QUEENSLAND EARLY CAREER TEACHERS’ CONCEPTIONS OF A QUALITY TEACHER: A PHENOMENOGRAPHIC STUDY.

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Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering

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Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I (Tony Richardson) declare that:

● the thesis is my own account of research undertaken by me; and

● the thesis has been wholly completed during candidature, except where the Committee has approved a transfer of enrolment from another higher degree by research; and

● where work has been done conjointly with other persons, my contribution is clearly stated and the contribution of other persons is clearly acknowledged and recognised; and

● the thesis does not contain as its main content any work or material which is embodied in a thesis or dissertation previously submitted by me or any other person for a University degree or other similar qualification at this or other higher education institution, except where approval has previously been granted by the Committee.

__________________________________________  __________________________
Tony Richardson                                Date
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**KEY TERMS**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. The researcher seeks to document and highlight the experiences of twenty-five early career teachers from Queensland, Australia. The focus of this research is to develop conceptions of a quality teacher with a view to producing an outcome space that reflects these conceptions. It is anticipated that the research will contribute to the body of knowledge associated with a quality teacher by providing a platform for Queensland early career teachers to contribute to the debate surrounding this topic.

Limited research has investigated Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher, which emphasises a gap in knowledge within an Australian context. Much of the work undertaken to address educational challengers, in Australia, tends to have a fixation on solutions from outside of Australia. As Dinham outlines the issue for Australia is that:

A fixation with Finland [and] South Korea ... represents the worst form of cultural cringe. We need to recognize and build on the strengths we have rather than cherry picking what appear to be recipes for success from vastly different contexts.

(Dinham, 2012, p.1)

In addition to highlighting limited research focusing on Queensland early career teachers’ experiences of a quality teacher a review of the literature also outlines challenges in understanding the definitions of teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher in addition to some ambiguity in identifying early career teachers.

The selection of phenomenography, as the research approach for this research, is based on its appropriateness to the investigation of a phenomenon such as quality. Phenomenography aims to describe, analyse and understand the ways in which participants experience aspects of the world in which they live. Phenomenographical research seeks to investigate neither the phenomenon, nor the participants who experience the
phenomenon, but the relation between the two. The results of a phenomenographic study present a description of all of the possible conceptions that a specific group of participants can have about a particular phenomenon.

The five major categories of description which emerge from the research, is presented as; The Knowledgeable One, The Architect Understanding, The Facilitator of Relationships, The Affective One and The Elder. Within these five major categories description thirteen salient features of conception are developed.

This thesis presents a view of a quality teacher that may be used to further develop the processes for teacher education, add to the debate surrounding a definition of a quality teacher, and the professional development of teachers from an Australian educational perspective.
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

ACE      Australian College of Educators
AITSL    Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
APST     Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
EQ       Education Queensland
ETS      Educational Testing Service
GDP      Gross Domestic Product
NAPLAN   The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NSWBSTES NEW South Wales Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards
OAM      Medal of the Order of Australia
OECD     Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PISA     Program for International Student Assessment test
QCT      Queensland College of Teachers
TQELTF   Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Task Force
US       United States
VIT      Victorian Institute for Teaching

Style.
This thesis has been prepared using an APA reference style, with reference to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition. This thesis’ formatting was prepared using The University of the Sunshine Coast’s formatting 2017 guidelines for thesis submission.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The importance placed by the Australian government on the education of Australian students emphasises the significant role teachers’ play in providing a quality education (Vavra, 2014). There is sufficient research to indicate that teachers vary in quality and that teachers have an impact on student learning (Dinham, 2012; Hanushek, 2010; Hattie, 2009).

By providing research on a quality teacher, through a focus on Queensland early career teachers, the researcher sought to uncover new knowledge, or add to existing knowledge that might assist Queensland teachers in providing students with a quality education (Dinham, 2012). With a brief overview of chapter 1 provided, the next section relates to explaining the structure and content of this chapter.

The focus of chapter 1 is to provide the reader with a brief insight into the background associated with the researcher’s interest in conducting research on a quality teacher within a Queensland context. In addition, chapter 1 also outlines some details about the researcher’s initial use of early career teachers as participants in this study, and a brief explanation of the phrase a quality teacher. The reader should note that more detailed responses for conducting research in Queensland, the use of early career teachers as participants, definitions of ‘quality’ and the concept of ‘a quantity teacher’ are provided in chapter 2. The following sub-headings provide a platform for unpacking Chapter 1’s focus – a personal consciousness, the purpose of this study, the research questions, the significance of the research, and finally, a summary of chapter 1.
A personal consciousness outlines the researcher’s initial motivation for this research by highlighting some background information for conducting research on a quality teacher within a Queensland educational context. This is then followed by an explanation of the phrase ‘a quality teacher’, and a brief outline for the use of early career teachers in this study. The purpose of this study is to highlight research that emphasises the link between teachers and student learning, and the significant role teachers’ play in student learning. The research questions focus on the approach used to develop these questions and outlines how these questions drove this study. The significance of the research highlights the possible importance of this study in relation to a quality teacher and research conducted within Queensland. Finally, a summary of chapter 1 provides an overview of the chapter.

1.1 A personal consciousness

This thesis reports the findings of research on the conceptions of a quality teacher. These findings are derived from the experiences of twenty-five Queensland early career teachers and obtained by using a phenomenographic research methodology. The reader should note that chapter 2 contains a more detailed response to the selection of these twenty-five participants. To assist the reader in gaining a deeper insight into the researcher’s personal consciousness, three points are highlighted, and expanded upon, in this introduction. The first point relates to a focus on conducting research within a Queensland educational context. The second point focuses on the researcher’s motivation to study the concept of a quality teacher. The third, and final point, provides the reader with a brief explanation for the use of early career teachers as participants in this study.

The initial focus of conducting educational research within a Queensland educational context is attributed to the researcher’s current
job location and a paper that the researcher read by Professor Stephen Dinham (2012) expressing concerns about Australia’s fixation with Finland and Hong Kong. However, the researcher’s interest grew after gaining a deeper insight into Dinham’s concerns from the research of De Bortoli, Thomson, and, Underwood (2017), Ergas (2012), Gorur and Wu (2014), Korpela (2009), and Sharrock (2012).

In 2012, one of Australia’s leading educationalists Professor Stephen Dinham (Australian College of Educators, 2016; The University of Melbourne, 2016) outlined some views to indicate that he held concerns about Australia’s fixation with the educational systems of Finland and South Korea (Dinham, 2012). A brief summary of his views and concerns are captured in the extract below:

> Australia’s fixation with Finland and South Korea ... represents the worst form of cultural cringe. We need to recognize and build on the strengths we have rather than cherry picking what appear to be recipes for success from ... different contexts. (Dinham, 2012, p.1)

From this summary above the researcher initially gleaned from Dinham (2012) a concern about Australia’s fixation with Finland and South Korea.

From this study’s perspective, Dinham’s (2012) focus on advocating the recognition and building of Australian recipes for success made an important statement about research in Australia. However, it was Dinham’s concern about Australia’s fixation with Finland and South Korea that resonated with the researcher. Dinham and Scott (2012) suggested that this fixation was the result of a growing infatuation with the envy associated with the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) test. Dinham and Scott’s concerns were supported by Buckingham (2014) who outlined that considerable controversy surrounds the PISA test in Australia due to the Australian government’s use of test outcomes to comment on the quality of Australia’s teachers.
The PISA test is the Organisation of Economic and Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) largest global educational survey that assesses the reading, mathematics and science aptitudes (with a focus on mathematics) of 15-year-olds globally (Buckingham, 2014). Based on the outcomes of this test countries are ranked on a global scale by the performance of their students (Buckingham, 2014). Over the past decade Finland and South Korea have consistently outperformed other OECD countries and have been ranked in the top five OECD countries (Buckingham, 2014). Therefore, both domestically and internationally success in the PISA test is used by governments as a standard that reflects a level of educational acumen and academic performance of an OECD country (Buckingham, 2014).

In order to address being outperformed by Finland and South Korea, Australia has sought to acquire information about the strategies that these high performing PISA test countries use by, as Dinham (2012) argued, simply cherry picking recipes of success to be implemented in Australian schools. The need for Australia to seek out Dinham’s recipes of success, as Gorur and Wu (2014) acknowledged, has been reinforced by the Australian government declaring that by 2025 Australian students will be in the top five ranked PISA countries.

It was evident to the researcher from Dinham’s (2012) initial comments and the importance placed by the Australian government, and other OECD countries on the PISA test that domestically and internationally there is a strong emphasis on ensuring students perform well in the PISA test. However, Australia’s strategy of seeking solutions, as Dinham outlined, from countries that are culturally and contextually different to Australia does have its pitfalls. Dinham is not alone in voicing a concern with attempting to seek solutions to Australia’s educational challenges from countries that are culturally and contextually different. Similar concerns are made by De Bortoli, Thomson, and Underwood (2017), Ergas (2012), Korpela (2009), and Sharrock (2012).
Ergas (2012) contended that cultural forces in the top five ranked OECD countries must play a part in their success in PISA testing and therefore, the cultural differences associated with Australia would have an impact on any attempt to transfer or adopt strategies from these countries to Australia. Sharrock (2012) followed on by highlighting that it would be difficult for Australia to neatly fit into Finland’s Nordic monoculture and as a consequence, there would be challenges to simply superimposing Finland’s culture on Australia. Moreover, as De Bortoli, Thomson, and Underwood (2017), and Korpela (2009) highlighted the issues surrounding cultural comparability between Australia and Finland would present educational challenges.

Dinham’s (2012) comments coupled with those from Ergas (2012), Gautschi (2002), Sharrock (2012), and Thomson (2012) acknowledge the high stakes of the PISA test, and, as such, the need for Australian educational research, and by association Queensland, to meet the requirements of the Australian government’s 2025 focus of being in the top five ranked PISA countries. A further development of a focus on research in Queensland is explored in chapter 2 where a discussion on the importance of having teachers of quality in Queensland classrooms is conducted.

From the researcher’s perspective, and based on the concerns espoused by Dinham (2012), the Australian government’s 2025 focus and the research of Ergas (2012), Gautschi (2002), Sharrock (2012), and Thomson (2012) there was a need to conduct research in Australia to address some of the educational challenges that confront the nation which may prevent it from attaining the government’s 2025 PISA goal. A review of the current literature indicates that some of these challenges focus on, for example, the quality of teachers in Australian schools (Caldwell, 2012; Dinham, 2012; Hattie, 2009).

A need to conduct research in Australia also stems from the difficulty outlined by the research provided above that suggests Australia will encounter challenges in raising its PISA ranking, by 2025, through a
possible focus on seeking to source teaching strategies from countries that are culturally and contextually different. Based on an interest to initially address Dinham’s concerns, the researcher sought to uncover areas of research which may be recognised and built upon. One area that caught the researcher’s attention was the term ‘quality’ as applied to teachers (Caldwell, 2012; Dinham, 2012; Hattie, 2007; Rowe, 2003).

The research noted above highlights that one area of focus for educational research in Australia, and by association Queensland, is the term quality as applied to teachers, and teaching; sometimes delineated as ‘teacher quality’, and ‘teaching quality’ (Caldwell, 2012; Dinham, 2012; Hattie, 2007; Rowe, 2003). However, for the researcher, an emphasis on teacher quality and teaching quality was too broad a research focus because the researcher was only interested in ‘a’ quality teacher. The researcher’s interest in research that focused on what constituted a quality teacher was attributed to two points. First, teachers vary in their quality (Dinham, 2012; Hattie, 2007; Hanushek, 2010) and a focus on teacher quality and teaching quality could have culminated in researching a myriad of terms that would have made the research less focused on specific teacher’s conceptions of quality. Second, the plethora of positive appellations used by other researchers to describe teachers; such as ‘the best teacher’, ‘the greatest teacher’, and ‘the very best teacher’ would have again diminished the researcher’s focus on specific teacher’s conceptions of quality. An explanation for the two points above is provided below in the following paragraphs.

A study that focused on a quality teacher interested the researcher due to a possible relationship between teachers and their quality. This interested is highlighted by the researcher’s focus on the phrase ‘a quality teacher’, so that ‘a quality’ precedes the ‘teacher’, and therefore, highlights the quintessential application of the term ‘quality’ when applied to ‘a’ teacher:- in other words a cogent focus on ‘a quality teacher’ as opposed to a focus on ‘teacher quality’, ‘teaching quality’ or
appellations associated with describing teachers as ‘the best’, the ‘very best’ or ‘of the highest quality’ was more appealing for the researcher.

The research presented in this study also contends that the term quality, used in this study’s context, highlights all of the appellations and various types of quality that are used to describe ‘a’ teacher. From the researcher’s perspective, this belief incorporated all of the possible terms to describe a teacher who was acknowledged by their peers, parents, and students as a quality teacher. For the researcher a quality teacher is a teacher who stands out from the rest by being acknowledged by others as being a good, very good, the best, the very best, high quality, very high quality, the great, or the very greatest teacher. This view lead the researcher to focus on ‘others’ which eventually culminated in an interest to uncover how early teachers’ careers may have experienced a quality teacher. As a consequence, this interest to uncover these experiences of quality resulted in the genesis of this study. It is important to note that further development of definitions focusing on quality, teacher quality, teaching quality, a quality teacher, in addition to an explanation to the use of early career teachers, are provided in the next chapter.

Whilst the research of Dinham (2012) and others highlighted above resonated with the researcher, it was Education Queensland’s (EQ’s) introduction of recipes for success from a United States context, into some Queensland schools, which eventually prompted the researcher to acknowledge the need for a study that centred on Queensland teachers.

In 2012, EQ initiated a process to introduce US contextualised research, by Dr Robert Marzano (2007), into some Queensland schools. Marzano’s research had been undertaken in a number of US schools and emphasised a suite of strategies for a teacher to apply in the classroom to assist students with their learning. It was envisaged by EQ that the implementation of Marzano’s strategies would have a positive impact on student learning, in some Queensland schools, as was experienced in US schools (Mason, 2013). Referring again to the concerns of Dinham (2012) and other researchers outlined above, EQ was using Marzano’s culturally
and contextually different strategies to achieve the same positive impact within Queensland schools, as was achieved in US schools. From the researcher’s perspective, such an approach would eventually, as Dinham highlighted, prove to be counterproductive. The researcher believed that the counter productiveness which Dinham spoke of could be due to the differing cultural and contextual backgrounds of Australian and American students. This statement is discussed in more detail in the paragraph below.

It could be argued that Australians and Americans have similar interests and aspirations, it would also be fair to state that culturally and contextually Australians and Americans are different (Fallows, 2011; Zimmermann, 2015). It is this focus on the differences in culture and context, as previously highlighted by other researchers above, which prompted the researcher to question the use of US contextualised research in Queensland. As such, the researcher felt that, instead of EQ focusing on success stories from the US, it is important for EQ to uncover success stories that are culturally and contextually aligned to Queensland. This belief by the researcher was based on the previous research of Ergas (2012), Gautschi (2002), Sharrock (2012), and Thomson (2012) who highlighted the challenges associated with the cultural and contextual differences between Australia, Finland, and the top five ranked PISA nations. As a result of acknowledging this previous research and the actions employed by EQ, the researcher initially focused on the need to conduct research that centred on Queensland. As previously mentioned a more detailed explanation of the selection for Queensland as the site for research has been provided in chapter 2.

With an explanation of the initial reasoning behind conducting research in Queensland, and a focus on a quality teacher highlighted above the remainder of the chapter looks at outlining the relevance of conducting a study on ‘a quality teacher’. This approach commences with initially acknowledging the impact of the teacher on a student’s learning. The researcher’s initial interest in the impact of the teacher on a student’s

For the researcher, studying conceptions of a quality teacher was initially encouraged after having read Professor John Hattie’s (2009) synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement. Of the many key points that Hattie highlighted in his meta-analysis, it is the work regarding the impact that ‘a teacher’ has on a student’s learning, which resonated with the researcher. Hattie concluded that percentage measurements could be allocated to highlight the impact a teacher, the student, and others had on student learning. Hattie revealed that a teacher had a thirty percent impact, a student a fifty percent impact, and others had a twenty percent impact on student learning. Hattie indicated that others reflected, for example, the impact the principal and a school’s resources had on a student’s learning.

A further investigation of Hattie’s research (2009) indicated that there were various levels of impact linked to the individual quality of each teacher which also aligned with other research in this area (See, for example, Caldwell, 2012; Dinham, 2008; Hattie & Yates, 2014; Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperative Development (OECD), 2005; Sanders & Horn, 1998). Consequently, while teachers have the capacity to impact on a student’s learning not all teachers’ impact equally on that learning (Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Sawchuk, 2011).

Building on Hattie’s (2009) research, investigations of the literature revealed that there are differences to the quality of teachers; and consequently, teachers varied in quality; therefore, some teachers impact on a student’s learning by thirty percent, while others impact to a lesser degree (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Garcia, 2006; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Liakopoulou, 2011). From the researcher’s perspective, Hattie’s research on student learning, coupled with the knowledge that teachers vary in quality, reinforced the importance of a teacher’s quality on a student’s learning. Therefore, it was a combination of concerns
expressed by researchers about the cultural and contextual differences between Australia, Finland and Hong Kong, the significance of the teacher’s impact on a student’s learning, and the variances in the quality of teachers that culminated in the researcher wanting to conduct research on a quality teacher. Using Hattie’s work as a starting point the researcher explored in more detail the impact that teachers had on a student’s learning via the quality of the teacher. This development of Hattie’s work is revealed in greater detail in chapter 2.

The information above reflects responses to two of the three points initially outlined by the researcher. The third, and final point, relates to a brief outline as to the use of early career teachers in this study; as mentioned previously a more detailed response to the use of early career teachers is provided in chapter 2.

There are two reasons behind the researcher initially selecting early career teachers for this study. First, the researcher’s experiences with preservice teachers was normally linked to their final practicum. Generally, the researcher found that these preservice teachers were receptive to taking advice from a number of people during the course of their practicum. This possibly occurred because of their interest in teaching, coupled with a desire to attain the best possible rating for their practicum. As the mentor teacher of preservice teachers, the researcher was required to allocate a rating, at the end of their practicum experience, for each preservice teacher based on a specific set of criteria. This rating, in conjunction with other documentation, was then used by various educational governing bodies to determine each preservice teacher’s exit standard for teaching.

Usually by the time a preservice teacher had reached the final year of their practicum experiences, they were generally keen to listen, and to learn to improve their teaching skills. It was this desire to attain the best possible rating for their practicums that interested the researcher. Therefore, these preservice teachers represented a constant reminder of the importance of quality in teaching, and the need to have detailed
discussions as to what constituted a teacher of high standard, based on EQ and university selection criteria.

Second, similar to preservice teachers, beginning teachers also sought out information about being a teacher of a high standard. However, unlike preservice teachers, beginning teachers generally focused on a number of classroom challenges, and how over time those challenges could be addressed through their teaching.

The researcher noticed after discussions with a number of beginning teachers that one strategy used by them was to focus on their past, and present teaching experiences, and the teaching experiences of their peers. In addition, the researcher observed that in general when beginning teachers sought knowledge about teaching, they tended to seek out and speak to teachers who exhibited, from their perspective, good teaching skills.

The initial use of early career teachers in this study is reflected in an interest in discussing pathways to seek out knowledge about good teachers, and teaching. This knowledge is based around preservice teachers, and beginning teachers wanting to discover ‘how’ they could be good at teaching. It is this connection to seeking out these pathways to success in their teaching that encouraged the choice of early career teachers as participants in this study. With an overview of the researcher’s personal consciousness outlined, the next section of this chapter focuses on the purpose of this study.

1.2 Purpose of this study

More than any other time, the quality of teachers-internationally, nationally, and locally – is under public scrutiny (Carter & Lochte, 2017; Livingstone, 2017). This public scrutiny is the result of a number of significant factors.

First, there is cogent research which attests to the link between a student’s learning and the teacher (Caldwell, 2012; Dinham, 2012;
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Hattie, 2009). Second, there is evidence indicating that the level of a teacher’s impact on a student’s learning is dependent upon the quality of the teacher and this quality varies from teacher to teacher (Alloway, Gilbert, Gilbert & Muspratt, 2004; Caldwell, 2012; Creswell & Underwood, 2004; Hanushek, 2010; Hayes, Mills, Christie & Lingard, 2006; Hattie, 2009). Third, research now substantiates that one of the reasons for a decline in a country’s gross domestic product (GDP) is linked to students’ learning and the impact of the quality of the teacher (Auguste, Hancock, & Laboissière, 2009; Jensen & Reichl, 2012).

As a result of the research presented above, the researcher believed that there was evidence to conduct this study due to the significance of the teacher on student learning outcomes, the teacher’s impact on that learning, and the convincing links between a country’s GDP, a teacher’s quality, and a student’s learning. Based on this belief the researcher undertook further research to validate the need to conduct research on a quality teacher using Queensland early career teachers as participants. In order to facilitate this further research and validation is presented in chapter 3. This study sought to uncover new knowledge, or add to existing knowledge on the quality teacher, within a Queensland context, by exploring conceptions of a quality teacher as described by Queensland teachers. It was envisaged that this study would contribute to improving the quality of Queensland teachers and a student’s learning, by assisting to further understand a quality teacher within a Queensland context. Thus, the next section focuses on highlighting the research questions associated with this study. These research questions provide a direction to the research and give some initial clarity to the research process addressed in detail in chapter 3.

1.3 The research questions

The approach used to develop the research questions involved a careful consideration of the research’s purpose and context. As such, the
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The first area of consideration focused on the identification of the conceptions of a quality teacher held by Queensland early career teachers. The second consideration was concerned with the variations between and within these conceptions. Accordingly, the following questions guided and provide a structure to this research:

1. **What are Queensland early career teachers’ experiences of a quality teacher?**

2. **How do Queensland early career teachers describe their experiences of a quality teacher?**

The questions above focus on the experiences that early career teachers have of a quality teacher. When investigating these experiences, this research sought to understand what conceptions of quality teachers were held by Queensland early career teachers. Therefore, these research questions are integral to the research by directing the research process towards an understanding of the conceptions of quality teachers as held by early career teachers, and by narrowing the scope of the research by describing a quality teacher from these experiences. From the descriptions of a quality teacher, it was then possible to construct phenomenographic categories of description, which, in turn, highlighted a graphic representation of a quality teacher as an outcome space. The outcome space for this is unpacked in greater detail in chapters 3 and 5. The remainder of the next section continues by exploring the significance of this research, locally, nationally, and internationally.

### 1.4 Significance of this research

It is anticipated that the understandings gained from this research will make a contribution to the wider body of knowledge about the quality teacher. It is believed that these contributions will be extensive for the following reasons. First, this research has a unique opportunity to contribute to the intellectual capital of educators in Queensland.
Conceivably, it could provide research-based evidence for decision-making and policy directions, related to the quality teacher. This policy focus could relate to teacher professional development and preservice teacher education.

Second, this research may act as a pilot study for future research conducted in other schools located in Queensland, and other states or territories of Australia interested in exploring avenues to improve the quality of their teachers and their teaching.

1.5 Summary of Chapter 1

Chapter 1 focused on outlining three key points. First, this research highlighted that a quality teacher was important because of an international, national and local interest in teacher quality. Second, that there was a need to conduct research that required an Australian context, and by association Queensland. This action needed to be taken because if Australia continued to focus on other educational contexts for direction eventually this may prove to be counterproductive due the culturally and contextually different environments of Australia.

As mentioned previously a more extensive examination of the literature that highlights the relevance of conducting Queensland research on a quality teacher and the definitions of teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher are provided in chapter 2. Chapter 3 presents a discussion that unpacks the qualitative research methods and explains the methodology chosen for this research. Discussion of the methodology of phenomenography, and a description of the research methods of interviews and observation follows. Chapter 4 offers the findings from within a phenomenographic framework. It is within this chapter that early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher are identified and displayed. Then, chapter 5 addresses the outcome space, via the relationships among the conceptions of a quality teacher, highlighted by Queensland early career teachers. Finally, chapter 5
finishes by highlighting the findings for this study, drawing a conclusion to this research, and the journey that surrounds it, through presenting the implications of this study.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research focuses on understanding Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. Seeking to understand the experiences of early career teachers is a starting point for the research process, with the ultimate aim being a categorical description of Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. In order to assist in developing a description of early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher the literature review begins by examining research around notions of the teaching profession, teacher significance, and a teacher’s impact on student learning. This information provides insights into western cultural perspectives of teachers and teaching, gives some clarity into the status of teachers, outlines possible links between how some individuals view teachers, and why individuals become teachers. These insights facilitate an opportunity for this study to highlight the links between the term quality and teachers, and a teacher’s impact on student learning. This is followed by looking at the importance of the term ‘quality’ as applied by researchers to teachers and education, along with exploring definitions of teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher. Finally, the literature review highlights the gaps in knowledge that a study of Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher addresses.

To assist the reader in obtaining a deeper insight into this study the literature review is written in four stages. The first stage explores teachers and the profession, which leads into the significance of a teacher’s quality to impact on student learning. The second stage unpacks the terms teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality
teacher. The final stage outlines the gaps in knowledge that the literature review highlights for this study.

The first stage of the literature review begins by providing a brief exploration of the teaching profession by focusing on the perceptions of some western societies about teachers, and then outlining the attraction or motivation of being a teacher.

2.1 Teachers and the profession – A mixed view about teaching

This section of the literature review seeks to outline a western cultural perspective of teaching and then addresses what motivates or attracts an individual to become a teacher. The work of Brown, Lake, and Matters (2009), Caldwell (2012), Lortie (1975), and Petty (2014) commences this research by briefly looking at teaching from a western cultural perspective.

Lortie (1975) highlights that, in a number of western countries, teaching is viewed by some university entrants as a low status profession. Brown, Lake, and, Matters (2009), Caldwell (2012) and Petty’s (2014) later research reinforces Lortie’s comment by indicating that this low status view of teaching culminated in the difficulty of attracting quality applicants, and that Australia is a country where some in society view teaching as a low status profession and, therefore, the profession experiences some difficulty in attracting quality applicants. Yet, in contrast, a Queensland newspaper reports on a university graduate who falsified their university qualifications to fulfil a desire to become a teacher (Gardiner, 2011).

Gardiner (2011) relates details of the court case of this university graduate who falsified their university qualifications to gain employment as a primary school teacher in Queensland. This individual completed a graduate diploma in teaching and then falsified their university qualifications by claiming to also hold a bachelor’s degree. In Queensland, to meet the requirements for teacher registration, an
applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree in education, or a bachelor’s degree in any field in conjunction with a graduate diploma in teaching (Queensland College of Teachers, 2016). Gardiner (2011) further outlines that the problem for this individual was working as a primary school teacher under a false pretence. This false pretence resulted from a failure to hold a bachelor’s degree, in any other field apart from education, in conjunction with a graduate diploma of education (Queensland College of Teachers, 2016). A failure to fulfil the requirements for teacher registration in Queensland meant that this individual had no entitlement to work as a teacher (Queensland College of Teachers, 2016). Eventually, the deceit perpetrated here was brought before Magistrate John Parker who summed up the case by stating that what had occurred here was dishonest, but the individual had taken this course of action out of a desire to be a teacher (Gardiner, 2011).

In making his statement, Magistrate Parker highlights a view that gives some indication to the attraction of, or motivation to, becoming a teacher. Gardiner (2011) writes, as Magistrate Parker’s comments reflected in his sentencing that this individual was prepared to break the law because of a desire to be a teacher. If in Magistrate Parker’s opinion this offender became a teacher out of a desire to be a teacher, what could have been the underlying factors that contributed to this desire; in essence, what is the attraction of, or motivation to, become a teacher?


### 2.1.1 The attraction of becoming a teacher

Individuals are attracted to becoming a teacher for a number of reasons. Anhorn (2008) argues it is the role associated with being a teacher that attracts individuals to become a teacher. Ingersoll (2004)
outlines that this role focuses on supporting, and building connections with students. Skilbeck and Connell (2004) state that an individual is attracted to becoming a teacher “largely for altruistic motives – out of a concern for the wellbeing and growth of others” (p.30). Further to this, Skilbeck and Connell add that this attraction of becoming a teacher is based on the need to connect, in a positive and helpful way, with young people so as to make a difference in their lives. Ashiedu and Scott-Ladd (2012) highlight that individuals are attracted to teaching due to a desire to work with children, to make a contribution to society, and to influence the lives of the children that they teach. Finally, Greer and Akbar (2015) state that personal enjoyment, a desire to work with young people, and to impact on the lives of young people attracts individuals to teaching.

The snapshot of the research presented above gives a brief outline to the attraction of becoming a teacher, showing there is sufficient evidence to indicate that this attraction is based on a desire to help, connect with, and influence the lives of young people.

Reflecting on a review of aspects of the literature above, an individual became a teacher based on a desire to impact positively on the lives of young people. Other researchers (Boon, 2011; Fried, 2013; Watt, Richardson, Klusmann, Kunter, Beyer, Trautwein & Baumert, 2012) also contribute to this discussion through research which focus on an individual’s motivation to become a teacher. The research surrounding what motivates an individual to become a teacher is outlined below.

2.1.2 What motivates an individual to become a teacher?

Boon (2011) highlights that what motivates an individual to become a teacher is the enjoyment of working with children and the need to make a difference in the lives of students. Fried (2013) and Watt, Richardson, Klusmann, Kunter, Beyer, Trautwein, and Baumert (2012) add to Boon’s research by indicating an individual is motivated to become a teacher due to a desire to shape the future of children or adolescents. Similar to the research that addresses an individual’s attraction to
becoming a teacher, an individual’s motivation to become a teacher is also based on a desire to work with children to make a difference in their lives. Consequently, the motivation to become a teacher may also be centred on a desire to have a positive impact on a young person’s life, and by a teacher’s desire to shape the future of students.

Clearly, a number of individuals enter teaching to have an impact on the lives of students. This association between teachers and students indicates that individuals have a belief that there is the opportunity, as a teacher, to impact on the life of a student. It could be argued that a teacher’s capacity to impact on a student’s life generally occurs through the teacher’s ability to impact on student learning. Therefore, based on the research presented above a quality teacher could be an individual who was motivated or attracted to teaching due to a belief that there may be opportunities through teaching to have a positive influence on the lives of students via impacting on their learning. The next section outlines research that demonstrates teachers do have the capacity to impact on a student’s life through student learning.

This part of the review examines the literature that describes and explains a teacher’s degree of impact on student learning. First, it outlines some insight into the history of the research literature associated with this topic. Second, it establishes the foundations for further discussions on how teacher’s impact on student learning. Finally, it highlights the importance of quality with respect to teachers, and teaching and then moves to a discussion on defining a quality teacher. The reader should note that when the research literature highlights a teacher’s impact on student achievement, there is an association made in this study to student learning. This association is based on the understanding that the outcome of impacting on student achievement indicates an impact on student learning (Hattie, 2009; Hattie & Yates, 2014, Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin, 2005; Tyre, 2012). From the plethora of research literature available on this topic, the research of Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPortland, Mood, Weinfield,
and York (1966), Goldhaber and Anthony (2007), Hattie (2009), and Scheerens and Bosker (1997) was selected to give a broad perspective, spanning nearly fifty years, into this area.

2.1.3 A brief history of a teacher’s impact on student learning

A brief history of a teacher’s impact on student learning is developed through the research of Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPortland, Mood, Weinfield, and York (1966). Coleman et al.’s report is included in this research because it represents the first major findings of a teacher’s impact on student learning. Coleman et al. argue that teachers, and the differences between them, did not matter much when it came to student learning. This report examines the effects of differentiated resources on student learning with the intention of highlighting that students who attend impoverished schools would perform badly in their learning outcomes, when compared to students who did not attend impoverished schools. Further from Coleman et al.’s research, the teacher, and school, are viewed as resources of little importance to student learning and therefore, had little impact. From Coleman et al.’s study, it is revealed that a student’s socioeconomic background has the greatest impact on their learning. However, later research by Goldhaber and Anthony (2007), Hattie (2009), and Scheerens and Bosker (1997) undertaken through the use of multi-level studies, questions Coleman et al.’s earlier findings about a teacher’s impact on student learning.

Multi-level studies use statistical techniques to apportion the differences in student achievement among the different environments that are assumed to affect their learning (Barber & Moursched, 2007; Hattie, 2009; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Maslowski, 2007; Rowe, 2003; Scheerens & Bosker, 1997). These studies typically phase out the influence of the individual’s abilities, the knowledge that students bring to the classroom, aspects of the classroom itself, and the characteristics of the school in which that classroom is housed (Hanushek, 2010). The
findings associated with some multi-level studies are reflected in the work of Goldhaber and Anthony (2007), Hattie (2009), and Scheerens and Bosker’s (1997). Scheerens and Bosker’s work provides some initial insight into the use of multi-level studies in education. Their research indicates that roughly twenty percent of the impact on student learning is associated with the schools which students attend, a further twenty percent from the individual classrooms and teachers, and the remaining sixty percent from the differences amongst the students in each classroom, including the effects of their prior achievements, and their socioeconomic backgrounds. Scheerens and Bosker's research questions the earlier work of Coleman et al. (1996) by highlighting that other factors exist, apart from the students’ socioeconomic backgrounds which contribute to, and therefore impact upon, student learning. Scheerens and Bosker’s research questions Coleman et al.’s research by placing a greater importance on teacher impact on student learning the research of Goldhaber (2002), and Hattie (2009) also contributes to this study by similarly attributing to the teacher a much more significant impact on student learning.

Goldhaber’s (2002) research acknowledges the tangible and intangible aspects of the impact teachers have on student learning. Goldhaber argues that tangible aspects such as a teacher’s qualifications, have a three percent impact on student learning while the intangible aspects, such as a teacher’s enthusiasm, and their ability to convey knowledge, had a ninety-seven percent impact on student learning. Thus, Scheerens and Bosker’s (1997) earlier work, and Goldhaber’s research make links with a teacher’s impact on student learning, and therefore, further substantiate the importance of a teacher’s impact on that learning. Finally, Hattie’s (2009) seminal research of a meta-analysis of over 800 studies that investigates influences on student learning provides a more detailed perspective of a teacher’s contribution to student learning.
Hattie (2009) states that “the major message is simple – what teachers do matters” (p.22), and he substantiates this claim through the research he analysed. Hattie notes that the research surrounding teachers indicates that teachers make a difference to student learning. According to Hattie some teachers display teaching which appropriately challenges students while other teachers do not. Therefore, Hattie argues that not all teachers are effective and not all teachers “have powerful effects on student learning” (p.34). However, teachers who are capable of having an effect on students are able to contribute to student learning by being in a position to “have an influence on student achievements” (p.34). Hattie's teacher contributions to student learning include:

- the quality of teaching – as perceived by the students;
- teacher expectations;
- teachers’ conceptions of teaching, learning, assessment, and the students – this relates to teachers’ views on whether all students can progress and whether achievement for all is changeable (or fixed), and on whether progress is understood and articulated by teachers;
- teacher openness – whether teachers are prepared to be surprised;
- classroom climate – having a warm socio-emotional climate in the classroom where errors are not only tolerated by welcomed;
- the fostering of effort;
- the engagement of all students. (Hattie, 2009, p.34).

Hattie (2009) also indicates that while a teacher can contribute to student learning that learning is impacted upon by the effect of the teacher. Hattie refers to this teacher impact on student learning as “effect size” (p.34). Hattie uses effect size to demonstrate the impact of influences, for example; feedback, peering tutoring, and homework, on
student learning. Table 1 below outlines the effect size on student learning by the student, teacher, and school via specific influences on student learning.

| Table 2.1 – Effect size on student learning by the student, teacher, and school |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Influence                        | Effect Size | Source of Influence |
| Feedback                         | 1.13   | Teacher |
| Student's prior cognitive ability | 1.04   | Student |
| Instructional quality            | 1.00   | Teacher |
| Direct instruction               | .82    | Teacher |
| Acceleration                     | .72    | Student |
| Remediation/feedback             | .65    | Teacher |
| Student's disposition to learn   | .61    | Student |
| Class environment                | .56    | Teacher |
| Challenge of Goals               | .52    | Teacher |
| Peer tutoring                    | .50    | Teacher |
| Mastery learning                 | .50    | Teacher |
| Homework                         | .43    | Teacher |
| Teacher Style                    | .42    | Teacher |
| Questioning                      | .41    | Teacher |
| Peer effects                     | .38    | Peers  |
| Advance organisers               | .37    | Teacher |
| Simulation & games               | .34    | Teacher |
| Computer-assisted instruction    | .31    | Teacher |
| Testing                          | .30    | Teacher |
| Instructional media              | .30    | Teacher |
| Affective attributes of students | .24    | Student |
| Physical attributes of students  | .21    | Student |
| Programmed instruction           | .18    | Teacher |
Audio-visual aids | .16 | Teacher
---|---|---
Individualisation | .14 | Teacher
---|---|---
Finances/money | .12 | School
---|---|---
Behavioural objectives | .12 | Teacher
---|---|---
Team teaching | .06 | Teacher
---|---|---
Physical attributes (e.g., class size) | -.05 | School


From the table above, there is clear evidence to indicate that the teacher has the greatest ‘in class’ influences, via effect size, on student learning (Hattie, 2009).

The research of Goldhaber and Anthony (2007), Hattie (2009), and Scheerens and Bosker’s (1997) noted above helps to establish a cogent link between the teacher and student learning. This link highlights that teachers have a degree of impact on student learning and that this impact is reflected in a teacher’s contribution to that learning. A further development of this statement is outlined below by exploring one component of a teacher’s influence, feedback.

A teacher’s impact on student learning through feedback represents an effect size of 1.13. Consequently, a teacher’s feedback could significantly impact on student learning through an effect size of 1.13. However, a teacher’s contribution to student learning is impacted by, as Hattie outlines, the engagement of all students in learning. Therefore, the degree of impact that a teacher has on student learning is also a reflection of a teacher’s level of contribution to that learning. While a teacher may have a 1.13 effect size on student learning through feedback, that effect size was impacted on by the engagement of students. Consequently, a quality teacher’s degree of impact might be reflected in a *high* degree of contribution to student learning because a quality teacher was in a position to engage all students in learning through feedback. Alternatively, a teacher who was not a quality teacher may also have the
same effect size on student learning, through feedback, but be unable to provide a high degree of contribution due to a lesser impact on student learning.

