

**The Goals, Values and Strategies of
Art School Lecturers in Scotland**

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Art School Lecturer in Context	4
1. Defining Quality in an Art School	4
2. The Role of the Contemporary Art School Lecturer	5
3. Theoretical Frameworks	8
1. Introduction	8
2. Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory	8
3. Hase and Kenyon's Self-Determined Learning Theory.....	10
4. Brockbank and McGill's Evolutionary Coaching.....	12
5. Multi-theoretical Approach	14
5.1 <i>SDT, SDL and Evolutionary Coaching in the Art School</i>	16
4. Methodological Approaches.....	18
1. Research Design.....	18
2. Method: Structured Interviews.....	19
2.1 <i>Interview Questions</i>	21
3. Analysis	21
4. Ethical Considerations.....	22
5. Discussion	23
1. Participant Overview	23
2. Academic Concerns and the Curriculum.....	23
2.1 <i>Participant Responses</i>	23
2.2 <i>Theoretical Lens</i>	25

3. Subjectivity and Agency	26
3.1 <i>Participant Responses</i>	26
3.2 <i>Theoretical Lens</i>	29
4. The Developing Art Lecturer	30
4.1 <i>Participant Responses</i>	30
4.2 <i>Theoretical Lens</i>	32
6. Conclusions.....	34
1. Limitations.....	34
2. Conclusions	34
7. References.....	39
8 Appendix 1 – Interview Questions	47

1. Introduction

In 1993, I graduated from a Scottish Art School with the intention of making a career as a professional artist. Two years later, I took a freelance role in a higher education institution (HEI), going on to teach scenic art and theatre design for 18 years, before making the transition to my current role as the head of a programme that supports the professional development of arts educators. As a lecturer, I was conscious I was teaching ‘applied’ arts, focused less on the discovery of individual voice and more on servicing the needs of a particular production. As the designer’s starting point is a play, operatic libretto or musical theatre score, and the scenic artist works from the designer’s model, I have never had a role to support students to engage with a creative process where the starting point was their own imagination and motivation.

As an art student, I had extensive freedom to explore my own creative expression, engaging with a literal and figurative blank canvas, however, the lack of learning outcomes, assessment criteria, assessment feedback or indeed lecturer contact, meant that there was no information on how the quality of my work was being measured. Much has changed in the Higher Education (HE) sector since then. In 2002, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) produced their Subject Benchmark Statements, including one for Art and Design, providing guidance to undergraduate curriculum designers on the expectations of quality (QAA, 2019), and in 2006, the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework provided a descriptor for each formal academic level in the Scottish system (SCQF, 2019). QAA Scotland launched the first cycle of the sector-wide Enhancement-Led

Institutional Review (ELIR) in 2003, and in 2005, the National Student Survey (NSS) began to gather feedback from students on their study experiences. This period marked a significant shift towards the articulation of generic quality markers and a greater accountability for HEIs to provide evidence to demonstrate that they were meeting those markers.

Recent social change has begun to impact HEIs, with some contextualising this within a larger argument that the significantly different and often complex needs of ‘Generation Z’ learners are not being met (Mohr, 2017; Rue, 2018). Statistics show a consistent increase in the percentage of HE students declaring a disability, with creative and performing arts programmes showing considerably higher levels than the sector average (HESA, 2023), and a study by the Mental Health Foundation Scotland showed that between 2011 and 2021, HEIs saw a five-fold increase in students disclosing a mental health condition (Maguire and Cameron, 2011, p. 7). Lukianoff and Haidt (2018) track the history of a change towards an increasingly vocal student body regularly protesting against perceived social injustice. Following student action, one prominent UK drama school was forced to publicly admit it had ‘been complicit in systemic racism’ (BBC, 2020), and discussing student protests at three European Art Schools, Mahony points to a conflict between emerging student concerns and ‘the neoliberal values’ in which our contemporary HEIs are ‘currently intermeshed’ (2016, p. 56). There is not scope within this study to offer a meaningful analysis of the many, often intersectional contemporary social discourses around identity politics, race, gender, disability, socio-economic status or sexual-orientation, and the points raised here are provided simply to highlight that the

contemporary Scottish art school is likely to be very different from the one I experienced as a student.

I developed my teaching practice on a foundation of non-directive coaching, and within the larger PhD study, I intend on exploring whether this approach might have a role in supporting artist development. Through this pilot study, I am seeking to understand the attitudes, beliefs and aspirations of lecturers currently teaching fine art in an art school context. I will outline the available literature to identify some of the documented challenges and priorities, the theoretical framework and methodology I will use, and will provide analysis of participant interview responses to establish key themes and conclusions. By the end of the pilot study, I aim to have some insight into the degree to which participant responses justify further exploration of the potential for non-directive coaching to support artist development.

2. The Art School Lecturer in Context

1. Defining Quality in an Art School

The practice of art and design is a creative endeavour that speculates upon and challenges its own nature and purpose and that demands high levels of self-motivation, intellectual curiosity, speculative enquiry, imagination, and divergent thinking skills. (QAA, 2019, p. 8)

Orr and Shreeve state that ‘students who develop an identity as practitioners early in their course, as well as a learner identity, are likely to be those who succeed’ (2019, p. 82), yet this is not a simple process. Carroll (1999) attests that developing an artist identity is made more complex by a lack of consensus on the ‘necessary and sufficient’ conditions for something to be classified as ‘art’, a consensus that very much depends on whether you are looking through a representational, formative, expressive or aesthetic lens (Carroll, 1999; Biesta, 2018). In the main, attempts to establish criteria that qualify something as art tend to draw on an author’s tastes rather than on any solid empirical evidence (Dutton, 2009), or on shared manifestos (Lack, 2017). Some argue for the boundaries around art to be more porous (Ingold, 2013; Tobias-Green, 2017) or that students should be actively guided to work in the liminal spaces between the traditional boundaries (Gunn, 2020).

Even if we accept the representationalist position that quality in art sits in direct relation to an artist’s ability to faithfully represent an external reality, this is not necessarily a straightforward proposition, as even the measurement of drawing skill presents hidden complexities (Rohr, 2013). With unclear parameters, measurements of success are open

to subjective interpretation, and lack of consensus around the success criteria inevitably leads to a situation where what art lecturers teach becomes their personal choice (Bolin, and Hoskings, 2015), measurements of quality are open to interpretation (Naughton, Biesta and Cole, 2018), and a lecturer's personal values can underpin the assessment process (Orr, 2011).

