Educating the Educators – Training and Development for Third-Level Lecturers – Case Study of the Private College in Ireland

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Declaration

I declare that all the work in this dissertation is entirely my own unless the words have been placed in inverted commas and referenced with the original source.
Furthermore, texts cited are referenced as such, and placed in the reference section. A full reference section is included within this thesis.
No part of this work has been previously submitted for assessment, in any form, either at Dublin Business School or at any other institution.
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Abstract

This research investigated third-level educators’ training and development practices based on case study analysis and evaluation of existing theoretical models. It involved a case study of a private college in Ireland. Using qualitative data, multi-methods was employed to assure methodological triangulation.

The purpose of the current study was to determine T&D practices and trends within a specific case study context of the private college in Ireland.

Although the main weakness of this study was the paucity of sample size, nonetheless, the dissertation managed to portray current T&D practices in the specific context and also set the directions for further debate.

Contemporary third-level education has gone through significant change in terms of student experience, the role of the educators and the educational institution. It remains a highly- regulated environment with growing pressure to remain responsive to the market needs.

This situation obliges lecturers to perform as educators, researchers and also as active members of the educational institution which ultimately has the role of accommodating staff training and development. Not only “excellence in learning” but also “organisational citizenship” notions are evidently needed and desired.

Therefore, certain models have been presented and are based on the specific educational contexts, limitations and strengths of the college’s T&D practices.
Introduction

“Those who know, do. Those that understand, teach.”(Aristotle)

This research aims to investigate third-level educators’ training and development practices based on case study analysis and evaluation of existing theoretical models. It involves a case study of a private college in Ireland. Using qualitative data, multi-methods will be employed including in-depth interviews, archive documents and researcher diary data analysis to assure methodological triangulation.

Scholars often suggest that training and development becomes one of the central human resources’ practices and part of the organisational strategy (Ahmed, P, & Kaushik, M, 2012, p.107; Garavan, Hogan and Cahir-O’Donnell, 2003; p.19; Blanchard and Thacker, 2012; Cartwright, 2003, p.40). Those notions arrive from the trend of the increasing need for highly-skilled and highly-performing workforces in a current, competitive climate.

The same applies to educators (Bassi, 2013; Miller, 2012; Vivian, Mark Winterbotham, Jan Shury, Ben Davies, 2011, p.52; McGhan and Anderson, 2010, pp.5-20; Ofovwe, 2011, p.208; Fan, 2011, p.128). Given the positioning of Ireland as knowledge-based economy (Inter Departmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, 2010; OECD, 2006), the education sector’s staff T&D debate has never been so relevant.

Additionally, the literature unveiled certain conceptual and methodological gaps which are hoped to be filled.

Firstly, educators’ training and development practices are largely studied within primary and secondary level, and there are few models that were applied within tertiary education in Europe. Yet, there is no evidence of such practice in Ireland (Garavan, Hogan and O’Donnell, 2003; Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2007; Lowe, Jones, Allen et al., 2007; Bubb, S, & Earley, P, 2009). Most of the literature focuses on the U.S. and U.K. That is why a case study approach is the most applicable here.
Secondly, there are certain conceptual frameworks of training and development that originated from HR theory; yet, they lack empirical evidence that would provide concrete solutions and best practice models (Khan and Sarwar, 2011; McMillan, 2007; McAlpine et al., 2011; Ofovwe, 2011).

Lastly, many of the empirical research evaluates existing teachers’ training programmes quantitatively as they work on specific components of training. There are few models for tertiary educators; the studies are mainly qualitatively-based on staff’s perception only – without taking the contextual factors into consideration (Saunders and Hamilton, 1999; Macfarlane and Hughes, 2009; Hemmings and Kay, 2010). Hence, a case study approach seems like a potentially-benefiting one. Additionally, literature findings led to the sample choice decision for the research, i.e. academics with strong managerial expertise within the faculty and managers responsible for quality assurance, training and development practices (academic director, heads of schools and HR manager).

Furthermore, as the researcher aims to progress an academic career and developing it within human resources, this topic choice seems justified. Therefore, this research project brings one through the following steps:

Chapter 1 contains some relevant literature evaluation, including training and development (T&D) theory, educator sector theory and the practice of T&D particularly within the Irish tertiary education context;

Chapter 2 comprises the methodology of the project, including research philosophy and detailed strategy, followed by findings and discussion in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4; Certain recommendations are proposed in Chapter 5;

In addition, readers can also find the project development process in the Self-Reflection Section.
1: Literature Review

As the aim of this study is to investigate current training and development (T&D) practices for further-education (FE) teaching staff, it is indisputable that one should evaluate this problem within the current literature discussion. This literature contours a snapshot of the relevant issues that may influence the course of enquiry in this project. It brings the reader through the following issues: basic theory of T&D and educators’ T&D – as a background of issues studied; followed by tertiary educators’ T&D practices and evaluation – where specific lessons learnt and models are revised to serve as a conspectus for the primary data enquiry of this project.

1.1: Training and Development – Theory

What does the term ‘human resources’ mean with regard to training and development? In order to investigate the training and development of ‘human resources’ for tertiary educators, the basic concepts of training and development ought to be explained. Current literature usually combines training and development (T&D) in human resources’ theory. Both can be regarded as distinct concepts whose understanding helps to analyse the complexity of T&D (Garavan, Hogan and Cahir-O’Donnell, 2003, p.19; Blanchard and Thacker, 2012; Cartwright, 2003, p.40).

Blanchard and Thacker (2012, p.35) argue that a basic understanding of the learning process helps in defining productive training and development. “Learning” definition answers a question such as: ‘What and how do we want our staff to learn?’ Classic models such as Knowledge/Skills/Abilities (KSA) and Bloom’s taxonomy, provide an analysis of the learning outcomes –the product of staff T&D. (Blanchard and Thater, 2013, p.35). The same authors define “training” as a more tangible process of enabling and facilitating staff with learning opportunities, while “development” is understood as less tangible and is the final result of the learning. Development refers to learning activities that are more extended in time, not necessarily directly related to the job activities performed. This simple distinction helps to design the initial directions for primary research of this project.

As described by Garavan, Hogan and O’Donnell, ‘development’:

It is also important to note, that the literature often uses T&D interchangeably due to the current shift from less process-orientated approaches towards more outcome-orientated approaches. The life-long learning approach is an example (Massaro, Harrison and Soares, 2006, p. 2257; Festing, 2012, p. 44; Ghilic-Micu, Mircea, Nisioiu, Silvestru, and Stoica, 2011, p. 82; and Karthik, 2012, p. 54).

Obisi (1996 as cited in Olaniyan and Ojo, 2008, p.328) gives a more appropriate definition, and concurs that a T&D process aims to create competences for people and organisations to advance.

T&D becomes one of the central HR practices, and it does not operate in a vacuum. It requires alignment with strategic organisational goals. Here, authors who focus on other aspects of human resources, such as performance appraisal systems, also stress the importance of T&D, e.g., Brudan (2010, p.110). Clearly, there is an alignment of strategy with practice but additionally, the author explains why the performance management system earned “the negative halo effect” (Brudan A, 2010, p.110), despite the strategic alignment. He referred to overdependence on pay-related rewards instead of training and development ones.

Likewise, Biron, Farndal, and Paauwe’s work (2011, p.1295), which examined sixteen world-leading companies on the effectiveness of the performance management systems (PMS), also refer to T&D. Using Spence’s signalling theory (Spence, 1973 as cited in Biron and Paauwe, 2011, p.1295), the authors elaborated on the finding that strategic alignment was met by implementing training and development as a part of PMS.

Devasheesh and Brutus (2006) suggested the following solutions. The two most significant factors to achieve the PMS alignment with the corporate strategy were: “Complementarity of development and training (...) and accountability mechanism –in multiple-sourced feedbacks – towards raters” (Devasheesh B and Brutus S., 2011, p.169).
Apart from strategic alignment, Ming and Shu-Tzu (2010, p. 108) propose T&D to be in line with Organisation Life Cycle (OLC) – an interesting, yet limited model.

The authors rather narrowly suggest that training strategy should play at first, an inspiring role when in its inception stage; secondly, an upgrading role in developing organisations; and finally, a shaping role in organisations that are mature.

This model seems to be incompatible with a current, innovation-driven market. Besides, all of the three – innovate, upgrade and shape – should be on the agenda regardless of OLC.

Therefore, it seems to work hierarchically from more to less innovative, not flexible staff’s KSA. Undoubtedly, OLC should be fully understood when designing T&D, but it cannot serve as a major indicator for T&D in the current, rapidly-changing climate of constant racing towards a sustainable competitive advantage.

Moreover, other academics suggest that tightly-scheduled and formal training is not paying off. Olsen, Hogvold and Harstad (2010) point out, that as much as formal training is important, it tends to create more ambiguities and uncertainties. Hence, this will also be assessed by the primary research.

Haven’t we all left training with more unanswered questions at least once? The author’s solution is a more informal and loose communication-based approach.

In contrast, Chapman (1993) and Becker (1962) as cited in Nguyen, Truong and Buyens (2010, p. 30), suggest that an organisation should only invest in the “specific training” that is directly related to the job. More so, Chapman says the “general training” (i.e. formal education) should be an employee’s cost, because it is benefiting the entire job market – and not only the particular employer.

One may argue that this harsh typology of training would not suit today’s competitive context. Although specific training is obviously directly related to higher returns more than general training would be, the immediate returns may not be the best criteria for making the decision whether to support an employee or not. What’s more, intangible benefits such as job satisfaction and motivation may have more far-reaching benefits for an organisation than returns.
What are those “benefits”? Some scholars are able to prove that intangible effects do matter, and no less than returns. Although this project does not aim to investigate it, nonetheless it supports the relevance of it in the current, competitive climate.

Guest’s Model (1996) is often used in literature as an example of such practice (Den Hartog, 2004, p.560) He sees commitment as the key element. Guest argues that employee training and development goals should be mirrored in the firm’s goals.

Kozlowski and Klein (2000, as cited in Nguyen et al., 2010, p.32), reach similar conclusions. They involve horizontal and vertical training. Horizontal training measures the direct change in KSA while vertical training measures apply to the link between changed KSA and organisational outcomes. The second measurement would be extended in time and more difficult to measure but still possible. It also ensures the importance of strategic alignment mentioned previously.

Research by Lowe et al., (2007) reveals another interesting finding, i.e. that the training had a significant positive effect on knowledge and perceived confidence. Authors focused their attention on the health profession, but it may as well be applicable to the education sector.

The education sector would not be much different after all as the same abilities are required – the ability to work with diversity and sometimes challenging customers – and a high level of expertise is required (Lowe, Jones, Allen et al., 2007, p.37).

It is therefore understandable how important T&D is and that it should go hand in hand with an organisational strategy.

Furthermore, scholars like Clarke (2006, pp. 196-204), Papastamatis, Panitsidou, Giavrimis, Papanis, (2009, p.84) highlight another trend of “learning organisation” in relation to T&D design. Clarke seems to derive this approach from the simple fact that organisations try to build effective but also cost-efficient training programmes. To do this, firms ought to adopt more of workplace learning methods. Sounds simple, but in practice it is much more difficult – as per Clarke – because it involves moving from a “business model” towards a learning model which requires more consolidated effort. This paper, however, does not serve up any practical choice of workplace learning methods.
Simply put, the above refer to the culture of an organisation. If it is not defined as learning culture, training practices may turn out to be one-off events rather than the actual “practice”. This serves as a solid basis for a conceptual framework but lacks practical solutions. Hence, this perverse question: ‘Does the learning institution (the one being studied here) constitute a learning culture?’

To summarise, a visible trend that has emerged is that T&D is becoming more of a vital part of improving KSA and the motivation of employees. Secondly, if training is aligned with strategic goals, it may also benefit the organisation. Lastly, there are a number of measures that organisations should consider when choosing the type of training, such as OLC, employee motivation, organisation learning culture and, finally, cost versus investment analysis (Nguyen, Truong and Buyens, 2010, p.32).

Different models are also offered by scholars in relation to the education sector and these are discussed next.

1.2: Training and Development for Educators.

Current trends in T&D have multi-faceted impacts on teaching staff. One comes from staff performance needs outlined previously, and one originated from the sector itself. Simply put, teaching institutions are not only concerned with their own staff expertise and performance but also with their customers'/clients’ experiences and achievements (students, trainees or pupils) for whom the education is provided.

Accordingly, Jazzar and Algozzine (2007, p. 85) suggest that professional development “... must be standards-based and aligned with the needs of the school in terms of student achievement.”

Scholars’ concerns with secondary and primary level teachers often refer to three major paradigm shifts (Ubben, Hughes, & Norris, 2007, p.50).

Firstly, results-driven education moved towards learning experience-driven, professional development programmes.

Secondly, any change in T&D is also considered in the broader scope of a systems- thinking approach. This is particularly important when finding the link between staff and organisational strategy. Basically, this approach allows for answering
the questions: ‘Where do I want to go?’ ‘Does the organisation also follow the same direction?’ ‘Do all sectors within the organisation benefit and work coherently with any T&D changes?’

Finally, education moves from passive learning to active, teacher-involvement learning activities (Ubben, Hughes and Norris, 2007, p.58). Indeed, for tertiary education, too, the era of “sit and listen” is long gone.

In the light of those trends, some models of T&D for educators offer a decent analysis and basis for improvement.

The following table includes an evaluation of four models of teaching staff training as well as hypothetical suggestions of how this may be applied in the practice of tertiary teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models of Professional Development Evaluation</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>In practice</th>
<th>Pros and cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Individually guided professional development”</td>
<td>Suggests that teachers know best regarding their areas and needs of development</td>
<td>Depending on individuals own aspirations– training needs are initiated and pursued by staff.</td>
<td>Intuitive and underestimate students’ achievements and experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Observation and Assessment”</td>
<td>Peers are the source of feedback; hence, initiate training needs</td>
<td>May include peer coaching, team building, collaboration and clinical supervision.</td>
<td>Requires advanced communication and high staff trust; also subjective evaluation may not be fair so it needs to be standardised, too.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Involvement in development / improvement process”</td>
<td>Related with school improvement- based on problems teachers can identify and solve a specific problem</td>
<td>Probably based more on feedback from students, external raters and awarding and controlling bodies.</td>
<td>Requires advanced communication; risk that if not followed up or communicated across the school- errors would be repeated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Training model”</td>
<td>Training based on instructions of the classroom behaviour. Cost effective but follow up is essential.</td>
<td>This would more likely take a form of sets of procedural trainings, i.e. compliance with marking, speaking, designing the lectures, etc. Feedback in the form of questionnaires, evaluating certain procedures in practice</td>
<td>Easy to do; Cost effective; Hard to transfer procedures to the real classroom situation; Requires follow up, but this may be more difficult to organise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It needs to be noted that the models only provide certain theoretical conceptions. The practical implications are only potential actions. This evaluation is particularly helpful to define a particular institution’s approach (what in turns helps to deliver effective T&D), rather than choosing the models to implement.
In relation to training practices for tertiary teachers, consolidated learning (Clarke, 2006) is also mentioned in literature (Jazzar and Algozzine, 2007, p.85). It may refer, for example, to utilising external validation mechanisms termed by Melo et al. as “professional accountability mechanisms” (Melo, Sarrico and Radnor, 2010, p.235). These are: external examiners, moderators, validators, peer reviews, etc. As to whether or not those utilised in the institution being examined in this project are to be assessed poses another line of enquiry.