Within the context of this study the phrase a quality teacher addresses the ‘teacher’ and their ‘quality’. Therefore, the literature thus far indicated that teachers had varying degrees of impact on student learning through their level of contribution and that teachers had a significant effect size on student learning; however, the need still exists to explore if the ‘quality’ of a teacher had any impact on that learning?

The next section of the literature review commences with an exploration of the impact of a teacher’s quality on student learning. This exploration is provided by determining how teachers impact on student learning, the contextualisation of teacher quality followed by the introduction of the term ‘quality’.

### 2.2 The impact of a teacher’s quality on student learning

There is a plethora of strategies a teacher can apply to impact on student learning; however, one of the most common ways of ‘determining’ a teacher’s impact on student learning is through value-adding (Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin, 2005; Skilbeck & Connell, 2004; Tyre, 2012). Value-added methods examine student academic gains from year to year, rather than their scores at a single point in time (Sanders & Horn, 1988; Hanushek, Rivkin, & Kain, 2005). To assist with an understanding of value-adding, within a Queensland context the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is unpacked below.

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy or NAPLAN is a series of tests that are administrated annually to Queensland students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 (ACARA, 2016). These ‘standardised test’ assess students’ reading, writing, language and numeracy skills. NAPLAN was introduced into Australia in 2008 and the
tests are designed to determine if Australian students are achieving designated outcomes based on agreed standards (ACARA, 2016). These designated outcomes relate to specific standards that have been set for students at each year level. For example, the expectation in year 3 is that for a student to be at the minimum standard for reading that student should be falling within Band 2. The minimum standard reflects the minimum level of accepted competency for that particular section of the testing regime. Table 2 below highlights the bands for each year level and the minimum standard required for that year level (ACARA, 2016).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Band</th>
<th>National Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 to 6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 to 8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 to 9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adopted from ACARA’s minimum standards 2016.

Whilst the information relating to NAPLAN above provides a brief overview to the fundamentals of the test the main focus in the context of this study is the use of NAPLAN as a ‘standardised test’. A standardised test is a test which is administrated and scored in a constant or standardised manner (ACARA, 2016). Standardised tests are designed to ensure that questions, conditions for administrating, scoring procedures and interpretations are consistent, and administrated and scored in a predetermined, standard manner (ACARA, 2016). Consequently, any test that is administered to all stakeholders in the same way, and graded in the same manner is referred to as a standardised test. The main purpose of the NAPLAN test is to determine the value-adding that may occur to each student over the life of their testing regime from years 3 to 9. This application of value-adding, via the use of the NAPLAN test, is outlined in more detail below.
Given that NAPLAN is a standardised test the results obtained from the test for individual students represents a continuous flow of data for that student from years 3 to 9. As mentioned previously, NAPLAN tests are designed to determine each student’s standard in reading, writing, language and numeracy skills. It is from this continuous flow of data where NAPLAN testing is able to develop a profile for each individual student, as they progress from years 3 to 9, and this profile highlights the possible value-adding to student learning. For example, students in year 3 may have fallen within Band 3 for reading, however, in year 5 these same students may, again for reading, fall into Band 4. It is this movement between bands that reflects the value-adding that occurs to student ‘reading’ standards. Therefore, student reading standards are value-added to through student reading gains reflected by a movement from Band 3 in year 3 to a Band 4 in year 5. However, one of the key focuses of value-adding relates to the teacher’s ability to impact on student learning (Hattie, 2009; Hanushek, 2010).

Hanushek (2010) argues that a teacher’s impact on student learning is determined by the changes that occur to the academic scores of students. NAPLAN tests are not designed to test for new knowledge rather to determine what students had learned and how students can apply that learning in their test (ACARA, 2016). A major contributor to student learning, within the context of the classroom, is the teacher (Hattie, 2009). Hanushek (2010), Hanushek and Rivkin (2010), Harris and Sass (2008), and Sawchuk’s (2011) research indicates that teachers differ in quality and it is this difference in teacher quality that influences the level of teacher impact on student learning. Therefore, the impact of a teacher on student learning could be determined by the value-adding that occurs to student results in NAPLAN. However, as Skilbeck and Connell (2004) argue, teaching is complex and that quality in teaching is contestable and “cannot be equated to merely measures such as immediate student outcomes” (p.60). Therefore, Skilbeck and Connell
continue that “quality referred to all aspects of the teacher’s work and the environments both within and beyond the classroom” (p.60).

Hanushek’s (2010) research suggests that a teacher’s impact on student learning can be determined through value-adding and therefore, a teacher’s quality may simply be acknowledged via student results. However, two important points need to be included when addressing quality and value-adding. First, teachers do not always contribute equally to student learning, and second, teachers have working environments within and outside the classroom. This reference to a teacher’s working environment being both within and outside the classroom suggests that a teacher’s quality is reflected in a student’s knowledge within the classroom, and how society judges that knowledge being applied outside the classroom. Therefore, a teacher’s quality should also reflect the teacher’s level of contribution to impact on the value-adding to student learning both within and outside the classroom (Hattie, 2009; Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Skilbeck & Connell, 2004).

The research above reinforced that teachers had an impact on student learning; however, the research above also highlighted that the quality of the teacher played a significant role in impacting on that learning. Therefore, a quality teacher may be a teacher with the ability to influence student learning by contributing to that learning whereby, all students become engaged and that value-adding occurred within and outside the classroom. Based on the literature thus far there is a need to follow through with a definition of teacher ‘quality’ and to demonstrate what this means in practice. The next focus of this chapter is to further address the importance of the quality of teachers within a Queensland educational context. This focus provides literature that highlights the following: the importance that some educational institutions in Australia place on the quality of teachers, and by association educational institutions in Queensland, the importance of ensuring that Queensland teachers are classroom ready, and the need for Queensland primary school teachers to have literacy and numeracy benchmarks.
2.3 The importance of the quality of teachers within a Queensland educational context

The research of Hanushek (2010), Hanushek and Rivkin (2010), and Sawchuk (2011) highlights that teachers vary in quality, resulting in differences in the quality of teachers. This part of the review examines literature that focuses on the importance of the quality of teachers within a Queensland educational context. In undertaking this examination, the literature relating to Cochran-Smith (2016), Craven (2014), Sanders and Horn (1988), as well as the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) (2011), and research by Masters (2009). The research of Sanders and Horn (1988) commences the examination of the importance of the quality of teachers.

Sanders and Horn (1998) claim that the quality of teachers is an important factor in student academic growth; and, as a result, has a significant role to play in student learning. Studies undertaken by Goldhaber and Anthony (2007), Hattie (2010), Rockoff (2003), and Rowan, Correnti, and Miller (2002) reinforce Sanders and Horn’s research. As Churchill, Ferguson, Godinho, Johnson, Keddie, Letts, Mackay, Mc Gill, Nagel, Nicholson, and Vick (2011) highlight, there is no single variable that impacts on student learning more than the quality of teachers. Consequently, quality and in particular the quality of Queensland teachers has an important role to play within a Queensland educational context. This importance is evident in literature developed by The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) (2011).

AITSL (2011) developed the Australian professional standards for teachers which emphasise four teacher career stages. These four stages are designed around a continuum that reflect the development of teacher expertise and are categorised as graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead teacher (AITSL 2011). AITSL’s standards assist teachers in gaining some insight into what teachers should be aiming to achieve at every stage of their career and to facilitate an improvement in teacher
practice both inside and outside of the classroom. AITSL’s professional standards for teachers represents a national focus to ensure that teachers provide evidence in order to become registered, or achieve a highly accomplished and lead certification (AITSL, 2011). The main thrust of AITSL’s focus in developing these professional standards is captured by their chair Professor Hattie who noted that “expert teaching should be by design, and not chance” (p.1).

AITSL’s professional standards for teachers provide various levels of teacher career stages and experience were “a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality” is made explicit through the “elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century” (p.1). In addition, AITSL’s professional standards for teachers highlights a concerted effort by the Australian government to develop a ‘national’ set of professional standards. The Australian government chose to take this course of action to ensure that Australian, and by association Queensland, classrooms have teachers engaged in “effective teaching”, which in turn emphasises the quality of the teacher (AITSL 2011, p.1). Further research by Jensen and Reichl (2012) helps to establish this focus on the quality of Queensland teachers.

The issue of addressing the quality of teachers in Australian schools is a national focus (Jensen & Reichl, 2012). Jensen and Reichl’s (2012) research suggests that an improvement in the quality of Australian teachers over the next eight years will have a net increase of about 0.4% per year on Australia’s gross domestic product (GDP) with a value of approximately 240 billion Australian dollars. While, Jensen and Reichl’s research does not directly focus on the impact to the Queensland economy, through an improvement in the quality of Queensland teachers, there is an association with Queensland through an Australian context. This association is evident in the outcomes for Australia’s GDP if Queensland’s economy is similarly impacted upon by the quality of teachers; in the financial year 2009-2010 Queensland’s economic contribution to the national economy was nearly 20%. (Australian
Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Therefore, any improvement in the quality of Queensland teachers has a direct impact on the improvement in the quality of Australian teachers, and by association the economies of Queensland and Australia. Consequently, there is little argument from the Queensland government against ensuring the continued growth of Queensland’s economy via maintaining the quality of teachers in Queensland classrooms. Further discussion on the significance of ensuring that there are quality teachers in Queensland classrooms is outlined through AITSL.

While AITSL’s (2011) teacher professional standards do not specifically reference the term ‘quality’ there is sufficient representation in the standards of an overarching focus on the improvement of the ‘quality’ of Australian teachers. This improvement is reflected through the transition of teachers, via AITSL’s teacher career stages, from graduate to lead teacher. For a teacher to move from one career stage to the next suggests that something must have transpired to facilitate a teacher’s movement from one level to the next. This research posits that one explanation for this movement from one level to the next could be due to an improvement in the quality of the teacher. Therefore, it is important to have teachers in every classroom in Queensland move from graduate to lead levels as this may be one indicator of their quality. The research of Craven (2014) expands on this statement.

Professor Greg Craven’s (2014) report on classroom ready teachers focuses on recommendations for the preparedness of school teachers to enter the classroom. Craven’s report outlines “that teacher education is critical to ensure that the quality of Australian teaching is world class” (p.v). Craven also adds that having world class teaching is important due to evidence that substantiates “enhancing the capability of teachers is vital to raising the overall quality of Australia’s school system and lifting student outcomes” (p.viii). Craven’s focus on ensuring that Australia has world class teaching by association includes Queensland. Therefore, similar to Australia’s need to have world class teaching Queensland also
requires world class teachers to help raise the overall quality of Australia’s school system, and to lift student outcomes nationally. Another area that Craven’ report focuses on relates to a number of key findings about teacher preparedness. These findings are presented below:

- Need to lift public confidence in initial teacher education – Australians are not confident that all entrants to initial teacher education are the best fit for teaching. This includes the balance of academic skills and personal characteristics needed to be suitable for teaching;
- Evidence of poor practice in a number of programs – Not all initial teacher education programs are equipping graduates with the content knowledge, evidence-based teaching strategies and skills they need to respond to different student learning needs;
- Insufficient integration of teacher education providers with schools and systems – Providers, school systems and schools are not effectively working together in the development of new teachers. This is particularly evident in the professional experience component of initial teacher education, which is critical for the translation of theory into practice;
- Inadequate application of standards – Initial teacher education providers are not rigorously or consistently assessing the classroom readiness of their pre-service teachers against the Professional Standards;
- Insufficient professional support for beginning teachers – Not all graduate teachers are adequately supported once they enter the profession. This means a number of beginning teachers do not reach their full potential, and some may choose to leave the profession;
- Gaps in crucial information, including workforce data – Useful information on the effectiveness of initial teacher
Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

education and students entering and graduating from initial teacher education is lacking. This hinders both continuous improvement, and workforce planning, including the ability to address shortages in specialist subject areas (Craven, 2014, pp. viii-xi).

The information that Craven (2014) highlights above focuses on preparing teachers for the classroom. There are key words or phrases continually being used by Craven to draw attention to shortfalls in teacher preparedness. These key words or phrases include the need to lift public confidence, evidence of poor practice, and gaps in crucial information. Clearly, there is a need to ensure that Queensland schools have world class teachers however, there are concerns about the current system in preparing teachers to meet this need (Craven, 2014). Whilst Craven’s research indicates some shortfalls in the current system it also provides some insight into areas of focus on a quality teacher. Based on Craven’s findings there are shortfalls in the current system in preparing teachers; however, these shortfalls could also represent some elements of a quality teacher. Craven suggests that there are shortfalls in teacher classroom readiness whereby there is evidence of poor practice in a number of programs. Craven highlights that this poor practice is evident through not all initial teacher education programs equipping graduates with the content knowledge, evidence-based teaching strategies and the skills to respond to different student learning needs. Therefore, by using Craven’s recommendations in a positive light a quality teacher, for example, may have the content knowledge, evidence-based teaching strategies and the skills to respond to different student learning needs. The same application could also be applied to Craven’s other five shortfalls to highlight areas where a quality teacher might have exhibited attributes, and skills which addressed his concerns, as described above. Another area of research that is of interest focuses on Masters (2009).
Masters (2009) was commissioned by the Queensland government to improve the literacy, numeracy, and science learning in Queensland schools. Masters indicates that students in the “middle primary years (Years 3, 4 and 5) in Queensland tend to have literacy, numeracy and science achievement levels below those of students in all other states and territories with the exception of the Northern Territory” (p.v). Masters continues that one way in which the Queensland government could redress this situation is by having “well prepared teachers” (p. ix). Masters acknowledges that a great deal of teacher learning occurs in a teacher’s first few years in the classroom; however, it is important that every generalist primary teacher begins their career with at least threshold levels of knowledge about the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science. Masters refers to this knowledge as pedagogical content knowledge which focuses on knowing “how a students’ understanding in a subject typically develops, how to engage students and sequence subject matter, the kinds of misconceptions that students commonly develop, and effective ways to teach a subject” (p. ix).

Masters (2009) clearly articulates the concerns of the Queensland government in relation to the quality of education provided to students. In an effort to address this situation Masters outlines recommendations for the Queensland government to implement with the view to improving the quality of teaching, and therefore, by association the quality of teachers in Queensland schools. One of Masters main recommendations is that teachers need to have knowledge about how student understanding in a subject typically develops, how to engage students, sequence subject matter, be aware of the kinds of misconceptions that students commonly develop, and effective ways to teach a subject. Therefore, based on Masters’ recommendations a quality teacher may know how student understanding in a subject was typically developed, understood how to engage students, sequenced their subject matter, was aware of the kinds of misconceptions that students commonly developed, and employed effective ways to teach a subject.
The literature above highlighted that the Queensland government placed an emphasis on ensuring that there are teachers of quality in Queensland classrooms. This emphasis was highlighted by the significance that the quality of teachers has initially on Queensland’s economy, and flow on effect that this has had at both national and state levels to facilitate teacher quality through AITSL’s (2011) Australian professional standards for teachers, and the work of both Craven (2014) and Masters (2009).

2.4 Summary of Stage 1

The purpose of providing the literature above was to fulfil the requirements of stage 1 of the literature review. Stage 1 focused on highlighting research on why individuals were motivated or attracted to teaching. This research suggested that individuals were motivated or attracted to teaching because of a desire to have some impact on a student’s life. Stage 1 outlined that teachers impacted on a student’s life through student learning and that the quality of the teacher had an impact on that learning. In addition, stage 1 also provided some insight that may have assisted in determining how a quality teacher might have value-added and contributed to student learning and that a quality teacher may be an individual who had entered teaching motivated by a desire to impact on the lives of students through student learning. Finally, a definition of quality was also provided and this definition suggested that quality needed to encompass not simply measurements acknowledging student learning from within, but also beyond, the classroom.

With an understanding of the significance of the link between quality and the teacher and teaching established in the literature above, the next section of this review focuses on defining three concepts that are pertinent to this study: teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher. The purpose behind providing definitions for teacher quality, and
teaching quality was to determine if some link existed between teacher quality, teaching quality and a quality teacher.

2.5 Stage 2 – Teacher quality, teaching quality and a quality teacher

Stage 2 of the literature review explores the terms ‘teacher quality’, and ‘teaching quality’, and the concept of ‘a quality teacher’. The purpose of this stage is to unpack the terms teacher quality, and teaching quality to assist in providing some clarity to the concept of a quality teacher. The literature review commences by providing some clarity to the concept of a quality teacher by first exploring the term ‘teacher quality’ then addressing ‘teaching quality’.

A review of the literature indicated a number of important points about the terms teacher quality, teaching quality and the concept of a quality teacher. The first point highlighted that teacher quality needed to incorporate a broad range of intangible attributes, skills and personal attributes, associated with a tangible link to student learning, along with any factors related to impacts on student learning. The second point outlined that teaching quality was a very broad concept; and, therefore, exhibited a number of representations. The final point indicated that there were challenges in defining a quality teacher due to the lack of research in this field and the complexity of the concept.

2.5.1 Teacher quality

Research in the 1960s that focused on the links between student learning and the teacher’s impact on that learning highlights that a teacher had little impact (Coleman et al., 1966). A plethora of research now dispels this view with the consensus amongst academics on the significance of not only the teacher, but also ‘teacher quality’, in impacting on student learning (Caldwell, 2012; Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kleinhenz, 2008, 2012; Educational Testing Service, 2004; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Harris & Sass, 2008; Hattie, 2009; Kennedy, 2008;
Marzano, 2007; Sanders & Horn, 1998; OECD, 2005). As Goldhaber (2002) contend, the single most important determinate to the quality of student learning is teacher quality. While Goldhaber acknowledges the importance of teacher quality, Tomazin (2011) and Dinham, Ingvarson, and Kleinhenz (2012) express concerns about Australia’s insufficient research to articulate an overall understanding of teacher quality. However, Skilbeck and Connell (2004) indicate that to assist in gaining an insight into teacher quality, it is important to know how teacher quality is formally and informally acknowledged and recognised. Research by Knopf and Swich (2007), Mpokosa, Ndaruhutse, Mc Bride, Nock, and Penson (2011), and Slade (2002) expand on Skilbeck and Connell’s point. Mpokosa et al.’s (2011) research addresses the formal acknowledgment and recognition of teacher quality.

Mpokosa, Ndaruhutse, Mc Bride, Nock, and Penson (2011) believe that an education system which is of quality requires competent, motivated, well-trained, adequately rewarded, and well supported teachers. Based on their research, teacher quality is formally acknowledged and recognised by teachers who are competent, motivated, and well trained. This formal acknowledgement and recognition of teacher quality is reflected in teacher qualifications and experience (Barr, 2012; Caldwell, 2012). Additionally, further research undertaken by Knopf and Swich (2007), and Slade (2002) focus on teacher quality being acknowledged and recognised informally.

Knopf and Swich (2007) indicate that opinions on teacher quality are acknowledged and recognised informally through comments from the wider community, often reflected in the actions of parents. These actions undertaken by parents that express informal acknowledgement and recognition of teacher quality are reflected in two examples from Slade’s (2002) research. In his first example, Slade outlines how the actions of parents acknowledge and recognise teacher quality informally through comments from the wider community. As well, Slade highlights that parents seek out schools with higher teacher quality often based on
comments from the wider community; and parents act to ensure the placement of siblings in classes with a specific teacher, also based on similar comments from the wider community. In his second example, Slade adds that informal comments articulated by students as another acknowledgment and recognition of teacher quality, albeit sometimes presented in a pejorative fashion. The following examples extracted from Slade’s research and articulated by students highlights there are ‘too many bad teachers in this school who don’t give a shit about us kids (Year 8 student), and whatever they do, is what we do. If they’re a good teacher and they do better stuff, we do better stuff. If they’re a crappy teacher, we do bad stuff (Year 9 student)’.

The research of Knopf and Swich (2007), and Slade (2002) indicates that parents and students informally acknowledge and recognise teacher quality. However, while comments made by the parents and students are useful in helping to acknowledge and recognise teacher quality, the comments lack any real substance in articulating a definition for teacher quality. As Slade concludes, there is no elaboration by the students as to what is used to acknowledge and recognise good or bad teachers? Slade continues that, while parents also indicate that they recognise teacher quality, and therefore, acknowledge teacher quality by placing their child/children in a particular teacher’s class, there is no indication as to how these teacher qualities are determined. The work of Knopf and Swich, and Slade highlights what Britzman (2009) acknowledges as only the ideas of individuals that surround the concept of teacher quality, and which reflect the partial and imperfect memories of relationships associated with their schooling.

The research of Knopf and Swich (2007), and Slade (2002) comment on teachers who are acknowledged and recognised by students and parents as teachers who possess teacher quality. The challenge for this study is to articulate the underpinning qualities associated with the acknowledgement and recognition of teacher quality, which are not present in Knopf and Swich’s, and Slade’s research. Therefore, to
understand teacher quality requires more unpacking. This unpacking is undertaken by exploring research by Caldwell (2012), Cookson (2005), Darling-Hammond (2000), Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005), which contributes to addressing the challenge of articulating the underpinning attributes associated with teacher quality.

Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002) warn that there needs to be caution associated with defining teacher quality to ensure that such a definition is not too narrow. Cookson (2005) add to Darling-Hammond and Young’s concern by arguing that teaching is a complex business that demands a lot from individuals; and, therefore, teacher quality should encompass a broad range of skills and attributes. Caldwell (2012) further elaborates on Cookson’s argument by outlining that teacher quality incorporates a high capability to analyse complex data about students, and an ability to diagnose the kind of teaching support needed by students. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) also put forward some concerns about attempts to define teacher quality because they felt that, in order to meet this challenge, educators would simply focus attention on a teacher’s educational qualifications and years of teaching experience, therefore, fail to understand the concept. Darling-Hammond and Bransford argue that to simply focus attention on a teacher’s educational qualifications and years of teaching experience needs to be viewed with caution, because teacher quality goes beyond formal educational qualifications and years of teaching experience. Later research by Garcia (2006), and Riley (2009) reinforce Darling-Hammond and Bransford’s comments.

Riley (2009) proposes that teacher quality is a reflection of a teacher’s content, theory, behaviour and skills in pedagogy, which allows them to plan for the effective learning of students. Garcia’s (2006) research, on the other hand, provides an extension of teacher quality from a teacher’s educational qualifications that include a teacher’s attributes such as cultural sensitivity, provision for a safe learning environment, and an understanding of the needs of students. However,
Garcia warns that issues often arose when policy makers and regulatory bodies attempt to encompass teacher quality with student attributes. Hattie (2009) reinforces Garcia’s research by indicating that one element associated with the understanding of student needs is reflected in the relationship between the student and the teachers. Hattie continues that one of the primary reasons for students not attending school is a consequence of not liking their teacher and, therefore, teachers need to demonstrate that they cared about the needs of their students.


Luke, Weir, and, Woods (2008) argue that undertaking a course of action capable of balancing informed prescription and informed professionalism is crucial in the determination of a definition for teacher quality. Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002), and Garcia (2006) add to Luke et al.’s argument by advocating that, to base teacher quality only on the informed perceptions of parents and students, or teacher professionalism reflected in teacher educational qualifications or years of teaching experience, is not adequate. In addition, Hanushek and Rivkin (2010) suggest that another key distinction to assist in understanding teacher quality is whether the teacher’s actions relate directly to student learning, or are simply presumed. As a consequence of Garcia, Hanushek and Rivkin, and Luke et al.’s research, the challenge in attempting to understand teacher quality requires something more than a suite of procedures or a bag of tricks (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002). However, this view of teacher quality not being a suite of procedures or a bag of tricks is held by others, as seen in the research from Alton-Lee (2003), Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007). Hanushek (2010), and Hanushek and Rivkin (2010).
While the teacher plays a crucial role in student learning, teaching is a complex educational practice and competing demands from many sources obscure the goal of identifying teacher quality by simply focusing on a student’s learning (Alton-Lee, 2003). Hanushek’s (2010), and Hanushek and Rivkin’s (2010) research suggests that the most common way to determine a teacher’s quality, without regard to student learning, is a teacher’s educational qualifications and years of experience, but this does not really capture differences in a teacher’s quality. Hanushek qualifies this by citing US data, obtained between 1960 and 2007, outlining a doubling in teacher qualifications and an increase in the median teacher’s experience; and yet, the math and reading skills of seventeen-year olds during that period remained virtually unchanged. Earlier work by Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007), on teacher effectiveness with Master’s degrees, also reinforces Hanushek’s research. Hanushek argues that the difficulty with determining teacher quality using only teacher educational qualifications and years of teaching experience is that it simply creates a check list to be used to tick-off key elements of quality. As a result, Hanushek suggests that the best way to determine a teacher’s quality is through what students learn and teacher observation that centres on what teachers control in that learning.

Research by Hanushek (2010), and Hanushek and Rivkin (2010) indicates that determining teacher quality by simply using teacher educational qualifications and teaching experience is not supported by their studies. Instead, determining teacher quality also needs to be acknowledged and recognised by whether or not a teacher’s actions directly relate to student learning and the observation of those actions by others (Darling-Hammond & Brandsford, 2005; Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). However, these views by Hanushek, and Hanushek and Rivkin are not endorsed by others. The Educational testing service (ETS) (2004) and Hattie (2009) offer further comments that expand on acknowledging and recognising teacher quality by exploring.
teacher impact on student learning, through a teacher’s positive impact on that learning, and what teachers get students to do in class.

ETS (2004) expresses the view that there are certain things known about teacher quality. The ETS indicates that teacher quality is a reflection of how a teacher makes a positive impact on student learning. This positive impact is linked to a teacher’s verbal ability and their content-based pedagogy (ETS, 2004). In addition, Hattie’s (2009) research conceptualises teacher quality within the context of having influenced student learning through teacher attributes. Hattie notes that “what teachers get the students to do in the class emerges as the strongest component” of teacher quality (p.35).

Studies by Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005), Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002), Hanushek (2010), and Hanushek and Rivkin (2010) indicate that teacher quality is acknowledged and recognised in a number of different formats. As a consequence of these studies, there is ambiguity surrounding an understanding of teacher quality. Thus, a number of pertinent points need to be highlighted. First, that teacher quality was acknowledged and recognised formally and informally (Knopf & Swich, 2007; Slade, 2002). Second, that teacher quality was tangible but due to the nature of teaching there were also intangible elements (Garcia, 2006). Third, that teacher quality reflected what a teacher was able to get students in the class to do. Fourth, that teacher quality was expressed by more than a teacher’s educational qualifications and years of teacher experience.

As Tucker and Stronge (2005) suggest, after years of research the consensus amongst researchers is that a combination of increased student achievement, coupled with professional skills, and personal attributes of the teacher all help to determine teacher quality. As Darling-Hammond (2000) and Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) highlight, teacher quality is more than a set suite of procedures or a bag of tricks, and that any definition of teacher quality should not be too narrow. Therefore, this study suggests that teacher quality needed to incorporate
a broad range of intangible attributes, skills and personal attributes, associated with a tangible link to student learning, through an association with the teacher’s impact on student learning. Having provided an understanding of the challenges surrounding a definition for teacher quality the next section offers insights into definitions of teaching quality.

2.5.2 Teaching quality

Teaching quality is not an easily understood concept. According to Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, and Odell (2011), the existing literature on teaching quality indicates that it is a concept not uniformly understood. Elliott (2015) outlines that this lack of uniformity is probably attributed to research that focuses on the multitude of views about the concept held by individuals, the community, and from particular eras. Elliott contends that this multidimensional understanding is due to how teaching quality is understood between person to person, community to community, and from one era to the next. Therefore, while the literature indicates that teaching quality is not a uniformly understood concept, some research is provided below to give, as Elliott highlights, a person to person view of the concept. The reader needs to note that a person to person view of teaching quality reflects the views expressed between people, such as, students to students, about teaching quality.

Okoye, Momoh, Aigbomian, and Okecha (2008) view teaching quality as a reflection of a teacher’s instructional strategies. Torff (2005) support Okoye et al.’s representation by highlighting that a lack of pedagogical skills impacts on teaching quality. Torff contends that a teacher’s instructional strategies are embedded in their pedagogical skill, and, as such, these skills need to be acknowledged when describing teaching quality. While Churchill, Ferguson, Godinho, Johnson, Keddie, Letts, Mackay, Mc Gill, Nagel, Nicholson, and Vick (2011) outline that teacher quality and teaching quality go hand-in-hand. The research of
Cochran-Smith (2016) and Hamid, Hassan, and Ismail (2012) expand on Okoye et al. and Torff’s representation of teaching quality.

Cochran-Smith (2016) and Hamid, Hassan, and Ismail (2012) view teaching quality as a reflection of the learning outcomes a student achieves, over the course of a school year, as a product of the teacher’s endeavour. Spooren, Mortlemans, and Denkens (2007) similarly suggest that teaching quality is a reflection of a teacher’s in-class performance. Spooren et al. highlight that a teacher’s in-class performance is acknowledged by a teacher achieving a number of educational goals, which are previously set for them. Labaree’s (2008) representations of teaching quality came from the results a teacher attains from their undergraduate academic transcripts and the calibre of the results achieved in professional testing. Finally, Kennedy (2008) views teaching quality as a concept that is compartmentalised into three independent perspectives: a teacher’s cognitive resources, in-class performance, and the effect on student learning outcomes. Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, and Odell (2010) build on Kennedy’s understanding of teaching quality by expanding on his three perspectives.

Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, and Odell (2010) view a teacher’s cognitive resource as the knowledge a teacher brings into their teaching. This teacher knowledge, Wang et al. continue, is a reflection of a teacher’s demonstrated outcomes in professional tests and their academic credentials. As for a teacher’s performance, Wang et al. highlight that this is displayed in the teaching strategies a teacher applies in order to achieve specific learning outcomes for students. Finally, Hanushek (2010), Hanushek and Rivkin (2010), and Wang et al. suggest that teaching quality as an effect, is represented as the teacher’s level of impact on student learning outcomes, which is acknowledged through the value-adding a teacher contributes to those learning outcomes. However, while Wang et al. expand on Kennedy’s (2008) understanding about teaching quality, Wang et al. do not limit teaching quality as Kennedy did, through three independent perspectives of the concept.
Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, and, Odell (2010) contend that attempting to neatly partition teaching quality into three separate perspectives is problematic, because a teacher’s cognition, performance and effect are interactive and interdependent. Wang et al. reinforce this point by stating that a teacher’s cognitive resources can manifest through a teacher’s performance, and a teacher’s performance is dependent upon a teacher’s knowledge, which in turn reflects a teacher’s effect. Other researchers also view teaching quality in a similar light to Wang et al.

Cardoso, Tavares, and Sin (2015) represent teaching quality as a multi-layered concept. Cardoso et al. outline that this multi-layered concept emphasises a number of teaching attributes, including a teacher’s academic skills, pedagogy, and motivational strategies. Cardoso et al. continue by highlighting that teaching quality is not confined to independent representations of the concept; but instead, as interdependent and spread across a number of teaching attributes. Heck (2007) views teaching quality as multi-layered by emphasising a teacher’s credentials, the perspectives brought to the classroom, and the instructional strategies they use in the classroom. Finally, Riley (2009) reinforce Heck’s research by indicating that teaching quality focuses on the teaching and learning a teacher applies each day to improve student achievement. The research of Berliner (2005), Boon (2011), Bollough (2010), and Puhan, Malla, and, Behera (2014) take a slightly different view to teaching quality, by emphasising the ethical and moral behaviour, and the moral responsibility, of the teacher, as representations of teaching quality.

Berliner (2005) views teaching quality as evident through a teacher’s ability to exhibit teaching qualities that had a positive impact on the lives of students. Other researchers, for example Boon (2011), add to Berliner’s understanding by highlighting that this evidence is exhibited in the teacher’s ethical and moral behaviour. Boon contends that a teacher contributes positively to a student’s life through their behaviour. This behaviour, Boon indicates, is centred on how a teacher behaves
ethically and morally towards their students. Therefore, Boon states that a teacher’s ethical and moral behaviours play an important role in a teacher’s interactions with students; and, as a result, these behaviours also represent elements of teaching quality. Bollough (2010) and Puhan, Malla, and, Behera (2014) also focus on morals, but emphasise a teacher’s moral responsibility as a part of their understanding of teaching quality. Bollough focuses on the teacher’s position of power, while Puhan et al. address the student’s future.

As noted above, Bollough’s (2010) notion of teaching quality relates to power and contends that a teacher’s moral responsibility exemplifies teaching quality by how teachers address power in the classroom. According to Bollough, this highlights how a teacher deals with power relations and moral outcomes. Bollough’s understanding of teaching quality is reflected in how the teacher bridges the tensions between power and morality in the classroom. This view, Bollough continues, manifests itself in the ways the teacher deals with their position of power over their students, and the moral behaviour exhibited in the administration of their power. Puhan, Malla, and, Behera (2014) add to this view by focusing on how teachers address their moral responsibility.

Puhan, Malla, and, Behera (2014) assert that teachers share a significant responsibility in preparing young people to lead successful and productive lives in society after having completed their schooling. Puhan et al. adds that teachers can be a source of inspiration and, equally importantly, provide a dependable and consistent influence on young people, as they made choices about further education, work and life. Consequently, Puhan et al. acknowledge that teachers have a moral responsibility to their students. To address this moral responsibility, Puhan et al. view teaching quality as aspects of the strategies teachers apply in their teaching that enables them to build relationships with their students; and, through these relationships, become a source of inspiration and influence. Cohen and Brown’s (2016) research completes this discussion of the person to person view to teaching quality, by
concluding with a focus on understanding teaching quality through collaboration.

Cohen and Brown (2016) move beyond the notion of teaching quality as a representation of an individual’s quality; and, instead, focus on it as a collaborative effort. Cohen and Brown’s research addresses teaching quality from the perspective that, in some schools, a teacher’s practices and their students’ achievement may reflect not just an individual teacher but collaborative efforts amongst teachers. Cohen and Brown’s view of teaching quality is the product of the combined actions of a group of teachers. Therefore, Cohen and Brown understand teaching quality as the combined quality of a group of teachers to educate a student or students within a school, as opposed to any individual quality of a single teacher.

The research highlighted above indicated that teaching quality was a very broad concept and, therefore, it exhibited a number of representations. The research noted above also indicated that, at a person to person view, researchers had some difficulty in reaching agreement on an understanding of teaching quality. While, a person to person view represented a cross-section of all the possible views that could be considered, this approach allowed for some depth of understanding with respect to the challenges researchers faced in identifying a uniformed representation of teaching quality. Based on the research above it appeared that teaching quality was a concept that focused on a teacher’s academic skills, pedagogy, and motivational strategies which reflected a teacher’s ability to apply those skills within the classroom to achieve desired student learning outcomes. These pedagogical and motivational skills were linked with the teacher’s capacity to build relationships with their students; and, through these relationships, become a source of inspiration and influence. Therefore, a quality teacher might be a teacher with the appropriate academic skills, pedagogy, and motivational strategies to achieve a desired effect on student learning. In addition to a teacher capable of building
relationships with their students so that these teachers become a source of influence and inspiration for students. The next section focuses on research that attempts to define what constitutes a quality teacher.

2.5.3 A quality teacher

This study seeks to uncover early career teacher’s’ conceptions of a quality teacher. To date, the literature surrounding definitions and/or contextual understandings of a quality teacher can best be described as disjointed and/or ambiguous. The literature below provides a cross section of some disjointed representations of a quality teacher expressed through the research of Calnin, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Goldhaber, 2002; Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012; Marzano, 2002; Tomazin, 2011; Torff, 2005; Watson 2005; Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2010. The work of these researchers is included in this study to provide a back drop to the dearth of research focusing on the concept of ‘a quality teacher’.

In his work, Hattie (2009) refers to quality teachers but does not explore any notions of what constitutes ‘a quality teacher’. Also, much of the literature in this field focuses on teacher quality, teaching quality, a good teacher, the best teacher, or effective teacher and therefore, does not directly refer to the concept of ‘a quality teacher’ (Calnin, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Goldhaber, 2002; Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012; Marzano, 2002; Tomazin, 2011; Torff, 2005; Watson 2005; Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2010). Therefore, there is some disjointedness and ambiguity surrounding the understanding of a definition relating to the concept of a quality teacher. To commence an exploration of this study’s understanding of a quality teacher, the work of a number of researchers is presented below.

Goldhaber (2002) outlines that a good teacher is important in raising the academic achievement of students; however, Goldhaber and Anthony (2007) maintain that, whilst there is an understanding of the importance of being a good teacher, there is far less clarity about what
constitutes a good teacher. Watson (2005) supports Goldhaber’s view by arguing that a problem with the body of research on teachers is its lack of understanding on what makes the best teacher; and, therefore, more debate on this topic needs to be encouraged. Further research by Calnin (2009) proposes that this debate needs to centre on understanding what the representations of a good teacher are. Calnin concludes by highlighting that these representations will eventually assist in identifying and rewarding high-performing teachers. The research of Breaux and Whitaker (2013), Hanushek (2010), and others provides some clarity of an understanding of what constitutes a good teacher.

Hanushek (2010) acknowledges the difficulty of formulating a uniform representation of what constitutes a good teacher. Hanushek continues that this difficulty stems partly from the desire that school administrators and educational policy makers have to recognise good teachers. He adds that this challenge is derived from identifying the qualities that an individual need to possess to become a teacher, arguing that the teaching profession is very complex; and, therefore, requires individuals with a number of specific qualities. Hanushek further contends that individuals need qualities that reflect highly developed skills, accompanied by a plethora of traits and attributes. Hanushek contends that good teachers possess these qualities and, therefore, these qualities need to be included in any representation of a good teacher. The challenge, Hanushek indicates, for school administrators and policy makers, is to find ways of recognising these qualities so that good teachers can be uniformly rewarded. Dinham, Ingvarson, and Kaleihnez (2008) support Hanushek’s comments by also emphasising the need to uncover the qualities of a good teacher, so that these teachers are recognised and rewarded.

Dinham, Ingvarson, and Kaleihnez (2008) highlight that the best teachers need to be paid around $130,000 (Aus) annually and that this payment needs to reflect teacher and teaching qualities. Similarly, to Hanushek (2010), they too are cognisant of complexities associated with
recognising the many teacher and teaching qualities linked with being a good teacher. Dinham et al. indicate that what adds to this complexity is recognising that these qualities also reflect a teacher’s passion for their subject/s – a quality at times which may be difficult to acknowledge. Hattie (2009) makes a further comment to Dinham et al.’s research by highlighting that individuals who become teachers need to be passionate about teaching. Hattie also says that a passion for teaching infuses “many of the influences that make a difference” to a student’s learning (p.24). Breaux and Whitaker (2013), Duarte (2013), Stronge (2013), and Marzano (2007) add to the views of Dinham et al., Hanushek, and Hattie by detailing some specific teacher and teaching qualities, which could be recognised as representations of the best teacher.

