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**The Masters in Teaching and Learning:  
Lessons to be learnt and key stakeholder  
perceptions**

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**Abstract**

This research investigates lessons to be learnt from and key stakeholder perceptions of the government-prescribed Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL). Located within the secondary school phase and higher education in the English West Midlands, this article presents findings within a multiple case study from interviews with recently qualified teachers (RQTs) who had started the MTL as newly qualified teachers (NQTs); RQTs who chose not to undertake the MTL; and Deans of Education.

Although the MTL represented a major shift in the professional development of teachers, their perceptions have generally been overlooked in academic literature, despite over 2,000 teachers in England starting the programme in 2010. Overall, respondents perceived the MTL to have its merits, although there were concerns about the programme and its implementation. Several common themes emerged, such as concern regarding the target cohorts; the impact on learning and teaching; and a lack of support/ interest from schools. Although seven of the eight universities within the region have now discarded the MTL and there is no longer any funding available for Masters level professional development for teachers in England, this article provides key messages to inform Masters level professional development for teachers.

**Keywords**

Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL); Masters level (M level) study; newly qualified teachers (NQTs); professional development; recently qualified teachers (RQTs).

**Introduction**

With the aim of improving standards in schools; the status of the teaching profession; NQT induction; and early professional development (EPD) in England, the former 'New Labour' government commissioned a review of the most highly-performing school systems in the world. One conclusion from this review was that Masters level (M level) study for teachers in Finland had been instrumental in improving the quality of 'instruction' in its schools (McKinsey, 2007). Through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), pupil attainment across the world is compared and Finland has consistently scored very highly in the last fifteen years. Influenced by the McKinsey report (2007), the *Children's Plan* (DCSF, 2007) declared that to keep pace with international competitors it was necessary to further improve the status and expertise of teachers by moving to a Masters qualified profession in England.

The creation of a Masters level profession received overwhelming support from many key stakeholders, including the teaching profession itself, teaching unions and academics (*The Teacher*, 2009; Thomas, 2016), in recognition of the complexity of teaching and the need for research-informed practice. The Universities' Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) – which represents higher education institutions (HEIs) in the United Kingdom – also agreed that the creation of a

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Masters level/ postgraduate profession could represent one of the greatest step-changes in teacher status and professionalism since teaching became an all-graduate profession in the 1980s (UCET, 2008).

### **The Masters in Teaching and Learning**

The principles of the MTL – the vehicle through which the Masters level profession was to be achieved - were set out in *Being the best for our children: Releasing talent for teaching and learning* (DCSF, 2008: 4):

We will introduce a wholly new programme ... known as ‘Masters in Teaching and Learning’ ... Our aim is that the qualification over time should be open to all teachers and ... that every teacher would want to complete it at some stage ... We need to ensure that quality finds its way to where it is most needed, including where the greatest challenges are to be found.

One reason for the move to a Masters level profession was to support children’s attainment in England, especially in ‘National Challenge’ schools – those in which fewer than 30% of pupils gained five or more ‘good’ General Certificate in Secondary Education passes including English and mathematics (DCSF, 2009). Consequently, these schools were given additional government funding to support improvement, including access to the fully-funded MTL for NQTs and newly-appointed heads of department (HoDs) employed in these schools. The MTL was also an entitlement for all NQTs in the pilot region of the North West (Hoare, 2008). Overall, 2,182 teachers started the MTL in April 2010, although the former Teaching and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) estimated that 3,000 – 4,000 NQTs were eligible to enrol (Hoare, 2010). Thereafter, it was envisaged that the MTL would spread to all NQTs across England, before being open to teachers in the first five years (the EPD stage) and later rolled out to all teachers.