Nevertheless, Chang (2001, as cited in Bubb, S, & Earley, P, 2009, p.11) points out that “teachers learn from experts, mentors, and peers about improving their professional classroom performance.”

A significant aspect is raised by the same authors: a paradox of academics feeling like losing autonomy, but at the same time, having this “big brother eye’s effect” of everyone around looking at their work. (Melo, A. et al., 2010, p.236).

This argument leads to another issue worth investigating – what are the possible drawbacks of T&D practice?

Valera lists major sins of teachers’ professional T&D, most of which originate from the organisational culture: not ongoing (lack of continuity), not differentiated (one size fits all) and not embedded in the classroom reality (impractical, unrealistic training). Valera’s solutions to those problems seem logical. The most important findings were as follows: teachers should be encouraged to talk about and communicate their experiences, and self-reflection should be monitored and accompanied by an ongoing mentoring system (Valera, 2012, pp.15-20).

Bubb and Earley’s (2009, p.11) research are in line with the above by proving that in many case studies, schools’ senior staff felt the lack of proper staff development, and would welcome some changes. Most importantly, a lack of sharing and sustaining knowledge were pointed out as major weaknesses in many institutions. This project may possibly contribute to the above debate.

Apart from staff attitudes, more tangible aspects are mentioned such as, time restraints, finance and institutional support, according to Bubb and Earley (2009, p.12). Although secondary teachers agreed with the necessity for training (better learning –
55%, greater motivation – 38% and confidence – 28%), only 15% actually believed training provided better results for students.

It is proving difficult to find similar studies related to tertiary educators, so it may be another opportunity to explore further, larger-scale projects than the one being presented here.

This sparks another question for further research. Taking “professional accountability” as being one of the most important characteristic of tertiary educators, who should bear the financial strain of development – the institution or the individual? And in what proportion should this participation be organised? What aspects of T&D exactly should be left entirely up to staff concerns?

Hopefully, this project will partially trigger further dispute.

Meanwhile, a U.K. report presents some concerns that may be taken into account but does not focus on T&D improvement as such. In the U.K., just 17% of teachers nationally report high cooperation between staff; moreover, just 14% made conscious efforts to coordinate content of courses (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson and Orphanos, 2009, p.23).

A mentoring model developed by Gaible and Burns (2005) and Hooker (2009, p.16), pays particular attention to different online mentoring practices but also suggests certain drawbacks in implementation. Additionally, this research offers a detailed evaluation of different training and development practices; however, it applies just to secondary or primary level teachers.

The question is whether those practices can be applied into the third-level education sector?

**Table 2: Mentoring Programme Evaluations. Adapted from Hooker (2009, p.16).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
<th>Costs considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_ Provides access to information, role modelling, good instructional practice, assistance as needed, and personal support _</td>
<td>_ Requires participation of knowledgeable teachers with good teaching and personal skills_</td>
<td><em>Stipend for mentor to assure continued participation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ Can allow new teachers to_</td>
<td>_ Labour intensive_</td>
<td>_ Cost of computers, internet, or other communication tools (cell phones, two-way radio)_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_ Mentor and “mentee” (the teacher being mentored) may not get along_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_ May reinforce a teacher’s isolation unless mentoring supports team-based or collaborative activities_</td>
<td>_ Training costs—training on_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>_ Needs incentives to function (e.g., paying mentor increases_</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likewise, Saunders (2012, p.178) confirms mentoring as an important part of a teacher’s T&D. This framework was based and evaluated on a teachers’ survey in Australia and found to be successful. Another positive finding was that most teachers wanted to share their experience which gives a positive outlook for any T&D model implementation (Saunders, 2012, p. 200).

Ubben et al., (2007, p. 55) propose a “Concerns-Based Adoption Model” to provide an effective improvement / involvement pattern whereby the problem identification initiates the training needs. Is this pattern present in the case study institution?

Practical solutions are presented in literature where most are related to existing T&D programmes for teachers – most of which are highly regulated by national education authorities.

Hence, although certain advice may be given, not much may actually be applicable to tertiary education staff.


Presenters who not only perform procedural training but also account for teachers’ personal experiences are more likely to assure successful training and teachers’ trust (Barnett, 2004).

Therefore, vast amounts of literature focus on teachers’ T&D practice evaluations, some of which are also possible for tertiary level implementation.
Moreover, there are plenty of issues outlined in literature, but they lack specific practical guidance. The guidance that does exist relates to fixed and fully mature programmes for primary and secondary teachers that are already in place; hence, this may prove difficult to implement within third-level education. Nevertheless, a number of valuable research articles are concerned with third-level educators’ training, and these are appraised next.

1.3: Third-Level Educators’ Training and Development – The Irish Context.

Given the positioning of Ireland as a knowledge-based economy (Inter Departmental Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation, 2010; OECD 2006), the education sector’s T&D debate has never been so relevant. It applies both to the private and public education sector which are largely involved in coming out of crisis educational programmes to tackle post financial bail-out reality in Ireland. A rapidly-changing society has forced third-level institutions to assure the quality of their staffs’ performances.

Furthermore, the institution investigated in this project is strongly involved in such activities, where the volume of incoming teaching staff is increasing rapidly, and those teachers’ backgrounds may not necessarily be strictly academic.

Despite the economic downturn, companies continue to invest in training and development (T&D). Similar trends are evident in the U.S., U.K. and Ireland (Bassi, 2013; Miller, 2012; Vivian, Mark Winterbotham, Shury, Davies 2011, p.52; McGhan and Anderson, 2010, pp. 5-20) where training and development expenditure has been kept at the same level or has been increased. According to the Irish Business and Employers’ Confederation (IBEC, 2013), a high proportion of T&D investment – 89% – is allocated to the Irish education sector (McGhan and Anderson, 2010, p. 15). Although the largest part of T&D utilises companies’ internal resources, industry reports also highlight another common fact which is an increase in e-learning training used by companies.

Those environmental factors shape higher education (HE) institutions’ performance and their responsiveness to the market needs which, in turn, influence the performance of HE lecturers. Similarly to Ubben et al., (2007), Rogers (2011, p. 250) concludes that the notion of “learning to learn” shifts toward “learning to teach”. The author explains
that until recently in the U.K., higher education constructivism dominated teaching and learning approaches, but now it becomes more about the “student-teacher” – a relativistic relation as a basis for professional training and development. The sustainability of models based on those current notions becomes crucial.

For example, Papastamatis (2009, p. 89) agrees that ongoing training is a major factor of change when pointing at Greek universities’ staff development as the source of organizational change. This poses another debate of what organisational change HE institutions face. Authors such as Giddens (2008) and Skelton (2002) who study philosophy of knowledge, contemplate that the environment in which knowledge occurs is rapidly changing and going through a process of “democratisation of knowledge” (Skelton, 2002, p.194). This, however, can only be triggered within an inclusive learning environment (ILE) open to dialogue and the questioning of current enquiry methods. In other words, the stiff hierarchical culture of academia is compromised with the teacher-student relationship as a partnership rather than a communicator-receiver-of-knowledge relationship.

Likewise, Opre, Zaharie and Opre (2008, pp. 29-43) studied T&D needs within four of Romania’s biggest universities. The most prominent finding is that staff training needs are shifting from expertise-based training toward a faculty-as-teachers’ training and development notion. Also, it was pointed out that faculties take on much more complex roles within the institution.

Rightly so, lecturers are not only teachers, but they also are managers, leaders, coordinators, creators and the driving forces of programme changes. All of those responsibilities ought to be taken into account when designing a training programme because, perhaps, underestimating those “additional roles” makes training and development plans unrealistic?

Garrett and Holmes (1995, p. 49) conclude that HE means enhancing teaching quality whilst keeping the level of research activity high.

Hence, quite often, an individual strives to pursue new knowledge, and also – as a member of academia – concurrently strives towards excellence of teaching practice.

As this project aims to examine HE T&D practices, it is wise to firstly define possible components of such practice. What exactly does it mean to professionally train and develop lecturers?
1.3.1: Tertiary Educators’ Training and Development – Definition and Components

Tertiary educators’ T&D practices are similar to those of other teachers, but before they are outlined, one needs to understand the role of educators within the institution. The Centre of Excellence (CELT) at Oxford University provides a detailed definition of what an academic practice actually means. CELT lists four major forms of activities: 1. “Academic enquiry” (from examination to empirical research); 2. “Working with students”; 3. “Institutional citizenship” (all activities related to organisational requirements and development) and 4. “Career over time” (McAlpine, Horn and Rath, 2011, p.1).

McAlpine et al. typology helps to establish a general scheme of topics for this project’s research enquiry.
It seems like roles and structures within FE (further education) are mobile; and as Scott (2005, p.46) said:
“Roles are becoming blurred, and lecturers are taking on more management tasks.”
The way in which the professional development in teaching and development in researching are combined depends largely on the particular institutional culture.

This case study aims to capture a snapshot of the particular situation rather than solve the above debate; nonetheless, it will also include portraying a specific organisational culture that nurtures either research-based requirements or teaching-based requirements of T&D for educators.
In addition to McAlpine’s typology, more specific KSA (Knowledge Skills and Abilities) can guide this case study enquiry. McMillan’s work provides some useful and simple categories of KSA based on a level of cost and time needed to gain those skills. Based on large scale data collected from lecturers and students at five different U.K. universities, the author organises specific competences into three categories, i.e. what, how and why. KSA can be self-guided learning (“What to do?” – to teach better); those that can be learnt from workshops or / and more able peers (“How?” – to teach better); and finally those that are educational, theory- based competences (“Why?” – to do this in a particular way). Planning to achieve the above can be sourced from self-planning and faculty-planning for development (McMillan, 2007, p.214).

Correspondingly, a phenomenal large-scale analysis provided by Khan and Sarwar (2011, pp. 208-210) helps in defining specific areas of training needs. Some of
those are presented in the table below, ranked from the most important ones—in private Pakistani universities—according to the authors. A comparison with the case study T&D practice is the reason why it is presented here.

Table 3: Areas of Training for University Teachers. Based on Khan and Sarwar (2011, pp. 208-210).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Philosophy of Education</th>
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<th>Educational Psychology</th>
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<th>Research Techniques</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
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<td>Research Techniques</td>
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<td>Professional Trends and Competences</td>
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<td>Professional Trends and Competences</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
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<td>Counselling and Guidance, Student Discipline</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Counselling and Guidance, Student Discipline</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Learning Theories</td>
<td></td>
<td>Theories of Supervision</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Learning Theories</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Theories of Supervision</td>
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The authors’ findings (Khan and Sarwar, 2011; McMillan, 2007; McAlpine et al., 2011), serve as a skeleton of the training content; yet, they do not tell how exactly to utilise those in practice. Despite those limitations, the work reviewed so far helps to understand the context and the content of FE (further education) T&D practice which is crucial in order to sketch the line of enquiry for primary research.

In summary, it is evident that the role of the FE lecturer becomes more complex and multidirectional. What’s more, those directions are set both by a lecturer and an institution simultaneously; hence, the investigation of T&D practices and organisational culture is essential for this project.

Nevertheless, reviewing other institutions’ experiences may prove to be serviceable and of a decent guidance for realistic recommendations.

1.3.2: Reflection on Tertiary Educators’ Training and Development Practices

When reviewing different FE institutions’ experiences, some dichotomies and commonalities in T&D practices can be observed.

McAlpine et al. at CELT combined research that identified certain issues reported by academics across various institutions worldwide (Baker and Pifer; Pyhalto, and Lonka; Rasanen and Korpiano; Golde and Dore; 2001; Gourlay, Shreeve, Brew, Boud and
Namgung, as cited in McAlpine et al., 2009, pp.1-4). All studies reviewed stress the importance of networking within academia. Additionally, new lecturers reported feeling confused, isolated and having inauthentic expectations. Those issues were explained by many factors. One was the fact that an academic expertise (both Masters and Doctorate) does not prepare one for lecturing positions and does not determine academic practices. As such, this is an appropriate issue of enquiry for the human resources’ department in the primary research. Secondly, the fulfilling of both the practitioner and academic roles may clash and create tensions – such issues are mentioned numerous times in literature already (Garrett and Holmes, 1995; Opre et al., 2008; Papastamatis, 2009; Rogers, 2011).

Certain recommendations are also given such as: including more stakeholders within the educational institutions (employers, practitioners, governmental institutions, etc.) so that those tensions can be minimised; providing both discipline and institutional training; and creating a network that enables shared practice and inclusion. (McAlpine et al., 2009, pp. 1-4). Accordingly, Fan (2011, p.128) proposes to develop T&D centres involving other stakeholders such as other universities, government institutions and employers. Perhaps those linkages may be identified through primary research.

Other scholars revealed problems with motivation and organisational commitment in meeting T&D objectives (Ofovwe, 2011, p.208). Academics in a university in The Netherlands openly welcomed any development activities; however, a lack of management support was evident. Furthermore, the author suggests that it can be changed by introducing appraisal plans or personal development schemes (Ofovwe, 2011, p.115). Another inspiring finding offered by Ofovwe is to focus on student needs more than staff needs, as apparently this helps release tension between school and an employee (Ofovwe, 2011, p. 213). Ofovwe’s suggestions, however, seem more aspirational rather than applicable in any specific form. In a way, it is in line with ILE (Inclusive Learning Environments) found in the work of Skelton (2002) and Giddens (2008).

Furthermore, researchers are dedicated to assessing mentoring programmes (Ofovwe, 2011, p.208; Fan, 2011, p.128). Here, some intriguing findings are presented. Senior faculty staff feel more comfortable with the mentoring idea. But a worrisome factor has
been identified and relates to a lack of a mentoring structure which makes it prone to “... campus politicking or romantic affairs” (Ofovwe, 2011, p.210).

The main proposal is to foster a mentoring culture. This can be achieved by introducing career plans and networking opportunities that provide a sense of pride.

Shortland’s research helps to complete the debate on mentoring and peer-observation by drawing some lessons from mentoring practices at U.K. universities (Shortland, 2010, p.301). These are presented in the following figure:

Table 4: Shortland’s Peer Observation Recommendations (Shortland, 2010, p.301).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The observation participants shall be allocated based on mutual agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Feedback should be based on pre-determined check lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Debriefing should be arranged to set the aims of the observation- specific skills</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>improvement- not all on the checklist - depending on the seniority and</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>experience of lecturer being evaluated</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Feedback should be context-specific and constructive so it is not damaging and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>perceived as a threat or ignored completely to avoid confrontation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Timing of feedback should reflect the requirements for immediacy, and reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Feedback should harness friendship and respect and this strengthens the relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with other academics and improves self-efficacy on the job</td>
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</table>

Shortland’s suggestions appear to be potentially applicable in the real-life situation, and they are based on best practice codes of human resources and work conduct in general. If applied, staff could benefit immensely and so could the institution and – naturally – the learners. Nevertheless, one ought to remember and account for Ofovwe’s concerns regarding mentoring practices.