Whilst art education might aim to help individuals find their creative voice, this happens within a micro-society that cannot be immune from wider cultural influences (Hermans, 2001). Extending the focus of art education beyond the walls of the institution to the broader social context (Hausman *et al.*, 2010) arguably makes the process of agreeing fixed criteria for ascribing value judgements significantly more challenging, and it raises the question of whether the art school lecturer's role should involve helping students to situate their own individual practice within a broader social milieu.

2. The Role of the Contemporary Art School Lecturer

It would seem reasonable to assert that artistic voice cannot be discovered or expressed without creativity, indeed some argue that, to teach creativity, lecturers themselves need to be creatively active (Tudor, 2008), utilising their own arts practice to inform their teaching (Hall, 2010). Whilst creativity is another elusive concept, there is some evidence to suggest that it is supported by the experience of the Flow state where an individual, deeply absorbed in a particular activity, is fully present in the moment and lacking concern for external influence (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Csikszentmihalyi identifies art as an activity that is usually intrinsically motivated and *autotelic* in that it is engaged in

for the experience rather than as an *exotelic* end goal (1997, p. 113). In one study of thirty-six female fine art students, Stanko-Kaczmarek showed that, ‘intrinsically motivated art students experienced significantly higher levels of positive affect in the creative process and evaluated their performance significantly higher than extrinsically motivated students’ (2012, p. 304).

Whilst this study cannot be extrapolated out to any general population, their findings accord with Ryan and Deci’s extensive research on the value of intrinsic motivation, (Deci and Ryan, 2000; Ryan and Deci, 2000, 2009, 2018; Vallerand, 2000). In their ‘Continuum of Relative Autonomy’, Ryan and Deci offer a taxonomy of motivation that dismisses the simplistic binary model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in favour of a nuanced range of extrinsic motivations (2018, pp. 191–195). Through analysis of this model, Ryan and Deci argue that the key to highly autonomous or self-determined types of behaviour lies in having an ‘internal perceived locus of causality’, where ‘actions are truly volitional and for which one experiences oneself as an *origin* of action’ (Ryan and Deci, 2018, p. 66).

This pilot study is designed to explore the goals, values and strategies of art school lecturers working in contemporary art school settings, and to develop an understanding of the degree to which the literature around quality assurance, social justice and motivation are predictive of the lived experiences of the study participants. The larger PhD study is concerned with developing a deeper understanding of the degree to which non-directive methods designed to help individuals become self-determined, might have a role in

supporting art students to develop as artists. As such, the next stage was to identify an appropriate lens through which to consider these responses.

3. Theoretical Frameworks

1. Introduction

Given the emphasis on the development of the individual artist, it was necessary to identify theoretical frameworks that were appropriate to the challenges and benefits of developing autonomy and intrinsic motivation. Whilst it may appear excessive to have included three models for this, these theories, and in particular Self Determination Theory, have a considerable research base supporting them, and the focus will be on the overlap between theories, rather than on a comprehensive application of each one. The following chapters of this section will provide a rationale for this approach.

2. Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emerged in the 1980's through the work of Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci. SDT is a macro theory of development that centres on the need for individuals to meet the three basic psychological needs of *autonomy*, *competence* and *relatedness* in order to flourish. The authors' assertion that 'self-determined functioning is associated with greater creativity, superior learning, better performance, enhanced well-being, and higher quality relationships' (Ryan and Deci, 2018, p. 17) position it as a useful lens through which to explore the role of the art lecturer. Sun et al. justify their choice of SDT as a theoretical framework for their study of student engagement with online learning, stating SDT is 'one of the most empirically supported motivation theories' (2019, p. 3159).

Research exploring SDT and art is limited. Looking through the lens of SDT, Oh states that learners are most motivated when given opportunities for ‘self-initiated’ art-making (2020, p. 85), and in 2021, researchers used SDT to assess art teachers’ well-being in making the shift to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wang *et al.*, 2021). In other art forms, researchers demonstrated the efficacy of SDT as a lens for understanding experiences in community dance contexts (Norfield and Nordin-Bates, 2012), and Evans argues that music learning is best motivated within a social environment that fulfils SDT's basic psychological needs (2015, p. 79). In their 2022 study, Evans and Ryan found that aspiring to intrinsic goals such as personal growth facilitates meeting the basic psychological needs, where placing emphasis on extrinsic motivators such as desire for fame or wealth can ‘thwart the fulfilment of basic needs and lead to greater ill-being’ (2022, p. 596). In a 2021 study, researchers using SDT as a theoretical framework concluded that ‘autonomous motivation was a considerable predictor’ of whether university students studying music would pursue a career in music after graduation (Miksza, Evans and McPherson, 2021, p. 64). According to Ryan and Deci, autonomy is ‘no doubt the most controversial and yet central construct in this work’ (2018, p. 97), partly because ‘feelings of competence will not enhance intrinsic motivation unless they are accompanied by a sense of autonomy’ (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 58), but at a more fundamental level, autonomy provides access to aspects of ourselves not addressed solely by competence or relatedness:

Because it is through the regulation of behavior that people access and fulfil other basic needs, both physical and psychological, autonomy has a special status as a need. It is a vehicle through which the organization of personality proceeds and through which other psychological needs are satisfied.

(Ryan and Deci, 2018, p. 97)

In their 2009 paper, Niemiec and Ryan identified a number of strategies educators can employ to enhance the autonomy of their learners including ‘providing choice and meaningful rationales for learning activities, acknowledging students’ feelings about those topics, and minimizing pressure and control’ (2009, p. 141). In a study conducted in North America, university instructors were shown to be more autonomy-supportive when they themselves were autonomously motivated (Yasué, Jeno and Langdon, 2019, p. 1), and McLachlan and Hagger (2010) demonstrated that even a brief intervention can increase autonomy-supportive behaviour and decrease controlling behaviours in tutors working in a UK higher education context.

