

# A world of knowledge: EdD impact case



In 2011 I completed a Masters in Education with the OU. I then went on to complete an EdD investigating what and how beginning teachers can learn from their mentors' tacit knowledge.

## Teaching and Learning

Having trained as a secondary school geography teacher in 1997 and taught in comprehensive schools for ten years, it was always second nature for me to think about learning new things (e.g. recent tectonic hazards, current events etc.) and how they could be useful in my work with students.

I became a school-based PGCE mentor in 2001; helping to support new teachers into the profession—I loved this aspect of my work and went on to take on the role of curriculum tutor at a local university which allowed me to develop this role more.

The flexibility of organising reading and studying around other commitments was a high priority and one which led me to complete both my Masters and EdD with the OU.



## Space and reason

Working with beginning teachers steered my decision to look into the types of knowledge they work with and are trying to learn during their PGCE.

I focused on 'tacit knowledge' and spent a large part of my EdD reading around how this type of knowledge could be defined and conceptualised.

Following an EdD encouraged me to prioritise time to read and to plan out ideas, whereas prior to this the mechanics and day to day demands of my job always took priority.

Reading, thinking and discussing new ideas and ways of looking at my work were all motivational aspects of undertaking the EdD.

This activity supported new ideas in my work and became integrated into my practice

**"IT WAS REALLY USEFUL Y'KNOW TO GET INSIDE HER HEAD"**

The primary data collection I gathered as part of my EdD research involved following three partnerships as case studies, a focus group and some online surveys.

An unexpected aspect of gathering this data was to see the participants benefitting from the intervention I designed. A flipped approach to lesson feedback resulted in beginning teachers accessing experienced teachers tacit knowledge [of their own teaching practices] and revealed "really useful" ideas.

As an insider researcher (also tutor to the beginning teachers) this was a positive and rewarding experience. Ethical decisions were complex and paramount at the design stage of my research.



## Learning from supervision

My supervisors, Dr Maggie Smith and Dr Gwyneth Owen-Jackson, were a key support for me in the following ways:

They had worked in teacher education for many years and encouraged me to take the step into the EdD reassuring me that the process was relevant and achievable.

The guidance on what was involved was beneficial as the regular submissions seemed daunting at first. The guidance on what was needed for each submission and the subsequent feedback, both on the writing structure and the ideas within, were helpful and motivational.

I was able to steer my own project, taking the ideas I saw as most important and relevant forwards in my work. The supervision guidance I received helped me to form opinions of my own and build my understanding; for example, in the skills of justification, criticality and evidence use. This was also directly relevant to my professional work as a teacher educator.

The regular meetings were flexible and tailored to my questions and concerns at the time. I felt able to discuss ideas in a supportive environment and this was particular beneficial at the weekend seminar events.

## Taking the EdD experience forwards

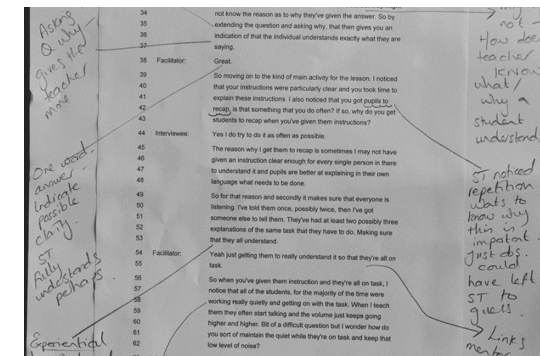
Critically reading others' research and completing my own research has helped me to understand the building blocks of how beginning teachers may come to approach this themselves in their work. This has aided my explanations and pedagogical approach to teaching sessions on the PGCE.

Using the findings of my research on tacit knowledge has been helpful in designing lesson observation methods which encourage beginning teachers to access the tacit knowledge of their mentor teachers. This can uncover key ideas and information which allow the beginning teachers to understand teacher operations in the classroom at a deeper level. Part of my work acknowledged the fact that lesson observation can be considered 'boring' and 'pointless' and the flipped lesson debrief (with beginning teachers asking the questions) has been a successful implementation on the PGCE

## EYE ON THE DATA

### Decisions Decisions

Opportunities to meet other researchers on the EdD programme face-to-face at weekend seminars were useful in considering the less directed aspects of my research. With so many ways to analyse the quantities of data (my early annotations and categorising attempts are below!) listening to how others were going about their research was fantastic.



What does it all mean?

