CONTINUITY OR CHANGE? THE INITIAL IMPACT OF THE POST-McCRONE AGREEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Changes in teachers' work, designed to modernise the teaching profession, and derived from the Agreement reached following the 'McCrone Report, A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century' in 2000, began to be introduced in Scotland in 2001. The spirit of the original report emphasised change of several types and recommended moves to enhance professional autonomy.

This paper offers an initial analysis of the impact of these changes on teachers' work, continuing professional development (CPD), careers and autonomy. The findings reported are drawn from 128 teachers in their fifteenth year of teaching, who have taken part since 1988 in a longitudinal study which has explored teachers' work, careers and development. Data were collected by questionnaire from the full sample and by interview from a sub-set.

The analysis is shaped by Kelly's GLAD model for reviewing change and concludes that the initial impact of the changes on teachers and their views of the changes are not uniform.

INTRODUCTION

Alterations in the nature of teachers' work frequently come about as unexpected and unplanned by-products of changes elsewhere, for example as consequences of developments in curriculum, the management of schools or local authority reorganisation. Occasionally however there are initiatives which are specifically designed to alter teachers' work, and this paper explores one such redesign. It considers the impact on work of a government-sponsored inquiry (the McCrone inquiry) into the professional conditions of work of teachers in Scotland. The origins of the inquiry were numerous and included teacher resistance to new developments in response to major and long term workload issues and concerns about teacher supply and retention, given problems in England. In the run up to the inquiry there was concern expressed (EIS, 1999) that it should not confine itself to pay and conditions, but should consider the circumstances in which teachers worked including "being forced to spend more time out of the classroom", the "unchecked and under-resourced" pace of educational reform, class sizes and undervaluing of teachers.

These comments reflected growing concerns over the preceding period about how a new teaching contract introduced following teacher industrial action in the mid 1980s, coupled with major initiatives on curriculum, assessment and testing, and school governance and management had contributed to a significant increase in demands on teachers, shifts in the composition of teachers' work and changing career opportunities. The inquiry itself must be understood against the background of the local historical and the national and global context.

Reviewing the recent historical local scene inevitably involves selection from many different changes during the period. The key criterion for inclusion here is relevance to changes in teachers' work and careers. In Scotland, the all-graduate entry to the profession, a dream since 1865 (Osborne, 1996) was achieved with exclusive entry through four-year BEd or one year postgraduate qualifications in the late 1980s. The new post of senior teacher was introduced, altering career ladders. Curriculum 'guidelines' were introduced for pupils aged 5–14 with further changes to the secondary school curriculum and changes in assessment. Changes in expectations held of school leaders, towards more managerial roles, and greater

external accountability with its associated bureaucracy changed the nature of working relationships and clarified line management in schools. In addition it was slowly accepted that staff development, later termed professional development, the acquisition of new skills and understandings, would be crucial in sustaining relevant education in a rapidly changing world. To an extent all these changes reflected wider changes in the nature of work and careers (as traced by for example, Sennett, 1998), which brought more flexible (and less secure) working with more temporary work available, more central control and micromanagement of public services with increased formal accountability and its associated bureaucracy and intensification of work. Modernisation of professional work and a reduction in the status of professional work and in professional autonomy have been flagged by many researchers including Ozga (1998), Smyth and Shacklock (1998), Hargreaves (1994). Additional contextual changes were reflected in debates about work-life balance and shared responsibilities for parenting. Changes in the conception and expectations of career, including professional careers, have led to multiple or serial careers. Global and UK wide concerns about teacher supply logically followed from these changes. All these formed a backdrop for the work of the Inquiry.

THE INQUIRY AND ITS IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

The Committee of Inquiry into teachers' pay and conditions was established in 1999. It received views from teachers, local authorities, professional bodies and Institutions, parents and pupils, and commissioned comparative studies of workload and remuneration in the public sector. The final report, published in late 2000 (SEED, 2000), offered a concise analysis of issues and a strong set of recommendations. These were discussed by government, the teacher unions and their employers and a negotiated Agreement proposing a raft of changes was put to teachers in Feb 2001. Eighty per cent of those who voted supported the Agreement and initial increases in pay were introduced in April 2001.

