How do I improve my leadership as a team leader in vocational education in FE?

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Module : Methods of Educational Enquiry
Date : Autumn 2002

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Abbreviations

AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education
CIF	The Commons Inspection Framework
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
FE	Further Education

GNVQ   General National Vocational Qualifications

MA   Master in Arts

MEE   Managing Educational Enquiry

TES   Times Education Supplements

Introduction

The aim of this assignment is to plan a small-scale enquiry, which will focus on the question:

> ***How do I improve my leadership as a team leader in vocational education in further education (FE)?***

Three years ago, I was appointed team leader for the Vocational ICT programme courses at The City of Bath College[1]. Shortly after, I joined the MA programme at the University of Bath. I had a clear aim in mind - to increase my theoretical knowledge about educational leadership. To date, I have completed four MA modules based on educational management. With my dissertation fast approaching, it is time to enquire into my own leadership practice and put to test some of the much theory-based knowledge of leadership gained through these modules. So I joined Jack Whitehead's class of Methods of Educational Enquiry (MEE). I am hoping that this assignment will enable me to plan a small-scale enquiry into my leadership practice. As leadership in further education (FE) has been the assignment theme throughout my MA study, it has been my desire to understand how my leadership style influences my team and subsequently the students' outcomes.

By undertaking this enquiry methods module, I hope to gain an in-depth and practical awareness of the various methods available for planning an educational enquiry. I will then be able to use the most effective methods productively to conduct the actual enquiry for my dissertation. The outcome of this assignment will enable me to make more informed choices into how and where to direct my resources for further studies during my dissertation.

To improve the readability of this assignment, I have divided it into four sections: *Context*, *Methodology*, *Analysis* and *Conclusion*. Context is intended to review leadership literature, the perspectives and the context of the enquiry. Methodology will engage into the methods of action research, the research design, data collection and ethical issues. In the Analysis section I will discuss the limitations of the research. Finally, a summary of this MEE assignment will be provided in the Conclusion section.

Context

This section includes a review of leadership literature that will inform the focus, the perspectives and the context of the enquiry.

Since 1980, leadership has become the newly influential domain of educational management. In the school sector, effective leadership has long been identified by many (Halinger and Heck, 1998 and Day, Harris and Hadfield, 2001) to name but a few, as crucial to good school management. Studies such as School Matters project in the UK in the late 1980's were categorical in their support for 'purposeful leadership', (Mortimer, Sammons et al, 1988). The authors saw a direct link between strong leadership and high standards of pupil achievement. At school level it was found that leadership does make a difference to student outcomes and school effectiveness. In fact, much of the research into educational leadership has been school-based and focused on the impact of leadership on student outcomes and/or school effectiveness in a more general sense. Yet there is little published research on the impact of leadership on team effectiveness and student outcomes in further education.

Many theories exist as to what constitutes effective leadership and what qualities or characteristics an effective leader should possess. Day et al, 2001, argue that effective leadership is defined and driven by individual values, visions and integrity. They identify personal qualities and professional competencies common to effective leaders. There is no reason to believe that effective leadership in FE should be any different. Additionally, at team leader level, effective leadership in FE is a matter of exercising a balance between people skills, interpersonal skills and communication skills (Horsfall, 2001). From personal experience, team effectiveness is the ability of the team leader to meet the needs of the team members and bring out the best in individual members. The ability of the team leader to create, maintain and develop an effective team is, in my view, one of the key ingredients to successful student outcomes.

In April 2001, The Commons Inspection Framework (CIF)[2] was introduced in further education. The framework has brought about changes in the focus of leadership in colleges. Most FE employees, staff and managers, would agree that its introduction has led to changes in the leadership style of both middle and senior managers - whether the change is one of degree, comes from a different approach or puts a fresh stress on something that was already present (Martinez, 2000). The 'test' of leaders and of leadership is now firmly on their effectiveness in raising achievement and supporting all learners. It is not surprising that educational leadership has recently been receiving a great deal of attention as part of the central government drive to improve standards of pupil and student achievement in the UK. In this assignment it is my intention to plan an enquiry into my leadership. The outcome of the enquiry will enable me to analyse and evaluate the nature of the influence I exert as a team leader (middle manager) in supporting the team to raise student achievement in further education.