3. Hase and Kenyon's Self-Determined Learning Theory

Whilst SDT offers a lens through which to consider the role of intrinsic motivation to help satisfy the three basic psychological needs, Self-Determined Learning (SDL) might present a model that informs how this translates to the role of the art school lecturer. Developed by Hase and Kenyon in 2000, and underpinned by Humanism (Rogers, 1969) and Constructivism (Piaget, 1957), Self-Determined Learning or *Heutagogy* offers a model of development focused specifically on facilitating the learner's ownership and autonomy over their learning journey, through learner-defined learning journeys, self-designed assessment and negotiated learning outcomes (Hase and Kenyon, 2000).

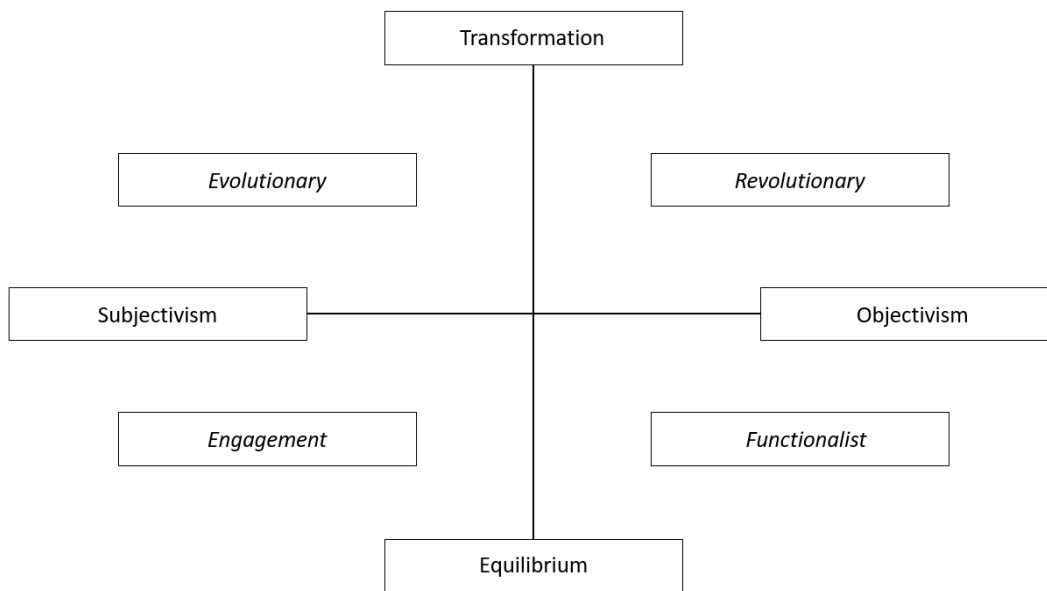
SDL focuses on helping individuals to manage their own learning journey, and at its core is learning to learn (Mannion and McAllister, 2020) or what Claxton refers to as

‘Learning Power’ (2006). Evidence shows the effectiveness of SDL across multiple contexts including school-age learners (Berger, 2014), and the self-managed curriculum has been shown to engage the most disengaged learners towards successful outcomes across the curriculum (Cunningham, 2021). SDL promotes effort over talent and aligns with Dweck’s Growth Mindset theory (Dweck, 2000), and whilst a recent meta-analysis raised questions over the evidence for the effectiveness of growth mindset in practice (Macnamara and Burgoyne, 2022), there is considerable evidence to challenge the fixed mindset view that each individual has pre-determined levels of ability, or *talent* (Colvin, 2008; Coyle, 2010; Pink, 2011; Seligman, 2011; Syed, 2011; Downey, 2016; Duckworth, 2016; Dehaene, 2020).

Within the literature there is some debate on whether SDL needs to be introduced progressively following the Pedagogy, Andragogy, Heutagogy (PAH) continuum (Blaschke, 2019), or whether, as Hase himself asserts, it can serve as a starting position for all learners at all developmental stages (Bancroft, Fawcett and Hay, 2008). Hase and Kenyon have argued for its efficacy in multiple contexts (2000, 2013; Hase, 2016) however some critics point to the apparent lack of empirical evidence, Agonács and Matos highlighting that, to date, researchers have been ‘more interested in understanding certain phenomenon related to heutagogy rather than explaining and predicting them’ (2019, p. 233).

4. Brockbank and McGill's Evolutionary Coaching

Self-Determined Learning is not necessarily a new concept of development, having its roots firmly within the work of Carl Rogers and his client-centred concept of *unconditional positive regard* (Rogers, 1986), work that also informed the development of life coaching, popularised by John Whitmore (2002) and Myles Downey (2003). Since its appearance as a professional and personal development approach in the early 1990s, there has been an increasing body of literature to support the efficacy of the coaching approach, however definitions can vary across the literature, creating some ambiguity around the practice. Brockbank and McGill's four quadrants model of coaching approaches offer some clarity here (2006, p. 11):

