aim)	Encourage participants to reflect critically on their teaching and support of learning
P11 (Objective)	The need for effective and continued reflection on professional practice.
P12 (Aim)	It helps you to develop your teaching skills and understanding by exploring and critically reflecting upon both your own experiences and practices as teachers and as learners in HE, and of those around you.
P13 (Aim)	A great opportunity to review and extend the ways you think and work, including practical skills and new approaches to enhance your practice
P14 (Aim)	… takes 'reflective, evidence-based practice' as its guiding model of professional development for lecturers
P15 (Aim)	The overall aim of this programme is to support the professional development of teachers and teaching-related staff in higher education in relation to educational theory, practice issues and values in the management of student learning. It is designed to

	develop reflective practitioners

Table 2: Examples to illustrate how each programme promotes the notion of reflection.

The development of the courses have in a limited number of cases further been explicitly influenced by institutional mission statements (P1, P4). Indeed, P4 states that:

> *"the design and delivery of this programme has been planned to meet the aims, objectives and values of [the institution's] strategic plan. (…) Other relevant policies and strategies that are crucial to this programme are: Staff Development Policy; Human Resources Strategy; Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy".*

Participants engaged with P9 are required to obtain the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE as *"an integral part of the University's strategic aims"*.

Theme 4: Design & planning of learning, including course philosophy

Philosophies of teaching

The review of programme documentation has shown that most programmes are explicit to varying degrees on their philosophies of teaching in respect of:

- how learning takes place;
- what teaching is;
- its goals for students; and
- its articulation of how the philosophy is enacted in practice.

For instance, we see in P2 a clear link with reflective practice:

> *The emphasis of the course is on developing your understanding of different ways in which people learn and your skill in enabling learning. It is a developmental course rather than a training course, and it aims to create an open-mindedness about innovation and alternative ways of promoting student learning. The benefits it offers are both short and long term: it will support you in the early stages of learning to teach in higher education, and at the same time it will help to establish a frame-work for your career-long development based on reflective practice. The 'reflective practitioner' ethos is fundamental to the course.*

P3, within its Pathway meanwhile states:

> *The approach to learning that we have adopted for this pathway is one which is firmly located in your professional experience and your day-to-day activities as an HE practitioner. The approach has the underlying premise that learners learn best when they are active and take responsibility for their own learning, and can relate it and apply it to their own context. We shall consciously make use of two related 'learning cycles': the 'experiential learning cycle'; the cycle of professional HE competencies.*

Other programmes outline explicitly their philosophy, as with P13:

The overall philosophy of the programme is that of creating and sustaining a rigorous and committed dialogue between:

(a) participants' own experiences of practice (given or received),

(b) the published literature, theory, and accounts of (disciplinary) practice elsewhere, and

(c) colleagues' understandings within and of the shared context of the programme (see Rowland, 2000, pp. 57–59 and 61–73; Barnett, 1990). Thus the course tries to be critical, in the sense of weighing up and testing these areas against each other, in the light of their effects on the various actors in the university, especially students and academic staff (Brookfield, 1995, pp. 28–48).

Courses promote a wide range of activities

The activities deployed across all programmes are wide-ranging. Explicit reference is made to:

- Use of institutional day and academic induction designated to teaching and learning staff development – 2 programmes (P5, P11)
- Group tutorials/small-group learning – 2 programmes (P6, P10)
- Supervised individual/independent study – 6 programmes (P6, P7 – "self-directed", P8 – ", P9, P10, P13 – "private study")
- Individual tutorial study – 2 programmes (P7, P9)
- Project work – 2 programmes (P10, P13)
- Action research – 4 programmes (P2, P3, P6, P9)
- Lectures/mini-lectures – 2 programmes (P10 & P14 respectively)
- Training sessions – 1 programme (P11)
- Workshops/seminars (variously described) – 11 programmes (P3 – "participative", P4 – "interactive", P5 – "taught", P7, P8 – "formal teaching methods", P9 – "interactive", P10, P11, P12 – "optional", P13, P14, P15 – "compulsory and optional")
- Course sessions/course units – 2 programmes (P12 & P10 respectively)
- Class/teaching observation – 5 programmes (P3, P4 – TPR*, P5, P7, P12)
- Learning Set Groups/Peer Group Meetings/Practice Exchange Groups – 7 programmes (P2, P3, P4, P9, P13, P14, P15)
- Review days – 6 programmes (P2, P3, P4, P5, P12, P15)
- Study packs (core & optional) & case studies/workbooks – P14, & P2 respectively
- Open/distance learning materials – P8
- Online – 6 programmes (P2, P3, P4, P6 – for supervised independent study, P7, P12, P13, P14, P15)

Flexibility and choice are present

The notion of 'flexibility' is evident in many of the programmes:

- Optional pathways and negotiation over the precise form and content of the portfolio (P4).