The changes agreed to teachers' work were numerous and significant. They included changes to the structure of school staffing (with a flattening of the long hierarchy of posts); the nature of the working day, week and year; pay scales; support on discipline; career routes through teaching; arrangements for newly qualified teachers; and, as a central tenet, changes in the purpose, focus and control of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). While some of the recommendations made in the original report were lost, many featured in the Agreement, including the formal definition of a 35 hour working week and a reduction in class contact time to relieve workload pressures and make space for planning, preparation and CPD. The spirit of McCrone to make teachers more autonomous and better-regarded and paid professionals remained, with CPD as a central dimension, as an entitlement and an obligation.

CPD

Sutherland (1997) proposed a career-long CPD framework for teachers. The McCrone report endorsed this, seeing CPD as the route for strengthening the profession and its reputation. In addition it saw CPD as a source of motivation and stimulation for teachers.

> Our objective should be to have an education service second to none. In order to achieve this we need high quality, trained, professional, motivated and contented teachers; and we need to restore public esteem for the teaching profession. (para 2.7:5).

The McCrone view of professionalism was that teachers should see CPD as part of their work. Prior to the report teacher development had been part of the rhetoric of teaching and had been central to an unsuccessful attempt to introduce teacher appraisal in the 90s. However, much in-service provision had been focussed on managerial development

needs, and, McCrone found, although teachers recognised the need for continuing development of knowledge and skills they were critical of the quality and relevance of some provision. In common with English studies of CPD (e.g. Day, 1999), CPD provision in Scotland had been system- and central-initiative-led rather than focusing on teachers' needs and often reflected a transmission model of delivery.

The Agreement proposed changes to the working year to make time available for CPD for all teachers. Thirty-five hours were to be set aside in the new working year and these were to be accounted for in an individual CPD record. To ensure relevance and enhance autonomy the use of that CPD time was to be negotiated at school level rather than externally specified. There were to be changes to the induction of beginning teachers to support their development and to instil CPD as part of the job from the start (see Draper, Christie and O'Brien, 2004). There was to be a new professional-development-based and unpromoted high status career route (Chartered Teacher status), and CPD provision was to be accredited to ensure quality and relevance. These changes signal shifts in the status, entitlements and obligations of teachers as well as having the potential to offer an increase in teacher autonomy.

CAREER CHANGES

There were also changes in career routes with a flattening of the hierarchies of posts in schools from 7 (secondary) and 6 (primary) to four matched levels across all schools. This flattening, commonly part of recent restructuring plans in both the public and private sectors, would be managed through a job sizing exercise to match roles and responsibilities to levels of pay. One consequence of the flattening of the career ladder was that some teachers found that the rung they were on ceased to exist and they dropped to a lower level, while keeping the salary attaching to the higher one.

CHARTERED TEACHER: A NEW CAREER OPTION

CPD had been criticised for focussing on managerial rather than the classroom roles. In this it reflected career trajectories, for there had been no posts beyond class teacher which did not, in practice, involve some management responsibility. Following prolonged teacher industrial action in the mid 1980s the new post of Senior Teacher was intended to offer recognition to good classroom practitioners who did not seek to be managers. Over time however this post became absorbed into the management structure. Senior Teachers were given specific responsibilities and limited time out of class to meet these and experience in this post became helpful in securing promoted posts with managerial responsibilities. The role had been hijacked.

The new Chartered Teacher Status by contrast would enable teachers, through professional development, to enhance their pay without leaving the classroom. Being a Chartered Teacher would be a status not a role and thus would not become part of the management structure. Instead the development of Chartered Teacher status introduced a mechanism whereby engagement in CPD could have direct salary implications. The Chartered Teacher Standard (GTCS, 2002), as an element of a four-part CPD framework, was developed through a lengthy process of consultation with the profession and other stakeholders.