Peer observation is well established in Britain’s higher education. According to Hammersley-Fletcher and Orsmond (2005, p.222), it is the main source of reflection. However, the authors exposed some limitations of peer review suggesting that the reflection aspect was underutilised. The authors came to similar conclusions mentioned here already (Ofovwe 2010), i.e. feedback cannot become too cosy or consist of a social meaning only. According to Shortland, the main difficulty with feedback was the lack
of meaningful language. To overcome this problem, the authors suggest utilising the critical incident method (CIT). Additionally, prior to a teaching period, debriefing can be arranged to specify what exactly is expected in terms of academic standards of teaching and then complete the teaching circle by delivering an end-of-the-teaching-year presentation with feedback.

The authors emphasise that this process ought to be continuous. It is unknown whether those solutions have been implemented; nonetheless, they seem potentially beneficial and enable more stakeholders to be involved in the process which ultimately would assure the strategic alignment notion of T&D practices.

More importantly, based on the Australian lecturers’ experiences, the authors point out that the proposed training methods need to go beyond simple classroom learning and should include teachers’ beliefs, values and identities in constructing the class reality (Bathmaker and Avis, 2007, p. 528). Otherwise, training is seen as “imposed on” rather than “organised for” lecturers.

Likewise, Brew, Bound and Sang Un (2011, pp. 60-65) also identify resistance to training and workshops amongst six, leading, Australian universities (Brew et al. 2011, pp. 60-65). As those institutions are currently striving to boost teaching performances, there are, however, large discrepancies in the level of training taken up by staff. What the authors found was that this type of training earned a low priority status for staff, and is not perceived as part of their career development route. Often, universities present conflicting and ambiguous opportunities; hence, development is seen as a personal pursuit only. The authors boldly state that it may be “built-in arrogance” (Brew et al., 2011, p. 62) embedded in the perception of one’s continuing expertise development which somehow excludes the need for teaching skills development because the first involves creativity and progress while the second is only a repetitive task.

Thankfully, the blame is not entirely directed towards intrinsic staffs’ motivations for T&D. Brew et al. also suggest that broader institutional policy and culture needs to be understood in order to overcome this resistance, especially in terms of providing a continuum of development opportunities for different stages of careers (Brew, Boud and Sang Un, 2011, pp.61-64). The authors also disagree with the U.K. teaching training system which is one of the most regulated in the world. Mandating courses is not a solution according to the Australian school – as per Brew et al.
Indeed, courses on teaching critically question the way staffs teach – especially experienced staff. Therefore, perhaps training practices should be tailored to the levels of experience and organisational culture that somehow define the roles of teachers / researchers.

The following research supports and adds to the above conclusion by introducing “Situated Learning Theory” which originated from the work of Lave and Wegner (1998, as cited in Warhurst, 2008, pp.454-457).

It suggests that acquiring teaching skills comes from the social constructs of four components: social practice, community, meaning and learning. Basically, it means that FE teachers (novice teachers in particular) learn from experiencing, belonging, doing and becoming.

This theory also strengthens the notion of understanding the practice and the organisational culture that shapes FE teachers’ individual approaches to training and developing within certain social circumstances (Warhurst, 2008, p. 457).

But what is more relevant to this case study is the examination which Warhurst conducted based on Rutherford College in New Zealand.

Firstly, the author points out that most of one’s further development is done individually and as college communities are undeveloped, there is no decent collaboration between institutions.

Moreover, staff who learn most effectively from existing training programmes were those who self-reflected on their practice first.

New Zealand’s example supports both an intrinsic motivation to develop as well as promoting institutional support for training and development. Warhurst stresses that in order to build the culture of “situated learning”, newcomers and less experienced staff should be involved in mentoring programmes to develop critical skills needed for further development.

Once more, the need for dialogue is prominent, and it does prove the point that a lecturer’s teaching is an ongoing, active and dynamic process rather than just a recreation of the same knowledge-seeking patterns. Because of this, possibly, the standardised institutional training notion clearly needs revisiting, including all institutional actors – as per the “situated learning theory”.

It is rather interesting to see if similar signals are received as responses to training activities organised in this project case study.
The novice lecturer in T&D has received particular attention in literature so far, and the following small scale qualitative study by Pickering sums up and presents this issue in greater detail. The author followed four new lecturers in their practice where they reflected on their experiences for a year. Again, participants revealed feelings of role confusions (teacher versus scholar) and described the college community as “inhospitable”.

Pickering suggests that most of all a “practice-based” approach should be exercised with the development of a strong community of support and shared practice. Hence, peer observation is essential, but there were major drawbacks in terms of practices such as reflective diary and talking seminars. Both were criticised as being too time consuming, too vague and “floating in the air”, rather than giving job-specific guidance (Pickering, 2006, pp. 320-330).

This poses another question in the case study being examined: “Does the seminar model work and is it contributing to the work improvement in any way?” Those initiatives are certainly worth organising; however, there may be a case of a lack of follow up and feedbacks that can serve as a basis for practical solutions for the college practices – whether it is teaching, researching or fulfilling other institutional requirements.

Hence so far, practice-based learning, particularly for newcomers, has been highlighted by many scholars. The work of Nichols strengthens this view and offers certain solutions as well. First of all, the process of designing the induction training should be based on the fact that further education teachers perceive their role as more than just consisting of institutional requirements only. Secondly, the assumption that a scholarship equips a new teacher with teaching skills is false. Hence, T&D should not only be a part of the faculty’s agenda, but most of all should be embedded within human resources’ practices such as training, performance management and rewarding systems (Nicholls, 2005, p. 623).

According to the above, the human resources’ department’s T&D practices related to teachers should also be examined within this project case study. Furthermore, a study based on seven new lecturers at Brighton University in the U.K. present the challenges of intuitional T&D practices (Barlow and Antoniou, 2007, pp. 65-70).
Although very specific to a particular context only, it provides guidance in great detail that may be implemented elsewhere.

Lecturers pointed out that the existing policies are not always utilised and used for induction purposes. There was a dichotomy found amongst different faculties in terms of nurturing new staff; some reported feeling taken care of while others complained of the lack of time and sufficient attention paid to them. The Brighton researchers combined a list of recommendations for improvement of T&D programmes. These are presented in the following figure:

Table 5: Brighton's Recommendations for T&D (Barlow and Antoniou, 2007, pp. 65-70)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Improve induction processes so that they are not just a box-ticking exercise</td>
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<td>Publish school-based staff handbooks which provide all the practical information</td>
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<td>Management development to enable school and division heads to develop a more unified culture</td>
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<td>Socialisation steps to tackle pervasive experience of isolation</td>
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<td>Cross-disciplinary discussions</td>
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<td>Explicit agreement on time allocation for research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring system that enables the control of time management and avoids overloading with responsibilities</td>
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Barlow and Antoniou’s work offers some interesting approaches, and – more importantly– this particular work has found believers amongst managers, human resources’ personnel and fellow lecturers as well. Certain steps have also been taken to implement some of their propositions which prove the power of open dialogue and all stakeholders’ inclusion. There is another positive aspect: most of those changes do not involve an extensive financial burden. It does look more proactive rather than reactive, which, in turn, allows for development not necessarily based on one’s own mistakes that were made. If these best practice suggestions can be applied, they most certainly contribute to the creation of an inclusive culture, which ultimately leads to students’ satisfaction.

While on the subject of students, that stakeholder’s importance is continuously mentioned in literature (Arthur, L., 2009; Barlow, J. & Antoniou, M., 2007; Warhurst, 2008; Ofovwe, 2011). The students’ voice could not be emphasised more thus far, but can also be looked at from the perspective of T&D practice.
Arthur (2009, p.454) proposed a typology of lecturers’ responses to students’ feedback. There are four types of responses which vary with the level of control perceived by lecturers: shame, blame, tame and refrain.

The main suggestion is, though, to move away from using this feedback of performative measure:

“... It appears that lecturers make decisions about how to improve their courses based on a complex array of factors, of which student feedback is just one. Lecturers’ reactions are influenced to some extent by their feelings and by their professional judgements about what content should be covered and how it should be taught’’ (Arthur, 2009, p. 454).

The typology developed by Arthur indicates that feedback is not entirely a good source of establishing the level of performance, and it brings the risk of a sense of helplessness rather than a constructive source of improvement.

Certainly, for this case study, the sample selections and enquiry should reflect the above issues.

Lastly, Weller (2011), Antoniou and Moriarty (2008) recognise additional factors influencing the process of T&D. Weller notes the departure of teaching-led U.K. universities as the beginning of a new era of both educational and learner-centre writing skills requirements (Weller, 2011, p.94).

Antoniou and Moriarty (2008, pp. 157-168), allude to the view that writing skills are crucial to T&D; yet, lecturers receive little or no guidance in this aspect. Creative writing lecturers may serve as a good example of practice that can contribute to the academic writing which is currently under-utilised, according to the authors. This suggestion seems daring and aspirational, but is it a realistic one taking into account the amount of other requirements of writing within an academic institution? Lea and Stierer (2009, p. 426) proved otherwise. The authors’ research targeted 30 lecturers in three different U.K. universities. It focused on daily routine writing rather than prestigious academic scripts, and concludes that it takes a significant amount of time and varies individually. Those practices are part of individual professionalism, and yet they may be also combined with the college requirements for quality assurance across the entire institution (Lea and Stierer, 2009, p. 426).

Clearly, suggestions for improvement in linking HR practices (such as performance management) with academic development are often mentioned. At the
same time, fostering the culture of shared practice and mentoring is highly valued by many scholars despite some potential problems occurring. Finally, the inclusion of students in the T&D practices seems quite an important step on the agenda of contemporary FE (further education) institutions.

1.3.3: Evaluation of Tertiary Educators’ Existing Training and Development Models

Many practices have already been evaluated so far. This section discusses specific T&D programmes that (although they are probably only applicable to the specific context in which they were established) may contain some important areas of enquiry for this case study.

Meanwhile, the University of Glamorgan in Wales and the Bath College of Higher Education re-evaluated their “twinning model” based on communication between and within institutions as the main force for training and development for FE lecturers. Thus, Saunders and Hamilton identified that predetermined structure was the biggest obstacle and that it needed more flexibility; nonetheless, the project was successful and was seen as having helical properties. (Saunders and Hamilton, 1999, pp.118-126).

Prompted by Jenkins and Healey (2005, as cited in Macfarlane and Hughes, 2009, p. 12), a “Study Leave Scheme” has been introduced in one U.K. university. It is built on ‘research-based’ teaching. It is believed to trigger the teachers to develop into researcher stance and, reversely, it helps researchers to flourish as teachers, too. A number of initiatives have been set to implement this project such as the Senior Research Fellow Initiative (Macfarlane and Hughes, 2009, p. 11-14).

Likewise, some Australian FE institutions introduced a “tri-session” initiative – two sessions for teaching and one session for research (Hemmings and Kay, 2010, pp. 190-196). It is extremely difficult to implement and consequently only works in some institutions while others have to “make time” elsewhere. McGrail, Rickard and Jones (2006, as cited in Hemmings and Kay, 2010, p. 192) mention research activity being hampered by lack of support from significant others. In no way does this problem belong only to the private sphere, and it should be taken into account by the institution to foster research initiatives as a form of development. The “tri-session” initiative is not aligned with staff performance which is another drawback claimed by the authors. As the authors allude
to, a significant chunk of a staff’s initiative which accounts for the most creative is, in fact, disregarded by the same institution (Hemmings and Kay, 2010 p. 196).

Nottingham Trent University developed a programme of para-professionals which used non-lecturers to undertake teaching tasks. 72% of the respondent colleges who had introduced para-professional roles did so to reduce costs. The survey also identified precise benefits, such as no restrictions on class contact hours and lower rates of pay. Also, students usually did not realise the differences between a lecturer and other professionals delivering classes.

Although it may be seen as downgrading the role of a lecturer, to be fair it potentially takes away some daily responsibilities from lecturers themselves; however, it poses other staffing and training issues. In this situation, lecturers are becoming more like managers of the curriculum while para-professionals are the deliverers. And the lecturers could even become more so as the deliverers are removed from the opportunity to develop (Scott, 2005, p. 46).

This is not the case in Ireland; nonetheless, it is quite a refreshing idea that changes the definition of the entire lecturing experience.

Meanwhile, in The Netherlands, another T&D initiative has been practised at the University of Twente and which was also successfully introduced in FE in Mexico. After seven years of practice, Project Based Learning (PBL) is re-evaluated by Weenk, Govers and Vlas (2004, p. 468), and the work looks astonishing.

It was developed based on training students, and then became a central training course for new and existing lecturers. The ground rule is “practise as you preach” (Weenk et al., 2004, p.469), which is based on offering examples of practice, letting lecturers use those practices and provide staff with students’ experiences which are all assessed and discussed. Additionally, to make it worthwhile, workshops are incorporated into the teaching hours and results with “product” which is about scenarios and or handbooks of course delivery.

This particular project seems robust, applicable and instrumental; yet, at the same time, it encourages academic enquiry in strengthening one’s academic skills.

In this way, academic debate is encouraged. Building consensus which is based on academic debate and consideration can help develop high-quality learning environments through purposive training and development programmes in line with the organisational strategy.
In conclusion, information regarding educators’ training and development practices is largely based on studies within primary and secondary level and there are few models that were applied within tertiary education. No third-level studies were found in Ireland.

Secondly, there are certain conceptual frameworks of training and development that originated from HR theory; yet, they lack empirical evidence that would provide concrete solutions and best practice models.

Lastly, most of the empirical research evaluates existing teacher training programmes quantitatively as researchers work on specific components of training. There are few models for tertiary educators. The studies are mainly qualitatively based on staffs’ perceptions only – without taking the contextual factors into consideration. Hence, this research, based on an Irish HE private institution, provides a qualitative approach and the methodology is outlined below.

2: Research Methodologies

This research aims to investigate third-level educators’ training and development practices. It involves a case study of a private college in Ireland.

Chapter 2 consists of an overview of the research methodology chosen for the project, including research method choice, data collection, data analysis methods, ethical considerations and research limitations.

2.1: Research Objectives and Questions

While aiming to investigate third-level educators’ training and development practices on the basis of a case study of a private college in Ireland, the following objectives are identified:

To establish current T&D practices for higher education (HE) lecturers

To evaluate different existing theoretical models of HE T&D

To propose recommendations for effective and efficient T&D practices for the tertiary lecturers in the specific context of the private college in Ireland.
Figure 1: Topic Deconstruction

Figure 2: T&D Environment
Research Questions:

1. **What are the current trends in tertiary teachers’ training and development practices?**
   Third-level education segment analysis enables one to establish what T&D practices exist for academics. Moreover, it helps to identify current trends in teachers’ T&D and drawbacks in existing programmes for teaching staff across the globe so that the optimal theoretical solutions can be proposed.