Breaux and Whitaker (2013) propose that the best teachers have seven common qualities. Breaux and Whitaker’s research notes that these common qualities are evident in the ‘best’ teachers planning effectively, having the ability to engage and motivate students, being able to give good instructions, being able to effectively manage a classroom, and being professional. Breaux and Whitaker also indicate that, in addition to these qualities, the best teachers are called to teaching out of a desire to want to help students. While Stronge (2013) does not agree with Breaux and Whitaker’s view on the best teachers having a calling for teaching, he does agree that the best teachers have some common qualities. Stronge advocates that these common qualities are reflected in teacher performance standards.

Stronge (2013) states that a good teacher exhibits a number of teacher performance standards. He highlights that some of these standards are a teacher’s professional knowledge, their use of data driven planning, and their professional approach to teaching. Marzano (2007) refers to an effective teacher, stating that an effective teacher has clear instructional goals which are communicated to both students and parents. Further research by Benekos (2016), Duarte (2013), Gipps, McCallum and Hargraves (2016), and Goh (2014) add to Stronge and
Breaux and Whitaker’s (2013) view that good teachers have qualities that are in common. Duarte’s view is that good teachers have a number of recognisable attributes and traits, which reflect common qualities and that good teachers use these qualities to embrace teaching. Duarte outlines that good teachers tend to embrace teaching by advocating constructivist principles, being committed to facilitating learning that is deep, engaging students, not being afraid to be experientially-based educators, having a capacity to empower students, reflecting on learning, and engaging in life-long learning.

Benekos (2016) also highlights that good teachers have a number of common recognisable attributes and traits, suggesting that good teachers tend to engage, and empower students by effectively interacting with them. Benekos further contends that good teachers have engaging personalities, knowledge and pedagogical skills and demonstrate passions and enthusiasm. Gipps, McCallum and Hargraves (2016) indicate that a good teacher creates opportunities for students to reflect on their work, guide students through feedback to ensure that students have a clear articulation of standards and exemplars, and, finally, develop ways to create, and use, good resources that assist in facilitating student learning. Finally, Goh (2014) states that good teachers create opportunities for students to reflect on practice, and provide guided practice through feedback, and clear articulation of standards and exemplars for student learning. However, further research by Caldwell (2012), Heinz (2013), and Hinchey (2015) presents a different view on how to recognise the qualities of good teachers.

Unlike Breaux and Whitaker (2013), who view good teachers as a representation of the seven common qualities, as outlined previously above, Caldwell (2013) advocates good teachers could be the outcome of university’s raising the academic entrance scores to their undergraduate courses in education, thereby impacting on the calibre of teaching applicants. Caldwell suggests that an improvement in the quality of undergraduates might eventually impact on the quality of graduating
teachers. However, Caldwell’s view runs counter to that of Heinz (2013) who notes that her research contests the rationale behind academic selection criteria as the only basis for determining a good or the best teacher. Heinz asserts that academic performance is one indicator of possible teacher quality but other areas such as an individual’s previous work experience, and the practical competent of an education program, need to be taken into consideration when considering the qualities of a good teacher. Another researcher, Hinchey (2015) indicates that value-adding is another way of determining a good teacher.

Hinchey (2015) argues that comparing each teacher’s contributions to student learning outcomes, for a particular subject, activity or task, from one year to the next, provides some recognition of good teachers. Hinchey highlights the fact that good teacher’s value-add; they increase the results a student attains for a particular subject from one year to the next. Hinchey indicates that a good teacher could therefore be determined by uncovering their contribution to the overall improvement in a student’s results from year to year. However, Schochet and Chiang (2010) stress that, while value-adding could be used to determine the best teachers, this approach is not a reliable sole determinant of a good teacher. Schochet and Chiang state that the estimates obtained from the value-adding of a teacher’s impact on a student’s results are likely to be somewhat subject to error because of the amount of data involved. This left Reardon and Raudenbush (2009) to emphasise that value-adding is not able to accurately identify unique teacher, school, or program effects and, therefore, they question its use as the only method in determining the qualities of a good teacher.

From the research presented above, it becomes clear that there is a dearth of research that surrounds the concept of a quality teacher. Arguably, this dearth of research culminates in a quality teacher also not being uniformly understood by school administrators, educational policy makers, and researchers. In addition, the intermixing of terms such as, ‘a good teacher’, ‘the best teacher’, and ‘effective teachers’ by researchers
to describe teacher quality or teaching quality leads to some ambiguity when researching a quality teacher. The literature indicates that very few researchers use the phrase ‘a quality teacher’. However, the literature establishes that ‘good teachers’, ‘best teachers’, and ‘effective teachers’ play an important role in student learning.

Initially this study defined a quality teacher as a concept that could be used to describe a teacher as a good, a very good, the best, the very best, the highest quality, or very high quality. The literature tends to support this definition based on the intermixing of various terms associated with teachers and quality, and the ambiguity surrounding definitions of teachers who are of ‘quality’. Some of this ambiguity can be attributed to the quality of the teacher exemplified through terms such as ‘the best teachers’, ‘good teachers’, and ‘effective teachers’. While there are challenges in defining the concept of ‘a quality teacher’ this study contends that a quality teacher may include representations of a teacher’s quality and their teaching quality as noted above. Therefore, a quality teacher arguably needs to exhibit quality in two areas. First as a teacher, and second in teaching. Consequently, this study concludes that a quality teacher may be a teacher of ‘teacher and teaching quality’. A quality teacher might not only be a teacher who had the knowledge to exhibit effective skills, traits, and attributes but also a teacher who effectively implemented these skill, traits, and attributes through their teaching.

2.6 Summary of Stage 2 – Teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher

The purpose of Stage 2 was to highlight literature that assists in providing some clarification to the definition of a quality teacher. To fulfil this intention the literature review highlighted research that unpacked two key terms ‘teacher quality’ and ‘teaching quality’. An analysis of this literature indicates that both these terms, while used frequently within educational research, are still surrounded by ambiguity and that
researchers have yet clearly define these terms. However, the bulk of the research contends that teacher quality, and teaching quality play a significant role in impacting on student’s learning. Consequently, a review of the literature outlined that there was a dearth of research that focused on the concept of a quality teacher and that the research that had been conducted tended to focus on the intermixing of the terms teacher quality and teaching quality or the introduction of phrases such as, ‘the best teacher’ or ‘the most effective teacher’. Therefore, there appeared to be a gap in the literature to uncover notions of what constituted a quality teacher.

The focus of this chapter now moves to identifying Queensland early career teachers, and then an explanation for their use in this study is offered.

2.7 Stage 3 – Queensland Early career teachers

Stage 3 of the literature review focuses on Queensland early career teachers. With the completion of Stages 1 and 2, Stage 3 briefly addresses the selection of Queensland as the site for the research, a more detailed response is provided in chapter 3. Stage 3 also explores the phrase ‘early career teachers’ and use of early career teachers in this research.

2.7.1 The selection of Queensland

Queensland was selected as the location for this research, primarily due to the dearth of research in this field. A more detailed response to the selection of Queensland is outlined in chapter 3.

2.7.2 Who are early career teachers?

The research of Ado (2013), Berry (2009), Dawson (2008), Elliott, Isaacs, and Chugani (2010), and Manuel (2003) identify early career teachers within specific timeframes which are compartmentalised into categories. Berry identifies early career teachers in a category of
beginning teachers and preservice teachers who are undergraduates in the first five years of teaching experience. Elliott et al. (2010) and Ado (2013) identify early career teachers as only beginning teachers with three years of teaching experience. Meanwhile, Dawson (2008) removes the categories of beginning and preservice, and simply identifies early career teachers as teachers with three or fewer than three years teaching experience. Therefore, for the purpose of this study based on the research highlighted above early career teachers are those teachers who are in their first three years of teaching or in their final year of an undergraduate or post graduate degree in Education.

**2.7.3 Why use early career teachers?**

In order to explore the use of early career teachers in this study, it is necessary to gain some insight into the professional life of such teachers. To facilitate this task research covering nearly thirty years, from Veenman (1984) to Maclean (2007), is provided to highlight the depth and breadth of issues surrounding early career teachers and the need to include them in this research. This exploration is initially provided by unpacking the research of Maclean (2007); and then expanding on that work using other studies.

Maclean (2007) argues that being an early career teacher in the 21st century is a long arduous process, beset at times with puzzles, uncertainty and doubt. Lundeen (2004) and Veenman (1984) assert that early career teachers experience a harsh reality check when they enter the classroom. In particular, Lundeen believes that this harsh reality check occurs because of the unrealistic expectations imposed on teachers in their early years. Veenman adds to Lundeen’s belief by stating that early career teachers experience reality shock due to the collapse of their missionary ideals formed during teacher training and by the harsh, and rude reality, of everyday classroom life. McCann, Johannessen and Ricca (2005) state that, because of this reality shock, the early years of teaching is both a taxing and stressful time.
Early career teachers bring to their preservice teacher education programs, personal beliefs about classrooms, teaching and how it feels to be a student (Kagan, 1992; Knowles, 1992). For some early career teachers, their knowledge and beliefs about teaching have not changed, even after having spent time in preservice programs (Kagan, 1992). As a consequence, early career teachers experience challenges with the development of their professional identity and learning to be a teacher (Flores & Day, 2006). To provide more depth to Flores and Day’s (2006) statement the research of Gilbert (2005), Gordon and Maxey (2000), Odell (1986), and Veenman (1984) is outlined below. The research of these researchers highlights some of the challenges that confront early career teachers on entering the teaching profession.

Veenman (1984) explains that early career teachers face a number of issues, and that some of these issues relate to classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing students’ work, relationships with parents, organization of class work, insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials and supplies, dealing with problems of individual students, heavy teaching loads resulting in insufficient teacher preparation time, and relations with colleagues. Odell’s (1986) work, which reinforces that of Veenman’s, indicates early career teachers have concerns about a lack of instruction, issues dealing with personal and emotional support, insufficient resources and materials for teaching, a lack of awareness on information about school policy and procedures, and a limitation on the knowledge associated with techniques for classroom discipline.

The research of Gordon and Maxey (2000), which adds to the work of Veenman (1984), and Odell (1986), highlights the fact that there are challenges for the early career teacher in managing the classroom, acquiring information about the school system, obtaining instructional resources and materials, planning organizing, and managing instruction, assessing and evaluating student progress, motivating students, using effective teaching methods, dealing with individual student’s needs,
communicating with colleagues, communicating with parents, adjusting to the teaching environment, and receiving emotional support. Finally, Gilbert (2005) expresses the view that time pressures, paperwork, and non-instructional meetings are a major source of concern for early career teachers.

From the research literature presented above, early career teachers appeared to experience a number of challenges in their initial years of teaching. As a consequence of these challenges, a number of researchers indicated that, for many early career teachers, teaching represented a sink or swim outcome (Cobbold, 2007; Hill, 2004; Howe, 2006; Ingersoll, 2001; Lundeen, 2004; Street, 2004). This situation, Ingersoll (2001) maintains, results in some early career teachers feeling a sense of abandonment and confusion, as a result of not receiving proper assistance and support from some teachers. To counteract this situation, early career teachers will, at times, actively seek out the assistance of their more experienced colleagues (Haigh, Ell & Mackisach, 2013; Patrick, 2013). Therefore, in an effort to address the plethora of concerns linked to their early career professional needs, it is more likely that early career teachers seek out the advice, support, and assistance of a quality teacher to help them become more effective teachers (Leong & Kavanagh, 2013; Tynjala, 2013).

From the views outlined above, the use of early career teachers in this study was based on the possibility that they were more likely to be attuned to, and receptive of, the skills, strategies, and pedagogies that were representative of their conceptions of a quality teacher. Therefore, early career teachers may be in a position to provide a number of differing experiences of a quality teacher because they were more likely to seek advice, support, and assistance from these teachers.
2.8 Summary of Stage 3

From the literature provided above on early career teachers there is evidence to indicate that early career teachers due to their lack of experience, and a need to meet the rigorous requirements of the teaching profession would generally seek out the assistance of peers who they acknowledged as a quality teacher. Based on this need to seek out assistance from these teachers the use of Queensland early career teachers as participants in this study was justified. This justification is reflected in two points.

First, the need to obtain rich data on the experiences of teachers of a quality teacher. Given that early career teachers are most likely to interact with teachers who could provide the greatest amount of assistance their participation would possibly provide a greater awareness as to what constitutes a quality teacher. This awareness of a quality teacher by early career teachers may reflect a need to pass their final year of practicum, or survive their first three years of teaching.

Second, the selection of Queensland as the location for research was initially due to the dearth of research in this field. As outlined previously a more detailed response to the selection of Queensland is discussed in chapter 3. Therefore, based on the two points already articulated the participation of Queensland early career teachers in this research fulfils this requirement. The final section of this chapter relates to the gaps in knowledge that this literature review highlights. These gaps in knowledge are outlined in Stage 4 below.

2.9 Stage 4 – The gaps in knowledge

The final stage of the literature review is Stage 4. Stage 4 provides the gaps in knowledge that a review of the literature highlights with respect to teacher quality, teaching quality, a quality teacher, and early career teachers.
The existing literature on a quality teacher provided limited insight into this concept and there continues to be considerable debate surrounding an understanding of its definition. Finally, the review also acknowledged that there was a dearth of research in this field that focused on the concept of ‘a quality teacher’.

2.10 Summary of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 analysed the literature dealing with a quality teacher. The chapter commenced with an outline of the teaching profession, and then proceeded to address the issue of a teacher’s impact on a student’s learning. Then, the chapter highlighted the importance of quality with respect to teachers and education, concluding with a focus on an understanding of the definitions of teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher, the use of the term early career teachers, and, finally, a brief mention of the gaps in the literature.

The literature informs this study in addressing a number of key points. The literature highlighted the significance of conducting research in Queensland by focusing on the concept of a quality teacher, and providing research that linked the teacher, and the quality of a teacher to a student’s learning. The literature also outlined that there was a dearth of research in the field focusing on a quality teacher, with most for the research addressing concepts like, the best teacher, teaching quality or teacher quality. Finally, the literature provided a justification for the use of early career teachers as participants within this study. With a summary of chapter 2 completed chapter 3 focuses on the methodology used in this research.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology and rationale used in this study for identifying Queensland early career teacher’s conceptions of a quality teacher. The research questions that this study addresses are as follow:

1. **What are Queensland early career teachers’ experiences of a quality teacher?**

2. **How do Queensland early career teachers describe their experiences of a quality teacher?**

Given that the research questions above focus on human experiences a qualitative approach best suited this study. An explanation supporting this statement is initially provided through the research of Burns (2000), Creswell (2007), Flick, (2009), Freebody (2003), Glesne (1999), and Goodwin and Goodwin (1996).

Qualitative research is used frequently to describe and develop an understanding of a particular social situation (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2007; Flick, 2009; Freebody, 2003; Glesne, 1999; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996). Studies that focus on qualitative research direct a researcher’s interest to the phenomenon under study through an exploration of how participants make sense of the phenomenon, what they experience from the phenomenon and how they interpret their experiences (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 1998; Flick, 2009; Freebody, 2003; Glesne, 1999; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996). Given that the purpose of this study is to find meaning in human experience, qualitative research, in appropriate research
methodology. With a brief explanation for the use of a qualitative paradigm as the framework for this study as outlined above, the next sections justify the use of phenomenography as the methodology of choice for this research.

3.1 Qualitative research in education

Hart (2000), Stage and Manning (2016), and Threadgold (1985) outline that any educational inquiry is measured against what assistance this inquiry provides in solving the educational problem at hand; and/or how relevant it is to the practitioners. Burns (1994) and Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011) highlight that educational research is traditionally characterised by two distinct traditions of inquiry – quantitative and qualitative research. Furthermore, Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) indicate that, within each of these traditions of inquiry as additional knowledge is uncovered, new paradigms emerge.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) define the term paradigm as the belief system or worldview that enables a researcher to make “epistemological, methodological, and ontological choices” (p.99). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) indicate that epistemology focuses on what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known; ontology emphasises questions about the nature of reality, and methodology relates to how individuals gains knowledge about the world. Consequently, with a view to acknowledging this study’s focus on human input, within an educational setting, a methodology emphasising a qualitative method of inquiry is applied.

Qualitative research provides a foundation for this study because the majority of educational endeavours are dependent upon human input, and educational contexts are filled with feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn from, via conventional research methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Eisner (1991) indicates that research focusing on qualitative studies has a number of
shared characteristics that typically emphasise a field research focus, and relate to self as an instrument. Eisner (1991) continues that qualitative studies also have an interpretive character, use expressive language, pay attention to particulars, and possess the coherence, insight and instrumental utility which makes them believable. The present study reflects these qualitative prerequisites, as Eisner (1991) highlights, in several ways.

First, this research focuses an educational setting. Second, the objects of this research are the conceptions held by Queensland early career teachers of a quality teacher. Third, once gathered, the findings from this research are interpreted by the researcher. Fourth, the participants provide a full and expressive account of the phenomenon under investigation through a verbal account, facilitated by the researcher. Fifth, through an analysis of the data, the researcher gains a detailed account of the phenomenon. Sixth, through a process of careful information collection, analysis and reporting, the researcher provides a truthful and trustworthy account of Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. With this understanding of the use of qualitative research in education, the next section deals with outlining the nature of a qualitative study.

3.1.1 Nature of a qualitative study

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) highlight that some difficulty surrounds a definition of qualitative research, as it is not a distinct theory nor paradigm. In an attempt to define qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln suggest it is a:

... multimethod in its focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.2)
Strauss and Corbin (1998) offer a broader definition of qualitative research by indicating that this type of research emphasises findings not determined by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) add that qualitative research also has the capacity to deliver creditable findings within an educational context, because a researcher does not uncover sweeping generalizations but contextual findings. Finally, Threadgold (1985) also emphasises that education has the ability to provide a greater opportunity to explore interactions and processes within and between schools and communities, and therefore, encourages qualitative research. Consequently, the qualitative approach is able to provide the necessary foundations for understanding the interactions that possibly exist within a school’s setting, and the behaviours that individuals might exhibit within that setting.

Researchers who use a qualitative approach study the phenomenon in its natural setting; and, via this setting, attempt to interpret the phenomena through the descriptions articulated by the research participants (Dahlgren & Fallsberg, 1991; Dall’Alba, 1996). Therefore, a researcher attempts to understand the phenomena under study by getting a feeling for the setting, thereby, acquiring a multi-view of the concepts from the participants involved in the study (Dall’Alba, 1996).

Once this multi-viewed is obtained, a researcher is required to present a narrative framed within a story-telling focus about the phenomenon. Thus, a researchers’ ability to bring his/her narrative to life is important (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). To achieve this ‘life like story’, a researcher needs to focus on the believability of the plot, and the methodology used; in conjunction with focusing on how their epistemological and ontological beliefs impact on the story telling (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Within the context of this research, the researcher, through the use of qualitative research, interprets the concepts of a quality teacher.
as highlighted by the participants in a story-telling narrative, and then is tasked with bringing that narrative to life. Therefore, the researcher's ability to achieve this outcome is reflected through the researcher's narrative skills to make the plot believable, the methodology used by the researcher to obtain the findings, and the impact of the researcher's epistemological and ontological beliefs on the story telling. Following this brief outline of the nature of qualitative research, the next section of this chapter focuses on providing an overview of the methodology applied to this research, that is, phenomenography.

3.2 Phenomenography – An overview

The principal methodology underpinning this study is phenomenography. Phenomenography emerged from research conducted by Ference Marton and Lennart Svensson, in the 1970s, and later work by Lars Owe Dahlgren and Roger Saljo (Mamaghanu, Mostowfi, & Khorram, 2015). From this synergy, phenomenography was introduced to the education research world in 1981, representing a complementary approach to other kinds of research, with a new and distinct field of inquiry (Marton, 1986). Dall’Alba (1996) argues that phenomenography is a research approach aligned with the broader qualitative research traditions already established within education. Prosser and Miller (1989) add that, initially, phenomenography primarily focused on the examination of learning tasks, but later expanded into research that emphasised describing perceptions about a phenomenon, as well as understanding a phenomenon.

Phenomenography espouses the view that the perceived assumptions individuals have about a phenomenon are reflected in that individual's behaviour (Willis, 2007). Marton (1981a, 1981b) and Marton and Booth (1997) add to this statement by indicating that these perceived assumptions are based on two perspectives, first-order and second-order, which investigate how individuals interact with and experience the world.
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in which they live. Marton (1981a, 1981b) contends that first-order perspectives relate to comments about the world, while second-order perspectives emphasise how people perceive the world. A research approach that assumes a second-order perspective is phenomenography (Marton, 1981a, 1986b; Marton & Booth, 1997). Therefore, phenomenography identifies and describes the various ways that individuals perceive a phenomenon (Marton, 1981a, 1981b; Pramling, 1995; Marton & Booth, 1997; Svensson, 1997).

3.2.1 Rationale for the principal approach of this study

In developing an overview of qualitative research methods, Tesch (1990) indicates, that within the context of the social sciences, there are three applications regarding this qualitative research. First, this type of research aims to investigate the characteristics of language. Second, this type of research seeks to discover any possible regularity that the participants highlight; and, third, this type of research focuses on comprehending the meaning of the text or action highlighted, to facilitate possible outcomes.

In research that seeks to discover commonalities in the conceptions held by Queensland early career teachers of a quality teacher, Tesch’s (1990) model above reinforces the appropriateness of phenomenography. Within the context of this study, the use of Tesch’s model assists in achieving an outcome whereby Queensland early career year teachers develop an understanding of a quality teacher, through a process of professional experiences, which in turn reflects their concepts of a quality teacher gleaned from differing educational environments. Therefore, a phenomenographic study, which is based on a capacity to uncover the conceptions that Queensland early career teachers highlight of a real world event best suits this research (Bogdan & Biklen; 2007; Freebody, 2003; Polkinghorne, 2005). Further support for the use of phenomenography as a methodology in this study is offered by Bowden
(1996) and others, through their suggestions that this methodology was not developed separately from education.

According to Bowden (1996) phenomenography was originally developed in response to questions about education. As Tight (2015) outlines, phenomenography has proven to be a valuable strategy in attempting to uncover any qualitative variations in the experiences of phenomena in teaching; and, therefore, continues to offer much to research in the field of education. Entwhistle (1997) also adds to the debate about the use of phenomenographic research in education by drawing attention to the inability of other research methods to achieve similar results. For Marton (1986), phenomenography identifies misconceptions, and therefore, assists a researcher to understand the phenomenon under investigation. Marton proposes that phenomenography helps to understand the phenomenon under investigation because of a capacity to identify misconceptions related to an individual’s learning, thinking and understanding. Marton continues that an individual’s learning, thinking and understanding all deal with relationships between the individual and that which he or she learns, thinks about and understands. Finally, Willis (2007) highlights the understanding of a phenomenon which entails different forms of research in conjunction with different ways of reporting that research. As a result of Willis’ comment, phenomenography too has a part to play in educational research. Therefore, through the application of a phenomenographic methodology research conceptions that Queensland early career year teachers have of a quality teacher can uncovered by the researcher. Another aspect of phenomenographic research that assists in understanding the phenomenon of a quality teacher is the central premise of phenomenographic research – that is, no two participants, experiencing the phenomenon of a quality teacher, did so in exactly the same way (Marton, 1986).

This central premise of phenomenographic research noted above assists this research, because this study seeks a collection of
participants’ conceptions of a quality teacher, with a view to understanding how all of these participants come to view a quality teacher in a specific way. Given that no two participants experience the phenomenon of a quality teacher in exactly the same way, the use of phenomenographic research provides an opportunity to explore a number of differing experiences about a quality teacher. Instead of focusing on the phenomenon of a quality teacher, the findings emphasise an understanding of how each participant experiences the phenomenon. Therefore, phenomenographic research lends itself to this study because it focuses on unearthing descriptions of the phenomenon of a quality teacher from the experiences of Queensland early career teachers.

3.2.2 Key elements of phenomenography

Steeped in an empirical research tradition, phenomenography tends not to focus on the metaphysical but instead on the relationships between people and their environment (Svensson, 1997). Phenomenographers believe that individuals, via their conceptions of a phenomenon, are able to subjectively make sense of the surrounding world and, therefore, express their particular views of reality as concepts (Ballantyne, Thompson & Taylor, 1998). In Ballantyne, Thompson and Taylor’s (1998) view, researchers use these concepts, as a type of filter to help see the world as viewed and understood by individuals in that world. Therefore, phenomenography focuses the individual on describing their conceptions of the world in which they live (Svensson, 1997).

The original focus of phenomenographic research hinged on a desire to gain some insight into student learning (Marton, 1981a, 1981b; 1986). This focus emphasised student learning centred on gaining knowledge that reflects understanding and meaning which is relative to a point-or-view (Marton, 1981a, 1981b; 1986). The aim of phenomenographic research is to describe knowledge in terms of understanding and meaning irrespective of the status that meaning holds in relation to the demands for objectivity and intersubjectivity (Marton,
1981a, 1981b; 1986). By taking this aim, knowledge is no longer described in objective and intersubjective terms – simply subjective and relative to a point-or-view (Marton, 1981a, 1981b; 1986). Consequently, knowledge within this context becomes a fundamental question of meaning and cultural context (Marton, 1981a, 1981b; 1986). Additionally, knowledge framed within this context formulates an awareness of the specific ways in which participants express their understandings of the phenomenon; and, as a result, gain an insight onto the similarities and differences about the phenomenon as it appears to the participants within their cultural context (Marton, 1981a, 1981b; 1986). Therefore, the key elements of phenomenography for this study focus on understanding the relationships that might exist between the participants, and a quality teacher, through a description of the range of possible variations of the phenomenon, as experienced amongst Queensland early career teachers.

3.2.3 Ontological perspectives and the nature of conceptions

Educational inquiry, due to a multi-paradigmatic nature and a broad contextual framework, is not shaped by any universal foundation or criteria (Hart, 2000). The culminating implication of this contextual framework for a researcher is that each path of the research needs to be valued in relation to its unique metatheoretical and methodological assumptions (Hart 2000). For the researcher in this study, that entails engaging in the clarification of their own assumptions and beliefs about a quality teacher (Hart, 2000). This clarification of assumptions and beliefs is important because educational inquiry has not been shaped by any universal criteria on how to conduct research (Glesne, 1999; Guba, 1990). Therefore, a view exists that researchers engaging in a qualitative study bring their own worldviews, belief systems and explicit and implicit tendencies to their studies (Creswell, 2007; Glesne, 1999; Guba, 1990). As Creswell (2007) argues, a researcher must approach phenomenographic research with an open mind to limit their bias.
This researcher’s belief is that the phenomenon of a quality teacher exists within the experiences of Queensland early career year teachers, derived from a number of geographic locations. A further belief is that, while a quality teacher is evident at each of these locations, Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher from these various locations vary. Therefore, the fundamental focus for this study emphasises the nature of the conceptions Queensland early career teachers possess and in understanding those conceptions in relation to how a quality teacher is experienced by Queensland early career teachers. Given that conceptions play a significant role in phenomenography, a fundamental ontological imperative is to address the meaning of the term conception and foundational framework of conceptions within this research.

Marton, Dall’Alba and Beaty (1993) refer to a conception as “a certain delimitation of a phenomenon from the context or background and of its component parts and the relations between them” (p.278). Dahlin (1994) adds that conceptions from phenomenographic research represent a participant’s conscious knowledge of the world that surrounds them. Therefore, based on the research of Dahlin and Marton et al. conceptions, with respect to this study, are the representations of the knowledge the participants have about a quality teacher which are gleaned from the world in which the participants live. The next section addresses a focus on awareness and the link between the participant’s awareness and their conceptions of a quality teacher.

Queensland early career teachers’ awareness of their conceptions of a quality teacher is important because phenomenography emphasises a truthful description of the phenomena under study, through the participants’ eyes, via their experiences of that phenomenon (Marton, 1994). As a result, phenomenography attempts to capture how participants experience the world by focusing on the critical differences between what participants experience with the world they engage in (Marton, 1994). In addition, because phenomenographic research
focuses on the experiences of the participants, this research does not engage in any complex investigations of how the participants became aware of their experiences (Marton, 1994). Therefore, to address a focus that emphasises a non-complex investigation of how Queensland early career teachers’ conceptualise a quality teacher, this study makes a number of assumptions about Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. These assumptions are outlined below to give some clarity to this study’s use of phenomenographic research.

In this study, there is an assumption that the phenomenon of a quality teacher exists within the experiences of Queensland early career year teachers who are from different school locations. This assumption is based on the belief of possible personal encounters by Queensland early career year teachers with a quality teacher within their differing teaching environments or schooling. A second assumption is that, while a quality teacher is evident within each location, conceptions of a quality teacher vary amongst the participants. Therefore, the fundamental concern for this research emphasises the nature of the conceptions Queensland early career teachers’ possess; and in understanding those conceptions in relation to their knowledge of a quality teacher. This view is expanded in more detail in below.

The knowledge, for example, that Queensland early career teachers have of a quality teacher may be described in terms of conceptions. These conceptions reflect the meanings, understandings and experiences of Queensland early career teachers about a quality teacher (Svensson, 1997). Therefore, given that knowledge may be expressed and described as conceptions in many forms, phenomenography is uniquely placed to address this because of an ability to identify these differing concepts, and the capacity to describe these concepts for each individual’s experience (Bruce, 1996; Bruce & Gerber, 1994; Hasselgren & Beach, 1997).
3.3 Experience and awareness

From a phenomenographic perspective, Marton (1994) highlights that experiences are the relationships which occur internally between the world and an individual, or something that occurs within the world and an individual. Franz (1994) suggests that, from a phenomenographic perspective, an individual’s experience is a representation of a two-way relationship that involves people and a particular situation being experienced. Franz adds that experience focuses on an understanding of how participants interact with the phenomenon, through their individual experiences, and not simply in terms of individuals or the phenomena. As a result, Franz (1994) argues that experiences do not represent a description of the phenomenon; but instead involve the possible relationships that exist between the participants and the phenomenon being experienced. Marton and Booth (1997) add to Franz’s argument by highlighting phenomenography aims to describe the experiences of participants who exist in a phenomenon because:

... we can never describe experience in its entirety, we are constrained to look for and describe critical differences in people’s capabilities for explaining the phenomena in which we are interested. (Marton & Booth, 1997, p.123)

According to Marton and Booth (1997), participants encounter difficulty in being able to describe their entire experience, culminating in phenomenographic research focusing on describing the critical differences that are unearthed between the participants’ explanations of the phenomenon. However, this focus is couched in the understanding that a participant’s experiences are limited to a number of qualitative variations of the conceptions of those experiences, so that no two participants experience the phenomena equally (Marton & Booth, 1997).

Marton and Booth (1997) indicate that awareness is a descriptive term and is reflected in the total number of experiences that an individual participant highlights, when engaged in the phenomenon. When focusing
on areas of critical differences, in the manner in which a participant experiences a particular phenomenon, there needs to be a focus on each participant’s awareness of the phenomena (Marton & Booth, 1997). Due to the humanistic nature of this process, Marton and Booth warn of the need to be cognisant that people do not have the capacity to be aware of everything at the same time, in the same way. Therefore, a lack of awareness by participants is the result of awareness being layered into two specific areas: core awareness and field awareness (Marton & Booth, 1997, p.123). Core awareness constitutes those elements that are most important, while field awareness represents the lesser important elements (Marton & Booth, 1997). The elements with the least impact are found at the outer fringes of the awareness, with the most important situated in the core (Marton, & Booth, 1997). Within the context of phenomenography, the experience of participants reflects their interaction between themselves and the world around. This interaction could be internal or external to the participant. However, it is important to note three points about experiences with respect to phenomenography.

First, experiences do not represent the phenomenon being studied; rather it is the possible relationships that exist between the participants and the phenomenon that is represented (Marton & Booth, 1997). Second, there is a limited number of ways in which participants experience the phenomenon (Marton, 1994; Marton & Booth, 1997); and, third, no two participants equally experience the phenomenon (Marton, 1994; Marton & Booth, 1997). Experiences reflect the different relationships that the participants have with the phenomenon, and awareness reflects the total number of ways that a participant experiences a phenomenon (Marton, 1994; Marton & Booth, 1997). Therefore, awareness highlights the connection between the participant and the phenomenon, through the participant’s experiences of the phenomenon.

By a researcher describing the critical differences between what the participants’ experience, by uncovering the participants’ awareness
of the phenomenon, a researcher gains an insight into the participants’ conceptions of the phenomenon under study. This insight occurs due to the connection that exists between the participants’ awareness of the phenomenon and their experiences of the phenomenon. Within the context of this research, the emphasis is on constructing a description of the phenomenon of a quality teacher based on the knowledge of Queensland early career teachers. Furthermore, in the case of this research, that knowledge is derived from the collection of the relevant findings that focus on the phenomenon under study. The following section now focuses on explaining how that data is applied within phenomenography.

3.4 Categories of description and outcome space

The categories of description and outcome space are tools that allow a researcher to capture and then communicate the features of the conceptions of individuals about a phenomenon (Bruce, 1996; Bruce & Gerber, 1994). According to Marton (1986), conceptions and categories of description are viewed as a dyad. Marton (1986) uses Lewis Carroll’s metaphor of the grin of the Cheshire cat as an example of this dyad. Marton (1986) outlines that if a conception is the cat, the category of description is the grin the cat had left behind. This example highlights the distinction between the act of experiencing or conceptualising a phenomenon, and representing the structure and meaning of that act.

Using Marton’s (1986) example above, and applying that example to this study, a quality teacher is the concept, and the categories of description represent the act left behind by a quality teacher. Consequently, categories of description are not staged responses and reflected snap-shots of experiences at a particular moment in time (Willis, 2007).

A researcher’s analysis of the findings is presented to reflect the categories of description; and, as Entwhistle (1997) believes, in order to
enhance the credibility of the findings, a researcher must give consideration to the presentation of their findings. Entwhistle made the following points:

The categories of description, which are the outcomes of phenomenographic analysis, need to be presented with sufficient extracts to delimit the meaning of the categories fully, and also to show, where appropriate, the contextual relationships, which exist. The summary description of a category serves an important purpose in drawing attention to salient features, which distinguish it from other categories, but the description isolated from the interview extracts cannot be fully understood by the reader. The meaning resides in the essence of the comments from which the category has been constituted. (Entwhistle, 1997, p.132)

Categories of description also represent a mental model of the conceptions constructed from, and revealed by, the analysis of findings (Svensson & Theman, 1983). It is from an analysis of these findings that a researcher interprets the way in which the participants experience a phenomenon (Svensson & Theman, 1983); and is based on the premise each phenomenon may be understood in a limited number of qualitatively different ways (Marton, 1994; Marton & Booth 1997; Saljo 1996; Svensson, 1997; Svensson & Theman, 1983).

Categories of description focus on providing a visual representation of the limited number of ways participant experiences are re-captured for a particular phenomenon. Therefore, categories of description are not conceptions, because they represent how the researcher interprets the ways in which each participant experience a specific phenomenon.

Bowden (1996) captures the essence of this paradox by emphasising that a researcher is not the participant being interviewed, rather the interpreter of the responses that the participant provides during the interview. Therefore, categories of description, according to Renstrom, Andersson, and Marton (1990), are not representations of reality but instead abstracts of the reality arrived at, by a researcher,
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through the reduction of the findings. The real aim of a researcher is to represent the wholeness of a conception held about a particular phenomenon (Svensson, 1997; Svensson & Theman, 1983). This wholeness of a conception in turn represents a number of influences, which encompass a range of interrelated content, which are orientated within a qualitative aspect (Marton, 1986). It is the multiplicity of these influences that culminates in a representation of each participant possibly articulating a qualitatively different conception of the same phenomenon (Marton, 1986). Marton (1986) and Marton and Booth (1997) provide the following criteria that aide in methodologically grounding the categories of description.

First, individual categories need to demonstrate a clear relationship with the phenomenon, so that each category tells something distinct about a particular way of experiencing the phenomenon. Second, categories have to stand in a logical relationship with one another, a relationship that is frequently hierarchical. Third, the system needs to be engaging; and, therefore, categories should be analysed and developed as is feasible and reasonable, allowing for the capture of the critical variations in the findings, as presented by the participants.

The three criteria above form the basis of the process that this research utilises to formulate these possible categories of description. In attempting to achieve this, Svensson (1997) argues a researcher needs to express the meaning of their findings, to illuminate the similarities and differences described by the whole categorisation. While the principal outcome of this research is to develop categories of description of a quality teacher, those categories need to be seen in the light of results gained through research that is reflected upon and referred to as an outcome space (Marton, 1986). Therefore, in this research categories of description are the representations of Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. These categories of description need to be presented with each category labelled, with elaborations. Then, each description of the conception needs to be followed by illustrative quotes from the
transcripts. It is essential for the researcher to depict accurately the phenomenon; and, therefore, the quality of the categories of description need to directly reflect their depiction. In addition, the categories of description form the results of the research.

While each participant needs to articulate their own experience of the phenomenon, it is the task of a researcher, via the outcome space, to represent the possible relationships amongst the categories of description. Ultimately, a researcher attempts to gain an understanding of the structural framework of the categories; and this understanding represents the goal of phenomenography (Marton, 1986). However, the issue for a researcher is that understanding the framework of the categories necessitates the development of a visual representation of the phenomenon (Ekeblad & Bond, 1994; Hasselgren & Beach, 1997). Added to this the outcome space is developed in a social context and, as a result, is framed in, and a reflection of, the social context in which the research takes place in (Ekeblad & Bond, 1994; Hasselgren & Beach, 1997).

Some of the possible key points when developing the outcome space are that the conceptions outlined are not a staged process; but rather represent a snapshot of the experiences of the participants at that particular time (Svensson & Theman, 1983). The aim of the analysis of the findings is not to categorise any individual participant as having a particular conception; rather, to illuminate or distil the full range of conceptions held by the group of participants (Svensson, 1997; Svensson & Theman, 1983). Consequently, an analysis of the findings from this study focuses on providing the researcher with a collective view of the concept of a quality teacher as opposed to individual views. Through providing the researcher with a collective view of the concept a more illuminated or distilled range of the conceptions held by the group of participants can be gleaned.