- Choice out of 'additional requirements' on top of mandatory four full day workshops and review day (P5).
- Choice of Optional modules and mode of study (attendance of ½ day tutorial/study day, or supervised independent study, or action research) (P6);
- Participant direction of group meetings (P7).
- Formulation of own learning plan and opportunity to contribute to the learning opportunities of participants, via the preparation of cases based on own experiences (P14).

The related notion of 'creative space' is also present in many cases:

> *…programme offers a collaborative, discursive and reflective learning context for participants and tutors… we believe this 'space' provides a 'site for contestation'…you will be encouraged to seek your own solutions to the organisational and pedagogical challenges posed by change to a mass HE system…* (P9*)*

> *Workshops afford flexibility for participants to address their own practice explicitly and independent study allows for significant autonomy.* (P10)

Work-based focus

Some programmes discuss explicitly how significant learning takes place via work-based experiences. For example, P3 – *"pathway firmly located in your professional experience"*; P4, P6 – use of School/Faculty related topics; P10 – *"Professional experience forms an integral part of each course unit"*. Programme documentation also highlights the importance of related reading. Furthermore, the use of credit for prior learning is also discussed explicitly in some documents as is the notion of 'attendance'-driven (P3, P7) or 'evidence'-driven (P2, P8) philosophy. All the programmes use some form of portfolio to present a range of assessment tasks and/or evidence of learning against programme/module outcomes.

Theme 5: Definitions

Explicit definitions

Whilst the term 'reflection' is frequently used in statements of values, aims and outcomes (see above section re: context) expansion of the term, for example "by reflection or critical reflection we mean…" is rare.

Those programmes that expand on their concept of reflection do so in the following ways (highlights added):

> *You will be encouraged to reflect on learning experiences, to **recognise the nature of the learning** that has taken place and to **use the learning in planning** future developments and activities. This is referred to as reflexivity and it also **includes the ability to stand outside present behaviour, to analyse development needs and to successfully manage change for yourself and for others**.* (P8)

> *… When teachers become reflective practitioners, they move beyond a knowledge base of discrete skills to a stage where they integrate and modify skills to fit specific contexts, and eventually, to a point where the **skills are internalised enabling them to invent new strategies**. They develop the necessary sense of self efficacy to create personal solutions to problems."* …

Reflective writing is a means of recapturing and structuring your experiences in order to make better sense of them…Moon (op cit, p.33) describes reflective thinking as: "mental activities such as relating, experimenting, exploring, reinterpreting from different points of view or within different contextual factors, theorising and linking theory to practice…and 'cognitive housekeeping' to imply the general reorganisation of thoughts on a particular issue. There may be a situation in which one is aware that there is a linkage between several known ideas or facts and the journal writing provides some 'intellectual space' in which to sort them out.*

*…Similarly, Biggs (op cit, p.9) maintains that teaching is a reflective activity: "Teaching is personal, and the context in which each teacher works is different. What is effective for this teacher, for that subject, at this level, for those students, may not apply to other teachers, working under their own conditions. Individuals have to work out their own solutions. This **requires reflection, a theory of teaching to reflect with and a context of experiences as the object of reflection**." (P9)*

*The examiners will assess both the process and the product of the portfolio. In other words the process element shows the reflective nature of the activity and the product offers evidence of the range and or depth of the work the participant has done 'on the job'….**Reflective thinking occurs through the process of relating, experimenting, exploring, re-interpreting from different points of view; or within different contextual factors; theorising - linking theory and practice, 'cognitive housekeeping', etc**. Boud, Keough and Walker in 'Promoting Reflection in Learning: a Model' in Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning (London) Kogan Page, 1985 stress that **reflection should not be an end in itself in professional practice. It is the outcome of reflection that 'may lead to a new way of doing something, clarification of an issue, a new cognitive map or the resolution of a problem'** (P11)*

Definitions are implied by institutional or programme aims or outcomes

Some institutional aims can be seen to match definitions of reflection. For example, outlined in one institution's Purpose Statement is the aim to: 'seek continuous review and improvement of performance' (P4). The same programme document identifies reflection as central to a model of the professional HE teacher, part of which (drawing on Schön, 1987) is to:

….act, above all, as self-critical professionals, able to continuously research and appraise their own practice. They need to be 'reflective practitioners' who take responsibility for the quality of what they do and for their own development as teachers.