Many Masters degrees have teachers among their student body, but often modules are not focused towards learning and teaching. The MTL was intended to develop and improve ‘teacher quality’ (DCSF, 2008) however, and was different from other M level programmes i.e. the programme was developed collaboratively with schools, local authorities (LAs) and HEIs; the Professional Standards (TDA, 2007) were integrated alongside M level requirements; new partnerships were established between the participant (i.e. the student), school-based coach (SBC) and HEI; and it was designed to build on initial teacher education (ITE), taking account of the NQT’s route into teaching (McAteer et al, 2010). As such, the MTL comprised a range of professional development models identified by Kennedy (2005) i.e. award-bearing; standards-based; coaching and mentoring; and community of practice, which were appropriate for NQTs and RQTs in the transitional phase as they are becoming professional educators. The benefits of mentoring and coaching are widely acknowledged (Rhodes, Stokes and Hampton, 2004; Forde and O’Brien, 2011) and underpinned by principles of reflective practice (Schön, 1983), dialogic teaching (Wells, 2004) and constructivist learning approaches (Dewey, 1904; Piaget, 1972; Bruner, 1996; Perkins, 1999). Furthermore, the MTL design recognised the efficacy of learning linked to school contexts (Walker and Dimmock, 2006) and the need to integrate the role of the school in participants’ learning to improve links between theory and practice (Simkins, 2009).

Consultation events were held for NQTs, headteachers, LA (Local Authority) NQT induction co-ordinators (LAs at that time still bore the sole responsibility for NQT induction) and representatives from ITE providers. ITE providers had been invited - rather than HEIs with responsibility for Masters level continuing professional development (CPD) - as the former Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) wanted to build on ITE and the M level Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), but also wanted the MTL to be radically different from existing Masters degrees (TDA,

2008a). Also, and without consultation, a further cohort was later added of newly-appointed HoDs in National Challenge schools.

Within weeks of teachers starting the MTL a new Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government came into power in May 2010 and withdrew funding from the programme. Maddern (2010a: 18) reported on a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010 to the TDA from Michael Gove, former Secretary of State for Education, explaining his decision:

The quality of teaching and teachers' professional development are of utmost importance, and I am committed to developing a strong culture of professional development where more teachers acquire postgraduate qualifications like Masters and Doctorates and where teachers are supported to progress further academically and deepen their subject knowledge. However, I also believe that teachers should decide for themselves which Masters level course is the right one for them and that a single Masters degree prescribed by Whitehall is not the right approach.

This statement suggested that there would be government support for higher degrees and greater choice for teachers regarding CPD. This is somewhat contradictory however, as the statement suggests that teachers should choose which course is best for them, but that this should be around subject knowledge. For neo-conservatives, subject knowledge is of prime importance (Furlong et al, 2000), but good subject knowledge is just one requirement for becoming an effective teacher. Small amounts of funding for M level CPD were granted for a few years afterwards, but subsequently withdrawn, meaning there is no longer any funding for M level CPD for teachers in England, nor any meaningful, national CPD strategy to improve standards in schools. The White Paper *Educational Excellence Everywhere* (DfE, 2016) outlines some aims for teachers to develop skills via evidence-based CPD; a new standard to help schools improve their CPD; and incentivising Teaching Schools to publish their research and CPD materials on an open-source basis, but these do not address CPD in a strategic manner for real school improvement.

This research investigates perceptions of the MTL via key stakeholders - RQTs who had started the MTL as NQTs; RQTs who chose not to undertake the MTL; and Deans of Education. Lessons to be learnt from the MTL initiative are also explored.

### **Research design**

Working within an interpretivist paradigm, this research follows a qualitative research design (Merriam, 2009) within a multiple case study to explore key stakeholders' perceptions of the MTL within one region. Data were collected via focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. The research was subject to approval by the University's ethics committee detailing matters of informed consent, the right to withdraw, academic integrity and the security of data. Anonymity of responses was assured. Data analysis consisted of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/ verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Key stakeholders interviewed comprised NQT participants i.e. RQTs who had started the MTL as NQTs and had successfully completed or were in the latter stages of completing the MTL; RQTs who had chosen not to undertake the MTL; and Deans of Education. In particular, the teachers interviewed are deemed to be reliable witnesses when it comes to understanding the MTL and yet their voices were largely ignored in the construction of policy and the implementation of the MTL. This article, therefore, addresses a significant gap when considering perceptions of the MTL. Data collected from NQT participants/ RQTs were deemed valuable, since this cohort had participated in the intended move to a Masters level profession via the MTL. Furthermore, the perspectives of RQTs who had chosen not to undertake the MTL were also valuable, to ascertain their perceptions and

reasons for not engaging with the programme. Individual interviews were undertaken with the Deans of Education, as “key players in the field who can give privileged information” (Denscombe 2003, p. 165). It was necessary to interview Deans of Education to gain the perceptions of senior leaders in higher education (HE) who had overseen a successful collaborative regional bid and had overall responsibility for the delivery of the MTL within their HEI.

