

**EVALUATION OF AN INSET PROGRAMME FOR
LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM**

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**THESIS PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF EDUCATION (SPECIALIZED EDUCATION)
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH**

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DECEMBER 2004

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any University for a degree.

Signature

Date

SUMMARY

In England, education settings have embraced the philosophy that it is the *human right* of pupils to be taught in inclusive schools with their peers. Part of the school's readiness and willingness to *accept* all pupils requires that it adopt a whole-school philosophy, which includes support staff provision, for example in the form of teaching assistants.

Taking the above into account, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the effect of participation in the NCFE Level 2 programme for teaching assistants on the professional development of teaching assistants working as support staff in inclusive classrooms. The research design is evaluative in nature and both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection are used.

The in-service programme was delivered during weekly three hour sessions over a period of thirty weeks. The programme consisted of five units:

- Developing professional skills and knowledge
- Understanding legal and national requirements
- Supporting the teacher in relation to pupils' learning
- Exploring the management of pupils' behaviour
- Supporting pupils with special educational needs.

Analysis of qualitative data such as observations and interviews indicates that participants benefited from programme participation and that, by the completion of the programme, there was a marked increase in confidence, knowledge and application of newly acquired skills. Analysis of quantitative data such as the pre and post self-assessment questionnaires indicate a significant difference between the pre and post scores on all the sections confirming improvement of participants' levels of confidence, knowledge and application of practical skills.

It seems that programme participants benefitted significantly from participating in this in-service training programme.

OPSOMMING

Opvoedkundige instellings in Engeland ondersteun die filosofie dat dit die *mensereg* van leerders is om binne inklusiewe skole, saam met hulle portuurgroep, onderrig te ontvang. As deel van skole se gereedheid en bereidheid om alle leerders te *aanvaar*, is die implementering van 'n geheelskool filosofie wat onder andere ondersteunings personeel byvoorbeeld leerondersteunings assistente insluit.

In aansluiting by bogenoemde was dit die doel met hierdie studie om die effek van programmeelname aan die 'NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants' te evalueer ten opsigte van die professionele ontwikkeling van leerondersteunings assistente in inklusiewe skole. Die navorsingsontwerp was evaluerend van aard en het beide kwantitatiewe sowel as kwalitatiewe metodes van data insameling ingesluit.

Die indiensopleidingsprogram is weekliks aangebied in drie-uur sessies oor 'n tydperk van dertig weke. Die program het die volgende vyf eenhede ingesluit:

- ontwikkeling van professionele vaardigheidskennis;
- begrip van nasionale beleidstukke en regsaspekte;
- ondersteuning van onderwysers met verwysing na leer;
- verkenning van die gedragshantering van leerlinge
- ondersteuning van leerders met spesiale onderwysbehoefte.

Kwalitatiewe data analise dui daarop dat programmeelname bygedra het tot 'n verhoging in die vlak van selfvertroue, 'n verbetering in die toepassing van nuut-aangeleerde vaardighede en 'n vermeerdering van kennis vir leerondersteunings assistente. 'n Kwantitatiewe analise van voor en na programmeelname vraelyste, dui op 'n beduidende verskil tussen die twee evaluering metings en ondersteun bogenoemde aanname ten opsigte van 'n verhoogde vlak van selfvertroue, 'n verbetering in die toepassing van nuut-aangeleerde vaardighede en 'n toename in kennis vir leerondersteunings assistente.

Uit bogenoemde kan dit afgelei word, dat leerondersteunings assistente beduidend baat gevind het by deelname aan hierdie spesifieke indiensopleidings program.

For Niel

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am sincerely grateful for a range of people who motivated and supported me in this particular study:

- All the children and adults in SEN that I have taught since 1997. I have learned so much from you.
- Mark Taylor. Thank you for allowing me to conduct this study within my teaching frame.
- Kelly Hay. Your knowledge and support on the quantitative research design helped me immensely.
- Marietjie Oswald. Your guidance on research design and methodology was invaluable.
- Rose-Maré Kreuser, for the technical care of this research project.
- Elaine Ridge for editing the grammar and language style of the research project.
- My supervisor, Prof. Petra Engelbrecht, thank you for discussion and academic guidance on this important issue of inclusive education. Your expert knowledge and vision have been an immeasurable help.
- My husband Niel McLachlan, thank you for making me believe that I can do an independent study of this nature. Thank you for continuous advice, support and encouragement. Your special way of caring for vulnerable people in our society has sensitised me. I have so much appreciation and respect for your skills and knowledge. Thank you for sharing it all with me.

Benita McLachlan

December 2004

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CHAPTER 1

CONTEXTUALISATION AND RELEVANCE OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Inclusivity in education has become an international issue and has generated research based upon a range of political, ideological, philosophical, pedagogical and cultural perspectives (Booth and Ainscow, 1998:45). Farrell (2001:7) explains that the driving force behind the 'inclusion movement' has sprung from the issue of basic *human rights*. Across the world, education settings have tried to embrace this important philosophy on the basis that it is the human right of every individual to learn and to have access to a learning environment of his/her choice. According to Sebba and Ainscow (1996:7),

Inclusive education is a process by which a school attempts to respond to all learners as individuals by reconsidering its learning provision. Through this process, the school builds the capacity to accept all learners from the local community who wish to attend, and in doing, reduces the need to exclude learners.

Fox (1998:2) agrees that inclusive education refers to the school's capacity to be *ready* and *willing* to accept all children. The idea of inclusive education has appeared in most Department of Education guidance in the United Kingdom, in connection with the rights of individual children and young people categorised as having special educational needs, to be educated where possible, in mainstream schools (Ainscow and Tweddle, 2003:166). Providing adequate support for these children with special educational needs has proved to be challenging, but there have been efforts in the UK to overcome these challenges.

The idea of having *trained* support staff like teaching assistants (TAs) providing support in inclusive classrooms has developed over the past few years. In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of teaching assistants working in inclusive schools (Farrell and Balshaw, 2002:27). The White Paper, *Excellence in Schools* (Dfee, 1997 in Potter and Richardson, 1999:34) clearly states the need for classroom assistants to be trained appropriately in order to provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms.

Support staff working as teaching assistants in inclusive classrooms alongside class teachers contribute to the effectiveness of inclusive practices. In research studies on the role and training of teaching assistants the conclusion was however reached that *the vast majority of TAs had no paper qualifications related to working with young people* (Farrell, 2000:7) and *professional development will be required for those who are to take on this radically reconstructed special needs role* (Ainscow, 1997:5). Farrell (2001:8) is optimistic in saying ... *that if trained and supported, TAs can make inclusion effective for a whole range of pupils with special educational needs*. A number of training opportunities has been put in place for TAs, e.g. school staff development programmes; Local Education Authorities provide local training and institution based courses.

1.2 PERSONAL MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

This study emanates from the researcher's work as a lecturer and coordinator of a special educational needs programme for students with significant learning difficulties in an inclusive Further Education College in the United Kingdom (UK). In addition to this she also lectures in and coordinates the training programme for teaching assistants working in inclusive classrooms. The researcher's philosophy of education is that all learners can grow and develop, given the right support. Having trained support staff in inclusive classrooms is one of the ways to fulfill this philosophy. Their role and responsibilities go beyond being just an 'extra pair of

hands'. They become part of the teaching team who observe, assess, teach, supervise and support.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

In inclusive classrooms, responding to and supporting learners with diverse educational needs is a great challenge. It results in teachers feeling stressed and demoralised as a result of their attempt to cope with change and new demands (Forlin, Douglas and Hattie, 1996:120; Jerwood, 1999:127). In the United Kingdom, teaching assistants (TAs) are seen as a classroom resource which can help to make inclusion a reality for pupils previously excluded from mainstream education. Research (Farrell and Balshaw, 2002:32; Farrell, Balshaw and Polat, 1999:51) has indicated the key role of TAs in making inclusion a reality but has also highlighted the importance of training for TAs.

This study recognises the importance of having fully trained and qualified teaching assistants in inclusive classrooms to provide for the school, the class teacher and pupil. It focuses on the development of an in-service training programme for TAs to improve their knowledge, skills and confidence.

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate the effect of a training programme on the professional development of teaching assistants working as support staff in inclusive classrooms.

In addition to this, it will endeavour to confirm the importance of this particular NCFE Level 2 Certificate.

1.5 THEORETICAL APPROACH

The basic tenet of general systems theory, as applied to social contexts, is that individuals are micro-systems. This refers to the individual within his immediate environment, e.g. family or school. Micro-systems form part of a larger meso-system which refers to the interaction between two or more environments, e.g. interaction between family and school. In turn meso-systems form part of an even larger macro-system, which refers to the organisation of social environments, e.g. schools in the United Kingdom (Bronfenbrenner, 1986:723-724). A recent adaptation of the general systems theory which incorporates an ecological perspective is known as the eco-systemic approach. The basic tenet of the ecological perspective addresses the reciprocal interaction and resulting influences of subsystems on each other (Collair 2001:3). According to Balgopal and Vassil (1983:21), *the ecological viewpoint should be regarded as an orientation emphasising relationships among persons and their physical and social environment. Conceptually the term implies that there are neither inadequate persons, nor inadequate environments, but rather the fit between person and environment may be in relative accord or discord.*

The eco-systemic approach therefore focuses on the individual, the environment and the interaction between the two. Within the eco-systemic approach the researcher is an interpreter who includes all the ecological and systemic variables in his/her research.

In the context of this study, both the pupil with special educational needs as well as the teaching assistant is seen as part of wider systems of family, class, school, education system, local community, wider community and social context. The reciprocal way each subsystem interacts, both influences and is being influenced by the others. The eco-systemic approach emphasises the importance of environment on the co-existence of pupils with special educational needs with the other pupils without special educational needs, in contrast with the medical model that implies medical treatment as intervention.

According to Engelbrecht (1999:54) *as unique individuals, pupils find their learning influenced by the unique reciprocal interaction of individual as well as environmental factors*. In the inclusive classroom there is continuous interaction among pupils, their peers, the teacher and support staff. Pupils with special educational needs fail to realise their full potential in inclusive classrooms where there are limiting environmental factors. Examples of such factors are insufficient staff to deliver one-to-one support, unskilled and untrained staff who do not understand pupils' diverse needs, failure to recognise health and safety issues and insufficient provision of opportunities when accessing the curriculum.

According to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory, areas of opportunity lie between the learner's *actual* and *potential* cognitive development. "Actual development is determined by what a child can do unaided by an adult or teacher. Potential development, in contrast, is what a child can do through problem solving under adult guidance" (McCown, Driscoll and Roop, 1996:44). In the case of pupils with special educational needs, such adult guidance or mediation within classrooms takes place, in the majority of cases, between the pupils and their teaching assistants. It is therefore important to recognise the importance of having confident and trained teaching assistants as mediators to optimise *all* pupils' potential in inclusive classrooms.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 Research design

Evaluation research is the systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualization, design, implementation, and utility of social intervention programmes (Rossi and Freeman, 1993:5).

This study focuses on the implementation of a training programme for nineteen students/candidates who enrolled at a local Further Education College in the UK for

a NCFE programme, Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants. The FE College serves a rural area in East Anglia and attracts a diverse range of students. Candidates either worked in a paid or voluntary capacity, as teaching assistants in inclusive schools in that area. All shared keen interest in their work and wanted to develop professionally.

An evaluation research design seemed most appropriate. According to Patton (1990:155), *evaluation research studies the processes and outcomes aimed at attempted solutions* within a societal context. Patton further states that the purpose of formative and summative evaluation is to improve human intervention within a specific set of activities at a specific time for a specific group of people. In this study quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were be integrated.

1.6.2 Methodology

1.6.2.1 *Data collection methods*

There are six very important data collection methods that the researcher used, and discussed in the following paragraphs.

- **Literature review**

A literature review is a very significant part of the research process. It is the researcher's initial attempt to find out what has been done (Mouton, 2001:87), it explains the theoretical discourse and provides the foundation and knowledge base in the relevant field of study. *The purpose of the literature review is to provide the researcher with an overall framework for where this piece of work fits in the 'big picture' of what is known about the topic from previous research* (Mertens, 1998:348).

In line with the above, the review of literature in this study allowed the researcher to critically examine key aspects of inclusive education, e.g. changing roles of key personnel in inclusive schools, profiles of learners with special educational needs, standards of learning support and training programmes for professional development of teaching assistants working as support staff. The literature review also provided an academic framework for systemic social intervention and guided the research project while the data were being collected, processed and interpreted.

- **Pre and Post Self Assessment Questionnaires**

Data from pre and post self-assessment questionnaires were used to measure the programme's impact on the professional development of teaching assistants.

- **Observation**

Candidates' class teachers, other candidates/peers and the lecturer/researcher did continuous observation throughout the training programme. The purpose of these observations is to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003:305) to confirm whether candidates could apply their new knowledge to real life situations (class rooms) and simulations by means of case-studies. According to Patton (1990:245), this method of data collection permits the observer to go beyond external behaviour to explore the internal states of persons who have been observed.

- **Interviews**

On completion of the training programme, candidates voluntarily agreed to an individual tutorial interview, in order to give them an opportunity to reflect on their course work.

According to Patton the quality of the information obtained during an interview is dependant on the interviewer (Patton, 1990:279). Taking this into consideration the interviewer/researcher determined the questions being asked. This interview style is called “the standardized open-ended interview and consists of a set questions worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words” (Patton, 1990:280). It seemed appropriate to correlate candidate’s own verbal perceptions of programme impact, with their written post self assessments. It also provided an opportunity to learn about programme weaknesses for future delivery.

- **Assignments**

All candidates completed seven written assignments as part of the evaluation process. These assignments were evenly spread over the duration of the course and were usually given to reinforce what candidates had learnt. Written feedback was given on an individual basis, evaluating candidates’ performance against a given set of targets. Rossi and Freeman (1993:216) argue that this form of assessment is important in order to *determine whether the proposed program would have its intended effects*. For the purpose of this study, these assignments provided continuous opportunities for informal reflection and discussion amongst candidates as well as with the lecturer.

- **External Examination (End test)**

On completion of the training programme, all candidates were subjected to an external examination, which was set and marked objectively by NCFE, the awarding body of this course. The purpose was to determine whether programme participation had had the intended impact and effect on candidates (Rossi and Freeman, 1993:216).

1.6.3 Data Analysis

As discussed in 1.6.2 both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used. Qualitative data will be analysed numerically and quantitative data will be analysed by using content analysis.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.7.1 Inclusive education

The terms inclusion and inclusive education are often misunderstood and confused with the term 'integration'. Integration assumes that the school system remains the same and only extra arrangements are made to provide for pupils with special educational needs (Sebba and Ainscow, 1996:7). The fact that the term 'integration' tells us nothing about the quality of the education that is received in this form of educational provision has led to the term 'inclusion' becoming a more usual way of describing the extent to which pupils with special educational needs is truly included in schools and communities. Used in this way, inclusive education refers to the extent to which a school welcomes pupils as full members of the group and values them for the contribution they make (Farrell and Ainscow, 2003:3). In recent guidance from Ofsted (2000), "effective schools" are described as "educationally inclusive schools" where new opportunities are offered to pupils who may experience difficulty.

1.7.2 Pupils with special educational needs

When referring to pupils with special educational needs, the assumption is that these are pupils who experience intrinsic as well as extrinsic barriers to learning and development (Snyman and Engelbrecht, 1996:7). Such barriers hinder them from learning in the same way or at the same tempo as the other members of the class.

For example, intrinsic barriers may refer to a pupil with a mild learning disability as a result of Downs Syndrome or a pupil who presents with challenging behaviour due to Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder. Extrinsic barriers are for example environmental factors such as, relevance and accessibility of the curriculum, teaching style of the class teacher, standard and level of learning support and the class room atmosphere.

According to the Education Act of 1996 in the UK and for the purpose of this study, pupils with special educational needs are defined as those pupils who experience a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them (Farrell, 2000:148).

1.7.3 Teaching assistants

To encourage the inclusion of learners with special educational needs in mainstream classes, teaching assistants were appointed in the UK to work under the close supervision of the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and the guidance of the class teacher in order to provide effective support teaching. (Farrell, 2000:160,163). Recently, the umbrella term 'teaching assistants' has replaced former terms such as learning support assistants, classroom assistants and special needs assistants who work as additional support staff alongside teachers in mainstream classrooms (Burnham and Jones, 2002:v).

The role of teaching assistants (TAs) is either to offer learning support to small targeted groups or to offer learning support to individual pupils with special educational needs in order to access the curriculum for these pupils.

1.7.4 NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants

The Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants awarded by NCFE comprises five

units with learning outcomes (fully discussed in Chapter 3). The intention of this training programme for teaching assistants working in inclusive classrooms are, to enhance their confidence, knowledge of their role and responsibilities as well as their application of skill.

As will be described in Chapter Two, research has identified weaknesses in the provision for pupils with special educational needs in inclusive schools. The above-mentioned programme attempts to offer solutions by means of training opportunities at institutions for support staff.

1.8 STRUCTURES OF PRESENTATION

The following is a brief outline of the research report:

Chapter One provides an orientation of the study.

Chapter Two deals with the literature review on inclusive education and new challenges and demands that are placed on the education system. Furthermore, it explores the significance of vocational training in order to meet new demands in classrooms.

Chapter Three discusses relevant training programmes available for teaching assistants and specifically outlines the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants.

Chapter Four deals with the research design and methodology.

Chapter Five presents the results and findings, as well as the discussion.

Chapter Six outlines the conclusion, strengths, limitations and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2**TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS****2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will focus on a review of literature on developments in the movement towards inclusive education in the United Kingdom and the important role of teaching assistants. According to Farrell (2000:77), the aim in inclusive education is to encourage schools to reconsider their structure, teaching approaches, pupil grouping and use of support so that they can respond to the needs of all pupils.

Engelbrecht (1996:12) states that recent developments in education for children with special educational needs are

- A greater acceptance that parents have rights concerning the education of their children
- An understanding that “special needs” refers to a much wider framework and range of individual needs rather than a sharp distinction between “disability” and “normality”
- A deeper philosophy of understanding that every pupil has a right to a full, independent, enjoyable and normal life.

It should therefore be the aim of any community, to integrate and include pupils with special needs fully, whether the setting is within the school, family or wider social context.

2.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE UK

2.2.1 Background

In recent years the issue of inclusion within education has become a prominent feature of discussions about development of education, and what form of provision there should be for children with special educational needs. International statements and conferences on inclusive education have had a major impact on the movement towards inclusive education.

The 1990 World Conference on Education For All in Thailand, emphasised that children worldwide do not receive adequate education, including large numbers who have disabilities. The outcome of this conference affirmed the commitment to a child-centered concept of education (all learners are special) in which individual differences are accepted as a source of diversity, a challenge rather than a problem (Engelbrecht, 1996:14).

The 1994 Salamanca Statement in Spain provided a framework which defines the scope of inclusion in the following terms:

Schools should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted learners, street and working learners, learners from remote or nomadic populations, learners from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and learners from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups (UNESCO, 1994:59).

The Salamanca Statement has been seen as a watershed in enhancing the prospects for inclusion throughout the world. According to Dyson and Forlin (1999:31), the Salamanca Statement creates the expectations that not only the rights and needs of pupils with disabilities within an education setting are going to be met, but it raises expectations of “highly effective education for all learners”

within a society that is free from any form of discrimination, across the world, emphasising the school as the key factor in inclusion provision.

In the United Kingdom, alongside policies that are promoting notions of inclusion (see next section) schools are under even more pressure than ever to raise their standards and to provide support for diverse educational needs.

2.2.2 The development of relevant policies

The development of policies in the UK has played an important role in ensuring that inclusive practices are rooted in legislation. These policies not only provide a legal framework for services, but also ensure that service-users' human rights are protected.

The 1978 Warnock Report gives an optimistic account of the development of special education (Tomlinson, 1982). The committee argues that there has been gradual progress from individual and charitable enterprise to a government effort which supports voluntary efforts. This progression has resulted in the creation of a national framework. The Warnock report predicts that once this framework has been incorporated, provision in ordinary schools will improve. Pupils who will specifically benefit from the incorporation are pupils who have previously received remedial education and pupils with disabilities (from special schools) who are to be integrated in ordinary schools (Sewell, 1996:159). According to the CeSNER Report (Resead, 2002) *Warnock ... has led to an increased focus upon special needs, and approaches to their management. ... and this may be a critical first step towards improved provision.*

It is particularly the Education Act of 1981 that forms the basis of all special needs legislation, with special reference to *identification* and *assessment* of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Subsequent acts and reports that came after this period, e.g. Green Paper, *Code of Practice* have refined and extended the provisions of the Education Act (Farrell, 2001:3).

When the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 was passed in Britain in 1995, it covered a range of services but excluded education. In November 1999, the Disability Rights Task Force (DRTF) advised the Government on how it might extend the DDA to include education. The disability sections of the Act were shaped significantly by the recommendations of the DRTF.

The Tomlinson Report: Inclusive Learning: The report of the learning difficulties and/or disabilities committee 1996 (Farrell, 2000:77) spoke of radical changes for improvement. The immediate purpose of this report was to radically improve educational opportunities compared to its deeper purpose to extend further education to thousands not now included (Tomlinson 1996:2).

The special educational needs Green Paper, Excellence for All Children (1997), has inclusion as one of its main themes. According to Farrell (2000:197), the Green Paper, published in October 1997 is concerned about raising standards, shifting resources to practical support and increasing inclusion. In addition to this, the Green Paper promotes the importance of the education of *all* pupils amongst their peers ... *the ultimate purpose of special educational needs provision is to enable young people to flourish in adult life. There are therefore strong educational, as well as social and moral grounds for educating children with special educational needs with their peers* (Green Paper, 1997:43 in Farrell, 1998:13). The Green Paper emphasises an intention to move more pupils from segregated schooling to take an integrative place in mainstream schools (CeSNER Report of Research: 11/06/02).

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA), brought in changes that were the result of a period of consultation, which started in 1997 with the publication of a Green Paper. In 1998, the Government followed this up with 'Meeting Special Educational Needs: A Programme for Action'. Proposals for changes in the legislation were further consulted on during March 2000. This resulted in SENDA. Disability discrimination duties were extended to cover every aspect of education. A new *Code of Practice* came into effect on January 2002 and replaced the previous *Code of Practice* of 1994.

2.2.3 Implementation of inclusive education in practise

Implementation holds the promise of the *practical reality* in the classroom, starting off as a worldwide change towards a more humanistic philosophy in education. But, how does this *practical reality* materialise? According to Ainscow, ... *maximum support to all member of the class* (2000:78) reflects the answer to an essential question of how to create educational contexts that reach all pupils (Ainscow, 2001). According to Forlin, Douglas and Hattie (1996:121), inclusive education brings additional demands on teachers and affects teachers' sense of efficacy. In order to show ways of 'cushioning' these extra demands, Tennant (2001:185) describes the importance of the deployment of support staff in inclusive classroom settings. Farrell agrees that the key issue running through most literature is that the success of inclusion depends to a great extent on the availability and quality of the support staff that is offered in the mainstream school (2001:7).

Dyson (2001:2) argues that inclusive education is a human rights issue which fully acknowledges the human rights of pupils with disabilities and implies positive changes in practices through which those rights of pupils can be realised. Research now forces us to ask crucial questions, within the context of educational change one of the most important ones would be *what needs to change for teachers in order for them to feel supported and well equipped to manage these extra demands in their classrooms?* They must be cognitively aware of their *new* role or that their role, as they know it, has changed.