The outcome space, within the context of the research process, is depicted using a diagrammatic representation (Svensson, 1997; Svensson & Theman, 1983). This diagrammatic schema is both a
representation of the categories of description and how the researcher configures these categories. Therefore, a vital part of the research process is the accuracy associated with interpreting and describing the participant’s expressions of reality – in this case their conceptions of a quality teacher. An explanation of the research process associated with this research follows.

### 3.5 The research process

This section presents a detailed account of how phenomenography is used to investigate the conceptions of a quality teacher by Queensland early career teachers. It discusses the role of the researcher, the validity and reliability of the findings, the participants, and the interview process.

#### 3.5.1 The role of the researcher

The researcher’s role in this study, from the perspective of Marton and Booth (1997), is to facilitate an outcome that culminates in a phenomenon that is central to their interest. Marton and Booth believe to achieve this outcome a researcher needs to undertake a number of key applications. Marton and Booth highlight that first, a “researcher needs to contemplate thoroughly the identification of the phenomenon; second, discern that structure against the backgrounds of the situations in which it might be experienced; third, distinguish the salient features; and fourthly, look at the phenomenon through the eyes of the research participant” (1997, pp.128 & 129).

Ashworth and Lucas, (2000) indicate that the action described above, highlights second order perspectives; and, via these perspectives, an accurate account of human conceptions is collected, for analysis; and thus, assist in minimising bias. Ashworth and Lucas suggest that, to help in minimising bias, a researcher needs to avoid the following:

- Importing to the present study, the findings of earlier research;
Assuming pre-given theoretical structures on participants’ in interpretations;

Presupposing the researcher’s personal knowledge and belief;

Assuming, prior to the acquaintance with the nature of the experience itself, specific research techniques. Assumptions built into the techniques tend to bend the data found using those techniques to a particular form that may be incommensurate with the aim of securing clarity concerning [student] experience;

A concern to uncover the cause of certain forms of [student] experience. It would be a distortion to import researcher’s notions of cause and effect into the description of the experience. (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000, p.8)

Ashworth and Lucas (2000) continue by emphasising that a researcher needs to focus on adhering to the guidelines that could likely achieve the phenomenographic goal of revealing the expectations experienced by the participants, as opposed to a researcher’s own expectations. This need by a researcher to focus on the expectations of the participants represents some challenges (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Burns (2000) believes that one of these challenges is the impact a researcher’s bias, which is based on his/her experiences of the phenomenon, and may influence the findings. Holliday (2007) maintains that a researcher needs to be conscious of this bias and focus on a role that ensures the integrity of the findings. In addition, it is essential for a researcher to remain vigilant and to not adopt a position on the correctness of the responses made by the participants, from the experiences of the participants about the phenomenon (Åkerlind, Bowden & Green, 2005; Bruce, 1996; Francis, 1996). Creswell (2007) contends that a researcher’s bias with respect to the phenomenon under study
could lead to errors and therefore impact on research, which could have otherwise been insightful.

Based on the research outlined above the researcher in this study needs to be cognisant of their experiences of a quality teacher to ensure that these experiences do not influence the findings from this research. Consequently, the researcher needs to remain vigilant of not imposing their experiences on those of the participants and not include their experiences in the data collection or research analysis and findings. For the researcher their experience of a quality teacher was outlined in chapter 1 where reference was made to a definition of a quality teacher. By way of a summary, the researcher’s view of a quality teacher is a teacher who has been acknowledged by their peers, students and parents as a teacher capable of engaging students in their class. A quality teacher is a teacher who has a professional relationship with all their students, and based on that relationship students trust that teacher. Finally, a quality teacher is a teacher who is aware of what they are teaching through years of experience. Given that the researcher’s use of a qualitative approach needs to focus on the acquisition of findings obtained through an interview process, it is important to gather information that is both reliable and valid. The next section reports on how the reliability and validity of this study is achieved.

3.5.2 Reliability and validity

The terms reliability and validity are usually associated with quantitative research and, therefore, not usually used in qualitative research (Noble & Smith, 2015). However, Sandberg (1995) refers to reliability and validity in relation to phenomenography. When focusing on outcomes associated with mainstream social science, reliability needs to be tested against whether another researcher, reviewing the same findings, could arrive at the same results (Sandberg, 1995). With respect to phenomenography, this indicates that the reliability of the research is dependent upon how at least two other researchers achieve the same
categories of description as the original researcher (Sandberg, 1995). However, Marton (1986) argues that the original researcher’s findings of the variation in conceptions amongst participants is a process of discovery and, as such, might not necessarily be replicated in another study. Sandberg (1995) highlights a possible area of focus, which addresses this concern, is the outcome space. Once the outcome space of a phenomenon is identified, it might be possible for another researcher to recognise instances of the differing ways that the participants experience the phenomenon under investigation (Sandberg, 1995).

The reliability of any research is of great significance because it links a researcher’s judgment and impacts on the personal input of a researcher. Sandberg (1995) proposes that one way to view a researcher’s judgement is to conceive this judgement as faithfulness, whereby a researcher is faithful to themselves, rather than simply being reliable. Sandberg (1995) expands on the faithfulness of a researcher by emphasising that a researcher’s judgment places a greater emphasis not on the reliability of a research, but instead focuses on a researcher’s personal impact on the reliability of the findings.

Saljo (1996) also adds that the emphasis on phenomenographic research is not on the replication of results, because replication fails to take into account a researcher’s aim to unearth the participants’ conceptions of reality. Consequently, while the replication of results may be viewed in a positivist paradigm as having highlighted the reliability of research, for phenomenography, such an outcome may instead indicate the unreliability of the research. Although, the replication of results in phenomenography can be viewed as unreliable, phenomenography is designed to focus on individuals, and their experiences because not all individuals experience the same phenomenon in the same way. The replication of outcomes is not a validation of the reliability of phenomenographic research, because the main premise of phenomenographic research is to discover the possible or varying descriptions of the same phenomenon. Therefore, undertaking a
phenomenographic research approach moves away from a replication of the findings.

Saljo (1996) argues that, in order to ensure that the outcomes are reliable, a researcher needs to remain as faithful as possible to the investigated conceptions. Additionally, Saljo (1996) suggests that faithfulness should be demonstrated in how the researcher controls and checks their interpretations throughout the research process. He continues, indicating that this is demonstrated through the formulation of the research questions, through the selection of participants, obtaining the findings, an analysis of the findings and finally, the reporting of the results. The over-riding implications for the reliability of research, conducted through a qualitative process, is premised on a researcher’s interpretation (Maxwell, 1992). For a researcher, this is emphasised by being aware of their interpretations of the descriptions derived from the participants of the phenomenon being researched. Another area of concern relates to the validity of the findings collected throughout the research process (Gerber, 1993; Sandberg, 1995). The validity of the findings are important because a researcher needs to emphasise a sense of trustworthiness, soundness and consistency throughout the research process (Collier – Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009; Gerber, 1993; Sandberg, 1995).

Conducting research is based on a known set of procedures and rules that need to be applied consistently and truthfully to a designated research question, with a focus on transparency (Collier – Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009; Gerber, 1993; Sandberg, 1995). Transparency is facilitated through a process that pursues trustworthiness, soundness and consistency (Collier – Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009; Gerber, 1993; Sandberg, 1995). Therefore, a level of quality control needs to be undertaken at each phase of the research process and in particular the interviews, where the clarification of meaning needs to be consistently and continually sought from the participants (Collier – Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009; Gerber, 1993;
Sandberg, 1995). If a research project falls down in the first phase of the interview, then possibly the validity of the research may be brought into question (Collier – Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009; Gerber, 1993; Sandberg, 1995).

It is important for a researcher to remain faithful to the research process; and, therefore, a researcher needs to interpret the participants’ conceptions by being as faithful as possible to the participants’ own experiences (Collier – Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009; Gerber, 1993; Sandberg, 1995). Maxwell (2002) provides some insightful research into how a researcher can address the production of valid information.

Maxwell (2002) suggests that validity pertains to “a relationship between an account and something outside of that account, whether this something is construed as objective reality, the constructions of actors, or a variety of other possible interpretations” (p.7). Maxwell continues that based on these three points validity is expressed are descriptive, interpretative, theoretical, generalizable and evaluate. When a researcher engages in validating the information obtained from the interview process it is important that the following actions are followed (Maxwell, 2002). First, a researcher needs to ensure the factual accuracy of their account by not making up or distorting the things they saw and heard. Second, a researcher is not concerned solely, or even primarily, with providing a valid description of the physical objects, events, and behaviours in the settings they study. Third, a researcher depends on a consensus within the relevant community about how to apply the concepts and terms used in the account; any disagreements refer to their accuracy, not their meaning, and the concepts and terms employed are as close to the experience as possible. Finally, a researcher needs to look at the extent to which individuals extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times, or settings than those directly studied. A researcher’s comprehension of the phenomenon is not derived from the basis of that researcher’s perspective and categories, but rather from those of the participants (Maxwell, 2002). Therefore, the
participants and the interview process play a key role in this research. Given the importance of the participants and the interview process to this study, the next sections focus on addressing the selection of participants and the interview process.

### 3.5.3 Participants

Historically, debate surrounds the size of a group in phenomenographic research. Dahlgren (1993) suggests that ten to twelve participants are sufficient to elicit the limited number of qualitatively different conceptions of a phenomenon. Bowden (1996) and Sandberg (1994) indicate that a figure of twenty participants as being an effective sample size. Marton and Booth (1997) highlight that the research group should be smallish and comprised of people from a particular population. Franz (1994) recommends a research group of between fifteen and thirty participants. On the other hand, Merriam (1988) does not specify the actual size of the group but indicates that the number of research participants selected should enable the maximum possibility of identifying variation in participant understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

When selecting groups, there is also some importance placed on the selection of participants, to avoid presuppositions regarding either the nature of the phenomenon or the nature of the conceptions held by particular types of participants (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000). As a consequence of Ashworth and Lucas’s (2000) research this study selected participants, as outlined below, whose conceptions of a quality teacher represented a variety of experiences of the phenomenon. Given that the collection of the findings is dependent upon the conceptions of the individuals, who have viewed the specific phenomenon, obtaining across-section of participants is necessary, so as to not impact on the clarity and richness of these findings.

Based on the research sighted above, this study interviewed twenty-five early career teachers, represented by a cross-section of
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teachers from their final year of post-graduate or graduate qualification in education, and in their first to third year of teaching experience, thereby maximising the range of perspectives encountered of a quality teacher. Table 3.1 below highlights this cross-section of teachers.

Table 3.1 – Details of the early career teachers involved in this study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher numbers (Total 25)</th>
<th>Teacher Experience (In years)</th>
<th>Teacher Employment Private, Catholic, Government or University</th>
<th>Primary or Secondary Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Females</td>
<td>Final year of undergraduate course</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Females</td>
<td>Post graduate course</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Females 1 Male</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Females 2 Males</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Female 1 Male</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Females</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Females 1 Male</td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All of the participants were located on the Sunshine Coast and worked in schools, or attended university, on the Sunshine Coast.

A group size of twenty-five participants was selected based on the recommendation of Franz (1994) who indicates that a group size of between fifteen and thirty is appropriate in phenomenographic research.
In addition, this group size also represents a number of differing educational contexts, and as Merriam (1988) alludes, enables the maximum possibility of identifying variations in participant understanding of a quality teacher. To further reinforce Merriam’s views the participants were selected from a number of differing geographical and work locations, ages, gender, along with a primary and secondary focus. In order to gain access to these participants it was necessary to address the following procedures.

Initially, an ‘ethical clearance’ was applied for and approved by the researcher’s governing university (see appendix 6). In addition to obtaining an ‘ethical clearance’ there was also the need to obtain approval from Education Queensland to conduct research in schools (see appendix 5). Education Queensland wants to ensure the safety of students and staff and therefore, any research project that engages with Education Queensland schools is thoroughly vetted before any research can be conducted. In the context of qualitative research involving interviews, ‘informed consent’ is a very important component for fostering a trusting relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. According to Glesne (1999) ‘informed consent’ may also “contribute to the empowering of research participants” (p.116). The process of facilitating ‘informed consent’ was achieved through documentation provided to teachers (see appendix 3) and providing teachers with an overview of the research project (see appendix 4). Finally, permission was sought to conduct research in the school via seeking approval from the principal (see appendix 7).

Participants from Queensland were selected for the following reasons. The first reason related to a review of the research in the field focusing on the concept of a quality teacher. This review indicated that there was a dearth of research from Queensland and therefore, the researcher believed that an opportunity to conduct research in this region was both viable and necessary. The second reason highlighted the researcher’s employment status with Education Queensland, which
partly assisted in the facilitation of accessing some early career teachers. The researcher had spent nearly twenty-eight years teaching in Queensland working in a number of regions of the state. Based on this timeframe, and the researcher’s work locations over that timeframe, the researcher felt that there were sufficient connections within Education Queensland to help with the facilitation of acquiring participants from various geographical locations around the state. The third reason stemmed from the researcher’s place of residence, which is Queensland, and therefore, Queensland represented a pragmatic choice.

As the findings for this study were obtained by an interview process, the following section highlights how the interviews needed to be conducted and the questions associated with these interviews are explored.

3.5.4 Interviews and questions

A phenomenographic study seeks human conceptions of a specific aspect of the world and these conceptions can be revealed in several ways – through drawing, products of peoples’ work and the manner in which people behave under controlled conditions (Marton, 1986). Conceptions are most accessible through peoples’ language; and, based on this the researcher, used one-to-one interviews that were face-to-face as the principal means of obtaining findings (Marton, 1986; Svensson, 1994). The individual participant format is also favoured over a focus group format, because this format enables greater probing, while still allowing for constant clarification of meaning and intention on the part of the participant (Åkerlind, 2002). Thus, a researcher, through the use of this format, could obtain more information about the phenomenon because participants tend to reveal more in depth experiences about the phenomenon (Åkerlind, 2002). Other exponents of the interview technique, as a means of obtaining findings, include Ramsden and Dodds (1989).
Ramsden and Dodds (1989) argue that this method of data collection is very effective in educational settings, enabling the researcher to fully explain the purpose of the research, to ask open-ended questions that sought rich, descriptive responses, and thus had the advantage of allowing a researcher to continually check for understanding. Bruce (1996) further expands on the interview approach and recommends the phenomenographic interview is the method most likely to elicit information that is meaningful within phenomenography. Bruce (1996) believes that this meaningful information is due to phenomenographic interviews being distinctive from other qualitative research interviews. Bruce (1996) further explains that this is because the purpose of the phenomenographic interview is to seek variation in people's experience or understanding of the phenomenon in question. Within the context of a phenomenographic interview, this implies that there is no need to focus on the person or the phenomenon under investigation, but rather the relationship which exists between the person and the phenomenon (Åkerlind, 2002; Bruce, 1996; Franz, 1994). This relationship is important because of the assistance rendered in helping to discover the participants' experiences of the phenomena (Franz, 1994).

The interview process is important because this process assists with seeking out the relationships that exist between the participants and their experiences while also highlighting, within these relationships, the descriptions offered by the participants from their experiences of the phenomenon (Francis, 1993). By engaging the participants in an interview process, this also creates a reflective practice, via a review of the specified phenomenon being researched, which enables the maintenance of a common focus between the researcher and the research participant (Ekeblad & Bond, 1994; Kvale, 1996). Therefore, as Kvale (1996) outlines, as a specialised form of qualitative interview, the phenomenographic interview is most useful in gathering descriptions of the interviewee's world, and then allows for the interpretations of the
meanings associated with the descriptions provided by the interviewee about the phenomenon.

Phenomenography is based on the assumption that, because all humans have different experiences, a phenomenon appears differently to each individual (Pramling, 1995; Kvale, 1996). The purpose of the phenomenographic interview is to ask questions that open up the thoughts and reflections of participants, which in turn enables them to express their conceptions. The primary aim of a researcher using this interview process is to have the participant make their thinking clear and thematise the phenomenon of interest (Francis, 1993). Importantly, phenomenographers also believe in a finite number of conceptions that are experienced via the relationship of the person and the specific phenomenon being studied (Marton, 1981a, 1981b).

On another level, the phenomenographical interview also allows for the phenomenon under research to be described through what the participants believe is important. Kvale (1996) explains that the interview could be regarded within the structure of a conversation, where participants have the opportunity to describe their life-world from their opinions and acts in their own words. Therefore, Kvale (1996) continues, the interview allows the participants to organise their own descriptions of a phenomena by emphasising what they found as important. Thus, Bruce identifies several distinctive features of a phenomenographic interview:

- They seek variation in people’s experience or understanding of the phenomenon;
- They focus on the relation between the person being interviewed and the theme of the interview;
- They focus not on the person, nor the theme, but rather, on how the theme appears to, or is experienced by, the person being interviewed. (Bruce, 1996, pp.5-21)
Phenomenographic interviews generally do not have too many questions, normally core questions, or entry questions, which are aimed directly at the general phenomenon (Åkerlind, 2002). Consequently, the unpacking of the questioning process is driven by the questions that follow or are developed from what the participant said (Åkerlind, 2002). Pramling (1995) suggests that interview questions need to be semi-structured and open-ended, to provide the participants with some latitude to choose a perspective about the phenomenon being researched. Consequently, when developing questions for a phenomenographic study, a researcher needs to have entry questions that focus the participants’ thoughts (Creswell, 2007).

In Pramling’s (1995) view, the role of a researcher within the interview questioning process is to occupy a position that moves between being engaging to passive. Consequently, there needs to be a minimal use of pre-determined questions in phenomenographic interviews (Ashworth & Lucas 2000; Marton, 1994). By ensuring that there is a minimal use of pre-determined questions, the interview becomes one of discovery and exploration (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000). However, to facilitate this process of discovery and exploration, there is a need to facilitate dialogue or a conversational partnership between the researcher and the participants (Ashworth & Lucas, 2000).

Marton (1994) believes that the verbal interaction between a researcher and the participants goes from being unplanned to the development of an object of focal awareness. As a result of this development, the questions raised by the researcher are usually developed from the responses of the participant and, as such, opportunities should arise for the researcher to uncover the participant’s experiences and conceptions of a quality teacher. It is from this opportunity that a learning experience is created for the researcher and the participants (Francis, 1996). Therefore, as Francis (1996) highlights, a researcher is not focusing on any right or wrong answer but instead
only seeks to obtain what are the participants’ experiences of a quality teacher.

Bruce (1996) suggests that, to assist in the questioning process, there is a need to commence with a non-technical question, as a catalyst, which allows for entry into some dialogue with the participant. The structure of this entry question needs to address two areas, one aimed directly at the phenomenon; and the second to allow the participant to identify instances of the phenomenon itself (Marton, 1994). Consequently, in following Marton’s (1994) advice, the initial question of this research is: *Can you please tell me about your experiences of a quality teacher?*

This question is premised on two beliefs. First, the participants are given the opportunity to discuss their conception of a quality teacher based on their individual experiences. Second, the participants are provided with an opportunity to discuss a quality teacher through a reflection that may highlight experiences from either a short or long term view. Therefore, the initial interview question assists in moving the participants towards articulating their concepts about the phenomenon itself and sets the framework for the remainder of the interview.

It should be emphasised that one of the responsibilities of a researcher, in this interview process, is to focus on probing, prompting and encouraging descriptions and reflections, from the participants (Marton, 1994). Francis (1996) suggests that the phenomenographic method enhances the interview process if “some sort of dialogue guidance and interpretation rules could be developed” (p.41). However, while Francis maintains the necessity of methodological guidelines, there is also recognition that:

It is important to know the settings of the interview, what sort of prompts were in fact used, what the interviewer estimated to be their effects, and how they made such estimates. In what ways was setting up the interview ‘leading’? (Francis, 1996, p.38)
Francis (1996) recommends that, to address this, a researcher should be actively listening to all responses and purposefully probing each response for understanding, through questions asking the participants to explain, expand, define, describe, clarify, or give examples. Another important application of the phenomenographical interview requires a researcher to undertake a process categorised as epoche (Creswell, 2007).

An epoche is a process where a researcher identifies any personal biases and then takes measures to limit his or her personal bias from the phenomena being researched (Creswell, 2007). The significance of this process is that a researcher is required to put aside their personal views regarding the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In an effort to address this requirement of putting aside his or her personal biases about the phenomenon the researcher is required to describe his or her own experiences of a quality teacher, and then ‘bracket’ these experiences before proceeding with the research (Creswell, 2007). By bracketing, a researcher acknowledges their own experiences, for example, of a quality teacher and then attempts to limit the impact of their experiences on the data.

Based on the methodology, discussions and the implications of findings the researcher commenced the interview process with a single question to the participants; *Could you please tell me about your experiences of a quality teacher?* From that initial question the researcher allowed the participants to respond at length only interrupting the flow of the participants’ narrative when clarification of meaning was required. When this occurred the researcher simply invited the participant to expand on their point. This expansion of a point was facilitated by the researcher asking the participants to unpack further what had been conveyed. This unpacking centred on the researcher simply asking the participant, for example, “What do you mean by that?” or “Could you elaborate on that a little more?” The role of the researcher was not to lead the participant but rather encourage the participant to speak at length.
about their experience/s. One aspect of the research which highlights the responses given by the participants relates to the manner in which many participants express experiences of a quality teacher in first person. During the course of the interview process, the researcher was required, at times, to direct the participant’s attention back to a quality teacher. Sometimes when commenting on a quality teacher experience, participants would engage in a narrative about what the participants did ‘as a quality teacher’. When this occurred, the researcher suggested to the participants, after the narrative, “So you are saying that this how a quality teacher would do it?” In most cases, the participants responded in the affirmative. Hence, within the context of the quotations, some of the participants’ experiences reflect personal pronouns, for example, “I” or other pronouns, for example, “he, you or they”. When this occurs, in most cases “I, he, and you” are replaced by a quality teacher. In similar cases, participants also suggested ‘they’; and again the term a quality teacher replaces that word. In addition, participants would sometimes jump from mentioning a quality teacher and then refer to that same quality teacher as ‘a teacher’. However, when asked to confirm if this teacher was a quality teacher, they would again confirm in the positive. Therefore, within the context of the quotes, some reference exists to a quality teacher via the participants linking their teaching to that of a quality teacher, and references to teachers who are quality teachers.

Participants at times also spoke of a teacher or the teacher when they were referring to a quality teacher. When this occurred the researcher simply substituted the teacher or a teacher for a quality teacher. Therefore, while the transcripts were transcribed verbatim they were changed by the researcher when early career teachers spoke of a teacher or the teacher when making reference to a quality teacher.

On average each recorded interview lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. The interviews were recorded verbatim using a small hand-held tape recorder and transcribed professionally. Once the transcription of the twenty-five interviews had been completed the transcripts where then
forwarded to the researcher for interpretation and analysis. To ensure the anonymity of the participants, and the security of the interview process, the interviews were conducted at site selected by the participant. With respect to the early career teachers working in schools this occurred at the teacher’s work site, after school, and for the undergraduate and graduate diploma early career teachers at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Given the time constraints placed on the university student interviews were conducted at various times during the day.

Due to the nature of the research associated with phenomenography, further exploration with respect to the interpretation and analysis of the data obtained from the interview process is required. This further interpretation of the data obtained from the interview process for this study is explained in the next section.

3.5.5 Qualitative analysis of interview transcripts

This study adopts Huberman and Miles’ (1994) process analysis, which incorporates data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Similarly, Kvale (2007) describes interview analysis as meaning condensation, meaning categorisation and meaning interpretation. This section summarises the process of data reduction and display (Huberman & Miles, 1994), in which meaning condensation and categorisation took place (Kvale, 2007).

Interview transcripts were analysed by coding and re-coding. The aim of this process was to identify common themes in teachers’ conceptions. An example of a coded transcript can be found in Appendix 2. This exercise allowed for the complexity of the phenomenon to develop, rather than trying to make the findings fit a particular model. It was found in the beginning stages of an analysis of the findings that the major phenomenographic themes would deal with the school environment of a quality teacher and the knowledge that a quality teacher brings to that environment. Similarly, Appendix 1 highlights the initial themes that were developed from the beginning phases of the coding process. The
coding scheme was created to reflect the emerging themes and this scheme was re-visited and reorganised numerous times to move away from simply describing the findings (Richards, 2009, p.135) to describing conceptions. This coding scheme experience exemplified the difference between describing and analysing the findings (Richards, 2009). Whereby, describing the findings simply organised them into themes (for example, knowledge, experience, understanding), but analysing the findings required more sophisticated treatment of the findings with reference to the research questions - What are Queensland early career teachers’ experiences of a quality teacher? And How do Queensland early career teachers describe their experiences of a quality teacher?

The transcribed texts were read over and over again to re-immers the researcher in the narratives and to assist in gaining a feeling for the interviews. Each individual interview was analysed on its own, with categories identified and coded, and then compared with other interviews. Over the course of the analysis process five categories of description emerged: The Knowledgeable One, The Architect of Understanding, The Facilitator of Relationships, The Affective One, and The Elder. These categories of description were uncovered via an analysis of the findings whereby the researcher read through each of the transcripts to uncover commonalities within the experiences of the participants. The researcher meticulously searched each transcript for commonalities, and these commonalities, which later reflected themes, where highlighted through the use of coloured felt pens. The key words captured in the coded colours indicated the common shared experiences of the participants of a quality teacher, which the researcher then used to create the categories of description. In addition to the categories of description, salient features of each conception were uncovered and reflect the underlying elements to each category of description.

The experiences of the participants outlined the participants’ voices, which highlighted their conceptions of a quality teacher, while the categories of description outlined the researcher’s voice, which was
constructed to make sense of the participants’ conceptions of a quality teacher (Richards, 2009). Therefore, the researcher’s voice highlights the common themes that surfaced from within the participants conceptions of a quality teacher. Similarly, the participants’ conceptions of a quality teacher emphasise the key common terms that emerged through the coding process.

For example, in the category of description The Knowledgeable One, the key common terms are student, planning, and content. Hence, while the participants emphasise the significance of a quality teacher having knowledge as voiced by the researcher, that knowledge focuses mainly on the student, planning, and content as voiced by the participants’ experiences of a quality teacher. Therefore, as Marton (1988) explains “phenomenographers do not make statements about the world as such, but about the people’s conceptions of the world (p.145).” Phenomenographers focus on seeking to comprehend and categorise the differences within the experiences of people about a phenomenon by identifying and analysing these conceptions into categories of description, which become the focus of the research findings (Marton, 1988). The categories of description and the accompanying salient features of the conception associated with each category are highlighted in chapter 4.

Throughout the analysis process, the focus of this study was sharpened so that a clearer picture could come to view (Richards, 2009). Due to the phenomenographic nature of this study, categories of description were constructed to analyse early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. Although a researcher is connected with all phases of the study (Holliday, 2007), it is possible to make discernment between the identification of the themes in the findings (conceptions) and the interpretive analysis of the themes (categories of description). Phenomenographers seek to apprehend and categorise the variance within descriptions of people’s experiences by identifying conceptions and analysing these conceptions in categories, which
become the focus of the research (Marton, 1998). Marton further contends that experience is the pragmatic relationship between psychology and sociology, and by understanding experience a better understanding of reality is obtained. Therefore, from described experiences a researcher looks for conceptions that could explain reality.

This research focuses on the qualitatively different ways in which Queensland early career teachers experience the phenomenon of a quality teacher. The main focus of the interviews related to encouraging these early career teachers to describe, in as much depth as possible, their experiences of a quality teacher. These differing experiences, after analysis, are coalesced into conceptions in which Queensland early career teachers experience the phenomenon. Once these conceptions are arrived at, it is then possible to discover the categories of description (Bowden, 2000). One application, with respect to these categories of description, is that other researchers could understand and use them in a similar manner (Marton, 1994).

The names allocated to these categories of descriptions are presented as labels and designed to assist in outlining the meanings attributed to a quality teacher. The order in which these categories of description are displayed is not hierarchical in nature and each is qualified by the use of quotations obtained from the participants. To assist in addressing some of the concerns that could arise in the use of categories of description, this research includes salient features of a conception (Collier-Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009). The use of salient features of a conception allows for more concise descriptors of the categories of description within the analysis. In this way, salient features provide a much clearer picture, therefore enhancing the understanding of the nature of each category of description. Quotations, from the participants, are included to help substantiate these salient features. These comments are general in nature and describe and delimit the nature of a conception so that the variations amongst conceptions can be recognised (Åkerlind, Bowden & Green, 2005).
Finally, in order to highlight the categories of description, each category is colour coded; a quality teacher as The Knowledgeable One, a quality teacher as The Architect of Understanding, a quality teacher as The Facilitator of Relationships, a quality teacher as The Affective One, a quality teacher as, The Elder, to assist in reading legibility.

3.6 Summary of Chapter 3

This chapter has thus far provided a detailed account of the research design process and highlighted the underpinning methodology of phenomenography. In addition, it has also discussed the data collection and analysis process associated with the data collection.

The research questions from chapter 1 emphasised a focus on obtaining information about a quality teacher from the experiences of Queensland early career teachers. This information reflected the ‘human’ experiences of Queensland early career teachers and therefore, focused on obtaining the meaning of, and understanding to, a quality teacher. Based on the need to obtain information from human experiences a research methodology that focused on a phenomenographic study fulfilled this requirement.

With an outline of the methodology applied to this research completed chapter 4 provides the findings that emerged from the rich data obtained from the research process.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH DATA

This chapter focuses on an analysis of the research data. To assist in discerning between the presentation of the data and the interpretive analysis of the data, this research distinguishes between the terms conceptions and categories of description. Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher are reflected in categories of description and these conceptions are constructed from an analysis of the data. It is by these differing categories of description that an outcome space, represented as a visual model of how Queensland early career teachers qualitatively experienced the phenomenon, was developed. However, these categories are not exhaustive and have been constructed to best fit, and describe, the plethora of variations and collective experiences of the participants. The categories of description are outlined as five distinct categories. These categories of description are colour coded and exist within a logical relationship to each other. In addition, the categories provide a framework for the findings offered by the participants, and while not exhaustive, represent the collective experiences of the participants as nothing under investigation is left unspoken (Marton & Booth 1997). It should be noted, these findings are provisional (Bowden, 2000) and context sensitive (Åkerlind, 2002), because the researcher presents the findings as a reflection of the participants understanding at that time.

4.1 Presentation of results

The results of a phenomenographic study are presented as categories of description leading to an outcome space that reflect the
recognised conceptions and the relationships between each conception. It is important that each category below is described in sufficient detail to ensure that the main character of the conception is clear. Entwhistle (1997) argues that this should be undertaken because the creation of these categories of description need to be equally reflected in the responses of the participants. The reporting of the results, pertaining to an analysis of the data from this research, is as follows. In order to highlight Queensland early career teacher conceptions of a quality teacher, extracts, in the form of quotations, have been taken from the transcripts and are included in this document. The purpose of including these quotations is to give greater clarity of Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. While enhancing reliability and trustworthiness in the findings and its analysis. These quotations are indented and align with the respective early career teacher, via the use of pseudonyms. The reader should note that when participants make reference to a teacher’s name that teacher’s name has been substituted with a pseudonym to ensure the anonymity of the participant.

### 4.2 Participants and a quality teacher

One aspect of the research which highlights the responses given by the participants relates to the manner in which many participants express experiences of a quality teacher in first person. During the course of the interview process, the researcher was required, at times, to direct the participant’s attention back to a quality teacher. Sometimes when commenting on a quality teacher experience, participants engaged in a narrative about what the participants did ‘as a quality teacher’. When this occurred, the researcher suggested to the participants, after the narrative, “So that this how a quality teacher would do it?” In most cases, the participants responded in the affirmative. Hence, within the context of the quotations, some of the participants’ experiences reflect personal pronouns, for example, ‘I’ or other pronouns, for example, ‘he, you or
they’. When this happened, the researcher replaced ‘I’, ‘he’, and ‘you’ with a quality teacher. In similar cases, participants also the pronoun ‘they’ in place of a quality teacher and again the term ‘a quality teacher’ replaces that word. In addition, participants would sometimes jump from mentioning a quality teacher and then refer to that same quality teacher as ‘a teacher’. However, when asked to confirm if this teacher was a quality teacher, the participant would again confirm in the positive. Therefore, at times the participants’ transcriptions were amended by the researcher to accommodate the word changes outlined above.

4.3 Categories of description

This research focuses on the qualitatively different ways in which Queensland early career teachers experienced the phenomenon of a quality teacher. The main focus of the interviews related to encouraging these early career teachers to describe, in as much depth as possible, their experiences of a quality teacher. These differing experiences, after analysis, were coalesced into conceptions in which Queensland early career teachers experience the phenomenon. Once these conceptions were arrived at, it was then possible to discover the categories of description (Bowden, 2000). One application, with respect to these categories of description, was that other researchers could understand and use them in a similar manner (Marton, 1994).

The names allocated to these categories of descriptions are presented as labels and designed to assist in outlining the meanings attributed to a quality teacher. The order in which these categories of description are displayed is not hierarchical in nature and each is qualified by the use of quotations obtained from the participants. To assist in addressing some of the concerns that could arise in the use of categories of description, this research includes salient features of a conception (Collier-Reed, Ingerman & Berglund, 2009). The use of salient features of a conception allows for more concise descriptors of the
categories of description within the analysis. In this way, salient features provide a much clearer picture, therefore enhancing the understanding of the nature of each category of description. Quotations, from the participants, are included to help substantiate these salient features. These comments are general in nature and describe and delimit the nature of a conception so that the variations amongst conceptions are recognised (Åkerlind, Bowden & Green, 2005).
4.4 Analysis of categories of description

4.4.1 Conception A: A quality teacher as The Knowledgeable One

Category of Description  Salient Features of Conception

Conception A:
A Quality Teacher as
The Knowledgeable One

Content: Knowledge
Planning: Knowledge
Student: Knowledge

Figure 4.1. Category of description and accompanying salient features of a quality teacher as the Knowledgeable One.

The first category of description – The Knowledgeable One – emphasises a quality teacher’s knowledge. An analysis of the category of description commences with a definition of the salient feature of conception content knowledge followed by a definition of knowledge.

Shulman’s (1987) seminal work on pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) has been responsible for influencing educational research for nearly twenty years. Shulman suggests that educators need to explore the complexities of teacher transmission of content knowledge and he refers to this knowledge as subject content knowledge (SCK). Research by Ball, Hill, and Bass (2005) and Thomas and Ball (2010) expand on Shulman’s earlier work. Within the context of this later research, each of the above researchers mesh the terms – subject matter, subject, subject areas and content knowledge, and, as a result, the terms became
interchangeable. Consequently, to assist in the development of a broader understanding of the category of description The Knowledgeable One, the terms, content, subject matter, subject or subject areas are all under the one umbrella of content knowledge. A definition of knowledge follows, and again, this definition commences with highlighting Shulman’s work.

Shulman (1987) divides teacher knowledge into the knowledge a teacher has about their understanding of the content being taught, and the knowledge about how a teacher teaches an understanding of content knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is reflected through a teacher's understanding of the content being taught and how that content will be taught. An analysis of the findings suggests that, if a participant highlights an experience that reflects “knowing or knew” content, there is an association with knowledge. The view held by this researcher is that, if a quality teacher knows about content or they knew some content, then a quality teacher possesses knowledge about content. An analysis of content knowledge will commence with comments made by participants Bob, David, Noah and Jane.

Bob, David, Noah and Jane commence the discussion by focusing on a quality teacher’s need to have content knowledge reflected in subject, subject areas or subject matter:

Yeah a quality teacher got to know your subject matter (Bob).

A quality teacher has knowledge of the subject areas that they’re teaching in (David).

Well I think a quality teacher has knowledge of the subject (Noah).

A quality teacher needs to know their subject matter (Jane).

A quality teacher knows what they are going to teach on that day (Emma).
While Bob, David, Noah, Jane, and Emma highlight subject, subject areas or subject matter, other participants spoke specifically about a quality teacher’s need to have content or content knowledge:

A quality teacher needs to have content knowledge (Elle).

A quality teacher needs to know his content (Harris).

I think a quality teacher – like I said earlier – needs to know their content, be knowledgeable themselves (George).

A quality teacher knew the content. A quality teacher needs to know his content knowledge (Molly).

A quality teacher needs to have content knowledge, I mean having the knowledge of the teaching area that you’re teaching (Harry).

In addition to these comments, Susan adds to the discussion by emphasising:

One of the biggest weakness of some people – and you won’t see it in a quality teacher – is teachers don’t know their content.

A second salient feature of the conception that the participant’s highlight is planning knowledge. This exemplifies a quality teacher’s need to plan. The comments from the participants below all suggest that a quality teacher knows that they need to plan. This knowing of a need to plan indicates that a quality teacher has knowledge of the need to plan or be planned and, therefore, emphasises the salient feature of conception planning knowledge:

A quality teacher knows there is a need to be well planned (Bob).

A quality teacher knows the need to be planned (George).

A quality teacher needs to know what you’re teaching and knows how you teach it effectively because they are planned (Mike).
A quality teacher knows that they need to have lesson planning that is quite detailed (Elle).

A quality teacher knows there is a need to spend time on planning (Harris).

Other participants, Elizabeth and Harris, add to the discussion by highlighting links, via skill acquisition and time, which indicate a quality teacher’s need to plan. Elizabeth outlines the significance of planning by suggesting:

That planning is a vital and necessary skill for a quality teacher to acquire.

While Harris, on the other hand, states that:

A quality teacher has a need to spend time on planning and it is this need to spend time on planning that emphasises the need for a quality teacher to plan.

These links also contribute to the idea that a quality teacher needs to plan and, as a result, highlights the salient feature of conception planning knowledge.

The third, and final salient feature of the conception student knowledge, is evident in participants’ descriptions of a quality teacher as someone who needs knowledge about students. This knowledge about students reflects either knowing the student as a person or in an educational context. These educational contexts are quite broad and focus on a number of examples of the salient feature of the conception. Some examples of the educational contexts that the participants refer to are from the experiences of Elle, Mike and George. These participants commence the discussion by exploring the need for a quality teacher to have knowledge about student developmental issues, learning styles and different stages of learning. Elle is first to outline an example of an educational context and she refers to a quality teacher’s knowledge about student developmental issues. Elle believes that:
A quality teacher would be **knowledgeable** of developmental issues, and classifications of where kids are likely to be at a quality teacher needs this **knowledge** as it’s pretty important to know what exactly to expect of students.

Elle’s’ focus highlights that a quality teacher possesses this salient feature of conception. Mike, continues on from Elle, by outlining:

* A quality teacher needs to **know** the kids’ learning styles, how they learn, to be able to cater for that when you’re teaching.