2. **What are current FE (further education) teaching staffs’ T&D practices?**
   Answering this question helps to identify current practices in order to expose any gaps in theory and practice. Additionally, it helps to identify possible benefits and drawbacks of current approaches so that in the particular college context, the theoretical recommendation may be offered.

3. **What are current teaching staff development practices in the case study institution?**
   The aim of this question is to see to what extent the college invests and/or supports teaching staff training and development programmes. Knowing what specific practices exist and how efficient they are helps to close this theoretical and practical gap in the particular college context.

**2.2: Proposed Methodology**

As the aim of this research is to investigate training and development practices within a particular organisational context, various sources of data are required. Additionally, the literature reviewed for this purpose unveiled certain conceptual and methodological gaps which are hoped to be filled. That is why interpretivism and subjectivist philosophy within an inductive approach is the most appropriate. Using qualitative data through case study strategy, multi-methods will be employed including in-depth interviews, participation observation, plus documents and researcher diary to ensure methodological triangulation. Why were specific epistemological and ontological choices made? This will be explained next with the help of Saunders et al. (2009, p.108) and the research onion model.
2.2.1: Research Philosophy

Because the third-level education teaching staff problem does not operate in a vacuum but within a specific multi-faceted context and involves human beings and their actions, it seems that a single structural approach to examining this problem would not be sufficient. That is why interpretivism and subjectivism knowledge philosophy is followed.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, p. 116) suggest that those approaches allow one to observe more subtle factors of social structure and humans within it, to seek a deeper understanding of a specific issue and, perhaps, observe more than one would if, for instance, a structured and functionalist approach would have been chosen.

Ontology types of knowledge quests do embrace subjectivism as the way of interpretation relevant only to the specific context and people that do change in time (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008, p. 13). Also, subjectivism in ontology allows the researcher to seek the knowledge and theories from social factors, mainly those naturally associated with interpretivism. That is why it would be most appropriate for this college case study to be concerned with most applicable training and development
models of practice as it does not predetermine variables but rather allows for theory to arrive from context.

Understanding the context first – how the education segment is evolving – and then what it will take to stay competitive and responsive to the market needs in terms of educational offers and approaches, is essential. It allows one to form alternative solutions rather that adapt limited models used elsewhere (in other colleges) and increases the chances that solutions will be realistic.

2.2.2: Research Approach

An inductive approach will be used in line with the research philosophy. Silverman (2005, p.378) defines inductive as based on the study of a particular case rather than a theory.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 32) say that in inductive reasoning, knowledge comes from specific instances (i.e. third-level private education teachers in Ireland) or occurrences (i.e. training, meetings, tutorials for staff, etc.), in order to draw conclusions about entire problems.

Moreover, a small sample choice is more appropriate for the inductive-type method (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 126).

2.2.3: Research Strategy

A case study is a type of empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary issue within its real-life context (Yin, 2003, p. 13).

Generally, a single case study is a well-suited choice because, as guided by Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p.135), it helps to promote an understanding of procedures and practices used in this particular context which perhaps may be applicable in other institutions as well, but it does not allow for generalising as such. It may also be a starting point to develop a hypothesis and study a certain phenomenon quantitatively.

Additionally, using a case study is most appropriate because of easy access to data, due to the fact that the researcher is an employee.
Silverman (2010, p.94) points out that it is one of the most difficult methods, but it allows for a broad context analysis which seems a right approach to this research as it operates within a specific market – third level educators, a specific context – Irish tertiary education and a specific situation – single case of a private college.

Thus, it needs to be studied with a broad understanding of the context and include all elements of the specific case – and not just T&D practices. It is important to understand the reasons for taking a specific T&D practice; it is important to discuss the trend of the organisational strategy and direction and this can only be achieved by using a case study approach. It also allows for combining different methods while collecting the data.

2.2.4: Validity of Qualitative Study

Validity refers to conducting the research that is “certain” and “true” (Guion, Diehl and McDonald, 2011, p.1). It means that research needs to be true for this particular situation that we are studying and also certain – i.e. supported by solid data. Although no external validity is possible in this research, methodological triangulation is employed. Patton (2002, as cited in Guion et al., 2011, p.2) points out that it is a misconception to believe that the data from multiple sources has to come to similar conclusions, but rather any inconsistencies that occur strengthen the research and give a deeper meaning to the data. Thurmond (2001) concurs that triangulation increases confidence and reveals unique findings (Guion, et al., 2011, p. 2).

This research uses “methodological triangulation” (Guion, et al., 2011, p. 2) which allows for using multiple methods to gather data. Additionally, this approach will be used for the following reasons: easy access to other data (researcher as an employee) and a research diary from the perspective of an employee as well as from the researcher. The biggest obstacle was the fact that no access has been permitted to conduct the research quantitatively by accessing a large number of employees.

2.2.5: Research Choice

Procedurally, multi-method is chosen to understand the complexity, ensure realistic recommendations and, most importantly, to triangulate methodologically.
A multi-method means that a few methods are employed in one research to ensure the researcher has a holistic view. However, as Silverman (2010, p. 60) states, “It is tempting but tricky” if the scope of the research is too broad. Once this research focuses only on one particular, well-defined problem, then this should not prove to be an obstacle but rather an advantage.

This is another reason why a research diary is kept throughout the process – to ensure that issues and themes are not too distant from the main problem. The use of a dictaphone was the most effective way of storing and capturing all the material required for the study.

In-depth interviews were chosen to accommodate the research objectives. This can be explained by couple of factors.

First, it derives from the complexity of the environment and the problem to be portrayed. Educational background is very complex; hence the role and the KSA of contemporary educators’ definition are multifaceted. McAlphine (2008, p.44), for instance, listed four major areas of an educator’s role. They include research, students and institutional citizenship.

Secondly, consulting and discussing the research topic led to a significant finding: every time educators were discussing or commenting on T&D practices and needs, there were very different points of view and directions given to the researcher.

Therefore, it seems unwise to use strict structure and questionnaires while so many intangible, unidentified and uncategorised aspects may be discovered.

Moreover, the role of the participants was of particular importance – all the interviewees hold managerial experience with considerable knowledge and background of educational theory and practice.

Finally, because no permission was gained to access a large number of participants, in-depth interviews seemed the most advantageous tool that would provide some rich data.

Hence, the following tools were used:

1. Four (approx. 1.5 hours) in-depth, semi-structured (recorded) interviews (See App. 1):
1.1 An interview with the HR Manager – to gather the most up to date information on current T&D practices and also future plans.

1.2 An interview with the Academic Director – to gather information on training and development practices in line with all external shareholders such as awarding bodies, external moderators, auditors, governmental bodies, etc.

1.3 An interview with the Head of School of Business – to find out all T&D practices – their disadvantages, advantages, plans, etc.

1.4 An interview with the Head of School of Arts – to find out what all their T&D practices are – their disadvantages, advantages, plans, etc.

Additionally, document analysis will be used. Silverman (2001, p. 55) advises to limit the specific type of text in order to keep the analysis easier while coding. All internal training and development-related activities are gathered consistently, starting from the initial stage of this proposal. It includes emails, memos, adverts, notifications / invitations / propositions of training, debates, discussions, any knowledge-sharing practices related to any form and shape of training and development.

To ensure the methodological triangulation and also to guide the researcher through the process, the research diary will be adopted and used for data analysis as well. The researcher diary (‘‘rewriting history’’ as Silverman teaches), helps to understand and avoid losing the way you reason about the research (p.249). It is also very important for two reasons: first of all, it serves as an additional source of data and secondly, it allows for staying focused in high, bias-risk situations when the researcher works for the college where the study is being held. Scholars often advise to use a research diary (Lovitts & Wert, 2009, p.57; Anderson, 2004, p.110; Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008. p. 28).

The structure of the diary does not require a strict method of both keeping a diary and the format of the data recorded as long as it is updated regularly. I based the research diary structure on what Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1986, as cited in LJMU Dissertation Handbook, 2013, p.43) suggested, i.e. to include feelings, thoughts, ideas and behaviour.
2.2.6: Time Horizon

According to Saunders et al. (2009, p.155), a cross-sectional approach means studying a particular phenomenon at a particular time. Hence, this approach is the only possible one to take on, mainly due to the time constraints and access to data. Therefore, the study is a contextual “snapshot” of a specific problem – training and development needs that can be applied into practice within a specific situation, i.e. teaching staff T&D practice in a third-level private college.

2.2.7: Qualitative Analysis

As it is known, “the characteristics of qualitative methods are dependent on the particular research paradigm undergirding a chosen inquiry approach” (Ponterotto, 2005 p.128). Therefore, Leedy and Ormrod (2005) explain well the reason why this approach is the most appropriate:

“To answer some research questions, we cannot skim across the surface. We must dig deep to get a complete understanding of the phenomenon. ... we collect numerous items of data and examine them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture…” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005, p. 133).

The data from in-depth interviews will be transcribed through Dragon Software. In Vivo will be used for data analysis.

Thematic analysis is considered the best form of analysis for this study as it offers an accessible and theoretical approach to analysing the data. It aims to identify any recurring themes and patterns within the data. One major benefit of thematic analysis is that it can provide data that is rich and detailed in content.

Five different stages were used in carrying out the thematic analysis; this step-by-step process prevented the researcher biases affecting the stages of analysis. The first stage involves becoming familiar with the data. The second step involves creating free nodes. Free nodes can be described as codes that identify a particular part of the data that seems interesting to the researcher. The third step is labeling these tree nodes with themes. Fourthly, all the free nodes are reviewed in order to ensure that the
free nodes were in the correct groups and that the names of them are appropriate for the data they represent. The fifth step involves choosing the dominant and most important themes; these themes are then used for the analysis of this research project (Bryman and Burgess, 1994, p.146).

Figure 4: Data Analysis Process. Adapted from Creswell, 1998, cited in Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 151)

2.2.8: Sample Choice

This research will use **non-probability and purposive sampling.**

First of all, because it is a case study of a particular college, we need vast amounts of various data.

Secondly, due to time and resource constraints (financial, data access and human), it is not possible to conduct this research in relation to all Irish third-level institutions.
Thirdly, it was not approved by the college research committee to conduct a survey with all the teaching staff as it may interfere with HR practices and may be also possibly associated with college HR practices. Additionally, in accordance with Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009, p. 233), it is impossible to generalise on statistical grounds when using a non-probability sample.

Finally, and most importantly, as per the title of this project, the researcher needs to focus on relevant – in terms of knowledge and experience – samples in T&D practices. This is known as “purposive sampling” (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009, p. 241).

It is, however, encumbered with the risk of biases (only one side of the story heard); nevertheless, the knowledge and expertise outweigh the limited viewpoint.

**Sample Size: 4**

**Sample Criteria:**

Teachers and HR employees with advanced knowledge in T&D practices

**Sample Inclusive Characteristic:**

Minimum 1 year in the position
Minimum lower-level managerial position held
Only in academic departments
Current or previous teaching experience essential
One participant in HR
One participant in academic standards and procedures
Two participants in staff management in minimum of two different streams (arts and business)
2.3: Ethics

“Universalism should never be broken. Infractions of ethical principles are wrong in a moral sense and are damaging to social research” (Erikson, 1967; Dingwall, 1980; Bulmer, 1982, as cited in Gross, 2013).

This research falls into “Research Category C” which, according to the DBS Quality Assurance Manual, is:

“Research involving human volunteers who are service users, patients, staff, records, etc, within the sphere of the HSE or similar setting (but not including clinical trials of investigative medicinal products) (DBS, 2013, p.1).

It has to be noted that the research is of a particular concern from an ethical point of view. The researcher is aware of a great sensitivity relating to the study which arises because of her triple role in the institution in which practices are being studied. She is a researcher and student and, at the same time, an employee there. It has to be emphasised that a series of precautionary steps have been taken in order to ensure that ethical standards are in place and to prevent any possible breaches.

Research approval has been obtained from the DBS Research Committee in cooperation with the college Human Resource Department and Kaplan in the U.K.
The following rules have been observed: The fact that the researcher is an employee influences the process significantly. It is tempting to talk about the details of the dissertation with colleagues but is strictly forbidden so as to ensure confidentiality and to abide by the ethical requirements of the college where its name / reputation cannot be prejudiced.

None of the data which requires additional approval has been accessed (such as restricted access data). Only data addressed to the researcher, and publicly but internally communicated to all employees, was accessed. None of the specific details was provided in terms of passwords, software details and other sensitive data.

There was an assurance given that no project-related information items would be interchanged with any of the participants from then on until the day of the interview with the participants.

Informed consent was obtained in the form of an invitation to participate with full information available about the research purpose, its processes and participants’ rights. (See App. 2.)

The right to privacy of participants would be respected. They would have the opportunity to refuse to answer any question that they considered inappropriate or that they couldn’t answer according to the college’s policies.

Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any time and confidentiality would be protected.

Participants would be provided with themes of the interview beforehand and a convenient time for preparation and scheduling of the interview would be given.

An assurance of all academic research standards alignment would be provided.

Confidentiality and anonymity assurance for:

- Participants
- The college procedures, the college name
- The publication of materials

The college holds a full ownership of the data produced and, as a result, holds the right to withdraw from any publication.

The information obtained through interviews would be used only for dissertation purposes.

An additional audit of the first stage of the data analysis would be obtained from the research methodology expert and / or supervisor to ensure that data would not be written in a way that would breach the ethical standards (research diary).
2.4: Limitations

The following are the limitations which have been identified in the study:

One of the biggest limitations is non-quantifiability. The research is based only on qualitative study – non-quantitative was applied due to college restrictions and procedures.

Additionally, this case study approach lacks external validity – only methodological triangulation was employed.

Also, the sample choice is limited – management level academics are the main source of information whereas it would be beneficial to gather the data from all employees.

The number of participants is also restricted due to time and cost constraints; hence, specific people were targeted, i.e. those with the most teaching and managerial experience in the college.

Other universities’ samples should be used to compare and contrast data in order to propose a model that is reflective of a broader area (3rd level education sector in Ireland) rather than on only one college case study; however, it was not possible due to time and cost restrictions.

As mentioned, the researcher is also an academic employee of the same institution and knew the participants personally. Naturally researcher bias exists and in order to minimise its influence the researcher has set ground rules to obey during the process.

Accordingly, researcher cannot talk about the dissertation details-especially the data collection phase with anyone in the college. None of the participant’s names are mentioned throughout the process. During interviews researcher is not allowed to make any references to other college practices and also makes sure that participant’s do the same therefore questions of the interview are carefully selected.

The case study is based on the researcher’s own workplace; accordingly, extra preparation should be made to minimise the risk of subjectivity and biases in the material studies.
There could be possible problems with the scheduling of the data collection as the interviews would be long.

In addition, personal bias could interfere with the process of the interviews.