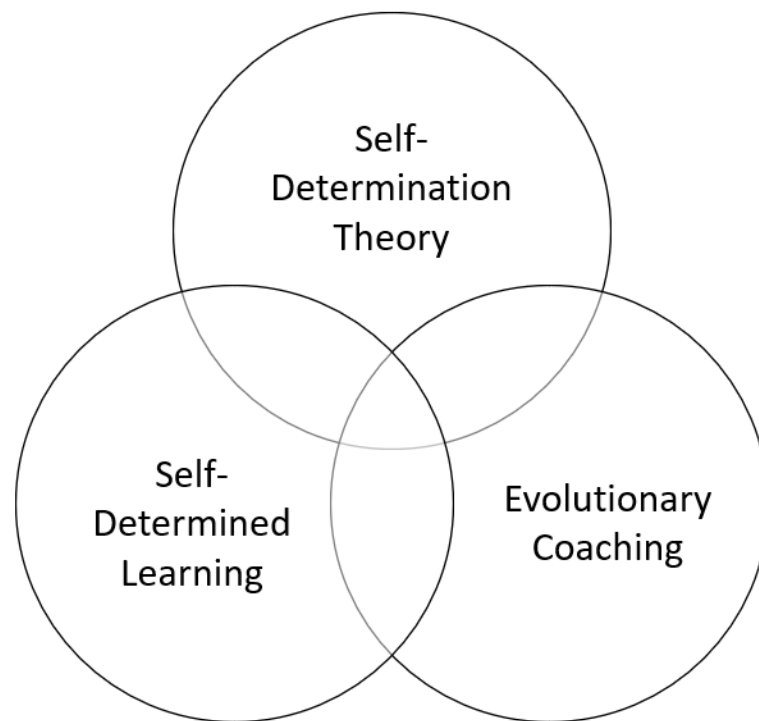


Adapted from Brockbank & McGill, 2006, p.11

In their model they contrast *equilibrium* with *transformation* on the vertical axis, with *subjectivism* (focus on the individual) contrasting *objectivism* (focus on the collective) on the horizontal axis. The authors refer to the top-left quadrant where transformation and subjectivism meet as Evolutionary, where the focus is on supporting individuals towards their own self-defined change. Here, the coach remains non-judgemental, asking non-leading questions to support individuals to identify their own goals, the barriers they face in meeting these goals, and the actions they are committed to taking to move towards their achievement. This requires the coach to suspend their own perceptions of what they believe the coachee *should* be aiming for. Whilst Hase and Kenyon acknowledge that some educators ‘see self-determined learning as a threat to their status as learned persons who bestow knowledge on learners’ (2013, p. 15), in the context of the contemporary art school, it would be reasonable to assume that supporting the transformation of the individual into new uncharted territory would have some resonance, and Brockbank and McGill’s Evolutionary Coaching model appears highly suited to this.

Whilst not arts-based, a study carried out at a UK university showed that ‘one-to-one coaching can have profound effects on students and can also help them to maximize their time at university’ (Lancer and Eatough, 2021, p. 250), and with a focus on the underlying evidence-based psychology of coaching, Green and Palmer highlight the role coaching can play in supporting transitions and in the development of resilience (2019).

5. Multi-theoretical Approach



In arguing that 'schools are contexts for human development', Ryan and Deci assert that, 'care for student's basic psychological needs thus warrants increased attention in setting educational policies, goals, and training, given its important role in shaping students' aspirations, motivations and performance' (2018, p. 378).

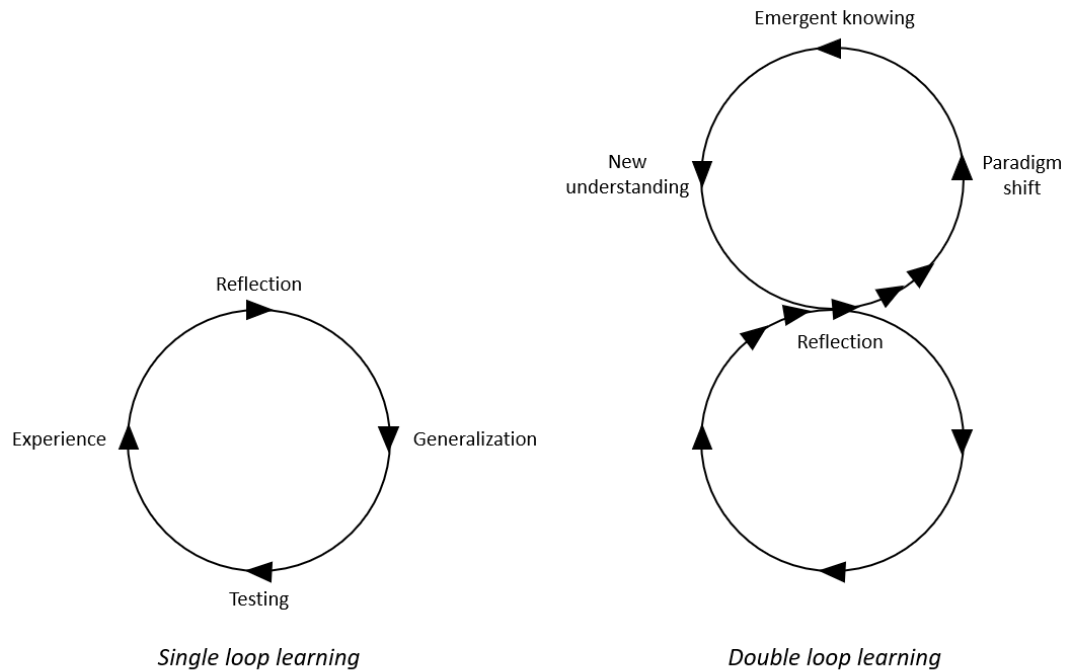
Gerstein describes SDL as *Education 3.0*, stating that it is 'self-determined, interest-based learning where problem-solving, innovation, and creativity drive education (2014, p. 90).

Whilst Hase is clear that heutagogy 'doesn't have anything directly to do with self-determination theory' he qualifies this by saying, 'however, heutagogy is related to the philosophical notion of self-determinism and shares a common belief in the role of human agency in behaviour (2014, p. 5).

This belief is also central to Brockbank and McGill's Evolutionary Coaching, as it 'adopts a subjectivist view of reality, and works with clients to define their own goals, whilst offering the potential for challenge and transformation' (2006, p. 103). Links between coaching and SDT have already been made, with Spence and Oades asserting that SDT 'presents as a useful theoretical framework for coaching as it can help understand coaching practice at both macro and micro levels' (2011, p. 104).

Whilst there are multiple models to structure the coaching process, such as the GROW model (Whitmore, 2002), the OSCAR model (Gilbert and Whittleworth, 2009), and the CLEAR model (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2018), they are all based on a process of asking questions designed to elicit meaningful insights for the client. The more the coach is able to suspend their own agenda and opinions, the more effective the coaching.

Drawing on the work of Dewey, Bruner, Piaget, Friere and Lewin, Kolb developed his four-step learning cycle of *abstract conceptualization, active experimentation, concrete experience, and reflective observation* (Kolb, 1984). Argyris (1977) extended this single loop model to the concept of double loop learning to describe a process of learning where the reflective observation stage leads to a second loop of paradigm shift, emergent knowing and new understanding. Where single loop learning is particularly suited to the incremental development of practical skills, double loop learning, where one's fundamental beliefs and assumptions are challenged, can lead to genuinely transformative change (Brockbank and McGill, 2006).



Adapted from Brockbank and McGill (2006, p. 34-35)

5.1 SDT, SDL and Evolutionary Coaching in the Art School

Within the context of this study, the combination of SDT, SDL and Evolutionary Coaching (EC) provide a lens through which to begin to consider how learning is facilitated in a contemporary art school. All three models share a central concern for the development of autonomy in learners. Through connecting this with competence, SDT brings a focus on the development of actual measurable ability, resonating with EC's concern for enhanced 'performance'. SDT's focus on relatedness helps position the learner within the social context of the art school. As a theory of learning, SDL with its advocacy of self-defined learning journeys and negotiated assessment, provides a focus on structuring learning experiences that can develop autonomy, competence and relatedness. EC works at the one-to-one relational level, providing clarity on the nature of

the day-to-day professional practice of someone charged with facilitating autonomy-supportive educational experiences.