As part of its learning and teaching strategy, P3 makes a connection between the promotion of reflection and broader aims of higher education to do with: (1) developing the ability to generate ideas and information; (2) facilitating personal development; and (3) planning and managing own learning – all of which, have resonance with Claxton's earlier definition of reflection. Further definition to the notion of reflection in P3 can be found within the aims of its use of action learning to do with: self-development; resolving intractable problems/issues; and determining future courses of action. Indeed, we can glean much in terms of definitions from the way programme documentation outlines techniques for putting reflection into practice.

As with P4, P1 also refers to Schön's writings with a view to aiding understanding about reflection. Furthermore, P1 discusses reflection in terms of a personal transferable skill - the ability to reflect on, and accept accountability for, selection of activities. In P1 the ability to self-reflect is seen as a key underpinning for self-improvement which, in turn, is argued to be *"one of the keys to a successful academic career"*. So P1 links the notion of reflection to the making of professional judgements and having confidence to improve throughout one's career.

The learning outcomes of P5 (stemming from a set of values and aims, both of which make reference to reflection) also imply a connection between reflection and a range of actions in respect of professional development: audit/review; prioritising; planning and evaluation. P2, too, makes reference to reflection in terms of evaluation of practice and personal development. In these cases implicit definitions are strongly allied to Schön's work on reflection in relation to professional practice.

Definitions are implied through tasks

It is also the case the definitions in relation to reflection are implied by the tasks that participants are asked to carry out. A key task for P3 is the writing of *"an overarching reflective commentary which serves to integrate your learning"*. So here an implied definition of reflection is that of 'integrating learning'. That said, the purpose of reflection was in the overriding majority of cases seen as the foundation for personal and professional development.

Both the nature of the assessment tasks and associated criteria give further insight into the way reflection is being defined. For example, in P1 uses the following criteria in assessing the quality and levels of reflection (highlights added):

> *Participants must demonstrate:*
>
> *2. REFLECTION*
>
> *2.1   Has the participant **considered learning experiences, drawn inferences from them, and used these inferences to identify strengths and areas for improvement**?*
>
> *2.2   To what extent has reflection been developed, from description through to **analysis, making use as appropriate of critical reading**?*
>
> *2.3   Has reflection been used to demonstrate the **knowledge and understanding that underpins performance**?*

Theme 6: Purposes of reflection

Rhetoric and its effects

All programmes engage participants in six broad areas of activity in which the HEA requires demonstration of competence. These areas can be seen to act as a focus for reflection. Further, as discussed under 'Context' above, the reflective and experimental rhetoric is influenced by the SEDA and/or HEA values. Both statements of values emphasise reflection as a tool for supporting participants in their role as teachers – a tool for learning. As Edwards and Nicholl (2006) point out, such definitions of activities and values do significant rhetorical work. They tend to define that which is outside consideration for reflection; and (following Foucault) invite mental creation by the

programme participant of herself or himself as a self-monitoring individual engaged in a particular form of development.

Formal purposes

Accepting that teaching and learning activity is complex, the promotion of reflection is linked to:

> *… [reflective] writing will provide the intellectual glue demonstrating your competence and hopefully the growth in your abilities as a lecturer…*(P1)

> *…developing understanding of the different ways in which people learn and (…) skill in enabling learning* (P2)

> *You will be encouraged to reflect on learning experiences, to (…) use the learning in planning future developments and activities. (…) it also includes the ability to stand outside present behaviour, to analyse development needs and to successfully manage change for yourself and for others.* (P8)

> *… not asking academics to submit to a barrage of techniques, tips and prescribed practices which they might 'inflict' on themselves and their students but rather, to engage in a way of thinking about their own practice. [The programme] … is intended to be mildly subversive and liberating, a subversion encompassing academic practice, engagement with students and personal practice* (P9)

> *… an opportunity for developing understanding and critical reflection (…) the opportunity to develop new ideas, question existing practices, challenge your assumptions, try things out and take a few risks, affirm and celebrate achievement, in a safe and enthusiastic environment (…) a vehicle for metacommentary [sic] and critical reflection about learning and teaching tasks and how different students might experience these and respond to them.* (P12)