3: Data Analysis / Findings

This research aims to investigate third-level educators’ training and development practices based on the private college case study analysis and evaluation of existing theoretical models. The case analysis findings are based on a multi-method, qualitative approach, and include various sources of data combined and analysed in this chapter. Four in-depth interviews were the major source of the data. In addition, various archive documents like emails, staff memos, notifications, invitations, minutes of meetings, staff newsletters and the researcher’s diary data were also employed in the analysis process, mainly to ensure methodological triangulation.

It is hoped that logical and consistent presentation of the findings answers the main research question: “What are the teaching staff’s training and development practices in the examined institution?” The following graph introduces the reader to the complex areas of themes and sub-themes of T and D practices in the college. It is important to note, that the graph does not determine the structure of the college; rather it allows for grouping and ranking from the most prominent findings and, consequently, illustrates the order in which they are presented here. Hence, there are four major distinctive themes:

- Alignment with regulations-led practices
- Practice in enhancing lecturers’ skills
- Sharing best practice
- Organisational culture.
All the sources revealed intriguing connections; in particular, the four, in-depth interviews provided substantial insights into T&D practices but also showed that T&D needs resources. Themes have been outlined based on the prominence hierarchy, logical relevance and inter-relatedness.

3.1: Alignment with Regulations-Led T&D Practices

Strong evidence suggests that the most prominent aspect referred to within all the sources was the regulatory environment that dictates many T&D practices, and is often referenced as “constructive alignment” (Participant 4) with regulations. This issue did not only appear most of the time, but it was also often linked with nearly every other issue discussed during the interviews. Section 3.1 therefore relates to all internal and external regulations that inform and set the tone for nearly all training and development practices in the college. Aspects such as the code of conduct, policies and procedures, quality assurance mechanisms like informing, monitoring and controlling, etc., are explained here in the context of T&D practices. All those are portrayed as essential, and every employee should understand the structural definition and adhere to it because this very definition ensures the college’s future – by the awarding body’s accreditation.
“Let’s face it – we are in a regulatory environment now so it is external powers that are pushing us to do it this way. It is not just for the sake of doing it” (Participant 1-P.1).

The Academic Director listed three major areas of focus when it comes to staff training:

“...assessment standards, validation and programme monitoring” (P.4).

Those are organised mostly in a form of telling sessions and / or information passed onto staff either via email, training days or staff internal portals.

The following table consists of all resources available to staff on all information needed to ensure and be assured of the best practice.

**Table 6: Chosen Q & A Procedures Provided by the College**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moodle handbook</td>
<td>Available online and locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles of Assessment</td>
<td>Currently under revision and will be available locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guideline on Indicative Bibliography</td>
<td>Available locally in library-online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic Review Documentation</td>
<td>Available locally-intranet and online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR Policies and Procedures</td>
<td>Available locally-intranet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awarding Body Procedures</td>
<td>Available locally and partially online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Protection Policy</td>
<td>Communicated via email and available locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Lecturers</td>
<td>Communicated via email and available locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking, Assessment Criteria</td>
<td>Communicated via email and available locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination Standards-the role of external in internal examiners and moderators</td>
<td>Communicated via email and available locally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“... there are three ways of doing it (informing of procedures): the most important are: they should be written somewhere (a pack in the exams’ office, a pack in the registrar’s office, a Q & A handbook—all in an open access area) but the mentor should direct to those” (P.4).

It is also important that regulations-led training is not only limited to a code of conduct and regulations requirements compliance, but it also should consist of enhancing transferable skills that lecturers need to develop their expertise. This specific aspect is outlined further in this chapter.

Although based on interviews and archive documentation analysis – this type of training is seen as mandatory – the interviews revealed a strong debate on the effectiveness of
training delivery methods and the language in which they are communicated.

Within the college structures, standards and regulations training is called: “compliance training”, “institutional training session”, “institutional compliance session” “mandatory compliance training”, “training was arranged as a result of deficiencies identified in best academic practice” (Archive documents and interviews).

All participants, however, discussed certain issues with the form of delivering training like this and with the way in which the CoC (Code of Conduct) and procedures should be communicated.

Although participants admit that certain regulations, procedures, etc., just have to be presented, in some cases it is not efficient, and the college should focus on specific language and form when a transfer of procedures is happening. Specifically, participants refer to constructive alignment and engaging forms of training such as workshops.

“... It would define our constructive alignment but it doesn’t use educational pedagogy jargon because we are not assuming people understand terminology but we try to introduce things that people need to know”(P.4).

“... so I ask myself that perhaps we are not providing a right vehicle of training. That is why we have changed to workshops rather than information sessions” (P.1).

... with a workshop, staff would see an immediate benefit of it” (P.4).

“... Learning is very difficult to measure ... by doing more workshops we get to physically do it. I mean there are things that you have to just tell the staff but this kind of thing can be much more interactive” (P.1).

... but writing programmatic reviews and module descriptors are the skills you have to acquire. We had workshop on writing learning outcomes; we need to do more of that” (P.4).

Participants agreed that their job is not only to make sure that management communicates the regulations and policies, but most of all it is to assure everybody that those regulations are well understood, and the lecturing staff has a clear, consistent platform of information to guide their own skills and develop their competences as well.
Additionally, as results indicate, currently there is no follow up or feedback of this type of training session as such; however, most areas of teaching practices are constantly assessed, moderated and monitored by department heads through the programme leaders. There are voices that some general monitoring system is needed for all QA (quality assurance) practices:

“So generally, it is not really about having the mentoring or directing but about checking that it is being done. It is the monitoring of the whole system “ (P.4).

There are also other ways of QA that set the tone for further T&D practices in the college; those three are part of the lecturers’ recruitment and initial induction processes.

3.1.1: Lecturers’ Recruitment Practice as one of the Mechanisms for Teaching Quality Assurance

Recruitment requirements are also specifically defined by the college’s QA. The initial screening process starts in a form of a lecturer presentation. In this way, apart from the expertise level, potential lecturers are also assessed on their teaching skills – mainly related to a classroom situation – presentation, facilitation and communication skills. Specifically for this purpose, the college constituted an Academic Appointment Sub-Committee. Their job is to ensure an applicant’s suitability for a position, but what is also important is to set the goals for further development. This is one of the strongest bits of evidence that there is an effort to fill the gap of monitoring systems as mentioned earlier. This also suggests a step forward in a proper assessment of training and developmental needs. Why? It is because one needs to remember that being a good lecturer does not only involve being up to speed in one’s area of expertise but also involves possessing the KSA needed to be effective as an educator. Therefore, having some mechanism of evaluating T&D at the very initial stage of employment seems quite important and may serve as an extensive source of information on required KSA (hence, the source of T&D needs).

“We would take everything that the interview panel has given us and we check this against our quality standards so we are not verifying anything. But if we think someone is not experienced in assessment, we would require the school to appoint an assessment mentor and that person should be giving – I would call it – informal training; we call it mentoring training as well” (P.3).
This brings us to the next significant section of further constructive alignment processes in the college, i.e. staff induction.

3.1.2: Staff Induction Practices

Initial induction sessions are organised mainly by HR. This involves IT, Facilities, HR and the overall college information sessions for new staff – as per HR manager. Although those sessions seem quite straightforward, there have been issues with time management, organisation and participation, as revealed during the interviews. Both school heads and the HR manager agreed that the time issue is the most problematic one because of the way the academic calendar is structured and the very nature of a lecturer’s job – specifically, the part-time lecturers. HR has taken steps to smooth the induction process and this is planned to happen soon and mainly involves having short online tutorials on all college-related procedures and manuals from tech to HR-related ones. But the induction of the lecturing staff is now monitored by the Academic Appointment Sub-Committee and school managers. This practice allows for training in the form of mentoring.

3.1.3: Mentoring

Mentoring was introduced two years ago – it is based on QA standards requirements and is only for new staff. As the Academic Director explained, the awarding body does not require having a mentoring system but it does require an assurance that certain teaching standards are met. Also, it does not mean that all new teaching staff have mentors – the subcommittee decides if it is required or is advised to assign one. It has happened already: “New staff coming in got a mentor appointed and they have a reduction of hours just to get a grasp of what is involved. The mentor is not their line manager, as they learn from someone in their programme team” (P.1).

“The Head of the School only may assign a buddy, i.e. a senior lecturer, that could be a touch base point that if somebody has an issue that they can go to; so, it’s a bit of like peer support really, on a more informal basis (P.1).
"We would appoint someone as a capable member of the team. New staff can shadow them and make sure they have a point of contact whom they can talk things over with” (P.4).

It is clear that although the mentoring system has great potential as a T&D practice for educators, it is only starting to fit in to the college structure as there is no evidence that it has been practised frequently.

The reason may be – as participants explained – because the recruitment process allows for only experienced candidates, and also because it is very informal and not facilitated to exist within the college structures yet.

“Our weakness is not in a lack of procedures and policy; we have that. Or weakness is: ‘How do we test that? How do we know they were actually given a mentor or was it just casually someone to go to in case of issues?’” (P.3)

Interestingly, mentoring is not really defined yet by the college; there is no one voice that defines mentoring; accordingly, there is no specific project on how it would actually work as the results have indicated.

School managers understand it differently. Participant 1 said: “That word is widely used in various different contexts. ‘Do you use mentoring as developing someone as a competent lecturer? Or, to develop someone for the purpose of succession planning, maybe? Is it linked to the management development?’”

Neither Participant 1 nor any other source provided a specific definition as to how the college defines the mentoring process. Generally speaking, current practices involve just some mentoring elements but they are more like a buddy system. Although certain steps have been taken to implement mentoring and it has been partially implemented as an employee’s induction phase, participants agreeably said that in the current situation the college is not yet ready to have a fully-working mentoring system in place. It grew organically and is working intuitively rather than within a certain policy.

I: “Are we ready?”

P1: “It is a bigger job. No, we are not. No, no, no...we are not – in my opinion.”
... I think it should be within HR structures, but we don’t have the facility for it at the moment. It is something that has grown organically within the schools as opposed to a defined policy. So, it was intuitional so far when not one experienced lecturer would ask somebody to help you out” (P.2).

From the HR perspective, in order to introduce the mentoring scheme, the entire process of recruitment, the probationary period and the induction process should be changed and prioritised according to the college’s needs.

Again the need for a monitoring process arose while speaking of the mentoring system.

Unlike other issues outlined so far, there are major discrepancies in opinions on a formal or informal mentoring process. Some participants believe this process should be informal, loose, voluntary, should stay within the buddy system and be available on request. Additionally, some managers refer to it as a “nightmare for managers” (P.4).

But others believe that this system lacks a monitoring phase which the college needs in order to know if it is actually working; whether it is beneficial; and whether it actually informs T&D. Those people are hoping to formalise it in the future and link it more with HR structures to be able to control it.

This particular debate is not going to be resolved here; however, it certainly indicates the need and opportunity for further discussion.

3.2: Enhancing Lecturers’ Skills

Before this theme will be presented, one surprising finding needs to be noted. Initially, the researcher planned a potential draft frame of themes and proposed connections to discuss mentoring as part of the enhancement of lecturers’ skills, but – as one can notice here – the results indicated rather low connections and references to teaching skills, as such. Enhancing lecturers’ skills was the second most referenced and most related to the theme from all the issues explored. Hence, the enhancing lecturers’ skills theme includes three of the most prominent issues such as self-development and enhancing teaching and other skills, but also includes research enquiry practices and peer observation aspects that were explored as well as they relate to the role of educators.
The enhancing lecturers’ skills theme has two sections that need further explanation. They are: “other skills sub theme” (assessment, writing exam papers, writing validation and programmatic review documents, writing module outcomes, etc.) and “teaching skills sub theme” (classroom situation and student-related duties).

Additionally, it is interesting to see that when speaking about T&D practices, enhancing other skills was most referred to – compared to enhancing the actual teaching skills which was generally one of the least mentioned during the interviews.

3.2.1: Self-Development and Staff Engagement Aspects

Within enhancing lecturers’ skills practices, self-development and staff engagement were referenced and cross referenced nearly in every other aspect discussed. In other words, in every practice discussed with participants, they were always underlining self-development and staff engagement. Those two aspects are quite self-explanatory. However, it is important that they are referred to every single time that any T&D practices are discussed. All participants agree that staff engagement is crucial, as well as the expectation to keep oneself up to speed in the area of teaching. The following table lists just some of the evidence of such practices gathered during this research process through all the sources of data used. These are not all possible initiatives or a wish list either – it is only to portray the fact that there are a good few initiatives that can tick the box for CPD (continuous personal development) apart from the official Research Committee, etc. – outlined further in this theme.

Table 7: Sources of Continuous Personal Development Opportunities / Activities Within and Outside the College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal and external sources of CPD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email invitations to external conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitations to talks and events in the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online talks and discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library activities, book recommendations, newsletters,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Architects Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other academic / non-academic (academic operations, academic affairs) departments’ info or invitations, fairs, talks, lunches, presentations, lectures, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.2: Enhancing Other Skills

As mentioned earlier, much of the college training initiative focuses on skills outside the classroom. Although many would be covered within the information sessions under QA, all participants agreed that practicality is the key to success and that telling sessions may not be the right approach. Hence, much attention was recently given to writing module outlines, exam papers, programmatic review documents, etc. Here, workshops have been used and all participants called it a success.

“Other workshops are great opportunities for cross work utilisation where you put a generic workshop on and you would invite people on it (P.1).”

Although many of those practices were forced by the regulations and were organised ad hoc, participants see it as an opportunity to build on in the future. It can be concluded that there are five major ways in which training is taking place:

A) Constant moderation – via peers and line managers – is widely used; Module Revision and Development Proposal System; internal documents moderation

B) Ad hoc training such as workshops, mock interviews and / or mock validation – organised just a couple of times but hoped to be exploited more

C) Monitoring system: internal and external audits and QA checks that inform T&D

D) Management training – regular Academy platform online

E) Tutor Academy Platform – only on request of a line manager or through the appraisal system.

Additionally, there are initiatives that would accommodate some system that would help in identifying teaching needs apart from student feedback and appraisal processes. HR is currently working on training needs analysis. It would be an online system linked to an existing “Success Factors” platform. Both are supposed to catch T&D needs across the college – including those of the teaching staff.

3.2.3: Enhancing Teaching Skills

Most references to this sub-theme related to T&D needs rather than the actual practices in the college. Because – as participants said – there is a good recruitment screening to assure QA in terms of teaching skills. However, all of them pointed out that
there is a debate and ‘voices’ on some tangible, accredited certification / training in teaching skills.

Another issue raised in terms of teaching skills is the fact that generally, current practice is more reactive. There are two reasons revealed in the data to the use of the word “reactive” by the researcher. First is that none of the participants was able to pinpoint any specific regular T&D practices, apart from CPD initiatives offered and training organised on other KSA – not related to the classroom situation as such – mentioned in the previous sub-theme. The second reason is that the only tangible information gathered and responded to in terms of classroom KSA, is the student-feedback system currently being used. This system, as the participants suggested, is important in informing T&D but not to the extent that they would want it. It simply informs and also responds to negative issues that have already escalated in the relationship between the educators and the learners.