For the reasons stated here, the working hypothesis here is that art school lecturers will share similar concerns for the development of autonomy, however these models do allow for a range of approaches. Should the development of extrinsic motivation turn out to be of greater priority to art school lecturers, SDT provides a considerable body of work on a range of extrinsic motivators, as does SDL's PAH continuum, and Brockbank and McGill's model provides less autonomy-supportive alternatives, such as the Functionalist and Engagement approaches.

4. Methodological Approaches

1. Research Design

The aim of this qualitative pilot study is to develop an understanding of the goals that fine art lecturers have in relation to their teaching practice, and to gain an insight into the strategies they currently employ to help them move towards the achievement of these goals. The overarching research question is ‘What are the goals, values and strategies of fine art lecturers in Scottish art schools?’ Data will be collected through a series of structured interviews that will be conducted online, and participants will be recruited using purposive sampling, targeting lecturers who teach fine art on an undergraduate degree programme in one of the five Scottish Art Schools.

This case study aligns with Shaw’s summary of the qualitative paradigm in that it focuses on the natural setting of the art school, has an empirical focus on meaning, where analysis proceeds by inducting, theorizing seeks patterns and is underpinned by a philosophy of idealism (1999, p. 5). As stated by Cohen et al.,

A case study is not so much a single method as it is a way of thinking about what a qualitative research project can focus on: an organization, community, classroom, school or school system, a family, or even an individual that must be understood in its entirety.

(2018, p. 6)

In this ‘case’ the art school is being considered as a single entity, however it is understood that, in reality any two art schools may radically differ, and the paradigm is phenomenological as here the researcher's aim is to ‘study the ordinary “life world”’ and

‘the way people experience their world’ (Fossey *et al.*, 2002, p. 720)', in this case, art lecturers.

This case study aligns with Yin's descriptive model (1984) but also with Merriam's (1998) interpretative type as I will be 'developing conceptual categories inductively to examine initial assumptions' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018, p. 255). As highlighted by Mabry,

an interpretivist study implies the constructivist theory that ‘all knowledge is personally constructed’ (Piaget, 1955; see also Glassman, 2001 and Phillips, 1995) and that ‘personal experience... provides the building blocks for the knowledge base constructed by each individual’.

(Mabry, 2012, p. 4)

In this case, the research is concerned with gathering data on the markers of quality that individual art lecturers have constructed, and interpreting these through the analysis of their responses to questions about their goals, values, strategies, definitions of success and perceptions of the ideal staff-student relationship. Therefore, the research methodology is *interpretative*, focusing ‘primarily on understanding and accounting for the meaning of human experiences and actions’ (Fossey *et al.*, 2002, p. 720).

2. Method: Structured Interviews

Between 5 and 10 participants will be recruited, ideally from across the five institutions, and, as they will be practicing art lecturers, each participant will be over 18 years of age. Due to the modest scale of the study, the research data can only, at best, provide partial insights into the opinions of participants on the day of the interview, and cannot be seen to represent the views of their institution, sector, or be extrapolated out to make any

generalized conclusions. Nonetheless, it is anticipated that areas of agreement or disagreement in participant responses will provide suitable indications of the range and diversity of thinking, and help identify priority areas for further research.

Fossey et al. assert that, 'Good qualitative research is characterized by congruence between the perspective (or paradigm) that informs the research questions and the research methods used' (2002, p. 731). The interviews will be structured with a set list of coaching-style questions and no additional questions will be asked. Arguably, it is far more common for qualitative case studies to employ semi-structured or unstructured interviews, and whilst there is a risk that in a structured interview, respondents may only provide 'superficial or cautious responses' (Alvesson, 2011, p. 5), the open questions are drawn from a non-directive coaching model and the researcher has considerable experience in crafting these to elicit rich responses. Berg states that in choosing the standardized or structured interview, researchers hold a few key assumptions, namely that the questions chosen 'are sufficiently comprehensive to elicit from subjects all (or nearly all) information relevant to the study's topic' and that 'all questions have been worded in a manner that allows subjects to understand clearly what they are being asked' (2009, p. 105). Crucially, the combination of structured interview with coaching-style questions should limit the degree to which participants might be led towards responses that confirm the researcher's assumptions or opinions (Roulston, 2010, p. 87), without any loss of richness and depth in the responses.

2.1 Interview Questions

The interview schedule (Appendix 1) loosely follows Whitmore's GROW model with questions 2 to 7 aligning with the Goals (G) and Reality (R) stages, and questions 8 to 10 beginning to address the Options (O) stage (Whitmore, 2002). In the Options stage of a traditional coaching session, coaches might use hypothetical questions to aid clients in creative thinking, and in this study, following this practice, participants will be asked to identify a mentor, a single question they would like to ask this mentor and then to imagine the mentor's response to the question. There is considerable evidence of the efficacy of imagined dialogue as a developmental tool (Austin, 1919, 1922; Honeycutt, Zagacki and Edwards, 1990; Honeycutt, 2002, 2008, 2011; Arnd-Caddigan, 2012; Honeycutt, Vickery and Hatcher, 2015), however, where the Will (W) section of a conventional coaching session supports the client to identify specific actions they will take to move towards the achievement of their self-identified goals, the intention in this pilot study is solely to gain insight into participants' developmental priorities, and as such, this stage will be omitted.

3. Analysis

The interpretivist paradigm requires 'the researcher to adopt an exploratory orientation, and in particular to learn to understand the distinctive perspectives of the people involved' (Hammersley, 2013, p. 27), and as such, it is appropriate that the data gathered will be analysed through the six stages of Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2021b, p. 35). The researcher will transcribe and listen to the audio recordings multiple

times before identifying codes. Using a combination of MS Word tables and digital mind-maps, the researcher will construct preliminary themes from the codes, refine these, reconfigure these against section headings and create a 'defensible narrative' to communicate the findings (Braun and Clarke, 2021b, p. 202). Whilst the responses will be limited to a small number of participants and cannot be generalised across a wider population, the study will be valid in the respect that all participants fulfil the criteria of being a practicing art lecturer (Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 13).