> *… 'reflective, evidence-based practice' as its guiding model of professional development for lecturers (…) always directed towards finding or creating, using and evaluating ways that you can continually improve, develop or refine your practice (…) you will take prime responsibility for your learning (…) course sets out to assist you to become more aware, observant, thoughtful and innovative in your practice as a teacher (…) and so provide more effective support to your students.* (P14)

Longer term purposes

All programmes (excluding the first stage or phase in those programmes that are hierarchical) are 'developmental' rather than 'training' courses in their emphasis. Reflection is linked to establishing *"a framework for (…) career-long development based on reflective practice"* (P2). Indeed, the notion of self-improvement is also prevalent in the documentation as is the idea of lifelong development (P1)

Theme 7: Techniques for promoting reflection in/on practice

Techniques link to ethos and quality of reflection

If a notion of the 'reflective practitioner' is fundamental to all programmes, they nonetheless ask participants to engage in a variety of tasks in order to put it into action. For example, techniques for putting P2's reflective ethos into practice include

participants having to write a **personal reflective statement** about their own experience of learning and education in their life to date, followed by a final reflective statement at the end of the course. Participants are also encouraged to keep a **reflective journal**, compiling a set of critical incident analyses during the course. The notion of **Statements of Relevance** is used to assist participants reflect in a structured way on the main ideas in study packs and to relate the theories and methods, as appropriate to their own teaching practice. **Peer observation** is strongly encouraged. Such techniques are common to all programmes and are closely allied to collecting various elements into a portfolio as the main way of portraying the personal and professional development engendered by the course.

Particular approaches to learning impact on the quality of reflection being promoted. For example P2 promotes reflection in and on practice via the use of Action Learning Sets, peer assessment and regular review sessions. Learning Sets, linked to Kolb's 'experiential learning cycle' are an integral component of P3. Similarly, P4 makes use of Peer Learning Group (PLG) sessions where *"peers on the programme will meet at regular intervals to share and discuss problems and issues and to present findings"*. Furthermore, P4 draws on online conferencing to share reflections.

Techniques centred on formative processes

Within the sub-sample, the **role of assessment (type and timing)** is of particular importance in the promotion of reflection. For example, the notion of formative feedback on work in progress is highlighted in P4 via **individual tutorials (online and face-to-face)** and via a work-based member of staff, in the role of 'critical friend' **observing and giving feedback** on a participant's teaching. In reality all programmes provide **formative assessment** with particular use being made of:

- tutors (all programmes),
- mentors (P4, P3, P5),
- peers (P1, P2, P4) and
- self (P5, P13).

Formative assessment – over and above the use of peer observation, mentor feedback and engagement with action learning type sets – is explicitly discussed in five sets of documentation (P1, P2, P4, P5, P10).

All the documentation places an emphasis on the use of reflective writing as opposed to a less 'conventional' form, for example, an annotated video, CD, web page, or presentation. Indeed, the use of reflective writing in the form of a commentary on those areas of competence highlighted by the HEA is an integral component of *all* programme assessment here. With so much emphasis placed on the use of reflective writing, explicit statements outlining the characteristics of good reflective writing are embedded in most programme documentation. If not, there is clear evidence of bespoke training/development on this as part of a participant's engagement with the programme.

To summarise, reflection in all programmes is being promoted by a combination of:

- Learning Journals/Diaries
- Learning Contracts
- Critical Incident Analysis

- Action Learning Sets
- Learning Partners/Critical Friends
- Peer and Self Assessment

Techniques using summative assessment

Although the main content of the programmes is prescribed, there tends to be a good deal of flexibility in terms of how learning outcomes are met (P4). Indeed, mindful of individual teaching contexts, all programmes give participants, to a greater or lesser extent, the opportunity to negotiate aspects of the assessment.

The review showed that portfolios were used by twelve programmes. Self and peer assessment was explicitly discussed in seven programmes. The notion of flexible assessment was discussed in one programme (P12). Finally, assessment instruments varied, programmes drawing on a combination of:

- Reflective essay/critical review
- Practice diary & analysis
- Poster on practice
- Project report/Evaluative project
- Special study
- Teaching Observations – reflection on
- Presentation of group activity
- Department-based task
- Annotated bibliography
- Portfolio
- Article/research report
- Teaching reference
- Development of case study, highlighting pedagogic challenges & sharing of this to peers; and
- Engagement with on-line tasks, linked to discussion board & reflection on.