Another participant George highlights that:

* A quality teacher is able to actually **know** the different stages of learning in different students.

George’s point also indicates the salient feature of the conception. George’s comment suggests a quality teacher needs to be able to know different stages of learning in different students. As a consequence of this knowledge about students, a quality teacher requires knowledge about different stages of learning for different students. Cath, Jane and Molly add to the discussion by highlighting how a quality teacher’s need for knowledge applies to students.

Cath commences by outlining:

* A quality teacher needs to **know** the students well and that they don’t just disregard the difficulties that they have a quality teacher will use this **knowledge** to clarify which things students will struggle with.

The significance of a quality teacher being able to clarify things for struggling students is reiterated through Jane and Molly when they suggest that:

* A quality teacher needs to apply that information to assist students in their teaching therefore, they need to **know** a lot of information (Jane).
A quality teacher will want to get to know their students, so they can either tailor work for students or understand home situations and, if you’ve got a kid who is not doing too well at home, and you know about it, you can take actions to help that child (Molly).

From the experiences of both Jane and Molly, the knowledge a quality teacher needs about students applies directly to the way/s a quality teacher deals with students based on that knowledge.

Another area, that emphasises the salient feature student knowledge, relates to the need to know a student as a person. The views of Harry, Harris and Noah help to express this idea in the following quotes.

A quality teacher actually takes the time to get to know their students and engage with their students. Doing those things to get to know the student. On one level it’s understanding the student more specifically. Understanding who they are as a person, what they’ve gone through. They get to know that student, to get to know that student outside of the classroom environment, to get to know about that student (Harry).

A quality teacher finds out about each student finds out where they’re going, where they’re headed, what their interests are and this helps their teaching (Harris).

A quality teacher knows your students and takes interest in your students. If you say you know that student has issues at home, and maybe they’re acting up in relation to that, then you’re going to be able to use your knowledge of their situation to manage that behaviour more reasonably (Noah).

Harry, Harris and Noah’s views reinforce the concept of a quality teacher’s need to know about a student as a person and how that knowledge applies to students.
From the overall experiences of the participants, a quality teacher needs knowledge and the salient features of content, planning and student knowledge, are all reflections of this conception. The next category of description is Conception B: The Architect of Understanding.
4.4.2 Conception B: A quality teacher as The Architect of Understanding

Figure 4.2. Category of description and accompanying salient features of conceptions for a quality teacher as The Architect of Understanding.

A second category of description in early career teacher conceptions of a quality teacher is The Architect of Understanding. The salient features noted above all help to frame a quality teacher as an Architect of Understanding. An initial starting point to delineate how the salient features underpin the conception is expressed through the comments of Elle, Penny, Sam and Harris. In their commentary, it is evident that planning for understanding plays an important role in being a quality teacher. Elle states that:

A quality teacher plans so that 100 percent of the students understand.

Elle’s experience echoes the experiences of Penny, Sam and Harris when they note that:

A quality teacher wants every student to understand (Penny).
A quality teacher focuses on students understanding (Sam).

A quality teacher wants students to understand (Harris).

It is clear that, for the participants above, planning so all students understand is integral to being a quality teacher. Other interviewees did not put the same emphasis on total understanding but still demonstrate the importance of planning through various other descriptors. The experiences of Bob, Matilda, Noah and Peter are examples of this and evident in the following quotes:

A quality teacher is concerned if they don’t understand (Bob).

A quality teacher looks to see if students didn’t understand (Matilda).

A quality teacher focuses on students not understanding (Noah).

A quality teacher addresses students having problems with not understanding (Peter).

Whilst Bob, Matilda, Noah and Peter focus on a quality teacher’s concern for those students who do not understand, highlighting such a concern emphasises a need for planning for understanding. Interestingly, Cath believes that:

A quality teacher looks at students who understand and don’t understand.

Within Cath’s experience, a quality teacher plans for students to understand because a quality teacher is looking to see if students do or don’t understand. Cath’s emphasis on looking at students is a reflection of a quality teacher’s planning, and this planning highlights a concern or a need to look, see, focus or address, any misunderstandings held by the students. Further examples of a quality teacher’s planning, by checking for understanding, are evident in the following quotes:
A quality teacher checks whether students have understood (Elle).

A quality teacher checks for understanding by students (Bob).

A quality teacher checks on where students are at in class to see if the students understand (Noah).

From the quotes made above by Elle, Bob and Noah, it is evident that they believe planning for understanding is an important characteristic of a quality teacher. Elle, Bob, and Noah’s quotes suggest that a quality teacher plans for understanding because they, like Elle, want all students to understand any task and therefore quality teachers check for student understanding. Significantly, other members of the cohort note that facilitating understanding is also an important salient feature of the category of the conception. That is, the facilitation of understanding encompasses the various strategies a quality teacher employs to assist students in understanding. A quality teacher can assist students through strategies like observing students, providing written and verbal feedback, testing and careful planning. Emma and Kevin’s comments offer an initial example:

A quality teacher observes students to see if they understand (Emma).

A quality teacher is very, very aware of what’s going on in the classroom watching, and observing to see their students’ understanding (Kevin).

As highlighted in the comments of Emma and Kevin above a quality teacher reflects the salient feature of the conception facilitates understanding by observing students to see if students understand. Another focus that the participants outline relates to a quality teacher’s use of time to assist in facilitating understanding. The following comments by Harry and Clyde add to Emma and Kevin’s experience by
suggesting that the salient feature facilitating understanding is also seen through a quality teacher’s use of time:

A quality teacher makes time to recognise and acknowledge particular students and what they’re doing, what they’re doing well or if they’re off task picking them up for that and helping them to understand the work (Harry).

A quality teacher finds time to see whether students have done their work in class, if they have understood what they were required to do by checking, for example, if they’ve completed their homework (Clyde).

As noted above, a quality teacher, makes or finds time to see if students are doing well or if they have done their work. While finding time is significant, Molly notes that:

A quality teacher gives written feedback and verbal feedback on where students are and where students should be at to ensure that student’s understand the work

For Molly, feedback is a mechanism for ascertaining where students are and where students should be and, therefore, feedback offers a quality teacher an avenue for determining a student’s level of understanding. From her perspective, this outcome then allows a quality teacher to further facilitate a student’s level of understanding. Mike, Penny, Harris, Elizabeth and Elle augment Molly’s experiences by highlighting listening, speaking, checking and testing strategies that a quality teacher employs. These experiences are noted below.

A quality teacher listens to students to see if they understand (Mike).

A quality teacher listens to the quality of the conversation between and with students to see if they understand (Penny).
A quality teacher has students speak it back so that they know for sure students understand (Harris).

Elizabeth and Elle add to the discussion by outlining another strategy focused on testing;

A quality teacher has careful attention to detail careful record keeping, checking student’s work and achievements, their homework, record keeping and testing students to check for student understanding (Elizabeth).

A quality teacher tests students as to their understanding (Elle).

However, as Harris, Mike and Elizabeth remark below, there is also a need for clarification when undertaking these strategies:

A quality teacher explains things in a very clear, in a simple way so that students understand (Harris).

A quality teacher is clear about having clear guidelines of how students were going to understand because it’s not just about a report card grade at the end of term (Mike).

A quality teacher undertakes all sorts of things and delivery of different modes, so that – a lot of students won’t get things the first time. They’d probably deliver the message in a mode that the majority of the kids would get, that they would hope that the majority of the students would be capable of understanding the message the first time. But then they’ll probably have to try a few different ways for different learning tasks in the class (Elizabeth).

It is evident from the quotes above that, in order for a quality teacher to facilitate understanding, there is a necessity for a degree of clarity when passing on information and/or instructions. In order to provide such clarity, George suggests that:
A quality teacher plans well-structured learning experiences to help students understand.

Elizabeth expands on George’s assertion by noting that providing clarity requires a level of skill acquisition, for students, that:

Focuses on the skill of analysing a source from history and whether students can understand the messages and then express their understanding in writing, so that’s a skill they need to learn.

Not to dissimilar to Elizabeth’s example above, Cath and Noah highlight that, in order to facilitate understanding, a quality teacher must be adept at questioning:

A quality teacher pitched his questions to just the right level to the students. So it was at the appropriate level he used a lot of language which they were more familiar with it wasn’t too technical sort of more on their level. When explaining to the students about irrational numbers he wouldn’t just tell them this is called an irrational number. He would try and remind them what an irrational number is. He would say it’s a number that’s like a crazy number. He sort of puts it in that way. He’s say it’s crazy. What’s another word for crazy and they’d remember oh yeah it’s irrational. So he’s sort of engaging them by giving them little questions instead of just telling them this is what it’s called and so forth. But using just these little questioning techniques that he’d developed he tried to find out if students understood what had been taught to them (Cath).

A quality teacher asks students when they come in how they are, how are they going today? Asks them how they’re going with their work to get an understanding of how the students are performing in class so he could help them improve (Noah).

In her comments above, Cath makes a number of important points however, the main focus of the comment rests with a quality teacher engaging students by giving them little questions, instead of just telling
them this is what it’s called and so forth. This suggests that a quality teacher is questioning students to facilitate a level of understanding. Cath believes that a quality teacher uses questioning to allow students to discover the answer, as opposed to a quality teacher telling students this is what it’s called and so forth. It is by discovering the answer for themselves that quality teachers facilitate student understanding. Noah’s experience is similar, to Cath’s in that questioning is also used but the emphasis of the questioning is direct. Noah states that a quality teacher asks students direct questions about understanding. For example, Noah observes that a quality teacher asks students how they are, how are students going today? Asking them how they’re going with their work? Through this questioning technique, a quality teacher ascertains the areas which are challenging to students and can, therefore, facilitate understanding when Mike adds to Noah’s comment by suggesting:

* A quality teacher is clear about having clear guidelines of how students were going to understand because it’s not just about a report card grade at the end of term.*

For Mike, a quality teacher, uses questioning techniques to help students understand because it is not just about what mark or result the student attains at the end of the term which matters. For Elle and Peter, such guidelines and clarity require an emphasis on patience:

* A quality teacher wants to make sure that all the kids learn if 30 percent of the class haven’t got it, the teacher has to be patient they just don’t leave the students to be. If the teacher don’t go back and check whether the students got it or not, understand it. That’s not right (Elle).*

*If a quality teacher isn’t patient enough to like a take second to try and work out where the learner’s head is at (Peter).*

*If a child is having problems with understanding something and if the teacher is not getting in the students frame of mind and thinking*
about what they’re doing wrong and what they to do need to fix to help the students? If the teacher hasn’t got the patience to just sit back and do that then you’re not going to be – a quality teacher (Peter).

A quality teacher, from Elle’s experience, goes back and checks whether students got it or not. The reason behind this is because a quality teacher wants to help students get it to understand so that, in Elle’s opinion, all the students learn. Peter’s focus of a quality teacher highlights a strategy of patience and is based on a quality teacher focusing on what they to do need to fix to help the students. By doing this, a quality teacher moves to help students by ameliorating the challenges students encounter with undertaking the task. This amelioration is the result of the assistance a quality teacher gives so that students gain an understanding of the task. It is through this understanding that a quality teacher can fix what students did wrong and this provides further evidence that a quality teacher facilitates understanding.

The third, and final, salient feature of the category of description is derived from the findings which suggests that a quality teacher directs understanding. A number of participants highlight a quality teacher directs students to achieve an outcome of understanding. The manner in which a quality teacher directs students comes in many forms. Some of these forms are articulated by the following participants. Bob, Jane and Darren emphasise the use of lesson or unit plans as a means of direction:

A quality teacher would have their lesson plans for the week on the board – for the day on the board to give students direction. They should know what’s going to happen next in the lesson and so too the students so that everyone understands what is going to happen (Bob).
A quality teacher plans and is clear about what that plan is at the start of the lesson and at the start of the week so that students understand what to expect. This gives students a path to follow because students need a very clear path of why students are doing something and how it’s going to lead up to the assignment. Students are always looking for the next assessment, what it is and what they need to do (Jane).

A quality teacher has a unit plan to direct students so that students know from week one through to week 10 of that term what was going on in each week so that they understand their tasks for the term (Darren).

Another group of participants, Penny, Molly, Susan and Emma, look at the salient feature of the conception directing understanding through a quality teacher’s expectations as noted below:

A quality teacher gives clear expectations about what the teacher is trying to achieve in terms of lesson goals or success criteria. So what they’re trying to achieve and how they’re trying to achieve it and what it’s going to look like when we’ve achieved it. It’s about the teacher being focused by giving students clear directions so the students understand what they’re doing, why they’re doing it and what it’s going to look like when they’re finished doing it (Penny).

A quality teacher’s first lesson gives the students clear expectations through directions like routines, and rules that’s going to help move the class forward in terms of what students learn so they understand the run of the classroom (Molly).

A quality teacher from day one gives the kids directions so the kids understand exactly what their expectations are (Susan).
The kids came into class very day and should know right, at eight thirty we’re doing this. At eight – at nine-ten students doing this so on and so on. So then at the start of the year a quality teacher sets out those expectations so that the kids have directions on understanding how to operate in the class each day (Emma).

The comments of Penny, Molly, Susan and Emma all suggest that a quality teacher directs students through expectations; and, therefore, reinforces the salient feature of the conception – directs understanding. The next section addresses a quality teacher as Category C: The Facilitator of Relationship.
4.4.3 Conception C: A quality teacher as The Facilitator of Relationships

Category of Description | Salient Features of Conception

Conception C: A Quality Teacher as The Facilitator of Relationships

Building: Relationship

Establishing: Relationships

Figure 4.3. Category of description and accompanying salient features of conception a quality teacher as The Facilitator of Relationships.

A third category of description describes a quality teacher as someone who is The Facilitator of Relationships. Beforecommencing an analysis of this category of description one point requires clarification. When the participants indicate that quality teachers want to build relationships, this also implies a physical act, for example, of caring, helping or supporting, students. With this clarification in mind, an analysis of the findings of the salient feature of conception building relationships follows.

The participants below make reference to the salient feature of conception building relationships, by suggesting a quality teacher engages in building relationships with students. This building of relationships with students, in some cases, may reflect the building of positive or really good relationships:

*If you’re doing short contracts or supply work you don’t have the same opportunity to build those relationships at a quicker rate and*
become a quality teacher to a particular cohort of students at a faster rate (Clyde).

I think that that’s – building that relationship and that respect that’s reciprocal is really important and what I have seen, quality teachers develop its linked back to building positive relationships with students (Molly).

There was always just a good vibe in the classroom. Like everyone felt valued, you definitely felt like your opinion was valued. He always would listen to you. He built a really good relationship with us. Quality teachers want to have a classroom where they can experiment and they can build good relationships within a classroom (Mike).

A quality teacher wants to build relationships within the classroom with their students (Sam).

The more positive a relationship a quality teacher can build with the child, the less behaviour issues you’re going to have (Kevin).

In addition to the comments above, participants also focus on a quality teacher building relationship with students by caring, helping and/or supporting students to achieve. The comments below indicate that a quality teacher supports students to achieve through better student outcomes and by students becoming good community members or a great member of community:

A quality teacher actually is interested in students and cares about them and generally wants them to do well. A quality teacher focuses on building relationships to get better outcomes for students (Clyde).

A quality teacher wants to be there. They’re not doing it just for the pay cheque. They want to be there, they want to help the students, they want to give kids a hand to succeed in life and not just school.
Building of relationships with the students helps a quality teacher want to be there as well. Because a quality teacher wants students to achieve they want to lift students up. A quality teacher wants students to reach a level, because students all have the potential to do it if students had a quality teacher supporting them to get there (Molly).

A quality teacher wants to build relationships with students to ensure that the learning environment is safe and supportive for all students. There are rules in the classroom. Whether the rules are established by the teacher or preferably rules are established in discussion with the class. A quality teacher has responsibility is to help students become quality community members (Sam).

I was thinking about it before. I think it’s the relationship. A lot of words want to come out of my mouth, it sounds very cliché, but I just think it’s the relationship. I think being effective is having a relationship with the student that they’ve got someone else in their life that they can count on and engaging them in their learning. That’s the job of a quality teacher. You are there to help students learn in every aspect of student life, not just with academics, but learn how to be a great member of a small community in school and hopefully the bigger community as they move into the world. That takes a lot of skill. It takes a lot of talent to build this relationship with students (Kevin).

To further enhance this focus on the salient feature of the conception building relationships Mike, looks at how the experiences of two quality teachers, one from a primary school and other from a high school, exemplify building relationships with students. In addition, Mike also includes his views as to the basis of this relationship. The first participant that Mike refers to is a primary school teacher:
He would build relationships by we’d do things like you’d have to get up and talk about just yourself and we had a lot of sort of sharing time each week or things like musical appreciation. Like he was in a band himself so he’d let you bring in a song each week and tell the class about it. You didn’t feel afraid to show things in front of the rest of the class. I guess it was a relaxed environment that he had in the classroom. He cared about us and wanted us to do well in school for later.

The second teacher that Mike discusses is a high school drama teacher and he notes that:

Then looking at say a quality teacher from high school, I know one of my drama teachers when I did drama, I reckon she was a quality teacher. She was always sort of – she gave you really good feedback on things and a lot of positive reinforcement she used with you, especially after you did an assessment, she would sit you down and really go through what you did well or if you were doing a draft or performance she’d steer you in the right direction. She tried to build a relationship with us by doing these things. She wanted to support us. She wanted to give us a hand. I guess she wanted to improve us she’s getting us ready for that next step after school because I did do it in the senior years as well. I think if she can get us to that point where we are going to continue with acting and be able to go to uni or get jobs within that field that’s why she was pushing us towards that. She was lifting us up helping to get us to that next level of achievement or success. She was always lending a hand to help us.

Considering what Mike discusses, his comments do provide a succinct summary of an analysis of the findings of the salient feature of conception, building relationships. Mike’s high school drama teacher focuses on building relationships with students by emphasising that this teacher wants to support or help students. This teacher clearly
demonstrates that they are concerned with building relationships with students by always wanting to lend a hand to support or help their students. In the next section of the findings, focus moves to the salient feature of conception establishing relationships. The findings presented below reflect comments from a number of participants, beginning with Elle.

Elle commences by stating:

A quality teacher is about establishing a relationship with a student first by demonstrating they care for the student.

Elle further suggests that:

A quality teacher demonstrated they care for the student by establishing a relationship by at first a quality teacher just tries to be pleasant and friendly. But obviously you are not the friend of the student. A quality teacher tries to get to know the students with casual banter. A quality teacher tries to establish a relationship with their students because it is important to get to know their students. A kid is not doing any homework or any assignment work, then as a quality teacher you would want to at least let the parents know that that’s what is happening, so that you know what support there is at home, for a start and whether the parents are willing to help ensure that schoolwork gets done, instead of taking them off motorbike riding or giving them an Xbox or whatever the story is. In this way the kids know that you care about their education. This is one way in which a quality looks at establishing a relationship with the student through a link with their home life. This in the long run will help a quality teacher work with the student and their parents because that is important.

Elle also believes:

A quality teacher’s focus on caring about students is because schooling is not just about academic outcomes. It is also about social
aspects of life and the community. It’s about a quality teacher establishing relationships with students both inside and outside school.

Elle adds to this comment, stating that:

A quality teacher looks at establishing a relationship with a student by first just trying to be pleasant and friendly; and a quality teacher establishes this relationship so the kids know that you care about their education.

Bob, another participant adds to the discussion around the salient feature.

Bob highlights that:

A quality teacher deals with establishing a relationship with students via the classroom whereby the kids eventually feel like this classroom is their home away from home.

It is the setting up of the classroom, so that it eventually feels as a home away from home, which highlights the salient feature of conception establishing relationships. Added to this, Bob suggests that:

This relationship is a reflection of a quality teacher’s desire that kids need to feel supported in a classroom as this support is important because when they don’t feel supported, they feel like the class rules are not enforced, they don’t feel safe. Students feeling safe promotes a culture of positive behaviour by a quality teacher being someone whose focus is on helping and caring for students and developing a place where learning happens by the students feeling supported in the classroom.

George continues the discussion by highlighting a teacher’s approachability in addressing the salient feature of conception establishing relationships.

George outlines that:

A quality teacher establishes a relationship with students by being approachable. A quality teacher’s approachability is via a friendly manner, an open manner, to their students. I’m not suggesting that
a teacher is a friend of the student “a quality teacher definitely needs to be approachable so if a student had some kind of worry, issue or problem, the student feels comfortable in confiding in a teacher or asking advice or help from a teacher, rather than feeling that they couldn’t possibly.

For George, approachability is important but equally important is an understanding of how a quality teacher’s friendly, open manner is conveyed. In addition, from George’s perspective:

A quality teacher wants to care and support students via this relationship. A quality teacher would support students by giving advice or help students by giving them a hand with problems to show they care about students and by allowing students to confide in them as opposed to making students feeling that they couldn’t. A quality teacher is about lifting a student’s confidence.

Another participant, Harris, extends on George’s comments about this salient feature of conception establishing relationships through time.

Harris believes that:

A quality teacher works on establishing a relationship by initially taking the time to highlight an interest in students. A quality teacher demonstrates support and care for students by showing an interest in what you’re doing and generally this shows that they care about the students which produces a positive outcome because students believe that from this support they can actually achieve better learning outcomes at school.

Jane adds to Harris' comments by exploring the significance of student outcomes in establishing relationships.

Jane says that:

A quality teacher can’t get a lot done unless you have a good relationship with your students. A quality teacher needs to establish a relationship with students, because a lot won’t get done if this did not occur. A quality teacher needs to make students feel good about themselves and a quality teacher really makes students feel good
about themselves because a quality teacher focuses on you wanting to feel good because they want you to enjoy school.

From Jane’s experience, the suggestion is that a quality teacher wants a student’s school experience to be a positive one by establishing an environment where students feel good about themselves and want to come to school to learn. Kevin and Noah enhance Jane’s experience.

Kevin suggests that:

A quality teacher needs to form good relationships with students because the better the relationship you have with the child, the less behaviour issues you’re going to have because this relationship is effective through giving students someone else in their life. Students have someone else in their life who can care for and support them and this helps students to learn how to be a great member of a small community in school and hopefully the bigger community as they move into the world.

Noah complements Kevin’s comments by highlighting:

A quality teacher works on establishing a relationship with students so that the students think they actually care because if the student thinks the teacher actually cares then they feel more inclined to do the work. A quality teacher establishes this relationship by being reasonable, to start with by asking students how they’re going in their work. Asking them if they need some help, possibly. Checking in with students on where they’re at.

Noah’s comments also reflect a relationship which exemplifies a quality teacher’s desire for students to achieve positive outcomes because a quality teacher does not want students to fail. This relationship is facilitated, from Noah’s experience, by a quality teacher asking how students are going and checking students’ work. These actions, by a quality teacher, suggest someone who wants positive outcomes for students via a demonstration of their caring about students’ work by making sure that students understand and don’t fail. Another participant Penny also focuses on student work in class.
Penny’s experience of establishing a relationship with students is reflected in:

A quality teacher had set up the class so that we all felt like we were in that class together and trying to achieve something together. We all felt like we were in that class together and trying to achieve something together.

Peter adds to Penny’s comments about how students felt by highlighting that:

A quality teacher starts off wanting the kids to feel good about themselves.

The emphasis in this statement is in the use of starts off. This indicates that a quality teacher sets up a relationship with students, initially centred on wanting students to feel good about themselves. Hence, a quality teacher goes about establishing a relationship with students by working to make the students feel good about themselves. This relationship is important, as Peter states because:

As a quality teacher you care like at the end of the day when you’re sitting there going, I don’t care what he’s doing. He can go and do that”. And, it’s kind of like, well, there goes that relationship that you care about them and you want the best for them through just keeping them safe and also feel like they can take a risk, like they can go and get an answer wrong and kids aren’t going to turn around and laugh at them.

A quality teacher’s caring is a reflection of wanting the kids to feel good about themselves.

Darren links in with the discussion by focusing on a quality teacher establishing a relationship with students through liking students.

Darren speaks about relationships with students:

Whether students are actually going to listen in class if students don’t like the teacher if they do not put pen to paper and finish their English assignment then that is an expression of the relationship that they have with the teacher and a quality teacher would not have
that problem with students because of the relationship they had established beforehand.

Therefore, from Darren’s experience, if initially a teacher cannot build on likeability then students will not learn in that teacher’s class. By establishing a relationship via likeability, Darren believes, a quality teacher is in a position to have students listen and undertake work. Darren’s experience emphasises that this relationship represents the foundations to other activities that are undertaken, as a result of the initial likeability of the teacher. However, Darren also warns:

That when establishing a relationship with students a quality teacher has got to balance that line between being a friend and being in a teacher student relationship as teacher student and the students being your friend.

The next section addresses a quality teacher as Category D: The Affective One.
4.4.4 Conception D: A quality teacher as *The Affective One*

A fourth category of description in early career teacher conceptions of a quality teacher identifies a quality teacher as someone who is *The Affective One*. The Affective One emphasises two salient features of this conception, which reflect that a quality teacher loves teaching or has a passion for teaching. Before commencing an analysis of the findings it is important to clarify some key words. These key words include ‘demonstrate and display’, ‘loves’ and ‘love’, ‘passionate’ and ‘job’.

The first key point to clarify is that the words, demonstrate and display, are interchangeable. For the participants, demonstrate and display are what a participant may see and/or observe in a quality teacher. The suggestion is that a quality teacher will ‘demonstrate’ or ‘display’ an action which the participants see or observe as conveying a quality teacher’s love or passion. In the case of love, it is seen or observed by actions that reflect a quality teacher’s enthusiasm, excitement or happiness. A quality teachers’ enthusiasm, excitement or happiness is a demonstration or display of their love of teaching. The second key point emphasises that participants also indicate that a quality teacher is...
passionate about teaching. Participants indicate that a quality teacher’s passion for teaching is reflected in their passion which students can see. A quality teacher’s passion for teaching is seen through engaging with students, engaging their subject, and the time that a quality teacher has spent in teaching. The third key point highlights that the participant’s use of the words love or loved refers to loves. When the participants indicate that a quality teacher has a love or loves their job this indicates that a quality teacher loves teaching. Having undertaken a clarification of these key points, an analysis of the findings relating to the salient feature of conception loves teaching follows.

This section reflects some of the experiences of the participants focusing on the salient feature loves teaching. Emma commences the discussion by highlighting that:

A quality teacher loves their job and this love of teaching is seen by being happy to come to work each day by their students.

Jane, Darren and Kevin add to Emma’s comments by reinforcing the use of love to describe a quality teacher’s connection with their job. Jane and Darren speak about two male quality teachers they had as students, while Kevin talks about a female quality teacher. Jane outlines that:

A quality teacher loved his job. He just loved his job. A quality teacher loves what they do, that they love being here, that they love where the business of doing is – that they really love kids. A quality teacher would be someone that is happy with their job because they love their job.

Darren, like Jane, also focuses on a quality teacher’s love for teaching and observes that:

His quality teacher is just so enthusiastic about their subjects they teach and you could see he really loved his job.
Kevin continues the discussion by referring to a female quality teacher:

To me she is a quality teacher. She loves her job, that’s a very simple thing to say, but she loves her job you could see she just buzzed with excitement when she teaches.

These comments from Jane, Darren and Kevin complement the discussion by reinforcing two key points. Firstly, a quality teacher’s love for teaching and, secondly, the participants seeing this love through the teacher’s excitement, enthusiasm and happiness. Penny and Susan in their comments also address a quality teacher’s love for teaching. Penny says that:

A quality teacher’s love being teachers, they love their job and that is something that I’ve definitely observed because they were so enthusiastic about their job.

Susan expands on a quality teacher’s love for their job by indicating that:

A quality teacher loves their job and because of that they live their job” and that’s exactly what I want to do but they’re really just normal people but they’ve got to be someone who just loves their job.

If you don’t love it you’re not going to be a quality teacher”. A quality teacher has their down days too however, you just see them as in wanting to be here they are happy because they have a love of their job.

There is significant findings across the cohort of participants to indicate a quality teacher loves teaching and demonstrates or displays a love of teaching to students by actions that are attributed to a quality teacher’s enthusiasm, excitement or happiness. This is encapsulated best by the information provided by the participants above. However, the ‘Affective One’ also has a passion for teaching; and the following explores the findings relating to the salient feature of conception passion for teaching.

This section reflects some of the experiences of the participants focusing on the salient feature of conception Passion for Teaching. A number of participants emphasise the use of the words passionate or
passion, associated with a quality teacher. Bob’s comments commence the discussion on the salient feature of conception passion for teaching:

> A quality teacher for me is versatile, definitely versatile, and passionate, that’s the two major things that come to mind, organised and well planned, and curriculum minded. If you’re a quality teacher you’re passionate, the kids know you’re passionate they can see it and then they start to get an interest in these subjects. A quality teacher has a passion for teaching (Bob).

> A quality teacher is just so passionate about teaching but all the things that they do you can just see it in them (Emma).

> I think so, definitely. I think a quality teacher for example would have to have, yeah, definitely subject specific skills, interest and passion for teaching and it’s seen in their subject area teaching (Elizabeth).

> I think a quality teacher you can see has a passion for teaching as well and for wanting those things themselves, and for striving for those things because if they don’t have a passion for what they’re doing themselves, then you’re not really going to be a quality teacher (George).

> He was really passionate about film and teaching film. I think that that’s all reflected in him being a quality teacher. A quality teacher has a passion for teaching, you could just see his passion (Molly).

> I think you have to have that passion to want to do it. I think that’s a big thing. I think there’s probably teachers out there that are just doing it for the pay cheque. I think that passion has gone. So they’ve still got the experience as a teacher, but whether they’ve got that quality label attached to them, I don’t know. The passion to still want to do it you can see it. I think you really need to have – [J]. You could see his passion for teaching (Matilda).
Well there’s no point in teaching science if you don’t know anything about science, and don’t care about science. I think if you’re passionate about the subject, that passion is going to be projected upon the students and the students can see it as well. But also on the note of passion, if you’re not passionate about what you’re teaching then I doubt you’re going to want to do it for a long time. You have got to have a passion for teaching. The longer you stay in a job that you’re not passionate about, the more you’re going to hate it and the quality of your teaching is going to diminish. So my points of a quality teacher were like, passionate, students can see if you’re delivering something passionately you’re going to engage students a lot more (Noah).

You could see he was passionate about his job. As a quality teacher he had a passion for teaching (Darren).

In addition to these comments, Susan also adds to the discussion by highlighting some key points about a quality teacher’s passion by reference to herself as a quality teacher. Susan stated:

If I’m not passionate students aren’t going to be passionate. Like the teachers here that really have a strong passion for it I can see that and so can the kids. I think the only reason I do this is because I actually have a passion for it because I don’t want to just do the basics, I want to do whatever’s best for your kids. I think once you’ve worked to become a quality teacher you’ve just put your passion into the job and people can see that passion.

The experiences highlighted by the above participants indicate that a quality teacher has a passion for teaching and that this passion is observed by others through the engagement of students, in the subjects that are being taught, and by the length of time a quality teacher has spent teaching.
The experiences of the participants above reflects a quality teacher as having either a love of teaching or a passion for teaching. These experiences suggest two views about a love of teaching and a passion for teaching by a quality teacher. Firstly, a quality teacher demonstrates and/or displays a love of teaching through their physical actions. These actions can vary from a demonstration and/or display of enthusiasm, to excitement or happiness. The second point is that, like a love of teaching, a passion for teaching is also seen by the participants. However, a passion for teaching is not seen through the actions, for example, enthusiasm, excitement or happiness, of a quality teacher; but rather passion is the observable action. From the experiences of the participants, a quality teacher’s passion for teaching is seen by their passion, which is a reflection of student engagement, the subjects that they teach, and the length of time that they have been teaching. Consequently, a quality teacher emphasises the category of description The Affective One. This concludes an analysis of the findings that presents a quality teacher as the category of conception The Affective One. The next data analysis addresses a quality teacher as the Category of Description E – The Elder.
4.4.5 Conception E: A quality teacher as The Elder

A fifth category of description in early career teacher conceptions of a quality teacher identifies a quality teacher as someone who is The Elder. A definition of the salient feature ‘experienced’ focuses on the experience a quality teacher has in relation to teaching, real life, the world, and travel. In the case of teaching experience, this did not necessarily equate to a specific amount of time a teacher has taught and, with reference to life experiences, this tends to emphasise worldly, real world or travel experiences. Within the context of this category of description, is a suggestion that a quality teacher as ‘The Elder’ is not someone who is ‘old’ but simply someone who has teaching and/or life experience/s. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the term ‘experienced’ incorporates a view that equates to a quality teacher’s teaching and/or life experiences. A focus on experienced is highlighted through participants making reference to the terms experience, experienced or experiences within the context of their interviews. The next salient feature to be defined is respected.
The participants highlight a number of different uses of the salient feature respected. Within the context of their experiences, participants refer to respect, respected or respectful and for the purpose of this research, all three terms fall under the umbrella of respected. A quality teacher is respected by students and this respect is reflected in how the students respond to a quality teacher or how a quality teacher responds to students. A quality teacher can be respected by students through students stopping to listen to them speak, by being looked up to by students and caring about students they teach. Finally, respect for a quality teacher is also in the demeanour of a teacher. The final salient feature to be defined is engaged.

Similar to the other salient features, experienced and respected, the participants in this study use engaged in a number of differing ways. The participants speak about engage, engaged, engagement or engaging; and for the purpose of this research all four terms reflect engaged. Engaged, reflects the action that students undertake with a quality teacher in the learning process. Simply stated, a quality teacher engages students in learning. With definitions of these three salient features completed, an analysis of the findings follows, beginning with the salient feature of the conception, experienced.

In this section, a number of participants describe a quality teacher’s experience. This focus is conceptualised through a quality teacher’s experience, whether that experience is reflected in teaching, real life, worldly, and travel. The analysis commences by the participants talking about “very experienced” quality teachers. However, it should be noted that when the research refers to the participants’ experiences, this does not make reference to the salient feature experience; and, as such, is not coloured ‘green’. The participants do not indicate what very experienced means, in relation to a specific time frame; however, they do suggest that being very experienced is important for a quality teacher as it assists them in their teaching and student learning. Emma commences with:
A quality teacher is very experienced, things happen very smoothly in their class. And the students can learn very easily. A quality teacher can concentrate on their teaching and the students learning so that they get so good at that, that it happens without everyone knowing it is happening.

Cath and Clyde build on Emma’s comments with each participant speaking about what being very experienced means for a quality teacher. Cath indicates that:

A quality teacher has a lot of ability from probably being very experienced which allows a quality teacher to know very well what students need so that the students can learn.

Clyde observes:

I guess I’m of the opinion that a quality teacher is somebody who more often than not is very experienced. I guess I mean teachers who have honed their skills and can keep students on task so they are able to learn more.

Finally, Kevin speaks about a female quality teacher. Kevin outlines that:

There were certain lessons that I would think I would do that differently, but again, she’s very experienced, she knows what works and I noticed that students tended to learn more in her classes.

The comments offered by the above participants all suggest that a quality teacher is very experienced and that being very experienced is important for a quality teacher, because it assists with teaching by helping students in their learning. The next participants Elizabeth, Molly and Matilda add to the comments above and spoke about a quality teacher only being experienced. As with Emma, Cath and Clyde, these participants also believe that being experienced is important as it assists a quality teacher in their teaching:

So to be honest that was what my answer to this whole question a quality teacher is an experienced teacher. Yeah, well I mean maybe
she knows about teaching – she’s got experience. She’s got experience so she knows to do that, she knows to do that. So she’s got experience (Elizabeth).

So I hadn’t had that experience. Really simplifying and controlling the learning environment through engaging with students to know what’s expected of them and everything is in smaller blocks. I think her reminding me that I needed to do that, is something that helped me move forward and I think it’s a reflection of her as a quality teacher having had a lot of experience in similar situations (Molly).

Probably experience. I think experiences comes with quality. I can see myself becoming a quality one. But I don’t think I’m going to have everything that I need to be one from day 1 of next year. I think I still have a lot of growing and a lot of developing. I suppose, when you’re on prac you’re working under somebody’s umbrella still. I’m hoping that experience and quality – like that experience will make me a quality teacher who will just have that gut feeling about making the situation better when I’m teaching (Matilda).

Darren, Bob and Peter extend on the comments outlined above and emphasise the significance of a quality teacher having “worldly, travel or real-life experience”. Similar to the other participants, these experiences assist with a quality teacher’s teaching:

A quality teacher understands a lot of the world, they have had a lot of worldly experiences to help with their teaching (Darren).

A quality teacher uses a lot of examples from the real world they have experienced and they can tell students about those experiences to help when they are teaching (Bob).

I think there’s a lot of different factors for a quality teacher. It would be how you’re taught previously, like certain things you would
experience when you’re young. Then certain things that happen in your life like if someone’s well-travelled as opposed to somebody that isn’t travelled, you’re going to – there’s little things that – little different things that everybody picks up on. Those types of experiences that let students know about your experiences of the world and you can build on this to help with teaching them (Peter).

The experiences highlighted above by the participants relate to a quality teacher’s experience in the real world, real life or travel experiences and how those experiences assist a quality in their teaching. The comments of the above participants conclude the findings on salient feature experienced; and the next section deals with respected. The participants above tacitly suggest a degree of respect given to a quality teacher from their experience(s).

The following participants emphasise that a quality teacher is respected. The first participant to address respected is Clyde. Clyde commences by saying that because:

A quality teacher has honed their skills and they, I guess, just seem to have more instant respect from students. It’s something that, it’s in their demeanour. I guess they earned their stripes with the students?

Elizabeth contributes to the discussion by focusing on what it means to be not respected by students. She says:

There’s a lot of kids have said a few things to me. Most of the time this semester I’ve thought oh my God, everyone hates me they don’t respect me. These kids, they hate my guts and that, I don’t like that. But then these kids have come and said we really like you and they’ve been really nice and it’s confused me. I haven’t really known exactly what’s been going on to be honest a lot of the time, with regard to how I’m being perceived. I’m still learning and teachers who are quality teachers have the respect of students that I don’t
have yet. I think it’s got a lot to do with me not being experienced enough for them and I don’t have their respect.

Harry, Jane, Molly and Mike’s comments follow on from those of Elizabeth’s and indicate ways in which students show respect to a quality teacher or conversely a teacher can see respect for a quality teacher.

Harry begins his discussion by stating:

A quality teacher should be somebody that is looked up to by their students. They should be somebody that’s respected by the students showing that they respect them by looking up to them.