For the past three years that I have been team leader for the Vocational ICT programme at The City of Bath College, the achievement rates for the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) ICT have remained significantly above the National Benchmark rate[3]. I would like to think that my leadership

has contributed to the continued high achievement results of my Vocational ICT courses[4]. However, I know that tracing the link between leadership and student achievement is not an easy task. There are many other variables, for example, student motivation, that contribute to student achievement. It is beyond the scope of this assignment to further discuss other variables that contribute to student achievement. Nonetheless, I believe there is still scope for a small-scale enquiry into leadership in FE and its role in supporting team members in raising students' performance.

Vocational education is important to me and I am passionate about it. I believe many learners who have chosen college over sixth form schooling have a more positive attitude to learning than when they left school. A recent research found that almost 9 out of 10 school leavers with a negative attitude, who continued their studies at FE colleges, believed they are now more confident in their ability to learn and have a greater enthusiasm for their subject (Crequer, 2002). Most of the students who took part in the research were poor academics with low motivation, low self-esteem and low confidence. I believe the vocational programmes at colleges of further education give these learners a second chance - another opportunity to improve their education and move forward in life. I feel it is a privilege to teach these students. This is what drives my working life - being able to make a difference to them.

It is therefore important to me, as a team leader, to be clearly focused on providing a leadership approach that will facilitate and support teaching and learning that are conducive to the type of students who choose to go to FE college. For this I need to be aware of teaching and learning strategies for the team to adopt. The uses of '*student-centred teaching and learning approaches*' and '*individual tutoring*' where students feel supported and valued are typical strategy examples. As an experienced exam board examiner, I am able to apply my exam board expertise, subject expertise and assessment knowledge to seek changes in the teaching and learning processes in my programme area. I believe the expertise identified enhances my leadership skills and has contributed to maintaining the high achievement rates of the Vocational ICT students' outcome for the last three years[5]. In leadership research, Sawbridge (2000) describes this approach as drawing upon the concept of instructional leadership[6]. These strategies to raise student achievement are important and are significant variables. Additionally, in my view, the response at course team level is also part of the key to success. The methods of capturing, collating and validating the views of my team members on how I lead the team are the main concern of the enquiry.

How do I explain my influence on the team? What leadership qualities do I possess that facilitate an effective team? What can I do to find out about these qualities in myself? Reflecting on my own practice and my influence on others strikes me as a fascinating way to carry out this enquiry on my leadership and its influence on the team. The Methodology section, which follows, will further develop the research design.

Methodology

In this section I will engage into the methods of action research, the research design, data collection and ethical issues.

The main focus of this assignment is 'how do I improve my leadership as a team leader?' With the emphasis being on 'I', the approach that I will take to complete this assignment is through action research[7]. The idea of self-reflection [the 'living I'[8]] is central to action research (Mcniff, 2002:4). The self-reflective nature of action research is well documented (Barret and Whitehead, 1985; Kemmis, 1988; Bassey, 1998; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Mcniff, 2002) to name but a few. I am very much interested in finding out how my team, as individual members, view my leadership and its impact on them in raising student achievement. As Mcniff (2002:3), points out, Action Research is based on "…the deep need to experience truth and beauty in our personal and professional lives." Referring to 'I' as the first-person, Reason and Bradbury (2001:386) argue "… the first-person research practice brings enquiry into more and more of our moments of action - not as outside researchers but in the whole range of everyday activities." This action research addresses the ability of 'me' as the researcher, to foster an enquiring approach to my own working life as a team leader and create my own 'living educational theory' (Whitehead, 1993:68).