2.2.3.1 Changing roles for teachers

The changing role of the inclusive classroom teacher brings new responsibilities which demand change on every level (Engelbrecht, 2001:256). According to McClelland and Verma (1996:105) the roles of teachers have changed rapidly and substantially. These changes have obvious implications for the clarity with which these roles are perceived. They continue to argue that in the last two decades the

role of the teacher in most sectors of UK education has been subjected to unprecedented change.

Kyriacou (in Engelbrecht 2001:256) indicates that the need to cope with these changes has become a major source of additional stress to teachers. Yet, these needs, according to Petty and Sadler (1996:22), *have either remained largely unidentified or have taken second place to the development and implementation of education policy. It is against the backdrop of stress and coping skills of such teachers that the effectiveness of inclusive educational practices must be established for inclusion to be feasible.*

It seems, then, that successful implementation of inclusive education demands comprehensive in-service training and education for teachers that take the management of educational change into consideration (McClelland and Verma, 1996: ix).

Within the context of an inclusive classroom, the general classroom teachers' role has developed beyond that of being the traditional "instructor" or facilitator of learning activities. Under the *Code of Practice* he/she has new responsibilities one of which is to identify pupils with special educational needs (SEN). According to Farrell (2000:161) this expectation, applies to all teachers and has implications for all initial teacher education.

In relation to the *Code of Practice*, a classroom teacher is the professional who is likely to note a pupil who has learning difficulties when compared with peers. The child with more severe special educational needs may well have been identified as requiring special provision. However, where less severe or less obvious learning difficulties are involved, the judgements of the class teacher play an important part. The implications for initial teacher training education are that the student teacher will have the necessary skills to be able to form judgements from a very early stage (Farrell, 2000:162).

In addition to the above, according to Fox (1998:26-28), the class teacher has a key

role to play in managing special needs assistance through supporting the special needs assistant (SNA) and to make effective use of such assistance. Some examples are:

- Ensuring that the SNA is clear about the roles and responsibilities of the job
- Providing regular opportunities for planning and discussion
- Encouraging the work of the SNA and providing positive feedback
- Making sure the SNA knows the learning implications of the pupil's special need
- Making clear and realistic requests;
- Valuing the SNA as part of the special needs 'team'
- Providing training opportunities for the special needs assistant.

Equally important is the role that the general classroom teacher plays as a valid member of a mainstream team. Mainstreaming teams are made up of a variety of different members. Each of these individuals plays an important role.

The involvement of general education teachers is critical because they have firsthand experience with students with special needs in their classrooms. They share ideas with parents and other professionals, and they assist in devising strategies for successful mainstreaming programs. If these teachers do not participate on the team, the effectiveness of the mainstreaming effort is compromised Lewis and Doorlag (1995:36-37).

Taking the above into account, research directs us towards another vital question, "who are the other team players?" "In an attempt to facilitate the inclusion of more pupils with special needs, schools and local authorities in the UK have begun to appoint increasing numbers of learning support assistants (LSAs) to work alongside teachers in the classroom" (Farrell, 2000:1). One could say that the growth in the numbers of teaching assistants (TAs), (see 1.6.4 for change in terminology to teaching assistants) being employed in the UK is a direct consequence of developments in the implementation of inclusion. On the contrary, according to Farrell, schools continuously raise many complex issues around these

employments. But, it is important to understand this debate within the context of historical developments.

Identifying the need and areas of work for an expert teacher (as an attempt towards efficient implementation of an inclusive education policy), resulted in the 'birth' of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) in schools in Britain in the mid 1980's.

Dyson and Millward (2000:1,2) define the role of the Special educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in mainstream schools as follows:

Many SENCOs engage for some of their available time in teaching students with special educational needs. However, the SENCO role per se is a management rather than a teaching role. It involves co-ordinating provision, liaising with colleagues, parents and external professionals, monitoring progress and keeping appropriate records. This means that much of the role is concerned with decision making ...

Sewell (1996:1,4-5) defines a 'new' role for the SENCO, different from other middle manager roles in schools, as someone who would be predominantly a pupil advocate. Furthermore, both Sewell and the Warnock Report emphasise the importance of an "expert teacher" through mapping out six major aspects of such a role:

- *To train mainstream subject teachers in the teaching of reading*
- *To extend the understanding of English across the curriculum*
- *To involve subject staff in supporting pupils with special needs in their own subjects*
- *To enable more pupils with sensory, physical, behavioural and learning difficulties to integrate into mainstream classes*
- *To support the staff who 'reach out forcefully and successfully' to these pupils*

According to Sewell (1996:3) the above resulted in critical questions being raised:

- How many staff feel inadequately prepared in order to identify and assess special needs?
- How many staff have undertaken an accredited Special Educational Needs (SEN) training course?

Previous literature has delivered negative answers to Sewell's questions (See 2.3.2.4). SENCOs are usually experienced teachers, but only a few have had adequate basic training with regard to SEN pupils.

Twenty years on, according to Farrell (2000:149), "The SENCO is a teacher having responsibilities for co-ordinating special education under the *Code of Practice*". The head teacher or deputy head teacher may be the SENCO in a small school. A team of teachers may co-ordinate special education in a large school and may be known as the SEN co-ordination team or the learning support team.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- *the day to day operation of the school's SEN policy*
- *liaising with and advising teacher colleagues*
- *co-ordinating provision for children with SEN (in-class support)*
- *maintaining the school's SEN register and overseeing the records on all pupils with SEN*
- *liaising with the parents of children with SEN*
- *contributing to staff in-service training, and*
- *liaising with external agencies* (Farrell, 2000:150).

Recent literature has added "*training and supervising Learning Support Assistants*" to the list of responsibilities of the SENCO (CeSNER Report of Research, 2000). Previously mentioned special educational needs policies and procedures, have resulted in the following of inclusive practices in mainstream classrooms.

2.2.3.2 Changes in local education authorities' approaches

Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in England are accountable for maintaining schools in their areas. According to Ainscow (2001:6-9), more power has been granted to LEAs since 1988, in order to improve standards: *This can be seen as a democratic process by which educational provision is made available for all children and young people within a local area.*

LEAs summarise their role and overall position on inclusion and achievement as follows: *The LEA is defined as the maintained schools in the district and the various units and services in the education department: 'inclusion' is defined as the process of identifying and overcoming barriers to learning for **all** pupils; achievement is defined more broadly than success in tests and examinations to include the celebration of progress at all levels of attainment; the Government's twin goals of improving achievement and promoting inclusion are incorporated within a single strategic aim of '**empowering the achievement of all learners by promoting inclusion**'; and schools and the education department are committed to a process of regular review and continuous improvement, and to a partnership that is characteristic by mutual support and challenge (Ainscow, 2001:6-9).*

From the above, it is evident that LEAs have a great responsibility to understand the deeper factors of inclusion practices, in order to move such practices and policies forward (2001:6-9). In her presentation in Perth, Ainscow (debated) the importance of knowing that changes for efforts to develop more inclusive forms of education, are still at the very early stage of development. Currently, 'maps' are being developed and can be used to review and develop work in relation to inclusion *and* achievement.

One of the more specific roles that LEAs have to deliver is managing the implementation of the SEN *Code of Practice*. The task and responsibility of LEAs is to statement those pupils who have a severe and complex difficulty and who require significant additional resources or special schooling. Fox (1998:4) agrees that

statements are appropriate for those pupils *who have severe and complex needs requiring ongoing multi-disciplinary assessment*.

The Code of Practice in providing the correct support to children and their families guides both, LEAs and schools. The new *Code of Practice* consists of four stages:

- School Action
- School Action Plus
- Statutory Assessment
- Statement of SEN

These stages carefully, and within limited time, move from registering a child with a potential problem in a school, having professional external agency assessments done, to actually having a comprehensive statement of special educational needs from the LEA. Parents' involvement and participation in the process is crucial throughout. They have the right to appeal against any decision made by the LEA, should they not agree.

In relation to the above, and detrimental to the successful inclusion of pupils with SEN, are the planning, monitoring and reviewing of SEN provision and pupil progress. *The SENCO takes the lead in co-ordinating provision, monitoring and reviewing progress* (Farrell, 2000: 149).

2.2.3.3 The provision of support in classrooms for pupils with special learning needs

The 'promise' of adaptations and provision for pupils with special educational needs in inclusive education settings, stems from the Warnock Report in 1978. As mentioned in 2.3.2.1, the most obvious result is the 'arrival' of teaching assistants in classrooms.

Tennant (2001:185) has argued that one of the major reasons for having teaching

assistants in the mainstream classroom is so pupils with special educational needs (SEN) can be included. Farrell agrees that there is a huge rise in the numbers of teaching assistants working in schools to support pupils with Statements (Farrell, 2001:8).

The aim of inclusive teaching is indeed to offer maximum support to *all* members of the class. This can only be accomplished with extra human resources, working alongside teachers as “helpers” in inclusive classroom settings. Ainscow (2000:77) defines such “helpers” as learning support assistants (LSAs), unqualified adults who work alongside teachers to support the learning of pupils categorised as having ‘special educational needs’. They are also often referred to as special needs assistants, classroom assistants or teaching assistants. Research shows, however, that it is not easy to work with other adults in the classroom. Jerwood (1999:127) sums up the situation in this way: *Teachers may feel threatened by their presence; anxious about the possibility of their own competency being questioned; and unsure of how to manage extra staff or how to involve them in a positive way for the benefit of the pupils*. Rose takes a similar line in stating that the teacher and learning support assistant relationship is clearly a complex one (2000:191).

In addition to the above complexity of having extra, unqualified adults in the classroom, Thomas, Walker and Webb (1998:29) say that inappropriate support provision results when a class teacher *assume academic expertise held by the LSA which the latter does not in fact possess*.

Recent reviews of the literature (Farrell, 1997:14; Farrell, 2002; Lacey, 2001:158) and major reports (Mencap, 1999; Farrell *et al.*, 1999 cited in Lacey, 2001:158) have shown how important teaching assistants are in inclusive education. However, these writers are cautious stressing that support requires to be properly organised, planned and monitored to be effective, an ‘extra pair of hands’ is not sufficient in itself.

The way forward, according to Ainscow (2000:77) *is the development of a school policy on working with assistants*, in order to avoid problems and overcome barriers.

From the above, Thomas *et al.*, (1998:26) indicate that success in the inclusive mainstream classroom is dependent upon teaching assistants. In addition to this, the need for them to have *specific* expertise and knowledge, in order to be effective and professional is paramount. It is clear that the effective delivery of support is crucial for successful inclusion, yet surprisingly little attention has been paid to the ways in which support works in classrooms.

2.3 TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

2.3.1 The role of the teaching assistant (TA)

An enormous responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the teaching assistants in mainstream schools. Research has shown that the implementation of the *Code of Practice* depends upon the effectiveness of TAs in schools (Clough, 1998:121).

Tennant (2002:185) defines four ways of providing support in the classroom:

- *Working with individuals*
- *Working with small groups*
- *Providing an extra pair of hands in classroom generally*
- *Modifying materials outside the classroom*

In relation to the above, specific tasks and responsibilities of the TA will be clearly stated in a formal *role description*, prepared by the head teacher. Close communication will exist between him and the class teacher responsible for the teaching assistant's work. Therefore, it's the responsibility of the teaching assistant to work ... *under the guidance of the class teacher in order to meet the needs of the children. By law, you are deemed a 'responsible adult' and the duties performed by you are delegated to you by the head teacher. If something does go wrong, you should discuss the situation with the teacher who is responsible for your work and with the head teacher* (Fox, 1998:4).

Research points to a change in focus, ... *A critical change seems to have occurred in the role that teaching assistants play, and the popular image of an 'extra pair of hands' is receding as teaching assistants become more and more actively involved in children's learning* (Potter and Richardson, 1999:34). This puts a new dynamic spin on the role of the TA and appears to be a *challenge*.

Rose (2000:193) describes the more specific, academic role of the TA as part of intervention when working with a SEN pupil as follows:

- To checking work
- To ensure understanding
- To keep a pupil on task
- To clarify a point at the pupil's request

The following is a comprehensive list of learning support duties, in order to provide good quality support, whether working with an individual child or small groups:

- Encouraging the whole group "to accept your pupil as a full member of the class" (Fox, 1998:6).
- Making the curriculum accessible to your pupil/group of pupils (e.g. preparing materials to support learning, etc).
- Providing learning support (e.g. "explaining, helping, giving strategies" (Fox, 1998:13).
- Listening, summarising (Fox, 1998:12).
- Reinforcing positive behaviour patterns in pupils.
- Multi-tasking when needed (e.g. support the class teacher with duties as needed).
- Collaborating with other staff members (team meetings), external agencies and parents.
- Setting a good example and role-modeling by being positive, encouraging, energetic, helpful and socially appropriate.

When working with an individual pupil it is easy to 'drown' that pupil with kindness. It is, however, important to remember that the role of the teaching assistant is *not to*

do the work for the pupil, but “to promote independence” (Fox, 1998:10). This can only happen if an experienced and *trained* TA provides enough “frequent opportunities for real success” (Fox, 1998:10).

In addition to the above, accidents should be treated as a first priority and the TA should give such a child first aid. The accident should be recorded and the information passed on to the class teacher. Furthermore, any danger to the child should be reported: *If during the course of your work with a child, some disclosure of physical or sexual abuse is made, then you have a duty, under the Child Protection laws, to inform the head teacher who will take any action necessary* (Fox, 1998:4).

From the above it is evident that the role the teaching assistant has to play is vital for children’s learning and safety. That role should be clearly defined in order to reduce any misunderstanding or confusion, for the TA as well as for the class teacher.

In order to facilitate effective classroom management, there needs to be a flexible *interchange of roles* between teachers and TAs. This can only happen if both parties feel confident and relaxed, about *what* is expected of them (Rose, 2000:194,195).

2.3.2 Specific educational needs that need support

Many teaching assistants work with an individual pupil who has a ‘Statement of Special Educational Needs’ (Fox, 1998:4). The Warnock Report estimated that about 20 per cent (1 in 5) of all pupils will experience some kind of special educational need at some time during their school life.

The range of special needs which might be expected in inclusive mainstream classrooms will now be discussed briefly.

2.3.2.1 Mild learning difficulties

Gulliford and Upton (1992:41) describe learning difficulties as the most frequent sources of special educational needs which, in various degrees, hinder the development of literacy and numeracy skills, needed in other areas of the curriculum. The Warnock Report refers to four degrees in which learning difficulties can occur: mild, moderate, specific and severe (DES, 1978 in Gulliford and Upton, 1992:41). Though *mild* focuses on the less complex degree of difficulty, it however refers to the largest group of children requiring some form of additional teaching and personalised educational support in ordinary schools.

Fox (1998:44) argues that although these pupils do not need a high level of support, “attention needs to be given to particular areas of need with the possibility of including structured activities to support a particular need”.

2.3.2.2 Moderate learning difficulties

According to Gulliford and Upton (1992:42) *moderate* learning difficulties stems from *a variety and combination of causes which often include mild and multiple physical and sensory disabilities, and impoverished or adverse social or educational background, specific learning difficulties and limited general ability*. It is obvious that special, personalised education is needed to meet these pupil's needs, whether in ordinary or specialised education settings.

Fox agrees that the needs of pupils with moderate learning difficulties in mainstream schools are being met through, *additional teacher support and/or learning support assistance* (1998:45).

2.3.2.3 Specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)

According to Fox (1998:47) a specific learning difficulty in British schools refers to poor literacy (reading, spelling and writing) skills, sometimes co-morbidity with poor numeracy skills and sensory impairments does occur. Because children need very specific strategies in order to learn, it is important that teaching assistants are trained, or have received considerable guidance from the SENCO, showing them exact ways/strategies in which to deliver learning support.

Lewis and Doorlag also state that pupils who have specific learning difficulties may demonstrate poor learning strategies (1995:66). Students can be *passive learners who fail to become actively involved in the learning task*. It is the crucial task of teaching assistants to support pupils with a specific learning difficulty to focus on their work and to stay on task.

2.3.2.4 Severe learning difficulties

Pupils who are genetically different from other pupils (e.g. a child with Downs Syndrome), or because of a medical trauma, would experience severe learning difficulties. Sometimes pupils would show similar characteristics than pupils with moderate learning difficulties, *but they frequently need a higher level of adult support and learn at a slower rate* (Fox, 1998:46).

2.3.2.5 Profound and multiple learning difficulties

According to Fox (1998:47) *these children often have limited understanding of language and little or no speech, so communication is often difficult*. A teaching assistant's task primarily with such pupils would be to ensure physical comfort. Educational priorities and learning almost become secondary to this.

2.3.2.6 Physical disability

Although this covers a wide range of conditions, the more common ones teaching assistants are likely to come across in schools include:

- Cerebral palsy;
- Spina bifida;
- Hydrocephalus;
- Cystic fibrosis;
- Muscular dystrophy;
- Diabetes;
- Epilepsy;
- Haemophilia;
- Limb deficiency;
- Asthma;
- Brittle bone disease; and
- Eczema.

Within each category, the effects of the disability range from relatively minor to relatively severe, in which case the pupil cannot function without the support of caring adults (Feldman, Gordon and Snyman, 2001:121,122; Fox, 1998:51).

2.3.2.7 Sensory impairment (visual or hearing)

Gulliford and Upton define three most common conditions of visual impairments that teachers and assistants will come across in schools, myopia (short-sightedness), hypermetropia (long-sightedness) and astigmatism (1992:116). By wearing spectacles, these pupils' vision will be corrected to normal vision. It is however those pupils registered as 'blind' or 'partially sighted' who would learn through alternative, tactile methods of teaching.

In addition to the above, it is the safety and mobility of pupils who are visual

impaired that is crucial. Full supervision in the form of teaching assistants are essential to encourage the independence of these pupils. *Careful and comprehensive assessments* (Gulliford and Upton, 1992:143), should be done to establish the level of impairment, in order to have a successful integration of a pupil with a hearing impairment into a mainstream classroom. This will result in the provision of adequate and *specialised learning support* to ensure the pupil has full access to the wider curriculum. In addition to this, moderate to intensive language intervention, deciding on the correct mode of communication for a specific pupil, is vital.

In order to support a pupil with a visual or a hearing impairment, the focus of learning should be on the usage and supervision of specialist equipment and resources, support in order to learn alternative communication skills and general adaptation of teacher learning materials (Muthukrishna, 2001:161-165; Snyman and Bloom, 2001:181-184).

2.3.2.8 Language impairment

The term language impairment stands for a range of difficulties:

- Difficulties in receptive language (understanding) or
- Pupils who have problems expressing themselves (Fox, 1998:56).

It is obvious that different types of problems would need different kinds of academic and social support or intervention.

In England and Wales approximately 250 000 children under the age of 5 have some sort of language impairment. The majority of these pupils are in mainstream schools where only expert learning support, help them overcome learning barriers (Fox, 1998:57).

2.3.2.9 Communication impairment (e.g. Asperger's syndrome, Autism)

Pupils with autism "have difficulty engaging in interactions" with others. Such pupils will have special educational needs over a range of areas e.g. behavioural, social, academic and physical (Lewis and Doorlag, 1995: 76). It is obvious that only well-trained, confident teaching assistants can deliver good quality service.

2.3.2.10 Emotional and behavioural difficulties (e.g. Attention; Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder ADD/ADHD)

According to Ayers, Clarke, Marray (1995:5) *different terms are often used to refer to unacceptable forms of behaviour e.g. abnormal, maladaptive, anti-social and conduct disorder*. Emotional and behavioural difficulties can also be a "blanket term" which includes a wide variety of conditions, all sharing the same characteristics in the child that presents with such problems. Such children are "troubled" and at the same time "troubling to those who come in contact with them" (Fox, 1998:60).

According to the American Psychiatric Association (1987) in Lewis and Doorlag (1995:75), attention deficit hyperactivity disorders are characterized by *developmentally inappropriate degrees of inattention, impulsiveness and hyperactivity*.

Many pupils with ADD or ADHD are accommodated in inclusive education settings. According to Fox (1998:61) these pupils need special provision, e.g. small class groups and an intense level of adult support, in the form of teaching assistants, to ensure the curriculum is accessible to them. Rose's research (2000:194) found, that although teachers were generally opposed to the notion of allocating TAs to individual pupils, they did concede that there were times when pupil behaviour could be so disruptive that they had resorted to this measure.

To emphasise the importance of having well-trained, qualified and confident teaching assistants to work with these pupils, Table 2.1 summarises the typical needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), in any inclusive school. These needs indicate the areas where adult support in the form of a teaching assistant is crucial and essential.

Table 2.1: Typical Needs of Pupils with Special Educational Needs

SPECIAL CHILDREN	Academic	Behaviour	Physical	Social
MILD LEARNING DIFFICULTIES	X	X	X	X
MODERATE L. DIFFICULTIES	X	X	X	X
SPECIFIC L. DIFFICULTIES	X		X	X
SEVERE L. DIFFICULTIES	X	X	X	X
PROFOUND L. DIFFICULTIES	X	X	X	X
PHYSICAL DISSABILITY	X		X	X
SENSORY IMPAIRMENT	X		X	X
LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT	X			X
COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENT	X	X	X	X
EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL	X	X		X

To summarise, working with an individual pupil with special educational needs, as a TA may be fulfilling and rewarding. Tennant (2001:185) lists, *interpreter, scribe, organiser, motivator, partner, assessor, reinforce and emotional/behavioural helper*, an interesting variety of work, requiring definite skills and knowledge.

2.3.3 Training of teaching assistants

According to Fox (1998:50) Farrell *et al.*, (1999:63), Farrell, (2000:125), Potter and Richardson (1999:16), TAs working in inclusive classrooms are untrained, and continue to receive unsatisfactory training whilst working.

A survey of SEN support services has found that fewer than half the services have received any training for their new roles (see 2.4.1). A later survey done by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) DfEE 1997, *Excellence for all Children*, notes that even fewer LEAs provide appropriate training and continuing professional development experiences for support staff (Clough, 1998:161). Recently DfES put

forward induction programmes for teaching assistants that would contribute to the development of knowledge, understanding and skills needed for teaching assistants.

A number of issues arise about how TAs and teachers should work, from which the most important question, *what sort of training do teaching assistants need* (Thomas *et al.*, 1998:26)?” In addition to this, Fox (1998:50) explains that teaching assistants vary greatly in their background experience. Research done by the National Foundation for Educational Research has indicated that assistants range from ex-dinner ladies or parent volunteers to people considering a career in teaching, who are exploring this by way of working as an assistant whilst others are qualified teachers. This wide variation in background seems to be the first, very obvious need for training. It is crucial that all members of staff working in a classroom should have the same basic knowledge and understanding of what their role and responsibilities are, together with a sound knowledge of how to plan for a session and how to deliver and assess pupils’ work. It is evident from research, that this level of confidence, knowledge and skill that has been acquired, stems from good quality training.

Apart from the above, parents also need to know that their children are supported “by people who know what they are doing” Fox (1998:50) and should be informed that schools play an important role in ensuring that children who need assistance are given informed support from fully trained assistants.

