

UNIVERSITY OF READING

The TAEDS Tree:

**a case study of graduate identity and employability in
a unique degree programme**



Institute of Education

Educational Doctorate

Submission Date: 20th September, 2017

Cathy Wardale

20801504

Statement of Original Authorship

Student ID: 20801504

Module Title & Number: Ed D – Part B Thesis

Assignment Title: **The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme**

Date of Submission: **20th September, 2017**

- Students who feel they need assistance in writing appropriate English should, in the first instance, seek guidance from their programme director, who should refer the student to the University's Study Advisors.
 - Students who use software for assistance with proof-reading or with editing their work, or who seek assistance with proof-reading or with editing from third parties, should be alert to the major risks associated with such intervention, including the distortion of intended meaning and the failure to use technical terms appropriately.
 - Students are warned that any use of third part proof-reading or editing services must not compromise their authorship of the work submitted and, in particular that the substance of work must remain the student's own. Students are also warned that they will be held responsible for work which they submit, and that the use of third party services will not be accepted in mitigation of any deficiencies in the work.
 - The use of any third party proof-reading or editing must be acknowledged in a written statement accompanying the work on submission.
-

I confirm that I have agreed with my tutor that this assignment falls outside the normal custom and practice of teaching and I have obtained ethical approval. My methods of investigation have been agreed in advance with my tutor.

I agree to an anonymous copy of my assignment being shared with future students as an exemplar.

I certify that this is my own work and that the use of material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged in the text. I understand that the normal consequence of cheating in any element of an examination, if proven and in the absence of mitigating circumstances, is that the relevant Faculty Examiners' Meeting will be directed to fail the candidate in the Examination as a whole.

Number of words: 62,017 (excluding references and appendices). I have not been assisted by a proof reader.

Signed:



Date: **20th September, 2017**

Abstract

TAEDS (Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies) was a unique B.A. degree at the University of Reading, U.K., established in 1996, with the last students graduating in 2018. Originally designed to train deaf people in drama teaching and leadership, deaf and hearing students followed the programme, which featured Sign Theatre, using British Sign Language within theatre. Over the years, TAEDS' low entry tariff and diverse and inclusive curriculum attracted many non-traditional students, while the proportion of deaf students declined in comparison to hearing. In this study, TAEDS' development and demise is considered in the context of drama in education in Britain; widening participation; employability and gendered choices in arts higher education. Identity development and issues within deafness and deaf education are also explored. This qualitative case study focuses on the perceptions of TAEDS alumni, from within a socially constructivist perspective. It investigates how alumni experiences before and during TAEDS impacted on their personal and professional identity development and high employability, in particular how drama within this context facilitated academic self-confidence and success. Both the structure of the study and the methodology are framed within the conceptual metaphor of a tree. Methods consist of an online survey; a paper questionnaire; a sample of interviews and a participant 'TAEDS tree' visual image. Findings are analysed using the constant comparative method and reveal a distinctive TAEDS graduate identity, within a strong alumni community. This analysis reveals the transformative effects of drama on marginalised students and identifies features of TAEDS which could be replicated in future non-traditional widening participation programmes. Although the outcomes are not generalisable, they contribute to educational knowledge through the particular methodological framework: by showing how the mainly female alumni can transcend gendered habitus; in advancing understanding of the importance of drama within twenty-first century education; in questioning concepts of employability and in raising awareness of TAEDS' value in contributing to a more democratic society, where the arts and social justice are valued.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for their direct or implicit contributions to this research. My earliest family role-model for a doctorate was my grandfather, whose expertise in music inspired me as a child. From my parents, Doreen and Philip Wardale, I have had unconditional support and love in everything I have done. They are both artistic; my mother's drama and people skills and my father's academic and practical expertise have been a huge influence.

Julia Boorman, memorable former colleague, first gave me the confidence to aspire to this study. Andy Goodwyn provided the opportunity and Janette Jolly prompted the methodology. I am grateful to Elizabeth McCrum and Carol Fuller for their particular guidance and support. Other colleagues gave their expert perspectives on different sections, as did friends, Marigold and Nick Ashwell. However, any errors are my own. My excellent supervisors, Gill Hopper and Geoff Taggart, always encouraged me gently, but firmly, in the right direction; they shared their own highly pertinent research and pushed me to extend my thinking. I greatly enjoyed their human and egalitarian approach to supervision.

I am so grateful to all the participants, whose generosity, in sharing their experiences and insights, was invaluable. The pilot's professional judgement was especially useful. It has been a privilege to work with many inspiring TAEDS' staff, students and alumni over the years, all of whom are contributing to the continuation of TAEDS' legacy.

The long journey through the Ed D forest has sometimes been challenging, but always stimulating. My whole family and friends have kept me company on the way, but I could not have completed the journey without the belief in my capabilities and unstinting support of my partner, Sarah.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 <i>Entering the forest</i> : Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introducing TAEDS.....	1
1.2 Identifying the issues	2
1.3 Researcher professional identity	4
1.4 Becoming involved with TAEDS.....	5
1.5 The changing focus of the study	6
1.6 Significance and outcomes of the study	7
1.7 Developing a perspective	8
1.8 Research aims and questions.....	9
1.9 Overview of the Methodology	10
1.10 Structure of the thesis.....	10
Chapter 2 <i>Roots</i> : Deafness and Drama	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Deafness and Disability	12
2.2.1 British Sign Language (BSL)	13
2.2.2 Signing and community.....	14
2.2.3 Deafness and identity.....	14
2.2.4 Oralism and manualism in deaf education	15
2.3 Drama and Theatre in Education (TIE)	16
2.3.1 Drama: learning method and art form.....	17
2.3.2 Drama: community and neoliberalism.....	18
2.3.3 Drama: soft and powerful pedagogy.....	20
2.3.4 Drama and theatre in education (TIE).....	22
2.3.5 Drama: citizenship and subversion	23
2.3.6 Drama: educational impact.....	25
2.3.7 Drama and deaf learners.....	27
2.4 Conclusion	27

Chapter 3 <i>Habitat</i> : TAEDS	29
3.1 Introduction	29
3.2 Early years: 1980s - 1995	29
3.2.1 Theatre of the Deaf	29
3.2.2 Programme development	29
3.3 Middle years: 1996-2010	30
3.3.1 TAEDS: Deaf awareness.....	31
3.3.2 The theatre curriculum	32
3.3.3 Disability arts.....	32
3.3.4 Sign Theatre	34
3.3.5 The education modules.....	35
3.4 Later years: 2011-2015.....	35
3.4.1 Deaf Studies modules.....	36
3.4.2 Careers and Enterprise modules.....	37
3.4.3 Holistic ethos and mythopoesis	37
3.5 Final years: 2015-2018	40
3.5.1 Secondary drama decline.....	40
3.5.2 Reduction in drama educators.....	40
3.5.3 The demise	41
3.6 TAEDS: Community	43
3.7 Conclusion	43
Chapter 4 <i>Habitus and Branching Out</i> : Identity and Employability	44
4.1 Introduction	44
4.2 Identity as socially constructed.....	45
4.2.1 Habitus and kinds of capital	46
4.2.2 Gender identity and role.....	48
4.2.3 Gendered habitus.....	48

4.2.4 Gendered choice in arts education	50
4.2.5 Issues in Widening Participation	53
4.3 The employability agenda	56
4.3.1 The historical context.....	56
4.3.2 Definitions of employability	57
4.3.3 Employability and employment	57
4.3.4 Employability and skills	58
4.3.5 Employability as personal attributes.....	59
4.3.6 Employability and graduate identity.....	62
4.3.7 Employability and the University of Reading	64
4.3.8 Widening Participation at the UoR	67
4.4 TAEDS identity and employability	67
4.4.1 TAEDS and Widening Participation	68
4.4.2 TAEDS and gendered habitus.....	70
4.4.3 TAEDS and employability	71
4.5 Conclusion	73
Chapter 5 <i>Choosing a path through the forest: Why this Research Design and Methodology?</i>	74
5.1 Introduction	74
5.2 Ontological and epistemological perspectives	74
5.2.1 Knowledge and knowing TAEDS.....	74
5.2.2 Conceptual metaphor	75
5.2.3 Imaginal knowledge	76
5.2.4 Unsure knowledge	77
5.2.5 Social actors and acting.....	78
5.2.6 Critical theory and feminism	79
5.2.7 Critical ethnography and qualitative methodology	80
5.2.8 My positionality.....	81

5.3 Case Study Methodology	82
5.3.1 Generalisability issues	82
5.3.2 Methods within methodology	83
5.4 Research Methods	84
5.4.1 The Online Survey	84
5.4.2 Online Survey Issues.....	84
5.4.3 The Online Survey: Content and Design.....	85
5.4.4 The Paper Questionnaire: Content and Design.....	86
5.4.5 Paper Questionnaire Issues.....	86
5.4.6 The Interviews: Visual conceptual metaphor as follow-up.....	87
5.4.7 Interviewing issues.....	87
5.4.8 The Interviews: Content and Design	88
5.5 Visual Methods	89
5.5.1 The River of Experience and critical incident charting.....	89
5.5.2 Issues in Visual Methodology.....	90
5.5.3 Tree Metaphors.....	91
5.5.4 The TAEDS Tree	92
5.6 Data Collection	94
5.6.1 The Sample.....	94
5.6.2 The Pilot	94
5.6.3 The Participants.....	94
5.6.4 Timescale.....	94
5.7 Data Analysis	95
5.7.1 How I analysed the data.....	95
5.7.2 Constant Comparative Method.....	95
5.7.3 Grounded Theory	95
5.7.4 Discourse Analysis.....	96

5.8 Ethical considerations	97
5.8.1 Ethical protocol	97
5.9 Limiting factors.....	98
Chapter 6 <i>The TAEDS Trees: Findings</i>	99
6.1 Introduction	99
6.2 Data Collection methods.....	99
6.2.1 The alumni online survey	99
6.2.2 The paper questionnaire for the new intake	99
6.2.3 The alumni interviews	99
6.2.4 The TAEDS tree images	100
6.3 <i>Roots and Nourishment: What are the professional and personal circumstances and influences that can lead to doing a TAEDS degree?</i>	102
6.3.1 Respondent characteristics: alumni survey Questions 1-5	102
6.3.2 Respondent characteristics: new intake questionnaire	103
6.3.3 Respondent characteristics: interviews and TAEDS trees.....	103
6.3.4 Drama and other school subjects: alumni survey Qus 10-12	103
6.3.5 Drama and other school subjects: new intake questionnaire Qus 11-13	104
6.3.6 Drama and other school subjects: interviews A (2, 3)	105
6.3.7 Role-models and influences: alumni survey Qu 8.....	105
6.3.8 Role-models and influences: new intake questionnaire Qu 10	106
6.3.9 Role-models and influences: interviews A (1, 2, 3 & 5)	106
6.3.10 Role-models and influences: TAEDS trees	108
6.3.11 Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS: alumni surveys Qus 6-14.....	109
6.3.12 Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS: new intake questionnaires Qus 5-9	111
6.3.13 Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS: interviews (A 3)	113
6.4 <i>The Trunk: How do alumni view the TAEDS experience?</i>	114
6.4.1 Alumni survey: Qus 15, 17 & 22	114

6.4.2 Interviews– TAEDS Learning Culture: D (3 & 4)	115
6.4.3 Interviews – The Significance of Drama C (1-3)	118
6.4.4 TAEDS trees	121
6.5 <i>The Tree Crown</i> : How do TAEDS graduates describe and understand their current personal and professional identities?	121
6.5.1 Alumni survey: Qu 19	121
6.5.2 New intake questionnaire: Qu 17	123
6.5.3 Interviews: B (1-5)	124
6.5.4 Summary: personal and professional alumni identity	125
6.6 <i>Branches, Leaves and Fruit</i> : How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their graduate capabilities and employability?	127
6.6.1 Alumni survey: Qus 16, 18 & 21	128
6.6.2 New entrant questionnaire: Qu 18	129
6.6.3 Interviews: B (3) and C (4 & 5)	130
6.6.4 TAEDS trees	132
6.7 <i>Acorns, Rhizomes and Saplings</i> : How do alumni reflect on the TAEDS community and legacy?	136
6.7.1 Alumni survey	136
6.7.2 Interviews: D (1, 2, 5 & 6)	136
6.7.3 TAEDS trees	140
6.8 Conclusion	141
Chapter 7 <i>Seeing the wood for the trees</i> : Discussion	143
7.1 Introduction	143
7.2 Drama and HE access - <i>Roots</i>	143
7.2.1 Education – resistance and recognition	143
7.2.2 Drama: refuge and rebellion	144
7.2.3 Drama – identity and personal growth	145
7.2.4 Role-models - gender and inclusion	146

7.3 The TAEDS habitat – <i>The Trunk</i>	147
7.3.1 Diversity and belonging.....	147
7.3.2 Academic portal and crucible.....	148
7.4 Positive identity and Employability - <i>The Tree Crown</i>	150
7.4.1 Power and capability.....	150
7.4.2 Values and self-efficacy.....	151
7.4.3 Transcending gendered habitus.....	152
7.5 The TAEDS legacy - <i>Acorns and Rhizomes</i>	154
7.5.1 Reflections and ripples.....	154
7.5.2 Rhizomes and recommendations.....	156
7.6 Conclusion - <i>Trees for a wider forest</i>	158
7.6.1 Research questions revisited	158
7.6.2 Saplings for a new forest.....	160
Chapter 8 <i>The Whole Forest: Conclusion</i>	162
8.1 Introduction.....	162
8.2 Contextual knowing	162
8.3 Participant empowerment and legacy.....	163
8.4 Study outcomes and contribution to knowledge.....	164
8.5 Limitations of the study	165
8.6 Future research	166
8.7 Reflection on the process.....	166
References.....	168
Appendices.....	204
Appendix 1 Ethical Approval Form.....	204
Appendix 2 Ethics: Alumni online survey information and consent email.....	207
Appendix 3 Ethics: New intake paper information and consent form.....	208
Appendix 4 Ethics: Alumni interview information and consent form.....	211

Appendix 5	Template online alumni survey.....	214
Appendix 6	Template new entrant paper questionnaire.....	221
Appendix 7	Template alumni interview schedule.....	226
Appendix 8	Template TAEDS Tree.....	229
Appendix 9	Prompt for TAEDS trees: employability and graduate capabilities.....	230
Appendix 10	Employability criteria and graduate capabilities.....	231
Appendix 11	Annie’s tree.....	232
Appendix 12	Becky’s tree.....	233
Appendix 13	Frances’ tree.....	234
Appendix 14	Sue’s Tree.....	235
Appendix 15	Tess’ tree.....	237
Appendix 16	Mandy’s Tree.....	238
Appendix 17	Sample alumni interview extract with coding.....	239

Figures

Figure 3-1 <i>Woyzeck</i> , TAEDS production, 2008.....	34
Figure 3-2 <i>TAEDS programme structure</i> (Wardale, TAEDS Open Day presentation, 2015a).....	36
Figure 3-3 TAEDS team, 2013-4	39
Figure 3-4 TAEDS student protest outside UoR senate, 15 th October, 2015, and sign singing at TAEDS event	42
Figure 4-1 Logical Levels (Dilts, 1990)	45
Figure 4-2 Applications and Acceptances for Drama course (Thorne, 2014)	52
Figure 4-3 Employability components and metaphorical model (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007).....	60
Figure 4-4 Claim-affirmation model of emergent identity (Holmes, 2013a)	63
Figure 4-5 <i>Connected Curriculum</i> (Fung, 2014)	64
Figure 4-6 <i>Engaging the Curriculum</i> (Barnett & Coate, 2005)	64
Figure 4-7 <i>University of Reading Curriculum Framework</i> (CQSD, 2017).....	66
Figure 4-8 TAEDS 2015 NSS employability data (Unistats 2015)	71
Figure 5-1 The TAEDS Tree template	93
Figure 6-1 TAEDS tree: whole image and upper section Frances, 2016	101
Figure 6-2 TAEDS tree extract, Before TAEDS, Sue, 2016	109
Figure 6-3 TAEDS tree extract, The Trunk, Frances, 2016.....	121
Figure 6-4 What are your plans for after you have completed the degree? New intake questionnaire, 2015	123
Figure 6-5 Alumni access to TAEDS experiences.....	127
Figure 6-6 How would others at work describe you? Interviews, 2016	132
Figure 6-7 TAEDS tree extract, Branches, Annie, 2016	132
Figure 6-8 TAEDS tree extract, Branches, Leaves and Fruit, Becky, 2016.....	134
Figure 6-9 Three qualities TAEDS graduates have in common	139
Figure 6-10 TAEDS Tree Acorns, 2016.....	140
Figure 6-11 Acorns, TAEDS tree, Annie 2016	141
Figure 7-1 How would others at work describe you? Qualities TAEDS graduates have in common (Interviews, 2016)	152
Figure 7-2 University of Reading Curriculum Framework (UoR CQSD, 2017, p 2) and Acorns: the TAEDS legacy (TAEDS Trees, 2015)	156

Tables

Table 1 Interviewee role-models and influences	106
Table 2 Current professional roles, online alumni survey, 2015	122
Table 3 TAEDS Tree branches: own graduate skills or capabilities, interviewees 2015	133
Table 4 TAEDS Tree Leaves and Fruit, 2015	135
Table 5 Before and after TAEDS: contrasting themes.....	142

Chapter 1 *Entering the forest*: Introduction

The purpose of this study is to highlight the benefits of a British degree programme that, despite its unique specialist quality and higher than average employability rates, experienced increasing marginalisation and eventual closure. From teaching initially part-time on the programme, my professional involvement in TAEDS (Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies) grew, as I will expand on later in the chapter. I became aware of its value and, simultaneously, I realised that there was a lack of support within contemporary higher education for arts-based programmes such as TAEDS, which could not be easily categorised. This discrepancy puzzled and motivated me through the five years of studying for the Ed D, during which time the focus of the dissertation changed: from being an advocacy and marketing tool for the degree, to a critical analysis of the ways in which TAEDS epitomised Widening Participation (WP) and enabled non-traditional students to achieve their potential through drama.

This first chapter introduces the dissertation so that the reader will have an understanding of what TAEDS is and what the issues are. It explains the significance of the research; its aim and objectives; outlines the researcher's own perspective; gives an overview of the methodology; and reports on the main findings and significance of the study.

1.1 Introducing TAEDS

Put simply, the B.A. Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies (TAEDS) is a small-scale degree programme within the Institute of Education (IoE) at the University of Reading (UoR). TAEDS evolved from a 1980s, part-time drama course at Bulmershe College of Higher Education, some years before the college amalgamated with the UoR in 1989. In addition to training teachers, Bulmershe had supported other pioneering and accessible programmes, targeting local, disabled, BME (black, minority and ethnic) and mature students, within the Arts and Humanities Faculty; some of these programmes were casualties of the amalgamation (Rooke, 1992).

Comprised of three interwoven strands, Theatre/Drama; Education and Deaf Studies, TAEDS' unique selling points lay in these three aspects being offered together in one degree course and in its initial target market of deaf young people who wanted to develop drama leadership and teaching skills: at the time there were few opportunities of this kind. Today, TAEDS is still the only programme to combine these aspects, both in the UK and internationally. Everyone learns British Sign Language (BSL) and there are theatre productions in the innovative art form, Sign Theatre, which is a celebration of the language and culture of deafness. In this respect, TAEDS contributes to the field of

disability arts nationally (Conroy, 2013a), often leaving audiences wondering whether performers are deaf or hearing.

TAEDS is at once a degree programme and also an ongoing community of staff, current students, alumni and supporters. Although staff varied over the years, TAEDS teams have usually numbered about six: full-time, part-time and sessional. Most TAEDS staff also worked elsewhere, for example teaching on other UoR programmes; running theatre companies; working as freelance actors or BSL assessors and pursuing post-graduate study.

Possible reasons for the student cohort composition are explored later but, at this point, it is worth identifying the characteristics of typical TAEDS cohorts. In the six years since 2011, cohorts averaged twelve in number each year. The table below, based on data from 2011-2017, represents a notional typical cohort of twelve students, with approximately 8% representing one student.

- 1 (8%) deaf or hard of hearing
 - 1 (8%) international and BME
 - 1 (8%) LGBT
 - 2 (16%) mature
 - 2 (16%) dyslexia or other learning disabilities
 - 3 (24%) physical or mental health issues
 - 3 (24%) live locally
 - 6 (48%) first generation
 - 9 (72%) female
 - Most have experience of deafness or disability through families or friends
- (Wardale, 2017)

The total is more than twelve, as in their overlap between categories, many students demonstrated 'multiple dimensions of disadvantage' (OFFA, 2017, p 6). In consideration of the value of TAEDS students to a university, it can be seen that in their diversity they amply fulfil many of the objectives of WP (OFFA, 2017).

1.2 Identifying the issues

TAEDS is a programme of contrasts and contradictions. With a relatively low entry tariff that encouraged and facilitated the recruitment of those students who may not identify (or be identified) as high academic achievers, it was nevertheless a programme affirmed by external examiners as of 'strong academic rigour' (Terret, 2016). Two thirds of graduates typically gained 2.1 or above each year, with two or more attaining a first, even though they may not have been academically successful at school. At 95%, TAEDS has had the highest employability in the UoR (Unistats, 2014; 2015), consistently exceeding the overall UoR rating of 92%, which increased in 2017 to 94% (UoR

Employability, 2017). Alumni are engaged in a wide range of creative and non-linear employment, with high job satisfaction. They speak extremely positively of what they gained from TAEDS, even though some students, perhaps inevitably, have also been dissatisfied, as on a number of degree courses. In my view, TAEDS' success in academic achievement and employability epitomised the WP agenda.

WP in Higher Education (HE), first reported on in 2002 (Comptroller and Auditor General), is now a major component of government education policy and a strategic objective of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). For example, in its introduction to a key policy document, HEFCE states 'all those with the potential to benefit from successful participation in HE should have the opportunity to do so' (HEFCE, 2015 n.p.). The *National Strategy for Access and Student Success* (BIS; OFFA; HEFCE, 2014) is designed to increase numbers of young people entering HE, especially those from under-represented groups, and the organisation works closely with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) to do this. Each year OFFA publish key priority groups for recruitment and retention and TAEDS cohorts typically match three quarters of the criteria, particularly the first. These are 'students with disabilities, particularly those with mental health issues, specific learning difficulties and/or who are on the autistic spectrum' (OFFA, 2017, n.p.); BME students; mature and part time learners and white males from lower socio-economic groups (LSE). In order for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to receive funding, OFFA requires them to produce an annual Access Agreement, detailing the proportion of their funds they will allocate to under-represented groups, in return for being allowed to raise their fees. In the most recent figures published by the UoR, this was 27% of fee income above the basic amount, as it has been for several years (UoR Access, 2016). According to HEFCE, the 2012 increase in HE fees to £9,000 disproportionately reduced disadvantaged students' applications to full time HE programmes (HEFCE, 2013) and, from 2013-14, applicant numbers to TAEDS dropped by 26% (Admissions, 2015), in spite of the best marketing efforts of programme staff. Meanwhile, the prestigious Centre for Deaf Studies at the University of Bristol was closed down in 2014 (Limping Chicken, 2013), suggesting similar problems. Despite the rhetoric, in the context of higher fees, WP appeared not to be possible for programmes concerned with deafness, even when TAEDS was generating highly employable graduates.

As will be seen in Chapter 3, far from being championed and marketed as a centre of excellence for deaf education; drama and theatre; WP and employability, TAEDS was put under increasing pressure to reduce the high costs of such a specialist programme. This ultimately resulted in phased closure from 2015 (UoR Communications, 2015), with the last students graduating in 2018.

Note on grammar. For simplicity, I refer to the TAEDS curriculum in the past tense from here on even though, at the time of writing, Part 3 runs until June, 2018. Where I have used the acronym TAEDS as an adjective, as in the sentence above, or ‘The TAEDS Tree’ there is no apostrophe intended; where it is obviously a possessive noun, as in ‘TAEDS’ value’, there is one. In ambiguous cases, such as ‘TAEDS alumni’, I have usually treated it as an adjective.

1.3 Researcher professional identity

It is pertinent to outline here the varied career trajectory which brought me to TAEDS. After completing a degree in English Language and Literature, I achieved a PGCE in secondary English and began teaching in 1979. As a teacher, I rapidly became focussed on the potential of drama to enliven literature and facilitate in-depth human understanding, as well as to develop pupil confidence. During my early career in secondary schools, I took advantage of the many in-service training (INSET) opportunities for drama teachers in the 1980s. I ran drama clubs, directed and produced school productions and helped to establish Drama GCSE at one school. But it was my involvement in a schools’ residency with a leading theatre in education (TIE) company, which was a turning point, kindling a career-long interest in celebrating diversity and challenging prejudice. It also provided the seeds of the tree metaphor which frames my dissertation.

Theatre Centre’s play, *Laughter From the Other Side* (Grieg, 1986) was inspiring on many levels. Cross-cultural, it honoured strong women, spirituality and friendship between boys and was rooted in the habitat of an ancient tree in India. After cross-curricular work with colleagues, and devising and directing new performance material with pupils in response to the play, I realised that I wanted to work more holistically than secondary school would allow and also put my interest in social justice into practice. I became part of *Learning Through Action*, (LTA) a charity whose current mission statement is ‘to work with young people to help counter alienation, low self-esteem, underachievement and antisocial behaviour, through the delivery of interactive learning workshops/projects’ (Learning Through Action, 2017, n.p.). Over several years, I co-created and led LTA programmes on issues such as global human rights, nuclear testing in the South Pacific and habitat destruction in Britain, working with all key stages. Meanwhile, I co-ran *Dramatic Productions*, a business directing and producing educational video material for teachers and, in 2005, I co-founded *Spotlight on Diversity*, an organisation based on interactive forum theatre, which ‘promotes social inclusion and cohesion through theatre, providing innovative training opportunities to explore diversity and promote best practice’ (Spotlight on Diversity, 2017) Concurrently, I was a freelance drama practitioner, sharing my practice with teachers through drama INSET.

After a period of ill-health, I worked part-time for many years in primary education (where there were few drama specialists), teaching curriculum drama at local schools and clubs and directing Shakespeare and history-based school productions. Alongside this, I taught primary PGCE and BA Ed drama at Oxford Brookes and at the UoR since 1998. Throughout my pre-TAEDS 'portfolio career' (Petrovski, 2000), I had amassed a considerable repertoire of original material and never wavered in my passion for and fascination with drama, which I had witnessed providing opportunities for personal growth, identity development and educational success for the young people I worked with. I constantly wondered: 'what is it about drama that empowers and validates?'

1.4 Becoming involved with TAEDS

Being invited to teach part-time on TAEDS in 2008 was an exciting moment of personal and professional synchronicity. Having followed a non-linear career path myself, I relished the opportunity to work with non-traditional learners. Since I concur with Day and Sammons' view (2007) that personal and professional identities are inseparably interwoven, perhaps my own experiences of belonging to potentially marginalised groups also drew me to TAEDS. A lesbian feminist mother, living with the long-term illness ME or CFS (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome), I had also become increasingly hard of hearing since the 1990s. This personal experience is relevant to deaf awareness on TAEDS. As a hearing-aid user with moderate hearing loss, participating in the social bonding of staffroom 'banter' could be difficult. It is easy to feel perceived as slow on the uptake or lacking in a sense of humour. By the time I have tuned in to who is speaking and picked up the rapid exchanges through guesswork or context, the moment has passed, the punchline is delivered and while others share laughter, I am left asking someone 'What did s/he say?' This minor social issue is writ exponentially larger for those who are profoundly deaf. Although, as a drama teacher, I had always encouraged clear speaking and projection in the groups I taught, on TAEDS my hearing aids became a positive professional asset, rather than a hindrance, giving a sense of authenticity to my contributions.

My engagement with TAEDS quickly developed, as did my interest in the range of students who chose to study on it and the ever-growing number of alumni who maintained strong links with the course and self-identified as the TAEDS community. I was intrigued by the atypical nature of the students, in comparison to the other HE programmes on which I taught. I was impressed by the distinctive qualities of many alumni, who not only were academically successful, but highly employable and passionate about making a difference in the world. They were, and still are, fiercely loyal to the TAEDS programme. A significant percentage of the undergraduate cohort were first in their families to attend university and, although many students arrived with good post-16 academic

attainment, others informally recounted being 'no good at anything at school except drama' and yet proceeded to achieve academically, as well in as practical work, attaining a 2.1 or first class degree. This resonated with my existing curiosity about the value of drama.

In 2013, I became full-time and TAEDS programme leader for three years, responsible for admissions, marketing and the delivery of a quality student experience (Wardale, 2015 b). There was considerable pressure to increase applicant numbers and improve financial viability. Through the UoR Admissions and various Communications departments, I worked to raise TAEDS' profile in the UoR; to identify why people applied to the programme and to publicise it further through UCAS. From an economic perspective, TAEDS was a minority programme dealing with disability and drama, costly to run and not generating a large income for the UoR because of low numbers. From a pedagogical perspective, it was highly regarded in its field, as one external examiner commented:

This programme is of national importance in the field of d/Deaf and Disability arts and has a deserved reputation for innovative performance practice. (Conroy, 2013a)

When the opportunity arose to follow the UoR Ed D programme, I knew that I wanted to investigate the TAEDS phenomenon and I started to consider the best focus.

1.5 The changing focus of the study

In 2013, I anticipated that evidencing the programme's achievements through this study would support marketing and thus encourage higher applicant numbers. Although it was evident that TAEDS was effective (i.e. in terms of improving the life opportunities of those who undertook it), there was as yet no analysis of the reasons for its success. During the next five years of the Ed D, with no further applicants to TAEDS, I felt it was important to put this 'marker in the sand', in part to commemorate the programme's importance in demonstrating the power of drama, but also to make explicit its value in promoting individual agency and social justice. The government report, *Social Justice: transforming lives*, defines this as, 'making society function better – providing the support and tools to help turn lives around' (Dept. for Work and Pensions, 2012, p 4), while Oxfam's global citizenship education materials take a pre-emptive approach, with the idea of giving everyone fair life chances, whatever their circumstances (Oxfam, 2015).

This was to be the first full-length academic and critical study of the TAEDS programme and its legacy. Through the study, I will argue that TAEDS had the capacity to positively transform the lives of its alumni, many of whom were WP students who traditionally struggle to access HE.

1.6 Significance and outcomes of the study

Although the landscape of HE is changing, there is arguably more rhetoric than will in relation to WP students. This study sets out to explore TAEDS' attraction and engagement for potentially marginalised WP students and its success in promoting their employability and identity development. The study celebrates the culture of deafness through Sign Theatre and provides evidence of the value of drama in personal empowerment and academic success. Through demonstrating the worth of this specialist, inclusive, non-traditional HE programme within the marginalised discipline of drama, the study questions prevailing HE attitudes. The research therefore focusses on these identified gaps in understanding, through:

- Investigating for the first time the phenomenological experiences and perceptions of TAEDS alumni: before, during and after their degree (Payne, 1996; Taylor 1995)
- Examining how the particular drama experiences on TAEDS promote achievement, educationally and beyond, although its benefits are under-appreciated in the current educational climate (Cziboly, 2010; O'Toole and O'Mara, 2007).
- Establishing how involvement in deafness and diversity on TAEDS promotes social justice through drama (Kempe and Shah, 2016; Neelands, 2004) and, through Sign Theatre, contributes to the debate on disability arts (Calvert, 2013)
- Considering how TAEDS facilitates personal agency through socially constructed identity development (Day and Sammons, 2007; Josselson and Harway, 2012)
- Documenting the ways in which TAEDS alumni fulfil and exceed current notions of employability and graduate identity (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011; Knight and Yorke, 2003)
- Advocating the importance of arts subjects in HE, against the current pre-eminence of STEM subjects (CLA, 2016; Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2013; STEAM, 2017)
- Exploring the positionality of TAEDS alumni in relation to gendered choices in arts HE and career choices (Knowles and Lander, 2011; Reay, 2004)
- Challenging the contemporary discourse in HE, where professed WP is contra-indicated by the neoliberal context (Robertson and Dale, 2015; Davis, 2014; Prentki, 2016)
- Asserting the importance of TAEDS, both as model for other non-traditional WP programmes and in its legacy contributing to a more democratic society, where the arts and social justice are valued.

These are the core purposes of my research and before I outline the research questions, I explain my developing perspective on the issues.

1.7 Developing a perspective

I discuss my positionality further in Chapter 5, but this is an overview of how it emerged. As a tutor on TAEDS as well as a researcher, my first challenge was to develop an approach to knowledge-acquisition. Just as human beings within social science research are part of the group we are studying (Cohen et al et al, 2007), I was one of the TAEDS staff and community. As a non-traditional academic, I related to the typical TAEDS student's journey from outsider to insider (Read et al, 2003) through my own professional experience.

Although this study was not auto-ethnographical research as such, there was a sense in which my Ed D journey as an older 'beginning' researcher (Kearns, 2012) appeared to parallel the experiences of those I was studying, that is, the mainly female TAEDS students who aspired to their potential through TAEDS. May (2001) contends that our cumulative life experiences affect our choice of research topic and perspective on participants. Mies (1993) goes further in this reflexive position, actively commending a conscious partiality and identification with the objects of research. It is important to acknowledge that my interest in drama and identity (like the hearing impairment) did not start with my university teaching, but had been gestating consciously or unconsciously throughout my career, in line with Middleton's views (1993). My position was post-modern, in its acknowledgement of reflexivity, and since I wanted to seek alumni perspectives on TAEDS, my research would be socially constructed, phenomenological, inductive and interpretive (Cohen et al, 2007).

I was interested in critical feminist theory, and the view that androcentrism, or male bias, is endemic (Acker, 1992; Kloot, 2004); indeed 'bias, power, and values drive the identification, labelling and legitimisation of problems and the methods seen as useful for studying and solving them' (Biklen et al, 2008, p 455). I researched alternative forms of knowledge-generation through art-based practices, such as drama, (Leavy and Chilton, 2014); stories as a way of knowing (Aadlandsvik, 2009) and conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999). Although questioning traditional modes of knowledge-acquisition and exploring alternatives, I considered that it was also my responsibility to attain an ethical objectivity, in line with Holma's thinking (2011), since research has an ethical responsibility to be empowering to participants, especially those from marginalised groups (Usher, 1996; Madison, 2012). Holma argues against cultural relativism and for, what effectively seems to be, a subjective objectivity: 'objectivity can be understood as being a matter of degree' (Holma, 2011, p 563). In relation to TAEDS, this led me to consider carefully the ethical code that would inform my study, regardless of the different methods I would use.

As can be seen in more detail in Chapter 5, I favoured a bricolage methodology (Thomas, 2016), where I was creative about the methods I chose within my research design. Recognising that, in the context of my study, knowledge produced would be phenomenological and also founded on theories which were intrinsically biased (Biklen, 2008), I effectively adopted a post-structuralist position (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013), where I sought to balance the paradox of knowledge-acquisition, through shared understandings of methodologies, with the legacy of power and gender inequalities within research frameworks.

1.8 Research aims and questions

As a professional drama teacher, I had long been fascinated by drama and wanted to investigate further what I had experienced in my teaching: drama's potential as a learning method and art form, and, importantly, as a portal to identity development and academic success.

My overall research question was therefore as follows:

- What is the significance of Drama in promoting achievement, inclusion and contributing to wider access to HE and employability beyond?

I conceptualised the five related research questions below, in relation to the visual metaphor of a tree:

Roots and Nourishment:

- What were the professional and personal circumstances and influences that led to choice of a TAEDS degree, with its unique qualities?

The Trunk:

- How do TAEDS alumni view the TAEDS experience?

The Tree Crown:

- How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their current personal and professional identities?

Branches, Leaves and Fruit:

- How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their graduate capabilities and employability?

Acorns, Rhizomes and Saplings:

- How do alumni reflect on the TAEDS community and legacy?

1.9 Overview of the Methodology

Although this is explained in Chapter 5, it is important to give an outline at this stage, since the arboreal metaphor informs my conceptualisation of TAEDS, the methodology and also the layout and structure of the dissertation itself. I sought a visual image for the TAEDS experience and, partly because of my interest in influences and role-models in identity formation (Bricheno and Thornton, 2007; Bryant and Zimmerman, 2002), a tree was a natural choice, with its connotations of growth and the ability to bear fruit. The 'TAEDS Tree' could visually represent the graduate capabilities acquired on TAEDS; the experiences on TAEDS which had cultivated these; aspects of current employment which drew directly on learning from TAEDS and also the personal and professional legacy for alumni. In addition, each alumna could represent one tree within a whole forest of TAEDS Trees. All of this was a tall order for one tree model and I had found aspects of existing ones fruitful (Siraj-Blatchford, 2014; Pyrch, 2015), but none sufficiently versatile. Ultimately, I designed a stylised hybrid, which can be seen in 5.5.4.

In brief, it was a mixed methods study, comprising an online survey, a paper questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Following these, each interviewee completed a personal visual conceptual metaphor of a tree, and the intention of this was to instigate a creative reflection on identity (Gauntlett and Holzwarth, 2006).

1.10 Structure of the thesis

The literature review spans three chapters, each addressing a key aspect of the title:

Chapter 2 *Roots: Deafness and Drama* provides the backdrop to TAEDS, founded to increase access for deaf people to professional development through drama. This chapter discusses deaf people's experiences within a historical and societal context. It details the ways in which deaf identity has developed in relation to the use of Sign Language, and how the education system has polarised into the widespread use of oralism, where young people communicate through assimilating into the hearing world by learning to lip-read and speak, and manualism, where communication is through BSL. In the second part of this chapter, the importance of educational drama and theatre as a learning method is demonstrated, particularly for young deaf learners.

Chapter 3 *Habitat: TAEDS* tracks the development and demise of the programme through the early, middle, later and final years. In parallel to this, the uneven path of educational drama is traced, in the context of the British education system in the twentieth and early 21st century. It can be seen that the trajectory of TAEDS closely parallels the wider political climate, with difficult consequences for TAEDS.

Chapter 4 *Habitus and Branching out: Identity and Employability* begins with theories of identity construction and social stratification, particularly in relation to Bourdieu's (1991) *habitus*. I consider the ways in which gender affects subject choices in HE and the relevance of this to TAEDS. Issues in the HE WP strategy are discussed, with relevance to TAEDS. The concept of employability is analysed in detail and how HEIs positioned themselves historically and currently in relation to this. Finally, TAEDS alumni employability is viewed in relation to the launch of the new IoE curriculum framework.

Having set the scene for the primary research, **Chapter 5 *Choosing a path through the forest: Research Design and Methodology*** begins with an overview of different approaches to knowledge-acquisition. In the light of my positionality, this chapter justifies the suitability of the research methods to address the research questions. The rationale for the tree metaphor is explained, in relation to visual methodology methods and critical incident charting (Kelly, 1991). I describe the data collection methods, involving an online survey, paper questionnaire, interviews and the TAEDS Tree, and demonstrate how the data was analysed through the constant comparative method. The section on ethics is particularly important, because this is insider research (Floyd and Linet, 2012).

Chapter 6 *The TAEDS Trees: Findings* is laid out according to the research questions and framed by the tree metaphor. Therefore, *Roots and Nourishment* considers the alumni experience before TAEDS; *The Trunk* is how alumni reflected on the TAEDS experience; *The Tree Crown* is their understanding of their personal and professional identities; *Branches, Leaves and Fruit* contains alumni description of their graduate capabilities and employability and *Acorns and Saplings* reports on their sense of the personal and professional aspects of TAEDS' legacy.

In **Chapter 7, *Seeing the wood for the trees: Discussion*** I present the argument that there is much to be learnt from alumni and undergraduate perspectives on the TAEDS experience, in terms of the transformative effects of drama, particularly on non-traditional students. I revisit the research questions and demonstrate how TAEDS alumni amply fulfil and exceed employability criteria.

Finally, in **Chapter 8 *The Whole Forest: Conclusion***, I discuss the contribution to knowledge this study makes, its limitations and recommendations for further research. I suggest ways in which understanding of TAEDS high employability could be applied to other non-traditional degree programmes that seek to engage with and recruit from social groups identified within WP targets.

Chapter 2 *Roots*: Deafness and Drama

2.1 Introduction

I begin this first of three literature review chapters with a focus on deafness and issues in communication, identity and education. Following this, I discuss educational drama within the arts and its role in promoting student achievement. In Chapter 3, I address what is known about TAEDS and what made it distinctive as an example of a non-traditional, inclusive undergraduate degree programme. Key aspects of the TAEDS curriculum are identified that supported the development of graduate skills and attributes to enhance alumni employability. This conceptualisation of the programme paves the way for the analysis in Chapter 4 of the relationship between TAEDS student identity and employability, with reference to WP.

Since TAEDS was in existence in some form for over thirty years, the literature reviewed spans 1980s to the present day, although some texts have been cited from earlier, to provide historical context. Additionally, it was decided to restrict the focus largely to research in the UK, as TAEDS involves educational drama within Britain and British Sign Language: however, reference to Australia provides an international comparison, because of recent initiatives there in curriculum drama (Anderson and Dunn, 2013). Although peer-reviewed journals were initially selected, paucity of literature about TAEDS necessitated consultation of a wider range of sources and these have been internally validated by colleagues, where possible. I begin with an overview of the condition of deafness, which was a pre-requisite for students in the early days of TAEDS.

2.2 Deafness and Disability

Deafness is a continuum, with a range of terminology to describe and define degrees of hearing loss. Being deaf refers to the inability to understand speech like other people, even when sound is amplified: it can occur in one or both ears and be mild, moderate, severe or profound. Some people are born deaf while others are deafened (i.e. acquire deafness after learning to speak) through accident, exposure to noise or illness. 'Hard of hearing' refers to mild to severe hearing loss which can be hereditary and tends to develop gradually, in children or adults, but most commonly in older people, where it is referred to as age-related hearing loss (Action on Hearing Loss, 2016). Severe deafness affects about 5% of the world's population and over 900,000 in the UK, half of whom are children (WHO, 2015).

Attitudes to deafness are framed through three models of disability: medical, social and cultural. The medical model of disability regards deafness as a debilitating condition or illness which can be cured

or ameliorated by technology, such as hearing aids and cochlear implants (Jones, 2002). In contrast to this, the social model of disability recognises that it is society's challenge and responsibility to accommodate the needs of all its members (Kempe and Shah, 2016), since disability results from:

The interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. (Children's Commissioner, 2003, p 6)

This interpretation firmly places the onus on society to adjust, since otherwise deafness and hearing loss can potentially impact on 'language development, literacy, academic achievement, family relationships, social and emotional wellbeing and employment prospects' (Anglin-Jaffe, 2015, p. 77). Thirdly, the cultural model views deaf people as a linguistic minority and deafness as an asset, rather than a disability, celebrating the knowledge of sign language within the deaf community (Ladd, 2003). This affirmation is central to the ethos of TAEDS, which incorporates BSL throughout the programme: communicating through signing is the cultural norm.

2.2.1 British Sign Language (BSL)

BSL was recognised as a language in its own right in 2003 and is the first or preferred language of about 70,000 deaf people in the UK (NDCS, 2016). It has a unique vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar, unlike Sign Supported English (SSE), which uses BSL signs but follows the word order of spoken English. Many hearing, as well as deaf, people learn BSL for personal, professional or political reasons (Berke, 2016). Taylor aptly describes BSL as belonging to:

A cluster of gestic, physical languages which use the hands as their principal sign vehicle. In addition, the signer's face and body are also signifying elements of the languages, and either compose a part of a specific sign, or inflect meaning. (Taylor, 1999, p. 17)

This highly developed sign vocabulary combines precision of syntax and physicality, but it is the visual dynamic and iconicity of the language which seems to intrigue non-signers (Taylor, 1999). Iconicity is the relationship between visual form and meaning and, in BSL, this can result in signs becoming metaphorical (e.g. in a sign language poetry context) which adds richness and can improve understanding for non-signers. For example, in Richard Carter's poem *Mirror*, personifying an ignored and lonely mirror, the simple raised flat palm sign for mirror is repeated through the poem: the plainness and ordinariness of this shape symbolises the monotony of this inanimate object's life (Kaneko, 2012).

2.2.2 Signing and community

The earliest evidence of a kind of visual-gestural signing, adopted and developed by UK deaf people, is from the seventeenth century; later on, sign language was enthusiastically supported by Pepys and Dickens, among other nineteenth century notables (Ladd, 1988). Hitherto denied agency by being seen as 'deaf and dumb', deaf people were regarded as inferior. The theological view of deafness associated it with sin, with Christian teaching falling on metaphorically deaf ears: 'They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images ... Hear, ye deaf' (Isaiah, King James Bible, 1958). The deaf were also disempowered by being largely viewed as simply needful of charity. In spite of this, the deaf community began to take pride in itself and organise nationally, resulting in deaf schools being founded in the twentieth century and deaf people obtaining professional posts (Ladd, 1988).

Contemporary advances in genetics explain how both deaf and hearing children can be born to hearing, as well as deaf, parents (Wolber, 2016). By contrast, the emergence of eugenic thinking about race and population growth in the nineteenth century meant that increased deaf visibility and self-advocacy was discouraged: it was feared that deaf people would marry and proliferate and the community would grow disproportionately. Examples of cultural integration of deaf and hearing were rare and isolated. For example, widespread hereditary deafness in the Massachusetts island known as Martha's Vineyard, where there were as many deaf as hearing until the 1950s (Groce, 1985), resulted in an integrated community, where everyone was bi-lingual, fluent in both sign language and oral language: the deaf were not defined as different (Taylor, 1995). Yet, even today, prejudice against those with a hearing impairment can result in ambivalence about identity: deaf young people born to hearing parents may feel more part of the deaf community than that of their parents. Potential 'cultural homelessness' (Navarrete and Jenkins, 2011) will be related to TAEDS student identity in Chapter 4.

2.2.3 Deafness and identity

Deaf identity is a complex, controversial political issue (Anglin-Jaffe, 2015). Like hearing people, deaf individuals can often identify with several other cultural or social communities, which can be both a strength and a challenge (Josselson, 2012). Indeed, Anglin-Jaffe critiques the essentialist homogenisation of deaf people as being 'exclusive, rather than inclusive, of difference and diversity' (2015, p 91). Until recently, deaf people have generally chosen to self-identify broadly in two major ways, as either capital 'D' Deaf people or lower case 'd' deaf (Jones, 2002).

Members of the 'big D' Deaf community are typically born deaf and are first and/or preferred BSL language users who embrace the rich heritage and culture of what Deaf campaigner, Paddy Ladd, calls 'Deafhood' within a 'Deaf Nation' (Ladd, 2003). Some members of the Deaf community see surgical treatments for deafness, such as cochlear implants or stem-cell transplants, as having the potential to eliminate their culture (Dwek, 2016). Central to Deafhood is the idea that Deaf people have a particular way of seeing the world and indeed possess unique gifts in their abilities to communicate with their hands, while 'non-Deaf humans are so cut off from their bodies that they are inhibited from using this language which exists deep inside all human beings' (Ladd, 2003, p. 3). Jones regards this pride in Deaf cultural identification as a way of normalising stigma, to maintain high self-esteem (2002). This claiming of language and identity can be seen in other marginalised communities such as the LGBT community's Queer Nation (De Lauretis, 1991).

In contrast, those who define themselves as part of the lowercase 'd' deaf community may be born of hearing parents and, like people with hearing loss, they often seek to 'fit in' and hide their impairment. Generally, they are less likely to use BSL and tend to welcome hearing aids, cochlear implants or other assistive technology. Hearing parents are more likely to perceive the benefits of educational integration for their deaf children and send their children to 'oral' schools. (Stewart, 2011a) But this can cause problems: for example a deaf TAEDS student, with hearing parents, took out her cochlear implant after only a few weeks as she could not adjust to the distortion of sound and was culturally unwilling to persevere. Similar imposition of the values of a hearing world on the deaf is explored in a film illuminating the experiences and identities of young deaf people at Mary Hare School (Arnold, 2018)

While acknowledging the major impact that educational experiences have on deaf identity formation in particular (Leigh, 2009), recent research goes beyond the binary conceptualisation of the medical and social modes, proposing a bicultural model (McIlroy and Storbeck, 2011). Their small-scale ethnographic South African study discusses a 'DeaF' identity, where the F represents a fluid deaf identity which includes constructive dialogue with the hearing community. Crucially, for young people to be 'deaf in my own way' (2011, p 495) relies on their being sufficiently secure in their deaf identity to interact positively with the hearing community.

2.2.4 Oralism and manualism in deaf education

The medical model supports a pedagogy of 'oralism', which involves deaf children learning to speak and lip-read, frequently in mainstream schools attended by hearing children. This attitude dominates contemporary U.K. education for deaf children (Stewart, 2011a). TAEDS students regularly ran

workshops for young people at two contrasting schools in the south east of England, one deaf 'oral' and one 'manual'. Mary Hare, a non-maintained co-educational special school in Newbury is oral. Here, deaf students lip-read the spoken word and until relatively recently, were forbidden to sign and punished for doing so (Ladd, 1988). This is corroborated by TAEDS deaf tutor, Ilan Dwek, who recalls his own school days there.

Oralism has its roots in the 1880 *Second International Congress on Education of the Deaf*, known as the Milan Conference. Contested only by the United States and Britain, a resolution was passed banning the use of sign language in schools (Berke, 2017). Although Gallaudet College in the U.S.A. decided to keep American Sign Language (ASL), Ladd claims that the Milan Conference had a disastrous effect on the self-esteem and educational progression of generations of deaf people, as their language was discouraged and shamed (2003). Ladd describes this denial of manualism as 'linguistic colonialism' (2003, p2), likening the deaf to those who are culturally oppressed, such as indigenous peoples. Although Anglin-Jaffe views this colonial metaphor as useful in highlighting inequality, she finds it limiting as a force for change to unite deaf education (2015). It is now recognised that signing supports, rather than damages, acquisition of spoken language (Meyer, 1991) and that education should be more responsive to the needs of deaf learners (Marschark and Hauser, 2012).

In contrast to Mary Hare, TAEDS students also visited Hamilton Lodge in Brighton, another non-maintained co-educational residential school, but one which follows the pedagogy of manualism: all lessons are taught in BSL, by hearing as well as deaf teachers. This school embraces the social model of disability and is inclusive of SEN. In relation to TAEDS alumni employability in specialist areas, which will be discussed in Chapter 6, it is interesting that profoundly deaf TAEDS' alumni, Tom Kent, teaches drama there.

2.3 Drama and Theatre in Education (TIE)

I will now turn to investigating the contributions of drama and theatre to education and schooling in the UK since the pedagogy of these subjects, in conjunction with TAEDS' inclusive pedagogy, can be seen as particularly congenial to the needs and interests of deaf students. TAEDS students engaged with drama and theatre in education (TIE) in three ways: most had experienced it at school; they learned through drama and theatre practice during TAEDS and they devised and delivered drama workshops in schools. Although the degree was not a teaching qualification, students were inducted into the practice and theory of educational drama and given an overview of its changing and controversial place within the curriculum (O'Toole and O'Mara, 2007).

Established in 1996, *Research in Drama Education: the Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* (RiDE) dedicated a 2009 issue to the importance of drama in learning and stressed the need to reveal more evidence to support its rightful place in education. The editorial affirms that drama is a powerful force for engaging learning, but acknowledges the negative perspective that 'drama education is treated with double suspicion by education gatekeepers, as either too soft or too subversive or both' (Anderson and Donelan, 2009, p. 166). In the following sections, I consider the generic values and challenges involved in drama education, examining this 'double bind' position further and arguing for drama's significance in promoting achievement.

2.3.1 Drama: learning method and art form

Drama has its roots in play and young children's natural instinct to pretend. This playfulness is a way for them to understand their environment, as Arts Council England's definition affirms:

Drama is an art form, a practical activity and an intellectual discipline. A drama education, which begins naturally with learning through dramatic play, will eventually include many elements of theatre. Like the other arts, it involves imagination and feelings and helps us to make sense of the world. It does this through the creation of imagined characters and situations, and the relationships and events that they encounter. (Ashwell et al, 2003, p4)

Drama and play connect in three ways: playing can involve the imaginative recreation of fictional worlds through observed or acquired knowledge, such as occurs in improvisation; a 'play' is a performance created through the medium of drama and a third definition of play is the physical flexibility residing in living materials such as wood (Prentki, 2016). It is easy for us to lose these senses of play as we get older, both literally, as our bodies become less supple, and metaphorically, as we 'grow out' of playing imaginary games. Drama and theatre help us to retain these qualities and 'appreciate something of our own world by creating worlds that are unreal' (HMI, 1989, p 9) through the ability to 'suspend disbelief', where a drama experience appears to be real and happening in the present. This supports higher order thinking and metacognition, that is reflection on our own thinking (Ashwell, 2009).

Key twentieth century educational thinkers appreciated drama. Dewey (1930) considered that work imbued with the attitude of play could achieve the quality of art and indeed that drama is an art form, as well as a method of learning. Freire (1972), pioneer of critical pedagogy, believed that education was an intrinsically political act of empowerment, where learners were co-creators of knowledge, rather than vessels to be filled. He came to value drama as providing dialogic opportunities for inquiring into factual events to reveal their social roots and causes (Freire, 2004). Drama is a social art form because it always involves others - even a monologue has an implied

audience (Ashwell and Kempe, 2000); the opportunity to empathise with different perspectives is crucial in drama in education (Prentki, 2016).

Like the other arts, drama has a key role within education, since it is 'through the arts in all their forms that young people experiment with and try to articulate their deepest feelings and their own sense of cultural identity and belonging' (Robinson, 1999, p. 79). Drama communicates through the language and conventions of theatre, one of the greatest forms of human expression (Ashwell et al, 2003). Unlike the other arts, drama uniquely relies on the imaginative human ability to be someone else (HMI, 1989) and Somers, theatre-maker, describes it thus:

Just as the engineer builds a model of a bridge to test its capabilities when built, so in Drama we model life and examine its complexities using the dramatic language. (Somers, 2013, n.p.)

Practitioners claim that through drama we can practise how to live as human beings within society (Bond, 2014; Czuboly, 2010; Neelands, 2004), a challenge which we all have to address. Drama teachers aim to apply the playful qualities of adaptability and openness to real world situations, using dramatic form. These are key skills in human development and also sought-after graduate attributes (Hincliffe and Jolly, 2011). I consider that experiencing drama in education at school improved TAEDS students' sense of achievement on many levels and supported their access to HE. This is evidenced in Chapter 6.

2.3.2 Drama: community and neoliberalism

Drama appears to 'work' by creating an open window of opportunity in our lives, temporarily releasing us from our familiar identities and allowing us to experience unfamiliar, different behaviours and states of mind. Through both being themselves and taking on the role of another character, participants in drama simultaneously inhabit at least two worlds, what Bolton describes as 'metaxis' (1992, p 11), thus experiencing alterity, or otherness and, through movement between self and other, becoming 'free to negotiate, translate and therefore transform' (Neelands, 2004, p. 54).

Drama is a community activity and Noddings (2002) affirms the importance of a relational curriculum, where learners, teachers and carers build caring relationships. Drama leads to an increasing awareness of oneself, alongside the needs of others, and this can involve a moral exploration of what is of real value, with a view to 'creating alternative presents and futures' (Prentki, 2016, p. 5). Drama thus has a subtext, which may be at variance with social norms.

Because of its focus on collaboration, drama can be viewed as a potentially politically radical, subversive curriculum subject and threatening to the *status quo*, as it is working against the prevailing competitive culture. Prentki maintains that:

Drama is ... a natural antidote to the individualism which has been gathering momentum since the birth of capitalism in the early modern period in Europe and which has reached its apotheosis in neoliberalism. (2016, p 6)

In *How Did We Get Into This Mess?* (Monbiot, 2016), political activist Monbiot argues that, with its roots in pre-war Europe, neoliberalism was born of a fear that social democracy, exemplified by Britain's welfare state, would crush individuality, wealth production and lead to state control. Promoted by the wealthy, business people and academics, neoliberalism was dormant post-war, when full employment and public service development were accepted goals. However, in the 1970s, with the impending rise of Thatcher's Conservative and Reagan's Republican administrations, the specific freedoms of neoliberalism gained ground, under the cover of the benefits of consumerism; this resulted in less distribution of wealth and more poverty; oppression of trade-unions, privatisation and outsourcing of public services (Monbiot, 2016). Metcalf (2017) contends that it is the application of neoliberalism to every aspect of our lives that is damaging. He explains economist Hayek's original idea that the market is a way of objective knowing that radically exceeds the capacity of any individual mind. It is privileging of this kind of knowledge over the human ability to think and reason which has led to the contemporary Western political situation, where competition has become the organising principle for all human activity. Metcalf recognises that neoliberalism is not an appropriate frame for education; as he points out, 'The authority of the professor, the reformer, the legislator or the jurist does not derive from the market, but from humanistic values such as public spiritedness, conscience or the longing for justice' (Metcalf, 2017, n.p.). Co-founders of the journal *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, Robertson and Dale, theorise the effects of neoliberalism on education and its implications for social justice, proposing a critical, cultural, political and economic frame to move forward (2015b). Contemporary playwright, Bond, sees much of contemporary theatre as mere spectacle, where social issues are commodified to make money (2014). Furthermore, drama educator Davis argues that drama should try to challenge this cultural mindset, where everything seems normal but is actually insane, in a society where distorted human relationships and priorities have become normalised and unremarkable: we know what things cost but not what they are really worth (Davis, 2014).

This focus on markets and consumer power can be seen in the 1988 *Education Reform Act*, which introduced a standardised National Curriculum (NC), with complex assessment requirements.

Through Local Management of Schools (LMS), more power over education was accorded to parents as resources were deployed to schools to make them more accountable, yet schools no longer had the support of Local Education Authorities (LEAs), as their role was reduced (Gillard, 2016). League tables in 1992 made competition between schools explicit: this has become intensified by recent academisation. Prentki (2016) maintains that drama's insecure position in curricula, like that of the other arts, reflects this wider political landscape, since the STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Economics and Mathematics) are those which tend to be most favoured in a climate where monetary policy and competition-led meritocracy form the main discourse.

In contrast to the measurable 'hard skills' of STEM subjects, 'soft skills' are more difficult to quantify, since they mostly comprise 'personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people' (OED, 2016, n.p.). Because of its focus on communication, co-operation, diversity awareness (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011) and personal responsibility (Andrews and Higson, 2008) (to name only those sought-after soft skills in graduate employability), I concur with the view that drama embodies values which are diametrically opposed to those of the current culture described above (Freebody and Finneran, 2016; Prentki, 2016).