“For me as a manager, I only speak to people where there is a problem. Again, going back to best practice, what about people who are getting really high scores? How can I not speak to them? The questions need to be reviewed as well. I question the questions” (P.4).

“What we haven’t done is a deeper analysis of trends in student feedback. We rarely pick up bad teaching really. We don’t want to saturate students with feedback but rather get a better quality data from it. It is a useful tool to identify needs” (P.3).

There is also this worrying fact pointed out by participants, that student feedback is still a part of a staff’s appraisal, but it should soon be balanced by the fact that it is currently undergoing a major revision.

Another positive note is that the Learning and Teaching Unit has been designed, promised and agreed upon by the institution. This particular cell will look at specific T&D needs for educators, and it is hoped to develop tangible results in a form of a module on learning and teaching.

3.2.4: Research Enquiry Practices

The formal activity in this field is the Research Committee’s development and that it is expanding its scope. Apart from that, the discussion on research enquiry leads to the
definition of the college’s mission and, therefore, to the staff’s definition in accordance with this mission. That is “learners focused” and “being a good educator”.

Additionally, three prominent findings came out. First of all, research informs teaching and the college has to follow this as well.

“As the college develops over time and matures, with that maturity does come more responsibility. When you start delivering at level 9, there has to be a deeper understanding of research of knowledge and so that is where research activity becomes quite critical; so research is a development that the college is aware of and that it needs to develop into. College has put in some measures for it but there is still a long way to go” (P.1).

Secondly, that research enquiry has to be beneficial for the college as well.

“Our big area is education. So, if people could produce something within the educational arena, then that would be very beneficial. There is something on the cards in the development arena, but it is not there yet” (P.3).

Lastly, all participants also mentioned the practice of keeping lecturers up to speed in their area of expertise. This is a form of a research enquiry as well as CPD practice, and should not be underestimated either.

Hence, all participants agreed that research enquiry largely depends on the fact that the college is first of all a teaching institution and not a research-based institute. But there needs to be balance as well – some research activity has to be sparked in the future and it seems to be on the cards for years – according to participants. There is still a long way to go in defining the research enquiry practice according to both the institution and its staff.

3.2.5: Peer Observation

This factor has been included within ‘enhancing lecturers’ skills’ as it is used worldwide. But, as it turned out, it is not so popular in the college yet; however, there is some evidence from discussions that there is an intention to embrace it in the future. Certainly, all participants agreed that they would welcome such an initiative, but they do not agree as to how this practice would be utilised in the college. Two significant
findings are worth mentioning: peer observation should be seen and communicated as a development and not regarded as a punishment practice. Also, the college has to be ready for it, both from the organisational point to the “buy-in” point from staff. So, it is certainly on the cards, but has a loosely-defined future.

3.3: Sharing Best Practice

This theme refers to all interpersonal and inter-departmental cooperation related to enhancing teachers’ skills and CPD. Although it is not directly related to T&D practice, it seems it is one of the main conditions and is based on results. Sharing best practice has been the third most referenced aspect based on all the data analysed. The biggest finding here is that T&D does not always have to be labelled as such or embedded within some specific system or structure. It may as well be loose, very flexible, not defined and intuitive, and still bring the benefits of T&D. It is perhaps partially due to the very nature of the third-level education sector where so many activities are led by individuals themselves and depend on individual initiatives as well as on the institution.

Data analysis showed two – somewhat contradictory – findings. On the one hand, there is plenty of evidence of sharing and cooperation in the college; on the other hand, all participants indicated deficiencies and a strong need for better communication and cooperation.

“I wouldn’t call it training as such, but it comes more from lecturers’ attendance at committee meetings and Board of Studies. Those kinds of meetings happen all the time. They would be life training and sharing best practice” (P.1).

“A lot of programme teams share their knowledge, and also I deal with the feedback from students; and, if required, we try to accommodate any training needs that come up as much as we can” (P.4).

The table below presents some chosen information based only on the data gathered within a relatively short period of time.
Table 8: Shared Best Practice – Chosen Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Committee</td>
<td>Invites for talks, presentations, lectures, open papers, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSR Committee- HR Dept.</td>
<td>Invites for talks, cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Invites for talks, fairs, online on-site discussions, happenings Share expertise Advice on issues such as literature choice, reading list creation, gathering materials, supporting activities for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library, Career and Student Services</td>
<td>Invites for fairs, talks, events, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Marketing</td>
<td>Informed of media coverage for the college and other media sources related to education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Operations</td>
<td>Share info on free lectures Informed of Board of Studies events Informed of any additional sources of manuals – apart from the usual duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>Invites and informed of additional lectures and speakers coming in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science Dept.</td>
<td>Created online Moodle page to share best practice and invited all staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology Department</td>
<td>Invites for some external and internal talks, events, lectures Shares info and resources related to teaching practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Law</td>
<td>Invites for some external and internal talks, events, lectures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, there are many initiatives happening across the college, but it seems they lack some common platform that would combine all individual and departmental activities and initiatives – whether formal or informal. The Research Committee along with the Teaching and Learning Committee are referred to as stepping stones in this process.

I: ‘‘Do you think there is good communication between departments in sharing their knowledge?’’

P.3: ‘‘No, we need to get better at that really.”

“There is so much information in the School of Business that the School of Arts is not aware of and vice versa. There is great communication between HoDs (Heads of
Department). But with the teaching practice . . . the only time when we’re really going to know is when there’s peer observation” (P.4).

“But I would love to have some more workshops on teaching practice. I’d love to hear how people are dealing with those situations” (P.2).

“We need to be exploiting the expertise we have, but we don’t. We really don’t” (P.4).

“We don’t utilise communication between departments to the level we should. There is always a need for deeper discussion ... while people would like a deeper training but you always need to balance it against time management issues as well” (P.1).

Therefore, staff advocated more communication, deeper discussion, a platform on which those can happen, a platform which would allow for T&D identification and, generally, to act proactively rather than reactively. The biggest obstacle that was given by participants was always the time management – to find the space to facilitate any training and to be able to plan in advance. The heads of the two schools as well as the Academic Director spoke about merging the schools somehow, for instance, by validating joined programmes in business and arts. Another idea given in order to achieve this was for the managers to speak to lecturers more, especially those who are practising the best teaching methodologies.

3.4: Organisational Culture

This theme emerged following discussions on T&D practices and explanations that allowed forming the overall picture of the institution – its statement, its mission, its definition and direction. It was not within the direct interest of the research scope, but it is an important one as it helped to understand how and why T&D practices are delivered and developed in a certain unique way.

Therefore, the significant issues that were captured were related to how the college sees its mission, and how it sees its teaching staff’s KSA.

There are two major facts in relation to the institution’s philosophy – “learner engagement” and “educating institution”. Although participants indicated the appreciation and the need for research enquiry, the most important thing is that the college must be good at educating, first and foremost. It aims for the best teaching quality so the “learner engagement” and “blended learning” are on the agenda. The
college exists within a strongly-regulated environment and those regulations are crucial to its future; as such, there is so much effort put into constructive alignment – as mentioned already in the findings.

Thus the educators’ roles and expectations are also clearly defined. Research enquiry is supported, but also requires a desire to be fitted with educational theory and practice. A currency in the area of expertise is required and further development should also be supported to some extent. Self-initiative and self-development are crucial and were emphasised at every opportunity during the interviews. Apart from that, good educators are also able to transfer and assess knowledge, and so it has measurable and objective outcomes. At the same time, there are some interesting points of view presented which show that educational theory is good as long as it is constructive and translated into practice. Otherwise, it stays within the theory frame and is not useful to anybody.

Finally, efforts are made for staff – particularly lecturers – to understand the wider educational context which is why staff engagements are desired in any initiative.

“Staff is informed about it either from the CEO directly or through their HoD attending managerial meetings. There are monthly managers’ meetings which include managers from all departments in order to know what is going on everywhere” (P.1).

3.5: Findings Summary

In short, all college T&D practices were investigated and presented. It has been found that as a highly-regulated institution, alignment with procedures and policies is crucial and as important as being a good lecturer. Therefore, much of the T&D practices originate from QA.

Furthermore, being a good educator was defined. Along with a certain level of expertise and a lecturer’s KSA, understanding the wider educational context is equally important.

The delivery of QA-related training brings some problems and participants pointed out that both staff engagement forms of training and different conceptualised language would be more effective that just telling sessions.

Moreover, there is a constant effort to enhance educators’ needs that relate to outside-the-classroom duties – writing, designing and assessing modules and programmes which are partially dictated by the constructive alignment force.
Not much is being done with the actual classroom skills as such. There are projects in place to enhance and accommodate this type of T&D need. Examples are planned projects (Teaching and Learning Committee) and already-established projects (Research Committee and Academic Appointment Sub-Committee). There are also projects in place to re-design the student-feedback process as one of the main sources in informing T&D needs for teaching staff. The peer observation process is only within the discussion phase, while elements of mentoring are used as a part of the induction process in the form of a buddy system.

Consequently, research enquiry largely depends on the fact that the college is first of all a teaching institution and not a research-based institute. But management appreciates the need for further research development – ideally in the field of educational theory in order to be of benefit for staff and the institution.

The need for more communication regarding sharing practices has been advocated in nearly every context as the one that fuels, informs and creates further training and continues professional development initiatives.

T&D for educators is proving to be a very complex picture from which many further ideas can be presented. One thing is certain: T&D practices within the educational field are extremely difficult to capture, monitor and develop.

The next chapter attempts to compare and combine research findings with current theoretical models, in order to fully understand and capture the issue that was studied.

4: Conclusions and Recommendations

This dissertation has investigated training and development practices for further education lecturers. The purpose of the current study was to determine T&D practices and trends within a specific case study context of the private college in Ireland.

There were three objectives for this project:

Firstly, to establish current T&D trends and practices for further education lecturers

Secondly, to evaluate different existing theoretical models of higher education T&D

Lastly, to propose recommendations for effective and efficient T&D practices for the tertiary lecturers in the specific context of the private college in Ireland.

The study has shown similarities of trends and practices in further education lecturers’ T&D environments as well as certain differences based on the case study and the literature analysis. There were some novel directions and recommendations drawn as well.

Generally, three paradigm shifts identified in literature by authors such as Giddens (2008); Skelton (2002), p.12; and Opre et al. (2008 pp 29-43), can also be observed in the college case.

Further education therefore, is shifting towards more of a system-thinking approach. What is important for the organisation also becomes crucial when identifying T&D practices. But it’s not just the role of the institution that is changing, but also the role of educators when a continuous attempt to merge the role of the faculty with the role of the teacher is present. The third paradigm can also be observed in the case study, i.e. a student-focused, active-learning approach is practised (Ofovwe, 2011, p.208).

Model 1 visualises those paradigm shifts that are also present in the findings based on the case study that was investigated.

Figure 7: Model of Understanding the Context and T&D Practices in the College
Thus, college practices show that the T&D originates from the constant need to comply with external regulatory bodies, while simultaneously dictating internal regulations and policies which, in turn, shape the training practices in the institution. This regulatory environment surely defines “the way how things are run” in an organisational culture.

This particular model, however, does not only show the interdependencies of T&D practices with organisational structures, but also suggests that it may also give new directions as to what, how and why T&D practices should be fostered in the college. The proof of this statement was also found in literature (Massaro, Harrison and Soares, 2006, p. 2257; Festing, 2012, p. 44; Ghilic-Micu, Mircea, Nisioiu, Silvestru and Stoica, 2011, p. 82; Karthik, 2012, p. 54; and Lowe, Jones, Allen et al., 2007, p.37).

The authors not only support the benefiting notion of strategic alignment of T&D needs with organisational needs, but, more importantly, indicate that staff commitment is also built on that dependency (Lea and Stierer, 2009, p. 426; Brew et al., 2011, p.60). So, issues such as understanding the mission, the strategy and the direction of the organisation help to establish a stronger relationship with employees which would result in greater commitment. Those factors indirectly influence a staff’s approach to T&D practices.

There are indications that in the case study, the college also makes efforts to ensure that the overall strategy is understood and followed. Basic induction training provided for newcomers and mentoring elements are just some examples.

More importantly, the recruitment process itself has been revised to assure teaching staff that KSA are in line with the direction of the organisation. Those are the recruitment elements that involve presentation and the constitution of the Academic Appointment Sub-Committee that is linked with mentoring.

To summarise, understanding the basic aspects of the organisational structure and culture, helps in developing a positive perception and cooperation in T&D activities.

This situation – as the literature suggested – is not easy to achieve, because most of the contributing factors are intangible and difficult to measure. The conditions were highlighted by other authors and also revealed in the findings. Olsen et al. (2010; p. 35), suggested that official and formal training significantly limit effectiveness. Moreover,
Papastamatis et al. (2009, p.85), suggested that work-based learning is the most beneficial form of T&D that constitutes the “learning organisation”.

Similar aspects can be observed in the case study. First of all, it has been found that “telling sessions”, regarded as a purely informative type of training (although sometimes the only way possible) did not work to the extent that was expected. Participants also mentioned the language of training and pointed toward the necessity for constructive, specific language – without pedagogical jargon – to be used.

Additionally, instead of information being provided, the need for practical and tactical training was expressed. “Learning institution” in literature referred to on-the-job type of training (Papastamatis et al., 2009, p.84). In the case study, there was evidence of using such a practice but not frequently enough. It referred to the workshop type of training and having a moderation system in place. Two of those were described as the most successful and constructive.

Moreover, as per authors like Jazzar and Algozzine (2007, p. 85); Ubben, Hughes and Norris, (2007, p.58), standards of students’ achievements as a training need are the most beneficial for the educational institution, and it is inevitable that they will be used in the current environment. They are also one of the most prominent sources of feedback in the case study.

At the same time, the system itself is currently undergoing a major review as it was not producing the quality of data expected. Yet, the biggest obstacle pointed out by the participants was the fact that it is reactive; it is only responsive to the challenging issues of teaching practice. Authors like Arthur (2009, p.454), stressed the importance of student feedback as a good information source; however, his recommendation is that it cannot constitute the only source that is used in the staff’s appraisal system.

It seems like a good lesson for the college as well – simply because it is not in line with a college lecturer’s definition. As has been already discussed, lecturers’ duties are reaching far more beyond the classroom situation; hence – logically – there needs to be some feedback system that would gather the performances of other duties, too.

The answer to the question as to whether or not the college uses some elements of work-based learning is, “yes”.

But another question posed while reviewing the literature was whether the educating institution investigated is also a “learning institution”.

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Based on findings, the answer would be, “not yet”. It may be due to the fact that the student- feedback process is not capturing the best practice in teaching. Secondly, there is no evidence of any feedback process either from student feedback or any training activity – apart from the moderation process in place.

Moderation is mandatory and the process means that the document will be moderate until it is properly written and delivered. But there is no other communication channel that would employ feedback. Hence, like with students’ feedback, the same mistakes are made repetitively by different people who do not have the opportunity to learn from the more experienced and senior teachers. As this system is undergoing a major revision, it is hoped that it would include other approaches and ways of collecting feedback. It is particularly important – as it is currently a part of the staff’s appraisal – that it should capture the training and development needs more precisely.