4. Ethical Considerations

The ethical risks associated with this study are minimal, however, as qualitative interviewing 'has the potential to probe deeply into the private lives of respondents' (Given, 2008, p. 4), participants will be informed that all responses and information gathered will be anonymised and it will not be possible to track any contribution back to an individual participant or institution. The structured questions, provided to the participants in advance, should minimise the potential that they might 'disclose information they might later regret' (Given, 2008, p. 4), however participants will be informed that, should they wish to withdraw any statements they make within the interview, these will be excluded. Participants will be asked to consent to the interviews being recorded through Zoom. This recording process results in a video file, an audio file, and a text file being generated for each interview, and these will be stored securely and deleted on the completion of the project.

5. Discussion

1. Participant Overview

Five participants engaged in the study, representing two of the five art schools. Each participant has a role in teaching undergraduate students in fine art, with a range of experience from less than a year to over 10 years. Some participants teach solely in the studio and some have a wider remit, including areas such as personal tutoring, widening access or teaching at postgraduate level. Further demographic information was not requested as this was not deemed necessary for the pilot study. Preserving anonymity, throughout the discussion I will refer to the participants as P1 to P5, and a discussion of the responses in relation to the theoretical frameworks will follow each section.

2. Academic Concerns and the Curriculum

2.1 Participant Responses

Participants were clearly conscious of the academic nature of the context within which they work with learners, stating they need to ensure learners are equipped to get the best possible results as measured against established learning outcomes, whilst recognising that these are often hard for students to decipher (P2, P5). All participants stated that on some level, the purpose of an art school is to 'facilitate them to become working artists' (P3) who can 'succeed in the economic marketplace' (P5), however P1 expressed that art schools tend to just 'set up and then repeat' without questioning their practice, and as such, are no longer able to meet this aim. Some of the traditional studio practices were

identified as problematic, such as tutors choosing their favourite subset of students (P2). P2 and P5 made the point that the ideal relationship between student and learner should be academic, and whilst there is a pastoral aspect to this, it should be at a distance. They agreed that the lecturer should not be the student's friend, but that this does not mean there is no emotional investment.

There was also a recognition that, whilst perceptions of distinct fine art disciplines are becoming more malleable in the art school, students often arrive with fixed views of the boundaries around disciplines, formed within the school sector, and these have to be challenged (P1). P3 stated that they organise first year workshops specifically to break these habitual ways of learning.

P4 and P5 stated that they had issues with more recent changes in the HE sector, highlighting particular concerns about over-bureaucratization, increased student numbers and scarcity of resource. This is compounded by tutors having to take more time away from the studio to undertake desk-based work, impacting the teacher-learner relationship, and an increase in student numbers raises concerns about the comparative anonymity of students to the tutors (P4). For students, pressure to progress in sync with module timelines was seen to be at the expense of necessary 'quiet time in the studio', leaving them little time to understand who they are, what they want to achieve, and to experiment and risk failure (P3). Tutors have to spend a great deal of time trying to 'squeeze things in' to portions of time where they have access to learners (P3), also impacted by competition for suitable places to teach (P2). P3, conscious of the economic diversity of learners,

outlined the need to argue for a budget that allowed them to provide students with enough basic materials to feel liberated to experiment and explore during class exercises.

Balancing the needs of the curriculum alongside developing authentic artists is made more challenging by an emphasis on student contentment. The wider sectoral shift towards HE as a 'service culture' can lead students to hold unrealistic expectation about their lecturer's ability to help them become 'art stars' (P4), and less favourable results from surveys such as the NSS and quality assurance processes such as ELIR can be detrimental to the well-being of teaching staff (P2, P4). Participants felt that such expectations of contentment do not accommodate the discomfort of 'not knowing' that accompanies a genuine creative process (P1, P4) or the fact a tutor needs to challenge learners in order to help them develop, and that this is not always a comfortable process (P5).

2.2 Theoretical Lens

All HE institutions need to meet external benchmarks that assess not just the competence of students, but also of the staff and the institution itself, and this has a direct effect on the level of autonomy they enjoy. Academic credit is based on evidence of competence as measured against learning outcomes within the established curriculum. Yet, these measures of competence were not always seen to be in alignment with the qualities participants felt were required for artistic success, and in the main, participants were more concerned about the art school's competence to support learners to become artists, a process that, ironically, was often hampered by the demands of the curriculum.

Bureaucratic systems pull lecturers away from time with students, and are overly concerned with timely measurements of student progress, placing increased pressure on learners to succeed to the detriment of their artistic development. Participants suggested that student competence was measured more in the way students took ownership of their own creative process, broke with expectations of tradition, and developed the self-knowledge to become self-determined, than on meeting the curricular measures of competence. The inference is that the art lecturer needs to collude in helping the student navigate around these curricular measures of competence to achieve a more authentic competence as a creative artist.

3. Subjectivity and Agency

3.1 Participant Responses

Learning to be an artist was thought to be especially challenging because, unlike the history professor, the art lecturer cannot contain the knowledge required by the student to become successful (P1). The criteria for making value judgements are subjective (P5) and are inherently difficult to express in language (P3, P5). Consensus is impossible as 'art does not have a prescribed career' (P4), fine art teaching 'is an irrational practice' that 'doesn't know itself', and 'nobody casts a net over it to contain it' (P1). Nonetheless, P3 expressed that there is value for students in learning what materials can do, from experienced people, providing them with the practical skills that would allow their individual voice to be expressed. P4 highlighted that they might guide students to a particular artist or book that might help them develop, but that the real need was in

developing the 'transferrable skills and creativity' that were perhaps under-valued in the past. P1 stated that they do not teach techniques, partly concerned that students would seek to mimic them, but also because this would define expectations and limit their creative self-expression. For P1, the most important goal was for 'students to find self-determinism and have agency over what they do'. In general, the dominant view was that the lecturer's main role is to support students to take ownership of their individual learning journeys. There was agreement that lecturers need to facilitate students to gain agency in their learning journey, to discover who they are as artists and to find their true selves (P3, P4), and that this requires helping learners to both trust and hone their own instincts (P1, P4). Where a lecturer believes their role is to tell students what they need, the development of self-trust was seen to be impeded. In contrast, participants felt their goal was to help learners develop the confidence required to feel liberated to make choices in their learning journey, reassuring them it is okay at times to fail or to not produce work (P2, P3 and P5). P5 stated that 'confidence in learners is damaged when they can't visualise or make animate a kind of spiritual purpose for their creativity', and that they need a learning journey where they can learn about their own creativity, the barriers to it and the benefits of engaging in individual exploration. Other participants saw their role as helping 'students be in touch with what they desire, not just what they know' (P3), and to 'understand who they are and what they want' (P4). This could be summarised in P5's statement that the goal was for 'learners to have the richest possible experience of a creative learning process'.