As discussed in 2.3.1 teaching assistants work in support of the pupils, the class teacher and the school within a wide range of tasks and duties. Above all, close and effective communication, collaborative teamwork are only a few ways in which the TA can take ownership of his/her role (Thomas *et al.*, 1998:26). The solution is not to avoid bad practice, and surely not to abandon training, but to rather produce training courses that meet assistants’ personal and professional needs (Fox, 1998:52; Thomas *et al.*, 1998:33). Such *professional development* as the acquisition of specific skills, knowledge and understanding which needs to be internalised and refined to make it part of the workers professional identity should

be available when needed (McClelland and Varma, 1996:87). Specific skill training should include communications skills training with emphasis on listening skills, verbal skills on how to encourage and praise pupils, and verbal directing of challenging behaviour. Knowledge in the above refers to knowledge on disabilities and how to plan and provide effective educational intervention for such pupils with SEN. Furthermore, knowledge of health and safety issues, for example dealing with medical emergencies, is crucial. Research has proved that the acceptable level and way of support will result in success in meeting the initial aim of inclusive teaching. It is therefore dependent on the skills, knowledge and self-confidence of those teaching assistants working alongside teachers as *trained* professionals in inclusive education settings (Dfee, 1997 in Potter and Richardson, 1999:34; Farrell, 2000:7-8; Ainscow, 1997:5).

To summarise, there are currently no mandatory qualifications for teaching assistants. However, ensuring teaching assistants have access to relevant training and qualifications will help LEAs and schools to maintain high quality support for teaching and learning in the classroom. It also demonstrates to teachers, parents and Ofsted, as well as to teaching assistants themselves, that they are recognised and supported as valued members of the school staff system. Gaining a nationally recognised qualification is good for self esteem and confidence as well the ability to do a good job, all of which contribute to job satisfaction, staff retention and raising standards in schools” (QFTA, 2002:3).

Research on this subject of *training* in relation to successful implementation of an inclusive education system, has shown that, not only the support staff in mainstream classrooms are inadequately trained in order to support and manage pupils with SEN, but this also seems to be the case for class teachers and SENCOs (Clough,1998:160).

2.3.4 Criteria of a nationally recognised qualification for teaching assistants

Nationally recognised qualifications are part of the national qualifications framework. An awarding body, externally to the school and the LEA, awards them. The Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is the body responsible for approving all nationally recognised qualifications and for regulating the awarding bodies. Thus, *Nationally recognised qualifications have to meet strict criteria to be approved to the national qualifications framework* (QTFA, 2002:3).

According to the QTFA (2002:3) the national qualifications framework aims to:

- widen participation and promote life-long learning
- promote public and professional confidence in the qualification system
- clarify the relationships between qualifications, including broad equivalences
- provide more transparent progression routes – upwards and sideways to related areas
- help employers distinguish between those qualifications that demonstrate occupational competence and have been assessed in the workplace at the end of a course

Furthermore, the national qualification framework consists of three different categories of qualifications, *general*, *vocational-related* and *occupational*. Six levels distinguish the degree of knowledge, skills and understanding, autonomy, analysis and creative thinking within the qualification (QTFA, 2002:3). See Table 2.2 for a visual overview.

Table 2.2: The national qualification framework

		CATEGORIES		
		General Qualifications	Vocationally related Qualifications	Occupational Qualifications
 Increasing levels of knowledge, skills and understanding 	Levels of Attainment	attest to attainment in a subject	attest to attainment in a vocational area	attest to attainment of competence in the workplace
	5	Higher Level Qualifications		Level 5 NVQ
	4			Level 4 NVQ
	3 Advanced Level	A Level	Vocational A Level (Advanced GNVQ)	Level 3 NVQ
	2 Intermediate Level	GCSE grade A* - C	Intermediate GNVQ	Level 2 NVQ
	Foundation Level	GCSE grade D – G	Foundation GNVQ	Level 1 NVQ
	Entry Level	Entry level qualifications can provide a basis for progression to qualifications across the framework at Level 1		
 Increasing occupational focus				

The above shows there is a difference between the types of qualifications. The implications for qualifications of specifically teaching assistants are as follows:

General qualifications are subject-based (QFTA, 2002:4) e.g. GCSEs and A levels. Teaching assistants would need a basic knowledge and understanding of Maths and English to be able to provide support in literacy and numeracy learning areas in the classroom. Teaching assistants working in secondary schools and who want to experiment on working in the classroom before starting a career in education would find this a useful route.

Vocationally-related qualifications (QFTA, 2002:4) are linked to occupational standards and are a route for people who are unemployed. The focus of such a qualification would be “a more traditional study-based training programme” (QFTA, 2002:4). Added to this, VRQs are also linked to occupational roles and include some work-based experience in the form of placements. Tutorial guidance is crucial

and offers mediated learning experience which systematically builds confidence, skills and knowledge in learners. *VRQs for teaching assistants will provide most if not all of the underpinning knowledge for the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at the same level, as well as developing practical skills needed to do the job and possible achievement of the NVQ in due course (QFTA, 2002:4).*

Occupational qualifications (NVQs) are based on national occupational standards (QFTA, 2002:5). Teaching assistants following this route can also work in the independent sector. There are two NVQs especially developed for teaching assistants. One in level 2 and one in level 3 of the national qualification framework (see Table 2.1).

According to *Qualifications for Teaching Assistants (2002:5,6)*, the following **STRENGTHS** anchor the above-mentioned NVQs:

- Evidence of application of skills and knowledge into real work situations
- Course structure is made up of a number of units of competence (some mandatory, some optional)
- Level 2 achievement means successful completion of four mandatory and two optional units
- Level 3 achievement means successful completion of 10 units of which four are mandatory
- An easy progression from level 2 straight on to level 3 (as long as enough responsibilities in the role of teaching assistant is provided)
- Prior as well as existing learning and experience can be used as evidence of occupational competency.

Table 2.3 shows which vocationally-related teaching assistant qualifications were accredited in the national qualification framework, in August and September 2002 (QFTA, 2002:7).

Table 2.3: Teaching assistant qualification accreditation to the national qualifications framework

Vocationally-related qualifications	Occupational qualifications
CACHE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants* Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants <i>ABC Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants (under development)</i> <i>NOCN Level 2 Intermediate Award for Teaching Assistants (under development)</i>	NVQ Level 2 for Teaching Assistants (awarded by CACHE, OCR, City and Guilds and Edexcel)
CACHE Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants <i>Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants (submitted)</i>	NVQ level 3 for Teaching Assistants (awarded by CACHE, OCR, City and Guilds and Edexcel)

* LSA training programme: focus of this study

2.4 CONCLUSION

Defining the role and responsibilities of teaching assistants in inclusive classroom settings is vital. The role and responsibilities fit the profile of a person that is energetic, has the skills and knowledge to multi-task, and more than anything, has the ability to manage stress. A training course that combines workplace experience with theory and effective and supportive guidance from the co-ordinator and tutor will provide a fertile environment for appropriate personal and professional growth and development.

CHAPTER 3**TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS****3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on training programmes for teaching assistants with specific reference to the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants.

Teaching assistants, who have no relevant qualification for their work with children in inclusive classrooms, are strongly recommended to obtain a suitable qualification that fits their personal and professional development (Clough, 1998:160; Thomas *et al.*, 1998:31-33; Fox, 1998:52).

Teaching assistants, who came into their existing roles as teaching assistants, have to decide whether their existing qualifications match the requirements of their new role. For example, someone with a play work qualification will not necessarily have knowledge on how to make the primary school curriculum accessible to a youngster with an emotional and behavioural disorder. Another example is teaching assistants who hold a vocational qualification, which pre-dates the development of the national qualifications framework (QFTA, 2002:7), can still continue with their roles in classes. Such a qualification will provide a sound base for future learning and job experience.

The next section takes an in-depth look into currently available vocationally-related training programmes (see Table 2.2) for teaching assistants.

3.2 VOCATIONALLY-RELATED QUALIFICATIONS

Vocationally-related qualifications (VRQs) are a route for people who are not yet employed, and who are looking for new job opportunities and who prefer a study-based training programme. According to the QFTA, vocationally related qualifications are particularly relevant to learners who are less confident, and who are likely to need the reassurance and guidance of a tutor. In this case the learning experience will be one of mediation. It will relate to occupational roles and will include some work-based practice. Assessments for these qualifications are usually by means of assignments, projects and sometimes short written tests (2002:4).

It is evident that VRQs will learn and provide the underpinning knowledge that teaching assistants need to do their jobs.

The following NVQs for teaching assistants are available on Intermediate Level 2 of the National Qualification Framework:

- CACHE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants
 - Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants
 - *ABC Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants**
 - *NOCN Level 2 Intermediate Award for Teaching Assistants**
 - NCFE Level 2 Certificates for Teaching Assistants.
- * Please note that Certificates from awarding bodies *ABC* and *NOCN*, although being mentioned in the Qualifications for Teaching Assistants, were still under development when this study was conducted (see Appendix A).

These training courses for teaching assistants will now be compared with each other on individualised specifications and criteria such as *aims, entry requirements, length of award, qualification structure, assessment and link for further professional development*.

3.2.1 Cache Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants (CTA2)

3.2.1.1 Aim of programme

According to the CACHE booklet (CACHE: 2001:7), the aim is to facilitate good practice and high standards in people's role as teaching assistant and to increase skills and knowledge.

3.2.1.2 Entry requirements

No formal entry requirements are prescribed. Students should be older than 18 years of age.

3.2.1.3 Length of award

A total of 120 guided learning hours are recommended. These hours do not necessarily have to be spent in the classroom. A differentiation of teaching methods is recommended. Study time for independent home study should also be allowed.

3.2.1.4 Qualification structure

The CTA2 consists of two mandatory units:

- Unit 01: Supporting the Curriculum
- Unit 02: Working within the School.

Sub-divisions for Unit 01 are, supporting:

- Literacy
- Mathematics

- Information communication and technology
- The planning process
- Pupil's learning
- Using scaffolded learning on task.

Sub-divisions for Unit 02 are:

- The role of the teaching assistant in school
- Policies and procedures
- Relationships with pupils
- Encouraging positive behaviour.

3.2.1.5 *Assessment of award*

Although units are separately assessed, both units must be successfully achieved to gain the award. Each unit is assessed by a CACHE assignment. One assignment is marked by the study centre and moderated by an external moderator, and one assignment is marked entirely externally by CACHE.

3.2.1.6 *Links for further professional development and training*

Progression can be made from here to CACHE Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants.

Key Skills can be signposted against unit assignments for accreditation in the following areas:

- Communication;
- Information technology;
- Application of number;
- Working with others;
- Improving own learning and performance; and

- Problem solving.

(Key skills are transferable and play an important role in developing personal effectiveness for adults in relation to working life. They also form the foundation of continuous learning.)

3.2.2 Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants

3.2.2.1 *Aim of programme*

According to the Edexcel BTEC booklet on short courses, this programme is designed to focus on providing:

- A framework of education and training for teaching assistants
- Opportunities to achieve a nationally recognised level 2 vocationally specific qualification
- A foundation for further professional development through progression to a level 3 course of the same nature
- Developing knowledge, understanding and skills needed to provide effective classroom support
- Opportunities to develop major and wider key skills
- A range of skills and techniques, personal qualities and attitudes needed for successful performance in working life (BTEC Short Courses, 2002:6).

3.2.2.2 *Entry requirements*

No specific requirements are mentioned, except that this course aims to attract a more “mature student” (BTEC Short Courses, 2002:6), who wishes to follow a short programme of study, focussing directly on relevant work experience.

3.2.2.3 Length of award

The Edexcel Level 2 BTEC Certificate for Teaching Assistants is a 180-hour qualification.

3.2.2.4 Qualification structure

The Level 2 BTEC Certificate for Teaching Assistants comprises three core units and two specialist units. In order to achieve this award, candidates need to successfully complete all three core units and one specialist unit.

The core units are:

- The Learning Environment
- Supporting Classroom Practices
- Supporting Oracy, Literacy and Numeracy.

The specialist units are:

- Working with ICT
- Supporting Children's Welfare and Well-being.

3.2.2.5 Assessment of award

Assessment is *criterion-referenced*, based on the achievement of specific outcomes (BTEC Short Courses, 2002:7). Units are either internally or externally verified. *Contextualised-grading criteria* (BTEC Short Courses, 2002:7), allows units to be individually graded e.g. pass, merit or distinction. Candidates must *pass* all units (core and chosen specialist one), in order to achieve this qualification.

3.2.2.6 Links for further professional development and training

The Level 2 BTEC Certificate for Teaching Assistants includes the signposting of key skills in the following areas:

- Communication;
- Working with others;
- Managing own learning;
- Using of numbers;
- Using of ICT; and
- Problem solving.

In the case of both the CACHE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants as well as with the Edexcel Level 2 BTEC Certificate for Teaching Assistants, it is evident that an enormous effort has gone into putting a comprehensive and substantial programme together to meet the learning needs of programme participants in order to obtain a qualification.

Of all criteria discussed and compared, it is the QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE, which happens to be the most essential criteria. This refers to the number of units a candidate needs to pass in order to achieve the award. It also shows which units are core or mandatory ones and which are optional. Each unit stipulates the exact subject knowledge and skills (learning outcomes) which will be the study focus within a specific time frame.

To summarise, looking closely at the two above-mentioned training programmes in relation to their qualification structures, it is clear that in both cases it does not include *the training of teaching assistants to work with SEN pupils* in mainstream classes. (Even though all other relevant matters are in place, e.g. health and safety procedures, policies, exploring the role of the teaching assistant, supporting literacy, and mathematics.) Chapter Two, the review of literature has shown that in the majority of cases the role and responsibilities teaching assistants' encompass with SEN pupils in inclusive education settings. This emphasised the need for specific

development and training in order to support those pupils successfully. Special educational needs training does not necessarily have to be part of the mandatory or core units of a qualification, but the choice has to be there for teaching assistants to make, within the optional units. The Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants, of which NCFE is the awarding body and which is the focus of this study, meets these criteria in its qualification structure, which other similar courses lack. Provision is made for candidates in the training programme to be properly trained in the field of special educational needs.

3.2.3 NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants

3.2.3.1 *Aim of programme*

NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is aimed at those candidates who want to gain employment as a Teaching Assistant. As reflected in the NCFE Qualification Specification (2002:2), this certificate also encourages transfer of learning in the workplace for those candidates who are already employed as Teaching Assistants.

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to:

- Develop confidence and motivation
- Develop knowledge, skills and understanding of the TA
- Explore the role of the TA
- Increase the understanding of educational practice
- Promote good practice in Teaching Assistant work
- Understand legal and national requirements
- Support pupils learning
- Support literacy and numeracy development
- Support pupils with special educational needs
- Explore the management of pupils' behaviour
- Provide a good qualification for existing TAs

- Provide a basis for further study and/or career development.

3.2.3.2 Entry requirements

It is recommended that candidates have some experience of working in a voluntary or paid capacity with children (age 0 – 15yrs). However, at the discretion of the centre, this qualification is open to those who have no previous relevant experience. Ideally candidates should have high levels of literacy and numeracy proficiency.

3.2.3.3 Length of award

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is taught over 150 guided learning hours (GLH). This includes candidates' work placement of 50 hours over the length of the award.

3.2.3.4 Qualification structure

This qualification consists of three mandatory units:

- Unit 01: Develop professional skills and knowledge
- Unit 02: Understand legal and national requirements
- Unit 03: Support the teacher in relation to pupils' learning.

And two further units, which must be either OPTION 1:

- Unit 04: Support the teacher in the development of pupils' literacy skills
- Unit 05: Support the teacher in the development of pupils' numeracy skills.

or OPTION 2:

- Unit 06: Explore the management of pupils' behaviour

- Unit 07: Support pupils with special educational needs.

3.2.3.5 Assessment of award

The assessment of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants consists of two components:

- An internally assessed portfolio of evidence which is assessed by centre staff and moderated by NCFE
- An externally set and assessed multiple choice question paper which is marked by NCFE.

Internal assessment by means of portfolio building, demonstrates evidence of achievement of all learning outcomes associated with each unit. The main pieces of evidence for the portfolio are:

- candidate notebook
- reflective diary
- assessor observation
- case studies.

3.2.3.6 Links for further professional development and training

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants has been mapped against the relevant National Occupational Standards for Teaching Assistants. This means that candidates can gather evidence whilst studying this qualification, which could be used to accredit prior learning (APL), against a particular NVQ.

Furthermore, Key Skills can be realistically achieved through this qualification. Once a whole Key Skills Unit has been assessed and achieved it will be possible to apply to NCFE for accreditation.

According to NCFE Qualification Specification (2002:3), there are also a number of possible progression routes to additional qualifications:

- NCFE Qualifications in Key Skills offering progression from Levels 1 – 4
- Other appropriate NCFE qualifications at Level 3
- Level 2 NVQ for Teaching/Classroom Assistants
- An Induction Training for Teaching Assistants programme such as that provided by the DfES
- Specialist Teaching Assistants qualifications at Level 3, e.g. the Open University Specialist Teaching Assistant Certificate.

The purpose of this section was to compare the available training programmes for teaching assistants. It is evident that the most effective training for candidates, working in inclusive education settings, would be to follow a programme that makes provision for the development of confidence, skills, knowledge and an understanding of working with pupils, who are included in mainstream schools and who present with special educational needs. Support staff in classrooms needs to be fully qualified for this challenging job. They require very specific training to meet the needs of the individuals who present with special needs e.g. definition of the disability, symptoms and how it presents itself, implications the disability has on that individual and most of all, educational intervention which includes an explicit description of their role and responsibilities. As assistants continue to grow in a holistic understanding of their clients, their application of skill will be based on true knowledge and not a trial and error approach. Simultaneously they need to practise and develop their role and build their confidence about their role. The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants provides such training opportunities.

The following section explains the outline of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants in detail.

3.3 NCFE: LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

3.3.1 The awarding body: NCFE

NCFE declares its commitment to excellence through its mission: *Innovative in its approach, NCFE strives for excellence in meeting the learners' needs and recognising their achievements* (NCFE Qualification Specification, 2002).

Being one of the UK's oldest and fastest growing awarding bodies, it offers a diverse portfolio to colleges, employers and training providers on nationally-accredited qualifications and national awards.

NCFE qualifications and national awards can be used to:

- improve candidate retention and achievement rates
- develop a curriculum offer to embrace Government initiatives such as Lifelong Learning
- access sources of funding
- meet local and national employers' needs (NCFE Qualification Specification, 2002).

NCFE is the awarding body of the Level 2 qualification, Certificate for Teaching Assistants. It is central to the focus of this research project.

3.3.2 Qualification Overview

3.3.2.1 Introduction

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants has been accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and is part of the National Qualifications Framework as a vocationally related qualification (NCFE Qualification Specification, 2002:1).

The Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is an ideal qualification for those candidates who wish to train to become Teaching Assistants and for those candidates already working as Teaching Assistants who would like to gain recognition of skills acquired whilst working in the childcare sector.

Work placement hours (WPH) for this qualification are included in the guided learning hours (GLH) for example:

- GLH - 150
- WPH - 50

Three mandatory units, followed during the course of this study are:

Unit 01: Develop professional skills and knowledge;

Unit 02: Understand legal and national requirements; and

Unit 03: Support the teacher in relation to pupils' learning.

Two further optional units which must be either

Option 1:

- Unit 04: Support the teacher in the development of pupils' literacy skills
- Unit 05: Support the teacher in the development of pupils' numeracy skills.

or Option 2:

- Unit 06: Explore the management of pupils' behaviour
- Unit 07: Support pupils with special educational needs.

Candidates must successfully complete all three mandatory units, plus option 1 or 2, to be awarded the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants. Option 2 was chosen for the purpose of this study, emphasising the importance of having trained support staff to implement inclusive education in mainstream schools, successfully.

3.3.2.2 Targeted group

The targeted group of candidates may already have some work experience of

working with children and young people between 0 and fifteen years old in a voluntary or paid capacity in a classroom. Ultimately the selection of candidates is at the discretion of centres and they should be satisfied that the candidate is capable of meeting the standards required to successfully complete all units. Additionally, candidates must be prepared to comply with vetting procedures for those working with children and young people, as required by current legislation. The minimum entry age of candidates to do the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants, is eighteen years.

3.3.2.3 Progression opportunities

There are a number of possible progression routes to related, additional qualifications after completing this programme:

- NCFE Qualifications in Key Skills offering progression to Level 4
- Other appropriate NCFE qualifications at Level 3
- An Induction Training for Teaching Assistants Programme such as that provided by the DfES
- Specialist Teaching Assistants qualifications at Level 3 e.g. the Open University Specialist Teaching Assistant Certificate (NCFE Qualification Specification, 2002:3).

3.3.2.4 Links

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants has been mapped against the relevant National Occupational Standards for Teaching/Classroom Assistants. Evidence, after successful completion of this programme can realistically be generated for Key Skills Units accreditation.

3.3.2.5 Assessment and moderation

Assessment is the process of measuring a candidate's confidence, skill, knowledge and understanding, against the standards set in the qualification.

The assessment for the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants consists of two components:

- An internally assessed portfolio of evidence which is assessed by centre staff and moderated by NCFE
- An externally set and assessed multiple-choice question paper which is marked by NCFE.

Candidates must be successful in both components to gain the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants.

(1) Internal Assessment

Each candidate is required to create a portfolio of evidence which demonstrates achievement of **all** learning outcomes associated with each unit.

The main pieces of evidence for the portfolio are:

- pre and post self assessments
- candidate notebook
- reflective diary
- assessor observations
- case studies
- written assignments
- written and audio taped tutorial sessions/interviews.

Assessors must be satisfied that candidates have achieved all learning outcomes related to the unit being assessed, prior to deciding whether candidates have been successful. Assessors are additionally responsible for supporting candidates

through the assessment process.

Candidates must seek parental/carers' permission for photographs, case-study work or any other material which might identify the child or family. Names should not be used and confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

(2) External Assessment

Each candidate is required to undertake an externally-set multiple choice question paper. Centre staff under examination conditions administers the assessment. Questions are set and assessed by NCFE and focus on the knowledge and understanding of requirements contained within the qualification.

(3) Internal Moderation

Internal moderation is the process of ensuring that everyone who assesses a particular unit in a centre is using to the same standard. It is the responsibility of the Internal Moderators to ensure that assessors' decisions are sampled and monitored to ensure consistency and fairness. Internal moderators are also responsible for supporting assessors by offering advice and guidance.

(4) External Moderation

External moderation of internal assessments is carried out to ensure that decisions are in line with required standards. Moderators who are appointed, trained and monitored by NCFE carry out this process. External moderators are responsible for monitoring and sampling candidates' evidence to ensure that internal assessment decisions are valid, reliable, fair and consistent with national standards.

3.3.3 Structure and content of the qualification units

3.3.3.1 Unit 01: Develop professional skills and knowledge

This unit will help candidates' to develop an understanding of their role as a Teaching Assistant. They will gain understanding by discussing their role, comparing and evaluating their own skills and experiences to that of a Teaching Assistant. This will include looking at the importance of equal opportunities and legal requirements that exist in this area. This unit also aims to develop professional confidence, skills, knowledge and understanding of the importance of teamwork.

This unit has three elements:

Element 1.1 Explore the role of a Teaching Assistant

Element 1.2 Establish the importance of equal opportunities

Element 1.3 Develop professional skills relevant to the role of the Teaching Assistant

This unit is mandatory and accounts for thirty hours of the total recommended guided learning hours, including ten hours work placement.