Teachers were interviewed via two focus groups comprising fifteen secondary school RQTs in total. Focus groups were used to interview RQTs “to get high-quality data in a social context where people can consider their own views in the context of views of others” (Patton 2002: 386). Purposive sampling (Given, 2008) was undertaken to select teachers from across subject areas and from those who had undertaken a range of ITE routes to gain a representative cross-section of RQTs. One focus group of eight NQT participants/ RQTs was taken from a sample of those who had undertaken/ were undertaking the programme across five of the eight participating HEIs within the region. The other focus group of seven RQTs was taken from a sample of those who had chosen not to undertake the MTL. In addition, data were collected across two of the participating HEIs from Deans of Education within individual semi-structured interviews. The focus group and individual interviews were recorded and took approximately one hour.

### **Limitations of the study**

This case study is necessarily an account of perceptions of the MTL in a single region in England. The case study itself may not be generalisable, but case study research is not barred from producing general conclusions (Gomm et al, 2000). Only the voices of NQT participant respondents are captured from the student body - the other cohort of newly-appointed HoDs was not included in the research, since this was a much smaller cohort. Also, NQT participants were only taken from those who had successfully completed or were in the latter stages of completing the MTL, which does not take into account the perspectives of those who had withdrawn from the programme at an earlier stage. Furthermore, this research shows the perspectives of teachers from the secondary phase because the MTL was only open to those employed in National Challenge schools within this region and National Challenge schools were all secondary schools. Research indicates that those from the primary phase, however, are often less confident than secondary colleagues regarding M level study (Graham-Matheson, 2010), so the findings below may be exacerbated further. Finally, SBCs were not included in the research.

### **Emergent themes**

Several common themes emerged from the participant groups. Common themes comprised: concern about the target cohort of NQTs; the impact of changing government policy; the impact on learning and teaching; a lack of support/ interest from schools; and issues relating to student integration and identity.

Concerns regarding the target cohort of NQTs, due to the additional workload alongside statutory induction requirements, emerged from all three cohorts. One RQT who had undertaken the MTL remarked: *‘I found adding M level study to a high workload as an NQT very difficult’*. One RQT who had decided not to undertake the MTL commented: *‘The NQT year was really hard. I wouldn’t have been able to do it.’* Some RQTs had also decided not to undertake the MTL due to concerns about failing the programme, whilst focusing on the induction period. A typical comment was: *‘I didn’t know what would happen if I failed and was worried if I had to re-take on top of everything else.’* Passing the induction period was clearly a priority for these RQTs. Illustrative observations from the Deans can also be found below:

*‘I worry that it’ll make teachers’ lives more difficult in schools and I don’t want teachers being busier and busier.’*

'I hope sufficient space is created for NQTs ... they're not the best place to start. NQTs and heads of department in challenge schools are already under pressure – it could drive people out.'

Findings that the NQT period was not an appropriate time to start the programme concur with research by Burton and Goodman (2011) and concerns raised by the National Union of Teachers (NUT), due to the demands of induction and because NQTs who fail induction cannot continue teaching in maintained schools (*The Teacher*, 2009). The NUT told the New Labour government that, whilst being in favour of a Masters level profession and the MTL, this should have been developed in partnership with teachers and that all teachers should have had access to the qualification (*The Teacher*, 2009). The equity of NQTs being prioritised as the target cohort was also questioned by the Director of Policy at the former General Teaching Council for England (Stephens, 2010). It is widely acknowledged that NQTs find induction an especially difficult time (McNally, 2002; Ofsted, 2003; Wylie, 2008; Roberts, 2010) and these concerns were also expressed by some delegates during consultation events (TDA, 2008a). Concerns around M level study and its compatibility with professional practice for some teachers in the early stages of their career suggest, therefore, that M level professional development may be most appropriate for experienced teachers who are professionally integrated.