Barret and Whitehead (1985) propose an Action Research framework, which focuses on a process of reflection to promote change and enhance professional learning. The authors' framework, which is outlined below, was later adapted by McNiff (2002).

1. What is your concern?
2. Why are you concerned?
3. What do you think you could do about it?
4. What kind of data could you collect to help you make some judgement about what is happening?
5. How would you collect such evidence?
6. How would you check that your judgement about what is happening is reasonable, fair and accurate?

Having identified my leadership as the concern, I will follow the above framework throughout this enquiry.

In a recent meeting my College Principal described leadership, as part of personality and that personality is a part of leadership. Later, reflecting on the dialogue that took place during the meeting[9], the power of this phrase became more apparent and important to me, in both my personal and professional life. Several colleagues have previously commented on my positive outlook and approachable and friendly personality. In a recent 'Myers-Briggs Type Indicator'[10] test, my reported type was warm-hearted and conscientious. It has also been said that I have compromising skills and positive influence[11]. I believe these personality traits and skills help gain the trust and support of my team members. In my view, they are vital skills to team working. As a leader, I strive to carry people with me and inspire them. I would like to discover more about my personality and the part it plays on how I lead my team.

I work with a close-knit team of five staff. For the past 3 years I firmly believe I have, through my values, personality and professionalism influenced a friendly, highly motivated group of dedicated team members who are equally passionate about vocational education. I understand that people at all levels within a team or organisation can make a difference and influence student learning. In this action research enquiry, I would like to examine different aspects of my leadership and analyse my influence on the team - how we perform as a team through

coordinated or joint activity[12] in our effort to raise achievement within our ICT programme area.

Data Collection

I will collect data about my leadership situation. This will be in various forms: *journal, audio and videotape recording* and *questionnaire*. A journal[13] will be used to regularly record dialogues, thoughts and events as they happen during my day-to-day routines. The notes can be transcribed into a report at the end of the enquiry. The importance of keeping the journal updated regularly is crucial because the recorded events will be the captured evidence that form the basis of the enquiry. As such it should be a true reflection of the event rather than what I felt should have happened.

I will check my leadership practice in team meetings, lesson observation feedback to team member and to individual team members' yearly performance reviews by audio and/or video taping these events. 'Critical friends[14]' from the Tuesday Evening Session at the University of Bath and two other team leaders at The City of Bath College can then comment upon this evidence. The opinions of the critical friends will be vital when evaluating the quality of the research.

To determine the attitude of the team and the nature of my influence on them, I intend to use a questionnaire to gauge their views and perception of my leadership. The questionnaire will need to be reviewed before being given out to the samplers. The reviewers will, again, be the critical friends. Once the questionnaire has been reviewed, evaluated and amended, I will test them with the team members in my vocational programme area. The questionnaire will include questions that will focus on leadership issues, for example, the level of support given by the team leader to the team member and the perceived role of the team leader as viewed by the team member.

I propose to formulate the questionnaire using the Likert scale[15] format of the "strongly agree … strongly disagree" style (Oppenheim, 2001:195). Bearing in mind that attitudes are emotional, I will try to avoid the stilted, rational approach when writing the attitude statements for the questionnaire. The Likert scales tend to perform very well when it comes to a reliable, rough ordering of people with regard to a particular attitude (Oppenheim, 2001:195). The author observes that the "reliability of Likert scales tends to be good and, partly because of the greater range of answers permitted to respondents… " as the positive aspect of this type of scale. The measurement of attitude of the participant team members is one of the main concerns with this type of data gathering. Oppenheim (2001:195) also recognised the "… lack of reproducibility" and that "…the scale offers no metric or interval measures, and it lacks a neutral point, so one does not know where scores in the middle range change from mildly positive to mildly negative" as a criticism levelled against this type of scale. A 5-point scale measurement, with negative and positive statements representing two sides of the same point, will be used to measure the level of agreement as responded by the participant team members. The 5-point scale will increase the validity of the questionnaire design and allows for quantitative data to be presented. I will use graphical charts or a table format to deduce the pattern of responses. The use of graphical charts will improve the presentation and interpretation of the responses. Bearing in mind that the purpose of this research is to help me understand my leadership

influence on the team, and in the light of their perception, change or improve the way I lead the team, the participant's attitude is essential in meeting the purpose of this research