2.3.3 Drama: soft and powerful pedagogy

Alongside subjects such as visual arts, physical education (PE) and media-studies, theatre arts and drama are among those regarded as 'soft': vocational, practical and less academic, in contrast to subjects deemed 'hard'. Interestingly, because of negative connotations, the latter are now referred to more neutrally as 'facilitating' subjects, by the Russell Group, which represents traditional 'red-brick' British universities (Russell Group, 2016).

The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA), a collective working to ensure that all children and young people have meaningful access to culture, informed the *Supporting the creative economy* report, which argued that the government focus on STEM subjects was having a 'pronounced impact on the arts and other creative subjects' (Culture, Media and Sport Committee, 2013, p. 44) and that the crucial role of arts subjects should be recognised by changing STEM to STEAM, to include Arts. To date, this movement has gathered momentum, with the recently published Camden STEAM Commission Report (STEAM, 2017).

Such conceptual divisions between different kinds of knowledge have a long history. Contemporary educational policies, which tend to favour rationality and knowledge over practical learning, have their roots in Aristotelian concepts of subject knowledge, *theoria*, and theoretical reasoning, *episteme* (Aristotle, 382/322 BC). Eighteenth century Western Enlightenment thought perpetuated

the appropriation of reason as a male quality, seen as more important than so-called 'female' attributes of emotion and feeling (Andermahr, 2000). After the 1944 Education Act, which standardised the British educational system (Gillard, 2016), male-dominated academic subjects such as Maths and Science were prevalent, with their focus on knowledge acquisition. Given the current direction of political travel towards re-establishing grammar schools (Stewart and Walker, 2016), it is not surprising that subjects such as drama continue to be sidelined, with their focus on holistic development and equal valuing of 'multiple intelligences', as detailed by Gardner (2006).

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a performance measure introduced for schools in 2010, which promotes five core academic subjects at GCSE as a route to HE (DfE, 2016). Like the other arts, drama is absent from this measure, and this has provoked outrage from drama educators. The government published the consultation results and professed its intention to implement the EBacc, from 2018 (DfE, 2017). In a letter to *The Guardian*, Chair of National Drama, Patrice Baldwin, takes issue with this DfE response to a letter from Birmingham Repertory Theatre:

Ministers do not consider drama itself to be core knowledge, as it is more a question of pedagogy. As you know, where drama features in the primary English programme of study it is in relation to pupils studying great works of great dramatists, including Shakespeare. (DfE, 2012)

This extract gives a flavour of the issues; it is not only poorly expressed, but also reveals ignorance of what drama education is. It is ironic that studying Shakespeare as text on the page within English lessons is valued, but practical drama lessons on the curriculum, to explore his universal themes, are not. Baldwin affirms that drama is indeed a valid subject, with its own pedagogy and need for qualified drama teachers:

Drama is a subject that can also form the basis of a particularly powerful pedagogy in schools. However, drama as pedagogy relies on teachers having drama subject knowledge, and skills, in order for them to give children the chance to learn both in drama (as a subject) and through drama (as pedagogy). You can't teach through a subject you have not gained knowledge of. (Baldwin, 2013, n. p.)

Kempe too reminds us that 'knowledge *about* and *how to* is augmented by the idea of *knowing through drama*' (2009, p. 412). Drama is a complex subject to teach well, but with the reduction in HE drama places (CLA, 2016), it is less likely that young people at school are taught by a qualified drama teacher (Baldwin, 2012). The acceleration of this vicious circle, with fewer drama teachers and lower numbers opting for drama qualifications at school, means that as yet, the future of drama within education is uncertain. Yet evidence suggests it is key in promoting achievement for many young people (Cziboly, 2010) and its impact is addressed later in this chapter.

At a policy level, drama is therefore ill-understood in Britain in terms of its educational potential. Particularly confusing is the multiplicity of terms used to describe drama and theatre and the ongoing debates about definitions (Fleming, 2004; O'Toole, 2009b). It is outside the scope of this study to discuss the nuances of terminology, as I believe that all kinds of theatre and drama can be significant in promoting achievement for young people. However, it is worth briefly differentiating between the more common concepts, all of which were addressed in the TAEDS education modules.

2.3.4 Drama and theatre in education (TIE)

'Drama in education' refers to drama taught by teachers within the school curriculum and can itself incorporate a range of dramatic approaches, such as 'process drama', where meaning-making is co-created through improvisation by teachers alongside students (O'Neill, 1995). Twentieth century practitioner, Dorothy Heathcote, conceptualised drama as a learning medium, developing techniques such as 'teacher in role' and 'mantle of the expert' (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995). The former involves the teacher taking on roles for specific purposes within the drama and the latter puts students in a high-status expert role. However, David Hornbrook, in *Education and Dramatic Art* (1998), challenged this primacy of process over form in drama. In his role as school arts inspector, he insisted that children learn about drama, as an art form, rather than through drama, as a learning method. This resulted in schisms in drama education, but ultimately led to a symbiotic relationship developing between the techniques of 'drama in education' and 'theatre in education' (O'Toole, 2009b).

Tony Jackson has extensively documented the development and importance of TIE, most recently in 2013. Initiated as interactive theatre for children by Brian Way, who established *Theatre Centre* in 1953 (Way, 1967), it was influenced by Peter Slade's theatre-in-the-round and child-centred practice (Bolton, 2007). These ideas gestated and in 1965, under a Labour government, the radical Belgrade TIE company was formed in Coventry; teacher-actors received government funding to run participatory theatre programmes in schools, focussing on challenging political themes (Wooster, 2016). Thus TIE can exemplify 'the role of drama/theatre in the ongoing struggle for social justice, human rights, and cultural action' (Neelands, 2004, p 49). From the 1960s, TIE companies proliferated, fundamentally changing the ways in which young people could access theatre and drama. Many companies utilised 'forum theatre', developed by Augusto Boal, twentieth century Brazilian theatre director and political activist (1979). This key participatory technique involves experimentation with different role-play responses to a conflict, working towards resolution and empowerment; it is also frequently used in Theatre for Development (O'Toole, 2009b), an example of 'applied theatre'.

Applied theatre refers to theatre used to inform or empower in other settings, such as prisons or community groups; it can also include TIE and gained currency in the 1990s, particularly in relation to HE drama courses (O'Toole, 2009b). Wooster (2016) tracks the British political and social backdrop to the change, from a plethora of independent professional TIE companies providing subsidised, authentic tailor-made programmes in the sixties, to a much reduced current number, with increasingly market-led content and struggles for funding. Good quality survivors such as *Big Brum TIE* (<http://www.bigbrum.org.uk/>) and *Blah, Blah Blah Theatre* (<http://www.blahs.co.uk/>) have close associations with high-status theatre professionals (Edward Bond and Bill Nighy respectively) and tend to focus on GCSE or A level texts, to ensure survival. The relationship between TIE, with its roots in political history, and the citizenship curriculum is an important one, which I will discuss in the next section.

2.3.5 Drama: citizenship and subversion

Citizenship education, like good drama teaching, focusses on the ethical challenges of being human within our society (Doona, 2012). Heathcote's view is that all drama is essentially about a 'Man in a Mess' [sic]: 'Drama is human beings confronted by situations which change them because of what they must face in dealing with those challenges' (Heathcote, 1985, p 48). This insight echoes the Ancient Greek relationship between drama and democracy, where tragedies and comedies were developed to question the political status quo and interrogate what makes a human being (Bond, 2014). This reminds us that the business of being human pre-occupied our eminent forebears too: 'When Shakespeare says 'to be' he is asking us how we should live' (Doona, 2012, p viii).

Shakespeare's attitude to the Stuart monarchy was subtly subversive, for example in *Macbeth* where he draws attention to James I's difficult childhood, gullibility, foolishness and superstition in *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth* respectively (Shapiro, 2015). Indeed, in contemporary Britain, the 2017 film *Charles III* (Bartlett, 2014), resonated in its prediction of certain mistakes in a potentially catastrophic succession.

Since citizenship was first included in the secondary National Curriculum (NC) in 2002, it has mainly remained a low-status subject, frequently taught through PSHE or by impassioned individuals (Calvert and Clemitshaw, 2003). In the most recent citizenship NC (DfE, 2013a), the previously integral global aspects have disappeared, despite our increasingly diverse society. The focus has moved away from human rights and advocacy to legality and financial management, although critical thinking does remain.

In the light of drama's invisibility in the National Curriculum, citizenship provides an opportunity for drama teachers to include the global issues which they deem important, as 'drama has readily allied itself with the educational, and above all the emancipatory, aspirations of citizenship and human rights' (Winston 2007, p 270). The unprecedented level of political discord about democracy, as evidenced by the 2016 Brexit referendum result, with its potential replacement of the Human Rights Act by a British Bill of Rights (Elgot, 2016), and the 2016 American election Republican Trump victory, indicates that the need for debate about democracy and social justice is particularly pertinent in contemporary citizenship education.

Helen Nicholson, editor of *RiDE*, uses *The Map and the Story* metaphor to express the tension between didactic educational policies and creative drama and theatre practice. She explains that, 'the map represents knowledge that is official, disciplined and objective, whereas the story is associated with everyday moments of creativity, ways of knowing that are practical, embodied and spontaneous' (Nicholson, 2011, p. 7). The limiting curriculum may be the 'map', but the subversive 'story' can be co-constructed through the passion of teachers with an ethic of care:

The link between teachers' responsibilities to care for students and to educate them to care is increasingly important at this time of economic volatility. In a world where there is a growing but palpable anxiety that a global scale crisis will plunge us into yet unknown territory economically, socially and politically, schooling, and thus teachers have come under increased pressure to educate citizens with the capacity to set the world aright. (O'Brien, 2011, p. 46)

Such a pedagogy necessitates considerable expertise on the part of teachers, requiring the needs of individuals to be balanced with the need to build an atmosphere of sufficient trust and mutual respect for a group of teenagers to grow and learn together, in what Nicholson calls 'the visible enactment of trust, as a performative act' (2002, p 84). My previous research into effective citizenship drama teaching (Wardale, 2014a) affirms Bandura's assertion that teacher self-belief and a sense of self-efficacy are pre-requisites for successful teachers (2001). Canadian practitioner, Linds, describes the kind of reflexive thinking required:

Ethical know-how based on continually developing common sense, wisdom and mature judgement ... in the here and now. I experience the enactment of dramatic work as drawing the [ethical] expertise out of me. (Linds, 2008, p. 108)

This intuitive and practical judgement relates to the Ancient Greek concept of *phronesis*, 'a form of moral practical knowledge that ... constitutes who we are in the process of *becoming* – interpretation, discussion, and reflection' (Berkeley, 2005, p 220). Drawing on Aristotle's categories

of knowledge (Aristotle, 384/322 BC), Berkeley questions the way in which, through training theatre professionals, the utilitarian HE drama agenda has focussed on *techne* (product-oriented delivered knowledge), rather than on *phronesis*. She recognises the learning potential for drama driven by ‘civically- oriented’ pedagogy (Berkeley, 2005, p 220), which can be effective in subverting the educational *status quo*. The demands of citizenship teaching mean that, in practice, many schools invite TIE companies to address challenging topics from a more general, distanced perspective. Impact evaluation is frequently sought to justify financial outlay, and this can be a thorny issue for drama.

2.3.6 Drama: educational impact

Because of the multi-layered aspects of drama, it is difficult to both prove and quantify the positive impact of drama experience on young people, although drama educators widely recognise it (Prentki, 2016). In 2006, *RiDE* devoted an issue to the challenges inherent in assessing drama’s effectiveness and in understanding how far applied theatre can bring about change. In the editorial, Etherton (2006) argues that, while the cornerstone of theatrical communication is empathy, this is hard to assess. Although outcomes can be evaluated, impact might mean personal shifts in perspective which outlive the drama experience and eventually evolve into social action. This is difficult to determine, as ‘in reality, the process of self-empowerment is not bound to a time-line, but like change itself, is without a beginning, middle and end’ (Etherton, 2006, p 148).

Notwithstanding, Dickinson (2006) makes claims for increased academic performance as a result of integrated primary drama. In his quantitative study of drama in two primary schools, Fleming (2004) demonstrated improved scores in maths, as well as children’s significantly more positive self-concept. However, he wonders:

Whether the impact in performance in mathematics can be attributed to general issues of personal development (increased confidence and improved attitudes) or issues related more specifically to cognitive development. (2004, p 195)

I would suggest that drama can do both and this is confirmed by a major international study in 2010. The EU sponsored theatre professionals and students from twelve countries for a ground-breaking international event to celebrate the value of educational drama. They hypothesised that drama could enhance five of the eight competences for a knowledge-based society:

1. Communication in the mother tongue
2. Learning to learn
3. Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, civic competence
4. Entrepreneurship

5. Cultural expression

(EU Parliament and Council, 2011, n.p.)

Crucially, this study identified 'being a whole human being' as paramount:

Furthermore, we believe that there is a competence not mentioned among the Key Competences, which is the universal competence of what it is to be human. We have called this competence, "All this and more". (Cziboly, 2010, p. 6)

This was a longitudinal, cross-cultural, mixed methods study of some 5,000 young people from all socio-economic groups. The findings were impressive, yielding far more evidence than the original hypothesis had predicted. Adjusting for variables, they indicated a positive correlation between taking theatre and drama courses for up to four months and enhanced key competences. However, causation, or the ability of one variable to influence another, cannot be definitively established since, for example, those students who choose to engage in drama may have different personalities or social conditioning than those who do not. Because of its significance, I make no apologies for the length of the following quotation, and what follows is a selection only, demonstrating that across twenty-two aspects, in comparison to the control group, drama and theatre students:

1. are assessed more highly by their teachers in all aspects,
 3. feel more confident in communication, are more likely to feel that they are creative,
 6. enjoy school activities more, are better at problem solving and coping with stress,
 9. are more tolerant towards both minorities and foreigners, are more active citizens,
 13. are more empathic: they have concern for others, are more able to change their perspective,
 15. are more innovative and entrepreneurial, show more dedication towards their future and have more plans,
 17. are much more willing to participate in any genre of arts and culture, and not just performing arts, but also writing, making music, films, handicrafts, and attending all sorts of arts and cultural activities,
 18. spend more time in school, more time reading, doing housework, playing, talking, and spend more time with family members and taking care of younger brothers and sisters. In contrast, they spend less time watching TV or playing computer games,
 19. do more for their families, are more likely to have a part-time job and spend more time being creative either alone or in a group. They more frequently go to the theatre, exhibitions and museums, and the cinema, and go hiking and biking more often.
- (Cziboly, 2010, p. 6/7)

These results were corroborated in 2014 by a small study eliciting the views of Canadian secondary students of mixed socio-economic status (McLauchlan and Winters, 2014). They found that drama enhances student growth across five broad learning categories: empathy and perspective taking;

social and collaborative skills; confidence, communication and creativity and success in other courses and interview preparation. Drama as a learning method is of particular relevance for deaf young people and in Chapter 6, I evidence the ways in which it can provide a portal to hitherto untapped academic achievement.

2.3.7 Drama and deaf learners

The clear speech required for working with the deaf, with visible lip-pattern and inclusive eye contact is good teaching practice generally (Thomas, 1997). Drama provides opportunities for practising in role different kinds of speech for specific purposes and is important in language development for all children (Ashwell, 2009). Since language learning through drama is an embodied activity, with collaborative dialogue and scaffolding (Stinson and Piazzoli, 2013), the use of gesture, body language and visual elements are key to communication. Although there is a link between deafness and mime (HMI, 1989), my teaching experience suggests that using mime or still image within mainstream teaching at all ages can encourage the developed thinking which is a pre-requisite for effective speaking. Using a range of dramatic forms can also promote agency in young people who do not have English as their first language (Stinson, 2013): this includes BSL users.

Because BSL, with its different syntax to English, is frequently the first language of deaf young people, their written skills may not reflect their true abilities. Deaf young people tend to struggle with complex verbal or written vocabulary, sequencing and structure (Payne, 1996). If they are pre-lingually deaf, they are likely to think visually and learn kinaesthetically (Marschark and Hauser, 2012) since the syntax of BSL works in visual images (Stewart, 2011b). They can be more spontaneously expressive, physically uninhibited and skilled at reading images than hearing people, as they are not so over-reliant on the spoken word. In these respects, deaf students are at an advantage in drama (Payne, 1996). As a TAEDS alumni explains: 'It comes more easily for me to express myself through my body and my face because I've been doing it all my life – it's part of deaf history and deaf culture' (Thomas, 1997, n.p.). During the early years of TAEDS, it became clear that, because of the practical application of academic theory through drama, deaf students' linguistic and conceptual skills improved dramatically (Payne, 1996).

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the importance of the cultural model of deafness in deaf identity. I argued that drama and theatre are important empowerment tools for young people, especially within citizenship education and examined the reasons it is undervalued in our current social and

political culture. Given the HE context, it can be seen that drama and deafness are unlikely to feature highly on HEI programme priorities.

Chapter 3 *Habitat*: TAEDS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by positioning the TAEDS programme within the historical and cultural context of both deafness and drama in education, and exploring its significance in relation to disability arts. It tracks the programme through four distinct phases: early, middle, later and final years, outlining the interesting relationship with education, at both school and HE level. I outline the programme's developing focus on careers and enterprise, which leads to an exploration of identity and employability in Chapter 4. To begin with, I consider TAEDS' influences and origins.

3.2 Early years: 1980s - 1995

3.2.1 Theatre of the Deaf

Gallaudet University for deaf students, named after its first president, was founded as a college in 1864 in Washington DC, USA. After its inception, drama developed through student-sponsored extra-curricular activities, using sign language within performance (Tadie, 1979). The first Gallaudet undergraduate drama degree ran in 1969, developed through the founding of the *National Theatre for the Deaf* in 1967 (National Theatre of the Deaf), and was an early model for TAEDS. Pat Keysell, mime artist and presenter of the BBC 1960s series *Vision On* for deaf people (McGown, A, 2009), founded the British Theatre of the Deaf (BBC, 2014). In the early 1980s, she initiated a small part-time two year course for deaf drama students, which took place at Bulmershe College of Higher Education in Reading UK. The course was funded by Carnegie UK Trust and validated by the Royal Society of Arts. Not professional training at this stage, it encouraged an interest in creative drama among the deaf adult community and raised standards of drama leadership in deaf clubs. It also stimulated interest from the Department of Film and Drama at Bulmershe and two members of staff became involved in the teaching (Floodgate, 2008).

3.2.2 Programme development

It appears that the development of TAEDS, to some extent, parallels the trajectory of drama in the school curriculum. The historical, social and political context of British drama's and theatre's place in the curriculum have been well documented elsewhere (Bennet, 2005; Jackson, 2007 & 2013; Nicholson, 2007), so what follows is an overview of how this applies to TAEDS.

During the 1980s, drama and TIE gained momentum, leading to a heyday typified by extensive INSET for drama teachers and funded TIE programmes. Yet at this time, there were still few opportunities

for deaf people to make a career in the performing arts and this was highlighted by the Arts Council Report in 1985 entitled *Arts and Disabled People*, (Attenborough, 1985).

By this time, the Carnegie UK Trust funding for the part-time course at Bulmershe had ended, and a Development Officer was recruited to negotiate the setting up of a full-time course. This began in 1986, was entitled *Theatre of the Deaf* and was a one year professional Certificate, validated by Bulmershe College of Higher Education, with most of the students being deaf (Floodgate, 2008). It was initially designed to train deaf, and some hearing, people in drama and leadership skills, with an emphasis on their being both role-models and able to work with deaf children in educational and community contexts (Payne, 1996). This 1986 Certificate course (which pre-empted the first NC in 1988) ran for four years, with thirty-four students successfully passing, of whom twenty-three were deaf: many of those became professional TV or film performers or worked in children's theatre (Floodgate, 2008).

In 1989, Bulmershe College merged with the UoR and from 1990, the course became first a Higher Education Diploma, reliant on discretionary funding, and then in 1994 a government-funded two year Diploma in Higher Education (DipHE), within the Department of Arts and Humanities in Education, with a one-year course available for postgraduate students (Taylor, 1995). At this stage, the academic content and entry requirements became more demanding. During the next six years, forty-five students gained the diploma, of whom two thirds were deaf. They were professionally very successful, particularly in TIE, with ex-students founding their own company (Payne, 1996).

3.3 Middle years: 1996-2010

Meanwhile, drama in the British school curriculum continued to develop, with the publication of the key HMI *Curriculum Matters, Drama 5-16* in 1989 and the Arts Council's 1992 *Drama in Schools*. Under the 1997 Labour government, drama became a specific strand for the first time, within the primary *English National Curriculum* (DfE, 1999). *All our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, the influential report on the importance of creativity (Robinson, 1999), led to Arts Council Initiatives such as *Artsmark* in 2001; *Creative Partnerships* in 2002 (CCE) and *Arts Awards* in 2005 (ACE, 2016). ACE brought out the second edition of *Drama in Schools* (Ashwell, 2003), which included the secondary phase. Although not a discrete secondary subject until GCSE level, Drama was a compulsory strand within Speaking and Listening and a NC requirement until the end of KS3, so the programmes of study and level descriptors were widely adopted and drama departments designed their own curricula.

During the 1990s, the *Theatre of the Deaf* DipHE had also gained momentum and became a well-subscribed degree programme in 1996, with annual recruitment from 1999, within the Faculty of Education and Community Studies at Bulmershe Court, UoR. The course was led and taught by a profoundly deaf theatre academic, Daphne Payne, and renamed *Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies* (TAEDS) to reflect the additional academic and broader educational aspects and to attract young people, hearing as well as deaf, who wanted to develop knowledge and skills through theatre and actualise these in professional environments (Floodgate, 2008).

3.3.1 TAEDS: Deaf awareness

Because TAEDS celebrated the culture of deafness through Sign Theatre, deafness was regarded as an impairment, rather than as a disability:

- a) Impairment is a physical, mental or sensory functional limitation within the individual.
- b) Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers.

(Barnes, 1991, p 2)

As mentioned in Chapter 2, this difference is crucial as it puts the onus on society to accommodate the needs of all its members equally (Kempe and Shah, 2016). High standards of deaf awareness were expected and working alongside BSL interpreters required staff and students to ensure clear delivery with good lip-pattern and provide written support materials, since it is not possible to watch a signer and write notes simultaneously. One person at a time speaks, indicating beforehand by raising their hand so everyone can see. All hearing students learned BSL and could gain nationally accredited qualifications, since TAEDS was a *Signature* exam centre (UK leading provider). As for oral deaf students, if upon entry to the degree course they did not know or knew very little BSL, they were expected to learn BSL alongside their hearing peers.

However, the demands of a degree course precipitated a decline in deaf applications, partly due to the variable quality of deaf education and opportunities for A level study, which can hinder deaf people from achieving their academic potential at school (Stewart, 2011a). Growing diversity of opportunity for deaf people within the arts and increased access to practical qualifications such as Performing Arts BTEC HND (Higher National Diploma) may also have contributed to reduced numbers of deaf applicants. TAEDS reached its highest number of graduates (25) in 2008, but by this time there were only about two deaf students each year (Wardale, 2014c).

3.3.2 The theatre curriculum

During these middle years, the TAEDS programme learning outcomes included developing a critical, analytical approach to theatre and making intelligent and informed decisions regarding form, presentation, design and performance, through a variety of dramatic contexts, theatrical forms and systematic analysis of dramatic texts and theatrical performances (Floodgate, 2016). Critical theatre modules began in the first year with performance analysis, an introduction to theatre history and theatre forms. By Year 3, students studied twentieth century and contemporary theatre directors and practitioners. Regular visits to accessible theatre productions were key to the programme; these were discussed in sessions to inform students' critical writing and own theatre practice. Through the physical theatre modules, students experienced a range of practical drama and theatre skills, with the emphasis placed on visual and physical forms, in particular exploration of the inherent possibilities of Sign Theatre, the innovative disability art form originated through the TAEDS programme (Floodgate, 2012).

3.3.3 Disability arts

'Disability arts' refers to creative ways of exploring the conceptual ideas and physical realities of what it is to be disabled. These art forms can be created by disabled and non-disabled alike and disability politics within the arts is the subject of contemporary debate (Calvert, 2013). Conroy, a disability performance scholar, explains that 'the foundations of disability cultural studies examined the implications of the prolific appearance of images of disability in the arts, matched by the relative absence of disabled artists' (Conroy, 2013b, p 528). Recognising that disability is a form of identity and an academic discipline, as well as a political movement, Conroy argues that ideas about representation are at the core of disability politics:

To work in disability arts, or in arts for disabled people, is to experiment with one's own positioning and to struggle with the meanings that arise at the point where practitioner (disabled or non-disabled) meets work. (2009, p 5).

In *Performing Disability* (2013), Floodgate addresses the question of who exactly is disabled; that is, how far a non-disabled performer can sufficiently embody a disability to represent it and whether non-disabled audiences may effectively be disabled by their lack of understanding of disability.

Graeae Theatre Company justly lays claim to be 'a force for change in world-class theatre, breaking down barriers, challenging preconceptions and boldly placing disabled artists centre stage' (Graeae, 2016, n.p.). With disabled and non-disabled performers working together, the company ethos is characterised by diversity, inclusivity and accessibility. Richard Tomlinson co-founded *Graeae* in 1980 with disabled artist Nabil Shaban, to empower individual performers, accord them status and

encourage them to be seen in a positive light by the audience (Conroy, 2009). However, while being intrinsically political, disability arts can also be aesthetically challenging to the status quo, in the assumption that we appreciate art through the senses. Jenny Sealey, artistic director of *Graeae*, describes the problem of critical spectators questioning the professional quality of performances which are outside conventional acting styles. (Sealey, 2002)

American disability arts theorist, Petra Koppers, acknowledges that the term disability is deeply contested and avoids a definition, preferring 'an undoing of certainties, a questioning of categories ... unknowability and different' (Koppers, 2003, p. 4). Conroy too challenges the idea of disability as a concept, and instead 'accepts disability as a way of thinking, and not an object of thought' (2013, p 519). She discusses the ways in which the 2012 British Paralympics, while apparently championing disabled people through their visibility and public engagement with categories of impairment, ironically embodied disability as 'a barrier that has already been overcome' (2013b, p 526). Although performers had self-identified as disabled, there was no distinction made in the opening ceremony between those who were disabled and non-disabled; one performer affirmed the importance of visible access equipment, to signify and claim their identities as disabled people. Indeed, during the 2016 Rio Paralympics, theatre professionals reflected on how no permanent changes in public attitude had resulted from the 2012 Paralympics (National Theatre Platform, 2016). Koppers argues that disabled theatre artists are at once invisible as active members of society and also hyper-visible, having to effectively perform their disability in medical and social situations (Koppers, 2003). Yet audiences often assume the disabled performer is defined by disability and this can pre-empt anything else s/he may be trying to communicate (Sandhal and Auslander, 2005).

Since deafness is an invisible impairment, within Sign Theatre it is frequently impossible to determine who is deaf and who is hearing. While this challenges audience assumptions, there is arguably a cultural responsibility to educate hearing audiences, to avoid stereotyping and marginalising of the deaf/Deaf (Bradford, 2005). However, in Berson's view:

Deafness occupies a unique position within the relatively new field of disability studies; while hearing-impairment is a disability, Deafness is a mark of a Culture. (2005, p 44)

Since TAEDS focused on the cultural aspects of deafness and did not regard deafness as a disability, Sign Theatre seems to occupy a liminal position on the edge of disability arts, although it has itself contributed to the field (Birch, 2016).

3.3.4 Sign Theatre

In its embodied practice as an emergent art form, TAEDS Sign Theatre was at the forefront of contemporary performance. Nicholson (2010) maintains that twenty-first century educators are imaginatively evolving new forms of drama and theatre, informed by cultural history and the kinaesthetic imagination. Indeed, during this century, high-profile UK deaf theatre professionals, such as Elise Davison (co-founder of *Taking Flight Theatre*), Paula Garfield (Artistic Director of *Deafinitely Theatre*), Caroline Parker MBE (freelance deaf actor and cabaret singer), Jenny Sealey MBE (Creative Director, 2013 Paralympics Opening Ceremony) and Jean St Clair (co-founder of *The Fingersmiths*) are continuing to experiment with accessible theatre using artistic sign language. European and international companies are also developing this kind of theatre, which has been described in a number of ways, such as SignMime, Theatricalised BSL, Visual Vernacular and Stage Sign (Floodgate, 2015).

Simon Floodgate, current TAEDS Programme Director, explains that Sign Theatre ‘makes conscious aesthetic use of BSL in relationship with the semiotics of theatre’ (2009, p 21). It differs from most deaf accessible performance, where sub/surtitles convey the text or BSL interpreters sign at the side of the stage. In a TAEDS performance, more than one person plays each role and deaf and hearing alike are centre-stage: anyone could be signing or speaking. Meaning is communicated by the visual and spatial language of sign and physical theatre and this exciting new art form has endless possibilities for creativity. A TAEDS publicity montage and examples of productions can be viewed online (TAEDS Youtube, n.d.). Below is an image from a TAEDS brochure, which illustrates two people playing one character: known as Voice-Sign Split.



Figure 3-1 *Woyzeck*, TAEDS production, 2008

Lib Taylor, former TAEDS tutor and Department of Film and Drama academic, documented early TAEDS productions, such as *Woman Alone* (Rame and Fo, 1991), where a ‘deliberate plurality of signification was exploited’ by three performers taking on the role of the isolated woman (Taylor,

1995, p 78). Daphne Payne's 1992 adaption of *Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language* (Groce, 1985) 'contribute[d] to the development of avant-garde and experimental stage languages which define theatre in new ways ... an interplay of physical, visual and aural theatre languages which challenged 'logocentricism' (1995, p 79). In questioning this centrality of speech to language, Sign Theatre is transformative and challenging. Social justice and empowerment are intrinsic to TAEDS, as Sign Theatre is its core; it demonstrates 'performance as a form of activism, as critique and as critical citizenship' (Denzin, 2009, p. 257). This was illustrated by the 2015 finalists' production of *Monsters Among Us*, which addressed discrimination against deaf people from within the frame of a nineteenth century freak show and demonstrated the way form and content can shape each other (Nussbaum, 1990).

3.3.5 The education modules

Within the education strand that ran through the TAEDS programme, students worked in groups to devise, deliver and evaluate drama and interactive theatre workshops for deaf and hearing children in mainstream and deaf schools. In Year 1, these were centred on a story of their choice and in Year 2 on an aspect of the primary History curriculum. In a separate module, students provided bespoke drama workshops for a local SEN school, with a focus on the needs of individuals and group learning. Secondary global citizenship delivered through interactive TIE workshops was central to the education strand. Sign Theatre was integrated, so that accessibility was ensured for mainstream, deaf oral and Deaf BSL young people. With guidance from Reading International Solidarity Centre for development education (RISC, 2016), students were encouraged to focus on a topic of both personal and political importance to them, and which they felt should be communicated to young people. In choosing issues such as ethical eating, sexual consent and the Syrian refugee crisis, TAEDS students applied their commitment to the local and global, engaging with social justice and sustainability and action for change (Allum, 2015). Encouraging a change in thinking through drama is a hallmark of TAEDS alumni, which I will discuss further in Chapter 6.

3.4 Later years: 2011-2015

Following a drop in applicants in 2009, a UoR Formal Review was set up, to consider possibilities for moving TAEDS to another school or university, instead of it remaining in the IoE (Floodgate, 2009). After a reprieve, an academic business plan was designed to reconceptualise the programme and the current curriculum was launched at the IoE in 2011.

The new curriculum allowed students the option to take modules outside the programme, included a mandatory work placement, and gave students the flexibility to specialise in an area of their choice, choosing either a dissertation or a final performance in Year 3, as can be seen below.



Figure 3-2 TAEDS programme structure (Wardale, TAEDS Open Day presentation, 2015a)

This formalisation remodelled Deaf Studies as discretely taught modules, introduced Enterprise and Careers Management as a new module in Year 2 and included a compulsory four week work placement between Years 2 and 3. In order to retain the inclusive ethos of the programme, the low entry tariff remained (CC – 160 UCAS), there were no formal exams and the ratio of practical to written assessments was kept at 1:2 (Wardale, 2015a). This inclusion required a range of funded support: note-takers for deaf and dyslexic students or those with other learning difficulties; lip-speakers for hard of hearing or deafened students who relied on lip-reading skills and of course interpreters for first language BSL users, both staff and students. This provision was potentially threatened by 2017 cuts in the Disabled Students Allowance cuts (DSA), which necessitated universities covering these costs themselves (Willetts, 2014).

3.4.1 Deaf Studies modules

Through the Deaf Studies strand in Years 1 & 2, the ethos communicated to the students was that ‘deaf education is finally embracing deaf culture as part of its family tree’ (Anglin-Jaffe, 2015, p 92). This was emphasised in the programme handbook:

Your programme includes both deaf and hearing students, and provides not only an opportunity for deaf people to experience higher education in a context where d/Deaf cultures and language is integral, but also an environment where deaf and hearing students can learn with and from each other to the advantage of both. (Wardale, 2015-16, p. 7)

In his own professional practice as actor, BSL assessor and academic, Ilan Dwek, Deaf Studies convenor, inhabits multiple communities (Anglin-Jaffe, 2015) and makes deaf advocacy explicit; his Year 1 module aim reflected the inclusive nature of TAEDS' approach:

- To consider the historical context of deaf/Deaf education and contemporary educational practice (Dwek, 2015)

During this module, students experienced medical lectures on deafness from the Audiology Department at Royal Berkshire Hospital. Sign linguistics and more controversial aspects of deaf culture were considered, such as stem-cell research, and forms of prejudice such as surdophobia, or fear of deaf people (Dwek, 2016). In this way, the Deaf Studies curriculum employed critical pedagogy 'to reveal and deconstruct myths of discrimination and domination' (Aadlandsvik, 2009, p. 98), encouraging students to do presentations on key aspects, as part of their assessment. BSL teaching and examination preparation was offered, not just at *Signature* Levels 1 & 2 but also Level 3, providing students with a potential springboard for training as interpreters after graduation. The first students achieved Level 3 in 2016.

3.4.2 Careers and Enterprise modules

TAEDS students' already high employability was also further enhanced through the new Careers and Enterprise module, convened by an entrepreneurial TAEDS alumni, co-founder of *Handprint Theatre*. This module was taught in conjunction with the Henley Business School and the Careers, Placement and Experience Centre and included Year 2 Enterprise and Careers Management Skills (ECMS), featuring TAEDS alumni as guest speakers, to provide insight into programme-related professional roles.

On the Work Placement module, students arranged the mandatory 4-6 week work placement between Years 2 & 3 to match their own field of developing interest. Recent external examiner, Liselle Terret, wrote of the positive response to this:

The approach of the curriculum is also current in that the students are prepared for the job market and able to offer skills that are increasingly valued and valuable... all felt really grateful at the opportunity of their placements and support from the tutors. (2015, p 7)

TAEDS were one of the first programmes at the UoR to recognise the value of a compulsory work placement (Wardale, 2014b): it is now incorporated into most other programmes.

3.4.3 Holistic ethos and mythopoesis

Many TAEDS modules develop interpersonal competencies such as group work and oral presentations, both of which are important in the workplace and valued by students, as are

opportunities to interact with people from a range of cultural backgrounds (Andrews and Higson, 2008). Taggart sees this kind of community of practice within education as key to holistic education, where the developing consciousness of learners and teachers can meet in the present moment to open the minds of all (Taggart, 2010b). He views drama as powerful in encouraging this interconnectedness of identity development, because of the interaction of theoretical and practical intelligences through embodied knowledge (2010b). Taggart regards the urge to grow and develop as imperative, with spirituality as an overarching organiser of educational experience. Drawing on twentieth century philosopher Hegel's concept of *bildung* (1977), as the individual engaging in a lifelong process of human development of personal, cultural and spiritual sensibilities, Taggart argues that to be meaningful, this must take place within a social and cultural context, to develop a 'civic consciousness' (2010b, p 332); he argues that 'education is properly seen as a forum where the inherited meanings of a culture are simultaneously transmitted and re-negotiated' (2010b, 331).

Aadlandsvik, advocates a mythopoetic pedagogy for a holistic curriculum. This is an holistic educational practice which favours a search for knowledge based on the phenomenological, aesthetic, spiritual, imaginal and emotional rather than transmission of knowledge to students as customers, through 'training, recipes and routine' (2009, p 94). Derived from the Greek word for myth-making, mythopoesis is characterised as the creation of myths or stories 'to create meaning, memory, and coherence ... to *transform* us, allowing us to understand the world in new ways' (2009, p 96).

As part of the new programme, the team held dedicated meetings to re-consider TAEDS' ethos and vision and articulate its current market. At this stage, the personnel were as follows, with two deaf members of staff and one hard of hearing:

Programme leader and education tutor – full-time (hard of hearing)

Sign Theatre tutor – full-time

BSL tutor – sessional (deaf)

Careers and enterprise tutor – sessional

Deaf Studies and theatre tutor – part-time (deaf)

Theatre tutor – part-time

Administrator – part-time

BSL interpreters and note-takers – freelance

Costume technician – part-time

Learning support manager and note-taker – part-time

Theatre technician – part-time

These meetings were designed to unite a disparate team, encourage staff commitment to shared goals (Burnard and Hennessy, 2006) and a mutual appreciation of professional strengths, since 'We all live in the stories that make up our lives, including the narratives that constitute our professional lives, and that provide different ways of knowing' (Aadlandsvik, 2009, p. 95). Through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and visual conceptualising, TAEDS was characterised variously by staff as:



Figure 3-3 TAEDS team, 2013-4

TAEDS staff retold the origins and foundation myths of TAEDS to share community values and history: for example, who exactly created the term Sign Theatre and when (probably Judith Jackson, BSL Linguist, in the 1980s).

However, Conroy identifies the paradox at the heart of community:

Myth is necessary for community: it promises for a moment to fit our experiences into a coherent articulation; it fails, because community fluctuates between what appears to be descriptive or representational, and what we can articulate as performative, or political; between a sense of origin and a desire. (Conroy, 2013b, p. 521)

This point is illustrated by TAEDS' middle years attracting fewer deaf students. The more academic curriculum effectively discriminated against the profoundly deaf, requiring that they should be fully bilingual, with a high standard of written English, rather than first language BSL users (TAEDS team,

2013-4). Many hearing students were also deterred by this academic rigour, and TAEDS applications declined from 2012 (Wardale, 2014c).

3.5 Final years: 2015-2018

This reduction in numbers occurred alongside the government side-lining of educational drama. Under the 2010 coalition government, drama in the Primary NC was not to thrive. The ill-fated Rose Review's *Understanding the Arts* recommendations to develop a discrete primary drama curriculum were never adopted (Rose, 2009). Instead, Gove's focus on traditionalist knowledge-based education (Coughlan, 2014) meant that drama was largely written out of the newest Primary NC, except as a minimal part of English (DfE 2013b).

3.5.1 Secondary drama decline

The secondary situation is currently worse. In contrast to Australia, where the first National Curriculum for secondary drama was recently implemented, many GCSE & A Level drama courses in Britain have recently been withdrawn, as Baldwin highlighted (2012). In addition, there was a significant dip in applications to all HE drama courses in 2012 (Thorne, 2014), which was associated with the increase in fees to £9,000 that year.

The latest figures show that there has been a 27% decline in all arts GCSE entries since 2010, specifically a 24% reduction in drama (CLA, 2017). The CLA collated these figures from the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual, 2017). In July 2016, parliament had debated the omission of arts subjects as a core requirement from the EBacc (DfE, 2016), as a result of a public petition (Latto, 2016). During this discussion different figures were cited, which claimed an *increase* in students studying arts GCSE since 2010: however, these figures were misleading, as they omitted those for Dance, where take-up fell by 25% in the same period (Latto, 2016). In fact, 2017 figures reveal an overall drop of 8% in arts subject entries, just since last year, and a 9% drop in drama entries specifically (CLA, 2017).

3.5.2 Reduction in drama educators

Fewer arts GCSEs sit alongside a significant fall in drama teacher numbers (CLA, 2016), corroborated by the Warwick Commission Report (Neelands, 2015) and related to the real reduction in HE drama places (Baldwin, 2012). Furthermore, the 2016 curriculum reforms, which now require 40% written work (DfE, 2015) could result in even fewer students opting for GCSE Drama (Hennessy, 2016). This is already an issue at Hamilton Lodge, where talented BSL first language drama students are not offered drama GCSE, because of the written elements.

Ironically, the chief executive of the National Youth Theatre advocated removing drama GCSE from the curriculum and integrating it into other subjects, because the subject is seen as 'soft and easy' (Cassidy, 2014). This kind of attitude epitomises the split between drama as professional entertainment and drama as a learning method, within the neoliberal market-led agenda, where the arts have had to repackage themselves as creative industries and cultural capital (Prentki, 2016). The 2016 British Olympic and Paralympic successes and the lucrative creative industries make it difficult to understand why the British education curriculum would continue to undervalue the kinds of intelligences that the arts and sport develop (Gardner, 2006). In the USA, at the start of his presidency, Obama made powerful statements about drama and the arts, suggesting that:

The study of drama, dance, music, and the visual arts helps students explore realities, relationships, and ideas that cannot be conveyed simply in words or numbers. The ability to perform and create in the fine arts engenders innovative problem-solving skills that students can apply to other academic disciplines and provides experiences working as a team. (President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 2011)

3.5.3 The demise

The significance of cultural capital for TAEDS alumni will be discussed further in Chapter 4, but it is likely that the drop in TAEDS applicant numbers is not unconnected to the prevalent undervaluing of the arts (Wardale, 2014c). By 2014, TAEDS recruitment was at an all-time low. Despite TAEDS' evident strengths, a Curriculum Review was set up by the UoR in April, 2015 following a mixed run of NSS scores (Unistats, 2014), to consider:

- i. how well TAEDS works within the Institute of Education, and whether any efficiencies can be found through sharing teaching;
- ii. how TAEDS might fit in with plans for a non-QTS BA Education programme;
- iii. what TAEDS can offer the rest of the University;
- iv. the quality of the student experience in the TAEDS programmes and any measures that can be taken to improve it;
- v. the right number and quality of students to recruit.

(Carter, 2015, p 1)

Led by the Dean of Teaching and Learning and the Head of the IoE, the Curriculum Review included a number of student focus groups, which participants contributed to enthusiastically, under the impression they were supporting TAEDS' development. However, WP focus groups in 2014 had already involved many of the same students and, although most were positive about TAEDS, they were effectively invited to continually critique the programme. Given the characteristics of WP students, which I will discuss in Chapter 6, the ensuing loss of confidence in TAEDS may have partly

accounted for a further dip in NSS results (Unistats, 2015). The Curriculum Review Final Report concluded:

Recommendations

The principles behind these recommendations are:

- to keep the overall workload on students within proportion;
- to allow greater flexibility around the curriculum, including import and export of students;
- thereby to increase proportionately the number of non-TAEDS students on TAEDS modules;
- slightly to reduce teaching costs.

A small group should be set up within the Institute of Education to write a revised curriculum for TAEDS. This group will have equal membership of staff and students and should aim to devise a curriculum that reduces the burden on both staff and students. This group should report by December 2015.

(Carter, October 2015, p 3)

However, just before an Open Day in October 2015, without the small group recommendation ever being implemented, the UoR made a hasty *fait accompli* decision and announced TAEDS' immediate phased closure, because of 'low numbers, poor student feedback and current curriculum' (UoR Communications, 2015). This sequence of events suggests that there was a pre-existing intention to close TAEDS, which may have initiated the Curriculum Review. There was no recruitment in 2015 and the final students graduated in 2018. Opposition to this, from the TAEDS cohort, alumni and supporters, was considerable and reflected their diversity and passion as individuals and a community (BBC, 2015; Campbell, 2015b; Crofts, 2015; Radio Berkshire, 2015; TAEDS Year 3 students, 2015).



Figure 3-4 TAEDS student protest outside UoR senate, 15th October, 2015, and sign singing at TAEDS event

3.6 TAEDS: Community

In spite of the imminent closure of TAEDS, the TAEDS community has grown each year and the closed TAEDS Facebook page currently has 212 members. There was high attendance at bi-annual social and cultural TAEDS events for past and present students; the *Silver Anniversary* in 2012 and the *TAEDS' Got Signing Talent* celebrations in 2014. TAEDS deaf and hearing alumni manifest a strong sense of shared identity, frequently describing TAEDS as a family (TAEDS Graduates, 2015).

After the well attended 2013 memorial service for Julia Boorman, a much-loved former staff member, a 2005 TAEDS alumna and ex-colleague affirmed this iterative strength of the TAEDS community:

The legacy that Julia left was that of development and growth. All us graduates have utilised our degree, becoming teachers, audiologists and interpreters, working with the National Deaf Children's Society and at City Lit, starting theatre companies and still holding that university experience dear to our hearts and a fundamental passion for this unique course. (Hobbs, 2013, n.p.)

In addition to alumni and staff, the TAEDS community includes a range of theatre professionals, deaf and hearing business people, academics from other national and international institutions and charities such as *Decibels*, whose founder, Ken Carter, was also instrumental in setting up TAEDS. Launch of the Alumni Mentoring Scheme in 2014 formalised the considerable support and networking already taking place, by matching TAEDS alumni to Year 2 undergraduates. This scheme elicited positive feedback and was then administered centrally by Career Mentoring (UoR Thrive, 2016).

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have considered the historical context of TAEDS' roots in *Theatre of the Deaf* and its maturation as a thriving and inclusive habitat for diverse students. I outlined TAEDS' development, success and decline as a degree course, comparing it with the trajectory of drama in the National Curriculum. The UoR decision to close the programme was addressed and in concluding the chapter with the ongoing strength of the TAEDS community, I have laid the foundation for the third part of the literature review, Chapter 4, where I analyse how TAEDS graduate identity contributes to the topical concept of employability.

Chapter 4 *Habitus and Branching Out: Identity and Employability*

4.1 Introduction

Current theories regard identity not as fixed, but as constructed through socialisation and culture, 'fluid, subjective and inextricably linked to a person's biographical experiences' (Floyd and Morrison, 2013, p 1). The idea of 'emerging' identity is particularly applicable to the TAEDS community, where, as I will argue, both students and graduates constantly redefine and renew their relationship to the TAEDS programme, their professional status and each other. The importance of self-reflection is illustrated in a TAEDS external examiner's perceptions of finalists:

Students commented that the course had given them a new insight into themselves and an awareness of how each person can have an important 'impact in this world'... confidence in terms of life and academic skills that they will take with them when they leave... they were able to reflect upon the amount they had learnt – also about themselves. (Terret, 2014, p 9)

TAEDS has aimed to provide graduates with the confidence to recognise and value their own, perhaps previously unacknowledged, unique qualities and to prepare them for work and full participation in civic life. In this chapter I begin by discussing sociological theories of identity formation and Bourdieu's social stratification theory. A French sociologist and philosopher, Bourdieu conceptualised education as the key site of social reproduction (1977). This leads to social mobility being restricted through experience of class and culture (Fowler, 1997) and Bourdieu's views are greatly critiqued in European education studies (Huppertz, 2009; Reay, 2002). I have found them 'good to think with' (Jenkins, 2002, p 11) and used them to frame my research.

Later in the chapter I refer to Foucault, contemporary of Bourdieu, who is also influential in the field. A post-modernist, he challenged received notions of Western philosophy, in his views on the relationship between power and knowledge (Hekman, 1996). Foucault's theories of self-monitoring and social control (1977; 1978) are also particularly relevant (Hopper, 2015).

In the light of these theorists, I consider the ways in which identity can affect aspiration to HE and achievement, particularly in relation to gender. I then examine notions of employability and review some definitions and models, including those adopted by the UoR. Finally, I discuss the relationship between identity and employability, with specific reference to TAEDS and WP. This provides the theoretical groundwork for the Findings in Chapter 6, which focus on how TAEDS alumni reflect on their current employability and professional identities.

4.2 Identity as socially constructed

Notions of identity depend on who is doing the defining and from what perspective: individuals are both identified by others and self-identify. Many people enact multiple identities, affiliated to several social and cultural groups (Josselson and Haraway, 2012). This protean quality affirms Day and Sammons' (2007) view that an individual's personal, situational and professional identities are in constant temporal fluctuation and interplay. Indeed, critical feminism argues that separating personal and professional identities is a false dichotomy and views high self-esteem in general as integral to a strong self-identity in the workplace (Kelchtermans, 1996); this holistic integration of positive identity is key to TAEDS' purpose.

The importance of self-esteem is illustrated by Dilts (1990), an educational innovator who applies Neuro-Linguistic Programming techniques (NLP) to education. He conceptualises identity as part of a broader picture, with the key concepts of self-esteem mapped to Identity; self-efficacy to Values and self-confidence to Behaviour:



Figure 4-1 Logical Levels (Dilts, 1990)

In his model, the levels below support those above, while the higher levels influence those below. He sees identity as formed by personal values, beliefs and capabilities as well as physical being and the environment. Identity is expressed through participation in larger systems: family, professional relationships, community and a global environment. Yet, as Josselson and Haraway (2012) assert, because our identity is rooted in the social and historical period in which it is formed and evolves, individuals are not always free to have the meanings of their identity accepted by others, but have to

negotiate society's labelling of them, which can negatively impact on self-esteem. This may have been the case, for some students prior to TAEDS, as I show in Chapter 6.

4.2.1 Habitus and kinds of capital

This labelling of others according to their social location is intrinsic to the social stratification theory of Bourdieu (1997). He theorised a cycle of social reproduction, based on class, claiming that people would be constrained from identifying themselves differently from their given family and socio-economic circumstances, or *habitus*. This concept includes the shared and internalised understandings, perceptions and tastes of the social groupings to which people belong. Bourdieu's system includes the acquisition of different kinds of 'capital': 'economic capital' denotes financial means and 'embodied capital' signifies inherited wealth or class, and this he saw as necessary to access institutionalised 'cultural capital', social achievements such as qualifications which can be acquired through HE and provide access to the higher echelons of society (Bourdieu, 1997). This apparently deterministic theory, with its focus on class as a system of economic differentiation, predicts poor social mobility and therefore less aspiration to HE from lower socio-economic (LSE) groups. Bourdieu's own experience of being a working-class boy at a top Paris university, where he felt he did not fit in, may partly account for his theory (Fuller, 2013).

In contrast, Goldthorpe's Rational Action Theory (RAT), which claims that aspiration and life-choices are largely defined by money and therefore class (2002), critiques the family-based concept of *habitus* and argues that economic capital alone is responsible in determining life-choices (Goldthorpe, 2007). From his perspective, consideration of the direct costs of HE and whether it could lead to a better paid job, rather than *habitus* itself, would predict class differences in aspiration. However, Beck regards the class system as superannated, only relevant as a lens to the past, since we now inhabit a society which values meritocracy and individual aspiration (2007). In spite of this, research confirms that disadvantaged young people, particularly those who qualify for free school meals (FSM), tend to underperform at school (Knowles and Lander, 2011). Beck's earlier view that identity and aspiration are self-limited by fear of failure, and that HE is merely insulation against poverty, appears to contradict his later notion that hard work is rewarded, although he does emphasise the importance of managing one's own self (Beck, 1992).

Although consistently critiqued as denying agency and perpetuating the *status quo*, Bourdieu did assert that *habitus* can be 'controlled through awakening of consciousness and socioanalysis' (Bourdieu, 1990, p 116). Indeed, Fowler maintains that,

Bourdieu always insisted that his theory of practice is not a theory of total determination ... humans possess reflexivity ... the conscious, rational use of power to resist the various forms of determination linked to the social colonization of the unconscious. (Fowler, 2003, p 485)

This breaking of *habitus* can occur at times of personal or societal change. Through HE, women can be empowered to become active agents of transformation and lead their families into greater social mobility (Fowler, 2003).

Fuller's approach stresses the importance of individual 'emotional capital' and self-identity in decision-making, which can over-ride other factors (2009). Emotional capital is a term which conceptualises parental investment in children's educational outcomes, most significantly that of mothers as the primary care-givers, in both hands-on support and perceived encouragement (Fuller, 2009). Significant emotional capital develops children's emotional literacy, which is increasingly regarded as crucial for realising potential (further explored in section 4.3.5). The importance of both alumni role-models pre-TAEDS and the programme itself in building 'emotional capital' is evidenced in Chapter 6.

Fuller's view that educational aspiration to HE can therefore be high, in spite of *habitus*, (2009) is persuasive. In her recent study, she argues that this comes at a price for women in LSE groups, namely *angst* about identity, since the "freedom to be" via education [does not necessarily offer] "freedom from" gendered norms and expectations' (Fuller, 2016, p 12). Although he was critiqued by feminists for suggesting that women are complicit in reproducing their roles in society, in his later writings, Bourdieu recognised the constraints for both genders of masculine domination (2001). According to Fowler (2003), Bourdieu had a nuanced understanding of the ways in which a sense of pragmatism curtails women's professional advancement, since they are largely responsible for domestic labour. She develops the idea of a 'precarious work habitus' (2003, p 487), where women's increased success in HE and consequent higher paid employment can ironically result in less gender equality for women from LSE groups, as they are employed to cover the background domestic care. Alternatively, LSE professional women struggle to fulfil this responsibility themselves, while also pursuing a career (Fuller, 2016). It seems to me that domestic labour is a constant, which largely falls to women: traded back and forth through economic exchange. This resonates with Foucault's theories of power, which I discuss later in the chapter.

As will be seen in Chapter 6, TAEDS alumni tend to pursue non-linear career paths, so the tensions for them can be different. In the next section, I consider the significance of gender identity and how this links to gendered habitus.

4.2.2 Gender identity and role

At this stage, it is worth recalling that 72% of typical TAEDS cohorts have been female, as were the 16% who were mature students, apart from one who was transgender (Wardale, 2017). Although there are usually key sex differences between male and female, *gender* identity describes how a person relates to his or her gender (Knowles and Lander, 2011). While it is outside the scope of this study to discuss the fast-growing body of literature on individuals who choose a different gender identity to their biological one, it is of note that Foucault regarded the modern sciences of sexuality as transmitters of both knowledge *and* social control (Hopper, 2015). He maintained that apparent freedom of choice about how to define oneself was illusory and in fact consisted of internalisation of external norms. This was illustrated in his conceptualisation of panopticism, an architectural design based on Bentham's circular prison. It ensured constant surveillance of inmates by figures of power, effectively leading to self-surveillance as the main policing mechanism (Foucault, 1977).

According to more recent gender relational theory, male and female construction of gender results in different behaviours, policed by peer groups who reinforce gender norms (Francis and Skelton, 2005). Perpetuation of these gendered roles echoes Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, as explained below:

It is the performance of our gender which is constructed by the dominant discourses prevalent within our society about what it means to be masculine or feminine. Such discourses are rooted in power or knowledge which has prevailed through time and we know that such power and knowledge is usually controlled through men. How we perform our gender roles is dependent on the power and knowledge which prevails within the macro-structures of our society and the macro-structures of family, school and peer groups. (Knowles and Lander, 2011, p 88)

Anthropologists have long claimed that humans culturally transmit gender expectations that males and females should behave differently (Mead, 1949). In the next section, I examine the possible reasons for these gendered expectations and behaviours still occurring in contemporary society.

4.2.3 Gendered habitus

Despite 21st century advances in the opportunities available to women, the literature (e.g. Bandura, 2012; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001; Day and Sammonds, 2007; Reay, 2004; Tinklin, 2005) reflects the complex psycho-social construction of gender, particularly in relation to career choices. Reay (2004) developed the concept of 'gendered habitus' from Bourdieu's (2001) writings, to conceptualise the ways in which women, frequently unwittingly, reinforce gender roles. For example, mothers may choose to engage with their daughters' schooling, so that they can encourage them to achieve more highly than they did (Lucey et al 2003).

Ironically, investing emotional capital in their daughters to support their academic advancement, can result in negative pressure on both mothers and daughters (Reay, 2004).

If emotional capital is to be viewed as inextricably linked to educational success and the acquisition of cultural capital then for substantial numbers of mothers and their children, it would perversely appear to be at the cost of emotional wellbeing. (Reay, 2004, p 69)

This is in line with Foucault's theory that there is no interaction free of power (1980). Rather than viewing it as a possession held by individuals or classes, he conceptualises power as an everyday phenomenon, existing only in its exercise: the discourse and transactions between people (Foucault, 1980). Middle-class mothers may feel driven to control their daughters' studying, urging them to work hard for future rewards; this can adversely affect the relationship. Reay identifies that women from LSE groups may lack confidence or have less positive personal experiences of schooling. She argues that because of their tendency to disengage with educational pressurising, it can be the mothers from LSE groups who are able to provide more emotional capital to their children (2004). This is echoed later by Fuller's study (2009) into the positive impact of maternally- invested emotional capital by working class women.

The fact that only women give birth, and still do most of the childcare and 'emotional labour' in the family, has an inevitable impact on their life-paths (Day and Sammonds, 2007). Although women increasingly want to combine motherhood with a career and financial independence, in practice support is lacking to do this effectively, especially for those in LSE groups (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001). Domestic work and childcare in the home are largely invisible and undervalued in our society, even by women themselves (Hopper, 2015). In the inaugural UoR Edith Morley lecture an alumna, Joan Smith, affirmed women's difficulties in satisfying the twin demands of parenting and independent meaningful work (Smith, 2014). Yet, in addition to these, there is the continued requirement for women to look attractive.

Although much of their labour may be invisible, Bourdieu (2001) highlighted the extreme visibility of the mother as socially representative of the family and cultural taste. Through spending money on their own appearance and that of the home, women convert family economic capital (material wealth often generated by male partners) into 'symbolic capital', which leads to acquisition of cultural capital (Reay, 2004). Because this 'market in symbolic goods is dominated by a masculine vision ... masculine categories shape notions of femininity' (Hopper, 2015, p 29). Referencing Foucault's self-policing panopticism as well as art-critic John Berger's (1972) view of women's presence as both surveyor and surveyed, Hopper argues that female self-monitoring of appearance and behaviour is endemic in our society: women are always conforming to and never not performing

their identity (2015). It can be seen that they fail to comply at their peril, as the Mary Beard trolling incident demonstrated (Day, 2013). It is not surprising that we are in the 'fourth wave' of feminism, with its emphasis on 'Everyday Sexism' (Bates, 2017).