3.3.3.2 Unit 02: Understanding legal and national requirements

Unit 02 aims to develop the candidate's understanding of the curriculum requirements of the country in which they work and relevant Codes of Practice. Candidates will understand the importance of health and safety at work and will be able to respond to emergency situations. They will also develop an awareness of child protection issues and understand how to implement required policies and procedures.

This unit has two elements:

Element 2.1 Recognise the importance of Health and Safety at work

Element 2.2 Respond to emergency situations

This unit is mandatory and accounts for thirty hours of the total recommended guided learning hours, including ten hours work placement.

3.3.3.3 Unit 03: Support the teacher in relation to pupils' learning

This unit will investigate methods of supporting learning and candidates' will be able to implement a learning activity themselves. Appropriate educational resources and understanding of their potential will be investigated. Candidates will be involved in preparing and maintaining learning materials involving the learners in the selection and maintenance of materials. The candidate will also gain an understanding of the range of educational equipment available.

This unit has three elements:

Element 3.1 Investigate methods of supporting the teacher in relation to planning pupils' learning

Element 3.2 Support the teacher in implementing learning activities

Element 3.3 Use educational equipment effectively

This unit is mandatory and accounts for thirty hours of the total recommended guided learning hours, including ten hours work placement. Optional units 04 and 05, were not included for the purpose of this research project.

3.3.3.4 Unit 06: Explore the management of pupils' behaviour

In this unit candidates' support pupils' emotional development by identifying factors that may affect development and demonstrating appropriate communication strategies to aid development. They learn to support the management of pupils'

behaviour by reacting to different kinds of behaviour in the most appropriate ways.

This unit has three elements:

Element 6.1 Support pupils' social and emotional development

Element 6.2 Support the management of pupils' behaviour

Element 6.3 Show awareness of child protection issues

This unit has been chosen by the centre as an optional unit and accounts for thirty hours of total recommended guided learning hours, including ten hours work placement.

3.3.3.5 Unit 07: Support pupils with special educational needs

This unit will raise candidates' confidence, understanding, knowledge and application of skill regarding the principles of inclusion and a range of learning difficulties that may result in special educational needs.

This unit consists of three elements:

Element 7.1 Explore the principles of inclusion and special educational needs

Element 7.2 Show awareness of learning difficulties

Element 7.3 Supporting learners with special educational needs

This unit was chosen by the centre as an optional unit and accounts for thirty hours of the total recommended guided learning hours, including ten hours of work placement.

This concludes a general structure and content of the qualification as described by the awarding body, NCFE.

The following is a detailed overview of the qualification training programme, focusing on the range of areas covered, on delivery of each session.

3.3.4 A detailed training programme

This comprehensive training programme for Teaching Assistants was delivered once a week over the period of 30 weeks. Each delivery session was conducted in three hours and are set out in the following table:

Table 3.1: A detailed training programme

WEEK 1 AND 2
UNIT 01: TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE
Element 1.1: Explore the role of a Teaching Assistant
<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES (LOs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the role of the teaching assistant • Discuss the relationship between your own role and the role of the teacher in the learning environment • Compare and evaluate your own skills and experiences with that of a teaching assistant to produce a 'skills audit' • Identify lines of reporting and consultation structures in the setting • List and describe the role of internal and external support agencies • Describe the role of others in establishing and maintaining a learning environment.
<p>RANGE (EXPLANATION OF HOW LOs WERE MET):</p> <p>▶ SETTING: The role of the TA, covering two age groups from the following list: 3 – 5 years; 5 – 7 years; 7 – 9 years; 9 – 11years.</p> <p>▶ RESPONSIBILITIES: As identified in job description, school expectations and requirements.</p> <p>▶ EXTERNAL SUPPORT AGENCIES: Educational Psychologists; Social Workers; Probationary service, Social Services advisory team; Educational Welfare Officer, Police.</p> <p>▶ RECORDS: Pupil progress and attainment, out of school activities and information, resourcing the classroom.</p> <p>▶ REQUIREMENTS: Under the Data Protection Act, Children Act or Children's Order (NI) and statementing process.</p> <p>▶ RANGE OF DUTIES: Including: Support for the child, teacher, school and curriculum; completing and maintaining pupil records; organising the learning environment; monitoring and maintaining classroom resources, promoting inclusion.</p>
<p>TRAINING MATERIALS: Handouts (lecturers initiative), Skills Audit, Assignment 01.</p>

WEEK 3 AND 4
Element 1.2 Establish the importance of equal opportunities
LEARNING OUTCOMES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify groups of individuals who may be denied equality of opportunity • Recognise personal attitudes to stereotypes • Describe appropriate strategies for and identify appropriate responses to issues relating to equality of opportunity in the setting • Discuss legal requirements to ensure equal opportunities.
RANGE/EXPLANATION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS: Gender, religion, culture, language, special needs, disability, socio-economic group, ethnic minorities. ▶ EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES: Inclusion, disability awareness, multiculturalism. ▶ STRATEGIES AND RESPONSES: Plans guided by legal requirements (Warnock Report, The Children Act 1989, SENDA 2001, New Code of Practice). Own practice guided by legal requirements. ▶ SETTING: Two from the following list: 3-5years, 5-7years, 7-9years, 9-11years.
TRAINING MATERIALS: Handouts, Case-studies.

WEEK 5 AND 6
Element 1.3 Develop personal skills relevant to the role of a Teaching Assistant
LEARNING OUTCOMES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify appropriate interpersonal skills for working with others • Draw up a personal action plan as a result of a skills audit • Identify study skills necessary to implement the action plan and prepare for further study • Follow an action plan and monitor own progress • Evaluate and review personal development plan • Identify different teams which contribute to the effective operation to the organisation • Contribute regularly and effectively to the team • Describe the school expectation for fostering good working relationships and promoting partnership and team work • Become familiar with school's grievance and complaint's procedure • Show an awareness of the difference between work and personal relationships • Describe how work relationships can be effectively maintained • Discuss the school's staff appraisal system and carry out a self review.

<p>RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:</p> <p>▶ SKILLS: Verbal communication, non-verbal communication, written communication, listening, observation, reflection, appropriate questioning, team building, awareness, ethics.</p> <p>▶ STUDY SKILLS: Analysing need, expectations and SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound), identification of targets/resources/relevant people, organisation of targets and resources, planning, prioritisation of tasks, seeking/accepting advice and feedback from mentors.</p> <p>▶ TEAMS: Size: 2, 3-5, 5+, teaching, supporting.</p> <p>▶ COMMUNICATION: Co-operate; seek guidance with others, colleagues, parents, students/pupils/learners; other professionals; support staff; cleaner; cook; work relationships</p> <p>▶ ROLES: Names, titles and area of responsibility of individual members.</p>
<p>TEACHING MATERIALS: Handouts, Guest Speaker consolidating the role of TAs in mainstream schools, Assignment 02, Assessor Observation Proforma, Case-studies.</p>

WEEK 7 AND 8
UNIT 02: TO UNDERSTAND LEGAL AND NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS
Element 2.1 Recognise the importance of Health and Safety at work
<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe legislation relating to Health and Safety at work, in the work place or other location • List areas of risk to personal Health and Safety • Identify good practice and procedures in different environments and situations • Become familiar with school Health and Safety policy documents, requirements and guidance • Identify own responsibilities in relation to Health and Safety and security.
<p>RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:</p> <p>▶ LOCATION: Classroom; playground; cafeteria/lunch hall; assembly hall.</p> <p>▶ ENVIRONMENT: Structured; unstructured; internal; external.</p> <p>▶ SITUATION: Accident; intruders, fire and bomb threat</p> <p>▶ REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDANCE: For health; safety, security and supervision.</p> <p>▶ RESPONSIBILITIES: As defined in the candidate's job description.</p>
<p>TEACHING MATERIALS: Handouts, Guest Speaker on Health and Safety at Work Act, Accident Report, Case-studies, Assignment 03.</p>

WEEK 9 AND 10**Element 2.2 Respond to emergency situations****LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Locate the safety equipment, and identify a qualified first aider
- Check contents of the first aid box and replenish, or notify the person responsible, in accordance with the Health and Safety requirements of the setting
- Identify and assess and respond appropriately to emergency situations in a variety of locations
- Carry out appropriate emergency actions in a calm and efficient manner
- Ensure acceptable standards of hygiene are maintained when dealing with accidents and emergencies and show awareness of risks to others
- Report accidents promptly in the format required by the setting
- Show awareness of the school policy for medicines in schools.

RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:▶ **SAFETY EQUIPMENT:**

First aid box; fire safety equipment, exits, fire doors.

▶ **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:**

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to identify, assess and respond to two real or simulated emergency situations from the following: bleeding, fractures, head injury, asthma attack, choking, epileptic fit, unknown persons on the premises.

Candidates are required to have the underlying knowledge to identify and assess the full range of emergency situations.

▶ **LOCATIONS:**

Indoors, outdoors.

▶ **APPROPRIATE:**

According to the situation, taking account of the individual's age, ethnic origin, religion, culture, own capabilities and role risks associated with the emergency.

▶ **RISKS:**

Contamination from blood and other body products; others in the vicinity.

▶ **INCIDENTS:**

Including significant medical conditions, administration of medicines and communicable diseases.

TEACHING MATERIALS:

Handouts, Guest speakers on dealing with emergency procedures, Certificates for attendance, Assessor Observation Proforma.

WEEK 11 AND 12
UNIT 03: SUPPORT THE TEACHER IN RELATION TO PUPIL'S LEARNING
Element 3.1 Investigate methods of supporting the teacher in relation to planning pupils' learning
<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify support you can offer and provide the teacher in planning, implementing and evaluating • Identify your own experience and expertise relevant to particular planned activities • Support the teacher in researching and planning learning activities • Describe factors which contribute to effective teaching and learning.
<p>RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:</p> <p>▶ SUPPORT: According to candidate's role, expertise and experience.</p> <p>▶ LEARNING ACTIVITIES: Small group/individual and linked to a specific curriculum area e.g. numeracy, literacy, single lesson, activities across several lessons, etc.</p> <p>▶ FACTORS: Learning Theories (Piaget, Bandura, Vygotsky) environmental, pedagogical, suitable resources contributing to effective learning.</p>
<p>TEACHING MATERIALS: Handouts, Group work.</p>

WEEK 13 AND 14
Element 3.2 Support the teacher in implementing learning activities
<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the teacher in implementing learning activities • Support the teacher in evaluating learning activities • Participate in record keeping and assessment • Describe and implement strategies to support pupils in adjusting to a new setting • Describe problems which might occur when supporting learning activities.
<p>RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:</p> <p>▶ ASSESSMENT: Formative, providing feedback.</p> <p>▶ PUPILS: According to setting: 3 – 4 years, 5 – 7 years, 7 – 9 years, 9 – 11 years.</p> <p>▶ PROBLEMS: Types of difficulties that might arise in interacting effectively with a pupil and how to deal with these.</p> <p>▶ FEEDBACK: Teacher, pupil, relevant agencies, to ensure good working relationships and contribute to the needs of individual pupils.</p> <p>▶ STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES: School policies, guidance and procedures.</p>
<p>TEACHING MATERIALS: Handouts, Case-studies, Assessor Observation Proforma, Assignment 04.</p>

WEEK 15 AND 16**Element 3.3 Use educational equipment effectively****LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Identify a range of educational equipment and resources available;
- Evaluate educational equipment and resources;
- Describe how educational equipment and resources can contribute to pupil's learning ;
- Use learning materials in ways which actively promote positive learning opportunities and experiences;
- Actively involve learners in the selection and maintenance of learning materials; and
- Promote positive images of people in displays of learner's work.

RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:▶ **EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES:**

Choose from: computer hardware, VCR, radio, whiteboard, audio cassette players, learning environment, others as appropriate.

▶ **EVALUATE:**

Health and safety, cost

▶ **PUPILS:**

According to setting, 3 – 5 years, 5 – 7 years, 7 – 9 years, 9 – 11 years.

▶ **LEARNING MATERIALS:**

Choose from: books, games, videos, worksheets, art and craft, musical instruments, computer programmes/software, displays.

▶ **DISPLAYS:**

Learners own work, work of others, cooperative efforts, ways to promote pupils' self esteem.

TEACHING MATERIALS:

Handouts, Assignment 05, Group work, Educational Resource Evaluation Proforma, Candidate Produced Educational Resource Evaluation Proforma.

WEEK 17 AND 18**UNIT 06: EXPLORE THE MANAGEMENT OF PUPIL'S BEHAVIOUR****Element 6.1 Support pupils' social and emotional development****LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Identify the main areas of pupil development
- Describe the main stages of social and emotional development
- Identify factors which may affect pupils' development and behaviour
- Demonstrate appropriate communication strategies to enable learners to express feelings
- Respond to incidents in a calm, reassuring manner in different situations
- Interact with pupils appropriate to pupil's individual communication skills.

RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:

▶ PUPIL:

According to the setting

▶ SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

0 – 16 years.

▶ EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

0 – 16 years.

▶ FACTORS:

Socialisation, culture, gender, special needs, age, case history, self esteem, stereotypical assumptions.

▶ COMMUNICATION:

Verbal, non-verbal

▶ INCIDENTS:

Accidents, disputes, physical violence, bullying, emergency situations

▶ SITUATIONS:

Structured, unstructured.

TEACHING MATERIALS:

Handouts, OHP films, Case-studies, Incident Report, Individual Behaviour Plan.

WEEK 19 AND 20**Element 6.2 Support the management of pupils' behaviour****LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Encourage acceptable behaviour by positive reinforcement
- Supervise pupils in a calm and confident manner
- Apply rules consistently
- Respond to unacceptable behaviour in a calm controlled manner
- Respond to incidents in a way appropriate to the behaviour and pupils needs at the time
- Document and record accurately the details of an incident according to the procedures of the setting and provide feedback
- Apply the school policy in the use of praise, assistance, reward and sanctions
- Discuss the Children Act and child protection issues in relation to behaviour management strategies
- Maintain own and others' safety when dealing with negative and/or inappropriate behaviour.

<p>RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:</p> <p>▶ BEHAVIOUR: Appropriate to the setting and the setting's policy, in relation to local and national policies and guidelines for behaviour management in schools.</p> <p>▶ PUPILS: According to setting: management of small groups or individual pupils' with a special educational statement (SEN).</p> <p>▶ INCIDENTS: Accidents, disputes, physical violence, bullying, racism, sexism, verbal abuse, others.</p> <p>▶ SETTING: Two of the following: 3 – 5 yrs, 5 – 7 yrs, 7 – 9yrs, 9 – 11 yrs.</p> <p>▶ EXTERNAL FACTORS: Social, peer pressure, domestic, health, SEN language/communication difficulties, culture, others.</p> <p>▶ FEEDBACK: To support behaviour targets.</p>
<p>TEACHING MATERIALS: Handouts, Case-Studies, Assessor Observation Proforma</p>

WEEK 21 AND 22

Element 6.3 Show awareness of child protection issues

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Identify the signs and symptoms of possible abuse
- Respond to signs of ill-health taking account of all factors
- Demonstrate the appropriate response to a pupil's disclosure of abuse or neglect;
- Discuss the requirements of accurate record keeping to support an abuse allegation;
- Follow the correct procedures for suspected abuse
- Observe a pupil's behaviour and condition, and select appropriate monitoring procedure
- show an awareness of the school policy and procedures relating to pupil's personal health and hygiene.

RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:

▶ **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:**

Physical, behavioural, emotional, grave concern for others.

▶ **ABUSE:**

Physical, sexual, neglect, emotional.

▶ **FACTORS:**

Medical conditions, religion, culture, medical history.

▶ **PUPIL:**

According to setting.

▶ **CORRECT:**

Relevant to setting, line of communication: class teacher, SENCO, head teacher, Child Protection Officer, Social Services.

▶ **AGENCIES:**

Voluntary agencies (e.g. NSPCC, Childline, Salvation Army)

TEACHING MATERIALS:

Handouts, Guest speaker on Child Protection Issues, Case Studies, Assessor Observation Proforma, Assignment 06.

WEEK 23 AND 24**UNIT 07: SUPPORT PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS****Element 7.1 Explore the principles of inclusion and special educational needs****LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Show an understanding of inclusion
- Discuss the factors necessary for successful inclusive education
- Explain the meaning of Special Educational Needs
- Discuss areas of educational need
- Show how differentiation can help to overcome learning difficulties
- Demonstrate an understanding of the Statementing process
- Identify the main elements of the relevant national Special Educational Need (SEN) Code of Practice
- Describe the main elements of school SEN policy.

RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:▶ **INCLUSION:**

General definition, guidance of the Department of Education, Action Programme for SEN 1998, differentiation, Individual Learning Plans.

▶ **FACTORS:**

Parent's wishes, effective support staff, attitudes, skills and knowledge of support staff, appropriate resources.

▶ **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED:**

Current national thinking such as the Education Acts 1981 and 1996.

▶ **AREAS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED:**

Communication and interaction, cognition and learning, behaviour, emotional and Social development, physical and sensory need.

▶ **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN):**

Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001

▶ **CODE OF PRACTICE:**

Main elements: chapter headings and summaries.

TEACHING MATERIALS:

Handouts.

WEEK 25 AND 26**Element 7.2 Show awareness of learning difficulties****LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Describe how to support learners for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL)
- Show an understanding of cognition and learning difficulties
- Describe how to support learners with behavioural, emotional and social development needs
- Describe how to support pupils with sensory needs
- Describe how to support pupils with a physical impairment.

RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:▶ **SUPPORT EAL:**

Language enrichment, modelling, scaffolding, extending, structuring, responding, celebrating diversity, promoting self esteem, observation/feedback, differentiation, resources, environment.

▶ **COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION DIFFICULTIES/COGNITION AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:**

Specific learning difficulties, dyslexia, dyspraxia, autistic spectrum disorders, speech/language delay, difficulties resulting from sensory/physical impairment.

▶ **SUPPORT (BEHAVIOURAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS):**

Behaviour management strategies, circle time, rewards/ sanctions, target setting, observation/feedback.

▶ **BEHAVIOURAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

Withdrawn, isolated, school phobic, disruptive, disturbing, hyperactive, socially immature, personality disorders.

▶ **SUPPORT (SENSORY/PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT):**

Nature of difficulty, level of need, access, equipment, mobility, communication, learning aids, planning, feedback.

TEACHING MATERIALS:

Handouts, Assignment 07, Case-studies, Assessor Observation Proforma.

WEEK 27 AND 28
Element 7.3 Supporting learners with special educational needs
<p>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out case studies for learners with special educational needs • Produce a staff list describing responsibilities relating to learners with special educational needs • Use resources available for special educational needs, and describe their purpose • Show how positive attitudes can assist learners with special educational needs • Describe the importance of confidentiality in support of learners with special educational needs • Contribute to an individual education plan, including observation and feedback.
<p>RANGE/EXPLANATIONS:</p> <p>▶ CASE STUDIES: Two, including definition of need, background/cause of need, current education situation, teaching assistants support/intervention for the learner and for the teacher, implications for child if needs are not met.</p> <p>▶ STAFF LIST: Teaching, non teaching, governors, outside agencies.</p> <p>▶ RESOURCES: Designed specifically for a purpose.</p>
<p>TEACHING MATERIALS: Handouts.</p>

(Individual tutorial sessions were held in weeks 29 and 30.)

3.4 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to outline the qualification content and structure and to provide a detailed overview of the training programme, explaining the learning outcomes, range and teaching materials used weekly.

The following chapter will focus on this study's research design and the methodology followed.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study as discussed in Chapter One (1.3) was primarily to evaluate the effect of the programme on the professional development of teaching assistants working in inclusive schools. Secondly, it endeavoured to confirm the importance of this particular NCFE Level 2 Certificate for teaching assistants training programme. The course coordinator of this programme at a Further Education College in England, partially developed and structured the course work, while delivering and presenting the programme. NCFE was the awarding body for external examination and certification purposes. Students/participants who attended this programme had existing work placements as teaching assistants. They felt the need to further their professional development and wanted to build their confidence and knowledge in order to increase their ability to give support. This study was framed within an eco-systemic theoretical framework. Teaching assistants, teachers and pupils formed part of the local school community and support agencies such as the LEAs (local education authorities), and parents/carers represented the wider social community.

4.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Mouton (2001) research “always” involves some form of information gathering and analysis. Data from documents, interviews, speeches, diaries, questionnaire responses, test scores in whatever form, are first gathered. Only then can such data be analysed for interpretation. The aim of any research is to conduct the study in such a way that the validity of the results is optimised. *The principles of*

reasoning of the research thesis, is the logic of validation. It is the act of advancing and clarifying arguments, reasons and evidence for reaching certain conclusions (Mouton, 2001:53, 113). The aim of all social research projects is to improve real-life problems and human conditions. As such, social research is the systemic observation of social life for the purpose of finding and understanding patterns in what is observed, and in the interaction of people who create the structures for those interactions.

Mouton (2001:49) states that the research design addresses the key question of what type of study will be undertaken in order to provide acceptable answers to the research problem (2001:49). Patton (2001:23) provides more specific information:

Programme evaluation is the systemic collection of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of the programs to make judgements about the program, improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming. Utilization focused program evaluation (as opposed to program evaluation in general) is evaluation done for and with specific intended primary users for, intended uses.

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is the programme under investigation. The researcher wanted to determine whether programme participation had increased participants' professional development with specific reference to their levels of confidence, knowledge of their role and subject matter and whether this was reflected in their practical application of skill, when working in inclusive classrooms. Additionally, although the main emphasis is not on a comparison with other existing training programmes in the field, strengths and weaknesses of this particular programme were explored. In order to do so, qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were integrated in the methodology of this study. Quantitative data collection focused on summative involving information gathered by means of tests and testing. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1993:7), tests are powerful methods of data collection, researchers have at their disposal. There is an impressive array of tests to gather data of numerical value. In this study, an *end test* in the form of an external examination were given to students/participants to complete, in order to quantify the

amount of course work they had internalised. Another quantitative form of data collection was the self-assessment questionnaires given to participants. Qualitative data collection involved formative evaluation in order to support a decision or judgement on the programme's worth, and the merit of continuing such a programme. For the purpose of this study, formative data collection methods included a literature review, teacher observations and data derived from individual tutorials in the form of interviews.

4.2.1 Analysis related to the conceptualisation and design of the intervention

Social interventions particularly during conceptualisation can be seen as responses to perceived communal problems. Designing a social programme can be a purposeful action to remedy such problems. Analysis is, however, an important means of determining the learning needs of participants. Key questions guided this analysis:

- Is the programme designed to meet its intended objectives or aims?
- Is there a coherent underlying rationale?
- Are stakeholders and participants involved in questions and issues?
- What is the relationship between costs and benefit? (Rossi and Freeman, 1993:20; Patton, 2001:299).