Conclusions: towards a dialogue

Rather than trying to provide an overall set of conclusions in relation to the features of these programmes, as seen through the documentation, it is more helpful to highlight at this point a range of specific issues displayed by the programmes in relation to the major categories of the grounded framework. This will assist us in drawing out links between the state of practice and the findings emerging from the rest of the review, guiding recommendations in relation to practice. We thus focus on each of these elements of the framework in turn.

Participants within all programmes are engaged with a comprehensive range of activities including: bespoke training/induction days designated to teaching and learning staff development; group tutorials/small-group learning; supervised individual/independent study; individual tutorial study; project work; action research; lectures/mini-lectures; training sessions; workshops/seminars (variously described); course sessions/course units; class/teaching observation; Learning Set Groups/Peer Group Meetings/Practice Exchange Groups; review days; study packs (core & optional) & case studies/workbooks; online discussion. All of these involve processes of reflecting on specific aspects of practice at a personal and social level, equating in these ways to our use of the term **tasks** in the wider review. In all programmes, a combination of several tasks (key components of the programme) is used to promote critical reflection on practice.

Implicit in all programme documentation reviewed is a level of **theoretical understanding** of the term reflection. This is evident in the design and delivery of curricula - all of which would appear to be mindful of the way theorists have defined and qualified the usage of the term. But, minimal explicit reference is made in programme documentation to the theory of reflective practice underpinning the design and delivery of the programmes. For example, whilst Mezirow's reflective categories of *content* (practice itself), *premise* (the basis for reflection) and *process* (processes of reflection on practice) are evident in course design and delivery, they are not explicitly discussed at a theoretical level. Similarly, whilst reference is made to Dewey and Boud (and reflective theory generally, especially P9) in some programmes, few links are made between their defining and qualification of the term reflection and participant's engagement with a particular programme context and the various tasks deployed to promote reflection. Furthermore, the use of Action Research and Action Learning Sets/Peer Learning Groups is not explicitly linked to the work of Lewin. Boyer, in respect of advanced scholarship of teaching is referred to in P6.

Moreover, theories of practice are not discussed explicitly in the programme documentation. This is in spite of the fact that detailed philosophies of teaching are evident in the documents. Any explicit referencing to theory of reflective practice within programme documentation is on Schön's nature of professionalism, reflection in the work place and the timing of reflection. Kolb is also drawn on to explain the nature of the process that is involved in reflection. Some reference is made, too, to Jenny Moon's notion of levels in depth of reflection.

It is important to note that all programmes designate time to helping participants understand the term reflection and it is likely that the theory of reflective practice is covered/promoted and linked to the modelling of such practice within these sessions. Similarly, it is likely that theories of practice and the modelling of them will be addressed during induction and periodically via tutor-led sessions and/or research-based assessment tasks.

The six broad areas of activity in which the Higher Education Academy requires demonstration of competence are **foci for reflection**. Whilst peer observation is used to focus attention on classroom performance, other tasks are drawn on to reflect on broader areas of practice to do with curriculum design, research and administration (see tasks, above).

A rationalisation of practice in terms of current pedagogic/subject theory and research is encouraged, as well, as the premises on which their practice is founded. This is evident in most programme philosophies. Regardless, such expectations are central to studying at Masters level. Reflection on the reflective processes themselves is evident within the indicative teaching, learning and assessment tasks. But the personal qualities and emotions linked to being a reflective practitioner are not explicitly discussed.

Reflection-on-action (where a reflective process occurs separately from action) is very apparent in all programme documentation as evidenced in programme aims, objectives and philosophies (see Context), teaching and learning activities, and assessment tasks. Reflection-in-action (where a reflective process occurs at the same time as professional action), meanwhile is only evident more implicitly. For example, *Teaching Process Recall* (TPR) is a technique developed within P14 for the purpose of enabling participants to evaluate their teaching, with the help of a small group of peers. It begins with participants having one of their teaching sessions video-recorded.

Extracts from the tape are then shared with members of the participants TPR group, which will probably include four other course participants and a tutor. The role of the TPR group is, firstly, to help participants to accurately recall and describe the teaching session and identify the factors that influenced their behaviour, and, secondly, to participate in evaluating the effectiveness of their classroom practice, and select areas for development.