Recognition that a woman's sexual persona is seen as more important than their intelligence or actions, is perhaps behind Smith's comment: 'It's paradoxical in 2014 that women have never had so many opportunities, yet so few role-models' (2014, n.p.). Of course mothers are significant role-models for many successful women (Cheung and Halpern, 2010); my own experience is that, 'whereas boys see only their fathers as role models, girls see both their mothers and fathers as such' (Tonnsen et al, 2011, p. 37), thus calling into question maternal investment of emotional capital. Feminist psychoanalyst Chodorow (1978) had argued that boys differentiate themselves from their mothers, identifying with the father's freedom, whereas the intensity of the mother/daughter relationship can result in daughters' over-identification with mothers and difficulties in developing agency. But if girls are drawn to the autonomy of their fathers, this may be just as well, given that my previous research has affirmed that positive role-models are key in young people's identity construction (Wardale, 2013a).

Interestingly, ground-breaking scientific research in the field of epigenetics could illuminate why women may not always be such positive role-models for girls, since it is suggested that our ancestors' experiences can affect us through 'transgenerational epigenetic inheritance' (Kirkpatrick, 2015, n.p.). This means that trauma or conditioning in one generation can affect descendants' genes, even several generations on, particularly through the maternal line (Davis, 2014). Thus, while women may consciously seek to empower their daughters, their own subconscious conditioning and genetic changes may result in effective disempowerment instead: maintenance of gendered *habitus*. Although such research is in its infancy, it seems to me that it could go some way to explain why some mothers tend to affirm, rather than challenge, more traditional gender roles in their daughters, even after years of feminism. However, epigenetics has been critiqued as perpetuating existing stereotypes of maternal agency and responsibility (Kenney and Muller, 2017). In Chapters 6 and 7, I discuss the complex influence of mothers, primary role-models for the mostly female alumni.

4.2.4 Gendered choice in arts education

Since girls' aspirations reflect their own perceptions of the opportunities for women, (Tinklin, 2005), gendered *habitus* inevitably affects young women's career choices and achievements (Reay, 1998). Bandura (2001) confirms that women still tend to choose subjects that are traditionally viewed as

female, although their skills are equal to those of males in all subjects, as is shown in his longitudinal Italian study:

Male college students have an equally high sense of efficacy for both traditionally male-dominated and female-dominated occupations. In contrast, female students judge themselves more efficacious for the types of occupations traditionally held by women but have a weaker sense of efficacy that they can master the educational requirements and job functions of occupations dominated by males. These differential beliefs in occupational efficacy are especially striking because the groups do not differ in their actual verbal and quantitative ability on standardized tests. (Bandura, 2001, p. 188)

By contrast, Hopper (2015) has shown that girls do believe they have the attributes and abilities to take on male-defined employment, but do not necessarily choose this. This may be because their power of choice is not obvious or self-evident, given the continued exposure to what is considered by parents and schools as gender appropriate (Knowles and Lander, 2011).

Coining the term 'biopower' (power over bodies), Foucault (1978) theorised the way in which the biological features of the human species become the objects of political strategy: through self-surveillance, the state effectively manages populations through control of reproduction and education. Because women are more involved with both these aspects, their career choices tend to adhere to societal norms. However, this approach is critiqued by some feminists, who see it as denying women's agency and indeed the possibility of women's politics (Hekman, 1996), since feminism conceptualises women's relationship to their bodies 'as both a reflection of social construction *and* of their own responses to (and mediation of) the cultural ideals of femininity' (Deveaux, 1996, p 234).

Bourdieu's view was that females are encouraged towards arts HE subjects, as they are the collators and accumulators of cultural capital within the family (1991). Although this research is dated, statistics illustrate females still are twice as likely as males to apply to HE drama courses, as can be seen below:

UK domiciled applicants to full-time drama courses by sex (24 March deadline)

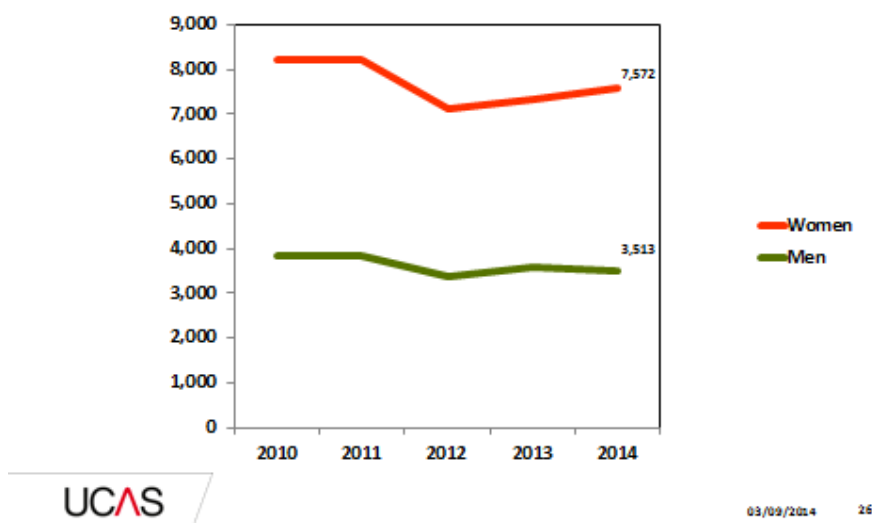


Figure 4-2 Applications and Acceptances for Drama course (Thorne, 2014)

Additionally, in a circular process, girls frequently choose HE arts subjects, fulfilling expectations of their gender roles and leading to these subjects then being regarded as more suitable for females and therefore discouraged in boys (Knowles and Lander, 2011). Although there is a popular perception that arts subjects are a soft option, since they often comprise a greater percentage of practical and coursework, they are no less academically rigorous than more traditional degrees, and often more time-consuming (Bishop et al, 1997; Etherington, 2013).

Females can be more willing than males to put in the hard work necessary for the arts and are more likely to enrol to study these at HE. But it tends to be males who have the confidence to pursue arts specialisms as a career and the reasons for this are complex, including females' lack of role-models and childcare (Hopper, 2015). Her research into primary art teacher trainees confirms that talented females tend to choose HE courses with a caring component, such as teaching (Hopper, 2015). They gain emotional satisfaction through the achievements of others, rather than prioritising their own artistic skills. There is a parallel here with TAEDS students. Because it is not a specialised theatre degree, but includes drama teaching, disability and inclusion, the programme encourages a concern with empathy and nurture, in other words the development of emotional capital.

Tinklin's (2005) study found that disadvantaged young women in particular were drawn to caring work, in line with Skeggs' (1997) view of these occupations as conferring the status of 'respectability'. Working class families are more likely to encourage their children to pursue what are perceived as gender-specific subjects (Fuller, 2009) and in 2013, HEFCE suggested that more LSE group women than men are choosing HE:

In the most disadvantaged areas, 18-year-old females are 50% more likely than males of that age to apply to HE. In advantaged areas, they are 20% more likely to apply. (HEFCE, 2013, p 24)

Huppatz builds on Reay's (2004) understanding of emotional capital and the interactions between class and gender. She conceptualised 'female capital' as the advantage that women have within the caring professions, where because of their people skills, clients of both genders frequently prefer to work with women. Women '*capitalize* on their femininity and femaleness within these occupations in order to gain a steady and reasonable income' (Huppatz, 2009, p 61). However, she argues that female capital is undervalued, in part because it is female-defined and seen as a natural extension of women's unpaid domestic roles within the family. Male capital trumps female capital; although women tend to promote women, men still dominate the higher paid echelons of social care and education (Huppatz, 2009). Male graduates still continue to earn more than female even across caring professions, where women predominate, such as education (Gbadamosi et al, 2015).

So despite recent government-sponsored initiatives, there is a gap between the theory and practice of pay equality (Knowles and Lander, 2011). Women may take time out of their working lives at some point for childcare; they are certainly more likely to engage in part-time study (HEFCE, 2013). Lack of support may mean that women have to work particularly hard to juggle professional and family demands (Carli and Eagly, 2011). Lower-paid caring work, with built in flexibility is a frequent choice for women, especially in the current climate of austerity (Hopper, 2015).

The frequently illusory opportunities for women appear to confirm gendered *habitus*. If mothers' encouragement of their daughters to aim higher than they themselves did is currently 'backfiring' (Lucey et al, 2003; Reay, 1998), this is worrying, as it is likely to reduce social mobility, even in the light of HE focus on WP.

4.2.5 Issues in Widening Participation

The purpose of WP is to increase access to and success in HE and this ongoing initiative, driven by HEFCE, is effectively about challenging *habitus*. Success to date has been limited, since 'Students who are disabled, or from a disadvantaged background, or from an ethnic minority group, continue to achieve lower degree outcomes than their non-disabled, white, advantaged peers' (Atkins, 2015).

Since the turn of the century, WP by non-traditional, first generation or disadvantaged students has increasingly become part of HE policy; this is partly due to the 2010 Equality Act, which outlawed discrimination in relation to a range of protected characteristics. However, there are a number of contradictions in government policy on WP, which may in fact result in *reduced* WP in HE.

Government-promoted educational 'massification' (providing more access) prior to the 2012 Fee Reforms resulted in greater numbers and social diversity in HE (Brown et al, 1997). Boden and Nedeva (2010) dispute neoliberalist claims that this massification is democratic and promotes social justice, through broadening individual choice and agency. Although more people theoretically have the opportunity to invest in themselves financially, through HE, to later access a well-paid job, Boden sees these opportunities as illusory in the context, because not everyone can afford this initial investment and the debts it brings (2010). Furthermore, Brooks (2009) reminds us that massification has led to more competition for graduate jobs, so the investment may be less likely to pay off, especially for those from LSE groups.

In recent years, government initiatives now defunct in England such as *Aimhigher* (2004-8), *Connexions* (2000-06) and the *Education Maintenance Allowance* (2004-10) were set up to encourage more young people to study post-16 and continue into HE. Since the 1980s more than 15% of the age-group have attended university; this number generally is regarded as the 'tipping point' between elite and mass education (Berry and Edmond, 2014). Removal of the cap on student numbers from 2015 was intended to enable an extra 60,000 young people to attend university every year (Clark, 2012). The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) *National Strategy for Access and Student Success* (BIS, OFFA, HEFCE, 2014) confirmed the commitment to provide support through the whole student lifecycle, to include preparing for and accessing HE, as well as progression to employment or post-graduate study.

Students accessing the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) have better HE outcomes than those who identify as having a disability, but do not receive it (Mountford-Zimdars, 2015). However, the DSA cuts (Willetts, 2014), which put the onus on universities to financially compensate for reductions in central funding, could potentially sabotage the professed focus on WP in HE and indeed threaten equal opportunities in student recruitment (Lewthwaite, 2014). Originally planned for 2014, the cuts were slightly modified after consultation and postponed to 2016 (Disability Rights UK, n.d.) The negative effects of the 2012 fee reform is greater on non-traditional students; this has decreased their numbers, as UCAS data shows: '18 year olds from the most advantaged areas are still three times more likely to apply to HE than those from the most disadvantaged areas' HEFCE (2013, p 24) and disabled students are statistically more likely to end their studies with high levels of debt (HEFCE, 2013).

The recent HE White Paper: *Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice* (BIS, 2016) recommends bringing together the functions of OFFA and HEFCE into

the service of WP, accountable to the new powerful Office for Students (OfS). It aims 'to double the proportion of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering university in 2020 compared to 2009' (BIS, 2016, p.15). However, there are potential issues here. Although it seeks to improve WP, by linking the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to fees increase, an unintended result could be that universities which teach students from less privileged backgrounds may be penalised, because of their more modest graduate career prospects and inability to afford higher fees. Because TAEDS' employability is high, it would not adversely affect the UoR in this respect.

Surprisingly, first generation students were not included in definitions of WP until recently (Thomas and Quinn, 2007). Defined as those whose responsible older generation did not attend university, being first generation is likely to be linked to being of LSE status (2007). Thomas and Quinn argue that WP should include first generation, and that parental education is key to both recruitment and retention of these students (2007). Encouragingly, BIS research shows that progress for first generation students equals that of their more traditional counterparts, once they are in HE (Gambin et al, 2014).

Although a strong sense of belonging is key to success (Woodman, 2014), Crozier et al (2008) found that some non-traditional students feel no sense of entitlement to a university place and do not always know how to access what is available, perhaps because of lack of role-models or not feeling that they belong. With reference to Bourdieu, Reay et al (2010) outlined the challenges for students who fit in paid work to support themselves and have to balance the conflicting *habitus* of their class identity with the academic *habitus* of HE. The tensions of straddling both cultures can cause 'cultural homelessness' (Navarette, 2011) in either environment and consequent low self-esteem and negative self-identity, much like that experienced by Bourdieu himself. Keane (2012) concluded that the students who were most successful in negotiating a temporary academic identity, without losing their original class allegiance, tended to sideline the social and networking aspects. This could subsequently disadvantage them in the graduate labour market, since they may not see the value of developing enhanced social capital or a 'graduate identity' (Keane, 2012). However, the TAEDS community closed Facebook page affirms the distinctive TAEDS identity and concerns itself with employment opportunities and support. In the next section, I discuss employability paradigms and consider how the UoR has positioned itself, through its recent launch of the UoR Curriculum Framework (UoR CQSD, 2017).

4.3 The employability agenda

As was seen in Chapter 3, TAEDS sought to ready its students for work through dedicated Careers and Enterprise modules and work placements, resulting in a typical NSS employability score of 95%, higher than the UoR average (Unistats, 2015). Within the contemporary political context, what has come to be termed 'graduate employability' is increasingly at the centre of the HE agenda (Boden and Nedeva, 2010).

Universities are expected to prepare graduates to contribute to the changing needs of employers, the economy and society, through development of relevant attributes, skills and knowledge (HEA, 2016a). Yet a recent HEA undergraduate engagement survey shows that only half reported that they have strongly developed the skills needed to help them get a job (HEA, 2016b). In this section, I consider how the increased importance of employability has arisen and review some definitions and models.

4.3.1 The historical context

During the nineteenth century, Cardinal Newman conceived the idea of a university as a community of scholars and students, where the pastoral relationship was paramount and the search for truth was inseparable from the moral development of cultivated human beings (Anderson, 2010). Teaching was paramount and it was not until later that research was privileged at UK universities. They were valued as free-thinking centres of learning, independent of government influence, but with a vital role in contributing to economic and civic affairs, under their own terms. This was enshrined in what came to be known as the Haldane Principle. Haldane was a senior British policy maker, who chaired the 1904 University Grants Committee (UGC). He believed that decisions about research fund spending should be made by researchers in the field, rather than politicians (Boden, 2010). However, through the neoliberalist agendas of late twentieth century Conservative and New Labour governments, universities became increasingly 'marketised' and encouraged to provide the future workers with knowledge and practical skills for employment. This arguably resulted in a shift in HE priorities from the traditional perspective of 'education for learning' to the current perspective of 'education for work' (O'Regan, 2009, p. 291; HEA, 2016a).

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE, 2016) replaced the UGC in 1988 and the 1997 Dearing Report: *Higher Education in the learning society* emphasised the importance of university education for employability (Gbadamosi et al et al, 2015). From 2004-8, the Higher Education Academy (HEA) brought out a series of publications entitled 'Learning and Employability' (HE Academy, 2016). The Leitch Review (2006) strengthened the employer's voice in demanding

what Boden evocatively terms ‘oven-ready graduates’ (2010, p 46), who reduce workplace training costs for employers because HEs have partially done this already. Boden argues that employability, as a key outcome of HE, effectively undermines the Haldane Principle; neoliberalisation of universities means that the state now controls their funding and purpose (2010).

Employability, as a governing principle in HE, may have its limitations and Berry elaborates: ‘Marketisation and privatisation are clearly identified as the manifestation of a system which is run for profit rather than for the benefit of wider society’ (Berry, 2015, p2.) In his view, ‘the commodification of education can be understood not just in terms of the “exchange value” of courses and programmes expressed as fees but in the relationship between fees and the “exchange value” of the graduate’s labour’ (2014, p 6). This appears to reduce HE to a commercial transaction where student consumers want value for money in the shape of subsequent employment. Through understanding the competing discourses around value and employability and interrogating current HE practices, student engagement could challenge the neoliberal hegemony by reconsidering the role of universities and moving beyond the focus on employability (Berry and Edmond, 2014).

4.3.2 Definitions of employability

Consideration of what exactly graduate employability is has generated considerable recent discourse (in particular Boden, 2010; Brown, 2007; Gbadamosi et al, 2015; Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011; Holmes 2001; 2002 & 2013a-c; Knight and Yorke 2003, 2005). It is not my intention to attempt to define this term, but rather to consider the existing concepts. Indeed, Boden highlights the impossibility of definitively encapsulating employability, seeing it as a fluid state ‘where heterogeneous employers’ needs and individuals’ attributes meet’ (2010, p 42). While I would concur with this, existing employability paradigms can be divided into three main types, which I discuss in more detail below:

- NSS employability percentages, based on DLHE **employment** statistics (Unistats, n.d.)
- **Skills-based** (Dearing, 1997; Leitch, 2006)
- **Personal attributes** (Knight and Yorke, 2003)

4.3.3 Employability and employment

This first concept is important as it refers to the way in which universities measure and advertise their employability. However, it is a definition based on employment just six months after graduation. Unistats provide information from the Destination of Leavers of Higher Education survey (DLHE, 2016), based on the ‘professional or managerial jobs’ defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (Office for National Statistics, 2010). Both the timescale and categorisation can be

misleading since many graduates initially start in unpaid internships (Holmes, 2013b) and arts graduates especially are more likely to work freelance or be in supplementary non-graduate employment (Brown, 2007). This narrow view of employability arguably says more about the graduate labour market and the quality of university careers advice, than the capabilities of individual graduates (Knight and Yorke, 2003). But, whatever their imperfections, these statistics have a significant role in HEIs' league tables and marketing.

Indeed students, as considerable consumers, have arguably too much power through the National Student Survey (Berry, 2014) and this appeared to be the case in relation to TAEDS' closure, as seen in Chapter 3. HEFCE funded, Ipsos MORI implemented and initiated in 2005 (NSS, 2016), NSS employability scores play a major role in prospective applicants' choice of HE institution. Holmes (2013b) draws attention to this unhelpful elision of employment and employability but also, like other theorists, takes issue with the second, skills-based, concept of employability.

4.3.4 Employability and skills

This government concept of employability was initially based on 'communication skills; numeracy; the use of information technology; learning how to learn' (Dearing, 1997, par 9.18). Holmes views employability as not simply possession of skills, but a process of validation as an employable graduate through performance in the workplace (2001). Later he critiques much of the methodology in this area as insufficiently rigorous (2013b). This is a fair point and illustrates the under-theorised nature of research into employability. It is also why in the primary research I designed my own criteria for employability (See Appendix 10) and considered a grounded-theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

In addition, skills lists like Dearing's frequently either include skills not needed in specific kinds of employment, or omit key so-called 'soft' skills like emotional literacy and being able to work constructively in a team (Hinchliffe, 2011). Personal qualities are increasingly recognised as key to employability and the HEA summarises the recent discourse thus:

Over the last 20 years, definitions of employability have shifted. They have moved away from demand-led skill sets and towards a more holistic view of 'graduate attributes' that includes 'softer' transferable skills and person-centred qualities, developed in conjunction with subject-specific knowledge, skills and competencies. (HEA, 2016a, n. p.)

However, the idea that skills can be easily transferred from one context to another is contested, since, for this to happen, students have to resituate the skills through the experience of working within appropriate communities of practice (Brown, 2007).

4.3.5 Employability as personal attributes

Knight and Yorke (2003) reconceptualised skills as generic social practices and developed the USEM model of employability for integration into HE curricula. This included four inter-related components:

- Understanding
 - Skills
 - Efficacy beliefs (self-theories)
 - Metacognition
- (2003, p 8)

In relation to 'self-theories', Knight and Yorke argue that those who hold 'incremental theories' (that is a belief that things are malleable and can improve) will be more successful in gaining employment than those with 'entity theories', who view capabilities as fixed (2003, p 8). This is because the former are more likely to try hard, in the belief that it can make a difference, whereas the latter may feel that they have little chance of effecting change, whatever they do. This is the basis of their USEM curriculum model and is echoed in the current work of Dweck (2012), who developed the idea of 'growth and fixed mindset', which is prevalent in primary education. Dweck's theory is that those with 'fixed mindset' constantly need to prove their ability, which can be a barrier to learning, as they may only tackle tasks they know in advance they can succeed at. However, a 'growth mindset' welcomes making mistakes and dealing with difficult challenges in order to grow and develop (2012). This is a useful lens to consider TAEDS alumni reflections on their degree experience, as will be seen in Chapter 6.

The HEA still uses Knight and York's 2003 employability definition, which places individuals at the centre of their own reflection on and articulation of their own employability:

A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. (Knight and Yorke, 2003, p 221)

But Holmes sees this definition as limiting, in its implication that graduate employability is a collection of attributes that can be possessed, rather than a processual emerging identity (2013b), and also in its reliance on self-reflection. However, Dacre Pool and Sewell later incorporated Knight and Yorke's definition into their 2007 CareerEDGE model of employability, where they argued that when students have sufficient support in reflecting on and evaluating their development, it can lead

to enhanced prospects for employability (2007). The focus on metacognition is conceptualised through a key here and I reproduce their models below:

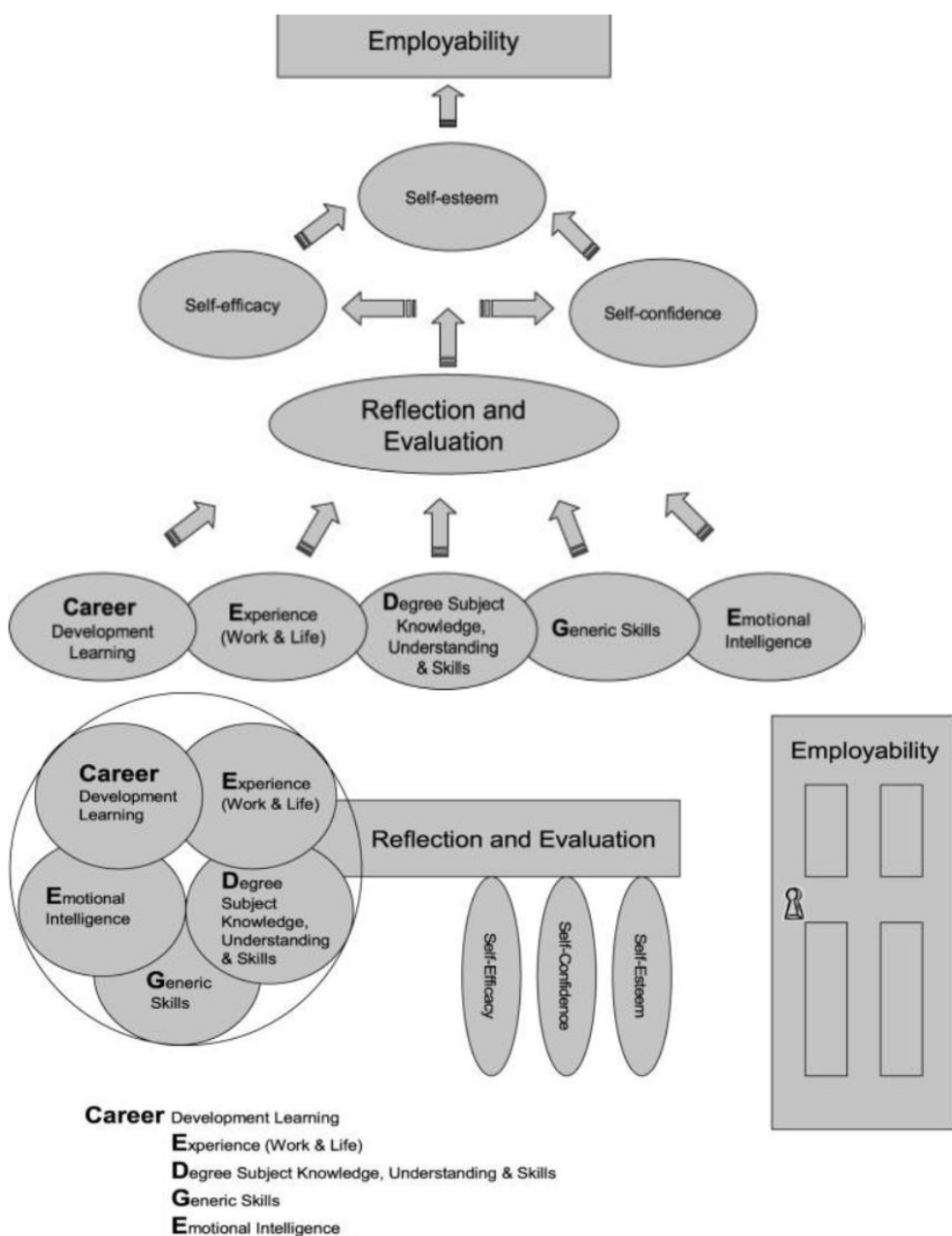


Figure 4-3 Employability components and metaphorical model (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007)

The complex interrelationship between **self-confidence**, **self-efficacy** and **self-esteem** is core to Dacre Pool’s model. People with **self-confidence** can present themselves with assurance and have ‘presence’; in their model, this is viewed as a situationally specific attribute which can therefore be developed through practice. But these people may be behaving ‘as if’ and actually have a low

opinion of themselves. However, individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy are likely to demonstrate this with high self-confidence (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007).

Self-efficacy describes beliefs about abilities and this relates to Knight and Yorke's self-theories, in the USEM model (2003). According to Bandura's post-modern approach (2001) self-efficacy beliefs are hugely influential, affecting how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave and, particularly for women, are a greater determinant of achievement than academic ability. Bandura (2001) mentions mastery experiences as key to high self-efficacy; this is when an individual takes on and succeeds at a new challenge. Referring to Polanyi's (1962) conceptual metaphor of learning how to ride a bicycle, Taggart regards mastery challenges as 'generating meanings from painful experiences ... as the learner moves from initial balance to disorientation to a more successful balance' (2010b, p 330). Dacre Pool and Sewell considers that HE tutors have an important role in persuading students that they are capable, as well as providing social models of those who have already achieved success (2007). In relation to TAEDS, staff provided this kind of support and role-modelling, as can be seen in Chapter 6. Taking part in performances, schools workshops, presentations, work-experience and peer mentoring can all develop student self-efficacy through mastery experiences.

Self-esteem is arguably the most important of the three key concepts in developing employability. Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) consider that people with high self-esteem have a strong sense of self-efficacy, but are also realistic in their evaluation of their abilities; without this realism, they are unlikely to engage in the self-reflection which is important for employability.

In Dacre Pool, Qualter and Sewell's 2014 Employability Development Profile, which trials the 2007 CareerEDGE model on students, they simplified the categories to identify five key factors:

- 1 Emotional intelligence and self-management
 - 2 Academic performance and study skills
 - 3 Career development learning
 - 4 Problem-solving skills
 - 5 Work and life experience
- (2014, p 308)

Dacre Pool et al (2014) subsumed self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy into the first factor, recognising that people with higher emotional intelligence tend to be motivated and achieve more. However, I prefer the term 'emotional literacy', with its connotations of interactions with others. Coined by Steiner and Perry in 1997, the understanding and managing of one's own emotions is increasingly regarded within education as crucial for thriving and realising potential. However, in the

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials for schools (DfE, 2007), emotional literacy was elided with emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2000).

The distinction between the two is important, in relation to TAEDS alumni. Whereas emotional intelligence is based on individual self-knowledge, emotional literacy is culturally situated: 'both about self-development and the building of community so that one's own sense of emotional well-being grows along with others and not at their expense.' (Matthews, 2006) Emotional literacy always incorporates emotional intelligence, but not *vice versa*. How this relates to the self-efficacy of TAEDS alumni will be discussed in Chapter 7.

It seems to me that a sense of self-efficacy is thus filtered through, often unconscious, beliefs about one's agency in the world, as in Foucault's self-surveillance (1979), Bourdieu's *habitus* (1997) and Reay's gendered habitus (2004). However, there is a tension here between these beliefs and the idea that students need a self-aware and agentic role in their own identity development during HE, in order to embody the effective graduate identity which is key for employability (Daniels and Brooker, 2014).

4.3.6 Employability and graduate identity

The complex relationship between graduate identity, attributes and employability is still developing in many HE institutions, with 'work-readiness' sometimes used as short-hand for employability:

Work-readiness' encompasses not only academic achievement, but also a slew of professionally relevant capabilities (a combination of attributes and 'generic skills'; hereafter, 'professional capabilities') that enable young graduates to be effective in workplaces. (Tyrer et al, 2013, p 5)

Acknowledging that HE is expected to contribute directly to the stock of human capital, Knight and Yorke argue that how individual students identify and represent themselves and their employability is key to their success (2003). The idea of a graduate identity has thus evolved, but whether this status is imposed or self-identified and transient is the subject of some debate. Hinchliffe and Jolly regard graduate identity as 'a transitional process of boundary crossing' between a student identity and a professional one (2011, p 581). Their research consulted a range of British professionals from all sectors, about what they looked for when employing graduates. While recognising that employers can only ever assess the potential in an employee, the study found that, whatever the discipline or workplace, there were commonalities between the sought-after graduate capabilities and attributes (2011). They concluded that generic graduate attributes are key to employability and conceptualised a graduate identity which comprises four strands:

- values
 - social engagement
 - intellect
 - performance
- (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011, p 582)

Their findings demonstrated that employers place a higher value on personal ethical qualities, such as integrity and working hard, than on practical skills. They also viewed extra-curricular engagement while in HE as a good indicator of a graduate work ethic. This was corroborated by Gbadamosi et al et al (2015) who found a positive correlation between students' high career aspiration and their valuing of the opportunities afforded by part-time work while studying.

However, Holmes critiqued Hinchliffe and Jolly's work, which he saw as mis-reading his earlier concept of graduate identity. He regards their four strands as describing 'graduateness', that is attributes owned by the graduate (Holmes, 2013a). He believes that a graduate identity is a complex relational process of individuals demonstrating they are capable graduates: 'graduate identity is the negotiated outcome of the claim-ascription process, so may be said to be jointly 'owned' by the parties to that process' (Holmes, 2013a, p 1055). His model of this socially constructed emergent graduate identity is reproduced below:

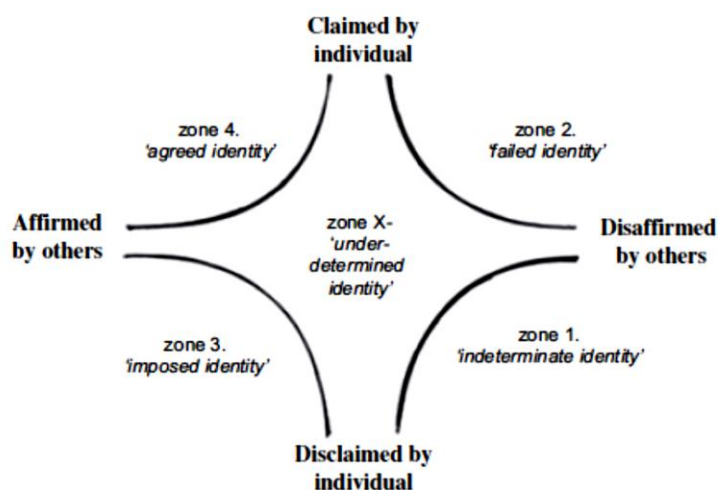


Figure 4-4 Claim-affirmation model of emergent identity (Holmes, 2013a)

Holmes explains that in presenting themselves to prospective employers, graduates claim to be worthy of graduate employment; if this is affirmed by them getting and keeping a job, their identity is agreed (zone 4, the ideal state). Zone 3 represents graduates subsequently questioning whether

this graduate job is for them (disclaiming the identity). However, if an individual fails to achieve a graduate job, their identity has been disaffirmed (zone 2, failed identity) and if they are in a (sometimes unpaid) internship or non-graduate job, they inhabit zone X, underdetermined identity. All of these states are temporary and reflect the shifting balance between how we define ourselves and how we are defined by others, with potential effect on self-esteem (Josselson, 2012).

4.3.7 Employability and the University of Reading

Employability is clearly a strong driver at the UoR and this is reflected in policy (UoR, 2015-18). In 2005, the UoR founded the Centre for Career Management Skills, with the focus on holistic career education, rather than employability (O'Regan, 2009). However by 2015, the renamed Careers Placement and Experience Centre (CPEC) gave way to The Careers Centre, now providing a service to students and alumni for twelve months after graduation and interestingly, also to potential employers. Using the Dacre Pool and Sewell employability model (2007), The Careers Centre promotes the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP) to 'enhance student employability' and the Red Award record of extra-curricular experiences, which is described as 'the official UoR Employability Skills Certificate' (UoR Careers, 2016, n.p.). In 2016, the UoR advertised its employability at 92% (UoR, 2016); this increased to 94% in 2017 (UoR, 2017).

HEIs nationally are focussing on employability pedagogy, integrated throughout the student journey: teaching and learning practice and assessment; work-based and work-related learning; staff engagement and strategy (Pegg et al, 2012). In terms of curriculum design, the TAEDS curriculum contained features of the two models below (Healey, 2015):

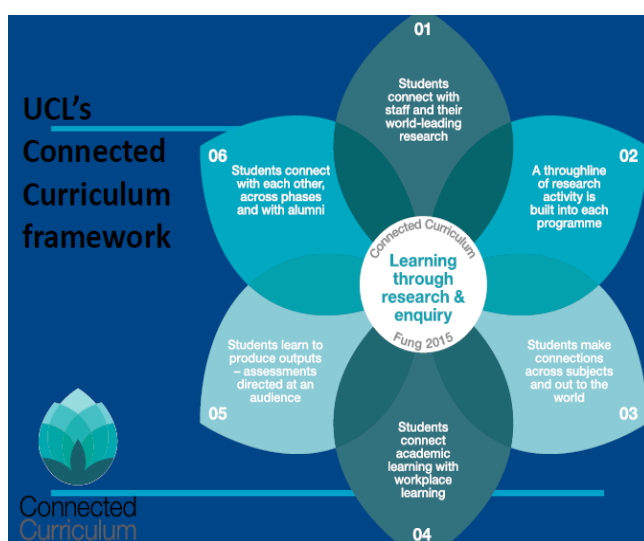


Figure 4-5 *Connected Curriculum* (Fung, 2014)

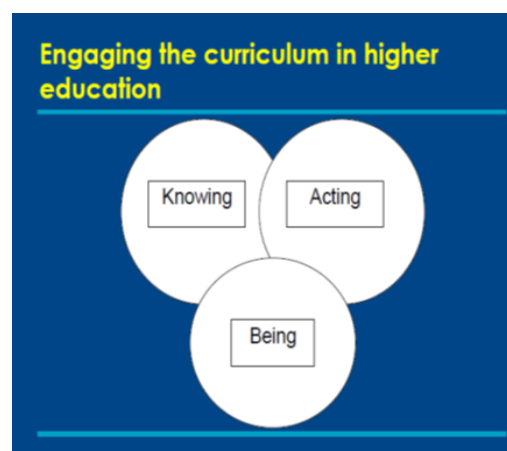


Figure 4-6 *Engaging the Curriculum* (Barnett & Coate, 2005)

TAEDS incorporates elements of the *Connected Curriculum*, particularly 03 'connections across subjects'; 04 'connecting academic learning and workplace learning'; 05 'assessments directed at an audience' and 06 'connections with alumni'. In relation to *Engaging the Curriculum*, TAEDS students embody all three aspects:

'Knowing – consists of a personal relationship between the person and the intellectual field in question

Acting – includes various activities which lead to the development of discipline-based, generic and employment-related skills and taking on the identity of what it is to be say a geographer, an earth scientist or an environmental scientist

Being – how students develop a sense of themselves and their capabilities, how they gain in self-confidence' (Healey, 2015)

I have emboldened the last point, as through their degree experience, TAEDS graduates develop a strong sense of their distinctive identity, with key skills and graduate capabilities, as discussed in Chapter 7.

Like Fung's model, the University of Reading Curriculum Framework, launched in 2017 as part of its 'embedding and developing employability skills and attributes into the curriculum' (UoR T & L, 2016, p 7), emphasises skills in research and enquiry. While recognising the primacy of the discipline, it is also explicit about global engagement and personal effectiveness, identifying academic principles around the circle rim and high-lighting four graduate attributes in red:

- Mastery of the discipline
- Skills in Research and Enquiry
- Personal effectiveness and self-awareness
- Global engagement and multi-cultural awareness
(UoR CQSD, 2017)

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK



Figure 4-7 University of Reading Curriculum Framework (CQSD, 2017)

A related UoR document, *Generic programme outcomes aligned to graduate attributes*, (UoR CQSD, 2016) uses these graduate attributes to structure generic programme outcomes, with level descriptors from 4 to 7 (Certificate of HE to Masters' degree). Confusingly however, employability is added to the list above, rather than subsuming all these elements. This is also a missed opportunity to articulate Healey's 'being' mentioned above (2015), which is so important to support a sense of belonging (Woodman, 2014), especially for WP students.

4.3.8 Widening Participation at the UoR

Although the observations in this section may be typical of HEIs nationally, they are particularly relevant to TAEDS. Currently at the UoR, there appears to be considerable tension between the obligation to promote WP in order to justify further increased fees, and the desire to recruit high-achieving traditional graduates, who will be more likely to improve league table results and employability status. In 2013-14, only 7% of UoR students came from backgrounds where very few people had been educated to a university level. The UoR annually allocates 27% of tuition fee income above the basic £9,000 to fund its Access Programme, which includes career mentoring schemes (UoR Access, 2016). It is telling that the most up to date UoR *Widening Participation Strategy* is four years old (UoR Widening Participation, 2013). WP at the UoR is somewhat homeless: it does not have a webpage and is currently structurally understood as part of Diversity and Inclusion (UoR Diversity and Inclusion, 2017), having previously been part of Recruitment and Outreach; here it was not well-placed to develop strategies to target non-traditional groups, as stated in one of its aims: 'Delivering a Widening Participation strategy through targeted schools and undertaking Language and Science specific activities' (UoR Marketing, 2016). During WP working party discussions, it emerged that these targeted schools are high achieving ones, from whom the UoR is already recruiting graduates with high A level grades, rather than schools from LSE areas. Proposals for a WP Community of Practice (Courtney, 2016), designed to fulfil the pledge made in the UoR 2016-17 Access Agreement to take a strategic, whole institution approach (UoR, 2015a), are still under development, although an IoE WP officer was appointed in 2017, so the situation may be on the point of change.

A stand-off between the UoR and RUSU, who threatened to boycott the 2017 NSS if fees were further raised (RUSU, 2017) illustrates some of the challenges. The consistently high percentage of non-traditional students in TAEDS cohorts, and the contradictions between generating more income and WP, could in part explain why the UoR took the pre-emptive decision in 2015 to close the TAEDS programme (UoR Communications, 2015).

4.4 TAEDS identity and employability

The TAEDS programme combines the advantages of embedding employment-related content and stand-alone careers modules (Brown, 2007). In the TAEDS model, work-based learning complements academic study, encouraging critical reflection and enquiry. Students are effectively encouraged to 'convert their cultural resources into personal capital ... to manage their employability' (Brooks and Everett, 2009, p 338). However, Berry sees this kind of self-commodification as an extra pressure on students to develop their own 'brand' or 'character' (2014). Yet, as seen in Chapter 6, taking on a

compulsory work placement at the end of Year 2, in a TAEDS-related field of their choice, greatly improves students' subsequent study and employment prospects, as in the thinking of Andrews & Higson (2008), especially where it highlights and develops their soft skills (Gbadamosi et al, 2015). For some students, their dissertation focusses on a professional issue which can provide a stepping stone into work, as Brooks and Everett recognise (2009).

All of these aspects are inextricably bound up with a sense of identity, (Healey, 2015) as discussed at the start of this chapter. Indeed Daniels and Brooker's 2014 Australian study cautions against HE institutions imposing a concept of employability on students. They argue for the importance of student agency in exploring their own individual identities and in Chapter 7, I consider how alumni developed their graduate identities. TAEDS student identity was diverse, as can be seen in the next section.

4.4.1 TAEDS and Widening Participation

As explained in Chapter 3, the TAEDS ethos is to view deafness through the social model as a culture, rather than a disability (Jones, 2002) and the programme epitomises WP in the profiles of the students it recruits; this has been both its strength and its downfall. From an economic perspective, TAEDS is a minority programme dealing with disability and drama, costly to run and not generating a large income for the UoR because of low numbers. At this point, I recap on typical cohort characteristics between 2011 and 2017, detailed in Chapter 1:

- 1 (8%) deaf or hard of hearing
 - 1 (8%) international and BME
 - 1 (8%) LGBT
 - 2 (16%) mature
 - 2 (16%) dyslexia or other learning disabilities
 - 3 (24%) physical or mental health issues
 - 3 (24%) live locally
 - 6 (48%) first generation
 - 9 (72%) female
 - Most have experience of deafness or disability through families or friends
- (Wardale, 2017)

From a pedagogical perspective, the programme is of high importance in relation to WP, as noted by a TAEDS external examiner:

d/Deaf theatre skills map onto theatre practitioners and the education sector needs and point in an encouraging way to widening participation and accessibility beyond the H. E. environment. (Terret, 2015, p. 5)

Although many academically able students studied on the programme, TAEDS historically had a deliberately low entry tariff of CC or 160 UCAS points. This was to support inclusion and particularly to facilitate access for deaf students, who may have had variable secondary education and be studying in their second language, with BSL as their first. There were no formal written exams on the programme; two thirds of the assessment was through course work and one third of the assignments were practical. All of these aspects facilitated students with learning difficulties or disabilities, who may also have required reasonable adjustment, such as note-takers, lip-speakers or interpreters.

Although this came too late to alter the path to TAEDS' closure, it is instructive to consider how TAEDS fulfilled WP, in relation to the findings of the HEFCE commissioned 2015 report, *Causes of differences in student outcomes*, which I reproduce in full below:

- 1. Curricula and learning**, including teaching and assessment practices. Different student groups indicate varying degrees of satisfaction with the higher education curricula, and with the user-friendliness of learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- 2. Relationships between staff and students** and among students. A sense of 'belonging' emerged as a key determinant of student outcomes.
- 3. Social, cultural and economic capital**. Recurring differences in how students experience higher education, how they network and how they draw on external support were noted. Students' financial situations also affect their student experience and their engagement with learning.
- 4. Psychosocial and identity factors**. The extent to which students feel supported and encouraged in their daily interactions within their institutions and with staff members was found to be a key variable. Such interactions can both facilitate and limit students' learning and attainment. (Mountford-Zimdars et al, 2015, p iii)

In relation to Nos. 1 and 2, TAEDS had a user-friendly curriculum and learning culture, with low student numbers; strong relationships between staff and students and high levels of support (No. 4). This was discussed in Chapter 3, and the sense of belonging and community is evidenced in Chapter 6. TAEDS' low entry tariff and inclusive ethos, where about 50% are first generation, challenged *habitus*, which is implied in No. 3.

Across HE, females are more likely than males to complete their degree and achieve a first or 2.1 (HEFCE, 2017). In addition, 'Some 83% of those who are in receipt of DSA achieve a degree, slightly above the rate for non-disabled students (82%)' (Mountford-Zimdars, 2015, p 17). These HEFCE

findings were certainly borne out in recent TAEDS degree results, where the first class students have been exclusively female, since 2010, when one was male. In 2015, the percentages were as follows:

30% of the all- female cohort gained 1st, one 2.2 and the remainder 2.1s. Of the four 1st class: one student was profoundly deaf, one hard of hearing, one international and dyslexic and one has visual stress. (Wardale, 2015b)

It appears that the writing was already on the wall by this time. In spite of this proof of TAEDS' success in WP, it was in the October after these outstanding degree results that the phased TAEDS closure was implemented.

72% female was typical of the gender balance on TAEDS, although for drama students nationally it is around 55% (Thorne, 2014) and across all undergraduates it is 56% (HEFCE, 2017). Given the importance of gender in choice of HE programmes (Croll et al, 2010), Goldthorpe's RAT (2002) could explain why more first generation females apply to TAEDS.

4.4.2 TAEDS and gendered habitus

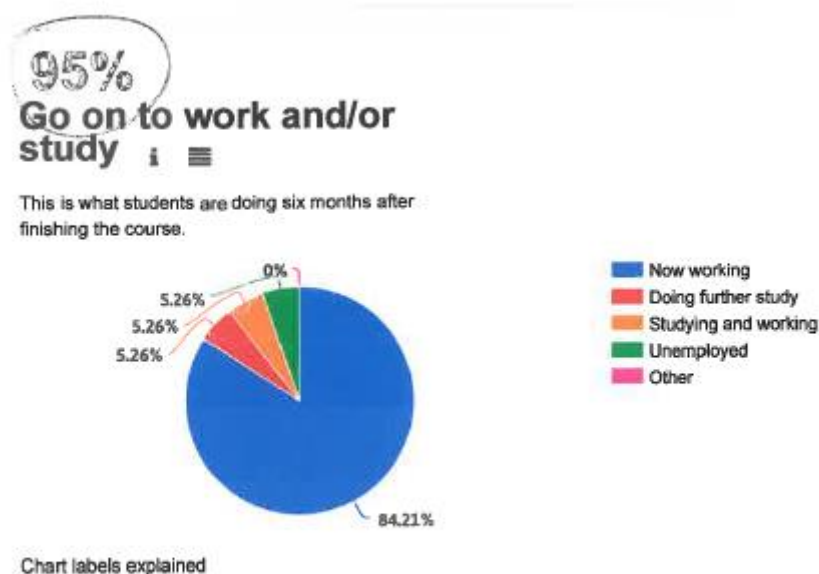
Although there was a gender balance among TAEDS staff, the vast majority of drama practitioners studied was male; this gender bias went unremarked, as in other arts programmes (Hopper, 2015). Through drama there are many opportunities to experiment with gender roles. Most TAEDS students identified as female, with male students frequently being non-stereotypical, and 8% of both genders identifying as LGBT (Wardale, 2014c). Some students were mature, with the occasional mother on the programme.

Self-monitoring of appearance and behaviour in order to 'fit in' is endemic in our society (Foucault, 1980) and is reflected in the prevalence of eating disorders among female TAEDS students, where in one cohort there were five (Wardale, 2015b). Similar to UoR art education, which has comparable students, a high proportion on TAEDS were dyslexic; this can affect self-efficacy, especially as females are more likely than males to lack confidence and undervalue their own abilities (Bandura, 2001). Non-traditional students are likely to feel the constraints of their *habitus* more keenly, as they may be disadvantaged in a range of ways (Hopper, 2015). However, as referred to earlier, this was ameliorated by TAEDS' encouragement for students to overcome challenges and thrive.

It appears that through the portfolio of subjects, skills and experiences on offer, TAEDS students of both genders could potentially accumulate considerable 'female capital' (Huppatz, 2009). How far TAEDS affirmed gendered habitus will be discussed in Chapter 7; through its focus on education and inclusion, it could be argued that TAEDS equipped females for employability more fully than males.

4.4.3 TAEDS and employability

As referred to earlier, TAEDS' advertised employability has been extremely high, at 95% (Unistats, 2014; 2015); this was consistently above the University of Reading previous average of 92% now 94% (UoR Employability, 2017) and points to alumni versatility: they are arts graduates with 'added value', as will be show in Chapter 6.



<http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/subjects/employment/10007802FT-UFTHAR/ReturnTo/S...> 14/09/2015

Figure 4-8 TAEDS 2015 NSS employability data (Unistats 2015)

This level of employability is in contrast to most performing arts, whose 2015 employability average was 87.6% (HECSU, 2016). Notwithstanding its focus on theatre, TAEDS was not a programme for students who primarily wanted to become actors or performers, but rather for those interested in drama education and inclusion. TAEDS graduates not only have expertise in the practice and theory of theatre and drama, but also skills in teaching these in schools. This gives them a head start in gaining experience for applications to PGCE or School Direct courses, where they often specialise in SEN. In addition, they are likely to have achieved at least Level 2 in BSL, which opens up a range of other career options, such as interpreting for deaf people or working in communication support. The flexibility and portfolio careers which these facilitate all conform to gendered habitus (Reay, 2004).

Entrepreneurial skills gained in the Careers and Enterprise modules equipped TAEDS students for starting and managing a business and the substantial work placement allowed them to trial different career options in advance. Contact with leading theatre professionals and the alumni network eased

the transition from student to graduate identity. The strengths of TAEDS graduates were affirmed by external examiners:

The skills and expertise both taught by tutors and lecturers and engaged in by students on this course is commendable and offers the students with very clear but wide career and continued Higher Education pathways. The curriculum offers a diverse, and at the same time complementary, pedagogical experience that provides the students with specialisms that place them in a very strong position upon graduating. (Terret, 2015, p. 8)

Previous research suggests that employers are most interested in graduates' sense of identity and capabilities, not merely in their skills sets (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011). However, drama graduates typically possess the following wide range of skills and TAEDS graduates are no exception:

Confidence; self-presentation; teamwork and collaboration; time management and organisational skills; self-awareness; self-discipline; an open mind and the ability to move beyond boundaries and experiment with different ideas; communication skills; analytical, critical and research skills; the ability to cope with criticism and learn from it; stamina. (AGCAS, 2013, n.p.)

Performing Arts graduates are often assumed to be particularly employable because of their 'communication skills, presentational skills and team-working' (Brown, 2007, p 45) and my own experience of talking to employers supports this: even someone with drama at GCSE level is regarded as possessing these skills. Drama career options are diverse, including: 'Education; Commercial and public sector management; Social/Welfare; Marketing/sales/advertising; Business/financial' (SCUDD, 2017, n.p.). This affirms research into the added value of HE, which acknowledges the 'signalling effect' of having a degree, suggesting increased productivity to employers and greater learner benefits (Gambin et al, 2014).

In our 21st century media-saturated environment, the UK creative arts industry is a major employer (HECSU, 2010). Graduates in Drama, Dance and Cinematics (the most comparable degree category listed) are not among the higher earners, with an average of only £19,659 in their first graduate job, compared to the general average of £22,984 (CUG, 2015). For TAEDS graduates that year the figure was £20,000 (Unistats, 2015). As Brown points out, for Performing Arts graduates, money may not be the highest priority:

A graduate job is not necessarily defined as a job characterised by high salary, prestige, status, and job security. It is more about obtaining interesting, stimulating work, using the degree, and having opportunities to be creative. (Brown, 2007, p 37)

Creativity is a key characteristic of TAEDS graduates, as will be seen in their reflections on their own graduate identity in the primary research.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have considered *habitus* and gender, theories of identity and current definitions and models of employability, before relating these to TAEDS within the context of WP. The research questions below are derived from my understanding of identity and employability and how TAEDS alumni are positioned in relation to these. Therefore I focus on the phenomenological perceptions of alumni, as follows:

- What is the significance of drama in promoting achievement, inclusion and contributing to wider access to HE and employability beyond?
- What were the professional and personal circumstances and influences that led to choice of a TAEDS degree, with its unique qualities?
- How do TAEDS alumni view the TAEDS experience?
- How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their current personal and professional identities?
- How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their graduate capabilities and employability?
- How do alumni reflect on the TAEDS community and legacy?

These questions were determined in relation to the study aims and outcomes in 1.6 and in the next chapter I detail the methodology for my primary research.

Chapter 5 *Choosing a path through the forest: Why this Research Design and Methodology?*

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by an outline of the ontological and epistemological positions, which inform my choice of research design. Following this, there is justification of the methodology and methods employed, with consideration of their positive implications and potential pitfalls. The section ends with a focus on the TAEDS Tree metaphor, which I explain in some detail. Data collection and methods of analysis are discussed, followed by ethical considerations.

This study is to investigate TAEDS graduate identity and employability and to identify which aspects of the programme (now in its final year), contributed to that success and thus might be used as a model for other degrees addressing WP. Although TAEDS was primarily a drama-based degree, it was also more than this, including a celebration of deaf culture through Sign Theatre. It was described by an external examiner as a ‘unique interweaving of distinct but related pedagogical strands and creative visual performances to maximise graduates’ capabilities’ (Terret, 2014). The research questions were concerned with participant perspectives and, since the nature of the research questions should drive the design (Creswell, 2007), this naturally led to qualitative research.

To conceptualise TAEDS effectively, I have sought to implement a research design that is sufficiently innovative to demonstrate the value of arts-based research inquiry with the potential for ‘powerful and emergent outcomes that could expand meaning’ (Leavy, 2009, p. 21). Initially, it is important to clarify my positionality and the directional relationship between ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods, since how we view the world, based on our own experiences, affects the whole research process (Grix, 2010).

5.2 Ontological and epistemological perspectives

5.2.1 Knowledge and knowing TAEDS

As a drama educator, metaphor is my natural habitat when seeking to understand the world. Therefore I was drawn to Lakoff and Johnson’s view (1999) that we organise and interpret phenomena through conceptual metaphor. Their idea of ‘embodied learning’ challenged the primacy of cerebral reason as a defining human quality, in its claim that our reasoning processes are intrinsically part of bodily experience and mostly unconscious. Embodied knowledge, gained through

language, is primarily metaphorical (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). This led me to adopt an arts-based paradigm which,

Generates knowledge and provokes inspiration through art-making practices and processes ... generates fresh energy and insights from our human capacity for creativity ... can access inner life through stories, metaphors and symbols ... communication of this knowledge has the potential to elicit transformative change.

(Leavy and Chilton, 2014, p. 2)

The transformative individual insights which the arts can facilitate through embodied learning are important *per se* and also in helping to develop a definition and acquisition of knowledge in relation to TAEDS, as we all inhabit our life stories which provide different ways of knowing (Aadlandsvik, 2009). The story of my dissertation began with a conceptual metaphor of the TAEDS experience as a tree (See Figure 5.1 in 5.5.4 and also Appendix 8).

5.2.2 Conceptual metaphor

Conceptual metaphor, or the idea that one idea or conceptual domain can illuminate another, is embedded in our lives and can shape our perceptions (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003). For example, the common HE metaphor of the undergraduate experience as a journey might connote an open-ended challenge, with destination yet unknown. Lakoff and Johnson's Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT) argues that because metaphor is found in both language and thought, it reflects our beliefs and therefore metaphoric thinking guides our behaviour (1999). Although this fundamental assumption has been critiqued since then, Gibbs (2011) maintains the importance of CMT in understanding how embodied metaphor affects our thinking and culture, 'since people have specific metaphorical conceptions of abstract ideas (e.g. emotions) that are shaped by recurring bodily experiences (e.g. their own bodies as containers' (2011,p 17).

I drew on my own experience of embodied conceptual metaphor to consider what knowledge acquisition meant through story and visual elicitation (Phelan, 2007). In a taught Ed D session, I chose as an image of teaching, a photograph taken from the bow of a sailing yacht looking backwards to the stern, as the yacht progressed at speed through rough open sea. This journey image resonated on many levels, aside from the obvious connection between the sea and contemporary societal issues, particularly within drama teaching. The nature of the embodied, sensory aspects are key to my interpretation and beliefs about the experience: the smell and taste of salt; the splash of cold water, the sensation of speed and the freshness of the wind ; the changing view of the horizon and the sounds of waves and birds.

There is a tension between the hurtling forward of the yacht and the viewer's gaze backward, as reflection is essential to progressing learning. The open view of the sea and sky contrasts with what is below the water surface: hidden depths where dangers lurk; the journey only reveals more of the unknown. As a sailor (drama teacher), with a crew of diverse levels of experience and aptitudes, (a group of teenagers with varied self-knowledge and social skills) there is much communication and skill required to negotiate weather, currents and tide (discourse in the group and within the NC, as in Nicholson's *The Map and the Story* (2011), discussed in Chapter 3) in order to move towards a destination (personal, professional, ethical and social development). The trajectory is rarely linear, as the yacht tacks against the prevailing wind, embracing unplanned learning and participants' lived experiences. The journey can be plain-sailing, disastrous, exhilarating or endless variants and can change very quickly, but it is never boring. To adapt Stevenson's metaphor (1881), it is often better to travel hopefully, rather than arrive at the planned learning outcomes, and the same can perhaps be said of research.

To engage in meaningful reflexive research, I had to locate my position in relation to the alumni journeys, without being overly directive. Yet, because they had come together from diverse roots to have experiences steered through the commonality of TAEDS, I felt that a tree trunk was an appropriate image to represent their growth. Dilts' fluid model of identity resonated, in that the core strength of a tree is its trunk, which is of course always growing and changing:

Identity describes your sense of who you are and how you think of yourself as a person ... our identity is like the trunk of the tree – it is the core of our being. (Dilts, 2016, n.p.)

Through the lens of conceptual metaphor, I examined other theories of knowledge. First I took a step backwards, to try to see the wood for the trees.

5.2.3 Imaginal knowledge

It could be argued that implicit to the human experience is the need to acquire knowledge, to understand the environment in order to make living within it more manageable. In my view, the process of living is therefore effectively research. In traditional societies such as aboriginal culture, *mythopoesis*, or imaginal knowledge, is handed down through generations to support understanding of natural phenomena (Tjingo, 2011). There is also a more spiritual aspect; for example, the songline stories of Kuniya the python physically encapsulated in the rock in Uluru, Australia, give purpose and structure to aboriginal lives and are part of the cultural wisdom and teachings, calling into question the linear existence of time as we experience it and claiming that, 'some truths, at least, are eternal' (Monk 2013), since:

Tjukurpa (the physical evidence of the activities of the ancestral beings) refers to the past, the present and the future at the same time. This knowledge never changes, it always stays the same.

(Tjingo, 2011, p10)

This kind of knowledge becomes comprehensible in relation to Lakoff and Johnson's radical rethinking (1999). They consider that we share reason with other animals and our rational sense-making arises out of the holistic combination of brains, bodies and experiences, so 'reason is not purely literal, but largely metaphorical and imaginative' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999, p 3). Conceptual metaphor is also implicit in other spiritual knowledge.

5.2.4 Unsure knowledge

From a hermeneutic Christian perspective, true knowledge is gained in the afterlife, never attained by mere human beings (Mark, King James Bible). Yet according to Buddhist beliefs, the only thing we know for certain is uncertainty; acceptance of that, rather than questioning to seek knowledge, is regarded as key to reaching spiritual peace or enlightenment (Sumedho, 1991).

In his foundational *The Problem of Knowledge*, positivist Ayer raises an interesting point:

The necessary and sufficient conditions for knowing that something is the case are first that what one is said to know be true, secondly that one be sure of it, and thirdly that one should have the right to be sure. (1956, p35).