The impact of changing government policy was another theme to emerge from all participant groups. Some NQT participants felt that there would be a minimal overall impact and a lack of credibility in the qualification due to the withdrawal of funding. One NQT participant commented: 'As the funding was cut after one year, I don't think the MTL will make much difference nationally and I worry it'll be worthless.' This aligns with the caution urged by UCET at the developmental stage to ensure costs were properly assessed (UCET, 2008) and that the MTL was a credible qualification (Milne, 2008), despite the omission of a mandatory research component. Research and action research, which facilitates a circle of planning, action and evaluation (Lewin, 1946; McNiff and Whitehead, 2009), can offer a more transformative professional development model/ phase (Kennedy, 2005). Nevertheless, many academics worked hard to ensure the MTL was a credible M level award, with 'rigorous independence and externality' to provide 'a basis for social respect for the profession' (Field, 2010: 11). Some RQTs who had decided not to undertake the MTL perceived that government policies changed regularly and were sceptical of starting a programme which may not exist or be *de rigueur* in a few years. One RQT perceived that: 'I just thought it would come and go, along with all other government ideas - and it has. Plus, I think there are better ways for money to be spent on schools.' Such perceptions are reinforced by Chapman and Gunter (2009), who outlined the whirlwind of interventions, strategies, ideological shifts and policies launched within education since New Labour came to power and successive governments have not relented in making frequent policy changes to education. Also, it is not surprising to find that RQTs were concerned about public money, as the focus group was interviewed during a period of economic recession. The Deans also expressed concern regarding the future of the TDA and funding for the MTL. One Dean predicted: 'Looks likely that the TDA will go and probably MTL ... funding with it. If there were no credit crunch I'd be more confident.' Subsequent events have confirmed the Deans' concerns i.e. the TDA functions reverted to the Department for Education and merged with the National College for School Leadership to become the National College for Teaching and Leadership; and funding for the MTL was withdrawn. Funding for the fully-funded MTL was a welcome financial boost to many HEIs which successfully bid to deliver the programme, however, especially at a time of widespread cuts to HE (Curtis, 2009; Vaughan, 2010) and during the economic crisis, although funding for the MTL was perhaps insufficiently considered and unsustainable in difficult economic times.

The impact on learning and teaching was a theme to emerge from NQT participants and the Deans. Most NQT participants considered that the MTL had had a positive impact on learning and teaching. One NQT participant commented: *'My dissertation ... changed and improved my practice.'* These findings concur with claims that M level CPD is beneficial in improving learning and teaching (TDA, 2008b; UCET, 2008). Teachers' opinions were divided, however, as not all NQT participants felt this way and some perceived there had been no impact on learning and teaching. One NQT participant commented: *'I don't necessarily think it will make better teachers.'* Wiliam (2010) also argues that gaining a Masters degree does not make teachers any better at their job, which aligns with other literature (Wylie, 2008; Baker, 2009; Robertson, 2010). Nevertheless, Wiliam (2010) makes a distinction between other Masters degrees and the MTL i.e. other Masters degrees may not make teachers better at their job, because they were never intended for that purpose, whereas the MTL was designed with this purpose. Some RQTs also criticised the study days, considering they had taken them away from the classroom at a critical time in their learning and had a negative impact on the teaching of their pupils: *'A lot of the study days were not useful and, therefore, it felt like a waste of our time when we could have been at school teaching our students.'* Nevertheless, the module evaluations completed at the time by participants were overwhelmingly positive across the region. This suggests, therefore, that there had been some attitudinal shift over time or that some participants did not fully see the benefits of linking theory with practice or perhaps these links were not made explicit. This is an important area, as the links between theory and practice are known to be problematic, yet practice can be greatly advanced if this issue is addressed effectively (Korthagen and Kessels, 1999). Both Deans considered that the MTL had brought about improved learning and teaching via greater criticality and reflection. One Dean commented that: *'It [the MTL] supports teachers' criticality and reflective skills.'* These findings are reinforced by McAteer et al. (2010) who considered that the MTL should ensure teachers are more critical, analytical and reflective. Clearly, regularly reflecting on and linking the teaching experience to the intended objectives in a structured way informs and improves practice (Bringle and Hatcher, 1999), which is important for improving learning and teaching. The Deans also perceived that the MTL had brought about new ideas into teaching. One commented that the: *'MTL has brought an injection of new ideas into the classroom.'* Again, this is beneficial to children's attainment and school improvement, reinforcing findings above that there had been a positive impact on learning and teaching. Clearly, if the MTL has brought about some improvements in learning and teaching then this is an important issue, which warrants further investigation and development.