P3 articulated the importance of supporting individual learning journeys in relation to the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, seeing their role as respecting diversity through helping individuals explore their unique 'true nature' and the complexities of their particular lives. P3 emphasised the additional social benefits of an inclusive learning environment where individuals from different demographics can exchange ideas about the problems the world faces. Further, P1 and P5 stated that a student's previous educational experience, and their physical and mental well-being can impact how they engage in their own art process and this needs to be taken into account when working with them. In short, this was about the need for both lecturers and students to be able to be 'authentic' (P4).

For this to happen, it was important students learn to reflect (P2), in particular on the experiences they are having, on what influences their decision-making, and on what it feels like on a human level to engage in a creative process (P1). Participants stated that, to some degree, they measure their own success against student self-motivation, for example, in the student's enthusiasm for being in the studio, on how much self-organised work they are producing (P3), or simply in 'seeing individuals have a moment of spark' (P2). For P1, this can also come from graduates reflecting on transformational conversations they had with the lecturer during their studies.

There was general agreement that self-analysis is best developed by lecturers through facilitating conversations. Typically, this happens in the crit context, where students and lecturers come together to have a dialogue about the work. However, P1 expressed a

concern that traditional crits can lead lazier lecturers to act like ‘jazz musicians, riffing on what comes to them’, rather than taking the time to understand the work from the students’ perspective. With proper facilitation, engaging learners in group discourse can encourage critical analysis of outcomes, help groups become cohesive and socially productive, and help students modify their desires for their work in light of peer feedback (P3). For P5, group crits also present an opportunity to really listen and observe, and through this to gain insight into their learners’ needs, leading to modifications to their teaching practice. It was important that this listening was done with empathy, sympathy and imagination, both in the group context and one-to-one, where both student and lecturer learn from the interaction in ways that develop their practice. P5 emphasised that these conversations need to be inherently challenging, helping learners know there is ‘something at stake’ in their creativity.

3.2 Theoretical Lens

SDT recognises the benefit of autonomy-supportive teaching, and this concern clearly aligns with participant responses. Whilst the word ‘autonomy’ was only mentioned once in the interviews, the theme of facilitating learners to find, discover or explore their own unique arts practice was prevalent, with terms such as self-determinism, agency, decision-making, motivation and self-organisation arguably acting as synonyms for autonomy. Autonomy-supportive behaviours were evident in how participants supported learners to develop confidence, to foster trust in themselves and to learn to use their instincts to guide their own individual practice. Hase states that the etymological root of “heuta” is the ‘Greek for self... and the “gogy” means “study of”: the study of self-

determined learning' (2014, p. 5). Whilst one participant felt there was a need to begin by teaching techniques, effectively taking students through the Pedagogy, Andragogy, Heutagogy continuum, in all cases the end goal was for learners to be facilitated towards a self-determined arts practice.

Lecturer-facilitated group discussions were seen as important for helping individuals to self-analyse their work, and to benefit from the input of peers without a hierarchical relationship. Within this context, the lecturer is responsible for providing the provocations or questions designed to encourage critical discourse, very much in a social constructivist model, supporting the development of relatedness (Vygotskij and Cole, 1978). What was less evident from the responses was whether participants utilised a specific process for supporting the individual students to use these experiences to construct their goals or the actions they need to take in order to achieve them.

4. The Developing Art Lecturer

4.1 Participant Responses

All participants articulated the importance of having their own art practice. Engaging in a creative process was seen to help open their minds to possibilities, experiment with materials and ideas, think more deeply about making work, and remain connected to the value and challenge of producing and sharing art (P3, P1). Crucially, this helped participants to reflect on what it is to make work, to struggle with confidence and self-doubt, and be observant of the complex experience of art making (P1, P5). P2 and P4

stated that it was important to share this with students, letting them understand that regardless of status, 'as artists we don't always know what we are doing' (P2), and that there is no 'one way' to create art (P4). This also reinforced the belief that a 'one-size fits all' approach could not be effective, and that lecturers needed to be flexible enough to allow students to do what they actually want to do. P2 stated that lecturers had to remain open to new ideas, and to make sure the pressure of the role did not ever lead to a jaded response to new student work. P2 stated that integrity was vitally important, and that students would seek assistance on the basis that they knew the lecturer would do what they said they would.

P1, P3 and P5 discussed that they were conscious that they were still developing as an art educator, continuing to question their practice on an ongoing basis. P5 articulated that they had 'stumbled' into a teaching practice without any former background in education, and that whilst this has led to 'big crises of confidence', it has also made them more alert to learning opportunities in the trial and error of their day-to-day experience of teaching.

In the interview, participants were asked to identify a mentor, a question they would ask them, and what they thought they would respond. As expected, each participant identified a different question and answer. P1 asked 'What is art for?' and provided the answer 'to deliberately make us confused, engaged and enquiring', an endless loop seen to be part of the human condition. P2 asked what the difference was between looking and seeing and responded that it required the instinct to understand and to somehow quantify the feeling of seeing something. P3 asked that, given the way the world is now, 'What do we do?' and

responded that it starts with the individual and works up to the systematic. P4 asked how their mentor had learned to listen so well, answering that it starts with listening to oneself. P5 asked about the resources their mentor drew on to 'nourish the spiritual objectives that sustain creativity', and answered that it is only in the material circumstances and material limitations that some sense of humanity can be found. Whilst there was no obvious overlap in responses to these questions, it is possible to see that each participant was concerned with exploring profound and foundational questions about their own learning journey, and in each case there was some evidence that the 'imagined interaction' (Honeycutt, Zagacki and Edwards, 1990) provided insight into how they might continue to progress as learners.