The final arrangements specified that Chartered Teachers would be excellent teachers leading by example in their classroom practice. The Standard was both academic (at masters level) and professional, and teachers could enter the Chartered Teacher programme once they had reached the top (sixth) point of the main grade teacher's scale and provided they had maintained a CPD portfolio. On completing stages of the programme, teachers would receive an increment on the Chartered Teacher scale, which overlapped with the first managerial scale of Principal Teacher.

PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

It is well documented elsewhere that the professional autonomy of teachers has been eroded as a consequence of increased central control and specification of education accompanied by increased accountability and the growth in managerialism in the management of education (e.g. Ozga, 1995; Smyth and Shacklock, 1998; Gewirtz, 2002). The McCrone Agreement offered a number of mechanisms whereby the professional autonomy of teachers might be sustained and enhanced, including:

- the removal of some administrative tasks which had burdened teachers, to enable more time to be spent on the professional tasks of teaching, for which teachers were trained;

- an emphasis on participative management and the active engagement of teachers in planning and decision making in schools (Agreement, 2001:29);

- the negotiation of the use of CPD time by teachers with line managers at school level;

- freedom to undertake tasks which did not require to be done in school 'at a time and place of the teacher's choosing' (Agreement, 2001:30).

Teacher autonomy was held by McCrone to be useful not only in motivating and raising the morale of teachers but also in restoring the professional status of teaching to better reflect the significance of Education and hence of teachers.

THE STUDY

This paper seeks to evaluate the initial outcome of the Agreement, as reported by a group of experienced teachers with respect to changes in their work, CPD, the introduction of Chartered Teacher status and the professional autonomy of teachers.

Had teachers' work changed? How was CPD regarded? Had its place in work changed? How had Chartered Teacher status been received? Was there evidence to suggest that teacher autonomy had been enhanced?

The sample

This paper draws from data collected in 2003–4 and presents findings on the experiences and perceptions of teachers in their fifteenth year of teaching. The primary and secondary teachers concerned (n=128) held a range of posts from teacher to headteacher. The gender and sector profile of the group of respondents is similar to that of the profession as a whole, although there is a slight over-representation of female teachers in secondary amongst the respondents. They were contactable through the General Teaching Council for Scotland and were mostly teaching in Scotland, though a few were teaching elsewhere (e.g. Bali, England).

Reflections on the data

These data were drawn from one group in the prime of their professional lives. Their experiences and responses may reflect their career and personal life stages, which were varied in that their ages and career trajectories were different. Whether or not they represent the views of less and more experienced teachers is unknown. The respondents may in themselves be unusual in that they have participated in a longitudinal study which began in 1988 (Draper, Fraser, Smith and Taylor, 1991) and which has required them to reflect upon their work throughout their careers to date. As such, they are survivors of both teaching and of the longitudinal study. They entered teaching at a time when teaching jobs were scarce and at the end of a period of significant industrial action in teaching.

It is difficult to distinguish in the responses between the impact of McCrone (intended and otherwise) and consequences of other local authority and/or school changes unrelated to the Agreement. Teachers were experiencing many changes not all of which derived from the Agreement but their comments do not all distinguish their origins. For example some of the changes in the structure of management posts which have been made, and which have been described by Ronnie Smith of the Educational Institute of Scotland as an "unconnected dash to rip up management structures in our Secondary schools" (in his address to the Annual General Meeting in June 2004) were not part of McCrone. In addition some changes envisaged by the Inquiry have not yet worked their way through, for example the full provision of additional administrative support.

Method

In the questionnaire sent to 200 (eliciting a 64% response rate, plus eight who had left teaching and who completed a different questionnaire), and in the subsequent follow-up interviews (n= 15, selected to vary by gender, sector and post), these 15-year teachers were invited to comment on how their work had changed in the wake of the Agreement, to rate their satisfaction with various dimensions of their work and to comment on the new arrangements for Chartered Teacher status. The findings reported here are mainly drawn from the open and closed items in the questionnaire and interview data are flagged.