Another common theme emerged regarding a lack of support/ interest from schools for the MTL, according to NQT participants and RQTs who had decided not to undertake the programme. One NQT participant complained that: *'The main disadvantage was that I didn't have a great deal of support from my school.'* Clearly, some NQT participants did have some support from schools, as the findings above showed that schools had released them for study days, so NQT participants appear to be criticising the lack of support relating to the interest shown by schools or relating to induction workload. One RQT who did not undertake the MTL commented: *'My school wasn't bothered whether we did it or not.'* These findings suggest a lack of interest in M level professional development and/ or resistance from some headteachers regarding this initiative, which perhaps also shows a flaw in the consultation process. In the months prior to the launch of the MTL, there were concerns that the programme was in trouble before it had even started (Maddern, 2009a) and calls were made for greater information to be disseminated to schools to stimulate the interest of teachers and headteachers (Maddern, 2009b). It would also appear that some headteachers, although key to the success of the MTL (McAteer et al, 2010; Maddern, 2010b; 2010c), did not consider the MTL a priority or perhaps had not grasped the concept, which is perhaps understandable given the pressures placed on school senior leadership teams from the government to improve school results. If there is a further attempt to move towards a Masters level profession in England then the government of the day clearly needs to engage teachers and headteachers more

effectively in meaningful consultation by listening to and acting upon what teachers want (Thomas, 2016).

Finally, a common theme emerged regarding student integration and identity from some NQT participants and RQTs who had chosen not to undertake the MTL. Some NQT participants considered there had been minimal interaction with other peers. One commented: *'I would have liked more interaction with other students on the course, as I did feel a little isolated at times. Perhaps a blog or chance to meet up occasionally would have been helpful, particularly in the final stages.'* This highlights the importance to some students of issues such as social and academic integration (Tinto, 1975); peer-networking (Rhodes, Stokes and Hampton, 2004); and interactive learning (QAA and NUS 2012) within HE. Integration is an issue which needs to be considered further, since this has been linked to student drop-out (Rhodes and Nevill, 2004). Student integration and identity are especially problematic for part-time students, who are in full-time employment. Also, some RQTs expressed their decision not to undertake the MTL relating to a desire to become a teacher. One RQT *'wanted to concentrate on being a teacher, rather than being a student.'* This aligns with Browne-Ferrigno's (2003) research that duality of identity often brings about confusion. Clearly, there seemed to be a tension for some RQTs regarding the challenges of teaching and studentship, although it is acknowledged that good teachers are good learners (Loewenberg Ball and Cohen, 1996). As discussed above, some RQTs prioritised meeting the induction requirements and it is suggested, therefore, that professional integration may be especially important to early career teachers, as they strive to achieve a professional identity in becoming a teacher. Identity transformation may, therefore, inevitably depend on socialisation with the professional culture (Thomas, 2013) and implies that M level study may need to be delayed as some early career teachers find M level study somewhat premature, due to the professional demands of teaching.

Several other themes emerged from one of the participant groups. Themes comprised: the fully-funded nature of the programme; a preference for a subject-specific Masters degree; the opportunity for HEIs to contribute to teachers' professional development; and the impact of government-prescribed content. One positive aspect emerged from the RQTs who had chosen not to undertake the MTL, in respect of the fully-funded nature of the programme. A typical response was: *'I nearly did it because there were no fees.'* Funding was also commended by UCET (2008) as cost is known to be a barrier in the uptake of Masters degrees and, coupled with large increases in undergraduate fees, the absence of funding for M level CPD may mean that many teachers in England are too indebted to afford a postgraduate education. Although those undertaking taught Masters programmes can access student loans from September 2016 (HM Treasury, 2014), the situation is unlikely to improve significantly for teachers, who are now likely to have student debts. Some of these RQTs also expressed a preference towards a Masters degree in their own subject area, rather than a Masters in Teaching and Learning. One RQT considered: *'I might have been interested if it'd been an MSc in mathematics.'* This concurs with research that many secondary school teachers have strong subject allegiances (Smethem, 2007) and aligns with the neo-conservative stance that subject knowledge should take precedence over training in pedagogy (Furlong et al., 2000; Maddern, 2010a). In contrast, it is widely acknowledged that subject knowledge is only one requirement to become an effective teacher (Burton and Goodman, 2011; Wiliam, 2010). It is also acknowledged that primary school teachers – as generalists - may have responded differently. The Deans also considered the MTL to be an opportunity for HEIs to contribute to teachers' professional development. One Dean commented that: *'It's a real opportunity post-qualification ... Lost opportunity if we hadn't gone with MTL.'* The contribution of HEIs to teachers' professional development post-qualification is a cogent argument, since it is argued that Britain has the best HE system in the world, after the United States of America (Vaughan, 2010). This perhaps also revealed the benefits of the fully-funded MTL to HEIs, aligning with HE aspirations and recruitment to student numbers outside Higher Education Funding Council for England controls