4.2 Theoretical Lens

As self-directed artists themselves, it is perhaps unsurprising that participants felt the dominant measure of learner competence was the degree to which they are autonomously leading their own learning journey. Whilst there is arguably some need for lecturers to have the competence to teach basic skills, the inherent subjectivity and diversity of learning journeys makes it difficult for the lecturer to do this without unduly influencing perceptions of quality and limiting creativity. Perhaps it is more appropriate for the competence of the lecturer to be measured in their ability to engage learners in their own learning journey through helping them develop the self-confidence, self-motivation and self-determinism required of the artist. One clear measure of success lay in the lecturer's ability to facilitate relatedness within the cohort of learners through meaningful conversation. In a one-to-one learner-teacher interaction, lecturers had to somewhat

distance the degree of relatedness, albeit whilst continuing to show empathy and compassion. Facilitating critical discourse with a group context was clearly core to the practice and helped students feel a sense of belonging, whilst supporting the self-analysis that aids autonomy development.

6. Conclusions

1. Limitations

The intention of this study was to answer the research question ‘What are the goals, values and strategies of fine art lecturers in Scottish art schools?’ This was a small-scale qualitative study of the subjective views of five art school lecturers from across two of the five Scottish art schools, and as such, the findings cannot be generalised to a wider population, and at best, the responses could only hope to answer the research question for the participants themselves. Whilst all attempts were made to limit researcher bias in the gathering and analysis of data, there will be inevitable omissions, assumptions and interpretations that another researcher would not have made. Whilst not having a role within an art school context, the researcher has studied at an art school, works within a comparable higher education role, and was known professionally to one of the participants. The individuals that agreed to participate in the study may not have been representative of the wider population of art lecturers and further research would be required to contextualise these responses within this wider population. The following conclusions should be read with these limitations in mind.

2. Conclusions

Whilst participant responses were fewer than originally anticipated, in practice, the structured interview produced useful data, with the transcribed responses averaging at approximately 2,500 words. It was clear from the richness of the responses that the coaching-style questions engaged participants in meaningful critical reflection that was

not influenced by interviewer responses. The online format helped in this respect as the interviewer was able to ask each question and mute themselves until such a point as the participant appeared to have completed their answer. One reflection worth stating is that, after the recording had completed, the interviewer did then engage with participant responses in an informal conversation, which elicited insights not included in this pilot study. In future interviews, it may be useful to include more semi-structured elements to allow for further exploration, however care would need to be taken to ensure that researcher bias did not unduly influence this content.

Analysing the interview data through Reflexive Thematic Analysis proved to be a productive approach in practice, allowing sufficient depth of exploration in the coding across a spectrum from the more overt semantic interpretation to more underlying latent meanings (Braun and Clarke, 2021a, p. 5). As a theoretical framework, SDT provided a useful lens through which to consider participant responses. In particular, SDT's foundational concern for the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness were clearly mirrored in participants' beliefs that:

1. their role was to facilitate students to engage in a self-determined, individual and unique learning journey
2. they needed to support learners to develop the competence to undertake such a learning journey with confidence, criticality and creativity
3. the best way to build these competences is to develop relatedness by engaging learners in group conversations where they can critically communicate about their work as part of a community of learners

Points 1 and 2 pertain equally to SDL and in particular supporting learners to transition from dependence to autonomy. Central to both SDT and SDL is the concern for individual agency, and this was clearly evident in participant responses. This is a central tenet of Evolutionary Coaching, however, very little was said within the participant interviews that indicated *how* lecturers actually worked with individuals to support their self-determined learning journeys. Participants were clearly concerned with the transformation of individuals and on how to facilitate them to engage in unique, self-motivated arts practice as a journey of discovery, and Evolutionary Coaching might be able to facilitate this effectively.

The study of the literature provided an overview of the context and possible themes that might emerge from this pilot study, and the evidence suggests there was considerable alignment, particularly in relation to the challenges of balancing the needs of a structured quality assured curriculum, the resources that support the delivery of that curriculum, and the learning journey required to support an individual to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to become a professional artist. From the study of the available literature, it appeared reasonable to consider the interview data through the lenses of SDT, SDL and Evolutionary Coaching, and analysis of participant responses suggest these were indeed appropriate.

On an initial reading of the literature, it appears that outcome-based educational experiences can provide learners, educators and sector bodies some assurance that there will be an element of parity across and within institutions, however, according to study

participants, supporting students to develop unique and authentic identities as artists does not always sit easily with the requirement to meet fixed learning outcomes to an academic timetable. This pilot study indicates that the relationship between lecturer and student is a complex one, requiring the vulnerability of being a co-learner developing one's own arts practice, facilitating meaningful critical conversation within the cohort, and also making assessment decisions on student learning. Nothing that was said within the participant responses suggests that non-directive coaching would be at odds with the goals and values of art lecturers, and the focus on self-determined and autonomous learning journeys and the development of creativity would appear to align closely with the purposes of Evolutionary Coaching.

This pilot study was conducted with art lecturers in order to develop and understanding of their priorities, however the primary intended beneficiaries of a non-directive coaching approach would be the learners themselves. I believe this pilot study provides sufficient evidence to indicate that a wider and deeper exploration of autonomy-supportive behaviours within the context of an art school would have merit. The next stage of this larger PhD study would be to conduct a similar interview process with art school students in order to gain an understanding of their goals, values and the strategies they employ to become successful as students and as artists. Should the findings of a student study provide sufficient evidence that a non-directive coaching approach may be of value to the students, the following stage of the study would involve the development of a bespoke coaching model to be piloted within the art school context, and a subsequent analysis of the impact of this pilot would complete the PhD study.

(8489 words)

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8 Appendix 1 – Interview Questions

1. Could you say a little about your current **role** as an arts educator?
2. When you are working with learners, what is your **goal**?
3. What **barriers** get in the way of achieving that goal?
4. What **strategies** do you use to help you achieve your goal and/or deal with the barriers?
5. How do you **measure** your success as an arts educator?
6. How would you describe the ideal **relationship** between you and your learner?
7. What three **values** are central to your practice as an arts educator?
8. If you could have a **mentor** from any time in history, real or fictional, to support your arts education practice, who would you choose?
9. If you could ask them one **question**, what would it be?
10. How do you think they would **answer**?
11. Is there anything **else** you'd like to say about your arts education practice?