Jane and Mike spoke about students showing respect by their behaviour toward a quality teacher. Jane indicates:

That students stop and listen to a quality teacher to show that this teacher is respected by their students.

Mike follows this by saying:

I’m just trying to think. I know my last prac teacher, she was a really, really good teacher but she just had different things in place compared to some of the other ones and the class respected her and they showed that respect when they listened to her, they were just showed that they were really respectful of her.

While, Molly comments on:

that coming in as a contract teacher for [J], who in my opinion is a quality teacher and highly respected by his pupils, and me sort of trying to, not fill his shoes, but at least shuffle them along a little bit until he gets back, it’s difficult, because I could see they respect him so much by the way they looked up to him.

While Harry, Jane, Molly and Mike speak about ways in which a student might show respect or a teacher sees respect from students for a quality teacher. Matilda and Susan talk about student and teacher behaviour and how this impacts on respect. Matilda commences by discussing student behaviour. Matilda suggests that:
When the children *respect* a quality teacher they’ll want to please you. As for Susan, she took behaviour a step further by focusing on the behaviour of the teacher. Susan believes that:

*A quality teacher will have got the respect from the students because they are positive with the students and care about them what they are doing is going to be beneficial for the students.*

Based on the findings above, a quality teacher is respected by students. This respect is reflected in how students respond to a quality teacher. The next section now examines a quality teachers association with engaged. The main emphasis of the salient feature engaged relates to a quality teacher engaging students in learning:

*I think it probably comes back to what you want to engender in the student and I think the – probably the overarching thing, to me, is that you are encouraging them to be lifelong learners. So you want to encourage them to be able to look for information and be able to find it reasonably accurately and to filter that information. That’s a skill that they’ll need for life. I think it’s important for a quality teacher to try and encourage. Not just to get them through the next test. There is engagement, so the kids engage in the learning material (Elle).*

When [J] teachers the students are really quite stimulated and quite interested. One of them even said that they liked this way of learning better than other ways. They liked being asked questions rather than just having to copy notes. They preferred that. So yeah they were quite *engaged* and very attentive in learning (Cath).

*Well education’s not really relevant unless it’s real life stuff that the kids are learning about. It’s all about engagement, a quality teacher does this so the kids feel that what they’re learning about is relevant to what goes on in the real world and whilst the curriculum might cover real world stuff, if it’s taught in a way that doesn’t actually make the student feel that it’s connected to what actually really happens in the*
world then maybe students are less inclined to engage in their learning (Clyde).

I think it is a better way of teaching if you can do it. I mean it is more engaging for the students and it makes them think more than probably it should. I mean there’s more learning going on since there’s more thinking, it’s more stimulating. Obviously, I think it does make for a better lesson if you can ask the students more questions and if you can have a bit more interaction. So you sort of get the students up and moving perhaps or you have more engagement with the students (Darren).

They got me to engage in class where I may not have otherwise engaged in class. They set up a learning environment in such a way that it is actually engaging for the students. Like little anecdotes. Because it’s Film and TV, so it will be just interesting facts that you probably wouldn’t know if you were – unless you did quite heavy research into the films you’re looking at, or the style. I think in using those, it helped engage the students. Using the Film and TV teacher as an example, I would say his use of anecdotes and trivia facts which may not mean anything for the assessment, still keeps students engaged because they’re finding out little titbits of information that could be funny or weird or something, and I think that that’s keeping them engaged and maybe a film that they probably wouldn’t have been too interested in seeing otherwise (Jane).

What makes a quality teacher? – I just think that once you know those things you can build on that and you can engage the students in learning (Kevin).

Well, I think engagement just ties in with everything. If you have trust for students when you come to teaching them in the classroom they’re
more inclined to be engaged in what you’re teaching and what they are learning (Mike).

A quality teacher makes the learning engaging. If the learning is engaging and the kids want to learn then they’re motivated to learn. If you are as a teacher were just dry and dreary and reading out of a textbook or just making them do – if you just had your C2C planning and you were just reading it off and saying, okay, now you need to do this and reading it again and doing that and showing no engagement, no enthusiasm for it. Then I can’t see how you can expect the children to be enthusiastic to learn if you’re not giving them enthusiasm in your teaching (Matilda).

So my points of quality teaching were like, passionate, and if you’re delivering something passionately you’re going to engage students a lot more in learning (Noah).

He was just so engaging and infectious, I guess, he was just really engaging. He wanted the kids to learn (Penny).

I think a quality teacher will have created a learning environment where students feel really comfortable and welcomed and can connect and engage with students (Susan).

There is significant findings from the participants to indicate a quality teacher engages students in learning. From the findings, it appears that being experienced, respected and able to engage learners are important features of the participant’s conceptions of a quality teacher whereby this conceptualisation can be encompassed in the term ‘The Elder’.

This summary of an analysis of the findings provides the necessary information and understanding to explore the outcome space for the research, in the following chapter.
4.5 Conclusion

The findings presented in chapter 4 indicate that a quality teacher exhibits five categories of description. These categories of description cover a number of areas. However, when examining these categories two key areas emerged. These two key areas are the teacher and teaching. A further explanation of these two key areas is explored in chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES AND IMPLICATIONS

The research methodology applied to this study was phenomenography. The main focus of phenomenography is to uncover and describe the many ways in which individuals experience and understand a particular phenomenon (Svensson, 1997). Therefore, the aim of this study was to describe the qualitatively different ways in which the phenomenon of a quality teacher is experienced and understood by Queensland early career teachers. Marton (1996) refers to these ways of experiencing a phenomenon as ‘conceptions’. Consequently, one of the principal intentions of this study is to construct a graphic of these conceptions and the variations that exist between them. By undertaking this approach, this study focuses on understanding the conceptions instead of engaging in measuring human behaviour or providing explanations for a teacher’s pedagogical decision making.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide information on the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data. While the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data is significant to the overall framework of this study, the major outcome of the study relates to exploring and describing the interrelationships that exist between the five conceptions outlined in chapter 4. This is achieved by reflecting on previous chapters, providing an outcome space which represents the culmination of the relationships between the categories, and relating the outcome space to some of the literature outlined in chapter 2.
5.1 Review of research outcome: Categories of description

Bowden (2000), Saljo (1988) and Sandberg (1997) highlight that, within phenomenographic research, the main outcome is the establishment of categories of description. Categories of description are sourced from the data analysis and help establish a mental model as to how these conceptions are constructed. Utilising aspects of phenomenographic research by Saljo (1988) and Svensson (1997) within this study, the ways in which Queensland early career teachers experience a quality teacher is exemplified by the mental model noted above. Moreover, phenomenographic research identifies that there is only a limited number of qualitatively different ways in which the phenomenon of a quality teacher may be understood (Saljo 1988; Svensson 1997) and, as such, this study draws out a limited number of qualitatively different ways Queensland early career teachers describe the phenomenon of a quality teacher. A review of findings in chapter 4, which is a reflection of the categories of description established by this study, is highlighted in table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1. Phenomenographic conceptions organised by categories of description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Description</th>
<th>Salient features of conception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Conception A: A quality teacher as **The Knowledgeable One** | ● Content  
● Planning  
● Student |
| Conception B: A quality teacher as **The Architect of Understanding** | ● Plans  
● Facilitates  
● Directs |
| Conception C: A quality teacher as **The Facilitator of Relationships** | ● Build  
● Establish |
Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

5.2 Mapping an outcome space

The provision of categories of description for a quality teacher are not the only outcomes of this study. Another outcome is the construction of an outcome space. The construction of an outcome space is achieved by examining the structural aspects of the conceptions, and facilitated by encompassing the categories of description. It is through the outcome space that this study is able to provide a graphical representation of the qualitatively different ways Queensland early career teachers experience a quality teacher. As Marton (1986, p.34) highlights, the outcome space represents the differing ways in which a researcher describes the experiences of a quality teacher through “understanding other people's understandings”. To assist in highlighting this understanding of the ways in which Queensland early career teachers experienced a quality teacher, the conceptions as presented in chapter 4 are repeated below:

- Conception A: A quality teacher as **The Knowledgeable One**
- Conception B: A quality teacher as **The Architect of Understanding**
- Conception C: A quality teacher as **The Facilitator of Relationships**
- Conception D: A quality teacher as **The Affective One**
- Conception E: A quality teacher as **The Elder**
Willmett (2002) stresses that it is via the categories of description that an outcome space is formed by a representation of the structural aspects identified by the conceptions. Willmett (2002) adds that visual representations of an outcome space have been used and validated in a number of studies and in various formats. Marton and Booth (1997) indicate that these visual representations provide a map, as well as illustrating a structure derived from the categories. Finally, Bruce (1994) shows that the mapping process assists in illustrating the interconnectedness that exists between the conceptions, which is a trait commonly found in phenomenographic studies. Therefore, it is through this mapping process the reader is able to obtain a visual image of how the categories of description provide the foundation for the structure of the visual representation highlighted by this study.

5.3 Structure of the outcome space

With respect to this study, the outcome space consists of five different conceptions, all of which constitute aspects of the phenomenon of Queensland early career teacher conceptions of a quality teacher. In terms of an outcome space this study presents the winemaker as a graphic representation of a quality teacher. Thus, the mental model and graphic that follow are based on the five conceptions highlighted above, and from aspects of the research literature provided in chapter 2.

This study emphasises the use of the phrase ‘a quality teacher’, which is a reflection of both the ‘teacher’ and their ‘teaching’. As previously mentioned in chapter 4 this study’s findings reflect that a quality teacher encompasses both the ‘teacher’ and their ‘teaching’. The teacher represents the knowledge a teacher has, while teaching outlines how a teacher applies that knowledge to impact on student learning. The findings from this study indicate that a quality teacher has knowledge, reflected in Conception A with the application of that knowledge highlighted in the remaining four conceptions. The four remaining
Conceptions B to E indicate ‘how’ a quality teacher applies their knowledge. The application of a quality teacher’s knowledge is reflected in how a quality teacher is able to facilitate relationships with students, help students to understand what they are learning, demonstrate or display to their students a love and passion for teaching, use their various experiences, and finally, having a student’s respect and getting students to be engaged. Therefore, this study’s findings focus on the use of the ‘teacher’ as a noun and ‘teaching’ as a verb and not as a noun. By focusing on a quality teacher in this way this study’s findings highlight that there is an association between the teacher and their teaching with respect to a quality teacher. An explanation to unpack this association is outlined below.

This study’s findings indicate an association can be made between the teacher and their teaching. The findings from this study outline that for a teacher to be conceptualised as a quality teacher requires teacher knowledge and teaching skills to apply that knowledge. Therefore, as the findings from this study outlines a quality teacher is recognised by what they know in addition to the how they apply what they know through their teaching. By using teaching in this way there is a specific alignment with the teacher’s knowledge and their actions. This alignment removes some of the ambiguity associated with having teaching used as a noun and simply linking teaching to a profession. Instead the findings from this study highlight that teaching is how a quality teacher applies their knowledge to have a positive impact on student learning. However, the level of teacher knowledge or teaching a teacher requires to be a quality is not the focus of this study. Based on the findings from this research the participants focus only on describing their experiences of a quality teacher and not specifically indicting any level of ‘quality’, which has been previously discussed in chapter 1. This association between the teacher and their teaching also applies to the winemaker.

The winemaker mirrors the attributes of a quality teacher and these attributes are reflected in the categories of description of the
knowledgeable one, the architect of understanding the facilitator of relationships, the affective one, and the elder. The winemaker requires knowledge about the wine making process, the need to plan for that process, and knowledge about the grapes that are used in the making of wines. In addition, the winemaker establishes and builds relationships with the consumer, and is able to display to the consumer a love and passion for the making of wines. Finally, the winemaker is experienced, respected by the consumer and engages the consumer. With respect to this study, there is not a focus on ‘the best winemaker’, or ‘the very best winemaker’ rather a single appellation of the winemaker. A graphic representation of a quality teacher as the winemaker is provided for clarification of the graphic below. The first area to be outlined focuses on the elements of wine making and then secondly, the implications of a wine’s vintage.

There is very clear evidence in the literature to substantiate the important contributions teachers have on student learning. In addition, the evidence also establishes a cogent link between a teacher’s quality and their impact on student learning. Finally, the research literature highlights that a nation’s GDP is reflected in the quality of its teachers due to the impact that teachers have on student learning. The research findings from this study identify that a quality teacher is the product of both a teacher’s quality and their teaching quality, whereby teacher quality is reflected in a teachers’ knowledge and teaching quality relates to how a teacher applies their knowledge. These facets of a quality teacher are not dissimilar to those qualities found in the context of the winemaker.

The winemaker requires knowledge and this knowledge represents what the winemaker knows about wines. However, similar to a quality teacher who must apply their knowledge to impact on student learning the winemaker must apply their knowledge to impact on the grapes to produce wines. To simply have knowledge about grapes and
not apply that knowledge to the grape will not culminate in producing bottles of wine. Instead, the winemaker must utilise all of their knowledge and then apply that knowledge to work with the various types of grape to produce different varieties of wine. The grapes that the winemaker uses in the production of wines are not only of differing types but also come from different nurturing environments. Some grapes are grown in the cold climates on hill tops while other grapes are grown in warm climates on river plains. This is similar to a quality teacher who must work with various ‘types’ of students who come from different nurturing environments. The winemaker must impact on the grapes while a quality teacher must impact on student learning. Finally, the winemaker, like a quality teacher, is constantly being assessed against the outcomes that each produces; the winemaker is assessed or judged by the quality of their wines and a quality teacher through their impact on student learning. A challenge for each is the ambiguity surrounding the long-term impact on their respective ‘products’.

The ambiguity noted above is reflected in the time associated with determining the quality of a winemaker’s wines and the impact that a quality teacher has on student learning. In both cases it could take many years before the winemaker has any indication as to the quality of their wines or a quality teacher is aware of the totality of their impact on student learning. Therefore, both a quality teacher and the winemaker may never really know the complete outcome of their labour. The resulting ambiguity is echoed in futuristic judgements about the quality of wines or the impact on student learning based on present circumstances. Both the winemaker and a quality teacher can have knowledge, and apply that knowledge in the present in the hope there will be a positive outcome in the future. For the winemaker that positive outcome will be quality wines and for a quality teacher a positive impact on student learning. A graphic representation of a quality teacher as the winemaker is outlined in figure 5.1 below.
Grapes come in different varieties but often are the product of many factors beyond the control of the winemaker.

It may be years before the skills, attributes and quality of the winemaker are fully understood.

Figure 5.1: Phenomenographic outcome space: The winemaker as a graphic representation of a quality teacher.
5.3.1 Conception A: A quality teacher as The Knowledgeable One

Queensland early career teachers firmly believe that a quality teacher has knowledge and that this knowledge is evident in knowing content, the need to plan, and knowing the student. One participant Noah emphasises this view by stating:

*A quality teacher has knowledge of specific students and what they might have difficulties with. They know where students are at with their work, they know the subjects they teach, they how to teach because they are well planned, they just know their stuff.*

Noah’s comment indicates that a quality teacher knows their ‘stuff’ and this is reflected in a quality teacher having knowledge about their students, the subjects that they teach, and being well planned. The knowledge that a quality teacher has, based on findings, reflects knowledge that encompasses more than just what is being taught but also knowledge associated with ‘how’ the knowledge is being applied through planning to help their students. Knowledge is not simply a reflection of knowing content but rather reflects an awareness of how that knowledge is going to be used by the teacher through knowing the students. There exists an emphasis on knowing that there is a need to plan, so that content knowledge can be understood and implemented. It is through this need to plan that a quality teacher demonstrates an emphasis on how and not simply ‘what’. This view is indicative of the findings through Noah’s statement where he highlights: “A quality teacher has knowledge of specific students and what they might have difficulties with”. A quality teacher’s knowledge is not just a reflection of what content knowledge is possessed. Rather, a quality teacher’s knowledge also reflects the necessity of knowing how to apply that content in the classroom for the benefit of the students. Concurrently, this application of how is a reflection of a quality teacher needing to know the importance of planning to ensure that “they know where students are
at with their work, they know the subjects they teach, they know how to teach because they are well planned” and not just simply knowing their work. Against this back drop of experiences from Queensland early career teachers, there is some research that supports this construction that a good teacher’s knowledge is more than simply content based.

The research highlighted above supports the view that teachers require knowledge (Breaux & Whitaker, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hattie, 2009; Hinchey, 2015; Stronge, 2013); and that this knowledge is varied and complex (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The variations and complexities associated with this knowledge are the result of the teaching and learning process; and some examples of this knowledge focus on pedagogy, student, and content (Benekos, 2016; Goh, 2014).

The research noted directly above does not specifically indicate that a quality teacher has content, student, and planning knowledge however, it does reflect the need for a good teacher to have knowledge that is more than content and that a teacher’s knowledge needs to focus on the student and pedagogy (Benekos, 2016; Goh, 2014). An additional point that the findings highlight about a quality teacher’s overall knowledge is that it needs to reflect both the teaching and the learning process. This view about a quality teacher’s knowledge being reflected in both the teaching and learning process comes through in the findings, and is highlighted in a comment by Penny. Penny says about a quality teacher:

*He really believed in us because I think he believed that everyone really has the potential to achieve amazing things. It’s just about learning the skills and the strategies and being able to reflect on their own learning and *knowing* what their own strengths and weaknesses are in terms of actually getting them there. That it’s a lot about student driven learning rather than teacher driven learning. So really good teachers *know* their students and give them those tools. I guess he really *knew* how to teach and not just *knew* about what he was teaching.*
Penny continues by explaining that this teacher’s ability to know how to teach is reflected in a lesson where she participated. Penny outlines:

*For example when we did a unit on Commedia dell’arte which is all about the masks, the Italian masks that are quite grotesque and very specific. Each mask denotes a different character and it’s all quite ancient kind of comedy and satire. Some of the movements and things that those characters and body are quite grotesque and larger than life and really over the top and some of them were very crude. He just put on the mask and showed us what it was supposed to look like, and it seemed crazy I guess to a group of Year 11s who were at a little school in northern Brisbane. But just the enthusiasm and the commitment to whatever he was doing really showed us that that was an option. That that was another type of theatre and that it was taken seriously because he would talk about it seriously and with such enthusiasm. It was his enthusiasm and the way how he got his message across that made us realise that we could do it just like him. I guess by him putting on the mask and showing us how to use the masks helped us. I guess he knew that by him putting on the mask it would give us an idea of what to do.*

Therefore, a quality teacher must focus not only on what students learn but also how the students learn. The conceptions of a quality teacher held by Queensland early career teachers adds to the existing research by highlighting that knowing what to teach is intimately linked with acknowledging the need to plan on how to teach. The winemaker, like a quality teacher, also requires knowledge associated with what and having a plan to know how. However, in the case of the winemaker it is knowledge that relates to what is required to make wines and the need to have a plan on how to make wines.

The winemaker requires knowledge associated with the making of wines, knowledge linked to the wines, and knowledge that there is the need to plan how the wine is be made. The winemaker needs to have knowledge of the wine making process and this process emphasises a
number of important areas paralleling those of a quality teacher. The
winemaker needs to have knowledge of the harvesting, blending and
fermenting processes (what and how), through to the tasting, bottling and
finally, the marketing of the wines. In addition, the winemaker also needs
to have knowledge about the wines that they are producing. For example,
if the wine is a Shiraz, a Sauvignon Blanc, a Pinot Gris, or a Cabernet
Sauvignon this will require different aspects of knowledge related to the
what and how of wine making. The winemaker, similar to a quality
teacher, needs to know their wines because wines, like students are all
different.

The complexity associated with knowledge about the wines
commences with recognising wines as red, white, and fortified however,
this then moves into particular categories of red, white and fortified
wines. As simply knowing that wines come in reds, whites, and fortified
will assist in only having a basic knowledge of the wines, the winemaker
must instead have knowledge of the make-up of the reds, whites, and
fortified wines so that they can create the Pinot Gris and the Cabernet
Sauvignons. It is this knowledge of the wines, and what goes into making
these wines that emphasises the winemaker’s need to know that there is
also a prerequisite to plan for the production of these wines. Similarly, a
quality teacher needs to plan for the variety of students who are in the
various classes. A quality teacher needs to know the make-up of their
students and how they learn so that they can help the student by value-
adding to their learning.

Recalling Noah’s statement on his experience of a quality teacher,
that a quality teacher just knows “their stuff”, this statement possibly
best sums up a winemaker’s knowledge. Similar to a quality teacher, the
winemaker just knows their “stuff”, they know “stuff” about the
production of wines they know “stuff” about the wines that they are
producing and they know that, in order to produce good wines, they have
to apply the “stuff” that that they know and that planning is essential.
Therefore, both the winemaker and a quality teacher need to know how
they are going to apply their knowledge. From the data, there is a view that knowledge is important with respect to a quality teacher. However, in addition to knowledge, there is also the significance of ensuring that this knowledge is understood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Content knowledge</th>
<th>1. Content knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Knowledge about students</td>
<td>2. Knowledge about wines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 comparing the graphic representations of the winemaker and a quality teacher as the knowledgeable one.

The next section focuses on how the winemaker and a quality teacher apply that knowledge. This application of knowledge is reflected first in the category of description the Architect of Understanding and then followed by the other categories. This category of description emphasises the salient features of the conception whereby a quality teacher plans, facilitates, and directs understanding. Therefore, this category outlines how a quality teacher and the winemaker apply their knowledge through planning, facilitating, and directing understanding.
5.3.2 Conception B: A Quality Teacher as The Architect of Understanding

Another category of description that emerged from the findings is a quality teacher’s ability to help students understand the learning that takes place in the classroom. Such understanding has been alluded to in studies suggesting that good teachers help students with their understanding by guiding them through a clear articulation of standards and exemplars (Gipps et al. 2016; Goh 2014). Therefore, some previous studies emphasised that a good teacher engages in helping students understand by facilitating understanding through the clear articulation of standards and exemplars. Such a view is not dissimilar to the craft of the winemaker, who is required to ensure that ‘the consumer’ understands the wine being purchased, and also touches on the understanding a quality teacher provides to students in helping them comprehend the learning taking place in the classroom. Before continuing, the reader should note that the terms the consumer and student/s are interchangeable in this study. However, to assist the reader when reference is made to the/a teacher, the term student/s follows to provide a clearer link between the business of education and commerce.

A quality teacher provides students with an understanding of the learning taking place in the classroom through the planning, facilitating, and directing of understanding. Similar to a good teacher, aspects of the facilitating of understanding by a quality teacher could be provided by guiding students through a clear articulation of learning exemplars and standards. However, unlike a good teacher who facilitates understanding, a quality teacher also provides understanding by being aware of the need to plan for understanding and having strategies in place to direct understanding. In turn, the winemaker provides the consumer with an understanding of wine by planning, facilitating, and directing the consumer’s understanding of wine. By engaging with the consumer in this way, the winemaker helps the consumer appreciate wine and, therefore, possibly increases the consumer’s understanding of wine.
The consumer for the winemaker represents the individual/s who are assisted to understand wine so that they will hopefully purchase it. For a quality teacher, the consumer is representative of the students in their classroom. In order for the consumer to receive either help in their understanding of wines, or for students to understand the learning taking place in the classroom, there needs to be some interaction. With respect to the winemaker, this interaction occurs at a tasting, while for a quality teacher it occurs in the classroom. It is at a wine tasting that the winemaker introduces the consumer to the wine, and then helps the consumer to understand the wine. A quality teacher in turn introduces the students to their subject/s and then helps them understand the subject/s through their teaching. It is through the interactions that occur between the consumer and the winemaker or students and a quality teacher, during a wine tasting or during teaching, that both the student’s and the consumer’s understanding is facilitated and directed. Therefore, it is through the facilitation and direction of understanding, and the need to plan for understanding, that the winemaker and a quality teacher provide, via these interactions, assistance to the consumer and the students to gain understanding. Initially, the winemaker plans for understanding at a wine tasting and a quality teacher plans for understanding in a lesson.

At a wine tasting, the consumer is introduced to the various wines on offer by the winemaker. It is at a wine tasting that the winemaker plans for understanding by the consumer. Usually, at this event, the winemaker plans for understanding by providing the consumer with the opportunity to taste a variety of wines. Generally, this planning entails the winemaker selecting the wines to be offered for a tasting, providing the consumer with a wine glass, supplying a specific amount of the selected wines to be poured into each wine glass for tasting, and then giving the consumer the opportunity to taste and reflect on each wine. It is during a wine tasting that the winemaker mirrors the second and third
salient features of the conception of a quality teacher by facilitating and directing the consumer’s understanding of these wines.

The winemaker plans to provide the consumer with an opportunity to taste wines, because it creates an opportunity to sell the wines. Furthermore, the winemaker plans to help the consumer understand the wine that they are tasting so that they will hopefully purchase it. This planning for understanding usually entails the winemaker’s plan to carrying out the actions outlined above. However, planning to carry out actions to help the consumer understand the wine needs to be followed up by facilitating that plan. Clearly, the winemaker has little chance of the consumer buying their wines unless they put their plan into action. The putting of their plan into action is reflected in the winemaker’s facilitation of their plan. In the case of the winemaker, the facilitation of their plan occurs during a wine tasting. While for a quality teacher the facilitation of their planning occurs during teaching. This action of putting a plan into action is expanded upon below in the following paragraphs.

There are some studies to suggest that teachers focus on improving student outcomes and that this focus is positively impacted by a teacher’s capacity for influencing a student’s understanding of what they are learning (Hattie, 2009; Hinchey, 2015). One way in which teacher’s impact on a student’s learning can be determined is through measurable improvement in the results that students attain in their academic transcripts (Caldwell, 2013). However, while these studies indicate that teachers focus on improving student outcomes by influencing their understanding of what students learn, a quality teacher focuses on more than learning outcomes that emphasise academic improvement. One participant Harry provides an insight into this focus when he states:

_I guess a quality teacher generally has something in common about them where they’re a person, like a role model, I guess, or a person that you could actually relate to and that have influenced your life in a particular way. They’ve helped, I_
guess, as a quality teacher develop yourself as a person. It might be academically but it might be even not academically. It might be in terms of helping you grow and mature as a person. Helping you grow to be a better person. A quality teacher is capable of getting the student to achieve better results by making the student believe that they are capable of achieving a lot more. A quality teacher instils a belief in the student that they can actually achieve better outcomes in learning and in life.

While teachers focus on improving the learning outcomes of students through impacting on a student’s academic transcripts, a quality teacher focuses on much more. As Harry’s statement indicates, a quality teacher not only focuses on helping students by impacting on their academic transcripts, but also in how they grow and mature as a person. In addition, a quality teacher instils a belief in students to strive for better outcomes in education and life. Therefore, a quality teacher facilitates student understanding based on a plan to not only impact on a students’ learning outcomes through their academic results, but also on the student as a person. A quality teacher wants to help students understand because they want to help them, as Harry says, “grow to be a better person”.

The winemaker wants to impact on the consumer’s understanding of the wines they are tasting by helping the consumer gain a better appreciation of these wines. It is by the winemaker’s impact on the consumer’s appreciation for these wines that they will hopefully purchase the wines on offer. For the winemaker, one indication of an improvement in the consumer’s understanding of these wines could arguably be reflected in an increase in the volume of wines sold. This increase in the volume of wines sold suggests that the consumer has an appreciation for the winemaker’s wine/s, possibly because they have an understanding of the wine. Therefore, armed with an understanding of the wines, the consumer is more likely to purchase the wine/s they tasted.
Generally, teachers want to impact on student learning by helping them understand what they are learning (Hattie, 2009). If a teacher is successful in helping students learn, one method used to determine this success is reflected in a student’s academic scores (Caldwell, 2012). Similarly, a quality teacher wants to improve student learning, and this improvement in student learning can be ascertained by a student’s academic scores. The findings in this study suggest that this is important, and is evident in a number of the participants’ experiences. The experiences of two participants, Molly and Harry, are highlighted to help support this view. First Molly states that:

*A quality teacher does not want to get stuck doing the same thing. If something doesn’t work, and you don’t reflect on it, and you don’t know how to fix it for next time, you’re going to be stuck in that same rut of just doing it over and over again the wrong way, and it’s not going to improve your teaching. It’s not going to improve the learning the students are going to get.*

Molly continues by emphasising that improving the learning of students “is very important for a quality teacher” because, “a quality teacher is about making sure the students get the learning that they deserve and the learning that they need by making sure that students understand what they are learning”.

Echoing Molly’s assertions above, Harry indicates that:

*A quality teacher likes to hope that all your students could get straight A’s, but achieving the learning outcomes that they’re capable of. Achieving – well, actually, I’ll rephrase that – achieving what the student actually wants to achieve out of being at school, working towards their goals and making sure that they’re actually on task and on track to be achieving those types of goals and learning outcomes. Say that in year 11 or year 12 they want to go off and do nursing or whatever then they’re going to need those grades and they’re going to need somebody that’s going to support them in order to actually achieve those outcomes. Sometimes it’s also about*
picking them up when they’re not actually achieving those outcomes. A quality teacher recognises what their students are capable of and where they actually want to go with things.

Both Molly’s and Harry’s comments reflect a quality teacher’s focus on wanting to not only impact on a student’s learning but to also improve on that learning. An example of this impact and improvement on a student’s learning, as Harry states, is reflected in all of the students in a quality teacher’s class receiving straight ‘A’s’. A quality teacher’s capacity to facilitate a student’s understanding of their learning, as Harry’s comment indicates, is highlighted in the number of ‘A’s’ students receive in that subject. Similarly, the winemaker wants to impact on the consumer’s appreciation of wine by helping them understand the wine/s that they are tasting so that the consumer will purchase the winemaker’s wines. Ultimately, the winemaker hopes that all of the consumers will purchase their wines, as a quality teacher hopes that all of their students will receive ‘straight A’s’. However, in both cases, as Harry’s comment indicates, a quality teacher focuses on:

What the student actually wants to achieve out of being at school, working towards their goals and making sure that they’re actually on task and on track to be achieving those types of goals and learning outcomes.

Similarly, the winemaker wants the consumer to buy wine because the consumer appreciates the wine and understands the wine from their interaction with a winemaker and not because the consumer simply wants to drink ‘free’ wine and therefore, take nothing away from the tasting experience.

The winemaker facilitates consumer understanding because a winemaker wants the consumer to appreciate their wines and as a result of that appreciation buys their wines. Whereas, a quality teacher facilitates a student’s understanding of learning because they want students to do well in their class, and so that the student can achieve
their goals. Therefore, it is via the volume of sales of wine that the winemaker attains, and the number of ‘A’s’ that a teacher achieves in their subject area, which can be used as a determinate to measure if they are a winemaker and a quality teacher. However, this figure must be couched against, in the case of a winemaker, the purchase of wine based on the consumer’s appreciation of wines and for a quality teacher, the association between a student’s academic results and, as Harry says, “their goals”. While facilitating understanding is important, the findings indicate that facilitating an understanding of student learning involves a number of strategies. Similarly, for the winemaker, facilitating an understanding of wine also requires a number of strategies.

A quality teacher facilities student understanding by implementing a number of strategies. As the findings indicate, one of these strategies relates to testing a student’s understanding of their learning. Some of these testing strategies focus on, for example, checking for understanding by listening and speaking with students. The winemaker also facilitates consumer understanding of the wines by implementing strategies that allow for the testing of consumer understanding. These strategies, similar to those used by a quality teacher, can focus on checking for understanding by speaking with and then listening to the consumer after they taste and reflect on the wine/s on offer. The similarity in the strategies used by the winemaker and a quality teacher highlight testing for understanding through checking. The facilitation of understanding that the winemaker and a quality teacher apply to the consumer and student links with how they each direct understanding.

For the winemaker, directing understanding occurs by drawing the consumer’s attention to the five key elements of a wine. These five key elements are the wine’s sweetness, acidity, tannin, fruit, and body (O’Keefe, 2005). When the consumer tastes the wine/s, the winemaker directs the consumer to one or all of the five key elements to help understand the wine. This directing of understanding occurs by the winemaker asking the consumer questions about the wine, or the
consumer asking a winemaker questions. The winemaker can then address the consumer’s lack of understanding about the wine they are tasting by referring to, for example, the wine’s sweetness. Such a focus develops an understanding of why the wine is sweet and how this sweetness impacts on the wine’s body and acidity. In conjunction with the five key elements of wine noted above, a winemaker may also present information, either through conversation or various artefacts, to direct the consumer to the types of grapes, and mixtures that are used to blend the wine/s so that the consumer has an understanding of the wine's overall make-up.

A quality teacher directs student understanding by having information on course requirements, assessment details, unit outlines, and unit plans. When a student lacks some understanding about the course, a quality teacher directs students to key elements of the course then, based on a quality teacher's knowledge, and helps the student in their understanding.

In addition to the above, the winemaker also directs the consumer at the wine tasting by referring to any previous experiences the consumer may have had with similar wines. Such an approach echoes research on a good teacher and an individual’s past experiences of good teachers (Britzman, 2009). During the wine tasting, the winemaker focuses on the memories and past relationships that the consumer may have with previous wines to connect them with their current experiences of the wines they are tasting. The winemaker achieves this by directing the consumer’s attention to the wine and referring to its sweetness, acidity, tannin, fruit, and body. By using these elements combined with past experiences, the winemaker can direct the consumer to help them gain a better understanding of the wine they are tasting. A quality teacher works in a similar manner, as Elle suggests:

A quality teacher takes an interest in their students they take the time to see if students understand and follow up if students haven’t understood.
Elle’s description of a quality teacher is similar to that of a winemaker. During a wine tasting, the winemaker takes an interest in the consumer, and takes the time to see if the consumer understands the wine and if not, then a winemaker follows up on that lack of understanding. A quality teacher, in turn whilst teaching, also takes an interest in their students, takes the time to see if students understand and follow up with students if they fail to understand. This focus on understanding is important because the winemaker wants the consumer to purchase their wines, and this will only occur if the consumer understands the wine. Therefore, for the winemaker to ensure that they achieve maximum sales for their wines, there is a need to follow up on any lack of understanding by the consumer. Similarly, a quality teacher wants to impact on the learning of every student in their class so they too will also need to follow up on any lack of understanding that the students may have about their classwork.

As a number of the participants highlight in chapter 4 that a quality teacher ultimately wants all of their students to understand, so too does a winemaker ultimately want all of the consumers tasting their wines to understand the wines on offer. If the consumer understands the wine, there is a higher possibility of them appreciating the wine/s and therefore purchasing the wine/s. An appreciation of the wine/s on offer, and an impact on student learning, will only occur if the consumer understands the wines they are tasting and the student understands what they are learning.
Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

1. A quality teacher plans for student understanding.
2. A quality teacher facilitates student understanding.
3. A quality teacher directs student understanding.

1. The winemaker plans for the consumer to understand the wine.
2. The winemaker facilitates consumer understanding.
3. The winemaker directs consumer understanding.

Table 5.3. Comparing the graphic representations of a quality teacher and the winemaker as the architect of understanding

The winemaker focuses on the consumer understanding their wines just as a quality teacher focuses on students understanding the learning that takes place in their classroom. Both the winemaker and a quality teacher plan, facilitate and direct this understanding by applying strategies, which can at times be similar, during a wine tasting and teaching respectively. A quality teacher as The Facilitator of Relationships is the next focus of this study.
5.4.3 Conception C: A Quality Teacher as The Facilitator of Relationships

A further conception of a quality teacher that emerges from the findings of this study is that of the facilitator of relationships. There is some evidence noting the significance of the relationships students build with their teachers, and the opinions that individuals hold about teachers from relationships they develop during their schooling (Britzman, 2009; Puhan et al., 2014; Slade, 2002). The findings in this study adds to that evidence by emphasising that a quality teacher facilitates relationships with parents and students by establishing and building on those relationships. The relationships that a quality teacher facilitates with students and parents are also not too dissimilar to those relationships facilitated by the winemaker.

Earlier in the chapter it was explained that it is important for interactions to occur between the winemaker and the consumer, and that a common place for interactions between the winemaker and the consumer is at a wine tasting. It is at a wine tasting that the winemaker is provided with the opportunity to establish a relationship with the consumer. Usually, by the end of a wine tasting the winemaker focuses on the building of this relationship. A winemaker can employ a number of strategies to build on the relationships they establish with consumers. For example, the winemaker can obtain the email addresses of the consumer and by obtaining these addresses is then able to follow-up on their initial contact. It is by contacting the consumer through follow-up emails that the winemaker builds on the relationship established at a wine tasting. Another strategy that the winemaker uses is to advertise their wines.

By advertising their wines, the winemaker is building on the relationship established with the consumer through their ‘reputation’. This focus on the winemaker’s reputation emphasises that the consumer might not have previously tasted these wines at a wine tasting, but still purchases wines based on the winemaker’s reputation. Therefore, by
using their reputation to build on their relationship with the consumer, the winemaker is able to continue to sell their wines long after a wine tasting.

The focus on establishing and then building on relationships is evident in the findings of this study and highlights similarities in how the winemaker and a quality teacher facilitate relationships. Numerous participants in this study provided commentary to support the above and this is best articulated through Jane when she notes that:

*A quality teacher establishes relationships with their students and from there they build on those relationships. I know that there are certain teachers who have a reputation as a good teacher that my students talk about all the time at school. I hear their names being brought up on a regular basis that they really like that particular teacher because they’re really clever and they’re really smart and they’ve learned heaps from them. I envy those teachers and I think wouldn’t that be great to be a teacher that students talk about in class to their other teachers and other students. This really shows me the relationships that these teachers have with their students and how their reputations are built on from those relationships. That’s really powerful.*

Jane comments that a quality teacher has their name being brought up on a regular basis by students, parents and other teachers and this occurs because a quality teacher has a good reputation. By parents, students and teachers bringing up a quality teacher’s name on a regular, their reputation as a quality teacher spreads within the community. This is similar to a winemaker’s reputation which is also spread by the regularity of their name being brought up by the consumer. The spreading of the winemaker’s reputation is due to the consumer marketing the winemaker’s wines by talking about the winemaker’s wines with other consumers. The application of marketing in this fashion reflects the advertising of the winemaker’s wine, through their reputation, by word-of-mouth.
Through word-of-mouth marketing the winemaker is not actively selling their wines rather it is the winemaker’s reputation as the winemaker being voiced regularly by the consumer that sells the wines. The winemaker’s reputation by word-of-mouth marketing is spread by the consumer talking with other consumers about the wines the winemaker produces. A quality teacher’s reputation in turn is promulgated within a school community by parents, students, and parents talking about the teacher. The winemaker is able to establish a relationship with a number of consumers and then build on that relationship through other consumers to establish further relationships with more consumers. Consequently, the winemaker, through establishing a relationship with the consumer, is able to build on that relationship through their reputation as the winemaker.