As a lecturer situated in the social reality (Haraway, 2013) of TAEDS, I felt I had this right to be sure, even while I eschewed such a positivist approach. Being an empathetic participant meant that I would inevitably take a relativist position, since we are hard-wired to make meaning of the world from our own perspective (Lucas and Claxton 2010). It would be fallacious for me to assume that I could ever attain objectivity or be detached from the structures and values in which I exist. Indeed, this would neither be desirable, from within social constructivism (Cohen et al, 2017), nor attainable from Lakoff and Johnson's perspective (1999).

Since thinkers differ in their definitions of knowledge and the nature of our pursuit of this elusive concept, I took refuge in Moore's assertion that: 'There is one piece of knowledge about which we can in fact be certain – we do know beyond doubt that we do have knowledge' (2007, p 39). While this does demonstrate certainty, it also confirms for me flaws in the objectivist view that knowledge is clear and finite. Indeed it is easier perhaps to define knowledge by what it is not, rather than what it is (Becker, 1998). From a very different context to TAEDS, I quote Rumsfeld's evasive political statement about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq:

There are known knowns; there are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns; that is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns – there are things we do not know we don't know. (Rumsfeld, in Burnett and Whyte, 2002, p 1).

Since the extent of what could be known about TAEDS was as yet not known, I sought to explore this and the place of drama as a vehicle for personal and professional knowledge acquisition.

5.2.5 Social actors and acting

I consider that dramatic activity, whether in a theatre or a classroom, echoes research, in that it allows us to explore our reactions to our findings about life, within a safe environment. The arts, in particular drama, are a potent medium for making sense of our experiences: 'Drama is ... a powerful way of knowing, which harnesses feeling and thinking in an enquiry into the social world' (NATD, n.p.). Therefore the idea of social actors engaging in drama activity as actual actors adds an intriguing layer of complexity to the pursuit of this research:

Social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors ... not only produced through social interaction but in a constant state of revision. (Bryman et al, 2001, pp. 16-18)

Arts-based research ontology is particularly appropriate for interpreting our social world within constructivism. A relatively recent research paradigm, it acknowledges that, 'artistic, intersubjective realities are emergent and shifting, hard to pin down, and difficult to convey in standard modes' (Leavy and Chilton, 2014, p. 404).

Acknowledging that we are both animals and human beings, living in the natural as well as the social worlds (Cohen et al, 2007) we are part of the phenomenon that we study. In Plato's well-known cave metaphor of our experiences as imperfectly mirroring reality (Bybee, 1999), prisoners in a cave are chained in such a way that they see the shapes of objects as shadows reflected onto the dark wall by the light of a fire. The prisoners name and interpret these shadows as reality, rather than reflections of it: that is until some of them are let outside and see the objects themselves, which are very different from their reflections. Socrates' query about whether the released prisoners would have superior knowledge, or simply a different version of reality from those left inside, highlights the notion of relativism (Grix, 2002), where 'knowledge is conflated experientially with knowing and it is always someone's knowledge,' (Moore, 2007, p28). This view is in direct contrast to Bhaskar's early theory of critical realism, (1978) where he argued for clear differentiation between epistemology (transitive and therefore changing) and ontology (intransitive and unchanging). Critical realism rejects both positivism and relativism, arguing that there is an observable objective reality but that

our understanding of it is socially constructed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). Plato's cave metaphor illustrates for me the fallibility of empirical knowledge, therefore positivism, as well as the flaws in interpretivist epistemological frameworks. I found these contradictory positions difficult to reconcile and thus chose to consider the critical theoretical approach.

5.2.6 Critical theory and feminism

The critical theoretical position regards both positivism and interpretivism as, 'essentially technicist, seeking to understand and render more efficient an existing situation, rather than to question or transform it' (Cohen et al, 2007, p 29). These paradigms therefore present only partial accounts of social behaviour and neglect the political and ideological contexts of much educational research, for example the frequently male-dominated hierarchies in schools:

The very process whereby one interprets and defines a situation is itself a product of the circumstances in which one is placed ... the power of others to impose their own definitions of situations upon participants... head teachers' studies are locations in which inequalities in power are regularly imposed upon unequal participants. (Cohen et al, 2007, p 27).

Feminist critical theory argues that, 'androcentrism ... prevails in practically all disciplines, in most theoretical work done through centuries of scientific quest,' (Mies, 1993, in Hammersley, p 68) and that, 'Far from treating educational research as objective and value-free... this is merely a smokescreen that serves the existing, disempowering status quo' (Cohen et al, 2007, p36). As a feminist, rejection of this apparently objective male position resonated, although I could also see the limitations of feminist standpoint epistemology (Harding, 1987) which, although it privileges women's marginalised ways of knowing and understanding the world, also, arguably, homogenises them (Andermahr et al, 2000).

Recognising the intrinsic diversity of women's perspectives and the limitations of such identity politics, Usher (1996) writes from a post-modern perspective, sceptical of traditional beliefs about knowledge, power and the self, deconstructing truth, objectivity and neutrality. While acknowledging the pervasive influence of gender as an influencing factor, she advocates an approach to knowledge which recognises that all theories are perspectival, and this resonated with my views. She argues from a reflexive perspective that research should be empowering to all participants, challenging the legitimacy of research that does not empower oppressed and invisible groups.

Foucault (1980) conceptualised knowledge and power as operating at micro-levels, but believed that in some contexts this can be positive. Indeed Habermas (1972) identified the social reciprocity which is free of domination within the 'life-world' of small communities and saw this as an important agent

for change. My continuing role within TAEDS meant that I still held power with alumni, as well as students, most of whom were female. However, this was from an advocacy perspective, as my commitment was to support and empower. It was therefore important that the participants understood how I viewed my position of power, given the implicit power base differential of student–tutor relationships (Gore, 1995).

Although not actively oppressed, TAEDS' marginalisation and lack of visible power within the patriarchal structure of the university ultimately led to its closure, in spite of its proven success in WP and employability. It was important to give TAEDS alumni a retrospective voice, enabling critical reflection on their experience, as can be seen in Chapter 6.

By now I was clear that my constructive, ontological position had become a reflexive, critical, theoretical paradigm informed by feminism. In order to address my research questions and illuminate the culture of TAEDS, my methodology would be primarily qualitative, with a critical ethnographic approach.

5.2.7 Critical ethnography and qualitative methodology

Traditional ethnography has its roots in anthropology and claims a commitment to objectivism, with the subject as an object to be archived (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Post-modern critical ethnography emphasises social justice and empowerment (Madison, 2012) and I was drawn to this, as inductive, interpretive and socially constructed, exploring participants' lived experiences (Cohen et al, 2007). Because of my 'insider' status (Floyd and Linet, 2012), I would need to balance being an empathetic participant with the constraints of internal ethical engagement.

I therefore planned to use mostly qualitative methodology, within questionnaires and interviews, and the devised visual metaphor, which I will elaborate on later in the chapter. I had originally planned to use performance ethnography at the TAEDS 30th anniversary event, both as an action research method and an advocacy tool for TAEDS, with 'performance as a form of activism, as critique and as critical citizenship,' (Denzin, 2009, p 257). However, this research method became redundant once the phased closure of TAEDS was implemented and the 30th anniversary event was cancelled. The TAEDS final celebration, scheduled for June, 2018, is outside the time-frame of this research.

Qualitative ethnographic research has frequently been regarded as the preferred choice of women because of their presumed highly developed interest in people (Bryman, 2001). This has led to the extreme view of quantitative research as incompatible with feminism (Mies, 1993) because of its

rootedness in patriarchal systems. However, others would argue from a deductive perspective that there is a need to effectively beat sexism on its own ground, by engaging with more objectivist feminist quantitative research within social sciences (Holma, 2011; Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991). Such feminists believe that male bias can be eliminated through scrupulously following the rules of scientific methodology and that 'feminist researchers can accomplish this without 'selling out' to the positivist, male-dominated academic research community' (Jayaratne, 1991, p. 109).

Bryman argues that quantitative data has a crucial role in raising awareness of equalities and driving policy change (2001). Although I am not a naturally deductive researcher, given that this research concerned a marginalised degree course within the marginalised discipline of drama and included potentially marginalised individuals (such as deaf and learning disabled), I knew that it was important to gain some quantitative data to demonstrate trends and support recommendations for other widening participation HE courses.

5.2.8 My positionality

As a TAEDS insider, I was aware that 'if we believe ourselves to be the product of our environment – created by it – then to some extent we are the mirror image of it' (May, 2001, p10). However, Haraway argues that from within this kind of situated knowledge, objectivity is possible (2013).

In this study, I sought to reconcile the dichotomy of relativism and positivism, through my understanding that truth is largely metaphorical, because it is socially constructed by embodied human beings. Critical ethnography is an apt lens for this kind of truth, in the same way that drama is a useful research tool for exploring shared reality, since being an actor can facilitate social understanding. I understood that the imperative to be 'objective' was largely a legacy of patriarchal social relations and considered that the most authentic standpoint was therefore one of ambivalence, holding the paradox of shared understandings alongside the legacy of power and gender inequalities.

Using conceptual metaphor, my intention was to 'illuminate[s] and explicate[s] ... the analytical frame' (Thomas, 2011, p 23) of graduate capabilities and employability, through investigating the TAEDS experience holistically. This led to the development of a case study methodology, with both qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to address my research questions effectively.

5.3 Case Study Methodology

I regarded the TAEDS programme as more than the sum of its parts and concurred with Punch that, 'only the in-depth case study can provide understanding of the important aspects of a new ... research area' (Punch 2009, p 123). Furthermore, TAEDS epitomised the different meanings of the word 'case' (Thomas, 2011, pp 12-14) as it was at once a 'container' of the TAEDS community: students, staff and alumni; an 'event' in the sense of longitudinal experience through the student life-cycle and the thirty-odd year duration of the programme; it was also an 'argument' for achievement through drama, inclusive education and employability through small non-traditional degree programmes, which are arguably not viewed positively by universities.

The case study can form 'an archive of material sufficiently rich to admit subsequent reinterpretation' (Cohen et al, 2007, p292). It was important to capture the actuality and complexity of TAEDS for future research after its ending in 2018. As discussed earlier, TAEDS was a unique B.A. It therefore seemed appropriate to adopt the approach of a single case-study, exploratory and explanatory, naturalistic and idiographic, using mainly qualitative methods to access participants' interpretation of their experiences (Pring, 2000). However, my professional role within TAEDS and the fact that this was critical ethnographic research meant that the process would not necessarily be replicable with a different researcher (Harris, 2013).

5.3.1 Generalisability issues

As an interpretative and socially constructivist approach, case study methodology is open to criticism as subjective and not generalisable. The thorny issue of generalisability characterises historical tensions between the reductionist nomothetic theories practised by natural sciences and exemplified by Plato (Thomas, 2011) and the more interpretative and inductive approaches, which result in knowledge deriving from phronesis (Kinsella and Pitman, 2012).

Since first recognition of the importance of case study methodology through Gestalt psychology (Thomas, 2016), the argument is not so much about whether generalisability is possible, as whether it is even desirable. Thomas maintains that seeking generalisability in case study research 'can inhibit or even extinguish the curiosity and interpretation that should be at the heart of inquiry' (2016, p 69). Instead of induction, he sees abduction as the appropriate 'inference form' for the case study: that is 'making a judgement concerning the best explanation for the facts you are collecting' (Thomas, 2016, p 70). This acknowledgement of provisionality leads to what he describes as 'exemplary knowledge' (2016, 73), where we can make inferences from the particular, based on

our own experience. Thomas questions the concept of theory in this context, preferring the term phronesis:

A view of a case study's validation coming no longer from reference to a body of theory or generalised knowledge. Rather its validation comes from the connections and insights it offers between another's experience and your own. The essence comes in understandability emerging from phronesis ... from the connection to your own situation. (Thomas, 2016, p 73)

In place of generalisability, Shenton (2004) uses the more precise term 'transferability', with the onus on readers to determine how far they can be confident in transferring the findings to other contexts. Pelias too argued that 'empathetic scholarship connects person to person in the belief in a shared and complex world' (Pelias, 2004, p 12) and that 'Knowing what is true, what is valid and reliable, and what to predict should come from listening to as many stories as you can and deciding how to act responsibly' (Pelias, 2004, p. 9).

I think this emphasis on the researcher's individual responsibility and judgement is key to counter the criticisms about generalisability levelled at case study methodology. Refreshingly, Pelias provides a different perspective on social research, arguing that staff and students alike are trapped and disadvantaged by the judgement that permeates the academy: 'Everyone is caught in the same critical grind, giving out and taking in comments designed to say how we are positioned, rated, ranked' (2004, p113). In *A Methodology of the Heart* (2004), Pelias questions how 'the scientific model continues to thrive in the discipline given the number of arguments that show why the heart needs to accompany the head' (Pelias, 2004, p 115).

I had chosen case study methodology to aspire to such a balance in knowledge acquisition in relation to TAEDS and would aim for conceptual exemplary knowledge, rather than generalisability. To determine the most effective way to do this, the next step was to decide on methods.

5.3.2 Methods within methodology

My choice of research methods was determined by the research questions and logically linked to, but separate from, the methodology (Grix, 2002). Case study methodology was a vehicle which enabled me to use mixed methods to portray, analyse and interpret the TAEDS phenomenon and subsequently use the constant comparative approach to make meaning. I aligned myself with Bryman's perspective that research methods are increasingly regarded as simple techniques, not concepts 'encumbered by epistemological and ontological baggage' (Bryman, 2001, p 463).

I agree with Thomas, who argues that 'Problems are solved by thinking, not by a special method' (Thomas, 2016, p 6) and who favours the bricolage approach coined by Levi-Strauss (1962). Through

this, researchers essentially use available materials to address problems through their own skills, interrogating the existing tools for their usefulness, but not being afraid to improvise and experiment through play. Kincheloe et al (2013) conceptualised research bricolage as the transformative use of multi-perspectival research methods to empower researchers to produce more rigorous praxis-based insights into educational phenomena. The concept of bricolage was apt for the structure and processes of the TAEDS degree itself, as well as for the research methods in this case study.

This meant that it was important to ensure validity through the choice and application of research methods. According to Silverman, 'Validity is another word for truth,' (2005, p. 224) and it was important to maximise internal and external validity, although threats to this can never be fully eradicated (Cohen et al et al, 2007). I planned to use triangulation to strengthen confirmability and credibility (Shenton, 2004).

5.4 Research Methods

I explain below the rationale for using the four distinct methods: an on-line survey for alumni, including both qualitative and quantitative aspects (Hammersley, 1993); a paper questionnaire for new TAEDS students; qualitative semi-structured face to face interviews with alumni and participant creation of a visual metaphor.

5.4.1 The Online Survey

An on-line survey was the most practical and effective way of initially addressing the research questions. Alumni were living and working in different places, yet most were part of the closed Facebook page, so could be easily contacted. As all were graduates, their reading and thinking skills were by definition sufficiently advanced to address written questions. Because of my positive relationships with many alumni, there was a sufficiently open social climate to allow for full and honest answers (Denscombe, 2003).

5.4.2 Online Survey Issues

Obvious advantages to this method were ease and speed; anonymity and non-traceability; authenticity of responses; implied consent; reduction of researcher effects and processing time and availability of sophisticated software supporting ease of design, use and analysis (Cohen et al, 2007). Although approximately 16% of alumni were typically mature students, the TAEDS programme had only been running since 1996 and information technology competence was an implicit requirement of the TAEDS degree, as was manual dexterity because of the BSL learnt. Therefore no technical problems were anticipated or encountered.

But some other issues were identified and addressed. The research was personalised by my identity being published in the Facebook invitation, along with the dissertation title and ethical information about consent and withdrawal. This meant that potential respondents knew the survey was genuine and serious. Some had heard me announce it at a TAEDS alumni event in 2014, where I asked volunteers to sign up if they were willing to participate.

Those who chose to respond to the online survey probably felt strongly about their TAEDS experience, either positively or negatively, although in practice most responses were positive. Because my specialism is drama and theatre in education, more who enjoyed this may have responded. The self-selecting sample may therefore not have included those alumni who were more ambivalent, less public-spirited or uninvolved with the TAEDS community, because their field of work was different. It was likely that more recent graduates would respond, but this was an advantage as the programme had changed over the years and refocussed its specialist employability modules in 2010.

Although Facebook is ubiquitous, anecdotally many young people are reconsidering their relationship to social media and this includes some TAEDS, who have closed their Facebook pages. These alumni could possibly have been excluded from the survey, but the Alumni Office also emailed the invitation to the 107 TAEDS contacts for whom they had email addresses on their database.

5.4.3 The Online Survey: Content and Design

To address the research questions effectively, the cross-sectional survey delivered through *Survey Monkey* included multi-choice, ordinal and interval questions. This included rank ordering, rating scales and open questions to assess attitudes to TAEDS. Asking similar questions in different ways both yielded richer data and signalled the importance of the topics to participants (Cohen et al et al, 2007).

Closed and filter questions were used to identify likely participants for the follow-up interviews. To preserve the response anonymity of those who volunteered to be subsequently interviewed, the survey was designed so that they had to click on a link to a further survey, where they gave contact details (See Appendix 5 for online survey template).

The design meant that each page had to be completed before progression to the next but drop-out rates were not recordable for those that did not complete. However, the response rate was good. After the first ten days, 42 alumni had completed the survey. Survey responses were monitored during subsequent weeks and as perhaps the novelty factor wore off (Cohen et al, 2007), diminishing

returns were addressed by two further Facebook postings and rounds of emails. When the survey closed after seven weeks, there were 55 responses (representing about 25% of the total number of TAEDS alumni) and sixteen volunteers for interview. Data collection for this and the paper questionnaire was fortunately completed before the phased closure of TAEDS was announced, so responses were unsullied by the feelings this might have elicited.

5.4.4 The Paper Questionnaire: Content and Design

To supplement the alumni data and provide longitudinal scope, I surveyed the final 2015 intake of ten TAEDS students, using paper questionnaires, to provide comparative answers to the research question:

- What were the professional and personal circumstances and influences that led to choice of a TAEDS degree, with its unique qualities?

This consisted of similar questions to the first part of the alumni survey and was created as an online survey and printed out. This meant that the branding was the same as the alumni survey, which participants may have seen advertised on the TAEDS Facebook page. (See Appendix 6 for paper questionnaire template).

5.4.5 Paper Questionnaire Issues

These briefer paper questionnaires were easily administered before module teaching commenced, thus providing a purposive snapshot of a specific point in time (Denscombe, 2003). With such a small sample (10), I did not want to risk non or late submission by using an online survey, as this could have distorted results (Denscombe, 2003).

To reduce the power dynamic between researched and researcher and improve confirmability (Shenton, 2004) a colleague, rather than myself, administered the questionnaire and explained the purpose and context of the research. Students were assured that participation was voluntary and that their responses were anonymous, to ensure ethical protocol. With implied consent, all completed the questionnaire. This could have been because they found it interesting, as some commented, or because their mindset on arrival at university was that they were motivated to fulfil tasks set.

The intention was to capture the students' perceptions before any teaching started or they had developed friendships with peers or other year groups, which could influence their views. However, through the TAEDS Mentoring scheme, they had been matched to and corresponded with a Year 2

TAEDS student during the previous summer, so their partner student's views could have already influenced their responses.

Several of the new intake had literacy difficulties, which made their written responses slower than perhaps they would have been electronically. This was minimised by giving them as much time as they needed and explicating questions where necessary.

With both survey and questionnaire completed, I was ready to work on the innovative methodology of a tree metaphor, which had been gestating for some years.

5.4.6 The Interviews: Visual conceptual metaphor as follow-up

I used a hybrid tree as a metaphor for alumni reflection after the interviews. Pelias' idea that writing is like weeding, combined with my love of gardening, had set me thinking.

Exactness is always a matter of weeding, pulling away this and that, turning over and breaking up what isn't ready, spading. For the gardener's pleasure, like the writer's, comes from digging into those dark places, digging out what might choke or smother, digging deep in preparation for seed. Structurally, I discover what the gardener's pleasure is by recognizing what it is not. I seek a clearing, a place where I can begin to see. (Pelias, 2004, p. 73)

The Greek word *theatron* means 'a seeing place' (Arnott, 1991) and to gain perspective on TAEDS, I wanted to weed out the potential mass of data so that key themes would emerge through the agency of interview participants. As well as providing meaningful data in their own right, interviews could also be used as a rehearsal for participants' labelling of their own TAEDS Trees. This was a narrative life-history approach with an ethno-methodological focus (May, 2001).

5.4.7 Interviewing issues

First it was important to consider issues in interviewing. Although derided as invasive when first used by nineteenth century journalists (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), interviews are now universally adopted as a research method. Although based on conversation, the structures and assumptions are very different (Silverman, 2005). The challenge is to pursue the lines of enquiry to gain answers to the research questions, while asking questions in an unbiased manner (Yin, 2014). Indeed Kvale and Brinkmann view interviewing as a skilled craft where 'knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee ... literally an *inter view*' (2009, p 2). They consider that in this social construction the interviewer should strive for 'reflexive objectivity' (Kvale, 2009, p 242) and like Pelias, they regard the best legitimation of qualitative interviewing is demonstrated through

the quality and value of the knowledge produced, since 'trees shall be known by their fruits' (Kvale, 2009, p 304).

Even in a semi-structured interview the agenda is set by the researcher and the impact of researcher identity needs to be considered (Denscombe, 2003). Because I was already known to many alumni, as was the topic of my research, they were aware of my positionality in relation to TAEDS. In view of this known bias, it was particularly important not to ask leading questions 'where the question influences the answer, perhaps illegitimately' (Cohen et al, 2007, p 151).

This became especially relevant as all the interviews took place after it was announced in October, 2015 that TAEDS was to close in 2018. As some participants (understandably) had strong feelings about this, it was my responsibility to demonstrate an ethic of care in relation to the questions asked (Carr, 2000). To minimise potential upset, I structured the interviews to ensure that questions about TAEDS' closure were towards the end, after participants had reflected on everything they had gained and the ongoing life of the TAEDS community. Several participants explained that they had taken part because they wanted to give something back to TAEDS.

5.4.8 The Interviews: Content and Design

Interviews were deemed the best method to illuminate the research questions in detail, through socially constructed knowledge (Kvale, 2009). It was made clear at the start that interviewees would be asked to comment on anonymous findings from the online survey, as well as to discuss their own experiences of TAEDS in more detail. Participants were at liberty to disclose whatever they chose in relation to any question asked. The informal interviews lasted under an hour, consisting mostly of open questions, with a few closed. This encouraged reflection on TAEDS, with the researcher sharing occasional pertinent details from her own experience, thus embracing a feminist non-hierarchical interviewing model: minimising status differences through a more open, reciprocal and equal relationship (Punch, 2009). The interviews took place in a location of the participant's own choice: their workplace, home or my university office. They were audio-recorded, transcribed and emailed to the participant to check for accuracy and omission, allowing for a reflexive aspect. The interview schedule (See Appendix 7) developed from the research questions and focussed on the research questions, each of which was informed by a tree conceptual metaphor:

- ***Roots & Nourishment***
- ***The Trunk***
- ***The Tree Crown***
- ***Branches, Leaves and Fruit***
- ***Acorns, Rhizomes & Saplings***

After the interview, participants were given a list of graduate capabilities to consider, with some blanks for them to fill in (See Appendix 9). I had found no one frame that I considered sufficiently comprehensive for TAEDS alumni, so the list was based on employability criteria from my elision of Hinchliffe and Jolly's four graduate attributes (2011) and elements of Dacre Pool's model (2007), to address the detail within the broader perspective; this was not given to interviewees (See Appendix 10 for this table).

Interviewees were given two copies of the TAEDS Tree template, which I explain below. They were asked to take this away, fill it in and return it to me within two weeks, adding new categories from the graduate capabilities list as appropriate, so that it reflected their own experiences and perceptions. The second copy was to record ideas for their own use. All participants completed and returned their trees within the timescale: the findings were illuminating and will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.5 Visual Methods

As preparation for use of conceptual metaphor within an interview context, I had researched visual methods. I intended that, through an artful enquiry approach which acknowledges the importance of emotional in critical reflection, participants could deepen their understanding (Lloyd, 2002).

5.5.1 The River of Experience and critical incident charting

Using qualitative research methods, Hodges (2010) asks adolescents to chart critical incidents on their reading collages, making use of river imagery. Additionally, I had been impressed by an Ed D colleague's research methodology, where she adapted Burnard's river metaphor to chart critical incidents in musical creativity (Jolly, 2016):

The river of experience is a reflexive tool since pupils, on their own or with the help of the researcher, draw it in ways that they feel are appropriate, linking it to critical incidents or moments in their lives: each bend of the river's path marks a critical incident.
(Burnard, 2002, p 2)

Jolly (2016) used this as a data capture technique, co-constructing the image with interviewees as both a reflective and analytical tool. I decided that a tree was a more fitting structure to explore and express my different research questions: before, during and after TAEDS. Different parts of the tree would represent these stages and as a living organism, it held the metaphorical possibilities inherent in a life-cycle: seeds and saplings; fruit and flowers. But it was important to establish the precedents for use of this particular image, in order to refine my own design, and also to investigate the critical incident model.

Critical incident charting was originally used as a clinical tool for empowerment in Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1991). He maintained that since our interpretations of experiences are constantly subject to revision over time, individuals can create better ways of conceptualising their lives, so that they are not victims of their own pasts but can anticipate future life events and create more positive outcomes. This can be achieved through appraisal of biographical turning points (critical incidents), potentially validated by the support and analysis of others: co-construction, in other words.

Education researchers Pope and Denicolo built on Kelly's scientific Repertory Grid by creating a system of personal constructs. They saw the potential for visual art and devised the 'snake' time-line imagery for teachers to consider their professional experiences (Pope and Denicolo, 1993). Burnard developed this critical incident metaphor further, to reflect on significant points in creative musical learning journeys. She argued that co-construction of a visual elicitation tool could 'create a positive learning environment in which both teachers and students can take risks, engage in imaginative activity, and do things differently' (Burnard, 2012, p 167). I originally planned to make use of Burnard's method of the interviewer devising a visual chart to reflect his/her view of particular turning points or significant events. This would then be verified or adapted by the interviewee. However, my subsequent research on visual elicitation methods led me to reconsider this.

5.5.2 Issues in Visual Methodology

The recent prevalence of visual ethnography and methodologies in different fields (Banks, 2001; Pink, 2003; Rose, G., 2001) has given rise to a critique of visual elicitation, when used without due sensitivity (Prosser 2013). Although she recognises the unique importance of visual art as a tool for thinking, discussion and expression and acknowledges the potential value of discussing personal issues through use of an intermediary visual image, Prosser regards visual elicitation as the 'most influential and abused methodological genre in contemporary visual research' (2013, p186). These are strong words, but she is mindful of the ethical issues in presenting participants with visual images chosen by a researcher; even apparently innocuous visual stimuli can evoke unexpected or painful memories.

In 2012, such were the concerns that a dedicated issue of the *International Journal of Research and Method in Education* featured the editorial *Visual Methodology: previously, now and in the future* (Wall et al, 2012). They argued that , 'Visual methods and participatory ideals are in creative synergy ... [and] can support two-way communication, facilitate partnership, reduce power dynamics and increase the validity and rigour of the process' (2012, p 225). But this only happens if this is

integrated at all stages of the research. This is important to facilitate empowerment and to determine whether participants are really having their say, with ownership of their own visual data.

Rose, a cultural geographer, identified 'three sites at which the meanings of an image are made: the site(s) of the production of an image, the site of the image itself and the site(s) where it is seen by various audiences' (2001, 16). In her review of interdisciplinary approaches to visual image interpretation, Pink developed this idea as 'audiencing' (2003, p 186) and emphasised four key considerations in relation to any image used: the context of its production; its actual content and most interestingly for my purposes, 'the contexts in, and subjectivities through, which images are viewed; and ... the materiality and agency of images' (2003, p 187). She concluded that the visual meanings that the researcher seeks to understand 'will often lie at the intersection of these different areas of interpretation, rather than being "revealed" by just one approach' (Pink, 2003, p 187.) However, Pink was mostly discussing use of photos and film, very different from the stylised tree image that I was designing.

Prosser commended experienced qualitative visual researchers, such as Pink and Rose, who 'seek to implement collaborative relationships in their research relationships that have some commonality with an ethic of care approach' (Prosser, 2013, p 207). Interestingly, researching towards the end of her career as an academic and social worker, and using visual methods to identify and express critical moments within young people's narratives, Kearns valued and validated a 'beginner researcher' identity in its capacity 'to integrate and transform existing claims' (Kearns, 2012, p. 24).

Although as an inexperienced researcher this gave me some licence, I realised I would potentially be adversely impacting knowledge production (Pink, 2003) and disempowering participants, if I labelled their TAEDS Trees myself. Having considered these ethical issues, Kearns' views gave me the confidence to steer away from labelling the Trees with my interpretation of what the alumni had said. I altered the design of my visual metaphor: on the template I labelled just one of the branches, leaves and flowers as an example, leaving the rest of the Tree blank for participants to label as they wished. This, I believe, gave them ownership of the data.

5.5.3 Tree Metaphors

In her work on reflective practice within arts, Bolton (2014) finds metaphor an expressive vehicle, alongside story and poetry. I searched for ways in which a tree metaphor in particular had been used. Theron et al (2010), researching South African teachers living with HIV/AIDS, discussed using a tree as symbolic image of grief created by a study participant. In contrast to this was Duncan's work, which drew on both tree and river metaphors in his empowering appreciative enquiry research with

excluded Pakistani women: this philosophical approach is based on the social constructionist premise that 'solutions are already within organisations, teams, individuals or communities and will be discovered if the right attention is given' (Duncan, 2015, p 56).

I found an even more positive and pertinent use of tree images in Siraj-Blatchford (2013): devising new models of leadership and management within Early Years practice. Participants were encouraged to create their own visual versions of 'a tree with the four key 'branches' of effective leadership and management, defined as leadership qualities, management skills, professional attributes and personal characteristics and attributes' (2013, p 39). These gave rise to very personal choices of tree, for example a willow to reflect flexibility (2013, p 140) and use of the roots to signify qualities and influences. Within contemporary action research writings (Bradbury, 2015), Pynch makes use of a "tree of life' exercise ... family roots, life's structure, leaves of information, flowers of accomplishment and buds of hope' (Pynch, 2015, p 701). This was more what I was looking for.

5.5.4 The TAEDS Tree

As I had not found one suitable model, I created my own stylised hybrid TAEDS Tree with the breadth and sturdiness of the archetypal oak (Mitchell, 1982), yet with broad chestnut leaves and upright flowers. Like an oak, it also had acorns to represent the TAEDS legacy. The Roots would represent early events and role-models that influenced alumni to do a TAEDS degree. The Branches showed graduate skills and capabilities acquired through TAEDS; the Leaves were the specific aspects of TAEDS which cultivated these and the Flowers represented fruition: aspects of current employment which drew directly on TAEDS experiences. The template is below:

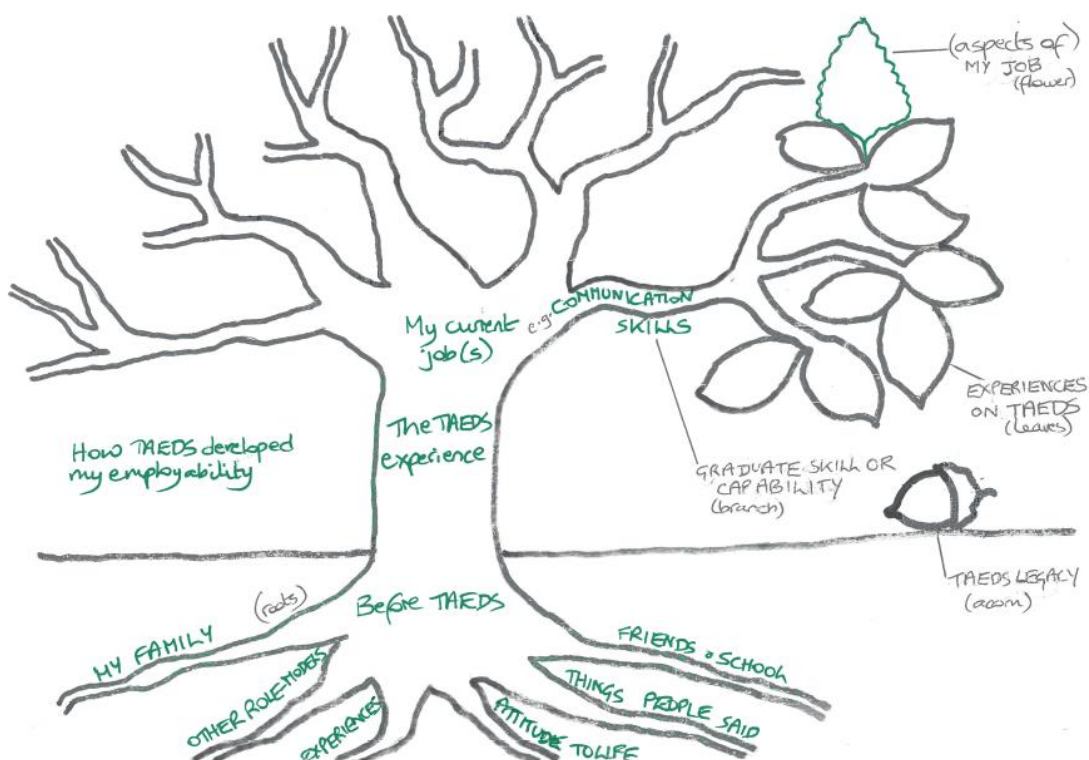


Figure 5-1 The TAEDS Tree template

A documented conversation between two media educators and researchers gave me a clear sense that I was on the right track with the TAEDS Tree. Discussing the use of images such as a tree, to represent learning, and a patchwork quilt as expression of identity, Gauntlett affirmed,

Most people can't really provide accurate descriptions of why they do things, or like things – let alone their identities and motivations – as soon as you ask them. But most language-based studies capture and preserve those instant responses as 'data'. In the new creative methods, we don't do that. Instead we have a reflective process, taking time, so the data you end up with is the result of thoughtful reflection ... by inviting participants to create things as part of the research process, it's a different way into a research question. We don't even need to get too stuck on whether it's 'better' than another method really. It's a different way in, and engages the brain in a different way, drawing a different kind of response. (Gauntlett & Holzwarth, 2006, p. 84).

This insight recalled those of Lakoff and Johnson (2003), and seemed to justify this form of knowledge-acquisition within my study. The power of role-models, early experiences of drama, critical incidents, relationship to TAEDS and other factors contributed towards participants' life-narratives and dynamic identities. Labelling their own TAEDS Trees after the interviews allowed the flexibility for participants to re-evaluate their significant themes of their life journeys and validated their own perspectives.

5.6 Data Collection

5.6.1 The Sample

Given the Ed D timescale, a fully longitudinal study was not possible, but it was important to sample the final new students embarking on TAEDS as well as alumni, to gain a sense of how expectations and perspectives may have changed over time. Since it has been a B.A. programme since 1996, there are about 400 TAEDS alumni and the closed TAEDS Facebook page currently numbers 200 plus alumni and staff.

5.6.2 The Pilot

The pilot consisted of one alumna, who was known to me professionally. To test face viability and reliability or, as Shenton (2004) would describe it, the dependability of the prototype questionnaire, the pilot completed an early draft of the online questionnaire, an interview and a TAEDS Tree. While it was important to ensure anonymity and ethical protocol (Yin, 2014), the iterative relationship with the pilot case proved invaluable in providing feedback to strengthen the questionnaire design and interview schedule. Where appropriate, pilot data has been used to supplement that of the main study and has been incorporated into the interview and TAEDS Tree findings.

5.6.3 The Participants

The alumni survey was returned by 55 participants, about a quarter of the total alumni. Following this, the self-selected group of volunteers for interview then became a purposive case sample (Cohen et al, 2007). From the sixteen volunteers, I chose five to interview, who represented the TAEDS cohort diversity. They had all graduated since 2009, in order for the TAEDS impact to be more current. The pilot interview became the sixth participant. The new intake questionnaire was a non-probability convenience sample, involving the whole 2015-2016 Year 1 cohort, numbering ten.

5.6.4 Timescale

The pilot was completed in Spring, 2015 and the online questionnaire went live on *Survey Monkey* from July 13th, 2015, closing on 5th September. The five alumni volunteers were interviewed from December, 2015- January, 2016 and submitted hard copies of their TAEDS tree within a few weeks. The transcriptions were typed up and emailed to participants for validation; this was completed by June, 2016.

Prior to this, during Welcome Week in October 2015, the new Year 1s filled in the hard copy questionnaire.

5.7 Data Analysis

5.7.1 How I analysed the data

Primarily I utilised the constant comparative method to generate meaning through conceptual clustering and making contrasts and connections (Cohen et al et al, 2007). From the online questionnaire, I grouped open-ended responses meaningfully, through open, axial and selective colour-coding (Thomas, 2016). In addition, thick description (Geertz, 1975) was employed to interpret data within the context.

In relation to the interviews, identification of both explicit and implicit themes (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003), was followed by a tally system to identify occurrences in each transcript. Key words and concepts were identified, relating to choice of language, broader issues and contrastive rhetoric (Bryman, 2001). Through studying the TAEDS Trees alongside the transcripts, I identified contrasts and conceptualised themes diagrammatically, see Table 4. Prior to this, I had considered several analysis methods, which I outline below.

5.7.2 Constant Comparative Method

This basic method of the interpretative paradigm was most appropriate for my study. It makes use of colour-codes to identify temporary constructs; second-order constructs and finally themes or categories (Cohen et al, 2007). I found Thomas' 'theme mapping network analysis' (2013) very useful, with its integration of key quotations and themes. Apposite on two levels, Thomas conceived 'network analysis' through a tree metaphor (2013) and adapted 'theme mapping' from Jones' 'construct mapping' (1985), itself derived from Kelly's personal constructs (1991).

I was mindful of the fact that 'Every way of seeing is also a way of not seeing' (Silverman, 2005, p. 182) and that coding frames are intrinsically subjective. I was alert to potential bias, where, 'Categories may reflect the researcher's agenda and imposition of meaning more than the text may sustain or the producers of the text ... may have intended' (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 490). To avoid fragmentation by focussing too narrowly, requires zooming in and out of the coding lens (Creswell, 2009): interrogation of the overall perspective of the key questions and their relationship to the contextual codes (Cohen et al, 2007). This is the essence of the constant comparative method, which shares assumptions with grounded theory.

5.7.3 Grounded Theory

Although named by Glaser and Strauss (1967), this intrinsically reflexive notion that ideas emerge from immersion in a situation has always been at the heart of interpretative enquiry. Thomas

critiques the idea that developed theories and predictions can really be made through grounded theory, affirming that 'constant comparison is the kernel of grounded theory worth preserving' (2013, p 239). In contrast Cohen et al detail the complex terminologies, advocating 'thick description' as a way of applying one's prior knowledge and insights to annotate the data. He is at pains to point out that 'grounded theory is not exempt from the conventional criteria of rigorous research' (2007, p 602), while also recognising that to use this experiential method, certain qualities are required of the researcher, particularly:

Tolerance and openness to data and what is emerging; tolerance of confusion and regression (feeling stupid when the theory does not become immediately obvious). (Cohen et al, 2007, p 599)

Charmaz (2013) articulates the contested place of grounded theory, since few actually begin their studies without some knowledge of the field, which is what Glaser advocates. In detailing the reflexive and iterative principles of constructivist grounded theory, Charmaz identifies the potential for social justice. The experimental and creative nature of constructive grounded theory was motivating. Bolton recognises that we have to 'be willing to stay with uncertainty' (2014, p. 10) and that we write to understand. But this requirement for openness to the experience and resistance to premature formulation of theory was also daunting. Although I am not a naturally patient person, Buddhist 'sitting with' the whole process of emerging understanding was crucial. I also considered discourse analysis to cross-reference and strengthen findings.

5.7.4 Discourse Analysis

Pelias maintains that, 'Remembering is a collective act, something we do together. It is created in discourse, in our interaction, in this moment ... Memory is not what emerges from an individual mind but what emerges from social life. So together we share the burden of what is to be told' (2004, p 58). However, this is the psychologists' use of the term discourse, to mean what is spoken between people, whereas sociologists refer to discourse as 'sets of linguistic material that are coherent in organisation and content' (Cohen et al, 2007, p 450). In relation to TAEDS, the interview transcripts were both discrete material and evidence of socially constructed dialogues, capable of being analysed for their performatory and emancipatory content, as well as what was being said (Habermas, 1972). I was alert to this in my data analysis.

Having determined that the constant comparative method would be my main method, there were major ethical considerations to address.

5.8 Ethical considerations

Although I was no longer teaching the alumni or in a professional power relationship to them, as a staff member, I was part of the TAEDS community, so this was insider research (Floyd and Linet, 2012). I had deliberately chosen to interview alumni, rather than current students, but I had prior knowledge of those of the alumni who had been my students and tutees. I still wrote references for some of them, so it was important to maintain an appropriate professional stance.

5.8.1 Ethical protocol

Full details of the research project underwent rigorous scrutiny before approval by the University Ethics Committee (See Appendix 1), but my ethical commitments went much further than this. Given the close-knit nature of the TAEDS community, I was mindful of the continuing responsibility as cultural insider/situated knower (Floyd, 2012) after this research ended. This inevitably involved 'white lies' to maintain confidentiality and effectively 'forgetting' confidential information (Seidman, 2006), for example when meeting alumni, who I had previously interviewed, at social events; anything they chose to share in this context which I already knew, I would hear as if for the first time. This included shifts in my professional relationships with current students, since they may have had contact with individuals who were part of the study, through the ongoing alumni mentoring scheme.

Details of who was interviewed and where and when the interviews took place were not shared with other interviewees, or discussed with any staff members, other alumni or students; nor were they disclosed on the shared Outlook Calendar. These structures also applied to the pilot, who was fully briefed about insider ethics and completely reliable. I made the decision not to provide detailed pen-portraits of the interviewees as, even anonymised, they could be identified within the TAEDS community.

However, drama practitioners have long struggled with ethics and in her editorial for a special edition 'On Ethics' of the prestigious journal, *Research in Drama Education*, Helen Nicholson recognises the complexities of contextuality, when practitioners are researching elements of their own practice:

Ethics throws a spotlight on the balance of power between the researcher and the researched. Issues of power, trust, care and authority remain of central importance to those who work in drama education in all its various inflections. (Nicholson, 2005, p. 119)

Checking the quality criteria of authenticity, cogency, plausibility and credibility (Harris, 2013) went some way towards counteracting my power position (Bryman et al, 2011). The reciprocal relationship between researcher and subjects was recognised and awareness maintained of the

possibility of the Hawthorne effect (Cohen et al et al, 2007) or of participants seeking to unfairly advantage themselves by being in a privileged position in relation to one of their ex-lecturers.

With implied consent, *Survey Monkey* was used as an anonymising tool for the online questionnaire as IP addresses are not recorded. Interview transcript anonymity was ensured by allocating pseudonyms to participants and excluding sensitive or identifying detail. Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms were augmented by verbal and email reassurance that no individual utterances would be traceable (See Appendices 2-4).

Perhaps the ethical challenges and an experimental methodology were a necessary corollary of an emerging area of research, as Nicholson asserts:

As drama education becomes increasingly recognised as an intellectual field, innovative research methods are important and necessarily involve a degree of risk-taking. But to protect ourselves and others, let us try to ensure that we enter the research process fully prepared, and aware of the risks we are taking. (1999, p 102-3)

Within the inherently risky situation of researching a closing arts-based degree programme, I took all ethical steps to protect participants.

5.9 Limiting factors

While acknowledging that 'objectivity' was neither possible nor desirable, due to the subjective situatedness of the researcher and the legacy of patriarchy, credibility was enhanced by my background and experience, as detailed in Chapter 1 and my familiarity with TAEDS, in line with Shenton's views (2004). Since TAEDS is unique, it made transferability and dependability difficult; there was no similar programme with which to compare data and neither could the research be potentially replicated elsewhere. Because of the time restraints and scope of the study, the small interview sample was located within the south-east of England. Through triangulation with quantitative questionnaire data, it was nevertheless possible to offset these disadvantages through the much larger online survey.

Therefore, despite these limitations I consider that in its provision of exemplary knowledge, the study has 'real world relevance' (Gorard, 2001, p. 3) and the potential to determine what aspects of TAEDS could usefully be included in future undergraduate courses, designed to empower non-traditional students through providing alternative routes to success in HE. The primary research was framed by a conceptual metaphor and undertaken from within a socially constructivist critical theoretical paradigm. Having established a robust methodology, I now detail the findings.

Chapter 6 *The TAEDS Trees: Findings*

6.1 Introduction

Through collating and analysing the findings, I built up an evidenced picture of TAEDS alumni identity and employability and was able to develop preliminary theories to compare with the literature. After revisiting the data collection methods, I address the five research questions, providing diagrams as appropriate. Where *Survey Monkey* has abbreviated categories, I have expanded these in superimposed text boxes for clarity. Respondents who skipped an online question are only mentioned if there were more than 10% who did this. Figures were rounded to the nearest whole number. Quotations from participants are shown in italics.

6.2 Data Collection methods

There were four data collection methods: **alumni online survey; new intake paper questionnaire; alumni interviews** and **TAEDS tree images** (by the same six interviewees).

6.2.1 The alumni online survey

There were fifty-five respondents to the alumni online survey. Administered through *Survey Monkey* in Summer, 2015, it consisted of twenty-two questions (see Appendix 5). Originally, this dissertation was partly conceptualised as a marketing tool, as discussed in Chapter 1, so over half the questions focussed on the research area **'What are the professional and personal circumstances and influences that can lead to doing a TAEDS degree?'** Sixteen online survey participants indicated that they had more to contribute, by anonymously volunteering to be selected for interview. I collated separately responses from those who were the first generation in their family to attend university.

6.2.2 The paper questionnaire for the new intake

The paper questionnaire for the new intake of ten TAEDS students was to provide more recent data, to compare with the alumni survey. Each new student filled in the eighteen questions anonymously, during Welcome Week in September 2015, before the October 2015 announcement of the programme's phased closure, so their responses were unaffected by this.

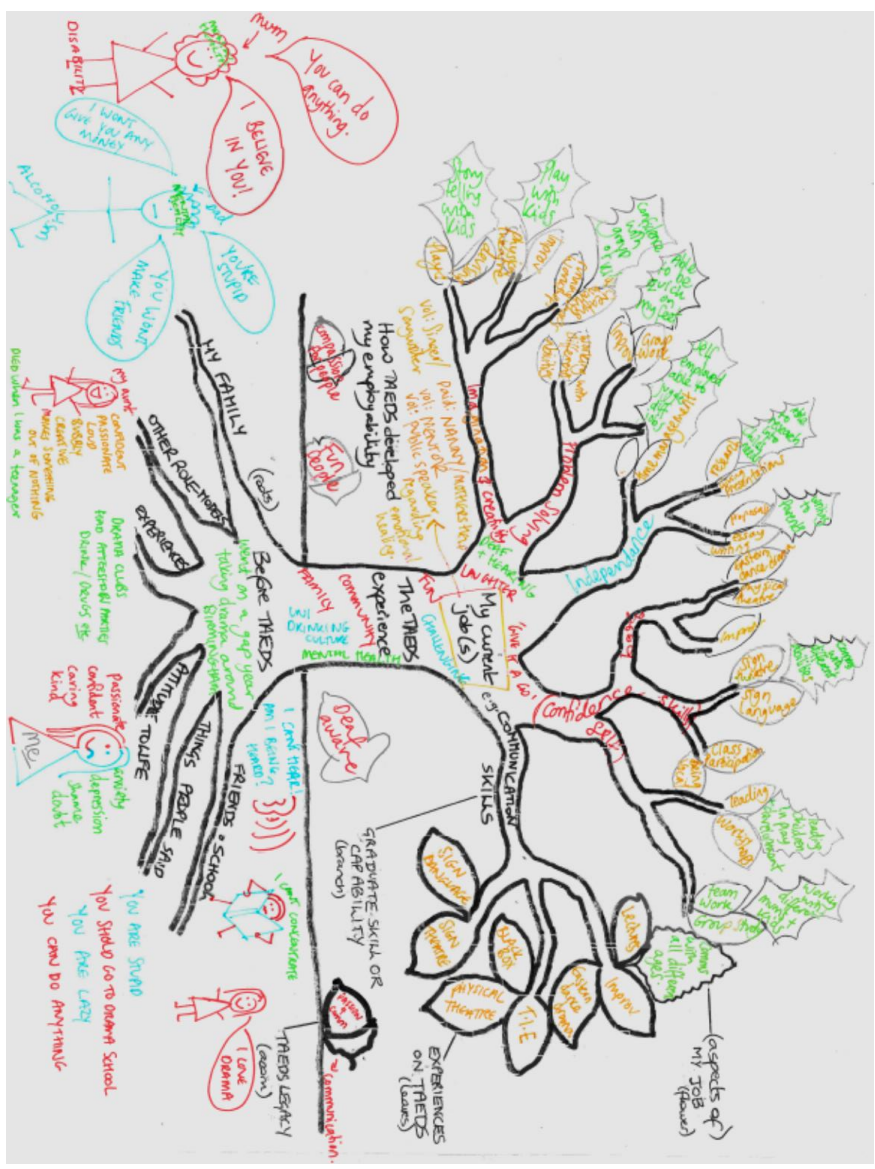
6.2.3 The alumni interviews

Pseudonyms were allocated to the six alumni interviewed as follows: Annie, Becky, Frances, Sue, Tess and Mandy. Consisting of twenty-one open-ended questions, the interviews addressed each research area in more detail. Although the questions did not duplicate those in the alumni survey, to

cross-reference findings they sometimes referred to alumni survey statistics. (See Appendix 17 for a sample transcript extract, with initial coding).

6.2.4 The TAEDS tree images

Each interviewee submitted a hard copy of their own tree image within a few weeks of their interview. As explained in Chapter 5, this was intended as a tool to engage thinking and reflection (Gauntlett, 2006) and to enable a deeper understanding of the issues discussed in the interviews (Lloyd, 2002). I designed a stylised, hybrid tree, with each section labelled to represent a different aspect of the TAEDS alumni journey (See Appendix 8). Figure 1 below is an example of a tree completed by Frances. The first image is the whole tree and on the next page is the upper section, with a text box to elucidate the experiences on TAEDS (emboldened) which support aspects of her job.





- Devising; plays:** story-telling with kids
- Physical Theatre; impro:** playing with kids
- Creating and running workshops:** confidence with group of kids
- Working with different abilities; impro; group work:** able to be quick on my feet
- Time-management:** self-employed and able to juggle different jobs
- Research; giving presentations:** able to research into child's needs
- Proposals; essay writing:** writing to parents
- Sign Theatre; sign language:** communicating with different abilities
- Leading workshops; class participation; being vocal:** leading children in play development
- Team work; group study:** working with different mums and kids
- Lectures; impro; Eastern Dance Drama; TIE; Black Box; Physical Theatre; sign language; Sign Theatre:** communication with different ages

Figure 6-1 TAEDS tree: whole image and upper section Frances, 2016

Frances spent time colour-coding her tree and the result is a colourful visual image, where she used blue to represent negative words said to and by her; green to show challenging experiences and skills she uses at work; red for affirmative statements, strong role-models and the TAEDS legacy; finally, she used orange to highlight her own positive attributes, TAEDS modules and experiences and her own graduate qualities. In the bottom section, ‘Before TAEDS’, this informative colour-coding is particularly effective in demonstrating the mixed messages she received when growing up. TAEDS alumni frequently experienced this combination of encouragement and discouragement, and this began to raise questions about their identity formation, which I discuss later.

6.3 Roots and Nourishment: What are the professional and personal circumstances and influences that can lead to doing a TAEDS degree?

This section is divided into four, each part covering one thematic aspect and including data from all the relevant collection methods. Based on the interview and survey questions, I labelled them as follows: **Respondent characteristics** cover profile data; **Drama and other subjects** reports on school or college choices; **Role-models and other influences** particularly addresses graduate role-models. Finally, **Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS** considers how respondents became aware of TAEDS, as well as their reasons for entering HE in general and choosing TAEDS in particular.

6.3.1 Respondent characteristics: alumni survey Questions 1-5

Qu 5 What is your gender? established that 50/54 who responded were female, with only four males responding to the questionnaire. All the first generation respondents were female. The majority were in the 25-34 age-range, unremarkable in relation to the follow-up question to **Qu 2 What year did you graduate?** Of the forty-four who answered, several were clustered around 2010, as can be seen below, making them about twenty-five years old in 2015. 7/23 who responded were mature students.

1998	1999		2002		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	2		2		3	4	3	3	5	5	6	1	5	2	3	1

It is worth noting that more than half the respondents skipped **Qu 2 (see Appendix 5)**, maybe because none of the categories listed applied to them. In retrospect, I could have included a further one entitled ‘None of the above’. Although this may have distorted these results, they are corroborated by the new intake questionnaire in 6.3.2.

Only 1/23 identified as international, which links with the response to **Qu 4 Please describe your race/ethnicity**, where 2/52 who responded identified as other than white British.

In relation to **Qu 3**, which concerns hearing status, 5/53 described themselves as deaf or hard of hearing. From those who answered **Qu 2**, it can be seen that 5/23 had SEN or learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, and 9/23 qualified for the DSA. 9/23 also lived at home during their degree.

6.3.2 Respondent characteristics: new intake questionnaire

Responses were proportionally similar to the alumni survey, although new intake numbers were much smaller (10). Seven of the new intake were female and all were in the 18-24 age range. Eight identified as white British, with two black or black Caribbean.

One was hard of hearing, two had learning difficulties or SEN and three were applying for the DSA. Three were living at home.

6.3.3 Respondent characteristics: interviews and TAEDS trees

Interviewees were chosen to represent the TAEDS cohort. All five interviewees (and the pilot) were female; four were aged 26-29 and four were first generation. Two mature students were 35 and 45: both lived at home when TAEDS students. One interviewee was deaf first language BSL; one hard of hearing; one had hearing issues and two had dyslexic tendencies.

From the data so far, I established that recent cohort characteristics, outlined in Chapter 4, remained relatively constant during the twenty years TAEDS was a degree programme.

6.3.4 Drama and other school subjects: alumni survey Qus 10-12

In response to **Qu 10 What were your favourite subjects at school/college and why?** Drama, Theatre or Performing Arts were unsurprisingly named by 41/48. English was the next favourite, with 18 choices: Art 8 and Languages 6. Eighteen respondents used the word 'creative' in their answer, including half of those who were first generation. These students are more likely to be drawn to HE through drama: *'Drama: it's creative and I was good at it'* (First generation, alumni survey, 2015). Creativity became a key theme, particularly in alumni self-perception, and is a sought after graduate capability, as referred to in Chapter 4.

The range of responses to **Qu 11 What subjects did you study at post-16 level?** was broad, naming twenty-seven. The most popular are shown below:

- Drama/Theatre Studies 38
- English 21
- Psychology 14
- R.E. 7

I found the high incidence of Psychology intriguing; this was studied by a third of first generation students. Pursuing this and R.E. suggests an interest in human nature and ethics, so called softer subjects; these topics form the substance of drama and theatre, as discussed in Chapter 2.

In response to **Qu 12 How successful were you in Drama/Theatre Studies/Performing Arts?** half the participants described themselves as successful, very successful, or provided results showing high achievement. Given that all had achieved a university place, this self-evaluation suggests low self-efficacy or poor exam results. Indeed, two first generation participants commented on the disparity between their practical and written achievement, for example: *'my practical assessments were of a high standard but my formal written expression was incredibly weak.'* (First generation, alumni survey, 2015) This potentially relates to their access to academic aspects of schooling,

6.3.5 Drama and other school subjects: new intake questionnaire Qus 11-13

Responses to **Qu 12 What subjects did you study at post-16 level?** were proportionally similar to the alumni, but with some differences. All named Drama, Theatre or Performing Arts as favourite subjects. For those applying to TAEDS in 2015, Psychology was as popular as English.

- Drama/Theatre studies 10
- English 4
- Psychology 4
- Dance 2
- Media 2

This could be because more schools now offer Psychology A level. Students may opt for newer courses in Media and Dance because they perceive them as creative and complementing Drama/Theatre Studies.

In response to **Qu 12 How successful were you in Drama/Theatre Studies/Performing Arts?** 8/10 described themselves as successful or very successful compared to 24/48 in the alumni survey. On this basis, new TAEDS intake self-efficacy appears higher than that of alumni. Like the first generation alumni, two commented on the mismatch between practical and written assessment: *'very successful in acting but written exams let me down.'* (New entrant questionnaire, 2015). This could be because of the increasingly academic demands of Drama and Theatre GCSEs and A Levels.

6.3.6 Drama and other school subjects: interviews A (2, 3)

Drama/Theatre or Performing arts were also the favoured subjects for all interviewees, with Art, Biology, Dance, English and Music also mentioned. Several spoke of drama's importance in helping them cope with challenging personal circumstances. Although one could argue that many students with problems throw themselves into their best subject as a way of coping, participation in drama provides unique opportunities to address personal issues and trial ways of being, through becoming someone else (as discussed in Chapter 2), and accessing support from a close-knit and trusting group (Nicholson, 2002). Becky, for example, felt drama helped her cope with family bereavement:

It was just a crucial age [to change schools]... and I had all my options sorted ...moving away from friends ... just get what options are left at [new school]... Drama was one of them, for which I am eternally grateful, it really helped me through that grieving period as well.

In spite of school phobia, Tess began to love drama at secondary school, and although Frances had health issues, she found a voice through drama:

I always seemed to have ear problems and with that had some hearing loss and so I think drama had always been something that I seemed to find my place in, and raise my voice in ... from a very young age I loved performing.

Although performing was liberating, Frances described the mixed benefits of out of school drama:

Hanging out with 18 year olds you end up going to parties where you drink and smoke and I was only 13 or 14 but I was inspired by these people ... so I suppose there was the negative and positive aspect of feeling free in performance but also being able to dabble in that sort of stuff at a very young age because of the drama side of things.

The drama community outside school was empowering, but also led to growing up faster, a theme developed later in the chapter.

6.3.7 Role-models and influences: alumni survey Qu 8

In response to **Qu 8 Did any of your family members go to university?** 17/47 had siblings who did, 13/47 had parents or carers and 2 extended family.

This means that 34/47 were part of the first generation in their family to go to university. I was interested to compare data, from the 15 shown by **Qu 8** to have no graduates at all within the family or extended family, with the general alumni survey. I analysed it separately and where there are differences, I have drawn attention to these.