The use of videotape will enable me to engage in dialogue with the team members participating in the enquiry. I will be able to enquire about their perception and impact of my leadership on the team. Since I am interested in observing my own leadership practice, the use of videotape as a tool for recording my teams' views and perception of my leadership, is vital in capturing evidence for this enquiry. As for the videotape data, I intend to analyse the video footage and transcribe the relevant parts of any dialogue as fully as possible. The video will increase my awareness of my values and intentions in my professional life. The video will capture how I communicate my values to the team members and help with the validation process with what I actually do in my leadership practice. This will provide me with effective feedback, which I will use for self-reflection on my leadership style when writing the final report, which will include both qualitative and quantitative data. However, I have to be prepared to acknowledge my teams' views even if these may conflict with my own perceptions. Whitehead (1993) believes that in viewing videotapes of our own educational practice, we can see our own 'I's existing as living contradictions. He advocates that 'this revelation, through the visual record, is crucial for the reconstruction of educational theory' Whitehead (1993:70). He reminds us that when we view ourselves on video, we can see and experience our 'I' containing content in itself - we see ourselves as a living contradiction, holding educational values whilst at the same time negating them. The author, citing King (1987), maintains that integrating such contradictions in the presentations of our claims to know our educational practice, we can construct descriptions and explanations for the educational development of individuals.

As their team leader I will also be asking my team members their perception of my leadership style. Some participants may not be comfortable expressing their views about me (their team leader) so openly, to me. Issues about 'honesty and power relations' may arise (Cohen et al, 2000: 66).

Ethical Issues

Whilst researching this assignment, I became aware of the ethical issues that relate with protecting individual rights, namely seeking the participants' agreement, preserving their anonymity and gaining their permission to do the research. As Cohen et al (2000:62), observe 'the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity'. To reinforce the importance of anonymity, the authors also quote Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) who said 'the obligation to protect the anonymity of research participants and to keep research data confidential is all-inclusive'. As a researcher, I have a responsibility to protect particular individuals because insensitive handling of their attitudes and observations of my leadership may damage the trust they had put in me. Being their team leader, this responsibility is even more significant. Before gathering any data, I will write[16] to the participant team members to seek their permission and assistance in this research. With the questionnaire, I will enclose a covering letter requesting their permission, explaining the purpose of the research and the relevant ethical issues relating to protecting individual rights and preserving their anonymity.

The question of anonymity will further arise when videotaping and audio taping events such as lesson observation feedback and team meetings. I will need to address this issue, as the anonymity of the individual participants will be reduced. Individuals cannot be disguised

As I will be working with adults who are also my peers and team members, I will need to be clear about the nature of my research. It is important that they know what I will be doing from the outset. I will be as open as possible and I will explain this clearly to the participant team members. The 'Enquiry Timescale'[17] and the cover letter[18] will partly fulfil this ethical practice. I need to gain their full cooperation and they need to gain my trust. As mentioned earlier, I work with a close-knit team and there is already a good relationship established between the participants and me (the researcher). By adhering to good ethical practices, I will maintain the good relations and the sense of rapport between us. Cohen et al, (2000:66) remind us that this will further increase the '"… feeling of trust and confidence." Throughout the enquiry, I will keep the participants fully informed of the progress. It is also important that they are fully aware that their responses will be solely used for the purpose of this enquiry[19].

Analysis

In this section I will discuss the limitations of the enquiry.