4.2.2 Monitoring the programme implementation

There are various reasons for monitoring programmes. Accurate, detailed conduct of activities (schemes of work) by the programme manager/researcher (see Appendix A), contributed to the efficiency of implementation of this study. Effective monitoring provided evidence to participants (which were the stakeholders) who paid for the service and expected a required outcome. Reflective monitoring further ensured the identification of the overall research purpose of the project. For the

purpose of managing this study project, the researcher was responsible for delivering and presentation of programme content. She kept a weekly teaching file (journal), reflecting week by week schemes of work and session plans. These specified the following:

- Name of module and unit title
- Name of person who delivered/presented
- Date of delivery
- Time and location of delivery
- Session objectives/aims
- Special notes relating to session
- Detailed description on session assignment
- Detailed description of participant participation/activity
- Resources/materials required or used
- Assessment of session in relation to objectives

4.2.3 Assessment of the impact and efficiency of the programme

The impact of the programme (degree to which a programme produces the desired outcomes), as well as its efficiency (benefits in relation to its costs) are both qualities that referred to as the programmes *utility* (Rossi and Freeman, 1993:21). In order to make a judgement on the above, both intended and unintended outcomes will be assessed. Such measures will establish whether the required outcomes (i.e. enhanced levels of confidence, knowledge and the ability to apply skill in their roles as teaching assistants in inclusive educational settings) are met.

Before commencing on the programme students/participants on the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants were given a self assessment to complete in order to determine their existing levels of confidence, knowledge of their role and field of work and their current practice and ability to apply their skill. The same questionnaire was repeated on completion of course work for an assessment of professional growth and development in levels of confidence and knowledge, as

well as application of skill. In addition to these assessment measures, participants were subjected to teacher observations, individual tutorial interviews, and written assignments which provided room for adaptation and change in delivery and presentation. In short, the above-mentioned logic sequence of evaluation design, has yet to prove whether effective implementation has resulted in the desired and valued outcomes.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology focuses on the research process, appropriate tools and procedures to be used. Methodology refers to an analysis of how the research should proceed to produce knowledge on providing a rationale on which the researcher can and should embark. The methodological focus in this study focuses on individual steps in the research process and the most objective procedures to “connect” the argument/debate with the practice (Mouton, 2001:56). Its ethical concern is for *value* to be *added* to those individuals who work as teaching assistants in their specific role in schools. Raising awareness of required behaviour and the potential to change the code of practice in order to provide excellent support for the school, class teacher and pupil is paramount. In order to fulfill this aim, the researcher decided on specific tasks (forms of data collection), as part of this research process, to ensure that this research would make a difference in the way participants felt about themselves in their specific roles, the knowledge that they had and how they applied their skills. It was hoped that the *value added* would go beyond this and have a knock-on effect on all people working with these individuals as part of the holistic context in which this study is conducted.

4.3.1 Participants and context

The standard and quality of a piece of research is not only determined by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation, but also the suitability of the

sampling strategy. The sampling strategy will be determined by judging three key factors:

- The sample size
- Representativeness and parameters of the sample
- Access to the sample. (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:92)

The sample population of this study was selected on purpose in order to yield the much information as possible about the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 2000) consisted of twenty four individuals enrolled to do a certificate for teaching assistants at a college for further education in Cambridgeshire, England. The criterion for the selection of the sample population was that these particular students had enrolled to do this specific course. They were already working as teaching assistants in existing roles in inclusive schools. The researcher acted as the coordinator for this programme, partially developing and structuring it whilst delivering the content.

After two sessions, two students withdrew for medical reasons. A few weeks later, another student withdrew. She had been appointed to a full-time position and found it difficult to juggle full-time work, part-time studies and homelife. Half way through the programme another student withdrew because of a lack of interest in the work. She felt that she had been pressured by her manager to enroll. Attendance was generally very good, with occasional absence because of the illness of a child or family obligations. A pregnant student/participant, who successfully completed all course work, went into labour on the afternoon of the programme's external examination. Although this was reflected as *did not attend* on the exam results, full accreditation was given to her on the basis of a portfolio of evidence by the external verifier when external modification was done. This provides a full explanation of the end total sample size of 19 used in this study.

4.3.2 Methods of data collection

The primary focus in making decisions on methods of evaluation should be on getting the best possible data to provide adequate answers to researcher's evaluation questions. Given available resources and time, the emphasis in evaluation research is on *appropriateness* and *credibility* (Patton, 1997:247). In consideration of this study, as discussed earlier, a **combination of qualitative and quantitative** methods was used to address key evaluation issues in an appropriate and credible manner.

According to Mouton (2001:161) and Patton (1997:252) qualitative research methods are predominantly used to describe and evaluate the performance of programmes. Qualitative data collection techniques like participant observation and open ended interviewing made high demands on the skill, competence and ability to conduct rigorous research. In this case the researcher used a literature review, teacher observations and data extracted from individual tutorial interviews. As part of their course work, participants were also required to write a reflective daily diary on how they supported a pupil or targeted group of pupils (see Assignment 01, Appendix E).

Paton (1997:273) argues that *quantitative measures strive for precision by focusing on things that can be counted and, when gathering data from human beings, conceptualizing predetermined categories that can be treated as ordinal or interval data and subjected to statistical analysis*. This study measured the experience of people on a programme by means of a self-assessment questionnaires administered before and after the programme. Numerical values were attached to describe programme outcomes. Participants evaluated and rated themselves before and after programme participation in order to measure whether desirable outcomes had been achieved. In addition to this, participants had to write an external examination (end test), set and marked by the awarding body. In order to pass, participants had to achieve an average of at least 80%. Data were also obtained from seven written assignments.

To summarise, in order to optimise the impact of this evaluation research, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used at the discretion of the researcher.

4.3.3 The literature review

With reference to Chapter 1 (1.5.2.1), the literature review in this study provided an overall framework based on theory and knowledge about previous research done on this particular issue of including learners/pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools and whether there is adequate provision for such pupils learning needs.

Educational provision in the majority of cases refers to untrained individuals working as teaching assistants in inclusive classrooms. Although previous research explains the need to have support in classrooms working alongside mainstream teachers, it fails to emphasise the need for *trained or qualified* assistants as part of a new code of practice in British schools. This study aims to introduce a new focus, for no formal research has been done on vocational training programmes for teaching assistants. The lack of information on this particular issue is obvious from the literature review of this study.

The importance of a literature review has already been established. In the case of this study, the literature review provided the theoretical framework, clarification of existing issues and, beyond that, offered a fair measure of predictability on how programme participation might have desirable outcomes for participants. In addition to this, the researcher was assured that this research project was not a duplication or unnecessary repetition of already existing research. In fact, the process of undertaking a literature review provided the researcher with guidance on how to pursue the research task, having known what other researchers had done and how they had solved particular research problems (Mouton, 2001:87; Patton, 1997:69; Mills, 2000:30).

4.3.4 Pre and post self assessment questionnaires

According to Mills questionnaires allow the teacher researcher to collect a large amount and great variety of data within a relatively short time frame. He goes on to state that social science measures, for instance questionnaires generally focus on clarifying a specific set of aims (2001:58,102). With respect to this study, such aims were investigating existing teaching assistants' views about their professional confidence, subject knowledge and their ability to apply their skill in their work practice. According to Cohen *et al.* (2003:246, 248), the best way to measure the above-mentioned *views* is to make use of rating scales. Reasons for this are that it is quick, easy and straightforward to complete. However, an important phase, when planning the pre and post self assessment questionnaires (see Appendix B), was to decide which areas of the programme under investigation, would serve as the criteria or outcomes for measurement to establish whether participants had developed professionally. Three main headings were identified i.e. levels of confidence, knowledge on and practical application of skill. Subsidiary headings relating to the central purpose and involving the formulation of specific information for two of the main headings, (levels of confidence and knowledge), were formulated. Lastly, two questions explored participant's levels of confidence in relation to their knowledge of their specific role and practical skill in playing that specific role. To summarise, in order to measure participant's professional development and growth, three main subject headings with fourteen subsidiary headings or items, completed the total questions for exploration.

When participating in doing the questionnaires, participants/respondents were asked to identify themselves by writing their names on the paper. Questionnaires were completed on the first and last night of programme participation. Rating scales were being coded from one to five:

- 1 Need improvement
- 2 Satisfactory
- 3 Good
- 4 Very good
- 5 Excellent

Participants/respondents had to draw a circle around the most applicable rating. The rating scale in this study was designed to provide the opportunity for flexible responses, and at the same time, to determine frequencies or correlations (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:253).

To summarise, the researcher used pre- and post self-assessment questionnaires as an integral and significant method of data collection in the gathering of quantitative data in this systemic research process. In line with Patton's words, the aim of the researcher was *to find those vital few facts among the trivial many* (1997:190).

4.3.5 Observations

It has become established practice for the researcher to use a triangular (see 5.6), multi-method approach to increase the validity and the reliability of all the evaluation data. Different data sources provided a *cross-check* for evaluation findings. Patton (1993:243-245) explained the importance of having the evaluator or researcher on-site when composing observations as a method of data collection. While the observer learns to *behave* as observer, those being observed learn how to behave towards the observer. "Mutual trust, respect and cooperation" refers to the "reciprocity model of gaining entry" in the observation process. This means that as the observer gains data, the people being observed feel it important to give useful feedback and experience pleasure from the interaction with the observer. Although continuous observations from participant peers, the researcher, as well as the class teacher, were done throughout this study project, only observations from the class teachers were analysed for interpretation.

In accordance with Patton (1993:244,245), observations were used in this study to minimise the limitations of other qualitative data collection methods. An assessor observation proforma (see Appendix C) as well as a cover letter (see Appendix D) were sent to the class teachers supervising the teaching assistants in training. Cooperation of each of these teachers in assisting the professional development of

the teaching assistant in his/her supervision was required. The class teacher took on the role of the assessor/evaluator in the observation process. The assessor observation proforma provided a set format on which assessors logged their observation notes. Key information on the proforma stipulates the following: name of the candidate/participant, date of observation aims/outcomes, tasks to be performed by the participants in training, observation comments of assessors and printed name and signatures of assessors. All class teachers positively agreed to assess observations, and contributed to the systemic approach which benefited this research process.

4.3.6 Assignments

In addition to other quantitative data collection methods, programme participants had to submit seven written assignments (see Appendix E) over the duration of the course. Assignments were individually marked and graded according to the requirements of the programme and the policy of the college. Having to do these assignments provided opportunities to *reflect* on what participants have learned. Assignments are considered to be a college requirement regarding the monitoring of student progress and as such form an integral part of the overall internal verification policy of the college. According to Mouton (2001:99, 105) this is in line with the importance of collecting data from written texts and doing textual analysis. The purpose of the assignments was to monitor what course matter participants had internalised as well as to create opportunities for researcher-participant-dialogue. The researcher, who also delivered the course material, provided written feedback (see Appendix F) on student progress in relation to the assignment. Cohen *et al.* (2000:30), argues that reflective practice should happen in four stages i.e. a description and interpretation of the existing situation, reasons that brought these existing situation to the form that it takes, an agenda for altering the situation and finally, an evaluation of the achievement. Reflective feedback in this study included the above-mentioned stages, and took on the form of written feedback sheets attached to assignments once they had been marked and were ready to be returned to participants.

Apart from guiding the participants to greater understanding and insight regarding course work, suggestions for change and assignment grades (see Appendix G) provided significant quantitative data and information on whether the desired programme outcomes had been met. In this study, seven assignments were given as hand-outs to participants, evenly spread over the duration of the course. Participants generally were given two weeks to complete their work. The aim of each assignment was to serve a specific purpose e.g. to consolidate new knowledge after completion of a unit. However, the most important purpose of the assignments was to establish whether participants had successfully linked the underlying theory with practice in their roles as teaching assistants.

4.3.7 Interviews

An interview is the interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:30). In this study tutorial sessions (see Appendix H) were held in the form of an interview. It is college policy to offer all students/participants an opportunity to talk to lecturers individually, in this case to the researcher. The purpose of such interviews is to discuss participant's progress and to set new targets and is not just about collecting data about life, *it is a part of life itself* (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:267). In interviews with the lecturer/researcher participants had the opportunity to give their own detailed interpretation of programme participation and whether they were meeting their training needs.

For the purpose of this interview, the researcher carefully constructed and worded two questions. These two questions were asked in the same way during each individual interview and the same procedure was followed throughout. For the purpose of this study interviews were held over the last three sessions of the programme. In order to support the research process and enable accurate analysis and interpretation of data, interviews were audio-taped.

4.3.8 External examination (End test)

Cohen *et al.* (2003:318) described criterion-referenced tests as tests which emphasise the achievement of learning objectives or learning outcomes. The externally set (see Appendix I) and marked examination, which fits Cohen's description, was used as a method of data collection in this study. On programme completion, participants were given a thirty-five minute multiple choice examination paper. Twenty-one questions were asked and participants had to respond by ticking the right answer. These end *tests* were conducted under strict examination conditions. The researcher was not allowed to see the paper before, during or after examination, neither was she allowed inside the examination room. College officials conducted this external examination. The results of this examination (see Appendix J) were particularly useful as they provided a measure of the exact amount of knowledge that a participant had internalised in comparison with the group. Along with all other quantitative methods of data collection, results from this end test would be an objective measure indicating whether participants had *failed to* or had *achieved* on this programme.

4.3.9 Field notes

Field notes in this study enabled the researcher to get a clearer sense of what was most pressing (Mills, 2000:52, Cohen *et al.*, 2003:77). This guided the researcher towards flexibility and continuous change in her delivery strategies. Field notes, recording formal and informal conversations on training evenings as well as telephone conversations, also contributed to the development of rapport between the researcher and the participants. This formed and built mutual trust and respect. It was vital that participants in this study develop confidence in the researcher and her ability to share experience and knowledge. The nature of this training programme was learning about *giving support to vulnerable individuals*. Role-modelling on issues like being discreet, attentive, having empathy and sensitivity, were essential key elements of the researcher's task in delivering and presenting

this programme (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:145).

4.4 PROCEDURE

During the preliminary stages of the research, initial data from a previous training programme for Special Needs Assistants were analysed in order to address the training needs of programme participants for this specific study. The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants was delivered over thirty sessions of three hours each, covering a ten month period during 2002 and 2003. Data were collected using various methods as described above. In order to evaluate the programme comprehensively this information was interpreted, analysed, coded and added to obtain mathematical values. These are displayed graphically and discussed and interpreted in Chapter 5.

The availability of similar vocational programmes in England was also investigated (see Chapter 3).

4.5 DATA-ANALYSIS

According to Mouton, data analysis involves “breaking up” the data into manageable themes and patterns. *The aim of analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one’s data through an inspection of the relationship between concepts, constructs or variables* (2001:108,109).

Quantitative data were collected by means of pre- and post self-assessment questionnaires, given to participants for completion during the first and last sessions of the programme, as well as assignments and the external examination (end test). Regarding the questionnaires, mathematical values were given to rating-scales in order to interpret results numerically. (See Figure 5.1 for the graphical presentation of data from pre and post self assessment questionnaires). For an analysis and

graphical presentation of participants assignments grades see Figure 5.2. Results from the external examination are presented in Appendix I.

Qualitative data collection methods included the following and were analysed with the help of content analysis:

- Teacher observations were used to analyse participant's application of skill while working in inclusive classroom (see Appendix C).
- Individual tutorial sessions were used to conduct interviews during the last three sessions of programme participation. Sessions were audio-taped for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. See Appendix H for time-table of interviews.

Content analysis is a research method which examines words or phrases within a wide range of texts, for example interviews and observations. Examination of certain words or phrases with regard to their presence and repetition in texts, enables researchers to make inferences about philosophical assumptions of the writer, the written piece, the audience for which the piece is written and even the culture and time in which the text was written. Inferences can be drawn by means objective and systematic identification of specific characteristics of a message. This general level of content analysis makes it possible to locate particular themes is known as conceptual analysis. In this study, the following steps were used in the process of conceptual analysis: deciding on the level of analysis; how many concepts to code for; deciding to code for the existence of frequency of a concept; distinguishing between concepts; developing rules for the coding of texts; deciding what to do with irrelevant information; coding texts and analysing results (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

4.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The reason for conducting a research study is to have enough reliable data collection methods in order to draw valid conclusions. Patton refers to it as face

validity or the extent to which an instrument looks as if it measures what it is intended to measure (1997:253). According to Mouton it is important when using an existing instrument that information about the validity and reliability of those instruments be available (2001:102). In qualitative data collection such validity relies to a significant extent on the skill and competence of the researcher which is the instrument when conducting observations and interviews. Validity problems along with the trustworthiness of the evaluator can affect the overall credibility of the evaluation (Patton, 1997:252,253) Trust, believability and credibility were the criteria for the holistic manner in which this study was evaluated.

Qualitative and quantitative methods can address both internal and external validity. **Internal validity** in its narrowest form refers to certainty about cause and effect. Did the programme cause the observed outcomes? In a broader sense it refers to the trustworthiness of the inference drawn (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:107). According to Patton, ... *internal validity is increased by exercising rigorous control over a limited set of carefully designed variables* (1997:258).

In this study, internal validity was addressed in the following way;

- **Researcher's position.** The researcher's educational philosophy and theoretical orientation, were clarified before the programme commenced. This provided confidence and authenticity in the data which added to the overall credibility of the evaluation (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:108).
- **Persistent observation.** Observation is a normal component of a teacher's monitoring and adjusting instruction, based on the verbal and nonverbal interaction in classrooms. Therefore, to establish relevant characteristics for this study's focus, different types of persistent observations were continuously used i.e. peers, lecturer/researcher as well as class teacher observations (Mills, 2000:50; Cohen *et al.*, 2003:108).
- **Triangulation.** According to Mills, triangulation strengthens the research process, for it allows the collecting of data in a number of ways rather than relying on one sole source. The researcher will then have the opportunity to accurately analyse and interpret a variety of sources, knowing that she has a holistic impression of study events throughout the research project (2000:49,

50)

- **Member checking.** Intentional opportunities for checking participant/respondent validation (Cohen *et al.*, 2003:108), were used during the course of this particular study by means of written assignments. Participants were asked to put factual knowledge in writing in order to see how much of the course work they had internalised and how they had increased their own knowledge. Feedback sheets provided summaries of factual checking. In some cases students needed to add more information in order for the assignment to be given a pass mark. Data and information from this process have been recorded.

External validity refers to the degree to which results can be generalized to the wider population, in other words this refers to the researcher's ability to take all the complexities of the study into account and still present results with *trustworthiness* in order for such results to be *transferable* to larger/wider groups of people (Mills, 2000:72-74; Cohen *et al.*, 2003:109).

In addition to this Patton argues that findings must be interpreted in light of stakeholders' and evaluators' experiences and knowledge, using all available insights and understanding about quite different situations. This focuses interpretation away from trying to determine truth in some absolute sense (a goal of basic research) to a concern with conclusions that are *reasonable*, *justifiable*, *plausible* and *useful* (1997:259).

To summarise, validity refers to the researcher's knowledge and how accurate he/she collected data for the purpose of measurement. Did the researcher actually measure or record what she set out to evaluate? Were consistent attempts made to measure data over time? Questions like these led the researcher of this study to use the following strategies in order to enhance reliability and validity:

- The researcher explained **theories** underlying the study in Chapter 1 and 2
- Researcher's position within the context of the group being studied, the basis on which participants were purposefully selected to participate in this training programme, and knowledge of existing programmes in the field as described

in Chapter 3 and 5

- Triangulation was employed to increase the validity of this study using multiple sources of data and multiple methods of data collection, as well as persistent observation and member checking as described in Chapter 5

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher should be guided by ethical considerations that are very close to the own personal ethical position of the participants (Mills, 2000:86). It is paramount that the researcher respects human dignity and in doing so protect the rights of research study participants.

The researcher gained informed consent or permission to conduct this study from the following people:

- The principal of the FE College in England where the research took place (see Appendix K)
- NCFE, the awarding body of the Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants (see Appendix L)
- Individual permission from participants (see Appendix M).

For the purpose of confidentiality in order to conceal participant's identities, all names have been erased from data.

In this study, the lecturer and presenter of this training programme was also the researcher and evaluator. It was important for her to remain aware of the participants' fears of participation. She needed to remain vigilant in her efforts to provide the necessary support and to find a balance in not becoming over familiar with participants whilst genuinely encouraging them in their efforts.

Finally, the researcher/evaluator in this study was partially responsible for the development and facilitation of this programme over the thirty week period.

4.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter described, the research design and the methodology employed. It also outlined the methods of data collection and analysis. Chapter 5 will present, interpret and discuss the research..h findings.

CHAPTER 5**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION****5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter 4 the research design, methodology and data analysis were discussed. The purpose of this chapter is to present, discuss and interpret the findings of the research in the light of the theoretical framework and literature review of this study.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS**5.2.1 Participants**

As discussed in Chapter 4 (4.3.1), twenty-four participants enrolled to do a certificate for teaching assistants. Over the duration of the course five participants withdrew (4.3.1) which resulted in nineteen participants completing the programme.

Table 5.1 contains information regarding the above-mentioned nineteen participants who was taken into account for the purpose of this study.

Table 5.1: Participant information

Participant	Age	Gender	Level of Qualification	Present professional situation
1	36 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
2	26 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
3	34 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
4	33 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
5	32 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
6	35 yrs	Male	GCSEs	Working as a TA
7	34 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
8	33 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
9	52 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
10	54 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
11	48 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
12	50 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
13	46 yrs	Female	Swedish equivalent of GCSEs	Working as a TA
14	29 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
15	41 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
16	47 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
17	46 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA
18	36 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as TA
19	29 yrs	Female	GCSEs	Working as a TA

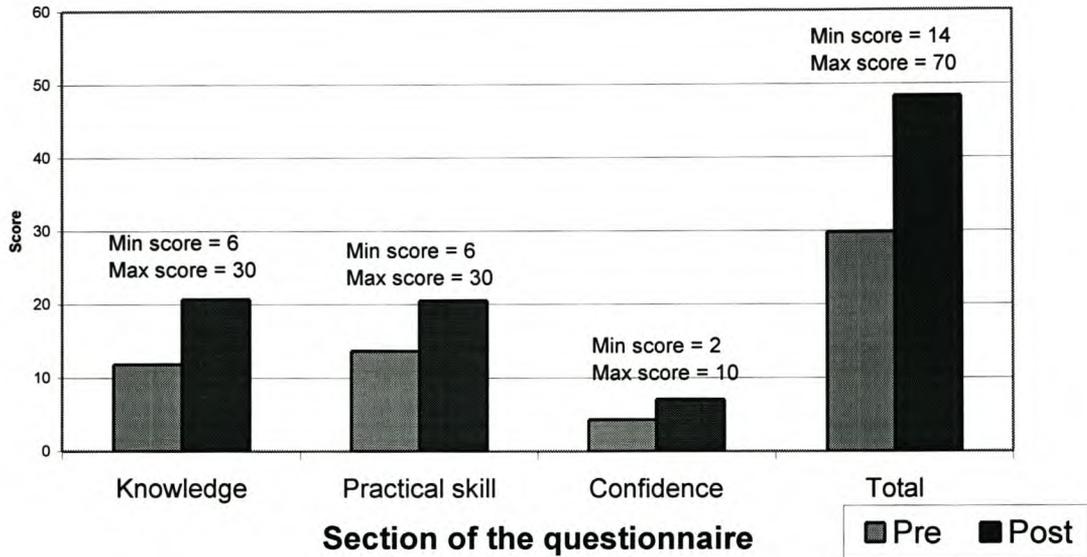
5.2.2 Quantitative data

5.2.2.1 Pre and post self assessment questionnaires

Results from the pre and post self assessment questionnaires will be reported in this section. A dependent sample t-test was used to compare the pre and post course scores for each section of the self-evaluation questionnaire. A probability value of ≤ 0.05 was considered to have reached a level of statistical significance. Because of the exploratory nature of the present work, all results given are two-tailed. The questionnaire had three sections, evaluation of: own knowledge; practical skills; and, confidence. Also, the total scores of the questionnaires were compared.