The significance of this statement directly above is that the name of the winemaker reflects their reputation and it is this reputation which helps to build the consumer’s appreciation for the winemaker’s wine. Therefore, it is through the winemaker building on the consumer’s initial appreciation for the winemaker’s wine, which in turn reflects the consumer’s ongoing positive support for the winemaker’s wines that an individual may also gain a ‘reputation’ as the winemaker.

The significance of the winemaker’s name reflects their reputation and it is this reputation which helps to build the consumer’s appreciation for the winemaker’s wine. Therefore, it is through the winemaker building on the consumer’s initial appreciation for their wine, which in turn reflects the consumer’s ongoing positive support for the winemaker’s wines that a maker of wines also gains a ‘reputation’ as the winemaker.

As with the importance of reputation to the winemaker, existing research on what might constitute good teaching often alludes to a teacher’s reputation, within a school community, as something worth acknowledging and can be reinforced by the opinions and comments of students and parents (Britzman, 2009; Hanushek, 2010; Slade, 2002). In addition, some evidence highlights that parents may move their
children from school to school, or can select teachers to teach their children, based on a teacher’s reputation and/or the opinions of other parents (Slade, 2002). According to the literature, a common method used to possibly determine a teacher’s reputation is to focus on their capacity to value-add to a student’s academic results (Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). If a teacher is a good teacher then that teacher demonstrates this by value-add ing to their students’ academic results (Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). As noted earlier in chapter 2, the more a teacher is able to value-add to their student’s academic results, the higher the possibility the teacher is viewed by the community as a good teacher (Britzman, 2009; Slade, 2002).

Based on the research highlighted directly above, a teacher’s reputation as a good teacher is developed within a school community as a result of their outcomes, for example, their impact on a student’s learning (Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). One method used by a school community to determine a quality teacher’s outcomes is value-add ing (Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010). This aspect of a quality teacher’s reputation being determined by value-add ing is also similar to that of the winemaker.

The use of value-add ing as one method in determining the consumer’s view on the winemaker’s reputation is through the sales of wines from year to year. If the consumer understands, and appreciates a winemaker’s wine then there is a strong possibility that the consumer will continually purchase these wines. Clearly, it is important for the winemaker to establish a relationship with the consumer however, it is equally important for the winemaker to encourage the consumer to continually buy wine. To achieve this outcome of encouraging the consumer to continually buy the winemaker’s wine, a winemaker must build on their relationship with the consumer.

One way in which the winemaker can build on this relationship is through a reputation that grows with the consumer. It is by establishing a reputation as a winemaker that the consumer begins to ‘notice’ the
winemaker's wines and in turn the consumer 'selects' these wines for purchase. Therefore, the winemaker is aware of the influence a good reputation has with the consumer. The winemaker highlights this awareness by implementing strategies that assist in spreading a good reputation, so that the winemaker’s wines are noticed and selected by the consumer. This noticing and selecting of the winemaker’s wines by the consumer is important because of the possible flow on effect it has on the sale of wine and, as a result of these sales, the building of a winemaker’s reputation.

The findings from this study adds to the research on a good teacher’s reputation by indicating that a quality teacher facilitates relationships by establishing and building relationships with parents and students. In addition, the findings also indicate that a quality teacher is aware of the significance of their reputation, and the importance of this reputation within the school community. A more detailed explanation to this statement is provided below.

A quality teacher's reputation is first established through their relationships with parents and students. That relationship is then built upon by parents and students talking about the teacher with other parents and students. It is also by the parents and the students talking about the teacher that a teacher’s reputation as a quality teacher is built upon. A quality teacher is aware of the importance of the talking that occurs between parents and students because this talking impacts on their reputation and by association the school community. A number of participant experiences derived from the data support this, and are presented through the comments of Bob, Emma, Peter and Molly.

Bob speaks about a quality teacher and an awareness of their reputation within the community. Bob recalls from one of his experiences of a quality teacher that:

*He was confident. It was like every subject he talked about was almost his favourite subject. When somebody’s talking about something that they love, you see a bit of a change in*
their voice and they project, they use a lot of examples from the real world, they seem a lot more interested in class feedback, the lesson seems to run better, it never boggs down, it goes quick, moves along at a nice speed. I think genuinely he knew what he was talking about. So I think he had a good background knowledge as well in the subjects that he was teaching, [unclear] be more organised, be prepared for those questions. All the parents and students knew that he was good at his job. You would hear parents talking about him with other parents, I know my parents talked about him with their friends. When parents first came to the door before school he spoke with them, he spent time getting to know the parents and because of this he had a reputation around the school that he was a good teacher he was good at his job. That’s probably why he had a good reputation with parents and students around the school. I think he knew he had a good reputation as a good teacher, it helped him, so he worked hard keeping it.

Emma follows up from Bob with her experience of two teachers, both of whom she considers to be quality teachers, and how their reputations are spread by parents talking amongst themselves. According to Emma:

Both of these teachers, they had one thing in particular. They had a classroom – it’s over there on the whiteboard because I do it as well – they had the program set out in big writing on the whiteboard. Every day the kids came into class and they knew, right, at eight thirty we’re doing this. At eight – at nine-ten we’re doing this so on and so on. This is – then at the start of the year they set out those expectations so that – for example, they – both teachers had only a handful of classroom rules. The kids in their classes learnt because everyone knew that they had reputations as good teachers because of the way in which they organised their classrooms. Parents wanted their kids in their classes because of their reputations. Parents knew that these teachers had good reputations. I guess parents spread the word by talking about them.
Emma also adds that these two teachers are aware of the importance of their reputations because they did not want parents to get the wrong idea. Emma states:

Both these teachers would go out of their way to meet with the parents on the first day of school. They worked on trying to get to know all of the parents of the kids that they were teaching. I guess in some ways they might have been concerned about their reputations they wanted to make sure that the parents and kids knew them first off. I guess they didn’t want parents to get the wrong idea they weren’t interested in their kids.

Echoing Emma’s comments, Peter’s experience highlights the importance of a quality teacher’s reputation linked with parents knowing that their kids are safe. Peter says:

A quality teacher just wants to keep the kids safe and also feel like they can take a risk, like they can go and get an answer wrong and kids aren’t going to turn around and laugh at them. A quality teacher has a reputation for not just letting stuff like that slide. A quality teacher tries to address every little issue so that the kids feel comfortable and safe. A quality teacher knows how important it is for the parents to know that their kids are safe and it’s good to have a reputation with parents like this because they talk about teachers and this talk can be good and bad, depending on the teacher.

Finally, Molly’s experience highlights a quality teacher as a head of department, who is aware of, and builds on, a reputation for being a calm and gentle teacher who is liked by other teachers, students, and parents.

From what I’m hearing, the students that talk about her they say she’s wonderful. The teachers who work with her say that she’s wonderful. I think she has a reputation as a good head of department around the school and in the community in general. That’s important because you need to have the teachers, parents, and kids on your side. A quality teacher is liked and one way one of being liked is to have a good reputation and a quality teacher has a good reputation. She’s
g gentle, she’s calm – this is how I see her in front of the class. I think she is just going to be a really calm person. Everything is going to be smooth. There’s not going to be a lot of hassle, and if there is hassle, she is going to treat it calmly and not let her emotions rise up. I think she is aware of being gentle and calm. I think she knows that this works for her and she has been teaching longer than me so I guess she has been like this for a while. I know the kids know this because I hear them talking about her, how she never seems to get angry or upset. I guess her reputation, her reputation as a person who never gets angry, who is always calm and gentle is something that the kids notice. I think as a quality teacher it’s important that kids need to see that you are a calm person and that things don’t get to you. If a teacher is not able to control their emotions and there are lots of hassles in the classroom the kids aren’t going to learn because of the disruptions. That’s why a quality teacher doesn’t let things hassle them.

The findings derived from the experiences of Bob, Emma, Peter, and Molly identify a quality teacher as someone who facilitates relationships with parents and students, because a quality teacher is aware of the impact that this has on their reputation within the school community.

Thus, the findings from this study indicates a quality teacher establishes a relationship with parents and students, and once that relationship is established a quality teacher then builds on that relationship. One of the aspects associated with establishing and building on this relationship relates to a quality teacher’s reputation. It is by establishing a reputation as a quality teacher with parents and students that a quality teacher builds on that relationship, thereby maintaining their reputation. This is similar to the winemaker, because if a winemaker is unable to maintain their reputation, then the possibility exists that the consumer will stop purchasing their wines. A possible outcome of the consumer’s actions to stop purchasing wines could be a winemaker’s sales of wine being impacted upon and so too their reputation. Another
area of interest that the data from this study draws attention to is the likeability of a quality teacher.

The findings highlighted that a quality teacher is liked by parents and students. However, the findings also indicate that a quality teacher has to work at being liked by parents and students. Therefore, ‘the likeability’ of a quality teacher results from actions to become likeable and not simply something that happens. As one participant Darren states:

*I think that my teacher worked hard to be liked by me. She tried to do her best by me, she really helped me with my work. She would listen to me when I had a question and always treated me with respect I liked her for that. My parents and I liked her because of that. I know that she had a reputation around the school as teacher who got on with her students and I know a lot of students and parents liked her.*

Darren’s comment draws attention to a quality teacher having to work at being liked, by stating that a quality teacher that he experienced “worked at being liked by doing her best for him, helping him, and respecting him”. Similarly, a winemaker must also work at being liked by the consumer. A winemaker must do their best by the consumer, a winemaker needs to listen to the consumer’s questions about their wines, and treat the consumer with respect. If the winemaker fails at being liked by the consumer, then possibly the winemaker will lose their reputation. Therefore, the winemaker and a quality teacher both seek to build on their relationships with consumers and students respectively, so that they continue to develop their reputations. However, before it is possible to build on their reputations as the winemaker and a quality teacher, each must work to establish those reputations in the first instance.

The winemaker facilitates relationships with the consumer, while a quality teacher facilitates relationships with their students and parents. The relationships that the winemaker and a quality teacher facilitate are established and built upon over time. In the case of the winemaker,
relationships can be established with the consumer at a wine tasting and then built upon by the consumer talking about the winemaker’s wine within the wine drinking community. For a quality teacher, relationships can be established through initial contact with parents and students and then this relationship is built upon. The winemaker and a quality teacher are also aware of the importance that the consumer and parents and students place on their respective relationships.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1. A quality teacher establishes a relationship with students.</th>
<th>1. The winemaker establishes a relationship with the consumer.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2. A quality teacher builds on their relationships with students.</td>
<td>2. The winemaker builds on their relationships with the consumer.</td>
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*Table 5.4. Comparing the graphic representations of a quality teacher and the winemaker as the facilitator of relationships.*

The next conception to be unpacked is a quality teacher as The Affective One. This conception addresses the love and passion that a quality teacher has for their profession and, in continuing with the graphic representation, similarities are drawn with the winemaker.
5.4.4 Conception D: A Quality Teacher as The Affective One

Queensland early career teachers also highlight from their experiences a category of description that indicates a quality teacher as The Affective One. The Affective One describes a quality teacher’s love or passion for teaching. The findings show that participants describe a quality teacher as a teacher who loves their job or displays a passion for teaching and the subjects that they teach.

Two participants, Matilda and Penny, offered succinct examples of a quality teacher’s love and or passion. Matilda states, from her experience of a quality teacher, that:

A quality teacher loved his job. He did. He was always very happy, smiling when he meet with us and spoke with us. He acted like he loved his job. You could see his passion by the way he just walked into class like I said he was always happy, always smiling. I think he was really, really passionate about being well read and for us reading as much as we could and learning from the stories that he read. I think he just loved – that love of his subject just made you want to love it. I had him for three years as an English teacher. His daughter was in my same grade. Everyone loved Mr [J] because he was just excited about his subject you could see he was so passionate he was such a great teacher [laughs].

The second comment about a quality teacher’s love or passion for teaching comes from Penny who states that:

I suppose it’s hard to exhibit passion when you don’t have it because without it would be very hard to go to work each day. I think that a quality teacher does have passion because they would be conscientious in their approach, be interested in the subject matter, use positive language when they’re talking about subjects, give students examples of how they can use these different subject areas in their everyday life, let them know that you have used these subjects. A quality teacher by doing these things shows that they love their job because they care about the student’s work ... they monitor what the students are doing and they help them with the subject. They want to make sure that students do well in their subject area
because they want their students to succeed. By doing these things regularly a quality teacher exhibits a love for their job. They just don’t turn up to work and not care about the students ... A quality teacher just does not do that and the students can see that. A quality teacher is happy, you can see it in their smile, they always enjoy being at work and students can see that. Students can see that and because they can see it they respond by wanting to work. Students really enjoy working in a teacher’s class who wants to be there, who wants to help them.

Both Matilda’s and Penny’s comments reflect that a quality teacher loves or has a passion for teaching and their subjects. In addition, their comments also indicate that a quality teacher’s love or passion for teaching is generally exhibited by the way in which a quality teacher speaks about their subject with their students, how they care about their job and their students, and their capacity to let students see that they do love their job.

From Matilda and Penny’s descriptions, it is clear that how a quality teacher ‘acts’ provides students some insights into their love or passion for their job and the subject that they teach, and how students respond to a quality teacher because of those actions. Matilda’s and Penny’s experiences, which also reflect a number of similar experiences of participants in this study, support some research that focuses on good teachers (Benekos, 2016; Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kaleihnez, 2008). In addition, the findings in this study add to the dearth of knowledge about the love or passion of a quality teacher because studies that centre on love or passion focusing on teachers “rarely” occur (Hattie, 2007, p. 23).

The research referred to directly above indicates that good teachers have a passion or love for their subject/s and teaching, and that individuals perusing a career in teaching need to have a passion for teaching (Benekos, 2016; Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kaleihnez, 2008; Hattie, 2007). Whereas, this study highlights a quality teacher and a quality teacher’s love and passion for teaching, how a quality teacher displays
their love and passion for teaching, and the impact a quality teacher’s love or passion has on their students. Therefore, the findings from this study emphasises that a quality teacher not only loves and has passion for their job but also demonstrates how a quality teacher displays a love or passion for their job and the subjects that they teach. In addition, the findings indicate that a quality teacher’s display of a love and passion for their job impacts on their students through their students wanting to engage in learning. The findings also highlight that the love and passion a quality teacher displays is not too dissimilar to the winemaker.

The winemaker has a passion for their job and wine because the winemaker cares about the wines produced for sale and consumption (Deep Woods, 2016; Rosemount Estate, 2016; O’Keefe, 2005). One way in which the winemaker displays this passion is by ensuring the safety of the wines. In some instances, expensive wines must be left to mature for many years (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012). This maturing process entails placing the wines in large oak vats where they are left to sit for years and monitored by the winemaker (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012). It is during the monitoring process that the winemaker checks on the wines to ensure that the wines are maturing effectively. If this process breaks down, then there is the possibility that the wine/s will not be of quality and, therefore, the reputation of the winemaker may be at risk. This focus on the winemaker’s reputation has been previously outlined in this chapter.

It is the winemaker’s responsibility to care for the wine to ensure that their reputation is not impacted upon by low quality wines. One operation that the winemaker focuses on to achieve this outcome of not impacting negatively on the quality of the wines is to regularly check on the wine through monitoring it. This monitoring process is designed to ensure that the maturing and fermenting of the wines unfolds as planned (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012).

The winemaker needs to be prepared to spend years, possibly, engaged in this monitoring process to ensure the wine’s quality is exemplary. However, it is by monitoring the wines over several years that
the winemaker connects with the wine and it is through this connection that the wines become the responsibility of the winemaker. Having this responsibility for the wine ultimately culminates in the winemaker viewing these wines as ‘their’ wines and not simply products in vats (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012). Consequently, this monitoring process is not simply the result of a need to produce quality wine but rather a reflection of the passion the winemaker has for ‘their’ wines.

The winemaker cares about their work and their wines because they want to produce good wines. Therefore, the winemaker has a responsibility to look after the wine and, as a result, the wine is an extension of them. To highlight this extension, the winemaker can sometimes name their children, wife or ancestors after their wines. A winemaker of some note from South Australia Michael Twelftree of Two Hands Wine, for example, has named four wines, in his garden series, after his wife and three children (Two Hands Wine, 2015). This focus on ownership and a desire to succeed is similar to a quality teacher who also wants, as Penny’s comment indicates, “their students to succeed”. The winemaker wants their wine to be recognised for its value and therefore takes responsibility for the wines. A quality teacher wants to help students to be successful and, similarly, takes responsibility for ‘their’ students.

As noted above, a quality teacher wants their students to succeed so, a quality teacher cares of their students, and a quality teacher takes action to ensure that their students succeed. One of the many participants who acknowledged a quality teacher caring about their students and wanting them to succeed is Cath. Cath describes a quality teacher’s focus on ensuring students succeed because they care about their students. Cath states:

> He was teaching I think Year 10 maths and his way of teaching was very interesting because he didn’t use any notes but he sort of built the lesson through asking the students questions. So he engaged his students just by posing lots of
questions which they could answer. So step by step he would teach them a whole lesson and by doing this he would monitor every student’s work. Then at the end he would sum everything up on the board which is quite different to what most teachers do because I think he really cared about his students. He wanted them all to succeed, not have any left behind.

This caring for students and wanting them to succeed might, as Cath’s description suggests, entail a quality teacher monitoring students’ work in class. For a winemaker, they too want their wine/s to succeed and so they take a course of action to facilitate this outcome. The course of action a winemaker takes is to care for their wine/s, for example, by monitoring the wine while it is maturing because they want their wines to be good wines. In addition, by taking the time to care for their wine/s, a winemaker is also expressing their love or passion for winemaking.

A quality teacher is able to express their love or passion for teaching through their interaction with the people they have contact with. In the case of a quality teacher, this contact is through their students seeing a quality teacher display their love and passion for teaching. As for the winemaker their love and passion for wines is displayed when a winemaker is seen by the consumer talking about their wines or when the consumer sees the winemaker working with their wines. The consumer sees the winemaker’s love and passion for the job because the winemaker generally exhibits a positive disposition by smiling and being happy when in the company of the consumer or around their wines (O’Keefe, 2005). In addition, when the winemaker usually engages in discussions about their wines with the consumer, the winemaker often uses positive language (O’Keefe, 2005). A quality teacher, echoing Penny’s experience, also uses positive language when talking with students and displays a happy disposition. A further development in a quality teacher’s love and passion for their job is the impact that this love and passion has on the student.
A quality teacher, again highlighting Penny’s experience, cares “about the student’s work” and is always “happy and smiling” and it is because a quality teacher displays to students their love and passion for teaching in this way that students respond by doing their work. Similarly, the winemaker shows the consumer that they care about the wines the consumer is tasting, and hopefully the consumer responds by wanting to purchase wine/s from a winemaker. In addition, the winemaker loves coming to work and they display this love of work when they talk about their wines in a positive tone with the consumer. As a result, the consumer can see that the winemaker loves their wines and, therefore, may buy the winemaker’s wine/s.

The winemaker wants to convey this message of passion to the consumer because a winemaker knows that this message could possibly be mirrored by the consumer and, therefore, impact on the consumer’s continued love of wines. As for a quality teacher, Matilda illustrates from her experience, a quality teacher whose love of his subject made the “students also love the subject”.

Possibly the final comment on a quality teacher’s love for their job is best summed up by another participant Molly, when she speaks of her experience of a quality teacher:

*A quality teacher wants to be there, and you’re excited by the work that you’re doing and excited by the subject. They love being a teacher and they love teaching you can see it, they just love their job. And because you can see that they love their job the students can see that too and that’s what makes them want to work.*

Based on Molly’s statement, a quality teacher wants to be at work, is excited by their work and is excited by teaching. This open display of wanting to be at work and being excited about work impacts on their student’s work ethic in a positive way. Similarly, the winemaker loves being the winemaker and they love winemaking by being excited about
their wines. It is this display of excitement that also excites the consumer and hopefully, moves them to purchase wines.

| 1. A quality teacher has a love for teaching. | 1. A winemaker has a love for winemaking. |
| 2. A quality teacher has a passion for teaching. | 2. A winemaker has a passion for winemaking. |

Table 5.5. Comparing the graphic representations of a quality teacher and the winemaker’s love and passion for teaching.

The final category of description, that depicts a quality teacher as The Elder, is developed in the next section. This category focuses on the respect, experience, and engagement of a quality teacher and how these salient features of the conception fit the graphic representation of the winemaker.
5.4.5 Conception E: A Quality Teacher as The Elder

The final category of description to emerge from the findings portrays a quality teacher as The Elder. The use of this category of description paradoxically does not highlight that a quality teacher is an ‘old’ teacher, rather The Elder reflects a perceived status that a quality teacher has within their peer group. This status is acquired by a quality teacher through their experience, the respect a quality teacher has from students, and their capacity to engage students in learning. Hence, the conception of a quality teacher as The Elder focuses on a teacher’s capacity to achieve student outcomes that reflect a higher degree of success when compared to teachers who are not a quality teacher.

There is evidence from the literature noting aspects of a good or effective teacher, with some references to engagement, (Benekos, 2016; Duarte, 2013; Karen, 2014; Marzano, 2007; Stronge, Breaux & Whitaker, 2015). However, there is a dearth of evidence focusing on a quality teacher’s age and gender, experience, and respect. Therefore, the findings from this study adds to the current body of knowledge by highlighting that a quality teacher engages students, is respected by students, is experienced, and is of no fixed age and gender. Each of these attributes is detailed below in three stages.

Firstly, an overview of how a quality teacher is conceptualised as being experienced is presented. Secondly, the insignificance of a quality teacher’s age and gender is discussed. And thirdly, the importance of a quality teacher being respected by students and their ability to engage with these students is explored. Within the context of these attributes, links to similar attributes within a winemaker are also provided.

The findings from this study highlights that a quality teacher is experienced and this experience is demonstrated through their teaching along with their worldly, travel, and/or real life. Two participants, Molly and Bob, offered some insight into a quality teacher as a teacher with experience. Molly states that:
I just think he has a lot of ability and was probably very experienced because he has a lot of skills when it came to teaching.

Molly emphasises that a quality teacher is “very experienced” because a quality teacher “has a lot of skills when it came to teaching”. Consequently, Molly’s description highlights how participants denote that a quality teacher has experience through their teaching experience. Bob adds to Molly’s portrayal by providing a description of a Canadian teacher he had as a student. Bob describes how this teacher’s travel, and worldly experiences allowed the teacher to connect with students and impact on student learning. Bob outlines:

A quality teacher had a way of diversifying the way he taught so that each student regardless of their level did feel like they were moving forward and that they were learning something. I think that boosted everyone’s confidence. He obviously had experience – well he was from another country, he was well travelled and that made him different and that was one of the main novelties about him. He talked differently, he had all these stories about where he came from, which caused everyone to become a little bit more interested in what he had to say. We listened to him more when he talked. I guess we liked is accent, his stories.

Bob contends that due, to his teacher’s worldly and travel experiences that the students, “become a little bit more interested in what he had to say”. Therefore, Bob describes his teacher as having experience due to the teacher’s worldly and travel experiences and that these experiences impacted on students’ level of interest and engagement.

It is noteworthy that, while the data acknowledges real life, worldly, and travel experiences, participants in general recognise a quality teacher’s ‘teaching experience’ as the most significant experience. Another point of interest is the use of the category of description The Elder to focus on a quality teacher’s age and gender.
The category of description The Elder highlights that a quality teacher is not necessarily an ‘old’ or ‘young’ male or female teacher. These features of the phenomenon of a quality teacher are also reflected in the data. The descriptions of one of the participants, Harry, provide a summary of the majority of participants’ experiences of a quality teacher, when referring to age and gender. Harry highlights:

*I guess they generally have something in common about them where they’re a person, like a role model, I guess, or a person that you could actually relate to and that have influenced your life in a particular way. They’re just people who do a great job with students.*

Harry’s description indicates that a quality teacher is “a person” and there appears to be a deliberate attempt to avoid ascribing any label related to age and/or gender. While an analysis of the findings thus far indicates that a quality teacher is experienced, the findings also suggest that a quality teacher’s age and gender is not significant. Conversely, the data does indicate that years of teaching experiences are an important attribute of a quality teacher.

The findings indicate that a number of participants describe a quality teacher’s teaching experience as an important aspect of a quality teacher. However, there is some ambiguity surrounding this notion of teaching experience because the participants’ descriptions do not offer any indication of how much time actually constitutes teaching experience. Susan provides a description to help understand the ambiguity surrounding a quality teacher’s teaching experience.

Susan states from her experience:

*So quality teachers, when you see them teach, they’ve figured out their way of their learners and generally that’s because you’ve tried different ways of running things. You will see the little light bulb moments with the students where they just get it. You think oh great; you’re a visual learner. You just know then I’ve got to make sure I incorporate something like that in my lesson so that those particular students can engage and*
those particular students can succeed. A quality teacher will do that. I think they do it without even realising. They’re just so engaged and so switched on with what their kids’ needs are and what their content is that they chop and change their lessons throughout if they notice it isn’t working. Being able to do this comes from experience in teaching but you don’t have to be an old teacher to have this experience. I’ve seen young teachers, you know not that much older than me, who’d been teaching for say four or five years doing these types of things with students. I think it is got a lot to do with how much time you’re prepared, as a teacher, to put into your teaching. I really believe that quality teachers can also gain experience from hard work, like really being prepared for their classes.

Susan’s description of a quality teacher provides some initial understanding of the ambiguity surrounding a quality teacher’s teaching experience by highlighting that a quality teacher can be a “young” teacher and may have only “four or five years” of teaching experience. The tacit implication of this is that teaching experience is not limited to years of service; but also maintains a variety of elements that transcend time.

While Susan’s description highlights some initial understanding of aspects of a quality teacher’s teaching experience and age, this description also facilitates a platform to highlight some similarities between a quality teacher and a winemaker.

The winemaker has experience, and the majority of this experience is often reflected in the number of years a winemaker has been associated with the making of wine (Deep Woods, 2016; Rosemount Estate, 2016; O’Keefe, 2005; 2012). However, there is no specific time frame associated with the winemaker’s years of ‘experience in wine making’ and being acknowledged as a winemaker. This statement is developed in more detail below by focusing on Randall Cummins and Franco Biondi Santi, who are both acknowledged as winemakers with various years’ of experience.

Randall Cummins is a winemaker of some note in Australia (Rosemount Estate, 2016), being experienced in making wines and currently works as a winemaker for Rosemount Estate Wines (Rosemount
Cummins’ experience in wine making spans roughly twenty years. A brief extract outlining some of Cummins’ wine making experiences is provided below:

As a young man Cummins did not have much interest in wine making, and instead commenced his career by enrolling in a Bachelor’s Degree in Agricultural Science. However, after he completed some work experience in this field Cummins discovered that agricultural science was not of interest to him and he removed himself from the course. Cummins then took an interest in wine and began to read books on the subject, later enrolling himself in the Australian Wine Research Institute (AWRI). During his time at the AWRI Cummins worked in a number of wineries in the McLaren Valley and from there moved to The Hunter Valley where he currently works. It was in The Hunter Valley where Cummins would meet large contingents of people would come from all over the world, each with different perspectives, allowing him to broaden his knowledge and appreciation for wine. Among other things, Randall completed a vintage in California through working as part of a partnership between Rosemount Estate and Robert Modavi. Today Cummins’ making wines skills are recognised national and internationally. (Rosemount Estate, 2016)

In contrast to Cummins’ wine making experience is the wine making experience of Franco Biondi Santi, which is highlighted below:

Franco Biondi Santi’s wine making experience spanned nearly ninety years. Sadly, Santi passed away in 2013. Santi’s grandfather virtually invented Brunello di Montalcino, a Tuscan red wine and his family alone has continuously produced this wine since 1888. Santi learned wine making from his father, who in turn had learnt it from his father. Santi’s wine making experience was the result of the experiences he gained from working in the family business for nearly ninety years, and the region of Italy where he grew up as a boy. Santi even after his death he is still highly respected for his passion, and his skill in making quality wines. Santi’s legacy continues today fours after his death through the wines he produced while still alive. (O’Keefe, 2005)
While the extracts above demonstrate that there are considerable differences between Cummins’ and Santi’s years of experience in making wine, both individuals are viewed as a winemaker (Rosemount Estate, 2016; O’Keefe, 2005). However, the examples of Cummins and Santi also explain that, while there are no exact time frames associated with a Winemakers’ experience in making wine, there are ‘skills’ associated with experience that are necessary for making quality wine (Rosemount Estate, 2016; O’Keefe, 2005, 2012).

The winemaker’s skills are important because these skills assist a winemaker in the production of quality wines (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012). The nexus between the winemaker’s skills and the production of quality wines implies that a winemaker has a number of years’ experience in making quality wines (Deep Woods, 2016; Rosemount Estate, 2016). Therefore, a relationship exists between the winemaker’s skills, the production of quality wines, and their years of experience in wine making. This type of relationship is similar to that of a quality teacher, through a quality teacher’s skills, their impact on a student’s learning, and a quality teacher’s teaching experience. The relationship between a quality teacher’s skills, impact on a student’s learning, and teaching experience is developed in more detail below.

A number of participants in this study make reference to a quality teacher’s experience. However, within these references are links between a quality teachers’ teaching experience, their skills and the subsequent impact on student learning. The descriptions provided by four of the participants, Molly, Harry, Jane, and Sam, are presented below because these participants’ descriptions best articulate the important connections between experience, skills and outcomes, as constituent elements of a quality teacher.

The first of these descriptions comes from Molly where she outlines:
I just think he has a lot of ability and was probably very *experienced* because he has a lot of skill when it came to teaching. He’d been teaching for some time. I mean I think most teachers know that just copying notes from a board is kind of a boring process and you don’t really learn that much. I think students in high school they don’t really grasp things that quickly and just writing notes they probably don’t learn that much from it. So this teacher used interaction because interaction is a bit more helpful for them. If you use interaction then the students can grasp what you are saying because they can share ideas, they can talk about work in class. But to do that you really need to know your work and have the skills to get it across. You know like making sure that it does not break down into a full on rabble amongst the students. It takes a lot of ability to manage a class like that and I think that if he hadn’t of been able to do that it wouldn’t have worked as well … it would’ve have been a rabble.

Adding to Molloy’s comment Harry, described a quality teacher who, because of teaching experience, has skills that impact on student learning. Harry highlights:

*He used, I guess, types of interactive learning experiences you would expect in those kinds of environments. He had a lot of talent, he was a very talented teacher, and he had a lot skills to back up that talent. You could say he was skillful and talented but funny thing he was still fairly new to teaching, he hadn’t been teaching for a long time. I’ll pick an example, just I guess reading a passage, say in a history class, like reading out of books but then we’d actually stop and actually go back and unpack that and actually understand what exactly is the point of this, why are we doing this, and what are we actually learning from this, and what is the author actually saying here? Because he had previous *experience* doing this he was able use that type of discussion based learning that made it engaging. He had the skills to really *engage* the students. We actually had a full class discussion type of teaching that actually allowed everyone to participate and everyone to engage in that learning experience. You could say he had a talent for teaching because of his ability to *engage* students.*
Both Molly and Harry’s description of a quality teacher indicates that a quality teacher acquires skills due to teaching experience and that these skills and teaching experience are linked to an outcome.

In Molly’s case, a quality teacher has an “ability” and her teacher “was probably very experienced because he has a lot of skill when it came to teaching”. The outcomes associated with a quality teacher’s teaching experience, in Molly’s example, are skills that reflect a quality teacher’s “ability to engage students”; and therefore, students in a quality teacher’s class can “grasp” what is said in class. Harry supports and adds to Molly’s description further by also highlighting links between a quality teacher’s teaching experience, their skills, and outcomes.

Harry states that a quality teacher has skills and that a quality teacher’s skills, derived from their teaching experience, culminate in an outcome whereby, the students “participate” and “engage in that learning experience”. Further comments about a quality teacher’s teaching experience, their skills, and outcomes are also echoed by Jane and Sam.

Jane commences by following-up Harry’s comments by saying:

*Just being very clear of what your expectations are. If you say you’re going to put something on the learning place or you say you’re going to send them an email about something or say that next lesson I’m going to show you something, that you actually come prepared and do it because they remember. It’s being reliable and knowing your material, know what you’re talking about. I have struggled with that a little bit because being only a second-year teacher I’m still learning a lot as well. All the units I’m teaching this year I’ve never taught before once again, just like last year. So I’m not teaching anything the same again. When I talk with some of the more experienced teachers here and they said oh yeah, I’ve done this five years in a row and blah, blah, blah and I think God, you’d get really good at it. But, then you’d also find yourself getting – you don’t want to be boring because you’re doing the same thing every – you know whatever.*

While Sam adds to Jane’s comments by highlighting that:
A quality teacher structures things if students are struggling with a certain thing or they’re connecting with different things in the unit. Because maybe a lot of them have come from single parent families where they don’t have time to read homework and things, that you can adapt your lessons and you can adapt the way that you’re teaching to be able to accommodate for those students to help them learn better. Quality teachers don’t just come in and learn your name off the roll and walk out. They have a bit more, that comes down to the rapport thing, their personality, an ability to communicate with students – being able to communicate with students is an important skill for a quality teacher because you need to be able talk with your students so that you get to know your students better than just, you’re from this classroom and you’re in this grade. Yah, a quality teacher knows from experience having taught all types of students they’ve got to take their teaching to the next level to be able to connect with their students.

The outcomes, as expressed through the descriptions above, show that a quality teacher is able to impact on a student’s learning through “interaction with students”, “being reliable and knowing your material, know what you’re talking about”, “take their teaching to the next level to be able to connect with their students”, and by “not being boring”. In addition to these outcomes, participants detail various skills needed to assist in achieving these outcomes. The winemaker has similar experiences to those expressed above and are reflected in a winemaker’s years of experience in wine making, which demonstrates their wine making skills through the production of quality wine (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012). Therefore, possessing wine making experience alone does not automatically indicate that an individual can be described as the winemaker. This is similar with a quality teacher, in that possessing teaching experience alone does not automatically make a teacher a quality teacher.

While the findings indicate that a number of participants report a significant portion of the descriptions provided by Molly, Harry, Sam and Jane, there is also evidence suggesting a primary focus on ‘teaching
experience’ as integral to being a ‘quality teacher’. For example, Elizabeth’s description of a quality teacher provides a ‘personal reflection’ on the impact on student learning, due to Elizabeth’s lack of experience; and, therefore, her perceived lack of skill. Elizabeth’s experience highlights similar experiences from other participants and is evident when she notes that:

When I talk with some of the more experienced teachers, you know quality teachers, they said oh yeah, I’ve done this topic five years in a row and blah, blah, blah and I think God, no wonder you’d get really good at it. At the end of the day this whole question about a quality teacher can be summed up in they are experienced. They have experience in teaching, everything to do with teaching.

Elizabeth’s description suggests that a quality teacher has had opportunities to repeat aspects of learning and teaching over time and this contributes to a notion of experience. Due to Elizabeth’s lack of opportunity to hone her craft through repetition over time, she does not identify herself as having the experiences found in a quality teacher. Consequently, the more a quality teacher repeats the work, the more experiences they will have of teaching and becoming “really good”; and for Elizabeth this equates to a deficit in her quality and the implication that she is not “really good” due to her lack of teaching experience.

As noted above, Elizabeth’s description highlights that a quality teacher’s teaching experience is reflected in the repetition of work; and that by repeating ‘the work’ a quality teacher acquires teaching experience which in turn makes a quality teacher “really good”. While Elizabeth’s description assists in further understanding the links between a quality teacher’s experiences, skills and outcomes, her description also outlines a challenge in describing a quality teacher by some of the participants.

Elizabeth’s description tacitly suggests that teaching experience alone determines that a quality teacher is “really good”. There is sufficient
findings in this study, and from the literature, to indicate that teaching experience, while significant, is not the only determinate of what constitutes a quality teacher. For example, the findings in this study indicate that there are many aspects that comprise a quality teacher. One of these aspects relates to a quality teacher’s impact on a student’s learning, reflected in a number of interconnecting elements. The findings suggest that some of these elements emphasise a quality teacher’s teaching experience, matched against a quality teacher’s skills, and the impact that these two elements have on a student’s learning. Penny and Peter’s descriptions of a quality teacher are provided below because they succinctly describe this perspective within the data. Penny states that:

A particular drama teacher that I had who was inspiring for me I guess and who eventually inspired me to become a teacher. He was an experienced teacher who had been overseas for a while and then came back to teaching. He was flamboyant. He was outrageous. He was a bit of a clown at times. He was really willing to put himself out there and sometimes gain ridicule from the students because he was so out there; and willing to just be embarrassing and crazy and outlandish in order to break down our barriers, to doing that in a drama class. So by kind of breaking the rules of being civilised and things like that in the class he gave us permission to break those rules. I guess he had good teaching skills because he showed creativity and kind of because of his outlandish behaviour he opened the class up to really exploring lots of different things in a drama class in a kind of outrageous way as we wanted to eventually. This really helped us learn I guess because we enjoyed the class more. He kind of gave us free reign while still maintaining boundaries and keeping that environment safe and supportive. He’d step in where he needed to, but he gave us a lot of freedom. Particularly in senior years I’m mostly thinking about. He had a really amazing rapport with all the students and he knew them all quite well. His relationships with students were really strong. He had an enormous enthusiasm for his subject and was really passionate whenever he spoke about anything or was demonstrating anything. He had been overseas and had visited a lot of
performing places like London’s West End. So he knew a lot about acting and he would tell us about what he saw. We all did so well in his class because he was just so engaging and infectious, I guess, really.

Peter echoes aspects of Penny’s comment by discussing the attributes of a quality teacher he had in his “first year of prac” where he notes that:

I do remember in my first year of prac at school around here they – the concept – it was Grade 5 and we were doing – we were learning about governments and democracies. That’s hard to teach because the kids normally aren’t interested in that stuff. This teacher was good at his job, he had some teaching time under his belt, he was talented, and had the skills to find a way to get the concept across. What we did was – and we found that it worked really well, because all the kids just pretty much, well they all felt quite ripped off by it. But we took all their lunch boxes – this is just as a role play, took their lunch boxes and said the principal’s decided that he wants all your food and you’re not getting it back. Then from there the kids were like, well what can we do sort of thing? From there we were talking about where some societies vote and some are – there’s just that one power, one person in charge. I don’t even think they realised until the end of the lesson what had actually happened. That they had actually learned something and didn’t know that it had happened. Like in the end we told them that it was just a joke and stuff, but I guess that learning or understanding where you don’t even really know what’s happening. But you’re so immersed in it that it just – you go through and do it. I would just love to have the experience to think of things like that, like my prac teacher did. It would be great. But then again he was older than me and I’ve got no doubt that this helped him because he had done more in his life than me and had more experience in life. He could use those experiences to build on what he said in class and the kids loved it.