The GLAD model

The GLAD (Gains/Losses; Attachment/Detachment) framework, devised by Kelly (1980), offers a structure for analysing the elements of change experienced by individuals in transition and posits that there will be both positive and negative dimensions to the prior and the new situations, and thus both gains and losses associated with the past and present.

	Detachment	**Attachment**
Gains/Benefits	Positive consequences of leaving the old situation	Positive experiences in the new situation
Losses	Negative consequences of leaving the old situation	Negative experiences in the new situation

This model has been used to explore several transitions related to working, including the impact of retirement (Kelly, 1980) and of unemployment (Hayes and Nutman, 1981), the experience of teacher secondments (McMichael, Draper and Gatherer, 1993) and the early experience of becoming a primary headteacher (Draper and McMichael, 1998).

In the questionnaire, teachers were invited to identify their experiences specifically through the following four related questions:

- Looking back what aspects of earlier ways of working has it been good to get away from? (*detachment gains*)

- Working as a teacher before McCrone, what were in your view the good things that have been left behind (*detachment losses*)

- Comparing your current work with the job as it was, what are the benefits of the new arrangements? (*attachment gains*)

- What aspects of the new situation are not as good as the job used to be? (*attachment losses*)

FINDINGS

This section begins with the GLAD analysis and then illuminates the initial findings by drawing upon other data from the longitudinal study in a discussion centred on changes in work, involvement in CPD, Chartered Teacher status and professional autonomy.

Drawing on the responses to the specific GLAD questions (above) the following analysis identifies perceptions of the transition from pre-to post-McCrone working.

Table 1: GLAD analysis

	Detachment Left behind ⟶	Attachment Acquiring
Gains		
Work	Inflexible/lack of control	More flexible use of time
	Over use of time	(and collegiate time)
	The 'elastic' working week	Things are more clear-cut
	Lack of collegiality, hierarchical management	Salary
		Fewer meetings
	Public: teaching is easy	Recognition of teachers as Professionals
CPD	Unstructured or no CPD	CPD improved
		Better recognition of need for CPD
		Improved arrangements for probationers
Losses		
Work	Time for staff meetings/PAT	More after school meetings
	Less paperwork	Too much paperwork
	Good will for doing extras	More clock watching
Career	Early promotion opportunities	Career path deficiencies
		Job sizing, many flaws
Autonomy	Autonomy in use of time/being 'allowed to dare to be different'	Impact still unclear

In considering the impact of the Agreement using the GLAD model, the obvious comparisons are between the past and present, between detachment and attachment. Changes in CPD are generally regarded positively, while changes in career and autonomy figure more in the losses section. Given the breadth of the changes in actual working it is unsurprising that some appear both as losses and as gains. However, contrasting gains and losses highlight the diversity in teachers' experiences. For example, some report more flexible use of time in the present, others that there are more after school meetings and more paperwork. Experience of the impact of the Agreement has clearly differed and this is reflected in the conflicting findings.

One example of conflicting consequences relates to the more flexible use of time in the post-McCrone era balanced by a greater requirement for paperwork. One of McCrone's intentions was to reduce administrative paperwork for teaching staff to clear their time for more professional tasks. These findings suggest that it had not happened. While this may be partly because increasing administrative, clerical and teaching support will take time, it is also identified by some as a by-product of the need to account for CPD time. Draper, O'Brien and Christie (2004) studying induction during the first year of the new scheme similarly reported that the bureaucratic requirements of the scheme partially obscured its developmental potential. In addition they found that the arrangements were mediated at local authority and school levels with the result that a nationally designed scheme had significant individual differences in practice.