Figure 5.1: Mean Score on the Self Evaluation Questionnaire

A Bar Chart Showing the Mean Scores on the Self Evaluation Questionnaire



The graph above demonstrates that one cannot compare scores between the sections since the minimum and maximum scores for each section are different. The post scores for each section are greater than the pre scores for each section, demonstrating that the subjects rated that they had improved in each section as a result of the course.

Table 5.2: The self-evaluation scores pre and post the course (N=19)

	Pre- scores M (SD)	Post-scores M (SD)	t	p
Knowledge	11.84 (4.717)	20.68 (3.859)	-9.496	0.0001
Practical	13.63 (3.562)	20.47 (3.116)	-6.918	0.0001
Confidence	4.32 (2.056)	7.11 (1.100)	-5.726	0.0001
Total	29.79 (9.247)	48.32 (7.071)	-8.791	0.0001

The table above shows that there is a significant difference ($p = 0.0001$) between the pre and post scores on all the sections and the total score of the self-evaluation

questionnaire. This demonstrates that overall, subjects rated that they had improved significantly on their own knowledge, practical skills and confidence, following the course compared to their ratings of themselves before the course started (Argyrous, 2000:110-127).

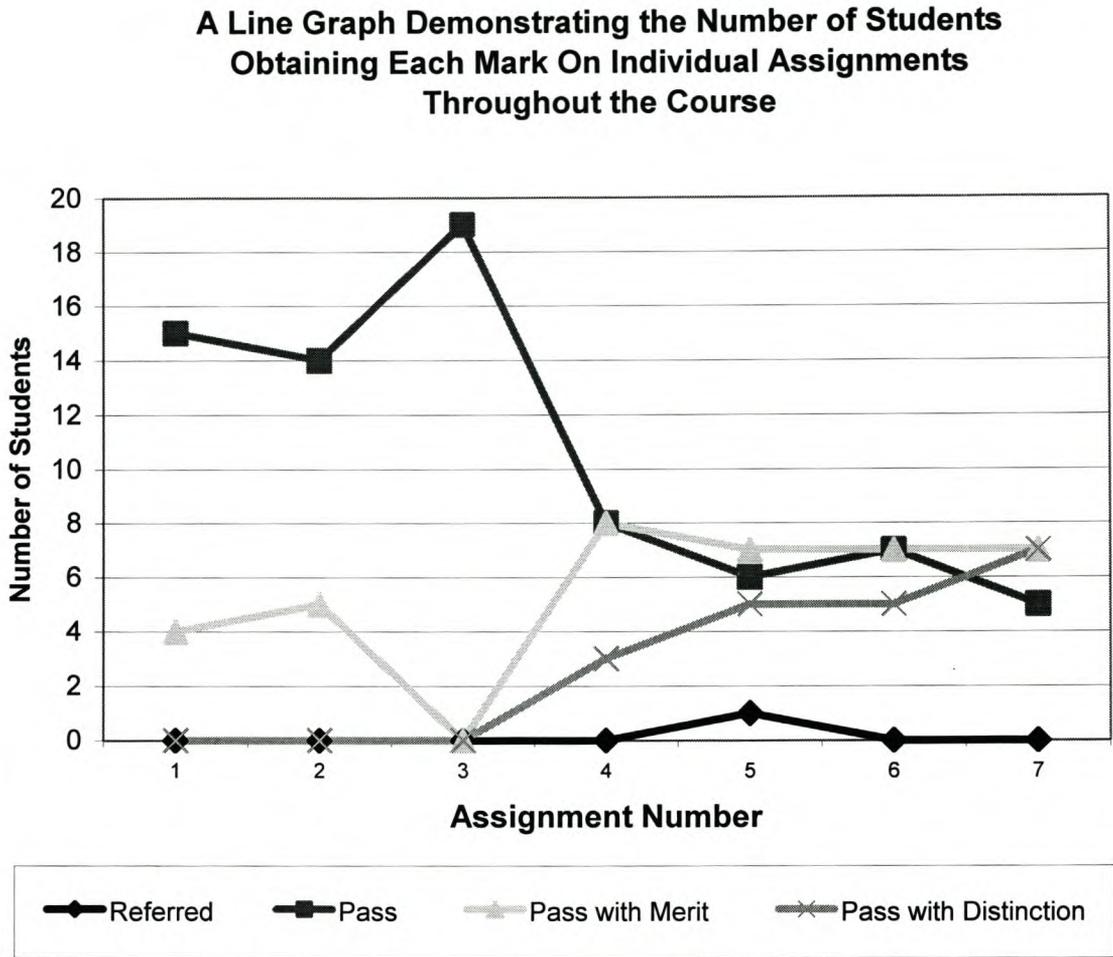
5.2.2.2 External examination (End test)

Nineteen programme participants were enrolled for the external examination that took place on 16 June 2003. As discussed in Chapter 4, the purpose of this examination was to measure how much knowledge participants had internalised, resulting in either achievement or failure. One of the nineteen participants was admitted to hospital on the afternoon of the examination. The remaining group of programme participants (N=18) passed the external examination. The examination was externally set and mark by NCFE, therefore no marks were given to the researcher. However, for students to achieve success in this exam they had to score an average of 80% or more. It can be concluded that all 18 participant who took the examination, scored 80% or above.

5.2.2.3 Assignments

In the following line graph the results obtained from written assignments submitted over the duration of the course are shown.

Figure 5.2: Marks on individual assignments throughout the course



As shown in this graph programme participants had internalised course matter. As the course progressed, the number of participants obtaining merits and distinctions increased to twelve by the seventh assignment, compared to four merits and no distinctions on the first assignment. Only on one occasion (assignment 5), a participant's assignment was referred.

5.2.3 Qualitative data

As discussed in Chapter 4, qualitative methods were used to evaluate this programme. Data subtracted from teacher observations and individual tutorial

interviews will be reported in this section. Field notes which guided continuous programme delivery strategies will also be reported on. From a holistic perspective the literature review as discussed in 4.3.3, provides guidelines for this discussion.

5.2.3.1 Observations

Teacher comments were analysed with the help of content analysis and the following themes were identified. **New knowledge** about their role:

- “she prepares the materials for the lessons”
- “she was able to support children who had difficulty with cutting without impairing their independence”
- “evaluation of the task was carefully written with the children’s successes, understanding and difficulties noted”
- “she went away on her own initiative and planned the display”
- “she worked closely with Mrs. T”
- “she is very well planned and talks through the lesson with me if she does not understand my planning”
- “she keeps a daily diary”
- “one child within the group needed more support and S noticed this”
- “disruptive behaviour was handled well and positive behaviour and responses praised”
- “session was introduced and rules shared”
- “good balance of both open and closed questions”
- “C works extremely hard on ensuring that the groups she works with achieve the learning objective of the classroom teacher”
- “she has devised a system of signs, signals and symbols to assist an autistic child within the class”
- “she has a feel for the capabilities of the children she works with”
- “she praised each child’s work at the end of the session”.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that teacher observations regarding

participant's new knowledge were overwhelmingly positive. These responses reflect a sense of the participant's improved knowledge following programme completion, e.g. supporting the classroom teacher in relation to pupil's own learning and managing difficult behaviour; knowledge of pupils with special educational needs.

Teachers' comments on participants' **application of skill**, performing a specific learning task were as follows:

- "she demonstrated the technique of making a coiled pot"
- "doing a star chart with a boy with challenging behaviour, A did not just take the star/token away, but talked through what and how the child can get out of the difficulty and regain star status"
- "she has devised the spellings for the low ability group using PAT"
- "she encouraged the children to use number lines and fingers"
- "she encouraged the child to use skills and clues i.e. initial sounds/pictures and to point to words"
- "he makes jottings in their exercise books to reinforce their understanding"
- "children were given support by step-by-step demonstration"
- "she organised her group very well"
- "instructions were clear and appropriate for level of the group"
- "she was able to modify the questions to enable all pupils to meet the learning objective"
- "she kept the group focused and on task"
- "she made sure the group was attentive before explaining the activity"
- "able to adapt the work according to need"
- "B is prone to call out because she is autistic. Mrs. R supported B with positive praise to concentrate on her task, also using appropriate hand and eye signals. B therefore did not call out"
- "she encourages and enthuses her boy who has challenging behaviour, by using a variety of techniques e.g. modelling, brainstorming and empowering the child to have confidence in himself and to trust his own instincts".

In light of the above positive comments, it can be concluded that participants

showed a marked improvement regarding application of skills, following programme completion. However, one teacher commented negatively regarding a participant's **application of skill** in a one to one reading session with a child with low ability. The teacher's comment was as follows, "the cover and title could have been discussed in more detail before reading began". In addition she further commented that "pictures on the page could have been discussed before page reading rather than during". In spite of this comment, the above-mentioned teacher concluded as follows about the relevant teaching assistant: "a good, supportive session", indicating that application of skill in terms of the overall lesson objective was still achieved.

Participants' level of **confidence** was the third component assessed by means of teacher observation. Responses were as follows:

- "she is confident about what she is teaching and enthusiastic, she shares this enthusiasm with her child"
- "she demonstrates the ability to takes initiative by taking the lesson further as and when needed"
- "A works well and confidently"
- "she communicates well"
- "Mrs. H was able to deal firmly, but calmly, with the more demanding members of the group"
- "pupils responded well for she was confident"
- "she talks in a calm, reassuring voice"
- "she managed the group very well and with confidence"

The above responses regarding participants' level of confidence, illustrate that programme participation had indeed enhanced participants level of confidence. In conclusion, general comments from teacher observations regarding the above three areas can be summarised as follows:

- "B is enthusiastic and competent. She is not just a pair of extra hands, and I have no hesitation in giving her a task and know that she is capable of helping the children as well as I could"

- “A certainly assists me perfectly”
- “the children trust and respect her”.

For the sake of this discussion, only a sample of quotations regarding the above three areas were reported to serve as examples. In line with the pre and post self assessment questionnaires this distinction was deemed necessary. However, knowledge, application of skill and level of confidence developed interactively throughout programme participation. For example, as participants continuously became more knowledgeable about their role and responsibilities as teaching assistants, working in inclusive classrooms, they grew in confidence which allowed them to apply newly acquired skills.

5.2.3.2 Interviews

Data were analysed by means of content analysis. Participants had to respond to the following two standardized open-ended questions:

- Describe how you have benefited from programme participation, if at all
- In your opinion, how can programme delivery be improved?

Responses to the first question were analysed, and the following themes were identified. Predetermined themes confirmed increased **knowledge**, enhanced **skill development** and raised **level of confidence**.

In support of the argument that **knowledge** increased, the following quotations are presented:

- “I gained a lot more insight into what goes on in a classroom”
- “learned about how teachers have to cope with children of all abilities”
- “my class teacher goes into more depth with me on how to do ILPs”
- “the course sensitised me”
- “I have learnt how it works in a classroom and what the important things to do are”

- “I understand the reasons behind his behaviour”
- “I’ve learnt about line of communication – I know now how to ask and where to go”
- “my knowledge on areas of the curriculum has developed”
- “I now know how to deal with minor medical situations if they crop up”
- “I have a better understanding of teaching strategies”
- “I’ve gained a lot of background knowledge”
- “I understand the process of assisting now”.

Enhanced **skill development** is supported by the following responses of programme participants:

- “I’ve learned to change my tactics when working with children with behavioural problems. They’re not all the same”
- “As a result of course home work, my class teacher and I designed a timetable in order for me to support her with her daily role. It has become a procedure where she has previously just written me a note. Now things are much more organised”
- “I know now that all behaviour has got meaning. I know what to look for underneath the behaviour, when he has a bad day”
- “I work with the deputy head. Previously when she dug off, the children would have been noisy. Now I can control that and keep it how it should be as a class”
- “now my communication style has improved, especially my tone of voice. I think about how I sound when I try to relate to the children. I also allow children in the wrong to tell their side, my listening skills have improved”
- “I’ve learned how to turn things around in a positive way”
- “in my job I also work with the parents of my child and now attend out-of-school meetings. It helped me to do all I can”.

As demonstrated by the following quotations, programme participation resulted in a raised level of **confidence** for participants:

- “it’s good to know that what I do now is the right thing”

- “I feel I’m more a person than just a teaching assistant. Previously I thought if they want me at a meeting they would say. Now I ask ‘can I come?’
- “confident to suggest things to my class teacher”
- “the course has built my confidence”
- “I’ve gained a lot of confidence in my work place. I lead a session now and feel confident that I should be doing it”
- “I feel confident to do displays on my own now”
- “I feel confident now to give my opinion for I know it’s based on knowledge”
- “I’ve gained a lot of self-confidence to speak out. I could never speak out. I can actually sit and hold a class and hold their attention. I don’t panic”
- “I’m not intimidated to work with a big group anymore. If you stuck me with a big group last year, I think I would have cried. I can handle a big group now, in fact I can handle more than a big group, I’m capable of running a classroom if I need to. It makes me feel good. It’s taken me along time to get me to where I want to be”
- “dealing with difficult situations, before I would have panicked, now I think I can do it”
- “previously a wreck – now a lot more confident”
- “I’m confident that I’m actually teaching the children correctly, not just hanging about”.

Six of the nineteen programme participants responded to the second question, recommending improvements regarding programme delivery:

- “more time for special needs, for I work with it at school”
- “an unstructured evening for students to talk about their pupils and experiences”
- “more in depth coverage on speech and language problems”
- “special needs units earlier in course”
- “more time to be spend on special needs”
- “a little bit more time at the end of each session to talk about work”

The comments above indicate programme participants’ desire for more detailed

coverage of special needs during programme delivery.

5.2.3.3 *Field notes*

The researcher and lecturer provided participants with her office number and telephone number. This created security for a group of mature learners because it gave information on where to find help regarding any aspect of this programme during the duration of the course. Although not many participants physically approached the lecturer at her office, the majority made phone calls for various reasons. The main reasons for telephone conversations were for participants to excuse themselves from class attendance and secondly, to clarify uncertainty about assignments and homework with which they were experiencing difficulty with.

The students had ample time to talk to the lecturer during tea breaks as well as at the end of each session. A variety of themes were informally discussed, e.g. positive and negative feedback from work placements, assignments and homework. The size of the group for these informal discussions varied between two to six. Based on these discussions, it can be concluded that participants demonstrated an increase in new knowledge and applied newly acquired skills more effectively and with greater confidence.

5.2.4 Integration of research findings

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are currently no mandatory qualifications for teaching assistants in the UK. To help LEAs and schools to maintain high quality support for teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms, teaching assistants should have access to relevant training courses that meet their personal and professional needs in order to develop specific skills, knowledge and understanding about their work (Fox, 1998:33; McClelland & Varma, 1996:87; QFTA, 2002:3). In line with the above, findings from this study indicate that participants on a NCFE

Level 2 Certificate for teaching assistants, showed significant improvement in their level of confidence, ability to apply new skills and knowledge about their role and responsibilities in inclusive classrooms.

5.3 DISCUSSION

5.3.1 Introduction

Teaching assistants play a vital role in supporting learners with special educational needs in mainstream schools. In terms of an eco-systemic perspective, the role of teaching assistants extends beyond that of support worker for the school, class teacher and parent/carer (Farrell, 2000:77). In order for teaching assistants to become fully empowered, the utilization of the correct training programme is of utmost importance (Thomas *et al.*, 1998:26). Such a programme should focus on increased levels of knowledge, enhanced application of skill and raised levels of confidence for participants.

Based on the above-mentioned results, the following discussion will focus on the effect programme participation has had on participants.

5.3.2 Structural aspects of the programme

5.3.2.1 *The aim of the programme*

The objectives of this qualification were mentioned in Chapter 3. From the above findings it can be concluded that these aims were met. Programme participants showed an increased level of confidence as well as improved knowledge at programme completion of the programme. Consequently this influenced their ability to apply to their skill e.g. supporting pupils with special educational needs, exploring their role as teaching assistants, promoting good practice in teaching assistant work,

and providing a good qualification and a basis for further study.

5.3.2.2 *Entry requirements*

Although this programme recommends that potential participants have some experience of working with children, it discreetly explores the possibility of including participants who have no previous relevant experience in working with children. The importance of doing so is that not only young people need to have an opportunity to pursue a career as a teaching assistant, but it also encourages others to make a career change. Either way, both types of entry students are motivated to explore and improve their knowledge of the professional role of the teaching assistant. However, teaching assistants working in existing roles are still the most obvious target group for recruitment to this kind of programme. Written statements on what participants on entry expected from this certificate for teaching assistants, indicated a need to gain more knowledge about their role and on how to be more confident in providing the correct support.

To conclude, entry requirements are an important link between a potential new student and a specific delivery programme. In this case, broad requirements helped to recruit the correct type of participant, without deliberately excluding anyone. The correct recruitment procedures enabled students to access programme contents effectively.

5.3.2.3 *Length of award*

As discussed in 5.2.1, the duration of the certificate for teaching assistants consists is 150 guided learning hours (GLH) and a further 50 hours on work placement or work experience. In practice this means that the programme runs over one academic year, in other words over a period of 30 weeks. The substantial time given to deliver the programme and for learners to be formally guided, whilst

simultaneously integrating experiences in practice, explains the strongly positive effect. As described in 5.2, findings from this study showed that participants had increased their own knowledge, raised their levels of confidence and their ability to apply their skills accurately and appropriately.

5.3.2.4 Qualification structure

In Chapter 5 the structure and content of the programme were discussed. The units have a logical pattern, starting with general knowledge on the role of the teaching assistant, and then continuing with an exploration of more specific areas, such as health and safety, legislation, and dealing with medical emergencies. The last two units explicitly investigate special educational needs in all its facets.

Apart from the above-mentioned critical structure of the programme, programme content throughout provided a theoretical point of reference. This allowed participants to better their understanding of basic procedures in an inclusive classroom such as teaching strategies and styles, reasons for assessing pupils' progress, importance of record-keeping and feedback and supporting learners with special educational needs (Ainscow, 1997:5; Farrell 2001:8).

5.3.2.5 Assessment

Assessment is the process of measuring a participant's confidence, skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in the qualification (see Chapter 3). It is vital that the assessment process consist of a variety of internal assessment methods, e.g. participants' notebooks', reflective diary, assessor observations, case studies, written assignments, role-plays. These aim at complementing the external examination which takes on the format of an end test.

Internal and external assessments are both integral components of formative

assessment, which plays an important part in the participants learning process. It provides the *transparency* that programme participants need in order to know *what is being assessed*.

For the purpose of this study, continuous formative assessment provided opportunities for changes to be made during the assessment process. This ensured positive outcomes regarding learners' demonstration of knowledge and skill. For example more detailed structure regarding organising and filing of participants' work in a portfolio was provided with clearer guidelines on ordering the work.

5.3.2.6 *Links for further professional development and training*

The programme under investigation, Certificate for Teaching Assistants, is mapped against the National Occupational Standards for Teaching/Classroom Assistants. Key Skills accreditation can be generated from relevant units e.g. communications (see 5.2.4). On completion of the programme, participants obtained a Level 2 qualification in accordance with particular occupational standards (see Table 2.2). This provided progression opportunities towards a Level 3 qualification should participants' choose to continue with further professional development and training.

In the case of this study, the majority of students enquired about progressing to a Level 3 qualification. The researcher/lecturer investigated the matter with college officials and managers. The researcher was advised to contact NCFE, the awarding body to explore such delivery possibilities within the college setting. According to NCFE, the Level 3 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is still under development and will continue to be for some time. The researcher has assured all current and previous programme participants who obtained a Level 2 qualification, that she would notify them when they would be able to enroll.

For the purpose of this discussion, it is important to remember that training of support staff in inclusive classrooms is a new development in special educational

needs, training programmes are still under development.

5.3.3 The role of environmental factors in the learning process

5.3.3.1 *The mature learner*

The mission of the FE College where the researcher undertook this study is the promotion of life-long learning. The role of a college for further education is to encourage vocational and professional training of students older than 16 years. It provides a wide range of full time as well as part-time courses.

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is a part-time course (see Appendix N) for which a student with an interest in working with children in school settings can enroll. The nineteen students who completed this certificate/programme were all in existing roles as teaching assistants. A quarter of the group has been teaching assistants for as long as ten years. As discussed in 5.2.1, the age of the students varied between twenty six and fifty four. All students made a choice to come back to college after a few years in practice and in some cases, students of a mature age enrolled to do professional training for the first time in their lives.

The researcher had to take the following factors into consideration when planning and presenting the programme:

- The majority of the group were single parents with household responsibilities
- All students worked full time and appeared tired and stressed at times
- Two students were frequently absent due to personal circumstances;
- Students lacked confidence regarding their learning potential,
- More in-depth introductions were required to link previous work with new knowledge;
- Mature students did not appreciate the 'new' social learning approach to teaching, e.g. workshops, group work, role-plays, etc. and were often rather

passive

- Mature students expected that hand-in dates of assignments would be extended on each occasion
- Mature students had a general psychological barrier towards improving their own knowledge, e.g. “I can’t” and “I don’t know”.

To conclude, it was hard work to motivate mature learners, even though it was a very rewarding task to undertake. Students needed constant, detailed guidance on all aspects of the learning process and consistent emotional and cognitive reinforcement, reassuring them that *they could do it*.

5.3.3.2 Role of the facilitator

For the purpose of this study the researcher was the facilitator of the learning process, acting the lecturer and co-ordinator of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for teaching assistants, as discussed in Chapter 1. The difference in roles was briefly explained to participants on the first evening of the programme attendance.

As the facilitator, she played a vital role in guiding programme participants in their professional development. For participants to achieve programme objectives or aims, the facilitator had to access the programme content in a suitable manner for mature learners to explore.

Presenting a good *induction* was of utmost importance. This provided the first initial contact with participants and laid the foundation for the bonding process. It was important for participants to trust and respect the lecturer on the grounds of her commitment to the course and knowledge of the subject. In return, the facilitator needed to gain knowledge about the participants and their working experiences and more specifically, needed to be clear about what their expectations of this particular programme were. The purpose of the first session in September 2002 was to facilitate a formal induction (see Appendix O). Guided conversation was used to

construct feedback between participants and facilitator.

Communication skills played an important role in the facilitating process. The researcher needed to ensure that she communicated clearly and that participants' understood her correctly. Apart from demonstrating appropriate verbal skills, the facilitator also needed to exercise excellent listening skills, e.g. showing empathy, being patient and tolerant, and accepting participants unconditionally. Non-verbal communication skills played an important role.

The facilitator focused on a student centred approach to learning (McCown, *et al.*, 1996.44). This resulted in students being actively involved in their learning process, within a social learning environment, e.g. group work, case studies, role-plays and workshops. Mixed ability groups were carefully arranged to allow a more adequate learner to mediate the learning process. This ensured positive copying of accurate application of skill. For example, praise of pupil's good work efforts, redirecting challenging behaviour, dealing with medical emergencies, and putting up displays of pupils' work.

Furthermore, the facilitator had to ensure complete transparency regarding ways of assessment. The success of the participants enrolled for this programme depended greatly on the amount of continuous information they had on *what* was going to be assessed and *how* it was going to be assessed. Participants received consistent guidance, e.g. on how to build a portfolio of their work, received written feedback on assignments, and had opportunities for peer assessment and doing mock multiple questionnaires in preparation of the external examination.