6.3.8 Role-models and influences: new intake questionnaire Qu 10

New intake proportions were similar to alumni survey: of the 10 respondents, 2 had siblings (but not parents) who had been to university; 3 had parents; 2 had extended family; 3 had no family members. Therefore 7 were part of the first generation in their family to go to university. 3 named their teachers as the reason that drama was their favourite subject: *'I had a very inspiring teacher who helped me for 7 years and showed me how creative I can be. [Drama] is a wonderful way to relax but also work at the same time.'* (New intake questionnaire, 2015).

6.3.9 Role-models and influences: interviews A (1, 2, 3 & 5)

Four questions focussed on role-models and influences and I have addressed them separately below. Three of the six interviewees were first generation and three second generation. Two had graduate parents, one a graduate sibling and two a graduate uncle. Two had no graduates within the extended family.

	Annie	Becky	Frances	Mandy	Sue	Tess
Positive role-models and influences	Mother Nan Great-grandfather Son	Mother	Mother Aunt	Mother Cousin Dance teacher	Sister Older brother Grandparents Drama teacher	Mother Older sister Best friend
Graduates in family	No	Uncle	Father	Uncle Mother	No	Older brother
First generation	Yes				Yes	Yes

Table 1 Interviewee role-models and influences

Role-models:

Five cited their mother as the most important role-model. Annie explained: *'my Mum obviously... she was this sort of centre of my life,'* and Mandy was impressed by her mother's further study:

The fact that she went back to university when I was in secondary school ... she's definitely always been a role-model of mine – very strong independent working woman.

Frances recalled another female who was creatively inspirational:

I remember my Aunt being a real role model to me, she was very enthusiastic, passionate, whatever she put her hands to, she turned everything into sort of creative exploration ... she totally inspired me to throw myself into things and make anything out of something.

Like the new intake, two interviewees cited school teachers as role-models and Mandy explained the personal, as well as professional, support provided:

[dance teacher] was just so inspiring and she was there for you as well pastorally ... she was a graduate and I'd seen her go on studying and do what she enjoyed doing and inspiring others and that's when I thought I want to work with people and students – I didn't necessarily know what age-group then - I wanted to further my studies and not just go into the working world.

These quotations show that role-models were admired for other reasons such as strength, caring or creativity, and also engaging in further study. Tess mentioned her best friend: *'she's graduated from RADA so she's real theatre, singing, dancing ... she did influence me quite a lot.'*

In answer to the question **Do you think you are already a role-model for anyone else? In what way?** all named a family member or the young people they worked with. Although there was modesty (*'role-model is a bit of a big title to fill!'*), they recognised that others were inspired by them, whether as mothers, single parents or professionals:

I work with special needs, and the fact that I have a disability myself, definitely yeah, I like to think they look up to me and think "Oh yes, I could do the same" or go on and achieve good and amazing things. (Sue)

Frances was a mentor within her church, sharing her experiences:

It's not about I know better, but "Oh mate, you can do this and these are the choices you have in front of you, it's up to you - I took these choices and some of them didn't work out for me and I took some of these and these did work" and it's about empowering people to make their own decisions and not feel like someone's going "This is the way you must go" because that just makes you want to rebel against it.

The themes of rebellion, empowerment and identity formation emerging here resonated with earlier findings about growing up quickly through drama, and the idea of gaining satisfaction through the achievements of others was to figure increasingly later in the chapter.

Influences:

In response to **'Were there any significant events or things that were said to you that you'll always remember and that influenced your life choices?'**, half mentioned positive encouragement from teachers, such as: *'always strive to be the best, and do your best at everything.'* However, interviewees also recalled negative comments which, in Mandy's case, provided motivation to prove them wrong:

"I don't think she should carry on with Psychology – she's going to struggle with the theory and should stick to the more practical-based work"... I said "No, I want to carry on"{laughs} ... I ended up getting the highest mark in the class.

This comment is interesting since, as a drama student, Mandy already knew how practical work could be a conduit to more theoretical aspects, but her teacher did not. Parental support, or lack of it, was mentioned: *'For me, it was more about what wasn't said ... There was never sort of "You can do whatever you want, you can be whoever you want"'. (Becky).*

Frances' parents had opposing perspectives:

My mum had always believed in me, in the drama inside of me and giving me the opportunity to do it ... I had quite a negative voice from my father ... "she's un-academic, she does drama".

This refers back to the devaluing of drama described in Chapter 2.

6.3.10 Role-models and influences: TAEDS trees

In her tree image completed after the interview, Sue reflected further on positive role-models and their qualities, recalling her grandparents', *'words of wisdom, faith and patience'*; her sister, *'a TA who taught me care'*; her brother: *'head-chef at [London hotel]who taught me to aspire to be the best, get to the best places'* and a teacher who was a *'deaf sign singer likes drama [sic].'*

Aspiration and caring were also themes for the three who filled in the underground roots part of the image, 'Before TAEDS'. Memorable things people said are shown emboldened and characteristics and strategies to deal with these shown underneath:

You can't. You can ...
Positivity Always look forward

Bullies "You can't do that, you're deaf"...
*Willing to learn Support Independence Emotional Intelligence Perseverance, determination
Prove that I can do it ... Positive What doesn't break you makes you stronger Treat others
how you want to be treated Believer of fate [sic]*

You are stupid. You should go to drama school. You are lazy. You can do anything ...
Passionate confident caring kind anxiety depression shame doubt

The strong, but contradictory, messages reveal doubt and low self-efficacy, but also determination. The following image exemplifies this complexity of role-models and influences (see Appendix 14 for enlarged version):

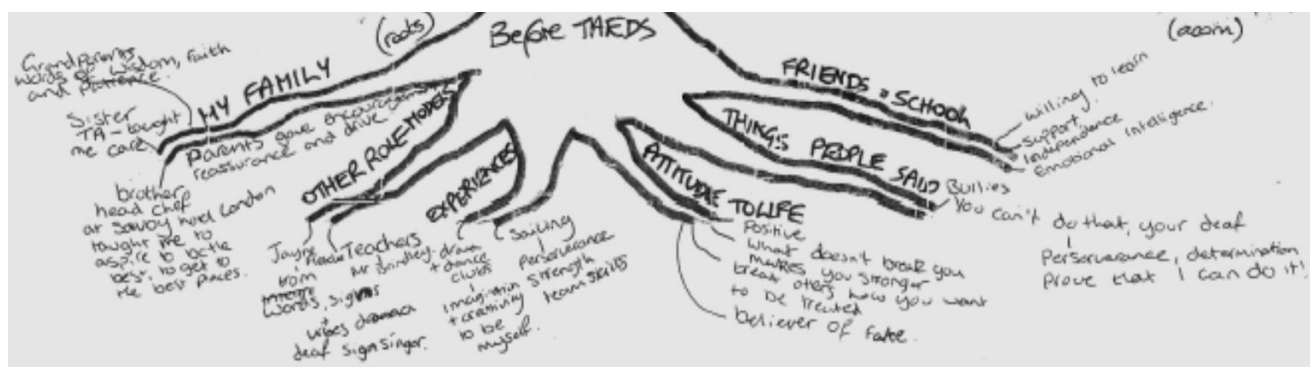


Figure 6-2 TAEDS tree extract, Before TAEDS, Sue, 2016

Overcoming the challenge of dichotomous messages requires positivity, willingness to learn and hard work: all are valued graduate capabilities. When Sue writes ‘What doesn’t break you, makes you stronger,’ she is demonstrating resilience, a feature cultivated on TAEDS.

6.3.11 Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS: alumni surveys Qus 6-14

I begin with data for the more general questions, **Qu 9 and Qu13**. Responses to **What made you decide to go to university?** can broadly be categorised as follows:

- Continue in education/gain qualifications 15
- ‘Natural progression’ 7
- Develop drama skills 7
- Enjoyment of learning 5
- University experience 5
- Improve employment prospects 4
- Develop teaching skills 2
- Family expectations 2

Surprisingly perhaps, employment was specifically mentioned by just four respondents: ‘I thought it would give me better job options.’ Natural progression was mentioned by one first generation alumni, showing high parental expectation: ‘I was the first ‘academically minded’ person in the family. There was never any question as to whether I would continue my education.’ (First generation, alumni survey, 2015).

Responses to **Qu 13 How did you find out about TAEDS?** show that the greatest category was the UCAS website at 20/49. A significant number of responses, 18/49, randomly searched online before coming across TAEDS. Two reported that discovering TAEDS changed their minds about HE: ‘before I found the TAEDS course I was considering not going to University as I didn’t want to spend 3 years on a course i was doing just for the degree [sic].’ (Alumni survey, 2015) Pertinent information from

Qu 14 What other courses did you consider and where else were you offered a place? indicated that 12/45 were interested only in TAEDS and applied to this programme alone. All this suggests a disregard for HE *per se* and that TAEDS was somehow perceived as more than, or different from, a more conventional degree.

Qu 6 Why did you decide to do a TAEDS degree? provided an opportunity to tick reasons, before the open-ended **Qu 7 What other factors affected your choice?** which asked for further explication. With the exception of two categories, responses were broadly similar for first generation.

40/49 were most interested in the opportunity to learn BSL and Deaf Studies and 24/49 were motivated by the idea of deaf and hearing working together: *'I wanted to be part of that community where EVERYONE works together no matter what their ability.'* (First generation, alumni survey, 2015). 12/51 were curious about interpreting; 5/51 had family or friends with learning difficulties or disabilities and 2/51 had deaf friends or family. This awareness of inclusion and access was a key driver in choosing a TAEDS degree, alongside the attraction of drama. The following shows typical interest in the combination of subjects TAEDS offered.

I have an ultimate passion for drama and acting, and the fact that it combined sign language, theatre and education which were all subjects I was interested in as it is my lifelong dream to work with deaf children using drama although not necessarily teach but as a youth theatre company. (First generation, alumni survey, 2015)

40/49 wanted to develop their acting/theatre/drama skills, with 16/51 indicating that drama helps them to develop self-confidence and 7/51 showing that drama was the only subject they thought themselves good at. This builds on the findings, established earlier in the chapter, that beginning TAEDS students had low self-efficacy academically. Moreover, 33/51 indicated that they 'wanted to do something creative', which could support a sense of drama as un-academic, since in Qu 10 eighteen used the word 'creative' to describe why they enjoyed the subject.

In terms of work-related skills, 10/49 selected gaining business sense/employability or a work placement opportunity as a factor. However, 4/14 of first generation alumni were interested in employability aspects, suggesting their more focussed reason to attend HE. In relation to education, 24/49 wanted to learn teaching skills, with 14/51 thinking about teaching, but not ready to commit to a BA Ed teacher training course. A higher number, 23/51, chose TAEDS as they were not sure of their career path and the following sums up this perspective:

I didn't know what I wanted to do after school but knew that I wanted to continue with theatre in some way despite not wanting to be an actor. TAEDS kept my options open because it was so varied in subjects. (Alumni survey, 2015)

Absence of formal exams was a factor for a large number of students at 19/51; small teaching groups 10/51; high contact hours for 9/51; team/group work for 7/49 and low entry tariff for 4/51. One respondent reported: *'I struggled at the first university. An interpreter guided me to this university.'* (Alumni survey, 2015)

However, first generation alumni were significantly more interested in the lack of formal exams (7/15) and twice the proportion chose 'more independence'; perhaps because of this, only one first generation lived at home (as opposed to 9/23 of the general alumni). Parental approval was important to only 2/15, but the reputation of the UoR can be seen in the following: *'Very unique course. Very practical and learning actual skills at a good university'* (Alumni survey, 2015)

It appeared that applicants were drawn to the variety on TAEDS for a range of reasons. I then compared these findings to those of the new intake, for a more up to date perspective.

6.3.12 Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS: new intake questionnaires Qus 5-9

The 2015 new intake responses to **Qu 5 What made you decide to go to university?** were more employability-focussed than the alumni; one commented *'education is the key to success'*:

- Gain knowledge & skills 5
- Expand career opportunities 3
- Career in teaching 2
- Enjoy learning 2
- Gain qualifications 1
- Gain independence 1
- Work with drama 1

These 2015 students tended to be more focussed on HE outcomes. 6/10 found out about TAEDS through UCAS and 5/10 through the UoR website, with only two through random searching online. This suggests that both the UoR and TAEDS' marketing strategy had improved.

New intake respondents were given the same options as alumni in **Qu 6 Why have you decided to do a TAEDS degree?** and were invited to expand on the most important reasons in **Qu 7**.

- Opportunity to learn BSL/Deaf Studies 10
- Develop acting/theatre/drama skills 8
- Deaf/hearing working together 7
- Learn teaching skills 7

- Work placement opportunity 7
- Gain business sense/employability 4
- More independence/self-confidence 4
- Team/group work 3
- Develop research, analysis & writing 2

In comparison to alumni data of 40/49, all the new intake (10/10) wanted the chance to learn BSL/Deaf Studies and 7/10 (rather than 24/29 alumni) were attracted by deaf/hearing working together: *'the use of BSL in theatre and education creates a unique experience and selling point.'* Five other comments are below:

No matter the disability, people shouldn't be left out or disadvantaged, and it's up to others to be proactive and make that happen.

I thought I would enjoy it – more interesting than straight acting/drama degrees so I thought I would be less likely to get bored.

Teaching, I would love to know sign language.

A rare mixture of two of my main interests.

The way drama, education and everything is brought together.

7/10 students were curious about interpreting; this is a higher proportion than the 12/51 alumni. 6/10 students had family or friends with learning difficulties or disabilities; this is proportionally higher than 5/51 of alumni. Similarly, 4/10 students (compared to 2/51) had deaf friends or family.

All of these findings point to an increased awareness of diversity and disability issues in the new intake, as well as more informed appreciation of exactly what TAEDS entailed, particularly in relation to improving access for others. Four of the new intake had applied only to TAEDS. This participant in particular really highlighted young people's increasing desire to be inclusive:

The most important factor for me was the ability to open up drama and theatre for a wider audience. Primarily my motivator is people with a learning difficulty and allowing them to access theatre as an audience member and an actor. (New intake questionnaire, 2015)

Although the new intake sample was small, it appears that they were more aware than alumni of the benefits of drama, and also they particularly valued creativity in an increasingly academically based school curriculum. 8/10 wanted the chance to develop their acting/theatre/drama skills, similar to alumni. Twice the proportion of alumni, 6/10, stated that drama helps them to develop self-confidence and similarly, 3/10 said drama was the only subject they thought themselves good at. In relation to education, 7/10 wanted to learn teaching skills, with 3/10 thinking about teaching, but not ready to commit to a BA Ed. 9/10 wanted to do something creative, compared to 33/51 of alumni (11/15 first generation).

Similar to first generation alumni, the new intake were more focussed on gaining work-related skills. Twice the alumni proportion, 4/10, selected gaining business sense/employability as a factor influencing their choice of TAEDS, with a higher proportion of their parents approving of the degree choice (3/10). But similar to alumni, half of the new intake reported choosing TAEDS as they were unsure of their career path: *'TAEDS is a very broad course allowing me to find out where I wish to end up.'*

The inclusive range of teaching and learning styles that TAEDS offered had particularly attracted the new intake. 9/10 favoured small teaching groups, a much higher proportion than 10/51 alumni. 3/10 valued team/group work, in contrast to 7/49 alumni. Absence of formal exams was a factor for a similarly high proportion at 4/10. High contact hours were important to half the new intake (compared to 9/51 alumni) and the low entry tariff to 2/10 (compared to 4/51 alumni). Importantly, one new intake commented: *'I have family/friends with learning difficulties and disabilities, including myself and I do not think there are a lot of things out there to help or benefit them.'*

The new intake therefore had a sharper awareness of their own learning needs and the personalised learning environment at TAEDS, the value for money of high contact hours and enhanced employability, against the potential lack of opportunity elsewhere. Through the interviews, I could probe these aspects further.

6.3.13 Circumstances leading to choosing TAEDS: interviews (A 3)

During the interviews, respondents were asked **How did your friends and schooling influence you positively or negatively to do a TAEDS degree?** and interestingly, responses about school were largely negative: *'I went to mainstream with a deaf unit ... always felt like an outsider'; 'school phobic'; 'all I wanted to do was art, you know I was an artist and I sort of bucked the system', and 'I didn't really enjoy school and found the sticking to the curriculum type stuff really hard.'*

However, extra-curricular opportunities were experienced positively, as sociable activities with friends, as Tess explains: *'with my best friend ...we went on, did amateur dramatics at [theatre] ... so that was really fun, that was just in our own time.'* Frances appreciated a broader environment than school: *'I had friends who were kind of dramatic with me so we carried on the drama outside and did drama club and I was part of a theatre group within the city centre.'* Mandy too appreciated community:

I used to really love the after school activities – though I was doing Dance and Theatre A Level, I was also part of the dance society and drama club ... all the clubs available 'cos I loved that community aspect.

The contrast between school, seen as something to rebel against, and out of school learning as fun and engaging perhaps begins to explain why some alumni struggled with the more formal aspect of learning on TAEDS. I take a closer look at this in the next section on alumni views of the TAEDS experience.

6.4 The Trunk: How do alumni view the TAEDS experience?

6.4.1 Alumni survey: Qus 15, 17 & 22

Forms of support alumni accessed during the TAEDS degree included two respondents listing a note-taker under **Other (please specify)**. The high numbers who accessed support reflect the fact that TAEDS was an inclusive degree with a low entry tariff, which welcomed deaf students particularly. These figures relate to the earlier alumni findings that 5/23 of the students arrived at TAEDS with learning difficulties or special needs, such as dyslexia, and 9/23 qualified for the DSA. New entrant proportions were similar, at 2/10 and 3/10 respectively. The fact that 32/43 mentioned personal tutors suggests that the small TAEDS team were approachable and able to provide individual support.

First generation students were more likely to access Counselling or therapy (6/14 as opposed to 12/43) and less likely to make use of Careers Advice (2/14 compared to 11/43). They also found Performances the most challenging, as can be seen below in the most popular responses to Qu 17 **Please describe the following aspects of the TAEDS experience: the most useful, most challenging, most memorable and the most beneficial (in terms of your life-journey)**. Categories were given and I collated their open-ended responses:

The most beneficial (in terms of your life-journey)	Education 18/42	BSL 13/42
The most useful	BSL 19/42	Education 4/42
The most challenging	Group work 8/42	Sign Theatre/Essays 5/42
First generation views The most challenging	Performances 5/15	
The most memorable	Performances 28/42	Friendships 5/42

From the perspective of being in the world of work, alumni appreciated the value of the Education and BSL/Deaf Studies modules. However, it was striking that 9/42 found group work the most challenging, when similar proportions were initially attracted to TAEDS initially by the group work (7/49) and small teaching groups (10/51). Indeed peer learning is particularly appreciated here:

The whole Uni experience defined who I am today, lessons about life were learned, to stand on my own two feet, to mature and learn of [sic] other people. Also the subjects that I'm so passionate about I've grown even more love for and being able to use what I've learned to share and inspire others. (First generation, alumni survey, 2015)

The final question in the alumni survey was: **Qu 22 Please write a few lines to sum up your experience of TAEDS** and thirty-three responded. The responses were very positive, with adjectives such as 'wonderful' (4), 'fantastic' (3) 'amazing' (2), and several reporting that they 'loved' or 'enjoyed' it (7). The example below typifies the personal and professional growth described:

I had an amazing time whilst doing my degree. I was pushed to my limits but relished discovering how far I could be stretched and what I could handle on a professional level. I learnt so much about myself and how I work, and am stronger in many ways from my experiences at TAEDS. (Alumni survey, 2015)

The experience was also described as 'challenging' (2) with four responses also featuring some criticism of the staff, teaching and assessment, but with positives too:

Great life experience and opened up a whole new world through different eyes. Some poor teaching and biased marking at times. Very political degree in terms of human relations. Could have been even better if more professional approach taken and better qualified lecturers employed. (Alumni survey, 2015)

As described in Chapter 3, TAEDS teams were typically small and diverse, comprising sessional and part-time staff, with few full-timers. Survey views were further illuminated by interview comments on the TAEDS learning culture in the next section.

6.4.2 Interviews– TAEDS Learning Culture: D (3 & 4)

Responses to the question: **How would you describe the learning culture at TAEDS?** were very positive: 'give it a go' and 'a real openness to try and if it's not working, try again rather than "No you can't do that"... it was never can't, it was always can.' Annie commented on the effort required by students:

You got out what you put in is the crux of it ... if you were willing to put in everything you got a lot more from the experience ... if you were prepared to really try and to seek help, you would benefit.

Sue described the learning culture as:

Fun, definitely, very relaxed ... It was almost like lecturers and students were equal, well they were I think; there was no sort of hierarchy but there was a lot of respect, students and to lecturers.

This mutual respect between staff and students was important: *'because it was quite a small cohort of students and teachers it made it all more personable ... I felt that I could go and ask direct questions about my [work] ... that little family vibe we had there.'* Tess saw the ethos as one of, *'major professionalism from the more renowned teachers who've obviously worked with a massive range of people, professionals who really knew their stuff.'* She mentioned education workshops which *'just really stuck in my mind and made me think "it's so much fun," and they're inclusive and immersive and that's inspirational and you just think it's really impressive ... I think a lot of other students would say the same.'*

In retrospect, interviewees perceived the TAEDS learning culture as inspiring, professional but also student-centred and egalitarian, with openness to experiential learning. However, during the degree journey some student feedback was negative and interviewees were asked: **Given how positive TAEDS alumni are after the course, why do you think they are sometimes critical or negative during their time doing the degree?** There were a range of reflections on this, from *'a little bit of immaturity'* and Becky's: *'everyone always says that second year's harder than the third year ... it's because you're going through that baptism of fire'* to different expectations: *'maybe the course wasn't what they expected.'* Tess saw it as managing the practical and academic aspects:

Perhaps it's because there's so many elements of it that are really fun and we can create things, that it can be quite difficult to be then reined back in and reminded you do have criteria to meet ... [students] don't always want to be told what to do.

This links back to perceptions of drama as a creative and open-ended alternative to academic subjects, as well as the sometimes conflicting experiences of drama as rebellion and empowerment, identified earlier in the chapter.

Group work was experienced as both enjoyable and fraught with interpersonal issues, since the quality of the final output affects individual assessment. I quote in full Mandy's insights into the effect on staff, as well as students:

It's very intense – you are working with each other constantly for assessment & sometimes it's great fun and other times you think ... "We've got creative differences" and I think that then creates tension ...if you start taking it out on the group it's going to cause more problems and you're not going to be productive and be able to achieve or complete the work, but you've got to have somewhere to unleash this tension. And sometimes I suppose that ends up on the tutor or partners {laughs}... once it's finished, you look back and most of the time you like to reflect upon the happy times, but I don't think you then think about what you may have said previously and people that has a lasting effect on are the people who are left there, which is the staff.

The 'baptism of fire' or crucible that is group devising makes huge demands on emotional literacy and team skills as well as creativity, because of the public nature of performance. It develops many sought after graduate capabilities, but for some students this happens the hard way. Emotions can run high and individuals have to learn to manage their behaviour, respect different working styles and levels of commitment and bring out the best in each other. Annie emphasised the qualities required even during personal challenges, because the final quality of the group performance or workshop affects individual assessment: *'I was like "Who am I, what's going on?" but I made sure I was there every day for the rehearsals ... even going through real hardship I couldn't let people down ... I'm a very reliable person for other people.'*

Group skills are key for employability and I see group-work as a microcosm of the world of work, where teams are under pressure to achieve a high quality end product, through professionally and skilfully negotiating colleagues' issues, egos and conflicting agendas. Views on staff support were elicited in **How did the individual teachers affect your experience of TAEDS?** and were largely positive: *'each teacher was different ... I would say the quality was really good'* ; a female teacher was described as *'incredibly pastoral and expressive'* and a male as having a *'balance of humour, challenge, seriousness with fun, blended with incredible teaching and inspirational ideas.'* (Frances)

Mandy identified particularly female role-models:

All my tutors were inspiring ... I found [name] just a strong powerful woman – I get really drawn to quite independent and powerful woman 'cos I've had them in my life a lot, so I definitely saw [name] & Julia as role-models.

Julia Boorman, now deceased and mentioned in Chapter 3, was regarded as *'a legend'* and her willingness to research on demand reinforced the notion that staff and students were equally part of the learning community:

If it was possible, Julia would make it possible – she also had the knowledge and if she didn't know anything she'd go and look it up, make herself an expert and then come back and tell us all about it. She was a really really inspiring individual. (Mandy)

As in the alumni survey, there were other views expressed: *'with BSL, lots of changes of teachers had a negative effect, I think I could have got to Level 3'* and *'there were one or two [staff] who were a bit questionable ... I found my specific marking of [module] to be massively unfair.'* But these were in the minority and Frances' comment is more typical: *'they always have a positive attitude, their words of advice and some of them their bubblyness and enthusiasm in the subjects that they teach... passionate and kind and really believed in us.'*

This sense that staff had faith in them as individuals was important for self-efficacy in some students, especially those who had experienced mixed messages when younger. I now turn to the ways in which drama supports achievement.

6.4.3 Interviews – The Significance of Drama C (1-3)

Interviewees were asked to comment on this: **Research on graduate attributes distinguishes between self-esteem (self-respect), self-confidence (ability to present yourself) & self-efficacy (belief in your own capabilities). In the survey 31% of alumni & 60% of new Year 1s said that drama helps them develop self-confidence – what were the key drama events for you during TAEDS that enhanced your self-confidence?**

Frances viewed drama as holistically confidence-building:

I think drama throughout my life has helped develop confidence and give me a voice when I've felt silent ...in TAEDS it comes back to the moments I've felt empowered and where even in the struggle I think my confidence was found.

Performances and children's workshops were seen as key drama events, the latter as *'massively impacting'* and *'nerve-wracking. But being in that situation, I overcame it, and the support of my peers as well, yeah that boosted my self-esteem.'* (Sue) Becky identifies the important paradox that performing may be escapism, but facilitating in role requires heightened presence and group awareness:

Having that ability to improvise has helped my confidence. I might not have made certain choices if I didn't know that I could improvise, which Drama in Education's definitely helped with because it's interactive – you have to be more mindful of what you do, it's not just performing because you can kind of disappear into performance, you don't have that self-consciousness ... in DiE you go into a role but then you have to come out ... so it's not total

escapism, you're more bare in a way ... you're looking at the audience for some sort of response and then going back into role and getting them involved ... staying present in the moment.

Improvisation is the key graduate capability of flexibility and adaptability, through which self-confidence can develop:

When we would do workshops as a team and it would be us leading the workshop with the children – even though at the same time it was the most petrifying thing I've ever done, I think within that empowering and doing it my confidence levels went up. (Frances)

Sue's academic self-confidence also grew:

A lot of people think that drama is an easy subject, practical, hands on – when they choose it they don't always think of the essays and the evaluations that come with it ... I used to struggle with essays ... since being at uni my writing skills have improved immensely and now when I'm writing emails or whatever it's professional sounding.

In corroboration of the specific data on drama, interview responses to the question on mastery experiences below were interesting: **Research suggests that experiences where you face a major challenge but overcome it are important to develop belief in your own capabilities (self-efficacy) – what were other challenges on TAEDS [apart from drama] that did this for you? How did it change the way you thought about yourself? (self-esteem)**

Here was clear evidence of critical thinking through drama as a portal to academic achievement. For Annie the more theoretical aspects were mastery experiences: *'Just knowing so much more than I did before and how to access that information and question it, rather than just taking something for the truth.'*

This kind of questioning is key and Mandy identified the 'Perspectives on Directing' module as developing both self-efficacy and self-esteem:

The three of us were really practical people ... that was pure theory and then we had to stand up and deliver a theory-based presentation which is something I would completely shy against ... I had to take the lead on that and also facilitate a debate and discussion ... I didn't used to be as confident voicing my opinion as I am now ... I actually ended up getting a 1st and we created a brilliant discussion and that really stimulated me as well ... now I do love a good debate (laughs) - I think that gave me a lot of confidence to believe – actually I can do it and you have to try – 'cos if you don't try, you don't know whether you're going to be able to do something or not.

I was intrigued to see how far alumni made sense of the relationship between drama and HE achievement, so I framed the question: **14% of alumni said that drama was the only subject they**

thought they were good at, yet most TAEDS graduates achieve a good 2.1 degree – what are your thoughts on this?

Tess began by contrasting the lure of performing and the perceived dullness of writing:

You get instant gratification with drama, having an audience that applauds at the end – you get that instant feedback that it's a good thing you've done ... the preparation and run up to the performance is exciting and nerve-wracking and the comedown afterwards, it's all very emotional, whereas writing an essay – you don't get that kind of rush, it's quite formal and maybe a bit boring as well... here's an A, end of...the theatre of it and being the centre of attention and the creativity of it all ... you've really got scope to be who you want to be, be expressive.

Like Becky, Mandy identified the escapism of performing, but recognised how being different characters also developed self-knowledge and could develop self-efficacy:

Drama students enjoy playing different parts sometimes more than they enjoy playing themselves and I think that's what it is – they need to kind of channel a different character in order to really have an understanding of themselves – I think drama students struggle with their self-belief 'cos you can easily hide behind another character, but it's quite hard to stand there and say I did this, this and this and actually I'm quite proud of it.

This notion that, through playing other characters than themselves, students discover and value their own abilities, resonates with the ways identity develops through the life roles we take on and are allocated by others, as discussed in Chapter 4. In Annie's view, TAEDS' low entry tariff facilitated students' identity development:

I think because TAEDS' ethos isn't necessarily about having great marks before you come onto the course ... it allows for people to find out about their own ability ... you don't know your own potential before you're given those experiences, opportunities, challenges ... going on the TAEDS course is so dynamic and there's so many elements – you can learn so much about your own abilities and skills and how you integrate with the world.

Finally, Frances explained how, for her, practical drama led directly to academic motivation and success. There is a strong sense of learning being relational and led by personal interest:

I would have said "only practical things for me" but actually there's loads of written work on TAEDS ... the practical side of it made me want to learn about it and because we weren't sitting behind desks it meant that I wasn't bored of that ... so I'd go to the library afterwards ... the passion and kind of knowing I wanted to read about playwrights ...you read about it because you're interested... I think that leads to people who were maybe non-academics succeeding on the course.

This section suggests drama is significant in HE achievement. Although initially attracted to TAEDS by the practical drama aspects, students became motivated to learn, developing self-efficacy and success academically, thus heightening their employability.

6.4.4 TAEDS trees

On their tree trunks, Sue and Frances listed words to describe the TAEDS experience. These were as follows and I have emboldened those which were mentioned in the interviews: 'Deaf and hearing, **Fun (2), Challenging (2), Community**, Family, Inspiring, Laughter, Mental health, Uni drinking culture'. Frances' is below:

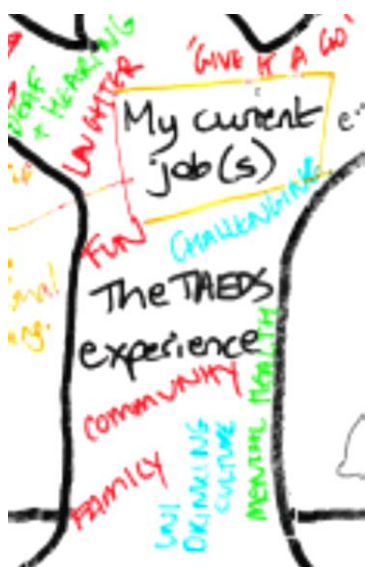


Figure 6-3 TAEDS tree extract, The Trunk, Frances, 2016

While the TAEDS experience was largely positive, along with many other undergraduates some alumni had mental health issues during these formative university years, particularly first generation as evidenced by the high number who accessed counselling. This may have delayed their professional identity formation, which I discuss later in the chapter.

6.5 *The Tree Crown*: How do TAEDS graduates describe and understand their current personal and professional identities?

6.5.1 Alumni survey: Qu 19

A significant number, (18/55) skipped **Qu 19 What is your professional role?** Labelling this more inclusively as 'your occupation', might have encouraged a greater response, as some may not have

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

been working outside the home or not regarded their jobs as professional. There was a wide range listed, with several doing more than one job. (One listed all of the following: ‘*professional actor, choreographer, dancer, aerialist, writer, theatre director and finally an event director,*’ demonstrating wide-ranging skills.) I grouped the roles according to the broad strands of the TAEDS programme, with additional professions listed underneath:

	Trainee teacher	Teacher	Primary teacher	SEN teacher	Secondary drama	Secondary English	Sch Gov	FE	LSA/TA	Drama workshop facilitator	EFL	Deaf CSW
Education	1	4	4	2	3 HoD 1	HoD 1	1	HoD 2	3 SEN 2	2	1	
BSL Interpreter 4 Tutor 2									Deaf 2			4
Performance										Actor 2 Director 1		

The following occupations were also listed:

- Carer 2
- Social worker 1
- Nanny/Mothers’ help 1
- Play therapist 1
- Own business 1
- PA 1
- Admin 1
- Retail consultant 1
- Student 1

Key:

- CSW – Communication Support Worker
- EFL – English as a Foreign Language
- HoD – Head of Department
- LSA/TA – Teaching Assistant or Learning Support Assistant
- Sch Gov – School governor
- FE – Further Education

Table 2 Current professional roles, online alumni survey, 2015

It can be seen that most were involved in education and or work with deaf people and involving drama. This engagement in caring professions and fulfilment through others is corroborated by an overwhelming 37/37 - 100% ‘Yes’ to the question **Do you enjoy your job?**

Six responded ‘*the same*’ to **What do you see yourself doing in 5 years?** and eight expected promotion to school management roles. Other responses are grouped below and again, most aspired to further their careers within education, caring or deaf accessibility, in line with gendered expectations, although some were unsure:

School management	8	BSL tutor	1	Actor	1
Teacher	3	BLS interpreter	2	Own business	2
Primary teacher	1	Training interpreters	2	Massage therapist	1
Teacher SEN	1	CSW	1	Raising own family	3
Teacher of the Deaf	3			Moving abroad	1
Specialist inclusion support	2			Something more exciting	1
Childminder	1			No idea	3
Social work	1				
Play therapist	1				

However, only 6/13 of first generation alumni affirmed that their current job was their chosen career path, compared to 37/37 of the whole sample. This suggests a less straight-forward career trajectory; as one 2007 first generation commented, *'I still don't know what I want to do.'*

In response to **Qu 20 Have you done, are you doing or do you plan to do any further study? 37/40** responded 'Yes' (a similar proportion for first generation), seeking qualifications in the following areas:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|
| • PGCE | 9 | • MA Social work | 1 |
| • PG Cert Dyslexia | 1 | • NPQ Leadership | 1 |
| • MA Teacher of the Deaf | 2 | • Management | 2 |
| • M Ed | 1 | • Occupational Therapy | 1 |
| • SEN | 1 | • PG diploma Play therapy | 2 |
| • BSL PG diploma | 7 | • Personal training | 1 |
| • BSL Level 3 | 2 | • Holistic massage | 1 |
| • MA Acting | 2 | • Languages | 1 |
| • NVQF Mime | 1 | • Musical instrument | 1 |

The majority gained further qualifications in teaching or BSL, with two combining these in a Teacher of the Deaf M.A.

6.5.2 New intake questionnaire: Qu 17

The new intake were asked a different question, **What are your plans at the moment for after you have completed your degree?** and there was one detailed answer: *'Incorporate sign language with dance for performance with/for/teaching young people with disabilities.'*

Others were as follows, see below:



Figure 6-4 What are your plans for after you have completed the degree? New intake questionnaire, 2015

6.5.3 Interviews: B (1-5)

Responses to **What are you doing at the moment and since when?** were consistent with the survey. All interviewees were working in more than one capacity: freelance drama workshop facilitators/running accessible theatre company; HE and FE teaching and learning support; SEN and mainstream teaching and support; interpreting: self-employed and employed; mothers' help and nanny. As Frances says *'We've learnt through skills of drama and improvisation to throw ourselves in and also we're unafraid to look stupid ... personally I'd find joy and pleasure in whatever job I did'*.

The second part of this question: **What are the reasons behind your career decisions after TAEDS? What happened which led to your being in this job?** elicited long explanations: this was not a linear journey for any, with the portfolio careers typical of many women. However, Mandy described a sense of unexpected progress,

I definitely think I've achieved more than I imagined at this stage of my life – but sometimes that's hard to see, when you're living something, you don't realise it's like an achievement cos you're doing it – you don't always have time to reflect.

In response to **Will you ever need or want to learn new skills? What do you hope to be doing professionally in 5 years?** two were studying for a PGCE and the rest planning or undertaking further study, including technical skills development and Level 6 BSL. Aspirations included setting up a theatre company, BSL assessor, counselling, teaching, writing and research, reflecting a multiplicity of person-centred interests, rather than high-earning career aspirations.

In responses to **Most alumni said their current role is their chosen career path – is this the case for you?** there was considerable commitment to education. Becky explains, *'It's on the path to, I definitely love teaching and I'm passionate about sharing information, educating people.'* Frances too saw her chosen career path as a developmental process: *'this is a step into what I want to be doing ... I have a real passion to work with families who have children with multiple disabilities and life-limited illnesses.'*

Tess showed her love of learning and professional stimulation:

I'm learning such a huge amount about different things... there's so many ways to expand my skill-set...you never stop learning, it's just been amazing to realise that. No matter how much you think you know, the more you find out the more you realise you don't know. I quite enjoy that.

Although no-one directly answered the second part of the question **If not, what is stopping you?**

Annie also articulated her own drive to learn and teach:

I love learning, this is something I've realised much later in life ... I'm very interested in children and young people and their learning, it really motivates me to learn about how to teach them and about development ... I'd like to be teaching ... I kind of see it as a good stepping stone to other things, maybe alternative education ... I could definitely see more play and the arts as a vehicle towards helping [children] grow.

I found this comment typical of many alumni, in the combination of a mature appreciation of learning, sometimes because of earlier challenging educational experiences, satisfaction in the achievements of others and a recognition of the role of play. These themes came to the fore when interview respondents were asked to reflect on earlier findings from the alumni survey as follows:

All the alumni said they enjoyed their job – assuming we all work for money, do you enjoy yours and what motivates you, personally and professionally? Frances too saw play as key, possibly feeling that this is what 'unlocked' her love of learning:

I just love being able to empower people ... unlocking potential, unlocking exploration, unlocking new things ... through play and through fun. It's probably because for me I didn't feel developed in boring lessons and sitting down and talking.

Mandy also valued satisfaction through the empowerment of others: *'I think it's the reward you get from seeing that you've been a part of somebody else's development and progress.'* Becky's comments about potential not being recognised refer back to her younger self:

My previous experiences with education – it's the possibilities, the potential not being reached ... I like working with special educational needs, because they have so many barriers to overcome that their potential might not be realised or even recognised by themselves or their own family.

Sue directly described this motivation through the achievements of others:

The children that I work with, because they suffer a lot with the things they have to deal with and their disabilities ... it just drives me to make them happy and be able to access their learning and for them to strive to go on and do good things.'

6.5.4 Summary: personal and professional alumni identity

From the evidence so far, a generic TAEDS alumni identity is emerging. Frequently, alumni had challenging home lives and personal experiences, involving bereavement, absent or unsupportive fathers and mothers who were viewed as strong role-models, often in the face of adversity. Some alumni had a disability or learning difficulty, which may have affected their access to learning and led

to their potential being underestimated at school. All loved drama, which they found accessible and which gave them a voice. Through drama they gained insight into themselves by playing different roles. Performing provided excitement, gratification and community: enacting 'grown-up' and rebellious activities, such as smoking and drinking. Because they often underachieved or were resistant to school, they were easily bored and believed they were un-academic and only good at practical subjects. They frequently entered TAEDS as individuals who felt themselves misjudged: with low self-belief, but a great interest in people.

Many alumni were first generation; they learned independence during TAEDS and tended not to live at home. Less interested in research, they particularly appreciated the absence of formal exams on TAEDS and the employability aspects, yet they felt less satisfied with their current career path. They had been particularly keen to follow a creative HE programme and many felt that drama helped to develop self-confidence. Some were deaf, had learning difficulties or SEN and accessed the DSA, as well as counselling support.

For alumni in general, TAEDS was a huge mastery experience, or rite of passage, during which many grew exponentially, personally and professionally. Through enjoyment of the practical aspects of drama and theatre, they became interested in the theory and acquired the self-discipline of academic study, frequently discovering an aptitude for this and a love of new learning. Exposure to the politics of deafness and disability arts enabled them to see the wider cultural picture and feel empowered as agents for change and social justice. Importantly, they experienced many TAEDS staff as inspirational. Because cohorts were small, alumni felt that staff knew them well, believed in them and were motivated to develop their potential, through tailored support. Alumni valued TAEDS' creative and improvisational learning culture with its 'can-do' and breaking down barriers attitude. Through a combination of these factors, many alumni were inspired to make a difference to the lives of others, by following careers in education, social care or deaf access.

However, some alumni were not able to manage their personal circumstances and experiences sufficiently to progress in this way within the three years of the programme. These individuals were, arguably, not emotionally ready for the experience, felt more negative about it, and took longer after graduation to settle into a career path. They were later developers and there was sometimes a mismatch for them between their ability to benefit fully from the opportunities available and the challenges presented by TAEDS. I conceptualise this below:

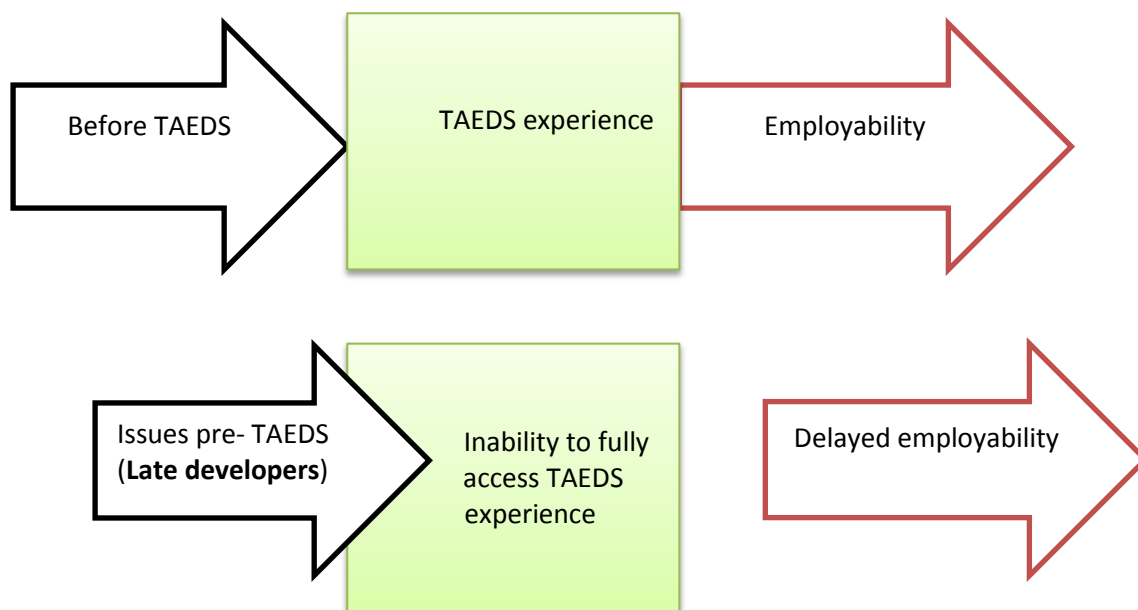


Figure 6-5 Alumni access to TAEDS experiences

Issues before TAEDS can leach into and affect uptake of the opportunities available, resulting in more criticism of TAEDS, less self-efficacy and later maturity and employability development.

‘Intense’ was frequently used to describe TAEDS, and it required hard work, good time-management, the capacity to learn a new language (BSL) and cope with the demands of group devising and constructive criticism. Group work became a crucible, which alumni both loved and hated at times, because their interpersonal and professional skills were stretched to the limit. From these experiences, emotional literacy, respect for difference and personal resilience grew, while life-long friendships were forged. On leaving TAEDS, alumni found their graduate capabilities were highly developed, particularly communication and team skills; diversity awareness; imagination and creativity. I focus on these in the next section.

6.6 Branches, Leaves and Fruit: How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their graduate capabilities and employability?

This section builds on notions of personal and professional identity, covers a wider understanding of employability and includes attitudes to part-time employment as a student.

6.6.1 Alumni survey: Qus 16, 18 & 21

In response to **Qu 16 Did you work part-time during your degree?** 29/45 alumni answered 'Yes' (the same proportion for first generation.) Although 12/45 perceived this as having a negative impact on their degree, nearly 19/45 reported no impact and 4/45 viewed it as positive, as in '*Benefitted, gave me a life away from uni group,*' for example:

I provided communication support for the students union and JCR it supported the course as it was generally only a couple of times a month, over the summer I taught drama courses to children in local summer schools – putting into practice the planning learned on the course [sic]. (Alumni survey, 2015)

In response to **Qu 18 How well did TAEDS prepare you for the world of work?** 31 alumni chose from 1-5, where 1 was highest. 6/41 selected 1; 8/41 2 and 16/41 3, bringing the weighted average to 3, which is not very high (the same for first generation). In **Please explain**, 14/41 of respondents ticked 1 or 2, to indicate that they felt that TAEDS had prepared them well for the world of work:

High contact hours meant that we were always expected to be somewhere or doing something, other university courses were less structured and relied on self- motivation and independent learning, something that in my current role, plays a part, however, the structured nature of TAEDS has prepared me more. (Alumni survey, 2015)

However, 35/55 of respondents had followed the new programme before the specific Careers and Enterprise strand and compulsory work placement were introduced and one felt: '*I gained lots of key skills but was qualified for nothing.*' In contrast, this response explicitly highlighted employability-related benefits:

In terms of time management and prioritising tasks, the second year of the Degree proved more intensive than anything I've ever been expected to do since, and so I am usually way ahead of my colleagues in terms of organisation. (Alumni survey, 2015)

Qu 21 Please rate how well TAEDS fulfilled your expectations and help you develop the following transferable professional skills resulted in a range of transferable skills being listed.

Those viewed as most important are below:

- Communication/people skills 27/40
- BSL and deaf awareness 23/40
- Working under pressure 23/40
- Creativity and flexibility 22/40
- Performance and self-presentation 21/40

First generation respondents indicated that TAEDS had prepared them less well in relation to the following:

- Tackling unfamiliar situations (3/14 compared to 18/40 in the whole survey)
- Handling criticism (3/14: 15/40)
- Self-reliance (4/14: 19/40)
- Research, analysis and writing (2/14: 10/40)

Although the latter is not surprising, the first three, taken together, indicate less positivity and lower personal and professional confidence and therefore lower self-efficacy, an important graduate attribute.

Yet, of the thirty-four alumni who responded to the follow-up **Which of these has been most useful to you in your career and how?** thirteen specifically mentioned the word '*communication*', of whom half were first generation. Two of the four who mentioned '*creativity and flexibility*', were also first generation, with one explaining:

Creativity and flexibility – working three different roles and leading student/client experiences means that I have to be able to support and develop learning experiences that can be easily changed if need be.

Communication, flexibility, imagination and creativity, are key graduate capabilities, which first generation amply possess, in spite of their lower self-efficacy.

6.6.2 New entrant questionnaire: Qu 18

New entrants were asked a parallel question to the alumni as follows: **Please explain how you hope the TAEDS degree experience will prepare you for the world of work after university?** and one response was: '*Theatre Arts creates confidence in communicating, Education allows me to open doors into education, BSL creates a unique selling point in life and work*' (New intake questionnaire, 2015).

Others mentioned work placements and '*I hope I will have new skills that will interest employers*'. Three more detailed responses are below and these relate to the reasons they chose TAEDS, as discussed in 6.3.12:

- *Broaden my horizons on the aspect of deaf education but also organise me for certain situations and different types of people I'd work with*
- *It will give me a greater understanding of how to make theatre more accessible to everyone, no matter their situation'*
- *I feel it will give me the confidence I need to push myself forward and it will give me the skills I need to support others less fortunate than myself.*

Each of these reveals an interest in personal development as well as inclusion, mirrored in alumni interviews; this supports the theme of empowerment of self and others identified in the last section.

6.6.3 Interviews: B (3) and C (4 & 5)

Interview participants were asked to comment on this contradiction: **Only 12% of alumni list improving their employability as a reason for doing a TAEDS degree, yet TAEDS has the highest employability in the University at 95% - why do you think this is?** Tess recalled the influence of working with diverse professionals:

It's such an eclectic mixture ... that massive curriculum, every part of it was really useful ... being exposed to influential people really, all the professionals you're involved with, all the visiting you do ... the first day watching [interpreters] and thinking that's what I want to be doing and I never looked back from it.

Becky appreciated the inter-related strands of the programme:

I think it was very cleverly designed and it's evolved over a period of time ... I think that's why it is highly employable [sic], but I don't think it looks that way from the outside, because I certainly didn't think of it like that ... I just saw it as very multi-faceted and creative.

and Sue also valued the breadth:

I think because it's such a diverse course and it has so many subjects involved ... drama, sign language, Deaf Studies, but it's all immersed together ... you can put your hand to anything because you've got all those skills you were taught.

Mandy gave an example to illustrate transferability of the skills acquired on TAEDS to retail employment; this is important evidence of versatility and employability of TAEDS alumni, so I quote it in full:

I know a graduate ... who is four down from the CEO of [supermarket] and he always said it's because of TAEDS cos he's so used to working under pressure, he's got all the communication skills, time-management, managing others, delegating ... he was so used to working in an intense environment in TAEDS he knows it's due to his training, whereas someone else might say "how do TAEDS and [supermarket] relate?"... the options available to you are so vast it's hard to make connections back to the degree itself, but you realise it's down to what you previously achieved.

In credit to their pragmatism, it is interesting that some TAEDS alumni are prepared to turn their hand all kinds of work, in order to avoid boredom, as Annie comments:

I desperately didn't want to be unemployed ... that's not how I work – I can't be doing nothing ... even if I'm volunteering somewhere I have to do something otherwise I get really bored.

Interview respondents were also asked to comment directly on the questionnaire findings: **82% of alumni and all new Year 1s cited the opportunity to learn BSL/Deaf Studies as a key reason they chose TAEDS: how has learning BSL supported your transferable skills?** Thinking visually and the subtleties of communication were mentioned several times: *'you learn more about body language and communication between two people without actually having to say anything and that helps you in any kind of environment.'* Frances expanded on the transferability of these skills:

I think it really enabled us to learn how to hold our bodies, how to express with our faces, whether it's a question or not a question, so all of those little things have helped to communicate and it's helped with different cultures but with learning disabilities as well.

All saw TAEDS as expanding their inclusivity, as Mandy explains: *'Culturally it's given me a different outlook on life ... when you meet people not from a similar background to you, it's given me more empathy.'* Tess detailed her enhanced social and political understanding, an important graduate capability:

Making things accessible, having deaf awareness ...you just have to make a reasonable adjustment and I think some of those skills that TAEDS gain [sic] are indispensable ... and everyone has the right to information and accessibility is just imperative.

Frances too mentioned heightened awareness of equality of opportunity:

Just because you don't fit inside this "normal" box you're kind of shrugged off ... my empathy is vastly more than when I first started.

Although lengthy, the quotations above evidence alumni reflections on the self-efficacy and social justice skills that TAEDS nurtured and I then examined self-evaluation of their current personal and professional qualities: **What positive professional qualities do you think you have?**

- Ability to see the treasure in each person
- Being a human and not afraid to express that
- Bring an element of surprise in everything I do
- **Caring**
- **Confident**
- Empathy
- Enthusiasm (2)
- Fair
- Flexibility
- Good at finding places
- **Kind**
- Integrity
- Leadership
- Mirror back to people the goodness that is inside them
- **Positive outlook (2)**
- Professional
- **Punctuality**
- Prepared
- Personable
- **Sensitivity**
- **Supportive**
- Winging it (2)

Above, I have emboldened the qualities which also appear in their responses to **How would others at work describe you?** shown below:



Figure 6-6 How would others at work describe you? Interviews, 2016

The commonalities between their self-perception and how others see them show how alumni clearly claim these qualities in particular as their own: Caring, Confident, Kind, Positive, Punctual, Sensitive and Supportive. ‘Confidence’ is particularly striking in relation to the low self-efficacy which characterised some of their pre-TAEDS experiences.

6.6.4 TAEDS trees

The Branches

After the interviews, participants labelled the branches of their TAEDS tree with the graduate skills and capabilities they are using in their current jobs, using the prompt as a starting point (See Appendix 9). Annie’s labelled branches are seen below, with her comments adjacent for clarity:

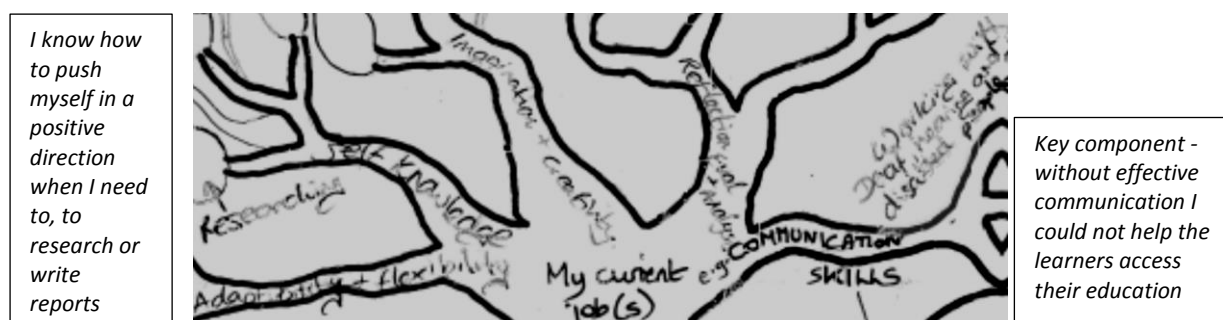


Figure 6-7 TAEDS tree extract, Branches, Annie, 2016

Because ‘Communication skills’ was already an example on the tree template, it was a given and not listed in the table below, which collates all the branch labels:

Annie	Becky	Frances	Mandy	Sue	Tess
Imagination & creativity		Imagination & creativity	Creativity	Imagination & creativity Initiative	Creativity
	Time-management Working under pressure	Time-management		Time-management Working under pressure Planning & organising	Time-keeping & punctuality
	Interpersonal & team work Listening	Interpersonal & team work	Interpersonal & team work Diplomacy & Negotiation	Interpersonal & team work	
Adaptability & flexibility	Adaptability & flexibility	Problem-solving	Flexibility	Problem-solving	
	Performance		Presentation & performance	Presentation & performance	
Reflection, evaluation & analysis	Reflection		Reflection		
Self-knowledge		Self-confidence	Self-confidence	Self-confidence	
Cultural, social diversity					Cultural awareness
		Independence		Independence	
	Writing		Writing		
			Professionalism		Smiley & personable

Table 3 TAEDS Tree branches: own graduate skills or capabilities, interviewees 2015

I emboldened specific graduate attributes and the most frequently identified are imagination and creativity; time-management and interpersonal skills. I found this interesting, as experience shows that the most imaginative and creative people are not always the best at time-keeping; however on TAEDS, both skills were well-developed. It is also clear that self-confidence is high, and this may be related to high incidence of reflection and analysis. A picture was emerging of highly competent graduates and I now considered which aspects of the TAEDS experience had supported this development.

The Leaves and Fruit

Through labelling the tree leaves, participants specifically linked experiences on TAEDS to the graduate skills and capabilities, which they actually use in their current employment. Becky's is below, rotated for ease of readability:

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

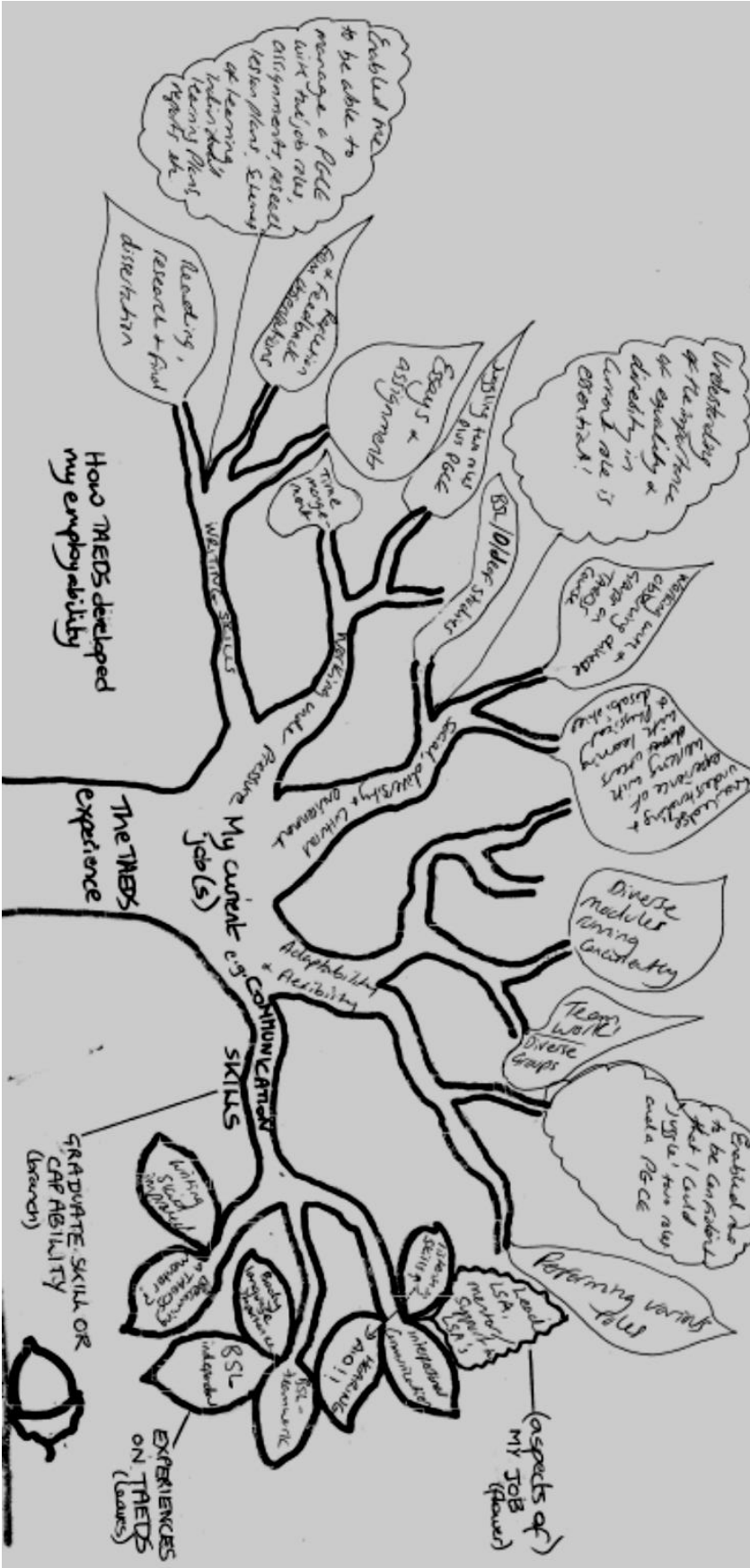


Figure 6-8 TAEDS tree extract, Branches, Leaves and Fruit, Becky, 2016

While valuing the ways in which TAEDS taught her to ‘juggle’ several roles, Becky regards her understanding of equality and diversity as ‘essential’. Below is a summary of all the **Branches, leaves and fruit** labels, with modules and learning strands listed first in bold and in red, those which were also considered most important in their interviews.