Changes in work

Half the respondents to the questionnaire said their job had been changed by McCrone. Post was important here. Nearly a third of unpromoted teachers, three quarters of middle managers and 90% of senior managers said their jobs had changed. Three quarters of male teachers and a little under half of female teachers noted a change but there was no difference by sector (phase) where half in each sector noted a change. (Just under half of the female teachers and three quarters of male teachers held promoted posts.) Promoted staff were significantly more likely to say their work had changed. Many respondents reported changes as a result of the job sizing exercise which had clearly been a cause of considerable discontent. These comments included reference to other changes in promoted post structure which were instigated by local authorities but (mistakenly) perceived by many teachers as part of McCrone.

The length of time changes would take to impact was also recognised:

> Eventually the flattening of the management structure should help pupils.

> Prospect of class contact reduction, impact on teaching and learning.

> Too early to tell.

Half of the respondents however reported that the way they did their work had not changed.

> McCrone has made little if any difference to my job.

> All appears to be the same to me just packaged up differently.

Given the scale of the changes to teachers' work, how could this be?

Findings on the working week give some insights. The Agreement had introduced a formal working week of 35 hours, but in practice most teachers said this was not workable. There was far more needing to be done than could be completed within that time and the introduction of a working week had caused some difficulties both in terms of conflict within schools and frustration at the impossibility of doing a good professional job in thirty-five hours. It may be that in the end the formal working week will mainly serve to enhance the public's view of teaching by helping to remove the misconception that teachers work only when with pupils, rather than impacting directly on teachers' daily work. Some clearly saw the formal working week as an irrelevance:

> There is no way I could do my job in 35 hours.

> Changes in contractual hours, CPD arrangements, personal development have little relevance to a committed teacher.

There appears little doubt that, for some teachers, work had changed. For others their involvement in work derives not from McCrone but from their own definitions of what needs to be done.

Involvement in CPD

Most (90%) reported they were effective or very effective teachers, with 36% choosing very effective suggesting that these teachers were professionally confident and that they were likely to be discriminating about what they see as helpful CPD. Over 90% expected to be in teaching in 5 years' time which, coupled with positive responses to questions on commitment, suggest a committed, stable and confident group of teachers at this career stage. Being settled into teaching and planning to stay does not however guarantee an interest in CPD. How committed had they been to professional development?

In formal course terms, nearly half had gained a further qualification, many on a self-funded basis. Twenty per cent were currently studying and one third thought they would do so in the future. Three quarters of the respondents had led developments at stage/dept level and 60% at whole school level. Smaller numbers had been involved in leading developments more widely: one quarter at neighbourhood, 22% at local authority and 10% at national levels. More of those who had led developments were from secondary schools, more were male and all senior and most middle managers had led developments. Few unpromoted teachers had led developments beyond their immediate setting.

Overall these teachers were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the CPD opportunities available to them. It was clear from their comments that there was no common experience in terms of speed and quality in how proposed changes in CPD were being implemented.

Had teachers' engagement with CPD changed? CPD had become a requirement for all teachers. Two thirds (81 of 121) reported that the obligations of McCrone to engage in CPD for 35 accountable hours represented no change in how they did their jobs.

> I have always pursued professional development with or without the support of my school/managers.

Of those who generally engaged in CPD, some reported changes in what was done.

> I reflect more on the reasons why I am doing what I am doing.

> We now offer CPD in the department.

> People are… more discerning in their choice of courses for in-service.

In other comments the obligation element was more apparent than the entitlement dimension.

> Something else to fit in over and above work. Pressure to do 'extra' which takes away from dedication to pupils.

The obligation brings with it a requirement to account for time used and this was a source of frustration for many of these experienced teachers.

> I now have to detail every moment of CPD. The forms we have to fill in are patronising especially for teachers of many years' experience.

> It isn't that I now do things I wouldn't have done anyway, I'm a professional. But it might represent a lack of trust making people complete needless admin. tasks.

Although most respondents reported no change for themselves many believed it represented at least some change for many of their colleagues.