Both Penny and Peter’s comments, as with a number of the participants, indicate that a quality teacher’s teaching experience is associated with skills and outcomes. In Penny’s case, she acknowledges
that her drama teacher is experienced and that this experience equates to the manner in which the teacher operates his class. In addition, Penny pointedly notes that her drama teacher also applied his skills to create a classroom where students succeed. Therefore, and according to Penny, the skills that a quality teacher uses in class are important for they produce successful outcomes for the students, exemplified in her recognition of students doing well and achieving ‘good results’. Simply stated, Penny’s drama teacher had teaching experience, and from that experience her teacher had skills that he applies to achieve an outcome, which in turn shapes her conceptions of a quality teacher.

In Peter’s case, a quality teacher also has teaching experience demonstrated through skills, which the teacher applies by getting the students to “discuss government”. Similar to Penny’s drama teacher, the use of these skills by Peter’s teacher offers opportunities to achieve an outcome where students “had actually learned something and didn’t know that it had happened”. Therefore, the data supports the idea that a quality teacher’s teaching experience is important, but that teaching experience alone does not describe a quality teacher. A further exploration of Elizabeth’s experience helps to unpack this statement in more detail.

Elizabeth’s focus on repetitive teaching experiences as acknowledgement of being able to indicate that something is done really well, needs to be understood against other determinates linked to outcomes. In Elizabeth’s case, these outcomes reflect the results for student learning obtained by a quality teacher over a five-year period. In addition, these outcome/s need to be considered in the context of what the teacher does and does not have control over, and if the teacher’s actions directly relate to a student’s learning. Therefore, while a quality teacher has teaching experience, this experience should not be used as the sole determinate to describe a quality teacher. This view has some support from research into teaching quality (Cardoso, Tavares & Sin, 2015), but overall the research literature, as noted in chapter 2, does not
thoroughly address what constitutes a quality teacher. Similarly, although the winemaker may have wine making experience, this experience alone cannot be used to determine if an individual is a winemaker (O’Keefe, 2005). Another area of similarity between the winemaker and a quality teacher relates to respect. The respect that the consumer has for a winemaker is similar to the respect that students have for a quality teacher.

Respect for the winemaker’s wine plays an important part in the selling of their wines (O’Keefe, 2005, 2012). The wines produced by the winemaker vary in price, and this variation in the price of wines is one example of how the consumer respects a winemaker. The respect a consumer has for the winemaker is similar to the respect a student has for a quality teacher as evident in Elizabeth’s comments:

_There’s a lot of kids have said a few things to me. Most of the time this semester I’ve thought oh my God, everyone hates me they don’t respect me. These kids, they hate my guts and that, I don’t like that. But then these kids have come and said we really like you and they’ve been really nice and it’s confused me. I haven’t really known exactly what’s been going on to be honest a lot of the time, with regard to how I’m being perceived. I’m still learning and teachers who are quality teachers have the respect of students that I don’t have yet. I think it’s got a lot to do with me not being experienced enough for them and I don’t have their respect._

According to Elizabeth’s experience, her belief that students hate her, results from a lack of respect; and quality teachers, in turn, have the respect of their students. Similarly, a consumer’s conceptions of the winemaker’s experience may impact on their respect for that winemaker and on their conceptions of a winemaker. Concurrently, the winemaker can produce wines of varying levels of quality, and this is reflected in the cost of these wines. The winemaker allocates a unit cost to their wines, and some of these wines are quite expensive. Two examples of a winemaker’s allocation of unit costs for expensive wines is reflected in
$4,367 for a single bottle *Krankl’s Black and Blue*, and $2,556 for a bottle of *Screaming Eagle Cabernet Sauvignon* (Ashcroft, 2015). Even though the above wines are expensive, the consumer implicitly acknowledges their respect for the winemaker through acknowledging the quality of the wine and by purchasing the wine for that price. The consumer respects the winemaker due to their wine making experience, and a capacity to make quality wines. Similarly, students respect a quality teacher due to their teaching experience, and their capacity to impact on a student’s learning. While, experiences and respect are viewed as important features of the conception The Elder by the participants, another feature of equal significance is engagement. The next focus on a quality teacher relates to engagement. This focus emphasises a quality teacher’s capacity to engage students, and, as a result, facilitate a student’s learning. An unpacking of a quality teacher’s capacity to engage students and facilitate a student’s learning as an outcome of engagement is initially reflected in a comment from Clyde.

Clyde’s comment addresses a quality teacher’s engagement by focusing on the adverse effects of a teacher failing to engage with students, as a result of things the teacher said, and the implications of this on the learning of these students.

Clyde states:

*One of the teachers that we have over here, he said a student is like a spear-chucker, like an Aboriginal boy that would – because he asked him one time and the boy was quite honest. He was like, no, I’m throwing spears at you. The kids did not like him. The teacher never really found a way to make the students like him. Any chance that he had at having some type of a relationship with his students was dead because of that comment. He also makes you feel – he tends to talk quite a bit and makes you feel stupid rather than bringing out the best in you. And because of this the kids just don’t want to learn they really just disengaged and they didn’t learn anything. I think that’s what a quality teacher does is try to bring out the best in the students. A quality teacher connects*
with their students because it also brings out the best in the teacher.

Matilda also echoes the importance of a teacher engaging students by referring to a quality teacher she has experienced and notes that:

A teacher who is not a quality teacher struggles to get – well, not everyone, but – struggles to sort of get to that point where they’re having less behavioural issues because they are able to engage with the students and able to then concentrate more on deepening the relationships with the students and allowing that learning process to take place and occur in a more productive way. I don’t know if I’ve used the right words there to hit on what I’m trying to say but...

Darren’s experience backs up Matilda’s and further highlights the importance of engagement. Darren says:

If a quality teacher thinks it’s not functioning well and the students are not on task, they’ve disengaged from the work, you’re going to say, okay, hang on, I’m going to have [a word to] the parts that aren’t working and get them back on task because the kids obviously don’t understand and are not learning. If everything is running well then great you just keep moving on with the lesson content or the work that you’re doing, focusing on those sorts of things.

Finally, Sam succinctly describes a quality teacher’s focus on engaging students, because engagement facilitates student learning through enjoyment. Sam outlines:

Okay so my concept of a quality teacher would be an engaging and knowledgeable teacher who is approachable. I think that is really important, having a good rapport with the students and how you approach tasks because the students will want to learn, they will enjoy the lesson.
While the experiences of Clyde, Matilda, Darren, and Sam have been outlined above to highlight the importance of engaging students, their experiences also represent a number of similar experiences from other participants in this study, and, to some degree, their notions of engagement overlap other conceptions discussed earlier. However, engagement in itself is significant and representative of an important aspect of being ‘The Elder’. The remaining focus of this chapter relates to outlining a summary of the categories of description and outcome space, the findings from this research, the implications for research, and a conclusion to this study through reviewing this story.
5.5 A summary of the categories of description and outcome space

This section concludes the winemaker as a graphical representation of a quality teacher, and the findings associated with this study. A graphical representation of a quality teacher is provided as the outcome space, and the findings associated with this study have been outlined.

The graphical representation of a quality teacher as the winemaker was developed from the five categories of description outlined in chapter 4. These five categories of description reflect the conceptions that twenty-five Queensland early career teachers hold about a quality teacher based on their individual experiences. From these five categories of description, an outcome space, as represented as the winemaker, is presented as a graphical representation of a quality teacher; and as prescribed within a phenomenographic methodology (refer to Figure 1).

While the outcome space is an important element of a phenomenographic study, equally important are the implications derived from the findings highlighted in this chapter. The next section addresses the implications of the findings from this study. To assist in this task, the graphic is discussed in part and then as a whole. A discussion of the graphic is provided in conjunction with further insights derived from the conceptions of a quality teacher, as held by Queensland early career teachers.

5.6 The findings from this research

A number of findings have been highlighted as a result of this study. This study outlined five categories of description of a quality teacher which represent the conceptions of a quality teacher held by the participants. These categories of description were organised into The Knowledgeable One, The Architect of Understanding, The Facilitator of Relationships, The Affective One, and finally, The Elder. The research
literature tended to reinforce a number of the salient features of some of the conceptions highlighted in the findings. However, some additional knowledge was uncovered which provides greater insights into conceptions of a quality teacher.

The findings associated with the conceptions of a quality teacher as The Architect of Understanding and The Facilitator of Relationships revealed that the salient features of the conceptions mirrored some of the research literature emphasising that quality teachers need to focus on student understanding in addition to the important role that relationships with students played in student learning (Bollough, 2010; Cohen & Brown, 2016; Hanushek, 2010; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2010; Hattie, 2009; Sawchuk, 2011; Puhan, Malla, & Behera, 2014). However, while the remaining conceptions also reflected earlier studies, the findings from this study outlined additional information relating to the conceptions of The Knowledgeable One, The Affective One, and The Elder. An exploration of these findings is provided below.

The conception of a quality teacher as The Knowledgeable One highlights that a quality teacher has knowledge and that this knowledge is reflected in content knowledge, student knowledge and planning knowledge. The research literature also emphasises the need for a teacher to have student and planning knowledge but in addition often emphasises the need for a teacher to have depth of content knowledge (AITSL, 2011; Barr, 2012; Breaux & Whitaker, 2013; Caldwell, 2012; Craven, 2014; Hattie, 2009; Marzano, 2007; Masters, 2009). The emphasis that the research literature places on a depth of content knowledge for the teacher reflects a priority for a teacher to be cognisant of the knowledge associated with their subject areas. The research literature therefore, places an importance on the need for teachers to have a depth of knowledge in their subject areas. The findings from this study questions the depth of content knowledge that a teacher is required to have in their subject area/s. This study’s findings indicate that a quality teacher’s content knowledge can vary from ‘in-depth’ or
substantive to being acquired the day before a lesson. Subsequently, while a depth of content knowledge is often portrayed as important for teaching and learning outcomes, this is not reflected in the conceptions of a quality teacher held by the participants of this study. Another area of focus from the findings for this study is a quality teacher’s love and passion for teaching which is identified through the conception The Affective One.

With respect to The Affective One, the research literature often denotes teachers as having a love and passion for teaching (Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kaleihnez; 2008; Hattie, 2009). In addition, the research literature also outlines that through this love and passion for teaching a teacher impacts on the learning of students (Hattie, 2009). While the research literature focuses on a teacher’s love and passion for teaching this study’s findings not only acknowledge a teacher’s love and passion for teaching but also a teacher’s love and passion for particular subjects that they teach. The findings from this study highlight that a quality teacher has a love and passion for what they are teaching, and not just for the teaching they do. Therefore, the emphasis that this study’s findings place on a teacher’s love and passion goes beyond teaching, as a profession or vocation, and includes the subjects that a quality teacher engages with each day. The conception of a quality teacher as The Elder is another significant finding from this study.

The research literature echoes a number of links with conceptions of a quality teacher as The Elder (see for example, Benekos, 2016; Duarte, 2013; Gipps, McCallum, & Hargraves, 2016; Goh, 2014). However, one of the important findings from this study that adds to these links is that a quality teacher’s teaching experience is not the only experience that should be considered when focusing on a teacher’s quality. The findings from this study suggests that a quality teacher is not necessarily a by-product of years of teaching experience. Indeed, the findings identify that there are other experiences, in conjunction with their teaching experience, which contribute to conceptions of a quality teacher.
Therefore, while this study recognises that teaching experience can be an important element in determining teacher quality the findings from this study indicate that a quality teacher’s experience is not isolated to teaching experience or years of teaching but also to experiences associated with life, the world and travel. Finally, the findings from this study also outline an association between a quality teacher’s knowledge and how a quality teacher applies that knowledge.

The research literature outlines challenges associated with definitions of teacher quality, teaching quality, and a quality teacher (Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kleinhenz, 2012; Elliott, 2015; Tomazin, 2011; Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2011). One of these challenges is the use of the terms ‘teacher quality’ and ‘teaching quality’ by researchers (Cochran-Smith, 2016; Hamid, Hassan, & Ismail, 2012; Okoye, Momoh, Aigbomian, & Okecha, 2008; Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2011). Definitions for teacher quality and teaching quality tend to be very broad and sometimes the two terms are used within the same context and synonymously (Kennedy, 2008; Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2010). The findings from this study suggest that teacher quality and teaching quality are two distinctly different concepts. These two different concepts are highlighted in teacher quality focusing on a teacher’s knowledge, while teaching quality indicates how a teacher applies that knowledge. A teacher’s knowledge represents all the knowledge that a teacher brings to the classroom to impact on students learning, including teacher qualifications, experiences, information about students, and knowledge of pedagogy. Teaching quality, however, refers to how a teacher applies all that knowledge in the classroom to impact on student learning. Therefore, the concepts of teacher quality and teaching quality are two distinct qualities and should not be used in the same text and synonymously. This final point brings an end to outlining the findings from this study. To assist the reader in obtaining an overview of these findings, which will give some clarity to the implications for these findings, a summary of the findings from this study is highlighted below.
Altogether, it is evident that there are challenges associated with earlier definitions for teacher quality, teaching quality and a quality teacher. In addition to such challenges, the demarcation of what constitutes a quality teacher is equally problematic in previous studies that have set out to make any determination of what constitutes the quality of teachers and by association what constitutes a quality teacher. However, the findings from this study provide insights into conceptions of a quality teacher. These insights emphasise that a quality teacher has content knowledge but that this content knowledge need not be as in-depth or broad as articulated in previous work in this area. Additionally, while a teacher’s love and passion for teaching plays an important role in student learning it is also a teacher’s love and passion for their subject that has an impact on student learning. Also, a teacher’s years of experience, which is used by some researchers in helping to determine a teacher’s quality is not given the same measure of importance by the participants of this study. This is a significant departure from current policy and education rhetoric which tends to emphasise years in a classroom as a benchmark of experience and by association attributes of a quality teacher. Moreover, conceptions of a quality teacher as identified through the data recognise the importance of life, worldly and travel experiences. These experiences are viewed as integral to student learning. Finally, while there continues to be debates surrounding definitions for teacher quality and teaching quality and differing views about what constitutes teacher quality and teaching quality the findings from this research contribute to this discussion by providing new insights into what constitutes a quality teacher. These findings are discussed in greater depth in the next section of this chapter which focuses on the implications of the research.
5.7 Implications for research

The initial research questions of this study were: *What are Queensland early career teachers’ experiences of a quality teacher? And, how do Queensland early career teachers describe their experiences of a quality teacher?* Importantly, an aim of the research was to generate knowledge and understanding about Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher. The findings, based on the initial questions above, has provided new knowledge and understanding of a quality teacher. This section of the chapter outlines the implications of this new knowledge and understanding with a particular focus on Queensland and then in a broader context. This focus on Queensland and beyond is detailed across three sections. First, it draws on conclusions about the conceptions held by Queensland early career teachers and reiterates key findings about a quality teacher before exploring the implications for future research and practice. The second implication of the findings from this study relates to a contribution to the current body of knowledge which is weaved within the fabric of the discussion. Finally, the third impact of the findings from this study reflects upon the research aim, in view of the research questions and outcomes. To that end, the implications of the findings begin with reflections on the research questions, aims and outcomes of the research.

The implications of the research that have emerged include the aforementioned focus on a quality teacher’s content knowledge, the importance placed on a quality teacher’s worldly, life and travel experiences, and expanding on a quality teacher’s love and passion for their subject area/s. Each of these three areas are discussed in more detail below. The first area to be unpacked is a focus on a quality teacher’s content knowledge.

The research that focuses on teacher content knowledge emphasises the need for teachers to have a depth of content knowledge. The findings from this study indicate that while content knowledge is
important, the depth of content knowledge required by a quality teacher is not reflected in the conceptions held by participants in this study. This study recognises that while content knowledge is deemed to be important in teacher education courses as noted in the literature, one of the implications of this is that an emphasis on content knowledge may be having an adverse effect on a teacher’s capacity to deliver that content effectively.

The literature notes concerns about a shortfall in equipping graduates with evidence based teaching strategies and skills to respond to different student learning needs. This knowledge is referred to as pedagogical content knowledge. The findings from this study indicate that while content knowledge is important a quality teacher’s ability to apply that knowledge within a classroom setting is equally, or more, important. An over emphasis on content knowledge, at the expense of not equipping graduates with skills and teaching strategies to respond differently to student learning may be the reason behind graduates failing to address this shortfall (Craven, 2014). Moreover, an emphasis on content knowledge may also be a contributing factor to various notions of ‘experience’ that are prized by some researchers and bureaucrats alike.

Teacher quality, as outlined by some of the current research literature, tends to focus mainly on a teacher’s years of teaching experience coupled with teacher qualifications (Barr, 2012; Breaux & Whitaker, 2013; Caldwell, 2012; Craven, 2014; Hattie, 2009). The findings from this study suggest that a quality teacher is not just a product of their years in a classroom where more years may be interpreted as a measure of quality. The findings of this study suggest that worldly, life and travel experiences are also constituent elements of a quality teacher as such experiences provide a quality teacher the platform for positively engaging students and their learning.

While it would be difficult to employ someone as a teacher based on their life, travel and worldly experiences, it is clear from the findings in this study that these experiences are important elements of
conceptions of a quality teacher. Concurrently, the findings from this study also indicate that conceptions of a quality teacher held by the participants do not place any significance on a teacher’s age or gender; quality teachers may be young or old, male or female, or any combination of each. Conversely, something of significance emerging from the findings relates to a quality teacher’s love and passion for their subjects.

As noted above, an important finding from this study notes that a quality teacher has a love and a passion for their subject in addition to a love and a passion for teaching. This finding suggests that simply having a love and a passion for teaching needs to be coalesced with a love and a passion for what is being taught. It is a quality teacher’s capacity to display their love and passion for their subject that helps to engage students. Perhaps this is a constituent element of a popular debate around whether teaching is an art or a science whereby the science of teaching encapsulates a love or passion for teaching and the art of teaching embodies a love or passion for the subject taught. While arguably rather esoteric in description, a love and passion for particular subject matter is often overlooked as a factor for planning and curriculum decision making in schools. Instead, aspiring new teachers and various employing bodies often engage in discussions about a love and passion for teaching; an important consideration but according to the findings of this study one that should not be considered in isolation. The next section below outlines the implications for the findings from this research on Queensland teachers, in addition to a broader context. The reader should note that implications for a broader context reflect those contexts outside of Queensland. While this study was conducted in Queensland the knowledge that the findings from this study highlights could be used to assist in understanding and helping to improve the quality of teachers both in Queensland and much broader contexts. However, it is important for the reader to note that the researcher strongly advocates that any further application of this study’s findings outside of Queensland should reflect not simply cherry picking possible success stories from the
findings of this study. The researcher instead advocates that the findings from this study are built upon by further research conducted within these broader educational contexts. The first implication that this research focuses on is content knowledge.

The findings from this study highlight that content knowledge has a part to play in a quality teacher’s knowledge but that this knowledge may not need to be as in depth as the literature indicates. While it is important for Queensland teachers to have content knowledge this needs to be balanced against other knowledge, for example, pedagogical, which Queensland teachers require to respond to the differences in student learning needs. The findings from this study suggest that Queensland teachers require some level of content knowledge coupled with teaching knowledge so that Queensland teachers are better placed to impact on student learning. This focus on addressing the level of Queensland teacher’s content knowledge, and emphasising a focus on teaching knowledge can also applied to the broader context of teacher education.

Another area of interest relates to a quality teacher’s experience and impact that this has on Queensland teachers. The findings from this research highlights a key points about a quality teacher’s experience. This key point is that while a quality teacher’s teaching experience does play a role in determining a teacher’s quality additional experiences that a quality teacher has also helps in determining a quality teacher. The implication of this findings for Queensland teachers is provided below.

One of the key determinates in a teacher’s quality, with respect to Queensland, relates to a teacher’s years of service. Queensland teachers are paid via incremental wage increases over the first nine years of teaching. Therefore, all first year teachers are paid the same wage because they only have one year of teaching experience. As the teacher acquires more years for teaching experience their wage increases until their ninth year where it stops and wage increase only are the result of government action. The findings from this study suggest that while years of teaching experience are necessary for a quality teacher there are also
the added experiences that a quality teacher brings to teaching, which add weight to a quality teacher’s ability to impact on student learning. These added experiences as highlighted by the findings from this study include worldly, travel and real life. While it would be unreasonable to include life, travel and worldly experiences in negotiations determining a Queensland teacher’s wage it would not be unreasonable to encourage and facilitate ways in which Queensland teachers can travel, experience more of life and see the world. The findings from this study indicate that teachers who have these added experiences can use them to engage with students and impact on their learning. Therefore, encouraging Queensland teachers to gain experiences beyond teaching experiences would assist Queensland teachers with engaging and impacting on student learning. Again, similar suggestions to the one outlined directly above could also be applied to a broader educational context. The final implication for Queensland teachers relates to a quality teacher having a love and a passion for their subject.

The literature focuses on teachers having a love and passion for teaching. However, the findings from this study indicate that a quality teacher not only has a love and passion for teaching but also a love and passion for their subject. This finding has number of implications for Queensland teachers.

One of the challenges for Queensland teachers is when they are posted to rural centres there can be a shortage of suitability qualified teachers to teach specific subjects. This situation is reflected in an English teacher, for example, being expected to teach Geography or Modern History when their subject areas are English and Drama. The implications for Queensland teachers from this study’s findings is that this will have an impact on student learning. The important focus here is that the teacher in this scenario may have a love of teaching but what is also of significance is their love of what they are teaching. The findings from this study indicate that while a teacher may have a passion and a love for teaching it is also important that a teacher has a passion and
love for their subject area. A quality teacher has both a love and a passion for teaching in addition to a love and a passion for what they are teaching which impacts on student learning. Therefore, having a teacher teach outside of their teaching area, even though they may have a love and a passion for teaching, may not have the desired impact on student learning. Another are of implications for Queensland teachers relates to Queensland primary school teachers who are required to teach across a number of subject areas.

While Queensland primary school teachers may love and have a passion for teaching it may be challenging for Queensland primary school teacher to have a love and passion for each of the subject areas that they are expected to teach. Therefore, to assist Queensland primary school teachers with the delivery of subjects that they may not love and have a passion for there needs to be greater cooperation or cross teaching within primary schools to have teachers who are passionate and have a love for a particular subject area to teach students. The findings from this study suggest that this would have an impact on student learning outcomes. As previously outlined above the findings from this study could also be applied to broader educational contexts whereby, similar focuses could be applied to address those contexts. This concludes the section on the implications for this research on Queensland teachers and the final section of chapter 5 deals with a review of this study.

5.8 Conclusion: Reviewing this story

From the commencement of this study, the researcher has endeavoured to provide an academic based study on a quality teacher, couched in the narrative of a story. As is reflected in the focus of a phenomenographic study, the researcher assumed the role of a storyteller from the beginning, and has tried to capture the experiences of Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of the phenomenon of a quality teacher.
This study has been an investigation of twenty-five Queensland early career teachers’ experiences of a quality teacher. The primary focus of this study was to qualitatively uncover the different ways in which the phenomenon of a quality teacher is experienced and understood by the participants. From the outset, the researcher believed that Queensland early career teachers would be able to assist in the development of this research story by describing their experiences of a quality teacher. The researcher was able to use these descriptions to answer the research questions set out at the beginning of the study. The descriptions also uncovered five qualitatively different ways in which the phenomenon of a quality teacher is experienced and understood by Queensland early career teachers.

The idea for this research was originally conceived by the researcher from both his professional and personal experiences as a teacher, as explained in chapter 1. A review of the literature in chapter 2 assisted in reinforcing the researcher’s motivation for conducting research on notions of a quality teacher and the use of early career teachers as participants in that research. Chapter 3 argued the suitability of phenomenography as the research method of choice, and as the most suitable methodology for uncovering Queensland early career teacher’s conceptions. Chapter 3 also reinforced the claim that phenomenography could best uncover the conceptions of Queensland early career teachers, due to this study’s emphasis on human experiences and the challenges posed by quantitative frameworks to readily measure human experiences (Teach, 1990).

The focus of this study was to provide the descriptions of the experiences of Queensland early career teachers whereby their conceptions where described through categories of description, and presented in the form of a graphic of the outcome space. The purpose of providing a graphic is to offer a graphic representation of the totality of the anatomy of awareness (Marton & Booth, 1997) held by Queensland early career teachers about the phenomenon of a quality teacher. The
researcher also mapped the outcome space so that the range of conceptions that Queensland early career possess are representative of their experiences of a quality teacher. The mapping process, and the graphic developed from this process, provide the reader with an opportunity to understand the experiences of Queensland early career teachers within a structural framework, one that assists in the clarification and simplification of the phenomenon being studied. However, and as conveyed in chapter 3, the nature of phenomenographical studies is to present findings that are broad and generalised. Therefore, there are limitations to the findings associated with the study.

First, one of the major limitations is associated with the design surrounding the investigation and research process. Svensson (1994) argued that with respect to phenomenography, a phenomenon always exists in a context and that there are a limited number of different ways in which a phenomenon could exist within that context. Therefore, this study investigated Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher; and, as such, this study emphasised a Queensland quality teacher from the perspectives of early career teachers, from Queensland. The conceptions of a quality teacher, within this research, were those of a specific group of early career teachers from a specific western cultural education system. Had this study been conducted in another part of the world, a different set of categories of description may have emerged. In addition, the data from this study is limited to Queensland early career teachers who, as highlighted in chapter 2, represents a specific group of teachers from Queensland. Again, if a different group of teachers had been selected as participants for this research, then the data could have reflected different experiences. However, this limitation does not diminish the value of this research as the focus of this study was to uncover knowledge that was relevant and contextualised to Australia. Given that research focusing on a quality teacher is important, based on the literature review outlined in chapter
2, this study could be built upon with future Australian research (Dinham, 2010). Therefore, the limitations outlined above highlight simply a contextualisation of this study to assist future researchers who may wish to build on this research.

Second, there may be some critique of this study’s overall reliability and trustworthiness. A phenomenographic study, which is a representation of the research conducted above, maintains a number of assumptions and these assumptions were noted and addressed in chapter 3. This study does not provide an understanding of a quality teacher based on the certainty of the findings provided by this study; but, instead, this study provides a social construction of the various interpretations of the phenomenon of a quality teacher.

This study has attempted to provide a social construct of our understanding of the conceptions of a quality teacher described by a group of teachers from Queensland, who are in their early years of teaching. The study itself not only adds to the existing literature but also provides further opportunities for research. Therefore, the researcher believes that, while Queensland early career teachers have provided an opportunity to know more about a quality teacher, there is still much more to know.
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APPENDIX 1

Initial development of categories of descriptions and salient features of the conceptions of A Quality Teacher

- **Knowledge** – know things, student, pedagogy, needs to be done, how it will be done, the third eye can see things.

- **Social Responsibility** – educate the next generation

- **Corporate EQ** – rules, routines, organized, manages student behaviour, job

- **Personal** – love, passion, helping, not wanting to disappoint (how others see you) giving of time, professional in job and students

- **Performer** – showing, demonstrating, engaging (teacher) (student), communicator making sure that students understand.

- **Relationship Builder** – caring, time giver, likeability, trust, respect

- **Experience** – time in the job, being able to see things
Example of a coded interview transcript

Interviewee: Yeah. I think they (a quality teacher) have to ask questions which are important and which are central. The questions have to be at the right level. They (a quality teacher) can’t be too difficult but they (a quality teacher) have to be just appropriate for the students. *(Questions that have significance – important. Set at the right level for students. Developing work that meets the needs of students.)* *(Understand students)*

Interviewee: I mean like they (a quality teacher) have to use language that’s kind of simple enough. That’s not too technical. *(Setting work to student level.)* *(Understand students)*

Interviewee: That they (a quality teacher) obviously understand quite a lot about students

Interviewee: They (a quality teacher) want students understand and if students don’t understand and what they (a quality teacher) need to do in order to actually teach. *(Understand students)*
APPENDIX 3

Participants consent form

CONSENT FORM FOR USC RESEARCH PROJECT

Early Career Teacher Conceptions of a Quality Teacher; A Phenomenographic Study

USC Ethics Approval Number HREC: S/12/400

Researcher: Tony Richardson PhD Student The University of the Sunshine Coast

Senior Supervisor: Michael Nagel Associate Professor The University of the Sunshine Coast

Please contact Tony Richardson if you have any questions or require further information about the project. Mobile 04 007 065 42 or Email t_r028@student.usc.edu.au

Statement of Consent

Signing below indicates that:

● I have read, understood and kept the information document regarding this project

● I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction

● I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team

● I understand that I can freely withdraw from the project, at any time, without comment or penalty

● I understand that if I have any complaints about the way the research project is being conducted I can raise them with the Principal Research Officer, or if I prefer an independent person, I can contact the Chairperson of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Sunshine Coast: (c/- the Research Ethics Officer,
Queensland early career teachers’ conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

Office of Research, University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore DC 4558; Telephone (07) 5459 4574 or facsimile (07) 5430 1177; email humanethics@usc.edu.au

- I agree to participate in the project

Name ____________________________________________

Signature _______________________________________

Date ____________________________________________

Please return this sheet to t_r028@student.usc.edu.au (scan and send)
Subject – Research Approval from (please place your full name after “from”)
For example: Subject: Research Approval from Sue Smith
APPENDIX 4

Over view of research for participants

Research Project Information Sheet – HREC: S/12/400

Early Career Teacher Conceptions of a Quality Teacher; A Phenomenographic Study

This study is designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of Early Career teacher conceptions of a quality teacher. It investigates the conceptions that Early Career teachers have about their understanding of a quality teacher and examines and interprets those understandings. Thus, this study examines, in a descriptive fashion, the knowledge bases upon which an Early Career teacher draws on to articulate conceptions of a quality teacher within their work environment.

The study is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy, in Education, for The University of the Sunshine Coast. I aim to interview 20 – 25 Early Career teachers.

You are invited to participate because you can help the research to possibly uncover what conceptions of a quality teacher have been experienced by Early Career teachers.

You do not have to participate in this study. If at the start you choose to participate, and then you no longer wish to, that is fine. You can stop participating at any time without saying why and without any penalty. Your decision to participate, or not participate, will in no way impact upon your current or future relationship with USC.

The method of research that I will use is referred to as phenomenographic research. This research focuses on engaging
individuals in a one-to-one interview. Most interviews run for a maximum of 60 minutes, will be conducted on site and are developed through open ended questioning. The initial question that will be asked of you will be, “Could you please describe your experience/s of a quality teacher?” From there, similar type open ended questions will be asked of you. The purpose of the questioning is to encourage a discussion with the participant that will allow the researcher to paint a picture of the participant’s breadth and depth of experience/s associated with a quality teacher. Hence, there are no right or wrong responses, only examples of possible experiences.

I will be using two methods to record the responses of each participant. First, I will be taking long hand notes, written into a notebook. Second, I will be using a digital recording device to record the interview. Based on the data obtained from both these applications I will then produce a transcript of each interview. Participants will be invited to review and comment on their transcript to ensure the quality and accuracy of the data. It will be here that the verification of the content, contained within these transcripts, can be undertaken.

If you choose to participate you will be invited to fill out a consent form acknowledging your stated intention to be a participant in this study.

All comments and responses are anonymous and will be treated confidentially. The names of individual participants are not required in any response and your anonymity is protected by the use of code identifiers. In this way only the researcher, Tony Richardson; who will conduct the interviews, knows who the participants are. Added to this, only members of the research team will have access to the interview recordings and transcriptions; which are protected by use of code identifiers. The study has been funded by The University of the Sunshine Coast and the university will not have access to personally identifying information about you that may be obtained during the research.
Queensland early career teachers' conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

If you choose to be a participant a copy of the thesis will be forwarded to you, if requested.

If you would like to be a participant in this research could you please contact me, Tony Richardson, via my USC email address t_r028@student.usc.edu.au. From this contact I can make the necessary arrangements with you, if that is acceptable with you, to collect your forms and answer any questions that you may have about the research.

If during the course of this research you have any questions or require further information about the project please contact Tony Richardson – The University of the Sunshine Coast Email t_r028@student.usc.edu.au or Mobile 04 007 065 42 or Associate Professor Michael Nagel – The University of the Sunshine Coast Email MNagel@usc.edu.au Phone (07) 5459 4402.

If during the course of the research participants have any complaints about the way the research project is being conducted they can raise them with the Principal Research Officer, or if they prefer an independent person, they can contact the Chairperson of the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of the Sunshine Coast: (c/-the Research Ethics Officer, Office of Research, University of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore DC 4558; Telephone (07) 5459 4574 or facsimile (07) 5430 1177; email humanethics@usc.edu.au

The researchers, Tony Richardson and Associate Professor Michael Nagel, in conjunction with the University of the Sunshine Coast, would like to thank you for your time and possible participation.

Tony Richardson (Researcher)
APPENDIX 5

Education Queensland approval

28 July, 2012

Mr Tony Richardson
449 Bunya Road
Eumundi Qld 4562

Dear Tony

Thank you for your application seeking approval to conduct research entitled "First Year Teacher Conceptions of a Quality Teacher: A Phenomenographic Study" in North Coast Region. I wish to advise that your application has been approved.

This approval means that you can approach Principals of the schools in the North Coast Region nominated in your application and invite them to participate in your research project. As detailed in the department’s research guidelines:

- You need to obtain consent from the relevant Principals before your research project can commence.

- Principals have the right to decline participation if they consider that the research will cause undue disruption to educational programs in their schools.

- Principals have the right to monitor any research activities conducted in their facilities and can withdraw their support at any time.

This approval is conditionally granted on your compliance with the department’s standard terms and conditions of approval to conduct research, which are available at http://education.qld.gov.au/corporate/research/terms_conditions.doc

At the conclusion of your study, you are required to provide a summary of your research results and any published paper resulting from this study to this Regional Office and to participating Principals.

Please note that this letter constitutes approval to invite Principals to participate in the research project as outlined in your research application. This approval does not imply official departmental endorsement of any aspect of a research project or support for the general and/or commercial use of an intervention or curriculum program, software program or other enterprise being developed or evaluated as part of your research.

Should you require further information on the research application process, please contact John Wood, Principal Education Officer (School Improvement) on telephone 5459 9149 or email john.wood@dete.qld.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Greg Peach
Regional Director
North Coast Region
Queensland early career teachers' conceptions of a quality teacher: A phenomenographic study.

APPENDIX 6

Ethics approval

Mr Tony Richardson
A/Prof Michael Nagel
Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering

Dear Tony and Michael

Expeditied ethics approval for research project: First Year Teacher Conceptions of a Quality Teacher; A Phenomenographic study (S/12/400)

This letter is to confirm that on 31 May 2012, following review of the application for ethics approval of the research project, First Year Teacher Conceptions of a Quality Teacher; A Phenomenographic study (S/12/400), the Chairperson of the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Sunshine Coast granted conditional expedited ethics approval for the project.

The Human Research Ethics Committee will review the Chairperson's grant of approval and the conditions of approval at its next meeting and, should there be any variation of the conditions of approval, you will be informed as soon as practicable.

The period of ethics approval is from the date the specific condition of approval is satisfied to 20 April 2013.

Could you please note that the ethics approval number for the project is HREC: S/12/400. This number should be quoted in your Research Project Information Sheet and in any written communication when you are recruiting participants.

The specific condition of approval for this project is that you obtain approval through Education Queensland and (if used) approval of principals of private schools.

Please note that this letter of ethics approval can be used to gain the above approvals. Please provide evidence of Education Queensland approval before commencing this research, but there is no need to provide approvals from individual principals.

The standard conditions of ethics approval are listed on page 3.

If you have any queries in relation to this ethics approval or if you require further information please contact the Research Ethics Officer by email at humanethics@usc.edu.au or by telephone on +61 7 5459 4574.

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Facsimile: +61 7 5430 1111  Locked Bag 4  MAROOCHYDORE DC QLD 4558
90 SIPPY DOWNS DRIVE  SIPPY DOWNS QLD 4556  AUSTRALIA

I wish you well with the success of your project.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Palmer
Manager, Office of Research
APPENDIX 7

Principal approval form

Approval to Conduct Research

The University of the Sunshine Coast Ethical Clearance number HREC: S/12/400

Catholic Education Approval Granted

I write to ask for approval to conduct research within your school.

The title of my dissertation is: "First Year Teacher Conceptions of a Quality Teacher: A Phenomenographic Study."

The research focus on FIRST YEAR Teachers only who are currently employed in a FULL - TIME capacity at your school.

This study is designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of first year teacher conceptions of a quality teacher. It investigates the conceptions that first year teachers have about their understanding of a quality teacher and examines and interprets those understandings. Thus, this study examines, in a descriptive fashion, the knowledge bases upon which first year teachers draw on to articulate conceptions of a quality teacher within their work environment.

The study is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy, in Education, for The University of the Sunshine Coast. It aims to interview 20 – 25 first year teachers currently employed, in schools, on full-time basis.

Attached are the participant and consent forms that are associated with this study.

There are two consent forms, one for the principal and the other for the participant.

The process that I would like to follow is highlighted through: As Principal, you first consent to the research being conducted in your school; acknowledged via Principal's consent form. Please place this form in the envelope provided and it will be returned to me via my home address. If you approve this research I would request that you contact your first year teacher/s and pass on to them both the participant detail and consent form. These forms have been
placed in the envelope/s provided and marked “Attention First Year Teacher”. Copies of these forms have been attached for you also marked “Attention Principal”. If the first year teacher/s agree/s to participate in the research they can contact me via my Education Queensland email address – trich201@eq.edu.au. After this contact has been made I will make arrangements to meet with each teacher to collect their forms and to answer any questions. If after this meeting the first year teacher would still like to participate then I’ll make arrangements, with them, to conduct their interview.

I would greatly appreciate any assistance that could be given in helping to facilitate this study. My contact details are Tony Richardson C/- The University of the Sunshine Coast;
Mobile contact 04 097 065 42 emails trich201@eq.edu.au or t_r028@student.usc.edu.au

Warm regards

Tony Richardson