The claim I am making is that my leadership style influences an effective team and that the purpose of this research is to further enquire upon how I improve my leadership. However, I am aware of the need to validate this claim, preferably using evidence from several sources. This will ensure triangulation[20] of the research.

The design of a journal to record my personal observations and thoughts as the researcher and those of the participant will be one of the sources of triangulation. Cohen et al (2000:294) argue that provided such recorded accounts of events are authentic, "… there is no reason why they should not be used as scientific tools in explaining people's actions." To increase triangulation I will, as explained earlier, record events such as: lesson observation feedback, team meetings and performance reviews with the participant team members, as they take place. The dialogues that will take place will be recorded either by audiotape or videotape.

The use of the questionnaire constructed using the Likert scales, will further inform the validity of the data collection. They will provide more precise information about respondents' degree of agreement or disagreement. Respondents tend to prefer this to a simple agree/disagree score (Oppenheim, 2001). The questionnaire will further increase triangulation.

As a researcher in this action research, I am part of the data collection team. Therefore, there is the possibility that my influence on the interpretation of the research may be biased. Once the data is collected, I will analyse the responses and explain any influence my leadership style has on the team. Whilst explaining this influence, I will ensure that any judgements I make are reasonable, fair and accurate by using the evidence gathered. Critical friends will play a crucial role in validating my interpretation. The validity of hypothesis produce by action research depends on aiding people to act more intelligently and skilfully (Elliot, 1991). The author argues that 'theories [in action research] are not validated independently and then applied to

practice - they are validated through practice' (Elliot, 1991:69)

Once the initial thoughts of the team member have been collated and validated, I will need to evaluate the enquiry: whether my leadership style and values have an influence on the team and what role, if any, does it play in supporting the team to raise student achievement. The importance of evaluating the enquiry is so that:

- If there are shortfalls in my leadership, then I can formulate strategies to improve it
- I can gain a substantiated insight into how the team view my leadership and its influence on them and review my leadership role in the light of the enquiry

The above evaluation criteria correspond to McNiff's[21] Action Research model.

Conclusions

The aim of this assignment has been to plan a small-scale enquiry, which focused on the question: *How do I improve my leadership as a team leader in vocational education in FE?*

Using an Action Research framework, I have been afforded a good understanding of the concepts of validity, reliability and triangulation of data gathered to support my leadership claim. I fully appreciate the role of the critical friends' voices in maintaining a systematic evaluation procedure, which is essential for moving the research forward. In terms of ethical practice, protecting the sensitivity, anonymity and confidentiality of each participant and their responses are very important ethical issues that I will need to seriously address, at all stages, when conducting this action research.

The quality of the research is dependent upon the methods used to collect data that will inform the enquiry: the personal journal, the use of audio and video tape recordings and questionnaire. These methods will enable me, as the researcher, to personalise the research in my own FE context. (Dadds et al, 2001). As the researcher and being fully involved in the data collection, there is a possibility that the external validity may be compromised - my interpretation of the research may be biased. However, internal controls, in the form of critical friends, will ensure this in not the case.

Having been a team leader for only three years, I am relatively new to leadership and I still have a lot to learn. But through action research, I have begun to reflect on my knowledge of leadership gained through previous studies of MA educational management modules and through personal and professional experience. Throughout the research, I was fully aware of the social intent of my focus - the criterion being that I plan to find out how I can improve my leadership for the benefit of my team and for my professional learning. For the benefit of my team I would like to maintain an effective team. A team that can work together, share good practice and resources, explore problems and resolve difficulties. As a team leader, I need to provide an environment that will create the right conditions to facilitate such opportunities.