at the time, in addition to the economic crisis. The Deans also raised concerns regarding the impact of government-prescribed content. One Dean considered that: 'The MTL will be a compromise and we'll have to live with government priorities.' This is a predictable view of some academics, as criticality and independent learning are key features of HE and academics are, therefore, likely to feel restricted and compromised by government-prescribed content. Choice is also known to be important for meaningful engagement in professional development (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003) yet the MTL was a one-size-fits-all model (Bangs, 2010; Burton and Goodman, 2011).

### **Conclusion and implications**

The intended move to a Masters level profession via the MTL, albeit brief, was a significant initiative in teacher professional development across England, from which it is important to learn. Although several benefits were perceived, the findings also show several concerns regarding the MTL and its implementation, reflecting the current state of the programme within the region i.e. seven of the eight participating HEIs have now discarded the MTL.

It is acknowledged that school contexts vary and, therefore, the MTL as a one-size-fits-all model was not necessarily going to be an effective strategy for all teachers and all schools. Also, one-size-fits-all models of professional development are contrary to the andragogic model for effective adult learning (Knowles 1990) and choice is important for meaningful engagement on programmes (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Bangs, 2010). It is suggested, therefore, that teachers need to have ownership of their own professional development and the locus of control. Nevertheless, there are some positive messages regarding the impact of a Masters level programme which was designed specifically to enhance learning and teaching.

The accounts from key stakeholders reveal important insights into the MTL and its implementation, which could be used by policymakers to inform future professional development initiatives. Key stakeholder perceptions could also be used by HEIs to inform and develop Masters level provision for teachers. For example, these findings indicate that M level study may be more appropriate for experienced teachers who are professionally-integrated, so HEIs could target this particular cohort of teachers, whilst still encouraging NQTs to undertake M level study but at an appropriate pace, which allows them sufficient time to focus on induction and supports them to meet induction requirements. Furthermore, HEIs could highlight the impact M level study can have on learning and teaching, when teachers undertake modules designed to improve this aspect of their practice, and also make the links between theory and practice more explicit. HEIs could also encourage teachers to undertake action research as a CPD model which can have a greater transformative impact on practice (Kennedy, 2005) and invest more time in discussing with headteachers the transformative impact M level study and action research can have on school improvement. HEIs could also discuss with headteachers the merits of investing in funding or partially funding M level CPD in relation to its potential high impact for relatively low cost, in comparison with one-day courses which also incur significant costs for cover and disruption to pupils' learning during the school day. Consultation is also key and HEIs need to listen to what teachers and headteachers want and need from CPD. Finally, HEIs need to consider strategies, such as social media and other online forums, to support the integration of part-time students who work full-time and to support teachers in gaining an appreciation of the linkage between theory and practice, which in turn may demonstrate the complementary identity of teachers as learners.

Overall, it is suggested that a Masters level profession is a highly commendable aim and that M level professional development provides teachers with a professional language and confidence with which to articulate their practice. It is suggested, however, that the MTL - as the vehicle for achieving the Masters level profession - and its implementation had several flaws and would need rethinking to meet the aims of the *Children's Plan* (DCSF, 2007). Aspirations for a Masters level profession and

the MTL challenged the technician view of teaching as 'a craft' however, and could have been a key strategy to improve standards, the status of the profession, NQT induction and EPD in England. These are still very important aims which are yet to be addressed and if a Masters level profession and/ or the MTL is no longer the driver to achieve these aims then a new direction needs to be articulated by the current administration to realise these improvements. The absence of national policy around teacher professional development in England, however, makes for an incoherent and chaotic scene (Thomas, 2016).

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