The notion of progression in respect of reflection is particularly apparent in the use of:

- Action Learning Sets (i.e. re-visiting of challenges in practice);
- Learning Journals (with the notion of 1st order and 2nd order reflection on critical incidents); and
- Action Research (where research & researcher is joined with action in order to plan, implement and monitor change/enhancement of own practice; and use of on-going/periodic self and formative assessment (allowing further reflection in relation to the same problematic area of assessment).

The **social dimension** of reflection is a key factor in all programmes with participants interacting with:

(1) each other (via peer assessment tasks, classroom observation, student-led seminars, learning sets, on-line conferencing etc)

(2) facilitators (via tutorials, formative feedback, lectures/mini-lectures, tutor-led seminars)

(3) colleagues within their department, school or other place of work (via the use of mentors, critical friends, department/subject based assessment tasks)

The importance of the social context of learning is a strong feature of all programme philosophies. Indeed, it is clear that the interdependence of the programme leader/tutor is highlighted in the programme documentation. For example, in P2, the onus is on participants to explain the role of the items of evidence they provide to support their claims to demonstrating fulfilment of both the areas of activity and the values.

The **personal basis** is clear in the range of staff who take these programmes, ensuring that reflective processes involved may well need to take a variety of personal and professional contexts into account. The compulsory nature of some programmes was also in evidence.

All programmes are influenced by the **wider context** of higher education in respect of teaching practice e.g., fee paying students, widening participation & inclusion, the paradigm shift in the role and relationship between teacher and taught and the notion of 'professional standards' etc. Programme outcomes are linked to institutional strategies and particular mission and vision statements. HEA accreditation is sought by all programmes, primarily for the benefit of staff new to the higher education context, but not exclusively. Notion of AP(E)L is present in some programmes, but *flexibility* is evident in all programmes. This programme flexibility is also expressed in part through the modular structure of some programmes, as well as through the extensive use of relatively long sessions, and partnerships between centre and local units. In terms of workplace context, partnerships are in evidence occasionally, as well as, more commonly, work-based experiences.

The purposes and **outcomes** of reflection can be seen to be underpinned by a functionalist educational ideology (eg HEA accreditation), linked to the: "equipping of students (lecturers) with the transferable and vocationally relevant skills necessary for a successful personal career and a contribution to the general social and economic good…" (Trowler, 1998). Clear claims are made in all programmes for a 'developmental' rather than 'training' focus, with the suggestions inherent in this notion for longer-term learning.

These observations contribute in particular to the boxed text within the main body of the report, where we contrast issues emerging from the grounded framework with this snapshot from the programme documentation of a sample of programmes. While the picture that we have painted here in relation to practice on programmes is evidently varied, a range of common themes have emerged to support a dialogue with the research literature. Programmes will find themselves relating to these common themes in different ways, ensuring varying responses to our grounded framework and the associated recommendations for practice.

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Appendix 4: Interim evaluation of the methodology

One of the aims of the review was to provide an opportunity to evaluate the methodological approach employed. The project that carried out the review thus also contained scope to employ a collaborative researcher who was not directly involved in the conduct of the review. The results of this evaluation, presented at the British Educational Research Association annual conference in September 2006, are directly relevant to any consideration of the methodology employed. The intention is for the evaluation also to lead to a peer-reviewed journal publication, providing a more comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of the review methodology.

Purposes of the evaluation

The interim evaluation, conducted by a collaborative researcher not directly involved in the main project, was carried out between January and April 2006. The main aim of this evaluation was formally to ascertain the effectiveness of the methodology employed in the review as a means to review the research literature in a way that would impact on practice. It considered the range of characteristics of the project participants and their circumstances and constraints, together with their interpretations of the methodology of the review, providing a rich picture of the interactions involved. This is intended to develop our understanding of the way in which review methodologies can be adapted to impact more directly on professional practice, linking to wider insights within practitioner research. We used the following questions as an initial framework for the evaluation:

- To what extent has the review been able to establish a discourse between theory and practice? To what extent, in what ways, and why, has this discourse contributed to the effectiveness of the review?

- Has there been any impact on practice resulting from the review, at the various levels of participation. What aspects of the review led to this impact if it did exist?

- Can the review process be improved in any way, in order to improve its effectiveness or its impact on practice?

- Are there any implications from the conduct of the review for the way in which such review processes might be integrated into practice?