TAEDS experience	Annie	Becky	Frances	Mandy	Sue	Tess
Current employment	Nursery LSA; drama practitioner	HE LSA lead PGCE	Nanny Mothers’ help	Lecturer Drama practitioner	1:1 BSL SEN TA	Interpreter /Deaf Services
Black Box/Performance Analysis			√	√		
BSL/Deaf Studies	√	√	√	√	√	√
Dissertation		√ √				
Drama and Theatre In Education	√	√	√	√	√	
Eastern Dance Drama	√		√			
Perspectives in Directing				√		
Physical Theatre	√		√	√		
Sign Theatre/ Monologues			√	√		
Theatre Histories				√		
Body language/non-verbal		√		√		
Concurrent modules		√				
Diverse cohort: deaf/hearing	√	√	√	√		√
Essays & deadlines	√	√ √			√	
Group dynamics	√		√			√
Improvisation			√		√	
Learning re SEN/disabilities	√	√ √	√	√		
Lectures			√		√	
Presentations	√		√	√		
Productions	√	√		√	√	
Researching		√ √				
Seminars/debates				√		
Speaking up in class			√	√		
Teaching		√		√		

Table 4 TAEDS Tree Leaves and Fruit, 2015

From the data it is clear, but predictable, that interviewees felt the modules most directly supporting their current professional roles were BSL/Deaf Studies; Drama and Theatre in Education and Productions (broadly the three strands of TAEDS), along with cohort diversity and learning about SEN and disabilities. Importantly, essays and deadlines are clearly evidenced as developing time management skills and handling group dynamics as preparation for interpersonal/team skills.

6.7 Acorns, Rhizomes and Saplings: How do alumni reflect on the TAEDS community and legacy?

This section details alumni reflection on personal experiences of the TAEDS community, as well as a perspective on the legacy.

6.7.1 Alumni survey

Ironically, this response commends the now closing programme:

It was very challenging at times but really rewarding. It was also a lot of fun and a good mix of theory and practice. I still enjoy being part of the TAEDS community and would recommend the course to anyone thinking looking to [sic] embark on a creative yet practical degree. (Alumni survey, 2015)

Unsolicited, six alumni said they made friends for life on TAEDS; three of these were first generation: 'A wonderful course that teaches a wide range of skills, brilliant for me who wasn't sure where to take my career path. Lifelong friends made and life skills taught and most that I look back on and use today'. In the interviews, I probed the friendship and community aspects further.

6.7.2 Interviews: D (1, 2, 5 & 6)

Responses to **Words to describe the TAEDS experience? Images? Any ideas about what you would want to convey about TAEDS in a drama performance?** Included the following: 'Amazing, Broad, Challenging, Community (2), Depth, Energetic, Fun.'

Tess described her ideas for a drama performance about TAEDS:

The voice gloss stood right next to you ... that mirror image of the same character but in two forms... I think something fun ... kind of breaking the mould, doing something people wouldn't expect you to do, being a bit shocking, making something memorable - not just giving a translation, that's boring, that's not TAEDS. TAEDS is "Oh my God, what an interesting, creative way she's translated that song".

Frances visualised a more serious piece:

I always have in my head this picture of people that look silent, that have no voice, but yet will hear ... with gaffer tape over their mouths and ears ... but there's this ability to create something maybe where words don't apply ... creating something beautiful that communicates something clearly.

Becky conceptualised TAEDS using a circular metaphor:

It's like a really supportive circle ... how we used to gather around (I'm getting a bit emotional) the lake at Bulmershe [college] ... it's like that image of everyone standing round holding hands ... it comes back to community, it really does, which I think is the one thing we're missing as a society, so I think it's crazy to get rid of such a cool course.

Mandy similarly invoked a ball or yoyo image, with journeying integral:

That would definitely have to be the heart of everything ... breaking away and coming back together again, because you all graduate, you do different things... but somehow we seem to migrate back together again {laughs}. I'm not sure if it's because we work in similar industries so we've got similar interests and passions but you do stay connected & even people I haven't met when I was studying, graduates from previous years, you are friends with. So it's a bit like a journey or a migration or togetherness and separation, coming back together again. You know one of those balls that unties? Opening up and closing again—togetherness that stays also separate – you're separate, you're an individual, but you're always part of the TAEDS community.

I have quoted these four as they each epitomise key aspects of TAEDS: the alumni community's mutual supportiveness, political awareness and powerful, aesthetic and innovative theatre. However, there is also a sense of strongly developed individual identity and group belonging, which supports high employability, as discussed in Chapter 4.

When asked **How many of your year-group and others are you still friends with & why?** many saw Facebook as a '*brilliant tool for keeping everyone in touch*'. Frances saw the TAEDS community as providing a safety net: '*a community of people who believe in each other, so when the degree ends it's not suddenly that you're alone but we all kind of help each other out.*'

Sue described a more generic university experience: '*I think no-one else has that bond that you make with your university friends. Especially if you do the same course, but if you're living together as well ... you get that closeness and it's a bond that's not easily broken.*' But Becky felt that it was more than this: '*I think the uniqueness of the course is very bonding in itself...*' and Mandy too considered TAEDS relationships as closer, because of the nature of the programme:

I think [relationship bonds] are quite hard to break 'cos ... things happen and a person you've only known for four weeks is supporting you through it ... So I think the challenges you've had together & similar shared experiences ... TAEDS is definitely a community and then 'cos you're all going into similar industries – I mean years above me I still see in the community and then my year group, we still sometimes help each other – the teachers “Has anybody got an idea for behaviour management in the classroom?” 'cos they know you're creative people... I think professionally people stay in touch and personally 'cos you made those friends & connections quite early on in the first year.

Becky elaborated on this creative growth mind-set, prevalent in the TAEDS community:

We have a lot of respect for each other, coming through it ... I think it inspires that growth mind-set and a “can do” attitude ... the year above me, they were inspiring; two years above me inspired me to look at the course .

Strong friendships developing through drama was a theme identified earlier and Tess articulates this:

It was a journey we all went through and I think that's where the theatre comes in because you really get to know people – it's just like no other degree when you're on your own and there's no group work – when you create something it's a real journey ... we had so much fun and it was accessible and really creative ... you just get to work with people in a way you never get in any other aspect of your life, to create something so visually ... it's like a beautiful creative wonderful expression of who you are.

Alumni experienced TAEDS as qualitatively different from other degree programmes, although answers to the second part of the question, **How does this compare to your friends who did different degree courses?** were typified by 'I'm not sure' and tended to revert to discussion of TAEDS, as Frances demonstrated,

Their programmes were run so differently, they're in a hall of 200 people so they might not sit next to the same person every time or get the chance to interact with their fellow students ...we worked from morning to evening together and we were so passionate about our course so we bonded and especially in the smaller groups we'd have our own little socials.

Becky emphasised the importance of peer support:

We were always encouraged to help each other out, come and see each other's performances ... you're encouraged to be mindful about the other person's journey ... you needed feedback for TIE and how important it was to get other students to observe and give feedback, for their benefit and for ours ... the peer support and peer feedback, constructive as well as supportive – I think that was such a big part of TAEDS and I think that is kind of cool.

Although lengthy, these extracts enabled interviewees to delineate the conditions which led to their identity development. When asked to **List three qualities that many TAEDS graduates have in common**, respondents came up with the following, which clearly relate to employability:



Figure 6-9 Three qualities TAEDS graduates have in common

Responding to the penultimate question in this section **With TAEDS closing after 30 years, what do you think will be its legacy – for you & for others?** Tess described being able to express herself:

Things are flexible, translucent and fluid. You can be creative, you can still meet the criteria, but you can go “That’s what you asked for but I’ve put my own personal spin on this, I’ve changed this bit, made it creative, visual, accessible” ... you can just really be yourself and put that out to people.

Mandy reflected on, how for her, the legacy was both personal and professional:

I feel my outlook on life has completely changed. I strive to create more equality in everything I do – access and equality within deaf and disabled individuals – that’s now what’s important to me. That’s the legacy it’s left with me - the ethos I think – TAEDS is a way of life, not just a degree.

In terms of professional legacy, *Handprint Theatre*, an accessible interactive theatre company for children formed by TAEDS alumni in 2010, was mentioned several times: *‘that’s a legacy already ... evolved from TAEDS, using sign language in drama, bringing deaf and hearing together, using drama ... it basically is TAEDS, what TAEDS is good at’* (Sue). Becky stated TAEDS *‘has flung lots of bright lights all over the place’* and two used a rippling water metaphor. Mandy described the legacy already established and continuing:

In terms of access, [TAEDS] definitely created a buzz all those years ago ... and although you’ve got people who haven’t studied TAEDS, everybody’s heard of TAEDS and the course which is striving to create accessible theatre and that’s created a movement within the theatre world itself, Sign Theatre. So although maybe people aren’t connected with TAEDS, aren’t TAEDS graduates, it inspired others to create more access and everywhere the graduates go, no matter if they’re not even working in the deaf community, people go “Yes, I know a bit of sign language” and you’re creating morale straight away.

When asked **What key aspects of TAEDS should be retained or developed on future degree courses?** several had strong feelings about TAEDS closing: *'TAEDS has just changed so many lives and inspired generations and it's a shame that's gonna be finishing.'* (Tess)

Frances could not pick out individual aspects:

So, apart from the whole thing? I'm really sad it's closing. It's hard for me to think of one or two things because I think the degree programme itself has been so significant and so influential ... it's not only the degree programme but the whole experience of TAEDS life.

Others specifically mentioned TIE workshops, and particularly BSL and Deaf Studies: *'everyone should learn that because then you understand so much more about society and inequality.'* (Annie)
Small group work, peer feedback and support were also seen as key: *'it's really important you're not completely independent in your own learning – you learn so much from other people.'* (Mandy)
Annie valued practical elements: *'those hands on experiences with actual people - you can't learn that from a book, it has to be from doing and even if things go wrong, you learn from that.'*

I will leave Annie with the last words on theatre:

The theatre strands were really important to understand society and not just see it as a play ... History, socio-political influences ... why are they writing this... there's so much more to theatre that people just do not value or even understand until you start doing it.

6.7.3 TAEDS trees

Respondents identified specific aspects of the TAEDS legacy, by labelling 'Acorns', see below:



Figure 6-10 TAEDS Tree Acorns, 2016

Annie's was detailed and I have added her explanatory comments in text boxes for clarity:

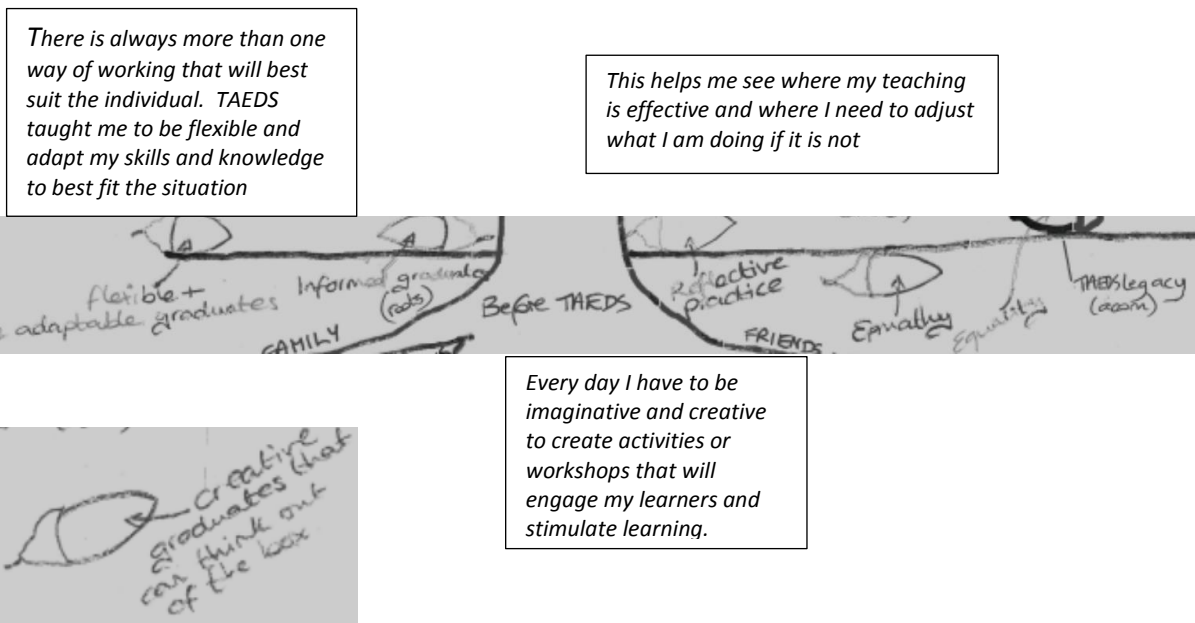


Figure 6-11 Acorns, TAEDS tree, Annie 2016

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have collated the findings from the four research methods: alumni surveys, new intake interviews, alumni interviews and their tree images. I organised the data by mapping it onto the five research areas, conceptualised in relation to the TAEDS tree as *Roots and Nourishment; The Trunk; The Tree Crown; Branches, Leaves and Fruit; Acorns and Saplings*, with data on the significance of drama in promoting achievement integrated throughout. A number of contrasts emerged between before and after TAEDS, which I have summarised as best I can below:

<p>Attitude to learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disaffected with education ➤ Easily bored ➤ Rebellious ➤ Value creativity ➤ Attracted to BSL by aesthetics and physicality ➤ Interested in deafness and inclusion ➤ See selves as un-academic 	<p>The TAEDS experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Love of Learning ✓ Interested and engaged ✓ Self-discipline ✓ See play as best way to learn ✓ Realise BSL is a tool for inclusion and community building ✓ Passionate about deaf access and diversity awareness ✓ Discover academic skills
<p>Self-efficacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disempowered ➤ Needing help ➤ Doubt ➤ Confusion 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Empowered and empowering others ✓ Wanting to help ✓ Confidence ✓ Positivity

Personal and professional identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-focussed ➤ Struggle with group work ➤ Few graduate role-models ➤ Outsiders: lack of belonging 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Satisfaction through others ✓ Appreciate group/peer support ✓ Role-model to others ✓ Insiders: TAEDS community
Experience of Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fun ➤ Enjoy practical learning ➤ Immature or grow up too quickly ➤ Refuge from personal issues ➤ Feel that they are only good at drama 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hard work ✓ Enjoy theoretical learning too ✓ Mature attitude ✓ Vehicle for others to thrive ✓ Experience drama as portal to academic achievement
Employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Undecided career path ➤ Undeveloped skills ➤ Unsure of own potential 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Highly employable ✓ Range of graduate attributes ✓ Reflective and self-aware

Table 5 Before and after TAEDS: contrasting themes

Some of these concepts were in direct conflict with each other, for example rebelling against education and yet wanting to empower others to achieve. Frequently seeing themselves as un-academic differentiates TAEDS students from traditional university applicants. Discovery of academic skills through drama is testament to the importance of arts education through TAEDS.

It is my view that those alumni who were ready to benefit from the rich TAEDS experience were able to grow personally and professionally, and become exceptional human beings with considerable graduate attributes and high employability. They developed their own personal and professional identity and vision. In the next chapter I discuss these findings further and relate them to the existing literature on TAEDS, identity and employability.

Chapter 7 *Seeing the wood for the trees*: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to synthesise the meaning of the data in my study, using the conceptual metaphor of the TAEDS tree to integrate the primary and secondary research. To do this, I cross-reference the themes identified in Chapter 6 with theoretical frameworks and concepts from the literature, to arrive at a perspective on the transformative effects of TAEDS and why this study of TAEDS alumni identity and employability really matters.

The TAEDS programme demonstrated very strongly drama's potential to empower marginalised groups, enhance their employability and enrich their social and cultural capital. Over a number of years, the programme facilitated the success of WP students, yet TAEDS closes in Summer, 2018 and the unique selling points are irreplaceable. However, the alumni community is vibrant (6.7.2) and the legacy is extensive (6.7.3). In the following sections, I argue the importance of this study, in relation to what the research has discovered about:

- *Roots*: The academic backgrounds of TAEDS students and drama's role in this
- *The Trunk*: The TAEDS programme evolution within the context of emancipatory drama
- *The Tree Crown*: The reported impact of the programme on identity and employability
- *Acorns, Rhizomes and Saplings*: The alumni personal and professional legacy

Finally, in *Trees for a Wider Forest*, I make recommendations that this case study should lead to TAEDS being used as a model for future small-scale WP degree programmes and outline the new IoE education programme.

7.2 Drama and HE access - *Roots*

It is clear that TAEDS students were atypical in a number of ways. Frequently first generation, many also dealt with major life challenges (6.3.6; 6.3.9; 6.3.10) and, perhaps because of this, had limited experience of academic success and a less than positive attitude to education (6.3.9). Non-traditional and therefore not usually targeted by universities, most would not have accessed HE at all, if it had not been for their involvement in drama; their positive teacher or family role-models (6.3.9) and their discovery of the TAEDS degree course (6.3.11).

7.2.1 Education – resistance and recognition

All the TAEDS alumni surveyed graduated between 1989 and 2015 (6.3.1). Replacing the SEN Code of Practice 2001 (DfES, 2001), the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) was implemented in 2014 (DfE and DoH, 2015), to include young people with a disability, as well as those with a learning difficulty.

Through addressing the Equality Act 2010 (GEO & EHRC, 2013), the SEND CoP provides greater focus on support for improved educational outcomes and aspiration to HE.

But this initiative came too late for the high proportion of alumni who identified as having a learning difficulty or a disability, on joining TAEDS (6.3.1). Prior to university, they had frequently resisted aspects of education (6.3.13) and expressed dissatisfaction with their own academic achievement (6.3.4). McIlroy and Storbeck (2011) point out the frustrations of deaf young people's experience of schooling within the discourse of the medical model of disability and we could infer that some applicants to TAEDS may have experienced this. Language development, as well as their social and emotional wellbeing may have been adversely affected, as argued by Anglin-Jaffe (2015).

In considering their education before TAEDS, self-efficacy generally tended to be low (6.3.4), which could, as Bandura believes (2001), have lowered their achievement, and 'low levels of confidence are an inhibitor to university entry' (Lasselle et al, 2009, p 403). But, aspiring to HE, TAEDS applicants, knew that they had ability, sought further opportunities to develop through drama and were frequently frustrated by the education system (6.5.3). All the alumni had been at school during an increasingly restrictive National Curriculum, with its growing focus on assessment (Gillard, 2016), traditional academic subjects (Prentki, 2016) and with less value accorded to the arts and creativity, a concern that Rose tried to remedy (2009). Yet, 7/51 of survey participants considered that drama was the only thing that they excelled at (6.3.11), with young deaf learners in particular having experienced the more creative subjects positively and as promoting their own agency (6.3.10). Because drama supports holistic learning through embodied intelligence (Taggart, 2010b), deaf people can be at an advantage, as they are used to expressing meaning physically (Payne, 1996). Importantly, for some alumni, validation in drama engendered personal determination to succeed (6.3.10).

Interestingly, about a third of alumni, particularly first generation, studied psychology, perhaps finding a connection between this and drama as a way of learning about people, challenging ideas and acquiring self-knowledge (6.3.4). Robinson's influential report (1999) certainly recognised access to the arts as paramount in self-realisation and accessing a community of cultural identity and belonging.

7.2.2 Drama: refuge and rebellion

As shown in Chapter 6, alumni felt that they belonged in drama: '*This is the place for me*' (Frances), but for half the interviewees, not necessarily within the curriculum (6.3.13). As a consequence, extra-curricular mixed age drama groups, which potentially led to smoking and drinking with older

teenagers (6.3.6), were a natural refuge for the more rebellious alumni, providing both an escape from restrictions and immersion in life's challenges beyond school (Bond, 2014). Some individuals were both immature and old beyond their years; many were late developers because of earlier trauma.

For these alumni, participation in drama marked the beginning of their resistance to the power and control entrenched in the formal education system (Foucault, 1977). It is a subject area which is frequently regarded with suspicion by authority figures (Anderson and Donelan, 2009). Although these alumni appeared to be fulfilling Bourdieu's (1991) view of females as accumulators of cultural capital, in their very choice of drama over another art form they were, consciously or not, drawn to its 'outsider' status within education (Prentki, 2016). If they themselves were not appreciated by the 'system', there was some satisfaction in embracing the ill-understood pedagogy of drama (Baldwin, 2013), with its own excitements and supportive community (McLauchlan and Winters, 2014).

By the time they arrived at TAEDS, alumni had potentially gained some agency by questioning and subverting the prevailing societal and educational assumptions (Neelands, 2004); one explained:

I love the way that you could be creative in drama think outside the box challenge ideas and develop skills knowledge and understanding of self and the surrounding world [sic]. (First generation, alumni survey, 2015)

At some level, it could be argued that alumni at school had much in common with drama as a subject: complex and unrealised, yet frequently misunderstood and perceived as rebelling against the establishment (6.3.13).

7.2.3 Drama – identity and personal growth

It is widely accepted that identity is fluid, socially constructed and constantly developing (Day and Sammons, 2007; Floyd and Morrison, 2013; Leigh, 2009). During their key formative years, all the interviewees reported that they had significant personal or health issues while they were at school and experienced drama as a way of coping with these challenges (6.3.6).

In drama, alumni had fun and enjoyed instant gratification from performances (6.5.4). It may have been unusual for them to be viewed in this positive light at school. At a deeper level, performing provided mastery experiences, which raised self-efficacy (Bandura, 2001). As explored in Chapter 3, drama provided the imaginative freedom for alumni to explore their own issues, distanced by other contexts, through *metaxis* (Bolton, 1992). By enquiring into cause and effect (Freire, 1972) and utilising interactive techniques such as Forum Theatre (Boal, 1979), alumni explored the consequences of different perspectives on situations, in line with Somers' view of drama as a model

for life (2013). Annie affirmed this: *'from doing acting and drama I like to analyse behaviour and look at societies and structures, so that was the beginning of my understanding that about myself [sic]'*.

Some alumni who, like many teenagers, experienced a lack of control in relation to the issues they were dealing with, sought and found freedom and autonomy through drama (6.3.6). In relation to Foucault's theory of biopower (1978), it could be argued that the mostly female alumni were reclaiming power over their own bodies through the embodied activity of drama (Prentki, 2016). Through taking on the role of characters of different gender and status, they could temporarily step outside gendered habitus. In improvisation (6.4.3), alumni could taste different ways of being, and become aware of society's gendered expectations (Knowles and Lander, 2011). This encouraged new insights and metacognition (Ashwell, 2009), supporting a more agentic personal identity development.

7.2.4 Role-models - gender and inclusion

Understandably, drama teachers were frequently significant as role-models who also provided pastoral support (6.3.8; 6.3.9), informed by an ethic of care (Nicholson, 2002). Family role-models were usually mothers, who were admired for their resilience and creativity in the first instance (6.3.9). Through belief in their children's capabilities, they provided emotional sustenance, particularly for their daughters, in line with Fuller's thinking (2009). The number of first generation alumni who thrived at TAEDS (6.4.4) appears to contradict Thomas and Quinn's view that parental education is key to recruitment and retention (2007). It also confirms Reay's (2004) claim that mothers from LSE groups may be able to provide more emotional capital. If these mothers had academic aspirations themselves, they served to strengthen their value as role-models to alumni, since the mothers demonstrated extra resourcefulness and determination (6.3.9).

Where present, fathers were less encouraging about drama (6.3.9) and this seemed to demonstrate that its benefits were not well understood (O'Toole, 2009a; Prentki, 2016) and also that arts subjects were viewed as occupying a lower status by males because of being more associated with females, as Knowles and Lander maintain (2011). Confirming Bourdieu's (1991) concept of females as accumulators of cultural capital, mothers had encouraged their daughters towards the arts (6.3.9). Although mixed messages within the family may have affected self-efficacy (6.3.4), all the alumni believed that they were good at drama, and most of the new intake reported that it had improved their self-confidence (6.3.12). Drama had provided opportunities to explore citizenship and social

justice issues (Doona, 2012; Winston, 2007), which for alumni were a living reality, for example where they experienced discrimination because of a disability (6.3.12-13).

10% of alumni and 60% of the new intake had family or friends who were deaf, had disabilities or SEN (6.3.11-12) and this experience had perhaps stimulated their interest in caring and diversity and further consolidated their understanding of marginalisation (6.3.12). Nearly half of the, typically 72% female, applicants to TAEDS had been unsure of their career path and a quarter attracted to teaching, but reluctant to commit to a whole teaching course (6.3.11).

In support of Hopper's findings in relation to studying art (2015), applicants to TAEDS tended to be less interested in pursuing theatre as a discrete art form, but rather viewed drama as a vehicle for emancipation of others and to facilitate inclusion (6.3.11; 6.3.12). Although this appears to confirm Huppertz' thinking on women generating female capital by using their caring skills as a route into employment and thus confirming *habitus* (2009), I view it differently. It seems to me that at this stage, females who chose TAEDS were resisting the historical view of teaching as a suitable occupation for women, as described by Knowles and Lander (2011), especially in the light of their own educational experiences (6.5.3). As I will argue, the elements of rebellion which they had practised at school through drama and brought to TAEDS were the foundation of their subsequent highly developed professional identities and versatile employability.

7.3 The TAEDS habitat – *The Trunk*

Steep competition for jobs after graduation was one of the consequences of massification (Brown, 1997) which had broadened the range of practical HE courses on offer, such as the unique TAEDS. The programme had evolved over twenty years, with social justice as its central focus. It was effectively a huge mastery experience (Bandura, 2001), from which those who were ready and open to what it had to offer could benefit greatly (6.5.4). From being academic outsiders at school (6.3.9), most alumni became TAEDS insiders (6.7.1), supporting Read's views that applicants choose courses with like-minded people (2003). They had already found a community of empowerment through drama (6.3.13) and they did not experience the social disjunction common to other marginal students on arrival in HE, especially those living at home (Thomas and Quinn, 2007).

7.3.1 Diversity and belonging

Practical and theoretical inclusion through drama was a reality at TAEDS (6.4.2; 6.7.2). Rather than alumni experiencing cultural homelessness (Navarette, 2011) or having to forge separate HE identities in order to thrive (Keane, 2012), TAEDS facilitated individual identity development within

its community (6.4.4). Students were able to use their expertise in drama as a platform for immersion in TAEDS (6.4.2), whose curriculum was based on 'Knowing, acting and being', which Healey recognises as important (2015). This cemented the sense of belonging crucial for retention and success in HE, especially for specific, non-traditional groups (Woodman, 2014).

However, the programme brought together very diverse groups of people and barriers had to be broken down in order for them to achieve through drama (6.4.2). Deaf and hearing staff and students worked together within a diverse curriculum, but with a shared focus on inclusion and the culture of deafness, as affirmed by Jones (2002). The low entry tariff and dedicated support for deaf students and those with learning difficulties within TAEDS was augmented by accessing UoR counselling and DSA support (6.3.1), access to which is known to improve HE outcomes (Mountford-Zimdars et al, 2015). Through working in eclectic groups and studying BSL and Deaf Studies, alumni reported major shifts in their understanding and appreciation of difference, both theoretically and practically: *'in a real setting, actually living it ... going to the pub with a deaf person'* (6.6.3).

Alumni reported perceiving TAEDS' learning culture as inspirational and egalitarian (6.4.2): *'We were being taught, but we could teach and could raise our opinions – it was an interflowing academic experience'* (Frances). Sign Theatre evolved further as an innovative embodied art form within the context of professional connections within accessible theatre and TAEDS itself contributing to disability arts (Conroy, 2015). Meanwhile drama enjoyed a brief place in the Primary National Curriculum (DfE, 1999), TIE programmes were widespread and the phenomenon studied at HE (O'Toole, 2009b).

Considerable alumni success through TAEDS was therefore due to many factors. Crucially, two thirds of interviewees reported academic self-confidence developing through drama, which facilitated their success (6.4.3).

7.3.2 Academic portal and crucible

Mike Stevenson, a hearing TAEDS lecturer, had characterised the emergent academic identity of some TAEDS students: *'I am an intellectual (I think); thinking is for me'* (TAEDS team, 2013-4). Alumni articulated the stories of how they came to engage with the theoretical aspects of drama through an interest in the practical (6.4.3): *'I had strengths I didn't realise ... I didn't know I was academic'* (Becky). Inspired by drama and theatre, alumni read with a sense of purpose (6.4.3) and the varied TAEDS curriculum demanded a range of research, as discussed in Chapter 3. As Annie said, *'It's never just a play'* (6.7.2) and she continued:

The analysis skills from the more theatre and research-based work ... they're unbelievably influential on me ...there could be many different angles to truth in different situations – how to think was a taught skill from doing the course.

This emphasises the value of political and cultural understanding (Neelands, 2004) in knowledge acquisition through practical drama (Kempe, 2009). Sign Theatre particularly exemplifies this *phronetic* learning (Berkeley, 2005) and the embodied nature of drama, because of the way thought and emotion are physicalised (Kaneko, 2012): *'You were able to work out your emotions through physical theatre'* (Frances). It is also necessarily co-operative because of the ensemble performance required by the voice/sign split (Floodgate, 2008).

At the same time, interviewees spoke feelingly of the 'baptism of fire' that is group work and the challenges of being assessed on this, with their own grade dependent on the overall group success as Mandy says: *'This is my individual degree but yet you're [sic] going to affect my mark if our personalities are clashing'* (6.4.2). At the same time as perceiving group devising as one of the most difficult aspects on TAEDS (6.4.1), alumni also recognised that this had facilitated development of their self-efficacy (6.4.3) and emotional literacy in relation to others (6.7.2), in line with Steiner & Perry's definition (1997).

Since drama is concerned with stories about life and how to solve the problems therein (Nicholson, 2011; O'Toole, 2007), drama itself is a kind of conceptual metaphor for the challenges in our own lives, as in the idiom 'drama out of a crisis'. This resonated with Aadlandsvik's (2009) idea of the transformative effect of stories or myth-making, intrinsic to a holistic curriculum. He uses a mythological metaphor to express the way that currently we 'have a kind of one-eyed knowledge resulting from the ascendancy of *logos* [facts] in educational practice' (2009, p 2). On TAEDS, alumni appreciated the contrasting emphasis on *mythos*; 'cultural, imaginal and emotional' (2009, p 1) which encouraged a phenomenological search for knowledge: *'give it a go'* (6.4.2). As a result of their experiences, the range of personal and cultural qualities that TAEDS alumni have in common (6.7.2) form the basis of a well-developed and distinctive personal and professional alumni identity (6.6.4). In the next section, I focus on the identity of TAEDS alumni and how this explains their high employability.

7.4 Positive identity and Employability - The Tree Crown

In relation to deaf identity, Sue makes an important point:

Deaf Studies – just knowing about the heritage of deafness ... it's important so the younger deaf generation can understand where we come from ... to give them an identity as well ... they are the history for the future ones to come [sic].

As discussed earlier, a confident deaf identity is important for thriving and well-being (Leigh, 2009). Sue's affirmation of TAEDS' role in supporting this takes in the broad perspective of TAEDS' legacy.

In describing their professional roles post-TAEDS, four fifths of alumni surveyed reported involvement in teaching or other caring professions, perhaps attributable to their experience of delivering schools workshops; at least a quarter of those alumni directly use drama in their work (6.5.1). Although it could be argued that most alumni therefore confirm theories of gendered habitus in arts education (Hopper, 2015) and female capital (Huppatz, 2009), it seems to me that the reasons are more complex than this. Strikingly, every single one of the fifty-five alumni surveyed enjoys their current professional work (6.5.1). I think this outstandingly positive professional satisfaction and strong sense of self-efficacy (6.5.3) leads to high employability, because of the positive graduate attributes TAEDS alumni manifest.

7.4.1 Power and capability

Survey respondents reported very positively on their degree experience (6.4.1) and interviewees spoke of the ways in which TAEDS developed key graduate capabilities, such as communication, creativity, presentation, team work and time-management (6.6.4). Like other drama graduates, they demonstrated capabilities not always found in combination, such as creativity and time-management together (AGCAS, 2013); and caring alongside confidence (6.6.3).

This professional confidence in their own abilities was in direct contrast to the self-doubt most interviewees felt in their lives before TAEDS (6.3.10). Appreciation of their own ability to care for and empower others had grown through TAEDS access to academic and pastoral support (6.4.1), as well as their openness to constructive criticism through peer learning (6.7.2). Alumni exhibited positive attitudes to life-long learning (6.5.3), which were very different to their perspectives on education pre-TAEDS (6.3.13). The energy and passion that they had expended on personal struggle and rebellion were now directed in a different way and they positively appreciated the power that they had gained to effect change, as Frances explains, referring to the young people she mentors: *'I think it's evident when they talk to me that I am influencing them in a way to create change in their own world and sphere'*.

As well as focussing their considerable drive, the TAEDS experience had provided in abundance the opportunity to develop values, both in relation to their own self-beliefs and their appreciation of social values. As discussed in Chapter 3, values are key in identity formation (Dilts, 1990).

7.4.2 Values and self-efficacy

From their perspective of learning as a process of becoming, Hinchliffe and Jolly maintain that 'Graduate identity can be seen as the cultural capital acquired prior to entering [employment]' (2011, p 580). Referred to in Chapter 4, their study of what employers across a range of sectors looked for when employing graduates identified 'a four-stranded concept of identity that comprises value, intellect, social engagement and performance' (2011, p 563). Similarly, TAEDS alumni had acquired respect for difference and an understanding of the co-construction of learning through group work (6.4.2) which meant their social engagement was high. Hinchliffe and Jolly view 'Value' as the most important, incorporating but not limited to, demonstration of trustworthiness:

An engagement in social values does not only indicate that a person has a more heightened sense of social responsibility: it indicates to the employer that the graduate who is diversity-aware is less likely to miss or neglect real business opportunities ... social values were also expressed in terms of respect for others, and, more subtly, a respect of status (the individual recognising their need to learn and develop and not to impose ideas and opinions on colleagues or clients). (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011, pps 575-6)

The business case for strong values could explain alumni high employability. The same TAEDS alumni are not only passionate about social responsibility (6.7.2) but also inspired to empower their 'clients' through drama and play (Prentki, 2016), while retaining the humility to be able to learn from them, as Frances explains: *'it really is an honour to walk with them, [the young people I work with] teach me as much as I feel like I teach them sometimes so I'm very lucky'* (6.5.3). These factors make them sought-after employees.

Furthermore, Hinchliffe and Jolly (2011) argue that these four strands of identity are not only central to employability, but also to human wellbeing; a sense of competence, or self-efficacy, is also key (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The exclusively female interviewees in this study demonstrated high self-efficacy, in reflection on their own professional qualities and particularly in how they thought their colleagues regarded them (6.6.3). The words used were virtually all positive, even though females tend to be more modest about their perceived skills (Skelton, 2010). I reproduce both Wordles from Chapter 6 below, for comparison.



Figure 7-1 How would others at work describe you? Qualities TAEDS graduates have in common (Interviews, 2016)

A sense of energy is implicit or explicit in many of these words and the frequent recurrence of the word 'positive' links to the 100% job enjoyment reported in 6.5.2. Despite their drama skills, alumni would be unlikely to behave so positively unless they felt this at least some of the time. It can be seen that typical alumni attributes also demonstrate Values and Social Engagement extremely strongly.

This data also supports other models of graduate identity for employability, all of which contain self-efficacy and reflection in some form, and I have emboldened these aspects from 4.3.5 below. Knight and York's concept is 'Understanding, skills, **efficacy beliefs (self-theories), Metacognition**' (2003, p 8); Dacre Pool and Sewell's CareerEDGE model (2007), with its conceptual metaphor of a key to the door of employment, includes '**self-efficacy**, self-confidence and self-esteem' under the heading '**Reflection** and Evaluation'; Healey's curriculum model includes 'Knowing, Acting and **Being – how students develop a sense of themselves and their capabilities, how they gain in self-confidence**' (2015). It was in their perceptive understanding of the cultural capital they had acquired on TAEDS that alumni particularly evidenced the importance of reflection (6.5.3).

7.4.3 Transcending gendered habitus

Frequently mired in self-doubt before TAEDS (6.8), alumni had travelled far in terms of their own self-efficacy, especially since this tends to be lower in females (Bandura, 2001; Gbadamosi et al, 2015). Immersed in the empowering culture of TAEDS, where teachers and students learn together, sharing their own humanity and celebrating 'sparkling moments' (Hugman, 2005, p 48), their own growth mindset had developed, in line with Dweck's thinking (2012),

Through discovering their potential during TAEDS, alumni started to own their power, rather than effectively surrendering it through the self-policing of behaviour, as theorised by Foucault (1977): '*think that self-belief comes with having the maturity to take ownership of your own achievements*'

(Mandy). As predominantly female, they had approached the ethical dilemmas inherent in compulsory group work through the primacy of their caring relationships with each other (6.4.2), in line with Gilligan's views (1993). In group work, they had to place their own agendas on one side (Noddings, 2007) and they also had to do this when in role with children as workshop leaders (6.4.3). This required development of *phronetic* ethical judgement in their interactions with young people (Linds, 2008). Through socially constructed learning through drama, alumni honed their values and achieved individual agency in the context of a trusting community (Nicholson, 2002). The closeness of their enduring friendships was very evident (6.7.2).

Although many alumni surveyed were in caring professions, which they viewed as high status, this was by no means a uniformly default gendered position, or some would have been dissatisfied and they would not, without exception, have said they enjoyed their jobs (6.5.1). Several had capitalised on their skills to run businesses, or were performing or directing. It is clear too, from the 93% who had achievements in or aspirations to further study (6.5.1), that they had developed as life-long learners, as well as in relation to leadership, which a quarter had already attained in their chosen fields (6.5.1). This finding contrasts with the fact that women are less likely to be in managerial roles, even in professions where they predominate (Knowles and Lander, 2011.)

It appears that the mostly female TAEDS alumni had made use of female capital, in line with Huppatz' views (2009), but it could be argued that they had effectively transcended gendered habitus. Through the unique composition of the programme and the intense but inclusive learning culture and study of drama, they had gained knowledge about the world, self-knowledge and agency. This enabled them to gain graduate employment with a range of graduate attributes and with high expectations of job satisfaction. An emphasis on enjoyment as a reason for studying, evidenced in the alumni survey (6.3.11; 6.3.12) strikes a refreshing note and leads logically to the idea of enjoying subsequent employment, as one alumni explains:

I think TAEDS definitely creates enthusiastic and passionate individuals even once they leave ... in order to complete the TAEDS degree you have to really be passionate and enthusiastic and enjoy what you're doing ... You're studying for three years so you have to be passionate about it – and therefore why would you go into a job that you don't enjoy? (Mandy, 2015)

Because TAEDS alumni had not necessarily enjoyed aspects of their early lives or educational experiences (6.3.6), they perhaps particularly valued professional enjoyment as hard-won. As Annie explains:

This was more important than money ... it's not even a massive wage as a teacher, but for me I've never even thought about having that much money, so it could be something I achieve.

The sense that high pay is less important than professional enjoyment chimes with Brown's findings on performing arts graduates (2007) and echoes Hopper's (2015) findings on female arts graduates. TAEDS alumni can arguably be seen as freeing themselves of the tyranny of equating status with high earnings.

In relation to Foucault's theory that power is a fluid concept implicit in all interactions, (1980), through enjoying their work on their own terms and being prepared to enter a range of professions, alumni held the power in the job market, owning their graduate identity in line with Holmes' model (2013a) and being able to reflect on it (6.6.4).

7.5 The TAEDS legacy - Acorns and Rhizomes

There are several reasons why reflection was identified as a key aspect of TAEDS' legacy (6.7.3), one of which is that I encouraged it through my primary research methodology, as discussed in Chapter 5. In addition, those alumni that I had personally tutored were used to being asked to reflect on their developing self-knowledge, as well as their academic progress, at key stages through the degree. Thirdly, for interviewees, their awareness of the planned closure of TAEDS threw into sharp relief the need to appraise the personal and professional worth of what they had experienced. It is perhaps human nature to eulogise something about to be taken away, but heightened appreciation of the TAEDS community after entering employment was not novel among TAEDS alumni. I illustrate this with a 2013 comment from a 2008 alumna, now a performer and BSL interpreter:

This is my community, the TAEDS community. TAEDS has influence in many areas of theatre, education and deafness across the UK and beyond. For a small course, you may be surprised how many of us are actually out there in a diversity of professions but with one commonality, TAEDS. I have come to realise how uniquely special that is: there is no deaf and hearing divide. There is no right or wrong career choice after graduating; after three immersive years, the world is your oyster. (Thorpe, 2013)

7.5.1 Reflections and ripples

This well-known metaphor of the world as oyster (Shakespeare, 1602) contains both the promise of rarity and delight, as well as the idea that opportunities in different fields are to be grasped, as in *carpe diem* (Horace, 23 B.C.) Where alumni had arrived at TAEDS ready to access what it had to offer, they flourished and were able to reflect on this afterwards (6.7.2): *'It's not until it all gets together [sic] that they totally understand the purpose... the overall skill set and how transferable*

they are [sic]' (Becky). When they described TAEDS as life-changing, alumni evidenced their self-knowledge and self-efficacy (6.7.2). They knew who they were and what was important to them professionally, which was often empowering others (6.5.3). Although it could be argued that a good university education increases all students' self-knowledge, TAEDS' intense environment of socially constructed learning advances holistic learning and *bildung*, (as discussed in Chapter 2), not just in terms of individual development, but in relation to a community of learners, in line with Taggart's views (2010b).

Additions to the TAEDS community can no longer be taken for granted and alumni reported a huge sense of loss at TAEDS' imminent demise (6.7.2). In envisaging the legacy metaphorically, alumni images were elemental: illumination and a pulsing circular organism opening and closing, with alumni branching out on their individual paths and then returning to the community core for sustenance (6.7.2). Aquatic ripples were mentioned by several:

It's like a ripple effect of equality, no matter where you are or what job you're doing those values that you've really intensely experienced and learned ripple out, of equality and understanding. (Annie, 2016)

Reflection is integral to the sense of self-efficacy and identity formation, and it develops self-awareness, as Daniels and Brooker affirm (2014), while self-efficacy is the strongest predictor of career aspiration (Gbadamosi et al, 2015). Evaluation and reflection are integral to Dacre Sewell's CareerEDGE metaphor of employability, depicted as a key (2007). TAEDS alumni certainly had the edge in relation to current concepts of employability (Dacre Sewell (2007); Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011; Holmes, 2013; Knight and Yorke, 2003; UoR Employability, 2017).

It is ironic that the new UoR Curriculum Framework (UoR CQSD, 2016) was launched just as TAEDS was in the process of being closed, as TAEDS could have been an exemplar of its Graduate Attributes in practice. It is instructive to view the Acorns of TAEDS professional legacy from 6.7.3 alongside, see below.

Graduate Attributes

Graduates of the University of Reading develop a range of attributes. The particular knowledge, competencies and skills which all programmes inculcate and enable students to demonstrate are outlined below. The curriculum seeks to engender the following attributes:

<p>Mastery of the discipline</p>	<p>Breadth and depth of knowledge of one or more disciplines and its/their use/applicability in real-world contexts. Discipline-specific skills and attributes. Understanding of disciplinary epistemology and methodology. Awareness of current research in the discipline/s. Ability to undertake research and enquiry within their discipline/s. Autonomous learning within the discipline/s.</p>
<p>Skills in research and enquiry</p>	<p>Ability to learn through research and enquiry. Ability to design, undertake and present research as appropriate to their discipline. Ability to consume and appraise research critically.</p>
<p>Personal effectiveness and self-awareness</p>	<p>Ability to communicate effectively in an increasingly digital world for a variety of purposes and audiences, and through a range of appropriate media. Ability to articulate what and how they have learned, awareness of their strengths and areas to develop, and commitment to learning and reflection. Desire for self-improvement. Personal self-awareness and reflection, self-efficacy, intellectual curiosity, adaptability, resilience and commitment to lifelong learning.</p>
<p>Global engagement and multi-cultural awareness</p>	<p>Intercultural competence and global outlook. Social and civic responsibility. Ability to collaborate effectively and adapt to different work or study contexts. Appreciation of multiple perspectives and valuing of diversity.</p>



Figure 7-2 University of Reading Curriculum Framework (UoR CQSD, 2017, p 2) and Acorns: the TAEDS legacy (TAEDS Trees, 2015)

The Personal effectiveness and self-awareness section is so pertinent that could have been written to describe TAEDS alumni, especially in its focus on communication, reflection and self-efficacy.

7.5.2 Rhizomes and recommendations

After 2018, to avoid stagnation, the TAEDS community requires an outward facing legacy and to cultivate the tree metaphor further, I conceptualised that as rhizomes. Since, ‘A tree is a mode of growth, not a botanical class of plants’ (Mitchell, 1982, p 9), my concept of TAEDS as a tree could be critiqued as a vertical arborescent process, which is chronological. In botanical terms, a rhizome is a continuously growing horizontal root system just below the surface, which needs to be sun-baked to successfully throw up stems. Perhaps this requirement for being parched prefigures the lean times ahead for drama and TAEDS, especially in the face of homogenisation of degree programmes. In relation to culture or social systems, a rhizome is an interconnecting map of influences and connections that spreads in all directions (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980).

Given that the UoR is a highly successful institution, ranking third in the field of Education (The Guardian, 2018), it could have championed TAEDS as a flagship WP programme. Indeed at the UoR, a new undergraduate programme has already been set up, before the TAEDS Tree is completely felled: *B.A. in Education Studies*, commenced Autumn, 2017. Designed to target some of the same students who would have applied to TAEDS, it is not as inclusive nor attracts non-traditional applicants, since the entry tariff is much higher at BBB-CCC. As on TAEDS, assessment is 100% coursework. The first intake is at least thirty, twice typical TAEDS cohorts, and a range of staff from different programmes contribute, including two from TAEDS. It therefore has considerable staff expertise and a curriculum which is focussed on social justice and drama, with links to TAEDS. The modules emboldened are taught by TAEDS staff and optional modules are asterisked *:

Year 1

- Professional Development 1
- Creative learning through the arts
- Exploring learning
- **Education for inclusion**
- Society and social justice
- Education for a sustainable future *
- Multilingualism in education *
- **Theatre for social change** *

Year 2

- Professional Development 2 (work placement)
- Global perspectives in education
- Leadership in education
- Contemporary education, policy and citizenship
- Technology, education and society *
- Study abroad for a term*
- **Drama for learning** *
- **Deafness and education** *

Year 3

- Professional Development 3 (pedagogical and andragogical approaches)
- Health and well-being in education
- Dissertation
- Applying creativity to learning *
- Learning with others: mentoring *
- Education for a sustainable future *
- **Drama and disability** *

(UoR B.A. Education Studies, 2017)

It can be seen that all the TAEDS-based modules, apart from Education for Inclusion, are optional so will not necessarily run; some have already been diffused for financial reasons. For example, *Drama for Learning*, originally planned for Year 1, has been postponed to Year 2 and may not involve

workshops with children. Time alone will tell whether saplings will sprout and alumni from this new programme will experience the personal and professional transformative effects that characterised TAEDS.

7.6 Conclusion - Trees for a wider forest

7.6.1 Research questions revisited

This section briefly summarises the findings, in relation to each research question. To bring the research right up to date, I quote 2017 TAEDS graduates' reflections where appropriate.

- What were the professional and personal circumstances and influences that led to choice of a TAEDS degree, with its unique qualities?

Before starting this degree I was unsure which career path I wanted to take and I felt at an absolute loss. TAEDS has opened my eyes to a world I did not even know existed. (TAEDS Graduate, 2017)

Most interviewees had experienced challenging life events or had disabilities which negatively affected their attitude to education. Having found community and self-expression through drama, they had achieved success in this, but often considered it their only strength. Frequently first generation or non-traditional students, they had positive role-models in teachers and mothers, while fathers tended to undervalue drama. The mixed messages had affected their sense of self-efficacy and their educational achievement was frequently low, so they were attracted by TAEDS' low entry tariff and sought an HE course where they could belong. Through friends or family, they typically had prior experience of deafness or disability and, in line with gendered expectation, sought a profession where they could support others. They were interested in teaching but wanted something more than a teaching course, in the first stirrings of rebellion against gendered habitus (Reay, 2004).

- How do TAEDS alumni view the TAEDS experience?

Throughout my TAEDS career, I have learnt a wide range of skills. To begin with, I was quite closed off and reluctant to allow myself to grow; academically and personally. I fought off this growth for quite some time; finally, I started to accept my growth more and more. TAEDS works as a family and I found the more I addressed my concerns with my peers and personal tutor, the more I grew in confidence. Everything I have gone through over the past three years has made me stronger and made me into who I am today. (TAEDS Graduate, 2017)

Where alumni were open to what was on offer on TAEDS, they experienced the culture as inspirational and empowering. The tailored support possible in a small programme ensured personal development and inclusive retention. In the process of group devising and running workshops with young people, they learn to balance their own needs within an ethic of care for each

other. By learning BSL and gaining understanding of SEN and diversity, alumni appreciated difference and become passionate about addressing injustice. In studying theatre, they acquired social, cultural, political and historical understanding, which they then integrated into their own values and attitudes. The work-placement module enabled alumni to trial career options during the degree and synthesise their personal and professional learning.

- How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their current personal and professional identities?

TAEDS has changed the whole path of my life ... it has given me a sense of self. TAEDS is an inclusive environment ... we are a family and this brave, kind, wonderful group of people gave me the skills to be supportive ... through TAEDS I know exactly the kind of people I want to surround myself with: those with passion and kindness; hardworking and always striving for the best. I know what I want to achieve in life, and I know how to get there. I hope that the people I meet on the path to achieving those goals are people like me: people who want to change the world. (TAEDS Graduate, 2016)

After TAEDS, alumni feel confident in their own abilities; have acquired a love of learning and a strong sense of social justice, based on well-considered values. All participants enjoy their work, have a sense of agency and are motivated to empower others; promote equality of opportunity and continue to develop their own academic and leadership skills. In their choice of work, they make use of the advantages of female capital (Huppatz, 2009), but they typically enjoy their work according to their own criteria, which are more about enjoyment and job satisfaction than earning highly.

- How do TAEDS alumni describe and understand their graduate capabilities and employability?

The range of exciting experiences offered to me throughout my degree, both assignments and extra-curricular, allowed me to experience a variety of different industries and learn so many valuable lessons. TAEDS not only equipped me with so many valuable professional skills, it also taught me to be a more patient, accepting and supportive member of a group. (TAEDS Graduate, 2017)

They are determined and talented individuals, with high employability and extensive graduate capabilities. They developed academic self-confidence and achieved success at HE, which gave them a sense of power, perhaps previously denied. First generation, disabled and non-traditional alumni achieved just as highly as more conventional graduates, because of the targeted support, as identified by HEFCE (2017). I consider that female alumni have transcended the dominance of gendered habitus (Reay, 2004) and want to make a difference in the world on their own terms. They

may choose caring professions, but through their own agency, rather than the expectations of others.

- How do alumni reflect on the TAEDS community and legacy?

Being a TAEDS alumni means that I continue to use and live by the TAEDS ethos of helping people and working in an inclusive environment. I am grateful to have had this opportunity, grateful to the wonderful friends for life I have made and grateful to have had the chance to work closely with people of different abilities. (TAEDS graduate, 2017)

Alumni identified strongly with the TAEDS community and drew on this for support during their subsequent careers. They were aware of a distinctive identity and ethos and certain of the ongoing influence of TAEDS graduates after the programme has closed.

- What is the significance of drama in promoting achievement, inclusion and contributing to wider access to HE and employability beyond?

TAEDS opened my eyes to the world of accessible theatre and the myriad ways you can communicate onstage. Through TAEDS I have had opportunities to work in a number of interesting places with my colleagues. We created a mini drama degree for local school children, which taught them the importance of BSL. TAEDS helped me find my calling and gave me so much real world experience. I would happily do it all over again! (TAEDS Graduate, 2017)

Through drama before and during TAEDS, alumni had found an alternative community, where they moved from outsider to insider. Through investing their energies in a marginalised yet creative subject, they had found validation and affiliation. They had questioned the educational *status quo* and explored human issues important to them personally. By taking on the roles of others, alumni had acquired self-knowledge and were able to question their own relation to gendered expectations and appropriateness.

7.6.2 Saplings for a new forest

In conclusion, the TAEDS experience was transformative because it represented a particularly intensified example of qualities which are intrinsic to the subject of drama. Although the embodied and cross-curricular nature of drama gives all students opportunities for empowerment and expression, marginalised students in particular gained agency, academic success and high self-efficacy, leading to employability. This happened through the use of drama, both as an art form and a learning method for studying issues in marginalised communities, such as deafness and disability. Applicants from those groups were deliberately attracted onto the programme, as well as those who were first generation and from LSE demographics. Females, who largely comprised the cohorts, were empowered to transcend gendered habitus, and maximise their employability and through this, their

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

potential to effect social justice. They had acquired self-knowledge and reflected on their identity and values, particularly their contribution to the wider community. They had attained full graduate identity and high employability by all measures.

In short they were, and are, extraordinary human beings with strong ethical values, who have a great contribution to make, particularly in relation to inclusion in society. Although idiomatically acorns do not fall far from the tree, given the right conditions the potential range of a rhizome is infinite. A new forest of saplings could spring up and I believe this will be the case with the TAEDS legacy.

Chapter 8 *The Whole Forest*: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The Thai Buddhist monk Ajahn Chah says, 'we can learn dhamma [the truth of nature] from a tree' (Chah, 1994). In their cyclic nature, trees are a lesson in accepting impermanence and the nature of growth. There is much underground which we do not see or necessarily understand, but which affects this growth. Trees are often part of a wood and with many species in the same habitat, the opportunities for all kinds of life to flourish is greatly magnified. In the writing of this dissertation, I have sought to understand more about the many aspects of life which TAEDS enhances and the truth of its nature.

My initial motivation was to explore the reasons for the high employability of TAEDS alumni, with a view to increasing recruitment. I intended to make this knowledge explicit and therefore raise TAEDS' status both within the UoR and nationally, as a unique drama-based programme which champions WP. In turn, this could have supported the UoR WP strategy and its USP in the competitive HE market.

In the context of the UoR's 2015 decision to close TAEDS in 2018, the study is inevitably in part a paean to and swansong for TAEDS. However, I also make recommendations for key aspects of TAEDS to be included in small-scale HE degree programme development, with a view to increasing the ripples of social justice.

8.2 Contextual knowing

In Chapter 7, I reflected on the contribution to knowledge made by this case study. My perspective is that all knowledge is socially constructed (Cohen et al et al, 2007) and reflexive (Moore, 2007). I recognise that my choice of research subject is predicated on my personal and professional life-experience (May, 2001). I chose case study methodology as appropriate for this new research area (Punch, 2009) and conceptualised the study metaphorically, using a *bricolage* approach and metaphor-based research method. This was arts-based research (Leavy and Chilton, 2014), examining the power of embodied learning through drama (Prentki, 2016). It was informed by critical feminism, with an emancipatory intention implicit (Usher, 1996b).

A number of paradoxes emerged in my approach to knowledge. I had to balance my awareness of the intrinsic male bias in traditional research methods (Biklen et al, 2008) with the need to utilise some of them and strive for an ethical objectivity (Holma, 2011). I sought to balance the positivist view that because of my role in TAEDS, in relation to knowledge acquisition I had 'the right to be

sure' (Ayer, 1956, p 35) against the relativist understanding that I could only ever make meaning from my own perspective (Lucas and Claxton, 2010). The opportunities of insider research also necessitated ongoing ethical considerations (Floyd and Linet, 2012).

My very individual approach, with its apparent freedoms, has involved taking the inherent responsibilities seriously, in order to produce findings of value. In preference to the idea of generalisability, I favour Shenton's concept of transferability (2004). He argues that knowledge can be transferred from one context to another, and it is the researcher's responsibility to determine how far this is possible. Thomas uses the term 'exemplary knowledge' (2016, p 73), where we can make inferences from the particular; it is in the connections between the researcher's insights and those of others that the validation of a case study emerges, through *phronesis* (2016). Pelias too acknowledges this complex relativity, in which I have striven to:

Pursue life's passions, puzzles and possibilities, writers and readers benefit from a close association with a scholarship that is evocative, multifaceted, reflexive, empathetic and useful. (Pelias, 2004, p 12)

My judgements are based on what I consider to be a responsible provisional contextual knowing. The intention was to achieve a balance between head and heart in this (Pelias, 2004) through attention to detail and structure in every aspect of the study.

8.3 Participant empowerment and legacy

In line with critical feminist thinking (Madison, 2012; Usher, 1996b), it was important that the research was and is empowering to participants, especially because of TAEDS' marginalised status. Through this study, alumni voices are foregrounded, and this validates their distinctive experiences and perceptions. In Sign Theatre, meaning can be powerfully communicated without sound, and Frances sees this in the children she works with: *'It felt like I heard their voice [sic] though they may not have been speaking ... where there is a lack of words doesn't mean there is a lack of heart'*. While the TAEDS programme's voice metaphorically has not been heard by the UoR, this study goes some way to ensure that alumni voices will be, and that, as Pelias recognises, 'the life of a community exceeds, in its richness and complexity, the sense-making activity of anyone of its participants' (Pelias, 2004, p 122).