One cannot forget another significant finding that relates to good teaching practice, i.e. the changing role of educators.

As presented in the findings, the college defines the role of an educator and the expectations that go with it. This is proven by the fact that the college expects its staff not only to be current in their area of expertise, but it also expects the members to work in line with what McAlpine et al. (2011 p.1-3) defined as “organisational citizenship”. All practices that go under ‘enhancing other skills’ T&D belong to this category. Consequently, the constructive QA practices are clearly postulated by the management, but there is no clear link between those and the appraisal mechanism. Although this link does not lie directly with the line of this research enquiry, it is an important source of T&D practices, as per the literature (p.12). The authors defined it as a “professional accountability mechanism”. It is practised in the college, but it is not part of what Clarke (as cited in Jazzar and Algozzine, 2007, p.85) called “consolidated learning”. Only student feedback is taken into consideration. Other duties lie within the code of conduct activities and are not appraised or awarded in any way. So the college puts the effort into QA (procedural training), but simultaneously talked about the need for better co-operation, sharing best practice and gaining the “buy-in” from staff when it comes to training activities and initiatives.

The biggest limitation of this study lies in its methods, i.e. the sample choice that could not have been overcome. The perception of institutional alignments and the need for understanding the role of educators have not been investigated through the educators themselves but only by the management / educators’ perspective. Despite the fact that
most participants are also or have been teaching for years, the staff’s attitudes have to be investigated in the future as well. Congruently, authors have recognised the sharing of best practice notions as important in T&D for academia.

As mentioned in the literature, Opre, Zaharie and Opre (2008 pp. 29-43), suggested that the role of lecturers will be constantly shifting into not only teaching or researching skills required for the job. Fan and McAlpine remind us how important networking is to enhance FE teachers’ KSA (Fan 2011, p.128; McAlpine, Horn and Rath, 2011, p.1-3). Also, the authors explained that it is especially important for novice lecturers.

The institution that was studied has partially addressed this need by introducing elements of mentoring. The system is not completed, but it can be a good platform to develop it further. At the moment, the college has implemented “the buddy system”, assigned only to those who are novices in the job. They are being given a mentor and their teaching hours can be reduced to accommodate it. Another important finding is that the college does not communicate with one, coherent mentoring definition; hence, neither the process nor the potential benefits have been identified so far. In most of the research that was discussed, mentoring is combined with peer observation as an element of the mentoring process (Shortland, 2010, p.301; Brew et al., 2011; Pickering, 2006, pp. 320-330; and Ofovwe, 2011, p.208). Therefore, there is nothing to compare it to if it is not practised in the college, as such. Still, there are some lessons for the future that should be noted if the process is to be implemented.

Scholars agree that mentoring and peer observation cannot be seen as mandatory and a forced form of development because they do not have a chance to earn the ‘build-in’ factor and they may be seen as threatening. At the same time, there is also a danger of seeing it as not significant and not benefiting to staff (Ofovwe, 2011, p.208).

The authors proposed some remedies to avoid this situation (Brew et al., 2011. p.62; Shortland, 2010, p.301). Teaching has to be seen as an important aspect of the job, i.e. something that is worth investing in the same way as research. Additionally, there were specific solutions as to the design of the process such as pre-training, mock observations and a general understanding of the purpose of peer observation and the mentoring process – that is, developing one’s KSA rather than assessing or appraising one’s KSA.
The above are only some of the solutions given and discussed regarding mentoring and peer observation issues; they need further investigation which this project does not provide. Nonetheless, the literature and the primary research confirmed that mentoring and peer observation constitute important elements of T&D practices for lecturers. Therefore, mentoring and peer observation should be studied further in the future, building on what this project managed to establish, i.e. that peer observation and mentoring are the channels of intense co-operation and shared practices, and are the most fundamental conditions to have in place in order to develop T&D practices for tertiary educators.

Another challenging aspect lies within the “research enquiry” as a T&D practice. Some institutions are investing heavily in research (Macfarlane and Hughes, 2009, pp. 11-14), but all unequivocally expressed the time limitations and the complexity of the lecturer’s role as the biggest obstacles. Certain lessons that can be taken from this project relate to research – the form and type of research welcomed by staff and the institution need further clarification. Solutions such as tri-semesters (Hemmings and Kay, 2010, p. 190-196) were considered as not possible to implement in the college. Additionally, summer time, when staff is not teaching, is seen as research enquiry time by some school managers. So, it seems like the programme of researching is understood by the college to be one of the sources of enhancing teaching skills, and, as such, would be supported by the institution.

“Researching” is directly related with a staff’s currency requirement that was emphasised as crucial by the college, as well. It is desired by the college that the research initiatives that would be supported by the institution should somehow be related to the educational theory – as per the school’s mission. This project did not fully explore the debate as to what kind of research is welcomed and what should be investigated further, perhaps, by the Research Committee in the college. Hence, the research enquiry is deemed to be crucial for the college’s future, and, as there are massive areas to explore, what do we mean by research? How do we want to
support it? How do we want to encourage it? These are all questions yet to be answered in a different debate.

Certainly, as with all T&D practices, the consolidated effort is the key to progress in relation to all college and staff initiatives in training and CPD practices. None of those should stand alone, and they all should be incorporated somehow within the college’s scope of practices.

This brings the debate to the crucial element of sharing best practice as the notion that received much attention in literature and in the primary research of the case that was studied. As results indicate, there are plenty of different forms of cooperative initiatives happening across the college, but it seems they lack some common platform that would combine all individual and departmental activities and initiatives, whether formal or informal. The Research Committee, along with the planned Teaching and Learning Committee, are referred to as stepping stones in this process.

The authors often suggested that the willingness to cooperate and share can be achieved by understanding the broad educational context. This is exactly in line with the interviewees’ opinions. Models such as “Situated Learning Theory” offered some steps to boost the cooperation and sharing of best practice. (Warhurst, 2008, p. 457). Therefore, teachers can develop their skills by “belonging” (community), “doing” (practising) and “becoming” (meaning and learning). At the same time, “the discussion” should not be limited only to “talking seminars”. Pickering (2006, pp. 320-330), for instance, mentioned that those are usually seen as counterproductive, not specific and lacking in conclusions and recommendations. Perhaps that may be the reason for a “lack of initiative and poor attendance” that was often pointed out during interviews as well.

In summary, the Monk, Irons, Kirk, Adams, Carlson, Abernathy and Stephens (2012, pp. 57-60) models will be discussed again in comparison with college practices in order to assess the overall approach to T&D in the college.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models of Professional Development</th>
<th>Evaluation Compared with the Practice in the College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>In the College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Individually-guided professional”</td>
<td>Not investigated by this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen from the above table, T&D practice in the college is a complex system to understand. It needs to be studied further; it certainly needs improvement, but it has a good reservoir of practices to build on. Much attention is given to enhancing skills other than teaching skills, while teaching skills are assessed by limited resources and in inaccurate ways. Communication needs to be improved as well to boost cooperation and dialogue across the college. Finally, staff cooperation should be looked at in order to strengthen the sharing of best practice, perhaps through peer observation and further development of the mentoring programme.
All of the above intriguing conclusions help to propose certain recommendations as well as revealing some limitations of this study that may give rise to further research.

4.2: Recommendations for Effective and Efficient T&D in a Private College

At the beginning of this project enquiry, the basic understanding of T&D was discussed. Three major points were made: *It involves elements of discovery, reflection and change,*” (Garavan, Hogan and O’Donnell, 2003, p.19). It also means advancing the organisation and individuals. This project suggested a number of solutions and directions in order to ensure effective T&D. The following models have been proposed to achieve the above in the particular organisational context.

These findings suggest several courses of action for effective T&D practices in the college. Creating a common platform to identify, monitor and develop T&D requires key factors to be met. These are: all staff to speak a common language; to remain in line with organisational strategy; to have a responsive system that is able to identify specific needs; and, finally, to create a common platform to accommodate the identification, the monitoring and the delivery of T&D practices.

The next model (Figure 8) proposes to create a unit that would gather information from all relevant sources.
Therefore, having a Research Committee that is not fully responsive to all training and developmental needs – apart from the ones made by staff themselves – is directly related to currency and development within specific teaching areas of expertise. As the model suggests, one unit would be responsible for gathering T&D needs and information from all college areas. It may prove to have several positive results, such as the following:

Reduce the pressure for line managers in monitoring and communicating training initiatives

Additionally, it may enhance communication with the non-academic departments on other T&D needs and practices. It may also boost the inter-schools’ and between-lecturers’ communication as the unit would gather findings and recommendations from many sources, e.g., board of studies, heads of school meeting, validation processes, etc.

Moreover, this model allows for the appropriate accommodating of T &D needs. A code of conduct and procedure are usually followed by all staff, but many are dealt with individually in various ways – depending on the faculty. The authors and participants
agree that “one size does not fit all”; hence, to properly design and deliver training, specific needs have to be defined. This, in turn, may boost the sharing of best practice as different faculties get to know about alternatives and innovations – particularly in enhancing teaching practice.

Continuous feedback and monitoring were also discussed in this project as important elements of learning and developing. The next model explains this process.

**Figure 9: Creating a Common Platform for T&D Practices in the College**

Consequently, the T&L Committee should not be taken as the one that organises training exclusively, but regarded more as a common platform for gathering and passing on information on T&D. Once the information is analysed, certain practical steps can be proposed – whether they relate to procedural requirements training, teaching skills or research activities, etc. Those can then be spread between the T&L Committee, the Research Committee and / or HR.

The next step in this process is to gather feedback from the training receivers. The feedback can be organised both by more formal specific forms, i.e. surveys (when the organiser needs to assess certain ways or content of training) and / or by loose, informal ways (conversations, talks, BoS, HoD meetings, blogs, Moodle, etc.).
Finally, a certain amount of time should be allowed to gather the feedback and start the revision process. Many of those steps can be organised online, while other face to face meetings can use minutes of meetings, documents, etc., as the channel.

In short, this process does not have to equal “more time on filling some forms and reports” as it can be casual and not according to strict protocol.

Additionally the awareness of having a system like this one may help to build the staff’s confidence and the “buy-in” for any initiatives in the college because people would understand the objectives and benefits of it. The ownership of the staff’s own initiatives and all college changes is crucial, as proven by the results of this study. The above model may help to harvest it.

Hence, the importance of staff cooperation and initiative was stressed in this project many times. Also, it was proven that the organisation can and should facilitate it as well.

However, a lack of initiative for many forms of organised training was pointed out as a major drawback. Time management and the “buy-in” were often pointed out as an issue.

Suggestions by participants and those drawn from literature were clear. We need to find the time; we need to assure people of the benefits and that they do not see it as threatening. The following model offers some steps to take – using peer observation as an example.

Why peer observation – if there are so many different forms of learning?

First of all, the literature and the empirical data presented strong evidence that “learning by doing” can be a very powerful resource for developing one’s KSA. The college has not implemented peer observation yet; however, it would be wise to consider such a practice if there were to be a vivid discussion which could result in enhancing college performance in terms of the products that it is delivering – the high quality of teaching and the high quality of education received.

Any negative implications of peer observation (too strict, too time consuming, seen as threatening because it is linked to performance appraisal, etc.), can be avoided by implementing the following model:
Figure 10, therefore, suggests a very casual, informal process of peer observation.

Additionally, it does not propose any official or unofficial feedback to send to any bodies of the college. In other words, the line manager, the head of the department, the HR manager or any of the committee would not hold the right to request a peer observation feedback. The general CoC would apply in any situations where staff is obliged to report when those are breached. But generally, it would be only the business of the peer and the observer.

The only process that would have to be assured is the pairing of the participants together by drawing lots. Additionally, staff would hold the right to change its selected observation partner.

The observation would not be dictated by any strict rules or questionnaires, unless proposed by staff themselves. A system like this allows for the building of the staff’s trust and willingness to participate. Moreover, both peer and observer automatically reflect on their own practice and share it while talking about it. So the peer who is being observed would not feel only like an object being assessed, but also as the source of the other peer’s learning. Peer observation in this model also allows for “sharing best practice”; “I observe to admire, to learn, to suggest and reflect.”
That is why it is important to meet another requirement – to share the findings only with the peer being observed in a very informal way. This will facilitate the discovery of more realistic and specific T&D needs and will be addressed by staff themselves via three sources – HR-related success factors initiatives; departmental meetings; and committees in the college.

4.3: Project Summary

This research investigated third-level educators’ training and development practices based on case study analysis and an evaluation of existing theoretical models. It involved a case study of a private college in Ireland. Using qualitative data, multi-methods was employed including in-depth interviews, archive documents and researcher diary data analysis to ensure methodological triangulation.

The purpose of the current study was to determine T&D practices and trends within a specific case study context of the private college in Ireland.

There were three objectives for this project: to establish current T&D trends and practices for further education lecturers; secondly, to evaluate different existing theoretical models of higher education T&D; and, finally, to propose recommendations for effective and efficient T&D practice for tertiary lecturers in the specific context of the private college in Ireland.

In summary, the empirical findings and literature assessment in this study provided a new understanding of T&D practices in the college.

First, it was found that the role of the institution is changing, and so is the role of educators when they constantly strive to merge the role of the faculty with the role of the teacher. Hence, not only “excellence in learning” but also “organisational citizenship” notions are evidently needed and desired. Much attention is given to enhancing skills other than teaching skills, while teaching skills are assessed by limited resources and in inaccurate ways. Communication needs to be improved as well to boost cooperation and dialogue across the college, and, finally, staff cooperation should be looked at in order to strengthen the sharing of best practice, perhaps through peer observation and further development of the mentoring programme.
It fuels another significant finding. This is a growing importance of networking, specifically in sharing best practice. The institution that was studied has partially addressed this need by introducing elements of mentoring. The system is not completed, but it can be a good platform to develop it further.

The college implemented some mentoring elements, but does not practise peer observation yet; however, it would be wise to consider such practice, if there is vivid discussion to ensure and enhance college performance in terms of the products that it is delivering – a high quality of teaching and a high quality of education received.

Several limitations to this study need to be acknowledged. The main weakness of this study was the paucity of sample size. A similar study should include educators themselves – and not only the management / educators’ perspectives.

However, with a small sample size, caution must be applied, as the findings are not transferable to any other situation.

The project was limited in several other ways which are setting the directions for further study as well. The current research was not specifically designed to evaluate factors related to research enquiry, peer observation and mentoring. Therefore, these three should be studied in the future, building on what this project managed to establish, i.e. that peer observation and mentoring are the channels of intense cooperation and shared practices – the most fundamental conditions to develop T&D practices for tertiary educators.

Nonetheless, the dissertation managed to portray current T&D practices in the specific context, and also set the directions for further debate.
5: Self-Reflection on Own Learning and Performance

Something important happened today – I finished my first belles-lettres book for years. When I completed it, I realized that I couldn’t remember the last time when I was reading something not academic, not professional and not science-related.