Enquiring into my professional practice in terms of my leadership influence on the team and reflecting upon it will be central to my dissertation research. The outcome of this MEE assignment has provided the foundation for further research for my dissertation. I am now in a

better position to apply the methods and understanding of action research in my forthcoming dissertation. For this, I will continue to progress-check the journey of my professional learning as a team leader and make any changes in my leadership practice in light of the research outcome. I intend to build a dedicated website and share the outcome with other team leader practitioners. I hope to reach a wider audience of team leaders and as a 'knowledge-creator'[22] be able to share good practice in terms of FE team leadership in a similar vocational context, thus bringing my "…embodied knowledge as a professional educator into the public knowledge-base of the Academy."[23] I would expect further feedback from team leader practitioners in similar vocational settings. Being in the public domain, my enquiry would be subjected to further scrutiny and vetting. As professionals, their feedback would provide further validation to the team leadership research and thus add credibility [or not] to the claim I am making. One advantage of this is "…such knowledge might help us avoid drawing far-reaching conclusions about instructional practices from experimental studies carried out in rarefied settings." (Snow, 2001).[24]

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Appendix

I   Enquiry Timescale

Tasks	Oct 02	Nov 02	Dec 02	Jan 03	Feb 03	Mar 03	Apr 03	May 03	Jun 03
Journal recording and compilation									
Videotape & audiotape lesson observation, team meetings and performance reviews									
Send questionnaire to participant team member									
Collect and analyse questionnaire									
Discuss video and audio records with critical friends									
Transcribe video and audio records									
Compile final report									
Start dissertation									

II   Ongoing Journal Recording and Compilation

28 Oct 02

- Staff meeting, which I chaired as Programme Area Leader.
- Discussed students at risk. One member of staff is having issues with some AVCE Year 2. Some of these students are "unteachable", she said. She implied that the tutors "mollycoddle" some of these students too much. One lecturer walked out of the meeting because she took offence at the latter statement. This led me to question my own leadership. I was unsure how to handle the situation. I went to talk to the lecturer who walked out and tried to persuade her to rejoin the meeting, but she refused saying was better she stayed away because she would say something she would regret to the other lecturer.
- I later spoke to another team leader and asked his opinion of how he would deal with such a situation. He gave me a copy of the book 'Working with difficult people'. That evening I read the chapters relevant to my situation. It was an interesting book with a common sense approach to working with difficult people in different work settings.
- During the meeting, the same lecturer had refused to post her assignments and handouts on the student shared area on the College network. This was in direct answer to her complaint that the students keep loosing her handouts. How did I handle her complaint? Which aspect of my leadership did I exert? Was I positive in my approach to get her to see the benefit of posting her work on the student access area? Was I supportive/communicative?

22 Nov 02

Meeting with the Principal @ 11:30

- The meeting with the Principal went quite well. She started by explaining the purpose of the meeting, which we both agreed, was open. We agreed that I should give her an overview of the courses that come under my programme area and that this would give her insight into the main issues.
- We talked about the Association of Colleges meeting she attended recently. She commented that Chris Woodhead was a guest speaker and that he argued that schools should not force over 14 yr

olds to stay at school - that a vocational programme would suit some of these students better than staying on at school. He was referring to the Government's drive to have XX number of students in HE by 2005/7

- We then talked about another gentleman - Ken Robinson who is disabled and yet was able to walk to the podium and delivered such a powerful speech that captivated his audience. Ken talked about creative learning and how important it is to foster this in FE. How this could turn the learning experience of a student from negative to positive. I took the opportunity to comment on the lecturer who finds some AVCE ICT Yr2 students unteachable.
- The Principal made some suggestions on how to handle this situation:
  - Have a meeting with the lecturer concerned. Talk about issues. Ask how she feels about things. What she thinks would be the solution.
  - Be positive, get the lecturers involved in the discussion.
  - Coaching lessons. Methods of coaching the lecturer. Talk to them rather than at them.
  - Meeting with principal brought up an important statement: "Leadership is part of personality and personality is a part of leadership".

26 Nov 02

- Meet with the Tuesday Evening group. Jack distributed a draft of my assignment. How would you test your influence on the team? Turn the questions into claim and then seek to claim the statements. Took out case study methodology.