Table 2: Teachers perceptions of the extent to which the new requirements to engage in CPD represented a change for colleagues

	none	some	most	all
Does it represent a change for some or most of your colleagues? (%)	10	57	23	10

There were no sector or gender differences, but while three quarters of class teachers did not see the new arrangements as a change for colleagues, tellingly nearly half of middle and senior managers believed it represented a change. One teacher felt that the new arrangements created useful obligations and that left in the past were

> …teachers who are not prepared to embark on professional development going through their career without commitment of time to growth.

Chartered Teacher status

The introduction of Chartered Teacher status, rooted in a programme of professional development, was perceived as a desirable development by the majority (60%), although the same proportion (60%) had no intention of applying. Ten per cent were currently enrolled, and a further 12% were applying or intended to apply in the future. However the bulk of unpromoted teachers in the sample, who might have been expected to be the most likely candidates to pursue chartered teacher status, did not intend to apply. Reasons against taking part commonly included concerns over the time and money required although these do not prove the idea itself is resisted. Some pointed out that with work and domestic and personal responsibilities it was not feasible for them to find time to follow this route, while others argued it was far too expensive. Others who had been senior teachers and who retained their salary, if not their status, were put at the equivalent of the third rung of the CT scale. They thus had to complete many modules before any increments would be paid, which may help to explain the disappointing levels of recruitment to the programme experienced across Scotland. Responses on Chartered Teacher were the strongest in the entire questionnaire. It was clear that feelings on the issue were running high.

Some were strongly in favour, seeing it as fairer than previous systems and as rewarding good teaching:

> Provides a method for rewarding good teachers and not just those who can bullshit their way through an interview. (secondary)

> Encourages continuous development and rewards it. Keeps teachers in the classroom. (secondary)

One primary headteacher who was interviewed was very positive about professional benefits but did not underestimate the costs both monetary and personal

> I welcome chartered teacher status. I think it is a very expensive thing for teachers to undertake. Having just become involved with the field assessor programme I think there is quite a lot of work. They are going to earn the extra money to do this from what I can see. Also from looking at the course work, I think there is a huge potential for benefit to the children. I think it is a good thing for education and I think it will improve the quality of learning and teaching. It is about improving practice. The people who elect to undertake chartered teacher course from what I have seen of the course work available, it will challenge people's thinking, practices.

This understanding is not universal at management level. Others were less clear and were inclined to 'wait and see':

> …a huge amount of discussion about it but it doesn't seem to be very clear. One person has expressed an interest in my school and I believe she has attended something on it, but I feel the rest of us decided it looked so complicated and the fact that you have to fund quite a lot of it yourself, it seemed to put quite a lot of people off. I was in the camp of wait and see how it goes first. It is something we don't fully understand. (primary, in interview)

Others were angrily dismissive, questioning the validity of the qualification and seeing a tension between study and teaching itself

> My own children need all my spare time – and money. Keeping the class prepared for and work marked, CPD kept up-to-date etc will take all my time. I worry CT status will attract/appeal to the young/free/single folk (which is fine!). Time away from 'the job' is needed too! (primary, in interview)

> The people who will leap through hoops for this are not your best classroom teachers because classroom teachers are taking home marking and you would be far too busy to do this. You would not be able to maintain the quality of teaching because you are busy doing the reading and essays for six years. (primary)

> Some teachers may be academic/have time to pursue certificates and be granted this status, yet not be the best teacher in l in terms of relating to pupils and meeting their individual needs. I think class teachers should be rewarded not for their intellect but their ability to teach, challenge, discipline and respond to pupils needs. (secondary)

There was also a feeling in several responses that the teacher had already spent years on self-development and qualifications and seemed to be back at square one.