So, it took two years of constant researching to sculpt the shape of my project. The process was difficult and exciting.

It would be a lie to say that I was new to the entire experience. First of all, constant researching has been a part of my life for thirteen years. My Masters in Sociology, a number of professional development certifications and the lecturing experience are all examples of my research caseload.

Hence, reading, writing and research enquiry are a part of me. My work on this research project has always felt like a culmination and a test of my entire academic life. It was a significant moment to say the least.

The dissertation was a test of my skills and my ability to adapt to a completely different area of expertise, but, most importantly, was a test of my ability to combine my expertise in social sciences with business administration and human resources’ management.

Did I pass? I can honestly say I did, regardless of this project’s mark. This research process helped me to set the direction to my future. It assured me that I made the right choice, despite my doubts. Did I change directions? Yes, I did – from social science to business management. Did I dare myself to be a student while being a lecturer at the same time? Yes, I did. Did it help me to make any discovery? Yes, it did – I have found an area of human resources in which I can combine my academic and professional expertise, i.e. employee training and development. My project is a final product of that combination.

Over the two years of conversations, questioning, debating, consulting, researching, eliminating, writing and analysing, I was finally able to visualise my direction and this project input. It really does make sense to me, to my career and, hopefully, to my organisation. The model presented sketches of my position and the logic of focusing on this particular topic of the dissertation.
It is because I was able to combine all my learning skills, my experience and expertise in the research project that allowed me to set my professional directions. It finally feels like I can make sense of everything that I have been doing. It comes down to this dissertation project.

First of all, how did I get here? There were several significant events and factors that contributed to the work on this dissertation.

Thankfully some wise, academic colleague advised me to start a research diary which I followed. Reading through my diary helped me to understand and appreciate so many important aspects. First of all, to see the progress that I made makes me proud. Secondly, I can appreciate all the people who served me with advice along the way. Thirdly, I could actually incorporate it into my data collection, and so it was also a good source of information for the case study. Lastly, I see the mistakes that I made, and so I can learn from them.

Scholars often advise using a research diary (Lovitts, Wert, 2009, p.57; Anderson, 2004, p.110; and Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler, 2008, p.28).
The structure of the diary does not require a strict way of making entries and of keeping
the format of data recorded as long as it is kept regularly. I built the research diary
structure based on what Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1986, as cited in LJMU
Dissertation Handbook, 2013, p.43) suggested, i.e. to include feelings, thoughts, ideas
and behaviour. Therefore, I kept the diary in the following format:

Table 10: Researcher Diary Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>What happened?</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September, 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

End-of-the-Month Report:

Initially, the diary was unstructured and in a loose form, but it proved to be too difficult
to follow the progress and find specific events in the past. The format I developed
helped me to easily track the specific details retrospectively. The research diary proved
to be useful for many reasons. They are listed below.

It was easy to track the names of people I was talking to. Some of them were not
significant, but other conversations helped me enormously. It was particularly useful
that I had the opportunity to consult and discuss issues, ideas and plans with academic
staff – they are the ones to whom this project is really dedicated.

It was a great way to gather all notes and thoughts on the project in one place. I
remember putting all the sticky notes and other random notes together at the end of each
week.

Keeping this diary also contributed enormously to the methodology of my project. First
of all, I realised how difficult it was going to be to structure the questionnaires for the
interviews based on my conversations with employees. Every time I outlined my ideas,
I received a different answer, leading to a different path. The findings changed the tools
choice; I considered ethical issues that I had never considered before. I had noted
conversations that literally led to changing my dissertation topic.
Many issues found in the diary contributed to the interview guidelines.

Finally, keeping the diary was of special importance to me as I was an employee of the organisation of interest. It helped to keep a distance from the personal biases and experiences.

Hence, keeping a diary is a basic step that each researcher should take, especially when doing the research based on a case study of the organisation they work for. It is a simple, very effective tool that may contribute towards the coherency of the project.

Another important event in the process was to revisit my own learning style. I was not a novice researcher as this was my third dissertation, excluding a number of other written assessments and materials that I had produced over years of studying and lecturing. So it was not a matter of starting from scratch, but more like revisiting my own ways of writing, learning, searching, etc. Due to my work, I found it easy to search and track materials I needed, scan them, organise, analyse and synthesise them. Due to the fact that I have been studying for almost ten years, I have developed my own learning style; however, it is beneficial to take a step back and analyse the process so as to make it more efficient. For that reason, I used the activity adapted from Marcia L. Conner (Marcia, 2008).

My primary learning style is “visual”, with elements of the “auditory”. According to the above, here are some basic tactics I found most useful. I enjoy and understand visual planning with pictures, drawings, charts and matrixes. Mind mapping helped to gather what I studied, and served as a basis for the models that I used in the project.

I am literally addicted to my daily / weekly / monthly planner, and I need to have it with me at all times. If some idea or task to be done pops into my head, I write it down immediately. It helps me to relax. It helped enormously to deliver this project on time without compromising my work duties. It was extremely difficult. Nonetheless, it would not have been possible without the proper tools of time management, such as an outlook calendar synchronised on all my laptops and PC, a phone calendar, memos and reminders, a paper-based diary for day to day and weekly planners, but also Smart Draw and Excel matrixes of entire projects and plans synchronised with other MBA and work duties for entire, long-term projects and plans.
But, as mentioned, all conversations – official and unofficial – contributed to my project outcome. The main lesson learnt for me was to talk to people and ask, even if you don’t know what exactly you intend to ask for. That will always eventually come to you. The conversation does direct it and if it doesn’t, it means you need to change direction. It is simple and may seem obvious, but it wasn’t for me, especially when you tend to plan your entire work and every week of the month, etc. You may actually lose the natural flow and the discovery factor. You may limit yourself to certain mind sets as per plans, while you may miss an important event. This was the case when I meticulously set the title for my project, in line with the course of the MBA, without considering the significance of it for my own career and the organisation. After speaking with one of the lecturers, I was asked one question that changed my entire approach to the choice of my topic: “Why are you doing it?”

That one question set the stream of questions that followed and led to training and development ideas. It made sense for me, for my job, for my future in HRM, for my educational objectives and for my organisation. T&D is what was born based on conversations, not precise planning. Planning came after, once I knew the direction. T&D is something that is in line with my organisation’s efforts to improve; it’s in line with the organisational strategy; it is in line with my current expertise as a manager and lecturer; and in line with what I want to improve and do in the future. Perhaps that was the line of enquiry I took because, as per Kolb (1974, as cited in LJMU Dissertation Handbook, 2013, p.43), my learning style can also be described as activist and pragmatist – I am keen on trying, experimenting, asking questions and discussing the possible / potential outcomes. It is so important to see it in yourself in order to set and extend your boundaries in the research project. Otherwise, I would never have decided on in-depth interviews as the research method tool.

As a result, I have learnt to listen to others, to understand well what you are doing and why you are doing it, and finally to plan for the best and to stick to this plan.

In undertaking this research, I believe that I achieved what I intended which was to understand T&D in educational practice and to investigate this issue in my own organisation. Simply put, it was a case of: “Where are we? Where do we want to go and how do we want to get there, in terms of T&D practices?”
Consequently, I managed to set the frame of a plan for future improvement, goals and career plans.

I used “SMART” goals tactic to specify my goals (Doran, 1981, p.40): specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound.

Working with and for people is my passion. I find it the most motivating aspect in my entire career so far from working to managing and educating people. In the near future, I would like to expand my career into HRM – specifically in staff training and developing.

I would also like to maintain my lecturing career, perhaps more as a hobby with a long-term perspective. As long-term goals, I would like to be involved in creating innovative approaches to people management in specific areas of business such as HRM, training and staff development centres, etc., where I can use my lecturing and managerial experience.

I have developed some plans for the potential career paths in line with my dissertation topic -below.

Figure 12: Career Tree 1
In summary, this project was quite a journey which I hope will bring some benefits in the future. Even if it doesn’t go according to plan, I still feel that I have gained so much already – in particular, the awareness of my limitations and the purpose of my effort. I enjoyed this process because – apart from the tangible outcome of the dissertation – it made me question everything I think, do and plan.
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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Research Invitation
Dear ____,
My name is Alicja Chmielowska. I am a student on Masters of Business Administration in Human Resource Management. I am conducting a research study as part of the LJMU requirements, and I would like to invite you to participate.
This is the title of my project:

“Educate the educators. Training and development for third-level lecturers. A case study of the private college in Ireland”.

This study focuses on training and development practices for third-level teaching staff.
There is an intensive debate amongst scholars on the evolving role of academics, particularly on the needs for improvement in this multifaceted, dynamic, educational environment.

Hence, sharing your experience will add enormously to the value of my project.

Perhaps this project can add some meaningful insights into this debate and hopefully contribute to potential improvement within areas of training and development for academic staff.

That is why your contribution to this challenging undertaking is greatly needed and appreciated.

**Specifically, what you would be asked to do** is to participate in a one-to-one in-depth interview on the issue mentioned, and specific areas of enquiry are listed in the **Interview Guide Document**- attached.

Interviews are designed to last approximately 1.5 hours and will be recorded for data analysis purposes.

Data protection and confidentiality, as well as the right to withdraw from answering questions, are guaranteed; and I strongly encourage you to familiarise yourself with the **Ethical Assurance Document** attached.

Thank you for your consideration.

Your positive reply will suffice as an agreement to participate.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study,

Kind Regards,
Alicja Chmielowska.
Alicja.chmielowska@dbs.ie
Ph. 41-77-500
Mobile: 086-897-18-10
Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Ann Masterson at ann.masterson@dbs.ie ph. 41-77-500

**Appendix 2: Ethical Assurance Document**

This document has been prepared in line with DBS Research Committee and Liverpool John Moores University Code of Practice for Research, hereafter referred to as ‘The Code’, and has been adapted from the ‘The U.K. Research Integrity Office’s Code of Practice for Research’.


1. Research approval has been obtained from Dublin Business School Research Committee in cooperation with the college Human Resource Department and Kaplan U.K.
2. The participation is anonymous; the right of privacy of participants will be respected.
3. Participants have the right to refuse to answer any question that they consider inappropriate or that they cannot answer according to the College’s policies.
4. Participants have the right to withdraw from the research.
5. Participants will be provided with themes of the interview prior to the meeting.
6. A convenient time for preparation and scheduling the interview will be given.
7. Participants will be able to choose the time and date for the interview.
8. A confidentiality rule will be strictly obeyed:
   - No names or any other personal details will be disclosed or used in the project.
   - The College name will not be used in any of the research stages nor the documents produced.
   - No internal documents will be published.
9. The College holds a full ownership of the data produced – and hence holds the right to withdraw from any publication.
10. The information obtained through interviews will be used only for the dissertation purposes and only in the form of an overall data analysis.
11. All recorded data will be accessed only by the researcher. They will then be destroyed after three years.
12. Raw data records will be retained securely.
13. An additional audit of the data analysis first stage will be obtained from the research methodology expert and / or supervisor to ensure that data is not written in a way that breaches the ethical standards of the organisation.
14. Participants have the right to review their own transcription documents.
15. It was assured that no project-related information would be interchanged with any of the participants from now on until the day of the interview with the participants.

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

Training and Development Practices

These are three major spheres that the questions will relate to:

1. INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS
2. STUDENT- AND TEACHING-RELATED PRACTICES

3. ACADEMIC ENQUIRY

Based on the participants’ expertise and roles within the institution, the relevance of those spheres will vary.

* Following the initial explanation of the interview, you may expect some additional probing and confirmatory questions being asked.
* You will be briefed on the overall aim of this project and all ethical rights on the day of the interview.
* Note that the in-depth interview allows you to speak freely on any issue you feel is relevant. This means that you do not have to limit your responses to those three spheres or the questions below.

Schedule:

1. Introduction and Briefing

Part 2: INSTITUTIONAL SHPERE:

2. Firstly, let’s start with the basic institutional-related training:

   i. On what specific areas is the training organised?
   ii. How often?
   iii. In what form?

2.1. Could you tell me something about all types of induction trainings?

2.2. What kind of other internal procedures / requirements-related training is organised?

   i. Any positive factors of that training?
   ii. Any drawback or suggestion for improvement?

2.3. What kind of other organised internal procedures-training is related to:

   i. HR?
   ii. Software / hardware?
   iii. Communication patterns within and between departments?
   iv. Documents handling procedures?
   v. Issue reporting?
2.4 What kind of other organised **internal quality-related** procedures training is related to?
   i. Writing standards
   ii. Documents templates
   iii. Email writing
   iv. Preparing various documentations (exam papers, reference letters, module / programme-related, etc.)

3. What kind of training is organised to ensure **external bodies standards alignments**?
   i. External examiners,
   ii. Awarding bodies,
   iii. Educational regulatory bodies, etc.
   iv. Research committee

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**Part 3: STUDENTS’ TEACHING SPHERE: WHAT? (Self-guided learning to teach better)**

4. Let’s take McMillian’s What / How / Why model to discuss different levels of training and development of teaching practice. What kind of material do you provide (some specific toolkits) for this level of training?
   i. Workshops,
   ii. More able peers,
   iii. Online discussion,
   iv. Online materials,
   v. Books / guidebooks,
   vi. Codes of conducts,

**STUDENTS’ TEACHING SPHERE: HOW? (What does it mean to teach better?)**

5. What are the institutional requirements of teaching practice?
6. How are those requirements communicated to teachers?
7. For existing practices and when practices are changed or re-shaped, what kind of training is organised in the following areas?
i. Classroom situation (speaking, presenting, facilitating, communicating, body language, handling difficult situations, time management-efficiency, etc.)

ii. Outside-the-classroom situations

iii. Assessment (assessing, marking, feedback)

8. Is the student feedback a source of training and development in the college and how?

9. What about the practicality and usage of the following methods in the college when it comes to teaching only?
   i. Seminars
   ii. Training sessions
   iii. Practice sessions

10. Perhaps there are other methods not mentioned above that you would like to comment on?

11. STUDENTS’ TEACHING SPHERE: WHY? (Educational theory: why to teach in a particular way?)

12. Could you comment on the following statement, please?
   “Understanding Educational Theory lies in the responsibility and direct interest of self-development and faculty-development.”

13. How do you think the above notion is utilised in the college?

14. Is mentoring used in the college?
   i. Can you describe it?
   ii. If not, why?
   iii. Pros of mentoring?
   iv. Drawbacks of mentoring?

15. Is peer-observation used in the college?
   i. Can you describe it?
   ii. If not, why?
   iii. Pros of peer-observation?
   iv. Drawbacks of peer-observation?

16. Would you like to add some other forms of training and development of teaching that we did not mention here?
Part 4: ACADEMIC ENQUIRY SPHERE:

17. Could you comment on practices related to any further staff development opportunities?

   i. Discipline-specific seminars / discussions / other initiatives?
   ii. Cross-discipline seminars / discussions / other initiatives?
   iii. Designated time?
   iv. Networking?
   v. Other forms of communicating?