Afterwards, participants wrote positively about the interview experience: *'You've now got me reminiscing over the good old days'* and *'It's been really good to think back upon my time studying at Reading University'*. Some alumni lacked advocates in their early lives and their individual

experiences are a microcosm of the TAEDS programme, which has not been endorsed by the UoR. However, this disempowered programme has empowered generations of students.

The final cohort particularly needs validation. Following completion of this study, there could be focus groups for current students to discuss the main findings; this would support external examiner recommendations to ensure that the final TAEDS experience is enriched, student self-efficacy is high and professional development enhanced (Birch, 2015; Terret, 2015).

8.4 Study outcomes and contribution to knowledge

I now revisit the gaps in understanding identified in 1.6, to demonstrate the significance of the study and its particular contribution to educational knowledge.

- **Through investigation of the phenomenological experiences and perceptions of TAEDS alumni, a distinctive alumni identity has been evidenced.** Frances characterises this: *'TAEDS has created graduates who are confident in their abilities to influence, empower and enable people'*.
- **It was established that drama experiences on TAEDS empowered alumni, promoted academic achievement and employability.** Becky describes how, *'the TAEDS course ... really made me realise how much I love research and writing ... for hours, doing that dissertation, I was just in heaven.'* Annie adds: *'Definitely doing the productions, the drama workshops that we had to do in schools, that was massively impacting ... I utilise those skills all the time, no matter what [work] I'm doing.'*
- **Involvement in deafness and diversity on TAEDS inspires alumni to pursue social justice professionally.** *'My depth of understanding is so much more than before I learned BSL, not just about deaf people but about disabilities and hardships ... I can go into any situation and be analytical about the social structures and is there fairness here [sic] and are people being treated equally and can we enable access to information and physical access if you can't get around'* (Annie).
- **TAEDS facilitates personal agency through socially constructed identity development.** Mandy explains: *'I ended up bringing all my past experience in performance into the one production and that makes you feel really good about yourself – you think, actually I can do a lot that I can offer to others – equally, others can offer experiences to me'* and *'School workshops helped me develop that confidence to be a good leader to children and to adults'* (Sue).
- **TAEDS alumni fulfil and exceed current notions of employability and graduate identity.** Sue reports: *'Because it's so diverse, you can put your hand to anything because you've got all those skills you were taught'* and Tess affirms, *'You're making yourself so employable by saying, "You know, I'm pretty hot working with people with disabilities, especially deafness" and realising the Equalities Act'* (Tess).

- **In relation to gendered choices in arts HE and career choices, TAEDS alumni, particularly first generation, can transcend gendered habitus.** *'Coming from a very working class background and then researching a lot more about class and inequalities, it's not necessarily who you are, it's social structures that can keep someone where they are ... actually it doesn't have to be like that at all ... if I can go on to be an educator that is full circle.'* (Annie)
- **The TAEDS personal and professional legacy continues, in spite of TAEDS closure.** Mandy believes, *'It definitely creates enthusiastic and passionate individuals once they leave ... in accessible theatre, although you've got people who haven't studied TAEDS, everybody's heard of TAEDS ... and I think that's created a movement within the theatre world itself.'*
- **The success of TAEDS, in terms of the academic achievement of WP groups and overall high employability, runs counter to contemporary neoliberal discourse in HE.** The very existence of this study challenges HEIs to reconsider the original purpose of university education to promote ethical development for society's benefit (Anderson, 2010) and to champion distinctive WP programmes.
- **Arts subjects, such as drama, continue to be important in HE, despite the current prioritising of STEM subjects.** Aspects of TAEDS are being used as a model for the new UoR *B.A. Education Studies*, particular those which focus on drama, diversity and social justice.
- **The TAEDS Tree methodology provides a new model for future phenomenological research, particularly into other HE programmes.**

8.5 Limitations of the study

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations, both in terms of the researcher and participants. Online survey respondents freely decided whether to participate and were likely to be those who felt positively about TAEDS. Alumni who volunteered for interview self-selected and those from the south-east of England were chosen for convenience. Only six white British alumni were interviewed and because no males volunteered for interview, it was not possible to get a perspective to balance that of the females; therefore the perceptions could be regarded as gendered. My adherence to the ethics of insider research was, and still is, rigorous as was my observation of all protocols to reduce interviewer bias. However, given that my passion for TAEDS was known to all the interviewees, they were more likely to have dwelt on the positives.

A study of TAEDS by any other staff member, past or present, would inevitably have taken a different approach, flavoured by their own positionality. If the researcher had been an expert on employability or identity development or chosen to focus on TAEDS from the perspective of a different department or university, the purpose of the study would have been other than mine and

the outcomes unlike those in this study. Because drama and theatre in education is my area of expertise, I have not considered the critical theatre modules in such detail. Although I appreciate Sign Theatre, my background is not in disability arts nor deaf studies. As a hard of hearing person with limited BSL, I do not have the same perspective as deaf staff members, or hearing staff who sign competently. Moreover, this study has captured a moment in time for TAEDS; in a year or two when it is no more, the research needs and findings might be very different.

While I have striven to ensure readability of the primary data, with hindsight, I could have avoided some of the technical reproduction problems of my methodology by bordering the TAEDS Tree template and requesting that interviewees write in black ink.

8.6 Future research

Despite the limitations, because this is a case study, it has amassed material which is open to further interpretation in the future (Cohen et al, 2007). This study points the way for a longitudinal study of TAEDS alumni, to investigate the ways in which their early professional identity and high employability develop over time and whether the impact of TAEDS continues to resonate throughout their careers. Given the complexities of the programme's endgame, investigating the perceptions and experiences of TAEDS staff could prove useful to universities for managing the staff well-being in marginalised and closing programmes. Once the new *B.A. in Education Studies* has run for at least a year, a study could usefully consider whether the TAEDS legacy is actually being implemented and if lessons have been learnt about ensuring the thriving and survival of small-scale degree programmes which focus on social justice and the arts. It would also be fruitful to use similar methodology to compare alumni data from other degree courses.

8.7 Reflection on the process

This has been a momentous research journey, which has given me new understanding of the reasons for TAEDS' enduring influence and success. I had no prior knowledge of employability before TAEDS, so this has been a steep learning curve. However, I have always been interested in how people identify themselves, so this was a fascinating area to explore. After years of 'practising drama' and knowing its value, both viscerally and anecdotally, I finally had the opportunity to research and evidence this. This has been an opportunity to honour TAEDS through the first dedicated full-length academic study and I hope it will point the way to more. It has also been the culmination of a career-long desire to write academically, at a level beyond undergraduate. Although it has taken forty years, in this respect, my journey echoes that of the alumni who are able to acknowledge what they have learnt when they leave TAEDS: *'TAEDS is a programme that entirely changed my life ... it*

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

has fulfilled and exceeded my expectations, allowing me to go beyond what I ever thought myself capable of' (TAEDS Graduate, 2016).

I leave the final words on the nature of TAEDS from an, aptly titled, End of Programme Evaluation by an alumna:

TAEDS is a course with immeasurable impact. It isn't a course that can be assessed by numbers or ratings or league tables. The difference we make through this course is seen every day. The university may not understand the way it feels [sic] to see the lightbulb moment when a child finally understands, or that feeling when you sign in the spotlight for the first time or take your final bow: but TAEDS does. Even though the course is closing, the work that TAEDS has done over the years has built so many amazing people who will go on to change the world. So there's no need to worry, TAEDS is far from gone. (TAEDS Graduate, 2016)

References

- Aadlandsvik, R. (2009). 'In Search of a Lost Eye: The Mythopoetic Dimension in Pedagogy' A Review of Timothy Leonard & Peter Willis' (Eds.) *Pedagogies of the Imagination: Mythopoetic Curriculum in Educational Practice. Phenomenology and Practice*, 3(1), 94-110.
- ACE. (2016). Retrieved September 2016, from Arts Council England: www.artscouncil.org.uk
- Acker, S. (1992). New Perspectives on an Old Problem. *Higher Education*, 24, 57-75.
- Action on Hearing Loss. (2016). *Definitions of Hearing Loss*. Retrieved from Action on Hearing Loss: <https://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/your-hearing/about-deafness-and-hearing-loss/definitions-of-deafness.aspx>
- AGCAS Editors. (2013, November). *Options with your subject - Performing Arts*. Retrieved August 21, 2104, from Prospects: The UK's official graduate careers website: http://www.prospects.ac.uk/options_performing_arts.htm
- Allern, T. (2008). A comparative analysis of the relationship between dramaturgy and epistemology in the praxis of Gavin Bolton and Dorothy Heathcote. *RiDE*, 13(3), 321-335.
- Allum, L. (2015, December 1). An introduction to Global Citizenship. *Lecture*. Reading International Support Centre (RISC).
- Andermahr, S, Lovell, T & Wolkowitz, C. (2000). *A Glossary of Feminist Theory*. Arnold.
- Anderson, M & Donelan, K. (2009). Drama in schools: meeting the research challenges of the twenty-first century. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 14(2), 165-171.
- Anderson, M & Dunn, J. (2013). *How Drama Activates Learning: Contemporary Research and Practice*. Bloomsbury.
- Anderson, R. (2010, March 1). *The 'Idea of a University' today*. Retrieved from History and Policy: <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/policy-papers/papers/the-idea-of-a-university-today>
- Andrews, J & Higson, H. (2008). Graduate Employability, 'Soft Skills' Versus 'Hard' Business Knowledge: A European Study. *Higher Education in Europe*, 33(4), 411-422.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Anglin-Jaffe, H. (2015). De-colonizing Deaf Education: An Analysis of the Claims and Implications of the Application of Post-Colonial Theory to Deaf Education. In K. Lesnik-Oberstein, *Rethinking disability theory and practice : challenging essentialism* (pp. 76-97). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Aristotle. (384/322 BC). *Nicomachean Ethics*. (D. Ross, Trans.) OUP.

Arnold, C. (Director). (2018). *Deaf School* [Motion Picture].

Arnott, P. (1991). *Public and Performance in the Greek Theater*. Psychology Press. Retrieved February 15, 2016, from https://www2.cnr.edu/home/bmcmanus/tragedy_theater.html

Artsmark. (2000). Retrieved Sept 2016, from <http://www.artsmark.org.uk/about-artsmark>

Ashwell, M & Kempe, A. (2000). *Progression in Secondary Drama*. Oxford: Heinemann.

Ashwell, M et al. (2003). *Drama in Schools: second edition*. Arts Council England.

Ashwell, M. (2009). *Landscaping Drama. A presentation for Drama Teachers*. Surrey: VT Four S education consultancy.

Atkins, M. (2015). *Who you are and what you study influences your degree level*. HEFCE. Retrieved from <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2015/Name,105305,en.html>

Attenborough, R. (1985). *Arts and disabled People: report of a committee of enquiry under the Chairmanship of Sir Richard Attenborough*. London: Bedford Square Press for the Carnegie UK Trust.

Ayer, A. (1956). *The Problem of Knowledge*. Macmillan.

Baldwin, P. (2012, October 30). *In defence of school drama: don't let arts fall off the curriculum*. Retrieved from The Guardian Teacher Network: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2012/oct/30/defence-school-drama-arts-curriculum-ebacc>

Baldwin, P. (2013, Jan 7). *Drama is a subject, despite what the government thinks*. Retrieved from Guardian Education: Teachers Network: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/jan/07/drama-subject-government-education>

Bandura, A. (1995). Exercise of personal and collective efficacy in changing societies. In A. (. Bandura, *Self-efficacy in Changing Societies* (pp. 1-45). Cambridge University Press.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Bandura, A. (1996). Mechanisms of Moral Disengagement in the Exercise of Moral Agency. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 364-374.
- Bandura, A. (2012). On the Functional Properties of Perceived Self-Efficacy Revisited. *Journal of Management*, 38(1), 9-44.
- Bandura, A; Barbaranelli, C; Caprara, G; Pastorelli, C. (2001). Self-Efficacy Beliefs as Shapers of Children's Aspirations and Career Trajectories. *Child Development*, 72(1), 187–206.
- Banks, M. (2001). *Visual Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Barnes, C. (1991). *Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination (3rd edition)*. Hurst.
- Barnett, R & Coate, K. (2005). *Engaging the Curriculum in Higher Education*. Maidenhead: OUP.
- Bartlett, M. (2014). *Charles III: a Future History Play*. London: Nick Hern Books.
- Bates, L. (2017, April 17). What I have learned from five years of Everyday Sexism. *The Guardian*. Retrieved June 21, 2017, from <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/apr/17/what-i-have-learned-from-five-years-of-everyday-sexism>
- BBC. (2014, April 16). *See Hear: Signing on the Stage*. Retrieved from BBC News: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-ouch-27047594>
- BBC. (2015). *See Hear*. 35:10.
- Beck, U & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2001). *Individualization*. Sage.
- Beck, U. (1992). Trans. M. Ritter. *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. London: SAGE.
- Beck, U. (2007). Beyond Class and Nation: Reframing social inequalities in a globalising world. *British Journal of Sociology*, 58(4), 679-705.
- Becker, S. H. (1998). *Tricks of the Trade: How to think about your research while you're doing it*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bennet, S (Ed.). (2005). *Theatre for Children and Young People*. Aurora Metro Press.
- Berger, J. (2008). *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Berke, J. (2017). *Deaf History - Milan 1880*. Retrieved from Verywell:

<https://www.verywell.com/deaf-history-milan-1880-1046547>

Berke, J. (2016, May 20). *Sign Language - Why Learn Sign*. Retrieved from Very Well:

<https://www.verywell.com/sign-language-why-learn-sign-1049298>

Berkeley, A. (2005). Phronesis or Techne? Theatre studies as moral agency. *Research in Drama Education (RiDE): The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 213-227.

Berry, J & Edmond, N. (2014). Discourse of 'equivalence' in HE and notions of student engagement: resisting the neoliberal university. *Student Engagement and Experience Journal*, 3(2), pp. 1-19.

Berry, J. (2015). Because we're worth it: Do students really define themselves in terms of their market value? *LINK*, 1(2), 1-5. Retrieved from <http://www.herts.ac.uk/link/volume-1,-issue-2/because-were-worth-it>

Berry, K. (2002). A Response to Nicholson's 'The Politics of Trust'. *RiDE*, 235-237.

Berson, J. (2005). Performing Deaf Identity: Towards a Continuum of Deaf Performance. In C. & Sandahl, *Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance* (pp. 42-55). University of Michigan.

Bhaskar, R. (1978 2nd edition). *A Realist Theory of Science*. Hassocks: Harvester Press.

Biklen, S, Marshall, C & Pollard, D. (2008). Experiencing second-wave feminism in the USA. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 29(4), 451-469.

Birch, A. (2015). *TAEDS External Examiners Report*. University of Reading.

Birch, A. (2016). *TAEDS External Examiners Report*. University of Reading.

BIS. (2015, November 6). *Fulfilling Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*. Retrieved from Gov.uk:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474227/BIS-15-623-fulfilling-our-potential-teaching-excellence-social-mobility-and-student-choice.pdf

BIS. (2016, May 16). *Higher Education: success as a knowledge economy - white paper*. Retrieved from Gov.Uk: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-success-as-a-knowledge-economy-white-paper>

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- BIS, OFFA, HEFCE. (2014, April). *National Strategy for Access and Student Success*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/299689/bis-14-516-national-strategy-for-access-and-student-success.pdf
- Bishop, K. (2014). Six perspectives in search of an ethical solution: utilising a moral imperative with a multiple ethics paradigm to guide research-based theatre/applied theatre. *RiDE*, 64-75.
- Bishop, K; Bullock, K; Martin, S & Thompson, J. (1997). Students' Perceptions of Coursework in the GCSE: the effects of gender and levels of attainment. *Educational Studies*, 23(2), 295-310.
- Bishop, P. (2008). The shadow of hope: Reconciliation and imaginal pedagogies. In Willis, & Leonard, *Pedagogies of the Imagination: Mythopoetic curriculum in educational practice* (pp. 31-51). Springer.
- Bloom, B. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: the classification of educational goals* . Longmans.
- Boal, A. (1979). *The Theatre of the Oppressed*. London: Pluto.
- Boal, A; trans. Jackson, A. (1992). *Games for Actors and Non-actors*. London: Routledge.
- Boden, R & Nedeva, M. (2010). Employing discourse: universities and graduate 'employability'. *Journal of Education Policy*, 25(1), pp. 37-54.
- Bolton, Gavin. (1992). *New Perspectives on Classroom Drama*. Simon & Schuster.
- Bolton, Gavin. (2003). *Dorothy Heathcote's story. Biography of a Remarkable Drama Teacher*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.
- Bolton, Gavin. (2007). A History of Drama Education: a search for substance. In L. Bresley, *Springer International Handbook of Research in Arts: Part 1* (pp. 45-61). New York: Springer.
- Bolton, Gillie. (2014). *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development (4th edition)*. London: SAGE.
- Bond, E. (2014). Keynote Speech, NATD Conference.
- Bourdieu, P. & Passeron, J. (1977, 1990). *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (2nd ed) London: SAGE

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *In Other Words: essays towards a reflexive sociology*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1997). The Forms of Social Capital. In A. Halsey, H. Lauder, P. Brown, & A. Wells, *Education, Culture, Economy, Society* (pp. 46-58). OUP.
- Bourdieu, P. (2001). *Masculine Domination*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bradbury, H. E. (2015). In N. Denzin (Ed.) *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research, 3rd edition*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Bradford, S. (2005). The National Theatre of the Deaf: Artistic Freedom & Cultural Responsibility in the Use of American Sign Language. In C. & Sandahl, *Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance* (pp. 86-94). University of Michigan.
- Bricheno, P & Thornton, M. (2007, May 28). Role model, hero or champion? Children's views concerning role models. *Educational Research, 49*(4), pp. 383-396.
- Brooks, R & Everett, G. (2009). Post-graduate reflections on the value of a degree. *British Educational Research Journal, 35*(3), 333-349.
- Brown, P; Halsey, A; Lauder, H & Wells, A. (1997). The Transformation of Education and Society. In P. Brown, A. Halsey, H. Lauder, & A. Wells, *Education: Culture, Economy and Society* (pp. 1-44). OUP.
- Brown, R. (2007). Enhancing Student Employability? Current practice and student experiences in HE performing arts. *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education, 6*(1), 28-49.
- Bryant, A & Zimmerman, M. (2002). Examining the effects of academic beliefs and behaviors on changes in substance use among urban adolescents. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 94*(3), 621-637.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods (5th edition)*. Oxford: OUP.
- Bryman, A; Collinson, D; Grint, K; Jackson, B & Uhl-Bien, M (Eds.). (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of Leadership*. London: Sage.
- Burnard, P & Hennessy, S Eds. (2006). *Reflective Practices in Arts Education*. Dordrecht: Springer.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Burnett, J & Whyte, D. (2002). Embedded Expertise and the New Terrorism. *Journal for Crime, Conflict and the Media* 1-18, 1(4), 1-18.
- Bybee, J. S. (1999-2000). Tenth Amendment among the Shadows: On Reading the Constitution in Plato's Cave. *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, 551-2.
- Calvert, D. (2013). Drama, Disability and Education. *RiDE*, 18(4), 417-8.
- Calvert, M & G Clemitshaw. (2003). Implementing Citizenship into the English Secondary School Curriculum . *NAPCE*, 3012.
- Campbell, G. (2015a, October 14). University of Reading students protest to save inclusive course. *The Reading Chronicle*. Retrieved from http://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/13845936.University_of_Reading_students_protest_to_save_inclusive_course/
- Campbell, G. (2015b, October 15). Inclusive degree terminated by Reading University. Retrieved from *The Reading Chronicle*: http://www.readingchronicle.co.uk/news/13872835.BREAKING__Inclusive_degree_terminated_by_Reading_University/
- Carli, L & Eagly, A. (2011). Gender and Leadership. In A. Bryman, Collinson, Grint, Uhl-Bien, & Jackson, *The SAGE Book of Leadership* (pp. 103-117). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Carter, D. (2015) *Curriculum Review of Theatre Arts Education and Deaf Studies (TAEDS)*. UoR unpublished
- Carter, K. (2016, July 1). *Decibels*. Retrieved from <http://www.decibels.org.uk/>
- Cassidy, S. (2014, October 31). *Take drama off GCSE curriculum, insists National Youth Theatre boss*. Retrieved from Independent Education News: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/take-drama-off-gcse-curriculum-insists-national-youth-theatre-boss-9831791.html>
- Chah, A. (1994). *A Tree in a Forest*. (D. Garden, Ed.) Yuan Kuang publishing house.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. . London: SAGE.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Charmaz, K. (2013). Grounded Theory Methods in Social Justice Research. In N. & Denzin, *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry (4th edition)* (pp. 291-336). SAGE.

Cheung M & Halpern, D. (2010). Women at the Top: Powerful Leaders Define Success as Work + Family in a Culture of Gender. *American Psychologist*, 65(3), 182-193.

Children's Commissioner. (2003). *'We want to help people see things our way': A rights-based analysis of disabled children's experience living with low income*. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner.

Chodorow, N. (1999). *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender (2nd edition)*. University of California Press.

CLA. (2016, June 28). *Arts education statistics: what we know*. Retrieved from Cultural Learning Alliance: <http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/news/arts-education-statistics-what-we-know/>

Clark, G. (2012, December 12). *Widening Participation in Higher Education*. Retrieved March 30, 2013, from GOV.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/widening-participation-in-higher-education--4>

Clarke, S. (2011). *Understanding formative assessment: active learning not mechanistic strategies*. Retrieved November 24, 2014, from <http://www.slideshare.net/katedavies/shirleyclarke-powerpoint2011>

Claxton, G & Lucas, B. (2015). *Educating Ruby: What Our Children Really Need to Learn*. Crown House

Cohen et al L, Manion L & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education (6th editon)*. London: Routledge.

Comptroller and Auditor General. (2002). *Widening Participation in Higher Education in England*. London: The Stationary Office.

Conroy, C. (2009). Disability: creative tensions between drama, theatre and disability arts. *The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 14(1), 1-14.

Conroy, C. (2013a). *External Examiner's Report for TAEDS*. University of Reading.

Conroy, C. (2013b). Paralympic Cultures: Disability as Paradigm. *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 23(4), 519-31.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Coughlan, S. (2014, February 13). *Gove sets out 'core knowledge' curriculum plans*. Retrieved Feb 2013, from BBC News Education & Family: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-21346812>
- Courtney, L. (2016, January 26). *Widening Participation Proposal for a Community of Practice*. UoR. Creative Partnerships. (n.d.). *CCE*. The International Foundation for Creative Learning. Retrieved September 2016, from Creativity, Culture and Education: <http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/creative-partnerships>
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Research Design (3rd edn.)*. London: SAGE.
- Crofts, H. (2015, October 19). *University of Reading to close 'unique' theatre course for deaf students*. Retrieved from The National Student: http://www.thenationalstudent.com/Student/2015-10-17/University_of_Reading_closes_unique_theatre_course_for_deaf_students.html
- Croll, P, Attwood G & Fuller, C. (2010). *Children's Lives, Children's Futures*. London: Continuum.
- Crozier, G., Reay, D. & Clayton, J. (2008). Different strokes for different folks: diverse students in diverse institutions. *Research Papers in Education*, 23(2), 167-177.
- CUG. (2012). *What do graduates earn?* Retrieved September 24, 2014, from The Complete University Guide: <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/careers/graduate-salaries-and-the-professional-premium/graduate-starting-salary/>
- Culture, Media and Sport Committee. (2013). *Supporting the creative economy*. London: House of Commons. Retrieved from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmcomeds/674/674.pdf>
- Cziboly, A (Ed.). (2010). *The DICE has been cast: Research findings and recommendations on educational theatre and drama*. Education and Training, Comenius. Lifelong Learning. Retrieved from <http://www.dramanetwork.eu/file/Policy%20Paper%20long.pdf>
- Dacre Pool, L & Sewell, P. (2007). The Key to Employability: developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education + Training*, 49(4), 277-289.
- Dacre Pool, L; Qualtar, P & Sewell, P. (2014). Exploring the factor structure of the CareerEDGE employability development profile. *Education + Training*, 56(4), 303-313.
- Dale, R. (2010). Introduction. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 8(4), 457-459.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Daniels, J & Brooker, J. (2014). Student identity development in higher education: implications for graduate attributes and work-readiness. *Educational Research*, 56(1), 65-76.
- Davis, D. (2014). *Imagining the Real*. London: Trentham.
- Davis, N. (2014). Politics Materialized: Rethinking the Materiality of Feminist Political Action through Epigenetics. *Women: A Cultural Review*, 25(1), 62-77.
- Day, C & Sammons, P. (2007). Chapter 6; Emotional contexts of teaching: six agency, vulnerability and professional identities. In *Teachers Matter: Connecting Lives, Work and Effectiveness* (pp. 102-123). Open University Press.
- Day, C. (2013, January 26). *Mary Beard: I almost didn't feel such generic, violent misogyny was about me*. Retrieved from The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jan/26/mary-beard-question-time-internet-trolls>
- de Certeau, M. (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- De Lauretis, T. (1991). Queer Theory: lesbian and gay sexualities: and introduction. *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, 3(2), iii-xvii.
- Dearing, R. (1997). *Higher Education in the Learning Society*. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office.
- Deleuze, G & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus*. (B. Massumi, Trans.) University of Minnesota.
- Denscombe, M. (2003). *The Good Research Guide, 2nd edition*. OUP.
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects*. OUP.
- Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y (Eds). (2005). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research (2nd edition)*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Denzin, N. (2009). A Critical Performance Pedagogy that Matters. *Ethnography and Education*, 4(3), 255-270.
- Dept for Work and Pensions and the Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith. (2012). *Social Justice: transforming lives*. HM Government.
- Deveaux, M. (1996). Feminism and Empowerment: A Critical Reading of Foucault. In S. Hekman, *Feminist interpretations of Michel Foucault* (pp. 211-234). Pennsylvania State University Press.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Devine, F. (2004). *Class Practices: How Parents Help Their Children Get Good Jobs*. CUP.

Dewey, J. (1930). *Democracy and Education: an introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York : Macmillan.

DfE & DoH. (2015, updated May 1). *Gov.uk*. Retrieved from SEND code of practice: 0-25 years:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

DfE. (1999). *National Curriculum*. Retrieved from
<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/1999-nc-primary-handbook.pdf>

DfE. (2007). *Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning for secondary schools (SEAL) Introductory Guide*. HMSO: London.

DfE. (2012, November 20). Retrieved from http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2012/12/18/SKMBT_C36012112714300.pdf

DfE. (2013a). *Citizenship Programmes of Study for KS 3 & 4*. Retrieved from National Curriculum in England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study-for-key-stages-3-and-4>

DfE. (2013b). *National Curriculum Framework*. Retrieved from
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210969/N_C_framework_document_-_FINAL.pdf.

DfE. (2015, February). *Drama GCSE subject content*. Retrieved from DfE:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/405327/Drama_GCSE_180215.pdf

DfE. (2016, February 12). *English Baccalaureate (EBacc)*. Retrieved from DfE:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc>

DfE. (2017). *Implementing the English Baccalaureate: Government Consultation Response*. Retrieved from http://schoolsweek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Implementing_the_EBacc_Government_Consultation_Response-with-links.pdf

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- DfES. (2001). *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. Retrieved from <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/dfes%200581%20200mig2228.pdf>
- Dickinson, R; Neelands, J . (2006). *Improve your Primary School through Drama*. Lonon: David Fulton.
- Dilts, R. (1990). *Changing Belief Systems with NLP*. Meta Publications.
- Dilts, R. (n.d.). *Logical Levels Inventory*. Retrieved October 26, 2016, from <http://www.logicallevels.co.uk/pages/lli-tool-background>
- Dilts, R; Hallbom, T & Smith S. (2012). *Beliefs: Pathways to health and well-being (2nd edition)*. Crown House.
- DiMaggio, P. (1982). Cultural Captial and School Success: The Impact of Status Culture Paticipation on the Grades of U.S. High School Students. *American Sociological Review*, 47(2).
- Disabililty Rights UK. (n.d.). *Government response to DSA funding*. Retrieved May 15, 2017, from Disability Rights UK: <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/government-response-dsa-funding>
- DLHE. (2016). Retrieved from Unistats: <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/find-out-more/about-the-data/#delhe>
- Doona, J. (2012). *A Practical Guide to Shakespeare for the Primary School*. . Oxford: Fulton.
- Downing, L. (2008). *The Cambridge Introduction to Michel Foucault*. CUP.
- Du-Bois Reymond, M. (1998). 'I don't want to commit myself yet': Young people's life concepts. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 1(1).
- Duncan, G. (2015). Innovations in Appreciative Enquiry: Critical Appreciative Inquiry with Excluded Pakistani Women. In H. E. Bradbury, *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research (3rd edition)* (pp. 55-63). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Dweck, C. (2012). *Mindset: How you Can Fulfil Your Potential*. New York: Ballantine.
- Dwek, I. (2015). *ED1DS1 module handbook*. University of Reading.
- Dwek, I. (2016). Stem Cell Research. *ED2DS2 Lecture*. University of Reading.
- Edmiston, B. (2000). Drama as Ethical Education. *RiDE*, 63-84.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Elgot, J. (2016, August 22). *UK bill of rights will not be scrapped, says Liz Truss*. Retrieved from The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2016/aug/22/uk-bill-of-rights-will-not-be-scrapped-says-liz-truss>

Etherington, M. (2013). Art and design is still a gendered school subject. *Research in Teacher Education*, 3(2), 34-39.

Etherton, M & Prentki, M. (2006). Drama for Change? Prove it! Impact assessment in applied theatre. *RiDE*, II(2), 139-155.

EU Parliament and Council. (2011). *Key Competences for Life-long Learning*. Retrieved September 24, 2014, from Europa Summaries of EU Legislation: http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11090_en.htm

Field, J. (2000). *Lifelong Learning and the New Educational Order*. Trentham.

Fleming, M. (2011). *Starting Drama Teaching, 3rd edition*. London: David Fulton.

Fleming, M; Merrell, C & Tymms, P. (2004). The impact of drama on pupils' language, mathematics, and attitude in two primary schools. 9(2), 177-97.

Floodgate, S. (2008). Background to the course. *TAEDS Programme Handbook*. University of Reading

Floodgate, S. (2009). *Academic business plan for TAEDS within the Institute of Education*. University of Reading: unpublished

Floodgate, S. (2012). Sign Theatre Terminology and Contemporary Confusions. *ED2PTV2 module materials*. University of Reading.

Floodgate, S. (2013). Performing Disability. In A. Kempe, *Drama, Disability and Education: a critical exploration for students and practitioners* (pp. 58-69). Routledge.

Floodgate, S. (2015). Deaf Theatre History. *ED2PTV2 module materials*. University of Reading.

Floodgate, S. (2016). *TAEDS Programme Specification*. University of Reading.

Floyd, A & Linet, A. (2012). Researching from Within: internal and external ethical engagement. *International Journal of Research and Methodology in Education*, 1-10.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Floyd, A & Morrison, M. (2013). Exploring identities and cultures in inter-professional education and collaborative professional practice. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 1-16.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punishment*. London: Allen.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The Will to Knowledge: the history of sexuality Volume 1*. (R. Hurley, Trans.) London: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-77*. (C. Gordon, Ed.) London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Fowler, B. (1997). *Pierre Bourdieu and Cultural Theory: Critical Investigations*. SAGE.

Fowler, B. (2003). Reading Pierre Bourdieu's Masculine Domination: Notes towards an intersectional analysis of gender, culture and class. *Cultural Studies*, 17(3-4), 468-494.

Francis, B & Skelton, C. (2005). *Reassessing Gender and Achievement: questioning contemporary key debates*. Routledge.

Freebody, K & Finneran, M (Eds). (2016). *Drama and Social Justice: Theory, research and practice in international contexts*. Routledge.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Penguin.

Freire, P. (2004). *Pedagogy of Hope*. London: Continuum.

Fuller, C. (2009). *Sociology, Gender and Educational Aspirations*. London: Continuum.

Fuller, C. (2013, February). Social and Cultural Reproduction. *Ed D lecture*. University of Reading.

Fuller, C. (2016). The existential self: challenging and renegotiating gender identity through higher education in England. *Gender and Education*, 1-13.

Fung, D. (2014). Connected Curriculum: Transforming education at UCL. UCL Academic Committee.

Gallagher, K. (2007). Pondering Ethics. *RIDE*, 11(1), 96-98.

Galvin, K & L.Todres. (2012). *Caring and Wellbeing: A 'Lifeworld' Approach*. London: Routledge.

Gambin, L; Beaven, R; Hogarth, T; May-Gillings, M & Katy Long, K. (2014). *Methodological Issues in Estimating the Value Added of Further Education, Higher Education and Skills: a Review of the*

Literature. Institute for Education and Research, Warwick: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

Gardner, H. (2006). *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*. New York: Basic Books.

Gauntlett, D & Holzwarth, P. (2006). Creative and visual methods for exploring identities. *Visual Studies*, 21(1), 82-91.

Gbadamosi et al, G, Evans, C, Richardson, M & Ridolfo, M. (2015). Employability and students' part-time work in the UK: does self-efficacy and career aspiration matter? *British Educational Research Journal*, 41(6), 1086-1107.

Gee, J. (2005). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis (2nd edition)*. New York: Routledge.

Geertz, C. (1975). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. London: Hutchinson.

GEO & EHRC. (2013). *Equality Act 2010*. Retrieved from Gov.uk:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Germer, C. (2009). *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion*. London; New York: The Guilford Press.

Gibbs, R. (2011). Evaluating Conceptual Metaphor Theory. *Discourse Processes*, 48(8), 529-562.

Gibbs, R. (2014). Conceptual metaphor in thought and social action. In M. Landau, *The power of metaphor: Examining its influence on social life* (pp. 17-40). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Gillard, D. (2016). *Education in England: the history of our schools*. Retrieved from
www.educationengland.org.uk/history

Gillies, V. (2005). Raising the 'Meritocracy': Parenting and the Individuization of Social Class. *Sociology*, 39(5).

Gilligan, C. (1993). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Glaser, B & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Aldine.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Goldthorpe, J & Breen, R. (2002). Explaining Educational Differentials: Towards a Formal Rational Action Theory . In *On Sociology: Numbers, Narratives and the Integration of Research and Theory*. OUP.
- Goldthorpe, J. (2007). 'Cultural Capital': Some Critical Observations. *Sociologica*(2), pp. 3-36.
- Goldthorpe, J. (1996). Class Analysis and the Reorientation of Class Theory: The Case of Persisting Differentials in. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 47(3), 481-505.
- Goleman, D. (2000). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam.
- Gorard, S. (2001). The way forward for educational research? *Research Capacity Building Network* (pp. 1-9). London: ESRC .
- Gore, J. (1995). On the Continuity of Power Relations in Pedagogy. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, Volume 5(2), 165-188.
- Graeae. (2016, August 24). *Welcome to Graeae*. Retrieved from Graeae Theatre Company: <http://www.graeae.org/>
- Grieg, N. (1986). *Laughter from the Other Side*. Theatre Centre. Retrieved from Theatre Centre: <http://www.theatre-centre.co.uk/shows/1986/laughter-from-the-other-side/>
- Griffiths, S. (2013, October). *Sunday Times*. Retrieved from http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/Education/article1332693.ece.
- Grix, J. (2002). Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research. *Politics*, 22(3), 175-86.
- Grix, J. (2010). *The Foundations of Research (2nd edition)*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Groce, N. E. (1985). *Everyone here spoke sign language : hereditary deafness on Martha's Vineyard*. Harvard University Press.
- Habermas, J. (1972). *Knowledge and Human Interests*. London: Heinemann.
- Hakim, C. (2000). *Work-Lifestyle Choices in the 21st Century*. OUP.
- Hammersley, M. (1993). *Social Research: philosophy, politics and practice*. London: Sage Publications, in association with the OUP.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Hancock, E. (2014, September 24). *Arts, Creative Arts and Humanities Overview*. Retrieved from HECSU:
http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/assets/assets/documents/Wdgd_arts_humanities_2013.pdf
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: the Reinvention of Nature*. London: Free Association Books
- Harding, S. (Ed.) (1987). *Feminism and Methodology*. OUP.
- Harris, R. (2013, October 5). *Analysing Qualitative Data. Lecture*.
- Hayes, D (Ed.). (2017). *Beyond McDonaldization: Visions of Higher Education*. Routledge.
- Hayes, D & Ecclestone, K & Furedi, F. (2005). Knowing me, knowing you: The rise of therapeutic professionalism in the education of adults. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 37(2)
- Hayes, D & Wynyard, R. (Eds.) (2002). *The McDonaldization of Higher Education*. Bergin & Garvey.
- HEA. (2016a). *Employability*. Retrieved from Higher Education Academy:
<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/workstreams-research/themes/employability>
- HEA. (2016b, November 3). *UKES 2016 - undergraduates engaged in their courses but only half feel equipped for the world of work*. Retrieved from
https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/about/news/ukes-2016-undergraduates-engaged-their-courses-only-half-feel-equipped-world-work?utm_source=CRM%20-%20HEA%20Update&utm_campaign=Surveys%20-%20UKES&utm_medium=Email
- Healey, M. (2015, May). Refreshing the Curriculum: Approaches to Curriculum Design. *Teaching and Learning Seminar*. University of Reading.
- Heathcote, D & G Bolton. (1995). *Drama for Learning: Dorothy Heathcote's mantle of the expert*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Heathcote, D. (1985). Improvisation. In O'Neill, & Johnson, *Dorothy Heathcote: Collected writings on education and drama* (pp. 44-48). London: Hutchinson.
- HECSU. (2010). *What do graduates do?* AGCAS.
- HEFCE. (2013, March). *Higher Education in England: Impact of the 2012 Reforms*. Bristol: HEFCE.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- HEFCE. (2015). *Student opportunity and success - policy and practice 2015-2020*. HEFCE.
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/sas/pp1520/background/>
- HEFCE. (2016). *NSS*. Retrieved from HEFCE: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/nss/>
- HEFCE. (2017, June 12). *Student characteristics*. Retrieved from
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/analysis/HEinEngland/students/sex/>
- Hegel, G. (1977). *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. OUP.
- Hekman, S. (1996). *Feminist Interpretations of Michel Foucault*. Pennsylvania State UP.
- Hennessy, L. (2016). A secondary school drama teacher's experience of drama in the curriculum in 2015. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 21(1), 78-79.
- Higgins, J; Nairn, K & Sligo, J. (2009). Alternative ways of expressing and reading identity. *Ethnography and Education*, 4(1), 83-99.
- Hinchliffe, G & Jolly, A. (2011). Graduate identity and employability. *British Education Research Journal*, 37(4), 563-584.
- HMI. (1989). *Drama from 5-16: Curriculum Matters No. 17*. London: HMSO.
- HMSO. (1988). *Education Reform Act*. London: HMSO.
- Hobbs, V. (2013, February 16). *It's good to talk*. Retrieved from
<http://inimitableflounder.wordpress.com/2013/02/16/its-good-to-talk/>
- Hodges, G. (2010). Rivers of reading: Using critical incident collages to learn about adolescent readers and their readership. *English in Education*, 44(3), pp. 181-200.
- Holma, K. (2011, October). The Epistemological Conditions of Moral Education: The Notions of Rationality and Objectivity Revisited. *Educational Theory*, Vol. 61(Issue 5), 533-548.
- Holmes, L. (2001). Redonsidering graduate employability: the 'graduate identity' approach. *Quality in Higher Education*, 7(2), 111-119.
- Holmes, L. (2002). Reframing the skills agenda in higher education: graduate identity and the double warrant. In D. Preston, *University of Crisis*.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Holmes, L. (2013a). Becoming a graduate: the warranging of an emergent identity. *Education + Training*, 57(2), 219-238.
- Holmes, L. (2013b). Competing perspectives on graduate employability: possession, position or process? *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(4), 538-554.
- Holmes, L. (2013c). Realist and relational perspectives on graduate identity and employability: a response to Hinchliffe and Jolly. *BERA*, 39(6), 1044-1059.
- Hopper, G. (2015). *Art, Education and Gender: The Shaping of Female Ambition*. Palgrave.
- Hornbrook, D. (1998). *Education and Dramatic Art (2nd edition)*. London: Routledge.
- Hugman, R. (2005). The intelligence of emotions and the ethics of compassion. *New approaches New directions in ethics for the caring professions: taking account of change for caring professions*, 48-66.
- Huppertz, K. (2009). Reworking Bourdieu's 'Capital': Feminine and Female Capitals in the Field of Paid Caring Work. 43(1), 45-66.
- Isaiah. *King James Bible: Old Testament* (Vol. 42: 17/18). Collins (1958).
- Jackson, A. (2013). *Learning Through Theatre: The Changing Face of Theatre in Education (3rd edition)*. Routledge.
- Jackson, T (Ed). (1980). *Learning through Theatre: Essays and casebooks on theatre in education*. Manchester University Press.
- Jackson, T (Ed). (1993). *Learning Through Theatre: New perspectives on theatre in education (2nd edition)*. Routledge.
- Jackson, T. (2007). *Theatre, Education and the Making of Meanings: Art or instrument?* Manchester University Press.
- Jayarathne, T & Stewart, A. (1991). Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in the Social Sciences: Current Feminist Issues and Practical Strategies. In Fonnrow, & Cook, *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Jenkins, R. (2002). *Pierre Bourdieu*. London: Routledge.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Johnstone, I; Peel, J; Tibby, M (Eds). (2010). *What do graduates do?* Cheltenham: AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services); HECSU (Higher Education Careers Service); UCAS.
- Jolly, J. (2016). What are the musical life-stories, lived experiences and perceptions of retirement-transition instrumentalists relating to music education and how have these impacted on their learner-identity construction? *Ed D dissertation*. University of Reading.
- Jones, M. (2002). Deafness as culture: a psychosocial perspective. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 22(2), 51-60.
- Jones, S. (1985). The analysis of depth interviews. In R. Walker (Ed.) *Applied Qualitative Research*. Gower
- Josselson, R & Harway, M (Eds). (2012). *Navigating multiple identities: race, gender, culture, nationality and roles*. OUP.
- Kaneko, M & Sutton-Spence, R. (2012). Iconicity and metaphor in sign language poetry. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 27(2), 107-130.
- Keane, E. (2012). Differential prioritising: Orientations to higher education and widening participation. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 53, 150-159.
- Kearns, S. (2012). Seeking researcher identity through the co-construction and representation of young people's narratives of identity. *Educational Action Research*, 20(1), 23-40.
- Kelchtermans. (1996). Teacher vulnerability: understanding its moral and political roots. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(7), 307-322.
- Kelly, G. (1991). *The Psychology of Personal Constructs* (Vol. 1 & 2). London: Routledge.
- Kempe A & Shah, S. (2016). Looking Back, Moving Forward: Drama, Disability and Social Justice. In Freebody, & Finneran, *Drama and Social Justice: Theory, research and practice in international contexts* (pp. 89-102). Routledge.
- Kempe, A (Ed). (2013). *Drama, Disability and Education*. London: Routledge.
- Kempe, A. (2009). Resilience or Resistance? The value of subject knowledge for drama teachers. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 14(3), 411-428.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Kenney, M & Muller, R. (2017). Of rats and women: Narratives of motherhood in environmental epigenetics. *Biosocieties*, 12(1), 23-46

Kincheloe, J; McLaren, P & Steinberg, S. (2013). Critical Pedagogy, and Qualitative Research: Moving to the Bricolage. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln, *The Landscape of Qualitative Research, 4th edition*. SAGE.

Kinsella, E. (2012). Practitioner Reflection and Judgement as Phronesis. In E. Kinsella, & A. Pitman, *Phronesis as Professional Knowledge* (pp. 35-52). Rotterdam: Sense.

Kirkpatrick, B. (2015, November 3). *Epigenetics: Avoiding the Pull of Pseudoscientific Nonsense*. Retrieved January 17, 2017, from What is epigenetics?: <http://www.whatisepigenetics.com/epigenetics-avoiding-the-pull-of-pseudoscientific-nonsense/>

Kloot, L. (2004). Women and Leadership in Universities: a case study of women academic managers. *The International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 17, 470-485. doi: 10.1108/09513550410554760

Knight P & Yorke M. (2005). Formative Assessment in Higher Education: Its Significance for Employability, and Steps Towards Its Enhancement. *Tertiary Education and Management*, 11(3), pp. 219-238.

Knight, P & Yorke, M. (2003). Employability and Good Learning in Higher Education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 8(1).

Knowles, G & Lander, V. (2011). *Diversity, Equality and Achievement in Education*. London: Sage .

Kuppers, P. (2003). *Disability and Contemporary Performance: Bodies on Edge*. Routledge .

Kvale, S & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Writing (2nd edition)*. SAGE.

Ladd, P. (1988). Hearing Impaired or British Sign Language Users? Social Policies and the Deaf Community. *Disability, Handicap & Society*, 3(2), 195-199.

Ladd, P. (2003). Deaf Theatre and Deafhood. *Deafway*. University of Bristol.

Lakoff, G & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the Flesh: the Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*. Basic Books.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Lakoff, G & Johnson, M. (2003 Updated edition). *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago Press.

Lang, H. (2002). Higher Education for Deaf Students: Research Priorities in the New Millennium. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 7(4), 267-280.

Lasselle, L. Keir, F. & Smith, I. (2009). Enhancing Pupils' Aspiration to University: the St Andrews Sutton Trust school experience. *Journal of Further & Higher Education*, 33(4), 395-410.

Latto, K. (2016, July 22). *Expressive Arts and the EBacc debate*. Retrieved from OCR:
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/blog/view/expressive-arts-and-the-ebacc-debate/>

Learning Through Action. (2017, June 12). Retrieved from RVA:
<http://rva.org.uk/organisation/learningthroughactio/>

Leavy P & Chilton G. (2014). Arts-Based Research Practice: Merging Social Research and the Creative Arts. In P. Leavy, *Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 1-41). OUP.

Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets Art: Arts-based Research Practice*. New York. New York: The Guilford Press.

Leigh, I. (2009). *A Lens on Deaf Identities*. Oxford: OUP.

Leitch, S. (2006). *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy: World class skills*. Retrieved October 19, 2016, from
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/354161/Prosperity_for_all_in_the_global_economy_-_summary.pdf

Levi-Strauss, C. (1962; Translated 1966). *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lewthwaite, S. (2014, April 24). *Learning and Teaching Hub*. Retrieved from Guardian Professional:
<http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/apr/24/cuts-disabled-students-allowance-put-studies-at-risk>

Linds, W. (2008). Performing Responsibility: ethical 'know-how' through drama facilitation. *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 101-110.

Lloyd, C. (2002). Reading and interpreting data through a reflective framework. *ALAR*, 16(2), 87-92.

Lucas, B & Claxton, G. (2010). *New kinds of smart: Teaching young people to be intelligent for today's world: How the science of learnable intelligence is changing education*. OUP.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Lucas, B & Claxton, G. (2015). *Educating Ruby: What Our Children Really Need to Learn*. Crown House Publishing.

Lucey H; Melody, J & Walkerdine, V. (2003). Uneasy Hybrids: Psychosocial Aspects of Becoming Educationally Successful for Working-Class Young Women. *Gender and Education*, 15(3).

Madison, D. (2012). *Critical Ethnography: Method, Ethics and Performance (2nd edition)*. California; London: Sage.

Mark. *King James Bible* (Vol. 9:25). Collins (1958).

Marschark, M & Hauser, P. (2012). *How Deaf Children Learn: What Parents and Teachers Need to Know*. Oxford: OUP.

Matthews, B. (2006). *Engaging Education. Developing Emotional Literacy, Equity and Co-education*. Buckingham: McGraw-Hill/OUP.

May, T. (2001). *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process* (3rd ed.). Open University Press.

McGown, A. (2009). *Pat Keysell: obituary*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2009/dec/18/pat-keysell-obituary>

McIlroy, G & Storbeck, C. (2011). Development of Deaf Identity: An Ethnographic Study. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 16(4), pp. 494-511.

McLauchlan, D & K Winters. (2014). What's so great about drama class? Year 1 secondary students have their say. *RiDE*, 51-63.

Mead, M. (1949). *Male and Female: The Classic Study of the Sexes*. Harper Collins.

Merriam Webster. (2016, 25 August). Retrieved from Dictionary: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/drama%20queen>

Metcalf, S. (18th August 2017). The long read - Neoliberalism: the idea that swallowed the world. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from
<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/aug/18/neoliberalism-the-idea-that-changed-the-world>

Meyer, P. (1991). Language Acquisition by Deaf Children. *American Scientist*, 79(1), 60-70.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Middleton, S. (1993). *Educating Feminists: Life Histories and Pedagogy*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Mies, M. (1993). Towards a Methodology for Feminist Research. In M. Hammersley (Ed.), *Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practice* (pp. 64-82). London: Sage OUP.

Mitchell, A. (1982). *The Trees of Britain and Northern Europe*. Spain: Domino.

Monbiot, G. (2016). *Neoliberalism - the ideology at the root of all our problems*. Verso.

Monk, R. (2013). *Of course time is real*. The Guardian Review. London

Moore, R. (2007, 48(1)). Going critical: the problem of problematizing knowledge in education studies. *Critical Studies In Education*, pp. 25-41.

Mountford-Zimdars A; Sabri, D; Moore, J; Sanders, J; Jones, S & Higham, L. (2015). *Causes of differences in student outcomes*. King's College; ARC Network and University of Manchester. HEFCE . Retrieved from http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Pubs/Independentresearch/2015/Causes,of,differences,in,student,outcomes/HEFCE2015_diffout.pdf

NATD. (n.d.). National Association of the Teaching of Drama. Retrieved July 26, 2017, from <http://www.natd.eu/>

National Theatre of the Deaf. (n.d.). *NTD History*. Retrieved June 22, 2016, from <http://www.ntd.org/index.html>

National Theatre Platform: Four years on from the London 2012 Paralympics. (2016, August 18). Retrieved from <http://www.graeae.org/news/national-theatre-platform-four-years-on-from-the-london-2012-paralympics/>

Navarrete, V & Jenkins, S. (2011). Cultural homelessness, multiminority status, ethnic identity development, and self esteem. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(6), 791-804.

NDCS. (2016). *Learning Sign Language*. Retrieved from NDCS: http://www.ndcs.org.uk/family_support/communication/sign_language/index.html?gclid=CwjwqoT8x80CFcZAGwodvasFZw

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Neelands, J et al. (2015). *Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth*. University of Warwick.
Retrieved from
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272363907_Enriching_Britain_Culture_Creativity_and_Growth
- Neelands, J. (1996). Agendas for change, renewal and difference. In J. & O'Toole, *Drama, culture and empowerment: the IDEA dialogues*. Brisbane: IDEA Publications.
- Neelands, J. (2004). Miracles are happening: beyond the rhetoric of transformation in the Western traditions of drama education. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 9(1), 47-56.
- Neff, K. (2014). The Space Between: Self-esteem and Self-Compassion. Retrieved May 14, 2014
- Nicholson, H & Kempe, A. (2007). *Learning to Teach Drama 11-18 (2nd edn.)*. London: Continuum.
- Nicholson, H. (2002). The Politics of Trust: Drama education and the ethic of care. *RiDE*, 81-91.
- Nicholson, H. (2005). On Ethics. (H. Nicholson, Ed.) *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 10(2), 119-125.
- Nicholson, H. (2009). *Theatre and Education*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nicholson, H. (2010). The promises of history: pedagogic principles and the processes of change. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 15(2), 147-154.
- Nicholson, H. (2011). *Theatre, Education and Performance*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Noddings, N. (2002). *The Challenge to Care in Schools: an alternative approach to education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Nussbaum, M. (1990). *Love's Knowledge: Essays on philosophy and literature*. Oxford: OUP.
- O'Brien, M. (2011). Professional responsibility and an ethic of care: teachers' care as moral praxis. *Professional responsibility: new horizons of praxis*, 26(3), 42-56.
- OED. (2016). Retrieved from Oxford Dictionaries Language Matters:
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/soft-skills>

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- OFFA. (2014, July). *Access agreements for 2015-2016; Key statistics and analysis*. Retrieved from www.offa.co.uk: <http://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Access-agreements-for-2015-16-key-statistics-and-analysis.pdf>
- OFFA. (2017). *Strategic guidance: developing your 2018-2019 access agreement*. Office for Fair Access.
- Office for National Statistics. (2010). *SOC*. Retrieved from Office for National Statistics: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/classifications/current-standard-classifications/soc2010/index.html>
- Ofqual. (2016). *Statistics*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>
- Ofqual. (2017, June 15). *Summer 2017 exam entries: GCSEs, level 1/2 certificates, AS and A levels in England*. Retrieved from Gov.uk Official Statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/summer-2017-exam-entries-gcse-level-1-2-certificates-as-and-a-levels-in-england>
- O'Neill, C. (1995). *Drama Worlds: A Framework for Process Drama*. Neinemann.
- O'Regan, M. (2009). *Career pursuit : towards an understanding of undergraduate students' orientation to career* . Ph D thesis, University of Reading.
- O'Toole J & O'Mara, J. (2007). Proteus, the giant at the door: Drama and theatre in the curriculum. In B. (Ed), *Springer International handbook of research in arts education* (pp. 203-18). New York: Springer.
- O'Toole, J. (1977). *Theatre in education: New objectives for theatre, new techniques in education*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- O'Toole, J. (2009a). A prelective keynote: IDIERI 2009. *Sixth International Drama in Education Research Institute (IDIERI)*, (pp. 271-292). Sydney.
- O'Toole, J. (2009b). Writing Everyday Theatre: applied theatre, or just TIE rides again. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 14(4), 479-501.
- Oxfam. (2015). *Education for Global Citizenship: a guide for schools*. Oxfam.
- Payne, D. (1996). Drama and Deaf Children. In A. Kempe, *Drama Education and Special Needs* (pp. 175-209). Stanley Thornes.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Pegg, A; Waldox, J; Hendy-Isaac, S; Lawton, R. (2012). *Pedagogy for Employability*. Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/pedagogy_for_employability_update_2012.pdf
- Pelias, R. (2004). *A Methodology of the Heart*. Alta Mira.
- Petrovski, L. (2000). Portfolio career: professional women in the year 2000. *Australian journal of career development*, 8(1), 9. Retrieved June 27, 2013
- Phelan, J. (2007). Seascapes: tides of thought and being in Western perceptions of the sea. . *Goldsmiths Anthropology Research Papers*, 14.
- Pink, S. (2003) Interdisciplinary agendas in visual research: re-situating visual anthropology. *Visual Studies*, 18(2) 179-92
- Polyani, M. (1962). Tacit Knowing: Its Bearing on Some Problems of Philosophy. *Reviews of Modern Physics*, 34(4), 601-616.
- Pope, M & Denicolo, P. (1993). Teaching and Teacher Education. 9(5).
- Prentki, T & Stinson, M. (2016). Relational pedagogy and the drama curriculum. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 21(1), 1-12.
- President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. (2011). *Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America's Future Through Creative Schools*. Washington DC.
- Pring, R. (2000). *Philosophy of Educational Research*. London: Continuum.
- Prosser, J. (2013). Visual Methodology: Towards a more seeing research . In N. &. Eds. Denzin, *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (pp. 177-211). SAGE.
- Punch, K. F. (2009). *Introduction to Research Methods in Education* . London: SAGE.
- Puttnam, D . (2011). *ImagineNation: The Case for Cultural Learning*. Cultural Learning Alliance.
- Pyrch, T. (2015). Teaching the Heart of Action Research Skill: Breaking Free in the Classroom. In H. E. Bradbury, *The SAGE Handbook of Action Research*, 3rd edition (pp. 700-707). SAGE.
- Radio Berkshire. (2015, October 12).
- Rame, F & Fo, D. (1991). *Woman Alone*. (G. Hanna, Trans.) London: Methuen.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Read, B; Archer, L; Leathwood, C. (2003). Challenging cultures? Student conceptions of 'belonging' and 'isolation' at a post-1992 university. *Studies in Higher Education*, 28(3).
- Reay, D. (1998). Cultural Reproduction: Mothers' involvement in their children's primary schooling. In M. Greenfell, & D. James, *Acts of Practical Theory: Bourdieu and Education*. Falmer.
- Reay, D. (2004). Gendering Bourdieu's Concept of Capitals? Emotional Capital, Women and Social Class. *Sociological Review*, 52(18), 57-74.
- Reay, D., Crozier, G., & Clayton, J. (2009). 'Strangers in Paradise?' Working class students in elite universities. *Sociology*, 43(6), 1103–1121.
- Reay, D., Crozier, G., & Clayton, J. (2010). 'Fitting in' or 'standing out': working class students in higher education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(1), 107-124.
- RISC. (2016, 8 21). Retrieved from Reading International Solidarity Centre: <http://risc.org.uk/>
- Robertson S & Dale, R. (2013). The social justice implications of privatisation in education governance frameworks: a relational account. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 39 (4). 426-455.
- Robertson, S & Dale, R. (2015). Towards a 'critical cultural political economy' account of the globalising of education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 13(1), 149-170.
- Robinson, K. (1999). *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*. London: NACCE.
- Rooke, P. (1992). *Bulmershe: The Life of a College 1964-89*. UoR.
- Rose, G. (2001). *Visual Methodologies*. London : Sage.
- Rose, J. (2009). *Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum: Final Report*. London: DCSF.
- Rose, N. (1989). *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Free Association Books.
- Russell Group. (2016, August 17). *Informed Choices*. Retrieved from Subject choices at school and college: <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/for-students/school-and-college-in-the-uk/subject-choices-at-school-and-college/>
- RUSU. (2017). *Boycott to Freeze Fees*. Retrieved January 23, 2017, from Reading University Students' Union: https://www.rusu.co.uk/campaigns/2016_2017/tef_off/

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Ryan, R & Deci, E. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78.
- Sandahl, C & Auslander, P (Eds). (2005). *Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance*. University of Michigan Press.
- Sanders, L. (2013). Integrating Contemplative Education and Contemporary Performance. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 53-63.
- SCUDD. (2017). *Drama and Employability*. The Standing Conference of University Drama Departments. Retrieved from <https://scudd.org.uk/prospective-students/drama-and-employability/>
- Sealey, J. (2002). Keynote. *Shifting Aesthetics*. London.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research - A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences (3rd Edition)*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Shakespeare, W. (1602). *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. OUP: London
- Shapiro, J. (2015). *The Year of Lear: Shakespeare in 1606*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Shenton, A. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22, 63-75.
- Shepherd, J. (2011, Feb 4). *Universities admit 'soft' A-levels damage chance of top places*. Retrieved from University administration: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2011/feb/04/university-places-traditional-subjects-a-levels>
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing Qualitative Research (2nd edn.)*. London: SAGE.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I & Hallet, E. (2014). *Effective and Caring Leadership in the Early Years*. London: SAGE.
- Skeggs, B. (1997). *Formations of Class and Gender: Becoming respectable*. SAGE.
- Skelton, C. (2010). Gender and Achievement: are girls the "success stories" of restructured education systems? *Educational Review*, 62(2).
- Slade, P. (1954). *Child Drama*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Smith, J. (2014, March 6). The Female Role Model in 2014. *Edith Morley lecture*. University of Reading.