> I am 3 times qualified: Drama, Primary, Guidance and I will have to spend £600 before anyone can tell me that I'm good enough to put foot on first rung of ladder! What an insult! (primary)

The issue of cost was raised in particular relation to life stage:

> No-one can afford to do it because they have to pay for their modules and although eventually you get the salary increase that would negate that, no-one has the money to start – most people who have mortgages and families can't afford to do it, especially at the age they would be at when they think about doing it. (primary, in interview)

Time to do the 'day job' was seen as already demanding at this fifteen-year point –and taking on more commitments was out of the question for some if they wanted to sustain their standard of classroom work. Having a family to consider both financially and in terms of time does suggest that there is not a level playing field for pursuing advancement at this juncture. Some felt that those who would pursue CT would either be doing so at the expense of their work with the pupils or were teachers with dubious commitment who already did a minimum at school.

   Views about Chartered Teacher were not uniform. It is relevant to highlight the dissatisfactions as, aside from those pursuing the promotion route (27), or those now "too old' (8), only 6 teachers put forward *positive professional* reasons for doing CT. A further 7 said they were doing it for the salary. The remaining 58 teachers – more than half who answered this question - had concerns. The responses were collected when the chartered teacher arrangements were just beginning and time and experience of the system should clarify some concerns (like the focus on practice). There were

also misunderstandings about the qualification. However it does seem that for this group of teachers, pressed by family and work demands, chartered teacher did not seem a very attractive prospect. Given that, for most, engagement in CPD was nothing new, a CPD route requiring a large initial outlay albeit with deferred significant and enduring returns, was not universally popular. A central ruling that engagement in Chartered Teacher programmes was not to be included in the 35 hours of CPD which were to be accounted caused confusion over the status of CT programmes and their role in CPD. The argument went that because successful completion of stages of the programme would have a direct impact on salary then teachers should work for the programme in their own time, but this is anomalous given that a) the CT programme is self-funded and represents a considerable outlay for teachers; b) some of the Scottish Qualification for Headship for which participants do not pay themselves takes place within the ordinary working week; c) both Chartered Teacher and SQH programmes require work-based learning which by its nature takes place at least in part within the working day and d) with more flexibility in use of non-contact time the notion of monitoring becomes much more complex as well as at odds with the stated move towards greater professional autonomy.

Professional autonomy: on the increase?

While some were clear that they had more scope, "more autonomy over curriculum and more flexibility over length of lessons", others reported there was little or no difference from before.

The Agreement said that work which did not need to be carried out on school premises could be "carried out at a time and place of the teacher's choosing" and there was evidence that some teachers were beginning to use this flexibility and found it useful, while others chose to stay at school to complete tasks. Being able to choose added to a sense of professional autonomy, though some commented that it made it more difficult to meet with colleagues. There was also mention of the personal benefits of flexibility.

> Flexible hours: I can manage my family around my work, less guilt!

Being trusted to act professionally could be argued to be a necessary condition of autonomy. On this also there were contrasting reports:

> Our time is far less formally laid down.

> Teacher autonomy, assumption of professional status and attitude… I now feel it is going to have to be recorded and proved.

Professional autonomy, according to McCrone, was to be encouraged by a move to more participant management and greater engagement of teachers in decision making in schools. The Agreement (2001) sustained this view: Teachers 'have a right and an obligation to contribute to the processes by which national and local priorities are determined'(p.29); 'should be fully involved in the development of the school plan' (p.29) 'effective consultation arrangements at establishment level (should) ensure full participation by all staff in key decisions affecting their establishment (p.29). Not all found this happening in their schools though some changes were occurring.

> Having more say in whole school issues-collegiate approach is effective.

> There is probably more scope for teachers to assert themselves.

While some found this a positive experience, others found that the price of participation was more meetings after school, others again were more cynical:

> Before you knew you had no real say. Now collegiate meetings are manipulative in the sense that you 'seem' to have a view.

One consequence of participation and local decision-making is that different practices will develop and divergence will be more common. It was clear from the responses that teachers found themselves in different positions not only in different schools but also in different Authorities:

> Different Authorities seem to be reading McCrone in different ways so there is no one way of handling 'McCrone' time.