We originally planned the methods for the evaluation to consist of: monitoring of discussion and posting of material by project participants on the on-line collaborative tool; brief questionnaire to the project team early in the project; sample of face-to-face and telephone interviews towards the end of the project. The first of these rendered very little data, since use of the web space was very sporadic. Questionnaires were completed by five of the core team and the project director. Two members of the core team and the reflective practice consultant also provided some personal notes at this time. The collaborative researcher subsequently interviewed all members of the project except one either in person or by telephone. Key themes from these data were then analysed in relation to the original framework for the evaluation.

Findings: emerging tensions

It is evident that, although the project was planned as an objective and systematised review which assumes a neutral stance on the part of the participants, each member of the team brings into the process a cluster of factors and perspectives that influence their approach. For example, the team members are typical of the educational development community in that they come originally from a wide range of disciplinary and sector backgrounds: languages, history, English, operational research, chemistry, biochemistry, mathematics, education, adult education. Thus it is not surprising that their various conceptions of a literature review cover a wide spectrum of approaches. The two examples which follow illustrate the two ends of this spectrum both in the conceptions they describe and the discourse used in the description.

> *"Systematic review of all peer-reviewed articles in a tightly-defined area."*

> *".. the purpose of a literature review is to convey to your audience/reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. It is not just a descriptive list of the material available, or a set of summaries. Rather, a literature review must be defined by a guiding principle (e.g. a research objective, or a problem or issue)."*

Disciplinary background is one possible influence on approaches to literature review, although it is evident that there are additional factors to do with professional role and context. A feature which emerged quite strongly in the interviews was the individual's orientation towards research, which in part was based on their role (both contractual and de facto) within their institution and also their professional self-conception. There was a strong sense articulated by one team member that '*we are not researchers'*. The members of the group defined themselves as practitioners, with only one member feeling they had a dual role as researcher *and* practitioner. There was a sense that a dedicated researcher would have completed the task of the literature review much more swiftly, efficiently and objectively than the team had done. The responses of the group suggested that they were feeling their way with the methodology, often with a sense of isolation and faltering confidence both in themselves and in the systematic process. There was a strong feeling emerging from the data that considerable time had been needed to develop an understanding of the approach. Their practitioner role in their institution also meant that this kind of work was not necessarily seen (by themselves and others) as a priority in the use of their time: '*I've just nipped in and pecked at it.'*

 Another aspect of the strong practitioner self-conception relates to the necessary pragmatism of the educational/professional developer role. There were several comments about feeling their responses to the material was very subjective and that their instinct was to immediately seek to apply what they read to the particular situations in which they worked. '*You sort of get seduced and can't help to start to interpret it in your own way'.* The team come from a range of institutions covering the full spectrum from traditional research-driven to predominantly teaching-focused. The professional programmes in learning and teaching which they lead have much in common since all fulfil the accreditation requirements of the Higher Education Academy, but they sit very differently within each institution, both organisationally and philosophically. For example, some are within staff development units and are part of a focused HR strategy whilst others are delivered within education departments alongside other academic provision. The usefulness of different literature perspectives will thus vary considerably according to the context.

As well as the pragmatics of the team members' working situations there was also a philosophical issue related to the original design of the project. The project design initially tended towards the empiricist/positivist in its approach. This followed the movement which has sought to provide a meta-analysis approach to reviews of research literature as an alternative to the narrative approach, drawing on scientific principles and rules (Hammersley, 2001). However, as the quotes earlier in this section indicate, this scientific orientation is distinctly at variance with the research philosophy of many members of the group. There *is* a recognition in the team that educational research in general and educational and professional development in particular offer under-theorised articulations of research: *'there's an awful lot of criticism at ed.developers for the way they do things, their un-researched approach and the fact that there's very little meat in research terms to a lot of what we do'.* Hammersley critiques the notion that scientific enquiry and positivist approaches need be synonymous citing, amongst others, Polanyi and his position that 'natural science necessarily relies on personal or tacit knowledge' (Hammersley, ibid, p.545). The evolution of this project has seen a process of altering the originally conceived more objective, rigorous and systematic techniques through the more intuitive approach of the practitioners. This engagement has clearly not been a simple or, indeed, comfortable one for the participants. The issue of definitions of reflective practice illustrates the point.