Somers, J. (2013). Making the Case for Drama. *Hellenic Theatre, Drama and Education Network*. Athens.

Spotlight on Diversity. (2017, June 12). Retrieved July 7th, 2014, from RVA:
<http://rva.org.uk/organisation/spotlightondiversity/>

STEAM Commission report. (2017, June 12). *Creating Camden's 21st Century Talent*. Retrieved from Camden.gov.uk: <http://camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/business/jobs-and-skills/steam-commission/>

Steiner, C & Perry, P. (1997). *Achieving Emotional Literacy*. London : Bloomsbury.

Stevenson, R. (1881). *Virginibus Puerisque*. Cornhill Magazine

Stewart, H & Walker, P. (2016, September 9). *Theresa May to end ban on new grammar schools*. Retrieved from The Guardian Education:
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/sep/09/theresa-may-to-end-ban-on-new-grammar-schools>

Stewart, I. (2011a, May 26). Education for the Deaf in Creative Theatre. *Research Seminar, University of Reading*.

Stewart, I. (2011b, May 26). The Origins of the British Theatre of the Deaf. *Lecture, University of Reading*.

Stinson, M & Piazzoli, E. (2013). Drama for Additional Language Learning: Dramatic Contexts and Pedagogical Possibilities. In M. & Anderson, *How Drama Activates Learning* (pp. 208-225). London : Bloomsbury.

Sumedho, A. (1991). *The Way It Is*. Amaravati Publications.

Tadie, N. (1979). A History of Drama at Gallaudet College: 1864-1969. *Ph D Thesis*. New York: New York University.

TAEDS Graduates. (2015). How TAEDS has changed me. *Graduate testimonials*. Unpublished.

TAEDS Graduates. (2017). How TAEDS has changed me. *Graduate Testimonials*. Unpublished.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

TAEDS team. (2013-4). Ethos and Vision meetings. Unpublished.

TAEDS Year 3 students. (2015, October 10). #saveTAEDS. Retrieved from Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/savetaeds?source=feed_text&story_id=175169112824155

TAEDS Youtube. Retrieved June 26, 2016, from Youtube:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=TAEDS

Taggart, G. (2010a). Religious and Spiritual Identity and Citizenship Education in the UK. In M. Soininen, & T. Merisuo-Storm, *Looking at Diversity in Different Ways* (pp. 95-119). Turku: University of Turku.

Taggart, J. (2010b). Nurturing Spirituality: a rationale for holistic education. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 6(3), 325-339.

Taylor, L. (1995). Deaf Sign Language as a Language for the Stage. *Studies in Theatre Production*, 12(1), 65-81.

Taylor, L. (1999). See to Hear - Deaf Sign Language as Performance. *Performance Research: A Journal of the Performing Arts*, 4(3), 17-23.

Terret, L. (2013). *External Examiner's Report for TAEDS*. University of Reading.

Terret, L. (2014). *External Examiner's Report for TAEDS*. University of Reading.

Terret, L. (2015). *External Examiner's Report for TAEDS*. University of Reading.

Terret, L. (2016). *External Examiners Report for TAEDS*. University of Reading.

The Limping Chicken. (2013, July 3). Deaf News: University of Bristol's Centre for deaf Studies set to be closed. Retrieved June 23, 2017, from <http://limpingchicken.com/2013/07/03/deaf-news-university-of-bristols-centre-for-deaf-studies-set-to-be-closed/>

Theron, L; Geyerb, S; Strydoma H & Delport, R. (2010). Visual Methodology to Build a Resilient 'communitas'. *Education as Change*, 14(1).

Thomas, G. (2010). Doing Case Study: Abduction Not Induction, Phronesis Not Theory. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(7), 575-582.

Thomas, G. (2013). *How to do Your Research Project (2nd edition)*. London: SAGE.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Thomas, G. (2016). *How to do Your Case Study (2nd edition)*. London: SAGE.

Thomas, K. (1997, May 6). *Far more than a gesture: Kim Thomas on the unique drama course at Reading that enables deaf students to show what rich talents they can bring to the theatre*. Retrieved from ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Guardian: <http://search.proquest.com.idpproxy.reading.ac.uk/hnpguardianobserver/docview/187989842/fulltextPDF/1D49161701974460PQ/14?accountid=13460>

Thomas, L & Jones, R. (2007, February). *Embedding Employability in the Context of Widening Participation*. Retrieved from HE Academy: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/esect_wideningparticipation.pdf

Thomas, L & Quinn, J. (2007). *First Generation Entry Into Higher Education: an international study*. Society for Research into Higher Education and OUP.

Thorne, H. (2014). *Applications and Acceptances for Drama Courses UCAS*. Retrieved September 2014, from SCUDD: <http://www.scudd.org.uk/2014/04/24/ucas-application-stats-04-14/>

Thorpe, S. (2013). TAEDS alumni, Freelance Drama Facilitator and BSL Interpreter. *TAEDS Landing Page*. Retrieved from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/education/ug/ioe-BATheatreEducationDeafStudies.aspx>

Tinklin, T; Croxford, L; Ducklin, A; Frame, B. (2005). Gender and Attitudes to Work and Family Roles: The Views of Young People at the Millennium. *Gender and Education, 17*(2).

Tjingo, K. (2011). *Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park*. Australian Government.

Tonnsen, S; Alexander, A; Topolka-Jorissen K & Jacobs, J. (2011). Influences of Early Life Experiences on the Generative Leadership Roles of Four Female Professors of Educational Leadership. *Women In leadership, 31*, 34-39. Retrieved July 18th, 2013

Tyrer, G; Dray, T; Ives, J & Yorke, M. (2013). *Professional capabilities in non-vocational subject disciplines*. Retrieved from The Higher Education Academy: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/professional_capabilities_non_vocational_subject_disciplinesv2.pdf

UCAS. (2015, December). *End of Cycle Report 2015*. Retrieved from UCAS Analysis and research: <https://www.ucas.com/sites/default/files/eoc-report-2015-v2.pdf>

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- Unistats. (2013). *B.A. (Hons) TAEDS*. Retrieved September 2013, from <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/Subjects/Overview/10007802FT-UFTHAR/ReturnTo/Search>
- Unistats. (2014). *B.A. (Hons) TAEDS*. Retrieved September 2014, from Unistats: <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/Subjects/Overview/10007802FT-UFTHAR/ReturnTo/Search>
- Unistats. (2015). *B.A. (Hons) TAEDS*. Retrieved October 2015, from Key Information Statistics: <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/Subjects/Overview/10007802FT-UFTHAR/ReturnTo/Search>
- UoR. (2013). *Widening Participation Strategy*. Retrieved from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/Widening-participation-strategy-March-2013.pdf?IID=85389&SID=9341>
- UoR. (2015, July 16). *The University's Widening Participation plans have been approved*. Retrieved July 17, 2015, from Staff portal: www.reading.ac.uk/internal/staffportal/news/articles/spsn-638065.aspx
- UoR. (2015-18). *University Learning and Teaching Strategy*. Retrieved October 26, 2016, from University of Reading: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/cdotl/University-of-Reading-Learning-and-Teaching-Strategy-2013-18.pdf>
- UoR Access. (2016). *2017-2018 Access Agreement with OFFA*. Retrieved from <https://www.offa.org.uk/agreements/The%20University%20of%20Reading%201718.pdf>
- UoR Admissions. (2015). *TAEDS Applications (YTD)*. UoR.
- UoR BA Education Studies. (2017, June 9). *Ready to Study*. Retrieved from University of Reading: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/ready-to-study/study/subject-area/education-ug/ba-education-studies.aspx>
- UoR Careers. (n.d.). *The Online Careers Centre*. University of Reading. Retrieved October 25, 2016, from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/careers/>
- UoR Communications. (2015, October 15). *TAEDS course closure*. Retrieved from Communications: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/news-and-events/releases/PR649026.aspx>
- UoR CQSD. (2016). *Generic programme outcomes aligned to graduate attributes Level 4-7*. University of Reading.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

- UoR CQSD. (2017, November 28). *University of Reading Curriculum Framework*. Retrieved from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/curriculum-framework/UniversityOfReadingCurriculumFramework.pdf>
- UoR Diversity and Inclusion. (2017). *Diversity Commitment*. Retrieved from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/diversity/diversity-commitment.aspx>
- UoR Employability. (2017, June 8). *Ready to Study*. Retrieved from UoR: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/ready-to-study/study/support/employability.aspx>
- UoR Marketing . (2016). *Student Recruitment and Outreach*. Retrieved from UoR: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/marketing-and-communications/marketing/mac-sturecruitment.aspx>
- UoR. (n.d.). Red Award. *Careers Centre*. UoR. Retrieved October 25, 2016, from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/readingexperienceanddevelopmentaward/reda-home.aspx>
- UoR T & L. (2016b). Teaching and Learning. *Summer Term(11)*. University of Reading.
- UoR Thrive. (2016). *Thrive with Career Mentoring at Reading*. Retrieved from Careers Centre: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/careers/placements/thrive/>
- Usher, P. (1996). Feminist Approaches to Research. In R. Usher, & D. Scott, *Understanding Educational Research* (pp. 120-42). London: Routledge.
- Wall, K; Hall, E; Woolner P. (2012). Visual Methodology: previously, now and in the future. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 35(3).
- Wardale, C (Ed.). (2015). *TAEDS brochure*. Retrieved June 23, 2016, from <http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/aTAEDSbrochure2015.pdf>
- Wardale, C. (2013a, January). *Historical accident or retrospective design: what are the perceptions of mature women coming to leadership and management later in their careers in HE institutions?* Ed D assignment. University of Reading: unpublished.
- Wardale, C. (2013b). *TAEDS Annual Report*. University of Reading.

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Wardale, C. (2014a). *Dramatic tensions: a secondary drama teacher's experience of navigating personal and professional identity through an ethic of care in teaching citizenship issues*. Ed D assignment. University of Reading: unpublished.

Wardale, C. (2014b). *TAEDS Annual Report*. University of Reading.

Wardale, C. (2014c). *What are the factors affecting recruitment to the TAEDS B.A.?* Ed D assignment. University of Reading: unpublished.

Wardale, C. (2015 b). *SFHEA FLAIR application*. University of Reading: unpublished.

Wardale, C. (2015c). *TAEDS Interview Presentation*. University of Reading.

Wardale, C. (2015a). *TAEDS Open Day Presentation*. University of Reading.

Wardale, C (2015-6). (Ed.) *TAEDS Programme Handbook*. University of Reading

Wardale, C. (2017, June 1). *The TAEDS Tree*. T & L presentation. University of Reading.

Way, B. (1967). *Development Through Drama*. London: Longman.

WHO. (2015, March). *Deafness and hearing loss*. Retrieved from World Health Organization:
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs300/en/>

Wilkinson, D & Birmingham, P. (2003). *Using Research Instruments: A Guide for Researchers*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Willetts, D. (2014, April 7). *Higher education: student support: changes to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA)*. Retrieved from www.gov.uk:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/higher-education-student-support-changes-to-disabled-students-allowances-dsa>

Winston, J. (2000). *Drama, Literacy and Moral Education*. London: David Fulton.

Winston, J. (2007). Citizenship, Human Rights and Applied Drama. *RiDE*, 12(3), 269-274.

Wolber, L. (2016, January). The Genetics of Deafness. *ED1DS1 Audiology Lecture*. Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

Woodman, P. (2014, October 16). *Engage in Teaching and Learning*. Retrieved from HOT TIP: What is the number one factor behind student success? .

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of graduate identity and employability in a unique degree programme

Wooster, R. (2016). *Theatre in Education in Britain: Origins, development and influence*. Bloomsbury.

Yin, R. (2014). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (5th edition)*. SAGE.

Yorke, M. (2006). *Employability in Higher Education: what it is, what it is not*. Retrieved October 19, 2016, from VOCEDplus:
https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/id116_employability_in_higher_education_336.pdf

Appendices

Appendix 1 Ethical Approval Form

University of Reading
Institute of Education
Ethical Approval Form A (version September 2013)



Tick one:

Staff project: ___ Ed D X_

Name of applicant (s):Cathy Wardale.....

Title of project:..... **The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on its alumni.**

Name of supervisor (for student projects): Gill Hopper & Geoff Taggart.....

Please complete the form below including relevant sections overleaf.

	YES	NO	
Have you prepared an Information Sheet for participants and/or their parents/carers that:	X		
a) explains the purpose(s) of the project	X		
b) explains how they have been selected as potential participants	X		
c) gives a full, fair and clear account of what will be asked of them and how the information that they provide will be used	X		
d) makes clear that participation in the project is voluntary	X		
e) explains the arrangements to allow participants to withdraw at any stage if they wish	X		
f) explains the arrangements to ensure the confidentiality of any material collected during the project, including secure arrangements for its storage, retention and disposal	X		
g) explains the arrangements for publishing the research results and, if confidentiality might be affected, for obtaining written consent for this	X		
h) explains the arrangements for providing participants with the research results if they wish to have them	X		
i) gives the name and designation of the member of staff with responsibility for the project together with contact details, including email . If any of the project investigators are students at the IoE, then this information must be included and their name provided	X		
k) explains, where applicable, the arrangements for expenses and other payments to be made to the participants			
j) includes a standard statement indicating the process of ethical review at the University undergone by the project, as follows: 'This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct'.	X		
k)includes a standard statement regarding insurance: "The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request".	X		
Please answer the following questions			
1) Will you provide participants involved in your research with all the information necessary to ensure that they are fully informed and not in any way deceived or misled as to the purpose(s) and nature of the research? (Please use the subheadings used in the example information sheets on blackboard to ensure this).	X		
2) Will you seek written or other formal consent from all participants, if they are able to provide it, in addition to (1)?	X		
3) Is there any risk that participants may experience physical or psychological distress in taking part in your research?		X	
4) Have you taken the online training modules in data protection and information security (which can be found here: http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx)?	X		
5) Have you read the Health and Safety booklet (available on Blackboard) and completed a Risk Assessment Form to be included with this ethics application?	X		
6) Does your research comply with the University's Code of Good Practice in Research?			
	YES	NO	N.A.
7) If your research is taking place in a school, have you prepared an information sheet and consent form to gain the permission in writing of the head teacher or other relevant supervisory professional?			X

8) Has the data collector obtained satisfactory DBS clearance?			X
9) If your research involves working with children under the age of 16 (or those whose special educational needs mean they are unable to give informed consent), have you prepared an information sheet and consent form for parents/carers to seek permission in writing, or to give parents/carers the opportunity to decline consent?			X
10) If your research involves processing sensitive personal data ¹ , or if it involves audio/video recordings, have you obtained the explicit consent of participants/parents?	X		
11) If you are using a data processor to subcontract any part of your research, have you got a written contract with that contractor which (a) specifies that the contractor is required to act only on your instructions, and (b) provides for appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect the data?			X
12a) Does your research involve data collection outside the UK?			X
12b) If the answer to question 11a is "yes", does your research comply with the legal and ethical requirements for doing research in that country?			X
13a. Does the proposed research involve children under the age of 18?			X
13b. If the answer to question 12a is "yes": My Head of School (or authorised Head of Department) has given details of the proposed research to the University's insurance officer, and the research will not proceed until I have confirmation that insurance cover is in place.			
If you have answered YES to Question 3, please complete Section B below			

PLEASE COMPLETE EITHER SECTION A OR B AND PROVIDE THE DETAILS REQUIRED IN SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION, THEN SIGN THE FORM (SECTION C)


A: My research goes beyond the 'accepted custom and practice of teaching' but I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications.	X
Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words. Attach any consent form, information sheet and research instruments to be used in the project (e.g. tests, questionnaires, interview schedules).	
Please state how many participants will be involved in the project: Total numbers 130 approx This form and any attachments should now be submitted to the Institute's Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.	
<p>The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on its alumni</p> <p>This is a Part B Ed D dissertation, which aims to investigate student experience of the unique TAEDS degree during the student life-cycle as well as the impact and influence of TAEDS on alumni. This is a previously un-researched area and the study will critically evaluate the benefits of the TAEDS experience within the context of inclusion and widening participation: in particular whether there is transferable best practice which could become a model for other inclusive degree programmes.</p> <p>The Methodology will consist of anonymous online questionnaires for approximately 100 alumni (depending on whether alumni bank of email addresses is up to date), 10 Year 1s and 13 Year 3s after graduation, followed by semi-structured interviews with about 5 self-selected alumni at a life-stage about five years after graduation. Total numbers 130 approx.</p> <p>The interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed and anonymised before being analysed. Following the first interview, the researcher will draft a visual metaphor, such as a tree or a river, as a basis for discussion and co-construction at the second interview.</p> <p>This is a link to the online alumni questionnaire preview https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/survey/preview?r=true&sm=9souT7Sk_2F2C1APtghnwwedrThmA0eDU22DxcTHHGKY8YgQQ0ceb8sdI5c5Env5CVHxiP6RCm8KR9eQ7Df5jKkGQ_3D_3D A PDF of the alumni questionnaire; a draft questionnaire for Year 1; a draft interview schedule; a risk assessment; online data protection certificate and information and consent forms are attached.</p>	

¹ Sensitive personal data consists of information relating to the racial or ethnic origin of a data subject, their political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual life, physical or mental health or condition, or criminal offences or record.

B: I consider that this project may have ethical implications that should be brought before the Institute's Ethics Committee.	
Please provide all the further information listed below in a separate attachment.	
1. title of project	
2. purpose of project and its academic rationale	
3. brief description of methods and measurements	
4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria	
5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)	
6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them.	
7. estimated start date and duration of project	
<i>This form and any attachments should now be submitted to the Institute's Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.</i>	

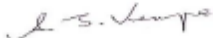
C: SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm that ethical good practice will be followed within the project.

Signed  Print Name Cathy Wardale..... Date...12th June, 2015.....

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE ETHICS COMMITTEE

This project has been considered using agreed Institute procedures and is now approved.

Signed:  Print Name Andy Kempe Date 2.7.15
(IoE Research Ethics Committee representative)*

* A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.

Appendix 2 Ethics: Alumni online survey information and consent email

Dear TAEDS Graduate,

Research Study *The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree.*

The study is for an Educational Doctorate dissertation at the University of Reading, Institute of Education.

It aims to investigate the student experience of the TAEDS degree, the expectations of beginning Year 1 students and the impact and influence on TAEDS alumni. This is a previously un-researched area and the study will critically evaluate the TAEDS programme within the context of inclusion and widening participation, in particular whether there is transferable best practice which could become a model for other inclusive degree programmes.

You have been invited to take part in the study because you are a TAEDS alumni/Year 3 TAEDS finalist

What will happen if I take part?

You are asked to participate in an anonymous online questionnaire, with the option of a follow-up interview if you choose.

If you give your consent to taking part in this survey, please lick on the link below

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TAEDS>

What will happen to the data?

The information you give will remain confidential and will only be seen by the researcher and the supervisors. You will not be identifiable in any report resulting from the study. Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in the study or in any subsequent publications. The records of the study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only the researcher will have access to the records. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the study are written up or after five years. The results of the study will be presented to tutors to be assessed as part of an assignment, and may be published in due course. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request. This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please contact Cathy Wardale, the researcher. Tel: 0118 378 2659 email: c.j.wardale@reading.ac.uk

The dissertation supervisors are Dr Gill Hopper, Tel: 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk and Dr Geoff Taggart, Tel: 0118 378 2643, email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

Thank you for your time.

Alumni Office etc

The University of Reading is ranked as a Top 30 UK university in the Complete University Guide 2016 and is in the top 25 in the Guardian league table

Appendix 3 Ethics: New intake paper information and consent form

Dissertation title: **The TAEDS Tree: a case study of employability and graduate capabilities in a unique degree programme**

Researcher : Cathy Wardale

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study about your experience of TAEDS.

What is the study?

The study is a research project for a Part 2 Ed D dissertation at the Institute of Education, University of Reading.

It aims to investigate the experiences of the TAEDS degree during the student life-cycle and the impact and influence on alumni. This is a previously un-researched area and the study will critically evaluate the TAEDS experience within the context of inclusion and widening participation at university, in particular whether there is transferable best practice which could become a model for other inclusive degree programmes.

The study will include anonymous online questionnaires, followed by semi-structured interviews for volunteer alumni. Interviews will be audio- recorded and followed up by second interviews and a subsequent focus group. The recordings will be transcribed and anonymised before being analysed.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been invited to take part in the study because you are a Year 1 TAEDS student, in line with the aims and research questions of the study.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether you participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time and without reason , by contacting myself or my supervisors: Dr Gill Hopper, 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk or Dr Geoff Taggart Tel: 0118 378 2643 email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to participate in an anonymous online questionnaire.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

The information you give will remain confidential and will only be seen by myself and the supervisors. You will not be identifiable in any report resulting from the study

What will happen to the data?

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in the study or in any subsequent publications. The records of the study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any report. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only the researcher will have access to the records. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the study are written up or after five years. The results of the study will be presented to tutors to be assessed as part of an assignment, and may be published in due course.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time without any repercussions. During the research, you can stop the interview at any time. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, I will safely discard your data.

Who has reviewed the study?

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct.

What happens if something goes wrong?

The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request. In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Dr Gill Hopper, 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk or Dr Geoff Taggart, Tel: 0118 378 2643, email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please contact Cathy Wardale

Tel: 0118 378 2659 email: c.j.wardale@reading.ac.uk

I do hope that you will agree to participate in the study. If you do, please complete the consent form below and return it by email.

Thank you for your time.

Research Project: The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni.

Consent Form

I have read the Participant Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.
I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me.

I understand that I may withdraw my consent to participate at any time during the project, by contacting Cathy Wardale or my supervisors: Dr Gill Hopper, 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk or Dr Geoff Taggart Tel: 0118 378 2643 email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

Name: _____

Please highlight/bold/underline the statement below to indicate your consent.

- I agree to take part in an anonymous paper questionnaire

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 4 Ethics: Alumni interview information and consent form

Dissertation title: The TAEDS Tree: a case study of employability and graduate capabilities in a unique degree programme.

Researcher : Cathy Wardale

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study about your experience of TAEDS.

What is the study?

The study is a research project for a Part 2 Ed D dissertation at the Institute of Education, University of Reading.

It aims to investigate the impact and influence on alumni in terms of employability and graduate capabilities. This is a previously un-researched area and the study will critically evaluate the TAEDS experience within the context of inclusion and widening participation at university, in particular whether there is transferable best practice which could become a model for other inclusive degree programmes.

The study will consist of anonymous online questionnaires, followed by semi-structured interviews for volunteer alumni. Interviews will be audio-recorded and may be followed up by second interviews and a subsequent focus group. The recordings will be transcribed and anonymised before being analysed. There is the possibility of an alumni focus group and shared performance work at a TAEDS alumni event, but this is entirely voluntary.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been invited to take part in the study because you are a TAEDS alumna in line with the aims and research questions of the study.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether you participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, by contacting myself or the supervisors: Dr Gill Hopper, 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk or Dr. Geoff Taggart Tel: 0118 378 2643 email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to participate in an audio-recorded interview at the University of Reading, at your work or a place of your choice, at a mutually agreed time.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

The information you give will remain confidential and will only be seen by myself and the supervisors. You will not be identifiable in any report resulting from the study

Participants in similar studies have found it interesting to take part and potentially helpful for their continued professional development.

What will happen to the data?

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this study or in any subsequent publications. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any report. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only the researcher will have access to the records. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the study are written up or after five years. The results of the study will be presented to tutors to be assessed as part of an assignment, and may be published in due course.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time without any repercussions. During the research, you can stop the interview at any time. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, I will discard your data.

Who has reviewed the study?

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct.

What happens if something goes wrong?

The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request. In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Dr Gill Hopper, 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk or Dr. Geoff Taggart, Tel: 0118 378 2643, email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please contact Cathy Wardale

Tel: 0118 378 2659 email: c.j.wardale@reading.ac.uk

I do hope that you will agree to participate in the study. If you do, please complete the consent form below and return it by email.

Thank you for your time.

**Research Project: The TAEDS Tree: a case study of employability and graduate capabilities
in a unique degree programme**

Consent Form

I have read the Participant Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.
I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me.

I understand that I may withdraw my consent to participate at any time during the project, by contacting Cathy Wardale or the supervisors: Dr Gill Hopper, 0119378 2644 g.w.hopper@reading.ac.uk or Dr. Geoff Taggart Tel: 0118 378 2643 email: g.taggart@reading.ac.uk

Name: _____

Please highlight/bold/underline the statement below to indicate your consent.

- I agree to take part in an initial interview, with the possibility of a further one
YES/NO
- I agree to this interview being audio-recorded
YES/NO
- I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in subsequent publications
YES/NO

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5 Template online alumni survey

The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni

Background details

1. What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 or older

2. When you did the TAEDS degree, were you:

- An international student
- A mature student
- A student who lived at home
- A student with learning difficulties or special needs
- A student who qualified for the Disabled Student Allowance

What year did you graduate?

3. Are you

- Hearing
- Hard of hearing
- D/deaf
- Deafened

4. Please describe your race/ethnicity.

5. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Or please describe

The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni

Choosing TAEDS

6. Why did you decide to do a TAEDS degree?

- Opportunity to learn BSL/Deaf Studies
- Develop acting/theatre/drama skills
- Learn teaching skills
- Gain business sense/employability
- Develop research, analysis & writing skills
- Team/group work
- More independence/self-confidence
- Deaf/hearing working together
- Work placement opportunity

Please add anything else & expand on the most important

7. What other factors affected your choices?

- I have family/friends who are deaf
- I have family/friends who have learning difficulties/disabilities
- Drama helps me develop self-confidence
- I wanted to do something creative
- Drama was the only subject I thought I was good at
- Low entry tariff
- Small teaching groups
- High contact hours
- No formal exams
- Student support available
- Involvement in the TAEDS community
- TAEDS kept my options open as I wasn't sure what to do
- I considered being a teacher but was not ready to commit to a BA Ed
- I was curious about interpreting
- My parents/carers approved

Please add any other factors and expand on the most important aspects

The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni

Before TAEDS: School and college

8. Did any of your family members go to university?

- Parents/carers
- Siblings
- Grandparents
- Extended family
- No

9. What made you decide to go to university?

10. What were your favourite subjects at school/college and why?

11. What subjects did you study at post-16 level?

12. How successful were you in Drama/Theatre Studies/Performing Arts?

13. How did you find out about TAEDS?

- School/college careers advice
- UCAS website
- University of Reading website
- Random searching online
- Word of mouth
- Personal recommendation from alumni
- Other (please specify)

14. What other courses did you consider and where else were you offered a place?

The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni

Your TAEDS student experience

15. Whether or not you qualified for the DSA, what support did you access from TAEDS or the University?

- Study skills
- Counselling/therapy
- Careers advice
- Personal tutor
- Student/academic mentor
- Reading Students' Union advice/support group
- Other (please specify)

16. Did you work part-time during your degree?

- Yes
- No

Please explain how this impacted on your degree

17. Please describe the following aspects of the TAEDS experience:

The most useful

The most challenging

The most memorable

The most beneficial (in terms of your life-journey)

The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni

During and after TAEDS - Employment

18. How well did TAEDS prepare you for the world of work? (Choose from 1-5: 1 is highest)

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain

19. Your professional role(s)

What is your current job(s)?

Is this your chosen career path?

Do you enjoy your work?

What do you see yourself doing in 5 years?

20. Have you done, are you doing or do you plan to do any further study?

Yes

No

If yes, what

21. Please rate how well TAEDS fulfilled your expectations and helped you develop the following transferable professional skills (Check 1-3: 1 highest - 3 lowest)

	1	2	3
Communication/people skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem-solving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working under pressure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tackling unfamiliar situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handling criticism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-reliance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performance & self-presentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research, analysis, thinking & writing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entrepreneurial & business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BSL & deaf awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership & group skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creativity & flexibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive attitude	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which of these has been most useful to you in your career and how?

22. Please write a few lines to sum up your experience of TAEDS

The TAEDS experience: the impact and influence of the Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies degree on alumni

Further involvement in TAEDS research?

Thank you very much for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire.

We are asking for volunteers to be interviewed as a follow-up. If you are willing for us to contact you, please follow the link below to give your name and email address. Your responses to this survey will still be anonymous.

[Interview volunteers](#)

Appendix 6 Template new entrant paper questionnaire

The TAEDS experience: new entrants 2015
Background details
<p>1. What is your age?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 18 to 24</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 25 to 34</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 35 to 44</p>
<p>2. Are you:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> An international student</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A mature student</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A student who lives at home</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A student with learning difficulties or special needs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A student who is applying for the Disabled Student Allowance</p>
<p>3. Are you</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Hearing</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Hard of hearing</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D/deaf</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Deafened</p>
<p>4. Please describe your race/ethnicity.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>

The TAEDS experience: new entrants 2015

Choosing TAEDS

5. What made you decide to go to university?

6. Why have you decided to do a TAEDS degree?

- Opportunity to learn BSL/Deaf Studies
- Develop acting/theatre/drama skills
- Learn teaching skills
- Gain business sense/employability
- Develop research, analysis & writing skills
- Team/group work
- More independence/self-confidence
- Deaf/hearing working together
- Work placement opportunity

Please add any other reasons

7. Please expand on the most important reason for you choosing a TAEDS degree.

8. What other factors may have affected your choice?

- I have family/friends who are deaf
- I have family/friends who have learning difficulties/disabilities
- Drama helps me develop self-confidence
- I want to do something creative
- Drama is the only subject I think I am good at
- Low entry tariff
- Small teaching groups
- High contact hours
- No formal exams
- Student support available
- Involvement in the TAEDS community
- TAEDS will keep my options open as I am not sure what to do
- I am considering being a teacher but not ready to commit to a BA Ed
- I am curious about interpreting
- My parents/carers approve

Please add any other factors

9. Please expand on the most important factors.

The TAEDS experience: new entrants 2015

Before TAEDS: School and college

10. Did any of your family members go to university?

- Parents/carers
- Siblings
- Grandparents
- Extended family
- No

11. What were your favourite subjects at school/college and why?

12. What subjects did you study at post-16 level?

13. How successful were you in Drama/Theatre Studies/Performing Arts?

14. How did you find out about TAEDS?

- School/college careers advice
- UCAS website
- University of Reading website
- Random searching online
- Word of mouth
- Personal recommendation from TAEDS students or graduates
- Other (please specify)

15. What other courses did you consider?

16. Where else were you offered a place to study?

17. What are your plans at the moment for after you have completed your degree?

18. Please explain how you hope the TAEDS degree experience will prepare you for the world of work after university?

Appendix 7 Template alumni interview schedule

The TAEDS Tree: a case study of employability and graduate capabilities in a unique degree programme

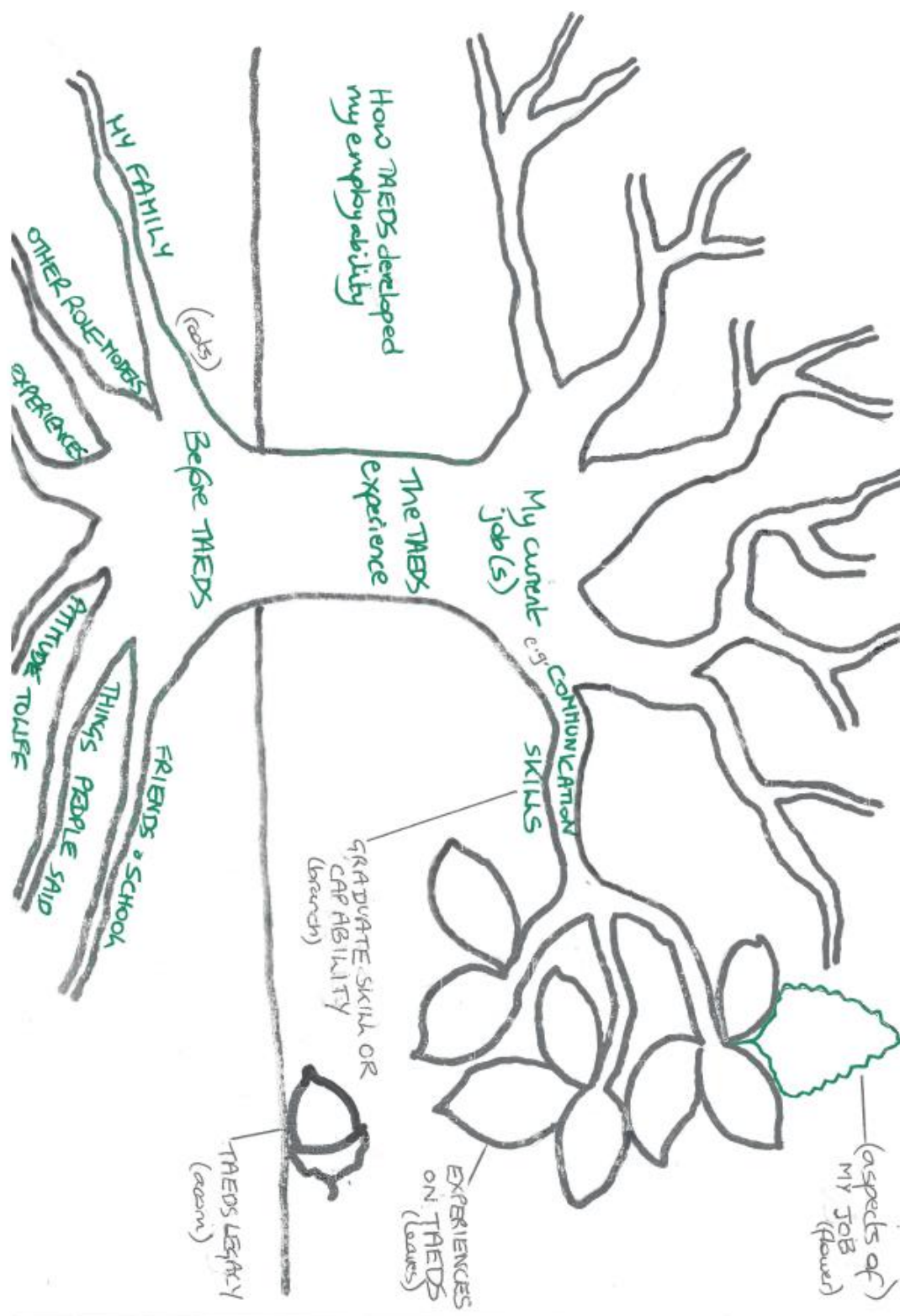
Interviewee Date

Research questions	Interview themes/questions	Notes
<p>Introduction</p>	<p>Study background & aims <i>I'll be asking about your experiences of TAEDS, particularly the ways in which it equipped you with transferable skills and capabilities, which have helped you in your career path since you graduated.</i></p> <p><i>There will be these main themes, but they will probably overlap a bit:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your current employment and professional identity • Your earlier influences and role-models • The significance of drama in your development and continuing life-journey • Your views on some of the findings from the alumni survey and how they compare with your own experiences • The distinctive features of TAEDS graduates and the TAEDS legacy <p><i>It'll be a semi-structured interview: a mixture of specific questions and follow-up ones. We'll use a diagram to look at while we're talking</i></p> <p>Participant Prerogatives <i>Mention Info' and Consent form. The interview will be audio-recorded and should be finished in about an hour; if you want to stop or have a break for any reason, do let me know. But let's switch our phones etc off & not answer the phone, so we can be undisturbed. If you want to terminate the interview at any time, that is fine.</i></p>	
<p>A: Roots & Nourishment</p> <p>What are the professional and personal circumstances and influences that can lead to doing a TAEDS degree?</p>	<p><i>I've brought along an A3 tree image to help you reflect. It's very much your tree, with the emphasis on your experiences and what you think is important so you can add or change anything you want. This is yours as a working document and I'll give you another blank copy too.</i></p> <p><i>To begin with, let's look at the roots – you can jot down notes on the tree if you like to help you remember.</i></p> <p>Age; family when you were growing up?</p> <p>Role-models and influences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thinking back to when you were younger, can you describe two or three important role-models from when you were growing up? 2. Were there any significant events or things that were said to you that you'll always remember and that influenced your life choices? 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. How did your friends and schooling influence you positively or negatively to do a TAEDS degree? 4. Did you have any graduate role-models within your family or friendship group? 32% of alumni and new Year 1s were the first in their family to attend university – does this apply to you? If so, what were the challenges for you as a first generation student? 5. Do you think you are already a role-model for anyone else? In what way? 	
<p>B: The Tree Crown</p> <p>How do TAEDS graduates describe and understand their current personal and professional identities?</p>	<p>Your current job – you can write that on the tree crown if you want</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are you doing at the moment and since when? What are the reasons behind your career decisions after TAEDS? What happened which led to your being in this job? 2. All the alumni said they enjoyed their job – assuming we all work for money, do you enjoy yours and what motivates you, personally and professionally? 3. What positive professional qualities do you think you have? How would others at work describe you? Have you always been like this? 4. Most alumni said their current role is their chosen career path - is this the case for you? If not, what is stopping you? 5. Will you ever need or want to learn new skills? What do you hope to be doing professionally in 5 years? 	
<p>C: The Leaves and Fruit</p> <p>How do alumni describe and understand their graduate capabilities and employability ?</p>	<p>Employability and graduate capabilities</p> <p><i>Research on graduate capabilities lists these as the most sought after by employers: Values, Intellect, Performance & Engagement – here are some examples (show table). Which would you pick out of the list as the most important for you? Could you write these on the tree branches and then write in the leaves how your experience of TAEDS helped you to develop them? Here are some questions to start you thinking ...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research on graduate attributes distinguishes between self-esteem (self-respect), self-confidence (ability to present yourself) & self-efficacy (belief in your own capabilities). In the survey 31% of alumni & 60% of new Year 1s said that drama helps them develop self-confidence – what were the key drama events for you during TAEDS that enhanced your self-confidence? 2. Research suggests that experiences where you face a major challenge but overcome it are important to develop (self-efficacy) belief in your own capabilities – what were other challenges on TAEDS that did this for you? How did it change the way you thought about yourself? (Self-esteem) 3. 14% of alumni said that drama was the only subject they thought they were good at, yet most TAEDS graduates achieve a good 2.1 degree – 	

	<p>what are your thoughts on this?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. 82% of alumni and all new Year 1s cited the opportunity to learn BSL/Deaf Studies as a key reason they chose TAEDS: how has learning BSL supported your transferable skills? 5. Only 12% of alumni list improving their employability as a reason for doing a TAEDS degree, yet TAEDS has the highest employability in the University at 95% - why do you think this is? 	
<p>D: Acorns & Saplings</p> <p>How do alumni reflect on the TAEDS community and legacy?</p>	<p>TAEDS alumni and the TAEDS legacy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many of your year-group and others are you still friends with & why? How does this compare to your friends who did different degree courses? 2. List three qualities that many TAEDS graduates have in common? 3. How did the individual teachers affect your experience of TAEDS; how would you describe the learning culture there? What key aspects of TAEDS should be retained or developed on future degree courses? 4. Given how positive TAEDS alumni are after the course, why do you think they are sometimes critical or negative during their time doing the degree? 5. With TAEDS closing after 30 years, what do you think will be its legacy – for you & for others? 6. Words to describe the TAEDS experience? Images? Any ideas about what you would want to convey about TAEDS in a drama performance? (TAEDS 30th Celebration Event) <p>Anything else you'd like to talk about that we haven't covered?</p>	
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>What will happen to the data? You can see an anonymised summary of the data on request; it will be kept securely and you will not be identified. Some of it will be used as part of the final dissertation, which may be published.</p> <p><i>Would you like to reflect some more and add to your tree? If you could send/scan and send your copy of the tree or post it to me within two weeks, that would be great.</i></p> <p>Response validation - I will mail you a summary of the transcript to check nothing is misrepresented –Thank you</p>	

Appendix 8 Template TAEDS Tree



Appendix 9 Prompt for TAEDS trees: employability and graduate capabilities

Graduate Capabilities adapted from Hinchliffe, G & Jolly, A (2011). Graduate identity and employability. *British Educational Research Journal* 37 (4) 563-584



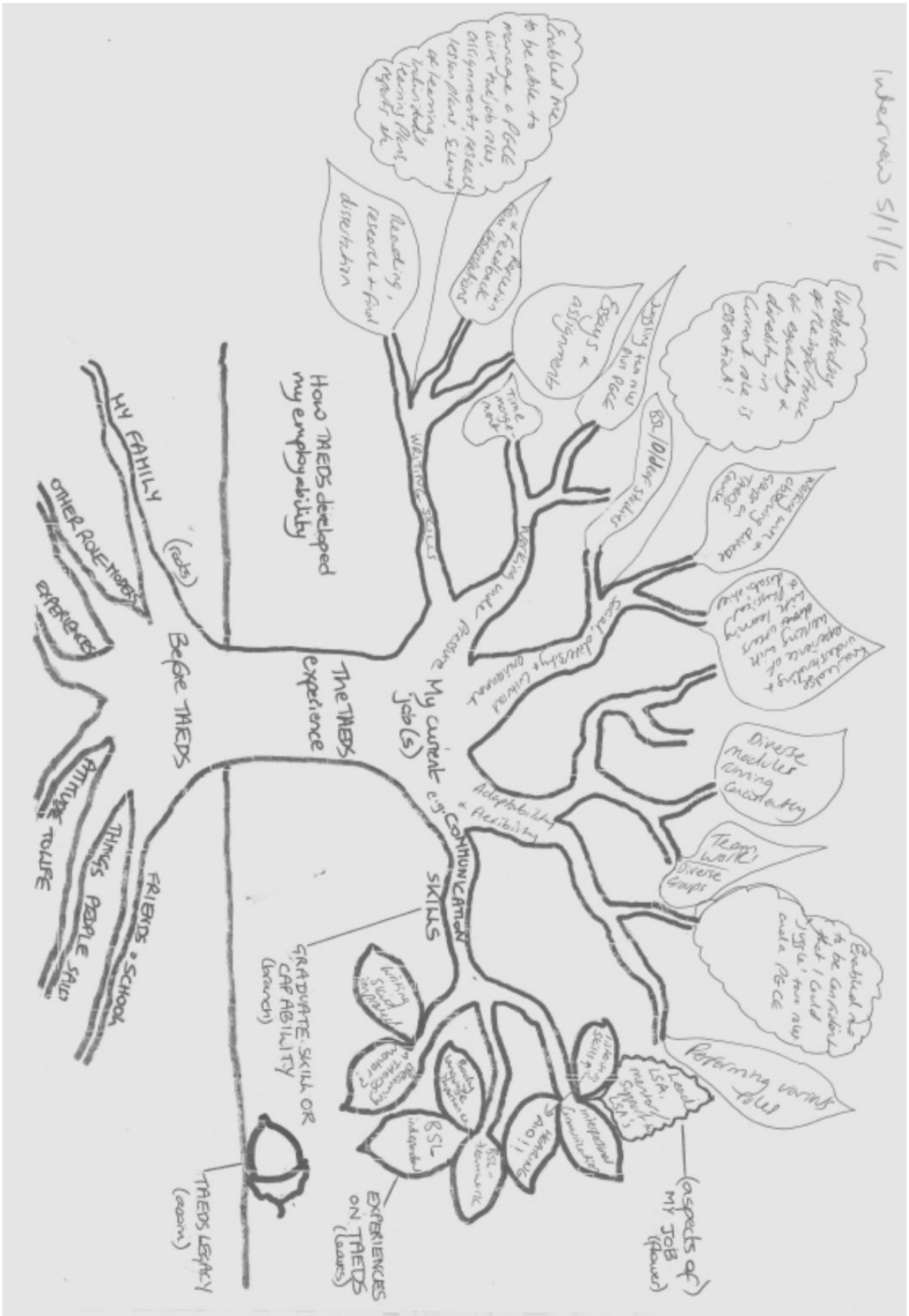
Appendix 10 Employability criteria and graduate capabilities

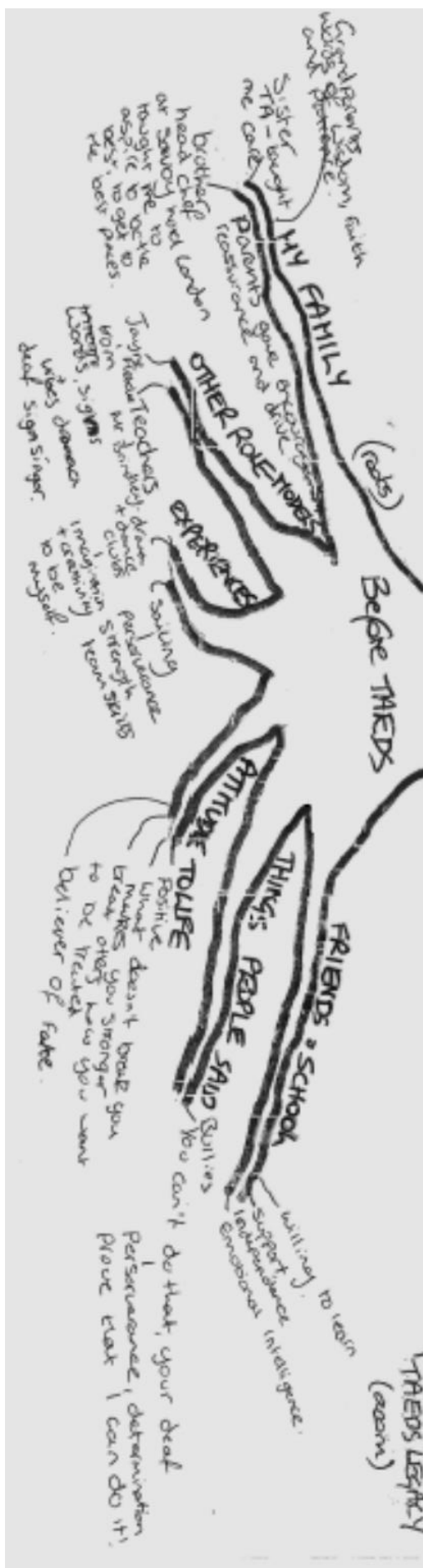
Values e.g.	Intellect e.g.	Performance e.g.	Engagement e.g.
Personal ethics Entrepreneurship Social awareness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity • Cultural • Environmental Self-knowledge Self-esteem (self-respect) Emotional Intelligence Spirituality & Beliefs	Creativity Imagination Critical thinking Evaluation & analysis Problem-solving Reflection Writing skills Research Working independently Generating ideas	Self-confidence Communication skills Time-management Planning & organising Working under pressure Taking on responsibility Decision-making Attention to detail Presenting Performing	Willingness to learn Self-efficacy (self-belief) Initiative Adaptability Positive attitude Active involvement Interpersonal skills Team-skills Responding to challenges Life-long learning

Adapted from:

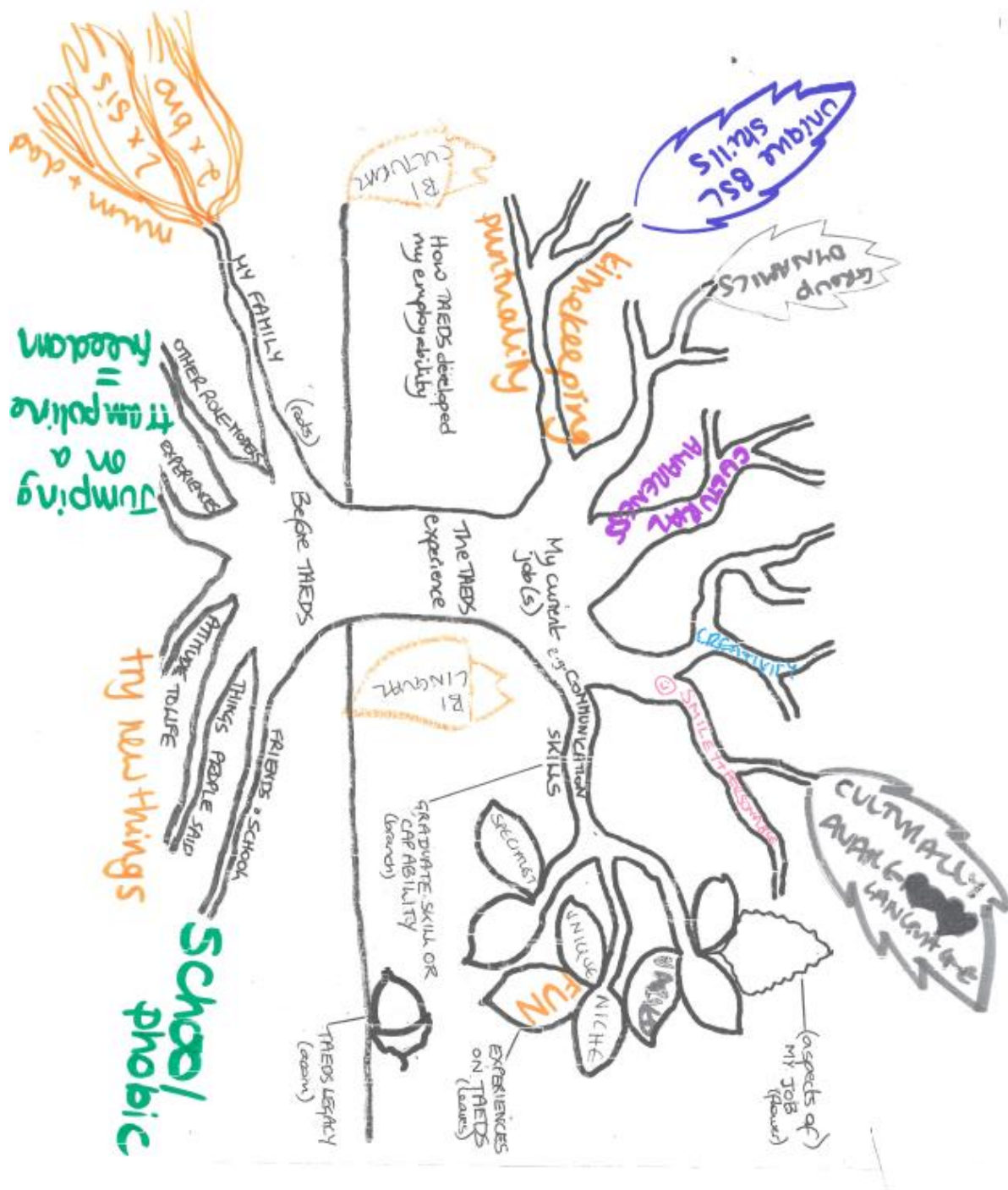
Hinchliffe & Jolly (2011). Graduate identity and employability. *British Educational Research Journal* 37 (4) 563-584 and Dacre-Sewell (2007). The key to employability: developing a practical model of graduate employability. *Education and Training* 49 (4) 277-289

Appendix 12 Becky's tree

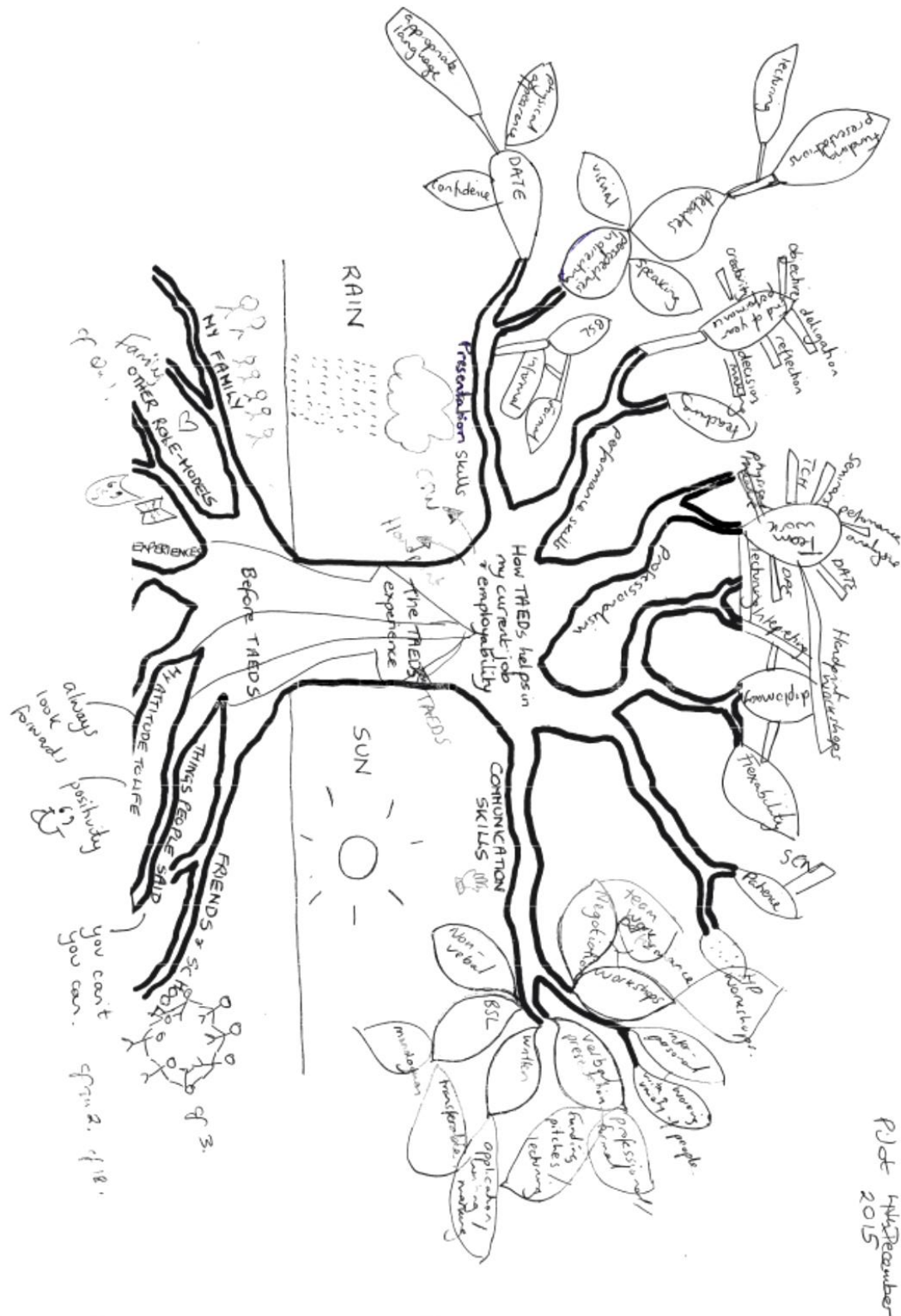




Appendix 15 Tess' tree



Appendix 16 Mandy's Tree



PJ of 14th December
2015

Appendix 17 Sample alumni interview extract with coding

- **Significance of Drama**
- **Personal circumstances and influences**
- **Personal and professional identity**
- **Graduate capabilities and employability**
- **TAEDS legacy**

C Employability and graduate capabilities

1. In the survey 31% of alumni and 60% of new Year 1s said that drama helps them develop self-confidence – what were the key drama events for you during TAEDS that enhanced your self-confidence?

Definitely doing the productions, definitely the drama workshops that we had to do in schools, that was massively impacting ... I utilise those skills all the time, no matter what I'm doing. I think probably the analysis skills that I got from doing the more theatre-based work and research based stuff, they're unbelievably influential on me from analysing social-political structures from the past, just knowing so much more than I did before and how to access that information and question it, like what source is that from, could be you know dodgy, rather than just taking something for right it's the truth and looking at the truth as it could be many different angles to truth in different situations - how to think was a taught skill from doing the course.

2. Research suggests that experiences where you face a major challenge but you overcome it are important to develop self-efficacy, belief in your own capabilities – what were other challenges on TAEDS that did this for you? How did it change the way you thought about yourself? (self-esteem)

I had a huge personal challenge... and I had a complete identity crisis. So while going through this, the structures of my life, while I was like 'Who am I, what's going on?' We were still doing our third year production and every day I was off my face of 'Who am I!' but I made sure even if I wasn't writing all the essays for everything else, I made sure I was there every day, for all the rehearsals for the production, even while I wasn't getting marked for it I would not let those people down. So for me it's interesting to see that even going through real hardship, I wouldn't let people down ... if it was just for me I probably wouldn't have done that but because it was for other people there was no way in hell that I would have let people down ... I'm a very reliable person, even though you can't write an essay and do something for yourself, I'm definitely reliable for other people.

3. 14% of alumni said that drama was the only subject they thought they were good at, yet most TAEDS graduates achieve a good 2:1 degree – what are your thoughts on this?

I think probably because the TAEDS, the ethos isn't necessarily about having great marks before you come onto the course, not that it lowers expectations at all but it allows for people to find out about their own ability without even knowing it before they came onto the course - you don't know your own potential before you're given those experiences, opportunities, challenges. Which you can't have that in a job role, it's just completely different things, whereas some people may not have gone to uni, and may go into a job thinking I'll start here and maybe go up a couple of notches on the career ladder but never see their potential, whereas going on the TAEDS course because it's so dynamic and there's so many elements you can learn so much about your own abilities and your own skills ...and how you integrate with the world.

4. 82% of alumni and all new Year 1s cited the opportunity to learn BSL/Deaf Studies as a key reason they chose TAEDS: how has learning BSL supported your transferable skills?

Well my depth of understanding is so much more than before I learned BSL, not just about deaf people but about disabilities and hardships, that actually society shuns and is not made accessible to people and just because you don't fit inside this 'normal box' then you're kind of like shrugged off. And the hardships people have gone through and are still going through even more so at the moment, so yeah my empathy is vastly more than when I first started. So I can go anywhere, into any situation and be analytical about the social structures and is there fairness here and are people being treated equally and can we enable access to, you know, information and even physical access to somewhere if you can't physically get around... I don't know how to frame the answer... I was in no way shape or form against anything when I started the course, but I think ignorance is bliss and unless you study about History and what people go through every day and if you at least try and think about walking in other people's shoes, obviously I can't, but at least I empathise with them on a deep level, not just 'Oh that's really sad' and go on with your life, but you know, then I think those things deeply now.