When asked how satisfied they were with the autonomy over their work, teachers in the sample reported considerable satisfaction. Of all 16 aspects on which they were asked to comment, autonomy was ranked as fourth most satisfying. Although this may be surprising in the light of wider comments in the literature about teacher autonomy it has been an area of consistent perceived satisfaction for these teachers throughout the longitudinal project (further details are reported separately, Sharp and Draper, 2005). Teacher autonomy has not been a source of dissatisfaction for this sample. These findings may reflect the relative classroom autonomy of the classroom teacher 'once the door is closed' and the sheer difficulty for policy makers of impinging on actual practice. Alternatively, since satisfaction depends upon expectation, if there is little expectation of autonomy then teachers may be satisfied with little. How much autonomy is achievable in teaching? There is a limited number of internal decisions which can be taken about curriculum, pedagogy and the running of schools and these may be redistributed within schools but unless more authority is devolved to schools from Authorities, the Scottish Executive and perhaps the GTCS then there may be little more autonomy to share round amongst teachers.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Impact on work

Around half of the respondents said their jobs had been changed by the Agreement. However the introduction of a 35-hour formal working week had little impact on the work of many.

Impact on CPD

It is early days and implementation is ongoing. On the basis of these findings, however, it is possible to feel some optimism about CPD developments post-McCrone. Some respondents report more flexible use of time and improved provision. These are in line with both the spirit and the letter of McCrone. It appears that for many staff there have been changes in relation to CPD. For some, the incorporation of CPD represents a change in how they do their work, drawing them in to a style of working which would be perceived as fitting modern definitions of professional work. Promoted staff are more likely than unpromoted staff to see the new arrangements as demanding change from teachers in the role of CPD in their work. However it is clear that some still do not see CPD as a part of 'the real job', instead perceiving CPD as more of an obligation than an entitlement. In this case the letter but perhaps not the spirit of McCrone has been achieved to date. For the majority of teachers who have regularly engaged in CPD prior to the McCrone changes, there have been changes in the way CPD is undertaken and these are reported almost exclusively as improvements.

It is important to note however that many teachers perceive little change as yet. One clear negative effect as far as these teachers were concerned is the paperwork associated with accounting for the additional 35 hours of CPD time. The pressure to account may also affect the types of CPD in which teachers engage since some, especially more formal, types of CPD are easier to identify and evaluate than more informal modes of learning. Has CPD reached the heart of Scottish teaching?

Certainly these findings suggest that most but not all see it as part of the job and, given the responses of these teachers, that seems to be progress.

Impact of Chartered Teacher status

Views were clearly divided in this group on the concept and nature of Chartered Teacher status. Some saw the new arrangements as offering real opportunities for development and for recognition, while others were incensed by its cost and nature and questioned its validity. As the number of Chartered Teachers grows (77 in March 2005, GTC press release), they will shape the reality and expectations of Chartered Teacher status.

Impact on professional autonomy

Again opinions were divided, and part of the difference might be attributed to the settings in which teachers worked, since teachers' experiences were clearly not the same. There remains a question about how much scope there is for enhancing autonomy without changes more widely across the system.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Agreement is not yet complete and its effects will take many years to appreciate fully. The findings indicate that the changes have been implemented differently and they offer initial insights into the varied experiences and responses of teachers. There is evidence here of enthusiastic teachers meeting new arrangements with energy and a belief that they will improve teaching and learning but also of others who are tired and suspicious of initiatives and change. Any change will of course be variously received, but these findings suggest that while there are some who see positive improvements, there are some who see change but no improvement, some who have experienced little change at all and some who report a worsening situation. Others highlight variations in the implementation of the new arrangements. The evidence therefore suggests that one effect of the changes may have been to increase the diversity in teachers' experience of work. While diversity may be appropriate, there remains a concern if, as is implied by these findings on the experience of teachers, the range has shifted to include more diminished as well as improved experience of teaching.

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