Project team members were each asked in the interviews what their definition of reflective practice was. It should be noted that the interviews were conducted some four months into the project. Responses highlighted the elusiveness of a clear and operational definition and the fact that the processes the team had engaged in for the project had served to complexify rather than to clarify their sense of reflective practice. *'If you'd asked me three months ago I'd have given you a one-line answer, but now we've done this project it's much more difficult'* was a typical response. The implication of the review approach is that it is a harnessing and domestication of the literature on the subject. For many participants, including the group member first quoted in this evaluation, the process of researching the literature had served rather more to open a Pandora's box of material and concepts. *'I found an enormous mass – too much – 400 references to* [my sub-review] *alone.'* It was evident, too, when asked about material that had had a significant impact on their thinking, and possibly their practice, that the examples given were invariably single papers that had spoken to particular interests or concerns, rather than the kind of overarching themes that would come from a more exhaustive enquiry. Often these examples were of a political nature.

However, at the same time as this process was going on, it was evident that the group participants viewed greater rigour in their knowledge and understanding of the literature to be something they wished to move towards. In response to the question about whether they were reflective practitioners themselves a typical response was; *'To be really reflective we need to get systematic about holding on to it…making it systematic is the bit that's missing'.* There was a real sense of tension in the data between an instinctive desire to hold the fluidity of the concept of reflective practice to maintain its pragmatic usefulness and to harness an understanding of both the notion and the literature around it. This seems to resonate with Polanyi's ideas and offer the possibility of coming to know and understand natural and social (and in this case educational) phenomena by using the rigour of the sciences coupled with more intuitive and constructivist approaches.

Conclusions

To what extent has the review been able to establish a discourse between theory and practice? To what extent, and in what ways, and why, has this discourse contributed to the effectiveness of the review?

It is evident from the data that, firstly, the project has served to sharpen and clarify the reviewers' theoretical positions in relation to their thinking about literature review in the context of educational and professional development. This has been apparent in the development of the systematic methodology to a more selective and intuitive approach. This change in approach, however, has resulted in a smaller amount of literature being included in the review than the participants would have liked. There is a sense amongst almost all the team members that an organic process of sense-making and adjustment of the review methodology has taken up quite a lot of the project time.

The project has also had the effect of developing the participants' thinking about reflective practice both as a theoretical concept and in its application to the effective delivery of professional programmes in their institutions.

Has there been any impact on practice resulting from the review, at the various levels of participation. What aspects of the review led to this impact if it did exist?

The data show that participants feel it is too early to detect a real impact on the professional programmes, but that individuals' conceptions have clarified and matured and that this gives them a different perspective which is likely in time to filter into the programmes. Rather than the literature review alone producing this result it is felt that the interaction with peers has been at least as influential in this process.

Can the review process be improved in any way, in order to improve its effectiveness or its impact on practice?

Most participants indicated that the process could be improved by a longer period of collective development of the methodology and the sharing of research as a group meeting in person more frequently. These would help to promote greater confidence amongst participants, particularly where they are novice researchers or where their experience lies in a discipline which adopts a different approach. It would also mean that philosophical positions and clarity of terms could be discussed and developed.

On a very practical level all participants found the on-line collaborative tool that was used for sharing information to be somewhat problematic in that it was difficult to use and seemed to obstruct rather than enhance communication and sharing of material and ideas. This partly related to the particular product being used. However, group members also referred to the fact that they were typically involved in the use of several on-line tools in their own institutions for various purposes and that moving in and out of various virtual communication and learning environments interrupted and inhibited thinking.

Are there any implications from the conduct of the review for the way in which such review process might be integrated into practice?

The strengths of the review have been very much seen as in the area of promoting discussion and sharing of research and other literature, providing space and a reason to engage in work which would otherwise get squeezed in everyday life. The fact that the project group was based around an existing network of educational and professional developers has apparently helped the process. The systematised nature of the review has moved on from the form in which it started and remains to some extent problematic. It may need further work and discussion by the practitioners themselves to develop it to the point where it can be readily accepted.

References for Appendix 4

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Appendix 5: A proforma for designing a directed reflective process

Aspect of the directed reflective process	Factors to consider	Specific ways in which these factors are evident within the reflective process, and help to sustain, target and deepen the process	Interactions with other factors (as appropriate)
Core reflective process: Task	Extended, cyclical, progressive or structured.		
Core reflective process: Focus	Focus in relation to the enquiry (outcomes and process); Focus in relation to reflection.		
Dialogue	The student's own voice; The voices of others; Challenge and questioning; Conceptual perspectives; Feedback; Atmosphere.		
Personal basis	Motivation; Capacity; Identity.		

Programme context	Lessons for future enquiries; Wider learning environment.		
Intended outcomes	Ability to engage in an enquiry, understanding of how to engage in an enquiry; Ability to engage in reflection; Other personal qualities or skills.		