To ensure participants' interest in the programme, the facilitator/lecturer alternated her teaching styles throughout. In addition to this, she arranged five guest speakers to deliver presentations about specialist areas in relation to programme content.

The following areas were covered:

- Role of the teaching assistant in a specific inclusive school
- The Health and Safety at Work Act in the United Kingdom
- Dealing with medical emergencies

- The statementing process of pupils with special educational needs in the United Kingdom
- Child protection issues.

During the individual interview sessions, a few participants responded positively to the presentations of guest speakers. For example, “I have enjoyed listening to the guest speakers” and “Mr. G the guest speaker, I found really interesting”.

To summarise, the collaborative and integrative approaches of the facilitator provided appropriate support and guidance and ensured a relaxed, but stimulating class atmosphere in which students could explore and investigate new knowledge and insights. Furthermore, the facilitator’s consistent enthusiasm contributed to the achievement of participants’ personal learning aims and the achievement of this research study aims.

5.3.3.3 *Work placements*

As discussed in Chapter 3 (3.2.3.3), participants needed to do at least 50 hours work placement. This allowed a natural opportunity for participants to practise new knowledge and skills working in classrooms, whilst building their professional confidence.

Classroom teachers contributed by acting as assessors of practical situations where teaching assistants provided learning support. The researcher applied teachers’ assessor observations as an integral part of participants’ continuous formative assessments. Teachers discussed their written feedbacks with participants/teaching assistants in training. Feedback formed the basis for structured guidance towards greater understanding of their roles as well as accurate application of skills.

For the above-mentioned reasons, it can be concluded that work placements were an essential component of a training programme which focuses on the professional development of participants in the form of work-based learning.

5.3.3.4 Resources

For the appropriate delivery of this programme, resources consisted of accurate learning materials, e.g. hand-outs, up-to-date First Aid Box, copies of relevant acts and policy documents. Additional resources which were used included, a white board and dry wipe pens, overhead projector, A4 paper, A3 card, hand books, assignment feedback sheets, and assessor observation proformas.

Research of correct and applicable learning content, was of vital importance in order to ensure accurate data on relevant aspects such as disabilities, legislation, and educational intervention strategies. The researcher, acting as lecturer, played an essential role in providing correct and relevant learning materials. The impact of this ensured a high standard of programme delivery, which is reflected in the report of the external moderator (see Appedix P).

The assumption can therefore be made that quality resource materials, contributed to participants' achieving their personal learning aims successfully.

5.3.3.5 Group size

As discussed in Chapter 4 (4.4.1), twenty four participants initially enrolled to do the Certificate for Teaching Assistants in order to get a professional qualification. However, for reasons discussed in the above-mentioned chapter, the size of the group were gradually reduced to that of nineteen participants.

Taking a student centred approach to learning in which the researcher/lecturer bases her teaching methods into account, programme participants needed to be *pragmatically* involved in their own learning process. In practice, the size of the group determines how successfully group work and workshops can be conducted. For example, case studies were usually discussed and fed back in small groups of four students. This allowed groups to have a leader (more adequate partner who

initiates the discussion, (see 5.3.3.2), a time keeper, scribe, and the person who provided feedback to the facilitator and rest of the class. Occasionally, small groups consisted of three or five members, because of absences.

The importance of facilitating group work as a teaching method is to develop a problem-solving approach amongst students, under the discreet guidance of the lecturer. Time-keeping is also an important aspect which makes provision for participants to be given detailed verbal feedback. In the case of this study, a group size of nineteen members, contributed effectively to the process of social learning. Group size was manageable and it was possible to allow time for adequate feedback.

To conclude, nineteen group members were an effective group size for the purpose of this study.

5.3.3.6 *Length of sessions*

The NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is a part-time course which runs over an academic year of 30 weeks, as discussed in 5.3.2.3.

Programme delivery took place once a week in the form of a three hour session or lesson. Classes commenced at 6pm and ended at 9pm. Participants had a 15 minute coffee break between 7.30pm and 7.45pm.

In the case of this study, the substantial length of sessions enhanced opportunities to use a variety of good quality learning activities. It took consistent planning and managerial skills on the part of the researcher/lecturer to ensure that learners achieved success in each session.

5.3.4 Conclusion

As discussed in the Chapter 1, it is important to stress the fact that although teaching assistants have been working in inclusive classrooms in the capacity of 'extra help' for some time, the idea of having assistants in a 'trained' role has only recently been developed. The following could be reasons for that:

- Changing role of the class teacher in an effort to deal with pupils' diverse needs and having to deal with increasing stress factors (Chapter 2: 2.3.2.1)
- Involvement of school SENCOs in identifying training needs for teaching assistants in existing roles
- "The huge rise in the numbers of learning support assistants working in schools to support pupils with Statements" (Farrell, 2001:8) (see 2.3.2.3).

It can be concluded from Chapter 2 that schools have accepted the philosophy of inclusion and show a genuine desire to accept and include all learners from local communities. However, decisions to do so pose complex problems e.g. is this fair to ask new teachers with no previous teaching experience to manage a class of pupils with greatly diverse learning needs, and do senior teachers necessarily have special educational needs training as a component of their initial basic teacher training (see 2.4.2; Table 2.1).

Taking the above into account, it is evident that a natural solution towards greater and more specialised support/assistance in the inclusive classroom is to extend the role of the teaching assistant and to provide either in-service training or to motivate teaching assistants in existing positions to gain a nationally recognised qualification.

The NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) programme that was under investigation in this study is mapped against Level 2 of the National Qualification Framework (see Table 2.1). In relation to this, three training programmes for teaching assistants by awarding bodies CACHE, Edexcel and NCFE, have been outlined in Chapter 3 in detail. Although the importance of this specific NCFE programme needs to be confirmed, it is important to note that it was not the primary

aim of this research to do so. This was additional and secondary to the main aim, which determined the effect of programme participation on the professional development of participants.

As was stated in the literature review in Chapter 3, the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is particularly valuable as a training programme to enhance the personal and professional development of existing teaching assistants.

The above-mentioned programme is the only programme where the qualification structure focuses on the training needs of individuals who work with pupils who have special educational needs. Unit 06 and Unit 07 of the qualification structure aims to “explore the management of pupils’ behaviour” and “support pupils with special educational needs” (see par. 5.4.9, 5.4.10). Focussed and detailed time is spent during programme delivery and participation to raise knowledge and understanding about terminology of disabilities, before educational intervention is discussed.

To conclude: in essence this section distinguishes the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants from other programmes currently available.

CHAPTER 6**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS****6.1 INTRODUCTION**

Professional training leading to a national occupational qualification for support staff working with *all* pupils in inclusive school settings should be a priority. The needs of pupils across the special educational needs spectrum and how to provide accurate and appropriate educational intervention should be addressed. Institutions responsible for further education in the UK should provide training programmes for this purpose.

6.2 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

As part of the researcher's lecturing role, the NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants, was delivered during the academic year 2001/02. This pilot study which preceded the research project resulted in the following:

- The researcher/lecturer being confident and knowledgeable about programme content and effective delivering strategies
- Raised awareness of a need for professional training for teaching assistants;
- Strengthened the lecturer's motivation and dedication for this study
- The pilot study enhanced local recruitment
- Teaching assistants who enquired about the programme felt disempowerment as a result of inadequate knowledge and skill and wanted to develop personally and professionally. These individuals became an integral part of this study and were motivated to achieve on this training programme.

The raised awareness of training needs (referred to above), identified by means of the pilot study, contributed significantly to the effectiveness of this research project.

In line with the above, the following strengths of this specific study should also be highlighted. The fact that a variety of data collection methods and interpretations were used added validity to the conclusions reached. In addition, the programme was delivered within a further education college setting. This provided a natural infra-structure of internal and external verifications and moderations, which contributed to this programme being delivered highly satisfactorily (see Appendix P). This in turn, consolidates research aims.

Seen within a holistic perspective, in which the programme is viewed within the greater context of teaching, learning and research the study has obvious limitations. The first limitation is the fact that the researcher and the lecturer was the same individual. Having two people could have resulted in greater objectivity which would have benefited the research process and perhaps resulted in a less positive view of the research aims. Another limitation was the fact that programme outcomes were not measured against the outcomes of other similar programmes. This would have greater weight to the overall research project and research aims, and allowed this value of the training programme to be evaluated more accurately. In addition to the above, the achievement of programme participants could have been measured against the achievement of participants of similar training programmes to provide more objective and accurate results. These limitations need to be taken into consideration when interpreting results of this study.

6.3 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This research study has shown that programme participation had a profound effect on the professional development of teaching assistants working in actual roles in classrooms. Furthermore, the importance of participating in a programme which provides specific skills training in the area of pupils with special educational needs is paramount.

This programme offers teaching assistants an opportunity to obtain a professional qualification via a training programme mapped against NVQ levels, and to train and progress on a career path, should they choose to do so. This change in direction is a new development for teaching assistants working in this profession. Based on the above research results, training for the professional development of teaching assistants is strongly recommended.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are that the above study should be used as a baseline for further research in the field of professional training programmes for teaching assistants working in inclusive schools. This is a relative new area of development in the field of special educational needs. There is a great need to continue to develop appropriate training programmes to ensure that support staff in schools meet the diverse needs of clients that they encounter and that they be empowered to provide excellent service.

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APPENDIX A

SCHEMES OF WORK

SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE: Develop Professional Skills & Knowledge/Understanding Legal & National Requirements/Support Teacher in Relation to Pupils Learning.	MODULE CODE: Unit 01/ 02/ 03

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
16/9/02	Introduction to new course & getting to know each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction activity. Discuss module of work & assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module of work & Divider handouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To meet new students. To make them feel valued. To explain course work 	Learning outcomes covered.
23/9/02	Element 1:1 – Explore the role of a Teaching Assistant.	Brainstorm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different people that work in schools. Identify their roles. Role of Teaching Assistant. Lines of reporting. Support Agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts – 'The Role of the LSA' Assignment 01. Video. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify & explore their roles & responsibilities as LSA's 	1.1.1 1.1.4 1.1.5 1.1.10 1.1.6 1.1.15
30/9/02	Element 1:1 – (cont.). Explore the role of a Teaching Assistant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List down – role of Teaching Assistant. Discuss – relationship with teacher. 'Skills Audit'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worksheets - (skills audit). Handouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore & identify the role and skills needed as a Teaching Assistant. 	1.1.2 1.1.9 1.1.3 1.1.11 1.1.6 1.1.12 1.1.7 1.1.13 1.1.8 1.1.14
7/10/02	Element 1:2 Establish the importance of equal opportunities	Relevant legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop – Divide in 5 groups, 5 each explore importance of Factors that influence diversity amongst people. Feedback. 	Handouts for workshops. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wormock Rep. Education Act 1981. 1994 Code of Practice. Senda 2001 New Code of Practice & Implications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify people who are being discriminated against. Explore discrimination. Ways to challenge it. Inclusion. 	1.2.1 1.2.6 1.2.2 1.2.7 1.2.3 1.2.8 1.2.9
14/10/02	Element 1:2 (Cont). Establish the importance of equal opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values – influence attitude. Policies /Reports/Acts. Discrimination – stereotyping. Ways to challenge discrimination & promote equal opportunities. List groups/Individuals prone to being excluded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts Values & principles. Def. inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To investigate relevant legislation that support inclusion & to give feedback to other class members. 	1.2.4 1.2.5 1.2.10 1.2.11

21/10/02 Half Term
27/10/03 – 31/10/03

INTERNALLY VERIFIED BY: (Print Name)	(Signature)	DATE:
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SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE: Develop Professional Skills & Knowledge/Understanding Legal & National Requirements/Support Teacher in Relation to Pupils Learning.	MODULE CODE: Unit 01/ 02/ 03

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS; DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
28/10/02	Element 1:3 Develop personal skills relevant to the role of a Teaching Assistant.	Students engage in notebook, role-plays on effective communication, reflection on own communication as team member, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write own script for role-plays. Own reflection sheets. Handouts – 'Team Members & Roles'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify effective skills for communicating as team member. To improve own learning. 	1.3.1 1.3.14 1.3.15 1.3.2 1.3.3 1.3.4 1.3.5) 1.3.6 1.3.7 1.3.8 1.3.9
4/11/02	Element 1:3 (cont.). Develop personal skills relevant to the role of a Teaching Assistant.	Guest speaker: Mr Nick Guest Head Teacher – Pamwell Primary School.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts. OHP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How he sees the role & responsibility of the Teaching Assistant's in his school. 	1.3.10 1.3.11 1.3.12 1.3.14 – 1.3.22 1.3.13 (Ass. 02)
11/11/02	Unit 02 Element 2:1. Recognise the importance of Health & Safety at Work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group discussion on legislation to health & safety at work. In pairs, list areas of risk to personal health & safety, etc. Group work – Good practice & procedures in situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts. Card. Pens, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know legislation relating to health & safety at work. To know areas of risk & restricted areas at school. Safe manual handling techniques. 	2.1.1 2.1.6 2.1.2 2.1.7 2.1.3 2.1.9
18/11/02	Element 2:1 (cont.). Recognise the importance of Health & Safety at Work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video on health & safety at work. Identify own responsibilities (group work). Guest speaker: Phillipa Knobbs – Health & Safety Officer – Isle College. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video All materials to make a leaflet on health & safety at work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To raise more awareness & improve own learning. To know responsibilities in relation to health & safety and security. To produce a leaflet with all information on health & safety issues at work. 	2.1.1 – 2.1.10 2.1.5 – 2.1.10 2.1.1, 2, 3, 5, 9
25/11/02	Element 2:2 Respond to emergency situations.	Lesson taken by first aiders: Rachel & Melanie – lecture & role-plays on how to administer first aid in a medical emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students need to prove that they have relevant knowledge & can use it in an emergency. 	2.2.8 2.2.9 2.2.10 2.2.11 2.2.12 2.2.13 2.2.14

Ass. 02

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SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE: Develop Professional Skills & Knowledge/Understanding Legal & National Requirements/Support Teacher in Relation to Pupils Learning.	MODULE CODE: Unit 01/ 02/ 03

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
2/12/02	Element 2:2 (cont.). Respond to emergency situations.	Follow-up & finish off from previous week – (Rachel & Melanie – First Aiders).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To complete evidence of dealing with emergencies. 	2.2.8 – 2.2.14
9/12/02	Unit 03 Element 3:1 Investigate methods of supporting the Teacher in relation to planning pupils learning.	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories of learning Piaget, Bandeira & Vygotsky. • Identify support you can offer. • Factors that contribute to effective learning. • Aims & learning objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts – Piaget Vygotsky 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve own knowledge on learning approaches & link with teacher's planning of activities – effective learning. 	3.1.7 3.1.1 3.1.4 3.1.6
16/12/02	Element 3:1 (cont.). Investigate methods of supporting teachers in relation to pupils	Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify support you can offer. • Support in research & planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop sheets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback, internalising of support for teachers in relation to pupils learning. 	3.1.1 3.1.2 3.1.3 3.1.9
End of Autumn Term					

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SCHEME OF WORK SHEET – MINIMUM CRITERIA

SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE: Support the Teacher in Relation to Pupils' Learning/Explore the Management of Pupils' Behaviour/Special Needs	MODULE CODE: Unit 03 (Cont.) & Unit 06/ Unit 07

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
2003/04 6/01/03	Element 3:2 Support teacher in implementing learning activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on learning strategies & curriculum. Workshops on case studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes from board. Handouts. Assignment observations. Handout 2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase own knowledge on learning strategies, styles (methods) & curriculum. By doing case studies measure application of knowledge. 	3.2.1 3.2.6 3.2.5 3.2.7 3.2.8 3.2.11(tapes)
13/01/03	Element 3:2 (cont.) Support teacher in implementing learning activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to auditory tapes (strategies to support learners to independence). Support learners with change. Assessment: (strategies) Importance of observation. Constructive feedback. Record keeping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tapes. Tape records. Handouts. Notebooks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue to increase learners knowledge & strategies to build their confidence to try new procedures. 	3.2.6 (cont.) 3.2.2 3.2.3 3.2.4 3.2.10 3.2.12
20/01/03	Element 3:3 Use educational equipment effectively.	Group brainstorm - List: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational equipment & resources. Usage according to learning areas & range of years. Evaluate for health & safety. Storage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts. Notebooks. Homework sheets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase usage & appropriate knowledge on educational equipment. 	3.3.1 3.3.7 3.3.2 3.3.8 3.3.9
27/01/03	Element 3:3 (cont.) Use educational equipment effectively.	Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss learning materials for different activities. Displays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes. Hand out assignment 04. (3.3.5/ 3.3.6/ 3.3.10/ 3.3.11). Ed.Res.EV.Proforma (appendix D (ii) (iii)). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase knowledge on usage of learning materials in relation to pupils' learning. 	3.3.3 3.3.9 3.3.5 3.3.6 3.3.10
3/02/03	Unit 06 Element 6:1 Support pupils' social & emotional development	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human development – milestones (PILES). Theories in short. Factors effecting development (groups). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OHP. Handouts. Notebooks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore management of pupils' behaviour, effectively. 	6.1.1 6.1.10 6.1.2 6.1.7 6.1.8

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(Signature)

DATE:

SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE: Support the Teacher in Relation to Pupils' Learning/Explore the Management of Pupils' Behaviour/Special Needs	MODULE CODE: Unit 03 (Cont.) & Unit 06/ Unit 07

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/LT DEVELOPMENT
10/02/03	Element 6:1 (cont.) Support pupils' social & emotional development.	Case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • App. Communications • Strategies to express feelings. • Responding to incidence. • Ind. Communication skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand out Assignment 05. • Case studies. • Notes/Handouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore management of pupils' behaviour effectively. 	6.1.4 6.1.11 6.1.5 6.1.6 6.1.10
24/02/03	Element 6:2 Support the management of pupils' behaviour.	Lecture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement. • Principles of behaviour management. • External factors influence behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts. • Notebooks. • Portfolios. • IBP's. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve knowledge on how to support pupils' behaviour positively. 	6.2.1 6.2.10 6.2.11 6.2.2 6.2.3 6.2.4 6.2.5 6.2.14
3/03/03	Element 6:2 (cont.) Support the management of pupils' behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for managing negative behaviour. • Schools' behaviour policy plan. (Questions & answers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A schools' behaviour policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to practice skills. (Case studies in between lectures). 	6.2.13 6.2.12 6.2.6 6.2.7 6.2.22 6.2.20
10/03/03	Element: 6:3 Show awareness of child protection issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest speaker: Veronica Wiltshire Child Protection Officer – Isle College. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To raise awareness on child protection issues. 	6.3.14 6.3.15 6.2.19 6.2.20 6.2.8
17/03/03	Element: 6:3 (cont.) Show awareness of child protection issues.	Role-plays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer & assessor observations of applying skill when interviewing in cases of abuse, neglect, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play scripts. • Peer review/observation sheets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To practice skill of interviewing in case of abuse. 	6.3.1 – 6.3.7 6.3.8 – 6.3.13

*Half Term – 17/2/03

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SCHEME OF WORK SHEET – MINIMUM CRITERIA

SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE: Support the Teacher in Relation to Pupils' Learning/Explore the Management of Pupils' Behaviour/Special Needs	MODULE CODE: Unit 03 (Cont.) & Unit 06/ Unit 07

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
24/03/03	Unit 07 Element 7:1 Explore the principles of inclusion of special educational needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen, take notes, & ask questions; Lecture & group work: Discuss & give feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts. Paper. Portfolios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore main principles of inclusion & special educational needs. 	7.1.1 7.1.2 7.1.3 7.1.4 7.1.5 7.1.6 7.1.7
31/03/03	Element 7:1 (cont.) Explore the principles of inclusion & special educational needs.	On different areas of Special educational needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notebooks. 		7.1.8 7.1.9 7.1.10 7.1.11 7.1.13 – 7.1.16
07/04/03	Element 7:2 Show awareness of learning difficulties.	Group work/ case studies & assessor observations on educational intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessor observation forms. Handouts. Portfolios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To prove awareness of learning difficulties. 	7.3.1 7.3.4 7.3.6 7.3.7 7.3.10 7.3.12 7.2.4 7.2.5 7.2.9 7.2.10

*Spring Term Closes

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SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE:	MODULE CODE:

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
28/04/03	Element 7:2 (cont.) Show awareness of learning difficulties.	Lecture: Communication/language/EAL difficulties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand communication & language difficulties & how to support EAL learners of ethnic minorities. 	7.2.1 7.2.2 7.2.3 7.2.6 7.2.7 7.2.8
12/05/03	Element 7:3 Supporting learners with special educational needs.	Case studies – Assessor – observations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case studies. Work sheets. Observation sheets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting learners with special educational needs. 	7.2.1 – 7.2.10
19/05/03	Element 7:3 (cont.) Supporting learners with special educational needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrapping up (7:3). Final questions. Sort portfolios. Discuss external exam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolios. External Exam. Exemplar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make sure learners have time to discuss any questions/problems. 	Could touch on all (Last night).
2/06/03	Individual tutorial sessions	With: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ally Oughton Maxine Thompson Caroline Barker Lynda Rancome Julie England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tape recorder & tapes. Feedback sheet (college). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet progress of programme Participation/academic progress/what next? Weaknesses of course/areas of improvement. 	College requirement.
9/06/03	Individual tutorial sessions	With: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gwen Wallis Sue Rout Sara Strickle Linda White Amanda Chapman Birgitta Taylor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tape recorder & tapes. Feedback sheet (college). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet progress of programme Participation/academic progress/what next? Weaknesses of course/areas of improvement. 	College requirement.

*5th May: Bank Holiday

26-30 May: Half Term

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QUALITY MANUAL

Stellenbosch University <http://scholar.sun.ac.za>
SCHEME OF WORK SHEET – MINIMUM CRITERIA

SCHEME / RECORD OF WORK: Certificate for Teaching Assistants	PROGRAMME: NCFE
MODULE TITLE:	MODULE CODE:

WEEK	DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT/TOPIC	STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY: VISITS, DIFFERENTIATION, TEACHING METHODS	RESOURCES & MATERIALS REQUIRED	LEARNING OUTCOMES	KEY SKILLS/ILT DEVELOPMENT
16/06/03	Individual tutorial sessions (cont.)	With: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Togoridino • Andy Houghton • Shelley Ogden • Veronica Clarke • Tara Harrison • Jo Wyke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tape recorder & tapes. • Feedback sheet (college). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet progress of programme Participation/academic progress/what next? • Weaknesses of course/areas of Improvement. 	
23/06/03	Final evening: End of course procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patricia Keogh (EV) visit. • Watch video related to all work, care, special needs, learning support etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video machine. • Video. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consolidate everything they've learnt. 	Unit -2 through unit 07.

12 June: New Students Evening:
Induction for new intake 2003/04

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APPENDIX B

**PRE AND POST SELF-EVALUATION
QUESTIONNAIRE**

NAME.....

DATE.....

SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

RE: KNOWLEDGE; PRACTICAL SKILL; LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE

RATING SCALE : (DRAW A CIRCLE)
 (1. need improvement 2. satisfactory 3. good 4. very good 5. excellent)

KNOWLEDGE ON

• students specific needs e.g. disabilities	1	2	3	4	5
• curriculum and accessibility of curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
• adaptations/provisions to meet needs	1	2	3	4	5
• essential qualities of teaching assistant	1	2	3	4	5
• effective support of the classroom teacher	1	2	3	4	5
• assessment/monitoring of student progress	1	2	3	4	5

PRACTICAL SKILL ON

• learning support strategies	1	2	3	4	5
• emotional support strategies	1	2	3	4	5
• building student's self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5
• working as a member of a team	1	2	3	4	5
• acting in an emergency	1	2	3	4	5
• dealing with difficult student behaviour	1	2	3	4	5

LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE REGARDING

• knowledge of your specific role as teaching assistant	1	2	3	4	5
• practical skill in delivering that specific role of teaching assistant	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

TEACHER OBSERVATION PROFORMA

Assessor Observation Proforma

Candidate Name:

Candidate Number:

Learning outcomes assessed:

Task:

Comments on Candidate's Performance:

Candidate's signature:

Date completed:

Assessor's Name:

Assessor's signature:

Date:

(The Assessor's contact details must be provided in order that the External Moderator may verify authenticity of the statement)

APPENDIX D

COVER LETTER TO CLASS TEACHER

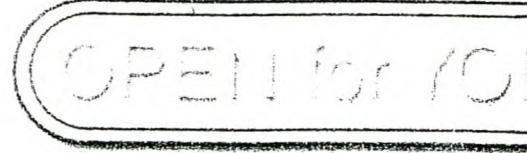


Isle College

Chatteris • March

Whittlesey • Wisbech

Stellenbosch University <http://scholar.sun.ac.za>



6th January 2003

Dear Class Teacher

As part of the candidate's course work, they need to be observed and assessed in their role as teaching assistant. Being the class teacher, you are in the best position to do such an observation.

Please be so kind and use the enclosed Assessors Observation form to provide a brief evaluation of

.....
ability to give learning support, while implementing a specific learning activity in your class. (Please state the **learning outcomes** that you've had for a certain session/lesson, the **task** you have given the teaching assistant and write brief comments on how he/she has **performed**.)

As these observation assessments are important for the above-mentioned candidate's personal and professional development, I hope that I can count on your future support.

Your observation assessment is highly valued and much appreciated.

Thank you for your kind co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Benita McLachlan

LECTURER

NCFE LEVEL 2: CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS



LEVEL 2: CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Reply to Centre indicated

Chatteris Centre Whittlesey Centre Wisbech Learning Area March Library Whittlesey Centre Wisbech Learning Area

APPENDIX E

ASSIGNMENT BRIEFS

NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

ASSIGNMENT 01 - 23 SEPTEMBER 2002

(HAND-IN DATE: TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH STUDENTS TOWARDS END OF COURSE)

Please log a daily diary in your current placement, **explaining the support** you are giving to an individual or group of individuals in your care.

Make sure that all names are changed for confidentiality purposes. Should you make use of any pictures, written permission/authorisation from parents or carers must be displayed in the front of your diary.

NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

ASSIGNMENT 02 – 28 OCTOBER 2002-10-25
(HAND-IN DATE: 11 NOVEMBER 2002)

AIM: TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Task 1

- Draw up a personal development action plan (as a result of your skills audit),
- identify skills you need to learn or improve for your role as teaching assistant,
- implement your action plan,
- and show how you will monitor your progress.

Task 2

Continuously evaluate a review your personal development plan through the duration of your course.
Find a way to display your reviews.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Learner must develop all skills relevant to the role of a Teaching Assistant (element 1.3); play an active role in his/her own professional development.
LEARNING OUTCOMES: 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 1.3.5

**NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

ASSIGNMENT 03 – 11 NOVEMBER 2002

(HAND-IN DATE: 18 NOVEMBER 2002)

AIM: TO CONSOLIDATE UNIT 01: DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Task

Please complete/fill out the WRITTEN QUESTIONING paperwork on Unit 01. You might find your notebook, as well as course handouts, useful to assist you. Do not hesitate to ask, should you need any other form of support.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Candidates must provide full evidence of personal skills and knowledge, developed for their role of TA, including knowledge of equal opportunities in their work situation.
1.1.1, 1.1.7, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.8, 1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.1.15, 1.1.4, 1.1.9, 1.1.10,
1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.6, 1.2.7, 1.2.3, 1.2.8, 1.2.9, 1.2.11, 1.2.4
1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.3.8, 1.3.9, 1.3.14, 1.3.15, 1.3.13

NAME:.....DATE:.....

WRITTEN QUESTIONING

UNIT 01

1. In which AGE GROUP does your role as teaching assistant falls?
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2. List down some of your usual TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES as teaching assistant.
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3. Why do you think is it important for you to have A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH your class teacher?
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4. Give short descriptions of the following INTERNAL PEOPLE'S ROLES in order to maintain a learning environment:
HEADTEACHER.....
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SENCO.....
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CLASSTEACHER.....
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5. Explain the **LINE OF COMMUNICATION** in a school setting. Why is it important for you to have this knowledge as a teaching assistant?

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6. Name a few **EXTERNAL SUPPORT AGENCIES**.

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7. Identify people who may have been denied **EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY** in school settings and state the importance of equal opportunities.

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8. How would you define **INCLUSION**?

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9. Do you think **LEGISLATION** can stop discrimination?

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10. Name the 4 stages of the **NEW CODE OF PRACTICE**

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16. Do you think you have a clearer understanding of the importance of your role as teaching assistant within your school/college setting?

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.....

THANKS FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION - ENJOY UNIT 02 !

**NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

ASSIGNMENT 04 – 20 JANUARY 2003
(HAND-IN DATE: 27 JANUARY 2003)

**AIM: SUPPORT THE TEACHER IN RELATION TO PUPILS' LEARNING:
PARTICIPATION IN ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING/CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK**

Task 1

Part of your role as a teaching assistant is to support the teacher in implementing learning activities, whether it is working with an individual or with a targeted group of pupils. In order to ensure that the pupils are learning and you are using the correct teaching strategies, you need to continuously assess the learning process.

- Use any learning activity that you are responsible for and assess it thoroughly to see if the learning aims are being met;
- present your findings in a condensed way;
(Cover page, assessment grid, interview questionnaire and answer sheet, short summary/recommendation if necessary)

Task 2

- In your own words, explain FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT;
- why *you* think it is important to assess/evaluate the learning activities you deliver

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Candidates must show understanding of the importance of assessment, prove that they support the teacher in the evaluation of activities, participate in record keeping as part of constructive feedback.

LEARNING OUTCOMES 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.2.8, 3.2.10

**NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

10 FEB .
ASSIGNMENT 05 – ~~27 JANUARY~~ 2003
(HAND-IN DATE: ~~17 FEBRUARY~~ 2003)
3rd MARCH .

**AIM: SUPPORT THE TEACHER IN RELATION TO PUPILS' LEARNING:
DISPLAY OF PUPILS' WORK**

Task

- The display of pupils' work is very important as it promotes positive learning opportunities. Give a brief explanation of why you agree with this statement.
- Provide photographic evidence of pupil's work that you have displayed as part of your role as teaching assistant in the class room. If necessary, you can include an activity plan of steps that you have used to put up your display. Perhaps pupils may have participated in helping you.

NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

ASSIGNMENT 06 – 24 MARCH 2003
(HAND-IN DATE: 31ST MARCH)

AIM: TO CONSOLIDATE UNIT 06: EXPLORING THE MANAGEMENT OF PUPILS' BEHAVIOUR

Task

Please complete the WRITTEN QUESTIONING paperwork on Unit 06. You might find your notebook and handouts useful to assist you. Should you need any other form of guidance or support, do not hesitate to contact your tutor.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Candidate must prove underlying knowledge and theory for successful application of skill, in managing pupils' behaviour.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.1.5, 6.1.6, 6.1.7, 6.1.8, 6.1.9, 6.1.10, 6.1.11, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4, 6.2.5, 6.2.6, 6.2.7, 6.2.8, 6.2.9, 6.2.11, 6.2.14, 6.2.15, 6.2.16, 6.2.17, 6.2.19, 6.2.20, 6.2.22, 6.2.23, 6.3.1, 6.3.3, 6.3.5, 6.3.8, 6.3.10, 6.3.11, 6.3.14.

- 3. Explain INTERNAL and EXTERNAL factors which may affect that development, and by doing so, affect the child's behaviour.**

4. Name four academic PERSPECTIVES on behaviour.

5. Understanding behaviour in context is important. Name a few GENERAL ISSUES on behaviour.

- 6. Outline the PRINCIPLES of positive behaviour management, including the role of appropriate communication strategies, limitation of rewards and sanctions, etc.**

7. Explain in your own words why you think it's important that we must allow opportunities for children to EXPRESS their FEELINGS. (What is the link between underlying feelings and behaviour? Give an example.)

8. What is meant by "encourage acceptable behaviour by POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT".

9. How would you maintain own and others' SAFETY, when dealing with negative or inappropriate behaviour.

10. Feedback, through accurate DOCUMENTATION and recording of an incident is vital. Name the KEY features or headings of such documentation.

11. Being around pupils who are happy and therefore act socially appropriate, is much easier than to have to deal with negative anti-social behaviour. Name a few FORMS of inappropriate behaviour that you often have to deal with.

12. In light of the above-mentioned, how do you manage YOUR OWN EMOTIONS when diffusing difficult situations? Name any PROCEDURES that your setting provides to ensure that you, an important member of staff, are supported?

13. What is an IBP?

14. Explain how a MERIT CHART can be used as a tool in managing challenging behaviour?

15. Design (in pencil) a MERIT CHART for a pupil in order to redirect his behaviour. Show important features, including his target/s and reward.

**16. How would you know if a pupil is possibly being ABUSED.
(Signs and symptoms)**

**17. What would your DUTY be next? Explain the line of
communication that will follow and all agencies involved.**

18. Explain in your own words the implication of LEGAL requirements in relation to child protection issues.



***BE PROUD OF YOUR HARD WORK,
YOU HAVE DONE VERY WELL.***

NCFE
CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

ASSIGNMENT 07 – 28TH APRIL 2003
(HAND-IN DATE: 5TH MAY OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER PLEASE)

AIM: UNIT 07: SUPPORT PUPILS' WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

TASK

You are the most senior LSA working at a multi-cultural mainstream school that promotes the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. As part of your role, the head teacher has asked you to design and produce a **leaflet** which can be used as a visual aid and staff training for new LSAs and beginner teachers.

The leaflet must contain information on language/communication and interaction barriers including pupils learning EAL and ways to support such learners.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Candidate must show knowledge of language and communication barriers, pupils learning English as an additional language, and how to support such learners in an effective way.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: 7.2.1, 7.2.2, 7.2.6, 7.2.7, 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.3, 7.3.4, 7.3.5, 7.3.6, 7.3.9, 7.3.10, 7.3.11, 7.3.12

APPENDIX F

ASSIGNMENT FEEDBACK SHEET

Certificate for Teaching Assistants FEEDBACK SHEET

STUDENT:	ASSESSOR: Benita McLachlan
UNIT NO:	ASSIGNMENT NO:
IV:	DATE IV'D:
HAND-IN DATE:	DATE RECEIVED:
DATE MARKED:	DATE RETURNED:
ASSESSOR'S FEEDBACK:	
ASSESSOR'S SIGNATURE:	
STUDENT COMMENT:	

GRADE:	REFER	PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION
GRADING CRITERIA:				
PASS	MERIT		DISTINCTION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pass grade is achieved by meeting all the requirements defined in the assessment criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A merit grade is achieved by select and use relevant information • show skill and understanding in applying knowledge • choose an appropriate format to present work using vocational language accurately 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A merit grade is achieved by collect, select and usage of relevant information from a variety of resources • show skill and understanding in analysing and applying knowledge • present and structure work coherently, using vocational language fluently 	

LINKS TO KEY SKILLS (level 2):
Problem Solving:
Communication:
Information Technology:
Working with others:
Improving own learning & performance:

APPENDIX G

ASSIGNMENT RECORD

Student Name	DATE	Assignment 01					Assignment 02					Assignment 03					Assignment 04					Assignment 05				
		Grade	Set	Due	Actual	Returned to student	Grade	Set	Due	Actual	Returned to student	Grade	Set	Due	Actual	Returned to Student	Grade	Set	Due	Actual	Returned to student	Grade	Set	Due	Actual	Returned to student
11 UNDA BINGOR		1	23/9			M	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	D	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	D	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
12 UNDA WHITE			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	P	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	D	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
13 MADISON SKINNER			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	D	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	M	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
14 SHERRY EGERS			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	P	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	M	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
15 JOHN HARRISON			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	M	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	D	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
16 VERONICA GUNDE			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	M	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	D	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
17 BEATRICE TAYLOR			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	31/12	P	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	P	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
18 ANITA SHAPIRO			23/9			M	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	M	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	M	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
19 DAVE BERT (W)						M	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	31/12	31/12	P	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2						
20 GAIL SULLIVAN (W)						P	28/10	11/11	18/11	25/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11											
21 SARA TEGEBERG			23/9				28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	P	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	P	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
22 BEVER LEAH (W)						P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11											
23 ANDY HUGHTON			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	11/11	18/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	M	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	R	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
24 ANDY BERT (W)																										
25 BARRY WOODWARD			23/9			P	28/10	11/11	18/11	25/11	P	11/11	18/11	18/11	25/11	P	27/11	19/2	19/2	24/2	P	10/2	3/3	3/3	10/3	
Title		ASSIGNMENT 01: LOG A DAILY DIARY					ASSIGNMENT 02: TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE					ASS. 03: TO CONSOLIDATE UNIT 01: WRITTEN QUESTIONING					ASS. 04: PARTICIPATE IN ASSESSMENT + RECORD KEEPING / CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK					ASS. 05 SUPPORT THE TEACHER IN RELATION TO PUPILS LEARNING. AS PUPILS WORK				

ASSIGNMENT RECORD

STAFF: BENITA M'NCHAMU

COURSE/SUBJECT: CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

YEAR: 2002/03



Isle College

Student Name	DATE	Grade	Set	Due	Actual	Returned to student
1	24/3	M	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
2	24/3	P	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
3	24/3	M	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
4	24/3	M	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
5	24/3	P	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
6	24/3	P	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
7	24/3	P	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
8	24/3	M	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
9	24/3	D	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
10	24/3	P	24/3	3/3	3/3	7/4
(CONTINUE)						
Title						
ASSIGNMENT 06: TO CONSOLIDATE UNIT 06: MANA- GING PUPILS' BEHAVIOUR.		Grade				
		Set				
		Due				
		Actual				
		Returned to student				
ASSIGNMENT 04: SUPPORT PUPILS' WITH SPECIAL EDU- CATIONAL NEEDS.		Grade				
		Set				
		Due				
		Actual				
		Returned to student				
		Grade				
		Set				
		Due				
		Actual				
		Returned to student				
		Grade				
		Set				
		Due				
		Actual				
		Returned to student				

APPENDIX H

TIME-TABLE FOR TUTORIAL INTERVIEWS

TIME-TABLE FOR TUTORIAL SESSIONS

NCFE LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

MONDAY: 2/06/03

TIME	ROOM	CANDIDATE'S NAME
6.45 – 7.15 pm	B1	
7.15 – 7.45 pm	B1	
7.45 – 8.15 pm	B1	
8.15 – 8.45pm	B1	
8.45 – 9.15 pm	B1	

MONDAY: 9/06/03

TIME	ROOM	CANDIDATE'S NAME
5.30 – 6 pm	B1	
6 – 6.30 pm	B1	
6.30 – 7 pm	B1	
7 – 7.30 pm	B1	
7.30 – 8 pm	B1	
8 – 8.30 pm	B1	

MONDAY: 16/06/03

TIME	ROOM	CANDIDATE'S NAME
5.30 – 6 pm	B1	
6 – 6.30 pm	B1	
6.30 – 7 pm	B1	
7 - 7.30 pm	B1	
7.30 – 8 pm	B1	
8 – 8.30 pm	B1	

TUESDAY: 17/06/03

10 – 10.30 am	C12	
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WEDNESDAY: 18/06/03

10 – 10.30 am	C12	
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APPENDIX I

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT TIMETABLE

2003/04 School Assessment Timetable

Qualification No **100/2240/5**

Scheme Name **NCFE LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

Assessment Type	Window No	Deadline for Entries	NCFE forwards to Centre	Candidates sit External	Centres return External	Results Released
MCQ	7/03	24/02/2003	24/03/2003	31/03/2003	01/04/2003	21/04/2003
MCQ	9/03	06/05/2003	02/06/2003	09/06/2003	10/06/2003	10/06/2003
MCQ	12/03	26/08/2003	22/09/2003	29/09/2003	30/09/2003	20/10/2003

APPENDIX J

NCFE EXAMINATION RESULTS

NCFE Results Confirmation Report

Qualification No Qualification Name

100/2240/5 NCFE LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Centre No Centre Name

022353 Isle College

Centres Own Ref

Candidate No	First Name	Surname	Batch No	External Ass Ref	Result
50013586	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013587	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013588	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013589	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013590	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013591	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013592	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013593	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013594	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013595	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013596	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013597	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013598	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013599	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013600	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Did Not Attend

Qualification No Qualification Name

100/2240/5 NCFE LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Centre No Centre Name

022353 Isle College

Centres Own Ref

Candidate No	First Name	Surname	Batch No	External Ass Ref	Result
50013601	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013602	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013603	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved
50013604	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	980519	EXTASS/117	Achieved

APPENDIX K

PRINCIPAL'S MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM

To: Benita McLachlan
From: Mark Taylor
Date: 18 June 2002
Subject: **RESEARCH PROJECT**

Thank you for your letter dated 10th June. I am of course delighted to approve your request.

Learning Support Assistants play a vital role in developing our ability to meet the needs of learners. It is therefore particularly pleasing to see the work in which you are engaged.

I am intrigued to note that you are doing your masters through the University of Stellenbosch. This must generate a number of challenges as well as creating an interesting dialogue on the actual work.

Best of luck with your research and your degree.



APPENDIX L

LETTER FROM AWARDING BODY

RECEIVED
10 JUL 2002



Ref: 020619mso/bm

19 June 2002

Benita McLachlan
Special Needs Lecturer
Isle College
Wisbech
Cambs PE13 0HY

Dear Benita

Re: NCFE Certificate for Special Needs Assistants

Many thanks for your recent letter to NCFE requesting permission to use the above certificate as part of your research for your MEd..

I am delighted that you have chosen to use the NCFE programme for your research and am happy to confirm our authorisation for you to do so. It would, of course, be of great interest to NCFE to hear of the outcome of your research.

It should be noted that the certificate in question is nearing the end of its validity as the new National Occupational Standards for teaching assistants will soon be adopted for all qualifications in this area (i.e. those working in any auxiliary position in an educational setting).

If you would like to discuss any of these impending changes, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague Gail Rochester on 0191 239 8076 or by email at gailrochester@ncfe.org.uk.

All the best with your research!

Yours sincerely,

Mark Stephen Oddy
Qualifications Leader

NCFE
Citygate
St James Boulevard
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4JE

Tel: 0191 239 8000
Fax: 0191 239 8004
Email: info@ncfe.org.uk
Web: www.ncfe.org.uk

Chief Executive: Isabel Sutcliffe



APPENDIX M

PARTICIPANT CONCENT FORM

EVALUATION OF AN IN-SERVICE PROGRAMME FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN THE UK

RESEARCH STUDY

The purpose with this study is to

- determine the effect of programme participation on the professional development of students working as support staff in schools;
- to confirm the importance of this particular NCFE programme.

APPROVED BY

This research project has been approved by

- The principle, Mr. Mark Taylor, Isle College, Wisbech
- NCFE, the awarding body for the Certificate for Teaching Assistants

ASSESSMENT

In addition to the standard programme assessment, you will be expected to complete the following:

- pre and post self-evaluation
- audio-taped tutorial session

CONSENT

I herewith consent to participate in the above research project.

.....
STUDENT NAME (PRINT)

.....
SIGNATURE

APPENDIX N

COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

AWARDING BODY: NCFE

Duration:

Part-time Monday evenings for 3 hours 6.00 – 9.00pm per week for 33 weeks.

Start Date:

September 2003.

Entry Requirements:

Whilst it is recommended that candidates have some experience of working with young children and young people between 0 and 15 years old or in the Further Education section either a voluntary paid capacity, this qualification is open to those who have no previous relevant experience. Ideally candidates should have high levels of literacy and numeracy equivalent to GCSE Grade C and above in English Language and Mathematics or be proficient in literacy and numeracy equivalent to that level.

Candidates must be prepared to comply with the vetting procedures for those working with children and young people, as required by current legislation when seeking placement hours. The minimum entry age for this qualification is 18.

Qualification Aim:

Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants

What does it involve?

The qualification consists of **three** mandatory units:

- Develop professional skills and knowledge
- Understand legal and national requirements
- Support the teacher in relation to pupils learning

Plus:

- Units explore the management of pupils behaviour
- Support pupils with special educational needs

Where does this course take me?

The Level 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants is aimed at those candidates who want to gain employment as a Teaching Assistant. The qualification also encourages transfer of learning into the workplace for those candidates who are already employed as Teaching Assistants. There are also a number of possible progression routes to additional qualifications. These are to:

- Other appropriate qualifications at Level 3
- Specialist Teaching Assistants qualification at Level 3
- NVQ's for Teaching Assistants

Assessment:

Assessment will include:

- Internally assessed portfolio

Each candidate is required to create a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates achievements of all learning outcomes associated with each unit. Learning outcomes specify what each candidate has to achieve and are included with each unit:

The main pieces of evidence for the portfolio are:

1. Candidate notebook
2. Reflective diary
3. Assessor observation
4. Case studies

Plus an externally set and assessed multiple-choice question paper.

Cost Of Course:

Details of price, concessions and the Learner Support fund can be obtained from the Advice Centre.

How to Apply:

Please call into our Advice Centre at the Isle College or contact us on 01945 466302.

We are committed to providing, as far as is reasonable and practicable, services for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

APPENDIX O

INDUCTION EVENING AGENDA

NCFE Level 2 Certificate for Tas

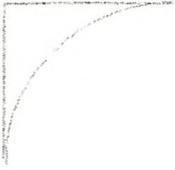
NEW STUDENTS EVE

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Brief intro of Course: -Aims
 -Units
3. Verifications: -Portfolios:
 Handouts
 Notebook
 Case studies
 Role-plays
 Assessor Observations
 Assignments
 Diary
 -External Exam
4. Work placements
5. Commitment
 Attendance
 Punctuality
6. Registration
7. Questions/Evaluation
8. Commence date in September

APPENDIX P

LETTER FROM EXTERNAL MODERATOR



ncfe

national awarding body

Dear Benita

NCFE LEVEL 2 Certificate for Teaching Assistants

Thank you for making me so welcome during my moderation visit to the Isle College on 23 June 2003.

I enjoyed the visit and was most impressed by the high quality of your organisation, planning and delivery of the course and of the students' work.

You are obviously very committed to the course and to your students. They are fortunate to have such an enthusiastic and dedicated tutor and congratulations on their successful results.

I hope you have an enjoyable and relaxing holiday.

Best wishes

Patricia Keogh

Patricia Keogh
External Moderator

NCFE
Citygate
St James Boulevard
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4JE

Tel: 0191 239 8000
Fax: 0191 239 8001

Email: info@ncfe.org.uk
Web: www.ncfe.org.uk

Chief Executive: Isabel Sutcliffe
Registered Charity 1034805 company no 2896700