21 Jan 03

Meeting with colleague who was having difficulties managing AVCE Yr2 students in her classroom.

Put into practice some of the tips (College Principal) had discussed with me[25]. After meeting with colleague, she commented on my positive influence and compromising skills. She expressed gratitude for my support and felt she could overcome her classroom management issue with my support.

III   The City of Bath College Achievement Data for AVCE & GNVQ ICT courses from 2000 to 2002

Qualification	2000		2001		2002	
	National Benchmark	COBC*	National Benchmark	COBC*	National Benchmark	COBC*
GNVQ Intermediate ICT (GNVQ)	65.0%	81.8%	69.0%	80.8%	66.0%	76.5%
Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education in ICT (AVCE)	55.0%	74.0%	77.0%	84..2%	57.0%	90.0%

* COBC = The City of Bath College
Source of data: http://www.lscdata.gov.uk

IIII   Letter to participant team members

Dear Colleague

The reason for writing to you is to ask for some assistance with my MA research that I am

currently carrying out. I am investigating my practice in leadership as a team leader. The aim of the research is to inform and improve my leadership in the way I lead The City of Bath College Vocational ICT team.

I would be grateful if you would grant me permission to videotape or audiotape joint activities such as team meetings and one-to-one activities such as: lesson observation feedback and/or individual performance review.

Soon I will also be distributing a questionnaire for you to complete. I am interested in finding out how my leadership style influences and support you, the team member, in raising the achievement of our vocational ICT students.

Your name will not appear in any published documents without your consent. Your consent and approval will also be sought prior to the publication of material derived from the research.

May I thank you in anticipation for your help, support and cooperation.

Yours faithfully

Daisy Walsh

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[1] The City of Bath College is a college of further education. It runs a large number of vocational programmes including Vocational 'A' Levels in ICT and General National Vocational Certificate in ICT for which I am the team leader.

[2] See Appendix V

[3] See Appendix III

[4] See Appendix III

[5] See Appendix III

[6] Instruction Leadership: a focus form of transformational leadership in which change is sought to teaching and learning processes and to improving student outcomes. The instructional leader needs to know and apply subject knowledge, exam board and assessment knowledge and teaching and learning techniques (Horsfall, 2001).

[7] Jean McNiff describes Action Research as,'…an approach that encourages practitioners to be in control of their own lives and contexts… A term which refers to a practical way of looking at your own work to check that it is as you would like it to be.' (jeanmcniff.com,2002, p.3-4)

[8] Quote from Jack Whitehead during our Tuesday Evening MEE sessions.

[9] See Appendix II - Journal Recording and Compilation: 22 Nov 02

[10] See Appendix VII - Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Answer Sheet & Report Form)

[11] See Appendix II- Journal Recording and Compilation: 21 Jan 03

[12] Joint activities could be in the form of lesson observation feedback or performance review of individual team member

[13] See Appendix for the ongoing Journal Recording and Compilation

[14] Your critical friend (also called a 'critical colleague' or 'learning partner') is someone whose opinion you value and who is able to critique your work and help you see it in a new light. (McNiff, 2002:19)

[15] Named after Renis Likert, the Likert scales is a technique for the measurement of attitudes

[16] See Appendix IIII

[17] See Appendix: Enquiry Timescale

[18] See Appendix IIII

[19] See Appendix IIII

[20] "Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human

behaviour" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:112)

[21] McNiff (2002) Action Research framework adapted from Whitehead (1985).

[22] See Appendix VI - Jack Whitehead's e-mail: Feedback to an MEE student's draft assignment.

[23] See Appendix VI - Jack Whitehead's e-mail: Feedback to an MEE student's draft assignment.

[24] See Appendix VI - Jack Whitehead's e-mail: Feedback to an MEE student's draft assignment.

[25] Journal Recording and Compilation: 21 Nov 02