

Teaching for Excellence

ACDE submission to the TEACHER EDUCATION MINISTERIAL ADVISORY GROUP

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The Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) process is a unique opportunity to constructively reposition teacher education and the teaching profession for Australia's future. Teacher education is the shared work of universities, schools and the wider profession. This TEMAG review provides a generational opportunity to position the Profession of Teaching into the future.

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this important work including innovative responses to a rapidly globalised world, diverse learners and communities and expectations that learning outcomes for Australian students are at, or exceed, world standards.

The Australian Council of Deans of Education presents five key areas for development of Initial Teacher Education for a profession of international regard. We argue that Initial Teacher Education bridges the years from entry to completion of a pre-service teacher education course, and critically also includes the first 2 years of teaching and full registration as a teacher. This submission argues for improvements across this full span of Initial Teacher Education. ACDE is prepared to lead these improvements in partnership with Government and other stakeholders.

ACDE argues that it is time to realign and repurpose current frameworks and responsibilities to support Australian Initial Teacher Education and the Profession of Teaching. Specifically ACDE recommends the following five priority areas for policy action:

- Reform of current regulatory and quality assurance processes: establish the Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession
- Focus on quality teaching for improved student learning outcomes: establish the virtual Australian Teaching Research Institute
- Enhance quality teaching from graduation to proficiency: Induction framed by the Graduate Certificate in Professional Teaching
- Reconceptualise Professional Experience and
- Re-balance initial teacher education content and pedagogy

In recent years ACDE has established unique and innovative ways of working that facilitate institutional change, national collaboration, and increased capacity to lift national effort in key agendas. ACDE is well positioned and keen to work in partnership with TEMAG, Government and all stakeholders to achieve reform.

Brenda Cherednichenko
President

Reform of current regulatory and quality assurance processes

Australian universities and Initial Teacher Education providers are regarded as some of the best in the world, with eight universities listed in the top 40 in the QS World Rankings in the discipline of Education. Australia's teachers are well educated with 60% entering the profession after completing a 4 year degree and, the other 40% with a first degree in another substantive discipline and postgraduate degree in Education.

However a regular scan of media and political comment would seem to suggest that these achievements are neither recognised nor valued. Margaret Lloyd's recent timely report "Troubled Times in Australian Teacher Education" maps and analyses the complex and competing internal and external requirements placed on Initial Teacher Education Programmes. Lloyd argues strongly for a streamlined regulatory framework to improve Initial Teacher Education and to untangle the unproductive and expensive knot of activity that strangles programme flexibility and innovation (Lloyd, 2013 p.19).

The achievement of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (2011) built around Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement provided some hope that these tensions and knots would untangle. However many hands, at many levels have made heavy work of this. We now have distracted resources and fragmented efforts to promote quality (AITSL 2014a, AITSL 2014b). These AITSL reports indicate that while Universities and pre-service teachers work closely to the National Standards, principals and teachers have not engaged well with the Standards, and links across entry to the profession are awkward and disconnected at best. There is an urgent need for coherent adoption of the Standards from entry to initial teacher education, through professional experience, graduation, induction and across the initial teacher professional journey.

In the Hughes Oration, 'the Quality Teaching Movement in Australia: Losing Our Confidence, Losing Our Way and Getting Back on Track's', Stephen Dinham (2013) observes that in a country with a population similar in size to Florida, Australia is bedeviled by duplication, mistrust and competition and worrying signs that the national initiatives and agreements are pulling apart.

ACDE contends that one of the significant barriers to quality teaching and improved student learning outcomes is, that in spite of the national Standards, the Australian Teaching Profession is not nationally focused. It is subject to conflicting registration requirements, excessive administration, and barriers to teacher mobility across jurisdictions and across specialisations. These challenges undermine the capacity for improvement in teaching.

An Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession, independently established and managed by the Profession, is proposed to address these issues. The Centre will register, for the first time, all initial teacher education students on entry to their degree and nurture them and their development from graduate to fully registered teacher to advanced educator and principal. Teacher Educators will register and belong to the Centre and the links between universities and schools forged strongly. The Centre will identify, develop and promote para-professional roles as an integral and valued part of the education community.

ACDE proposes that the Centre is modeled on other professional organisations, such as health and engineering, and will lead this development with the Australian Government. For the first time in Australia's history, the Profession will be united and can be recognised as a high quality national professional workforce with the capability to continually improve education outcomes, promote Teachers as Learners and excellence in teaching designed for improved educational outcomes.

The Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession will provide an effective and integrated national approach to Teacher Registration and Programme Accreditation. This will provide substantial outcomes for the sector including teacher mobility and tracking, formal and structured reporting of teacher professional learning, and most significantly, the capability to support an evidence-based research-led approach to identify and map the close link between high quality teaching and student learning outcomes.

While States and Territories have the lead role in employment and schooling, they face some difficult challenges in leveraging national improvement. The current duplication of resources across many jurisdictions restricts the development and transfer of knowledge and expertise. Given the importance of Education to the Australian people, economy and social improvement, a national approach is an imperative. As an example, the health professions through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) provide a rich and effective model for teaching and have systems in place that are simple and effective. ACDE recognises that the needs in the teaching profession are distinctive and require specific focus, such as in professional practice, for example. Nevertheless the AHPRA model is instructive as a starting point.

Teacher registration in Australia is cumbersome, complex and currently ineffective in monitoring even the most basic data needed such as age, gender, languages spoken, qualifications and professional specialisation, retention in the profession, and professional development participation. We do not have a comprehensive national database through which to engage with teachers or to address issues such as workforce planning. We do not coordinate effort nationally without difficulty, often using expensive, time consuming, one-off research efforts. The National Teacher Workforce Data project is an example of the need for this data. The management and innovative use of possible relationships with teachers must be harnessed and expanded.

Significantly, the Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession will provide

career-long registration and strong and enriched career options through enhanced and new specialisation roles, such as STEM and LOTE, with reward and recognition.

We recommend that TEMAG examine the work of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/> in supporting national accreditation and registration of 14 health professions.

Some of the strengths of AHPRA include:

- strong governance structures
- a publically available national register of individual health practitioners
- consistent approach to registration and renewal processes for health practitioners and students around Australia
- fair processes to investigate matters of professional conduct and performance
- a national approach to registration standards, codes and guidelines
- a rich database of those entering the profession with capacity to stay connected if they leave temporarily

Focus on quality teaching for improved student learning outcomes.

ACDE strongly endorses the centrality of student learning outcomes in schools as the measure that matters in assessing teaching quality. There is a paucity of strong, scalable conclusive research that relates the work of teaching to the improvement in student learning. This is one of the most important but difficult areas of teachers' work to measure effectively from pre-service teacher to graduate teacher and beyond.

We therefore propose a virtual Australian Teacher Research Institute to:

- collaborate in a longitudinal national study of the impact of teaching on learning
- examine the relationship between teaching and learning outcomes from Australian data and compare and benchmark these data with reliable overseas evidence
- identify the elements of Initial Teacher Education which explicitly support student learning
- reach across the teaching profession to establish sustained and systematic professional development that is research-based and drives learning outcomes
- generate innovative ideas from sustained, rigorous, international standard research in pedagogy and practice
- foster new networks for research especially in areas of high need, for example: STEM led by Australia's leading science and mathematics education researchers, and strategies to attract quality teaching to hard-to-staff schools

ACDE's Research Deans' network represents all providers and will act as lead partner to drive this work. The Institute will be independent, connect lead researchers nationally through digital platforms and engage teachers for evidence-based teaching.

The Australian Teacher Research Institute will provide all school systems and Initial Teacher Education providers with access to its findings and will be closely linked to the Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession. It will bring ideas and evidence from overseas to compare with Australian data and experience. It

will provide evidence upon which the most effective teaching practice can be built by and for Australian schools and higher education.

Enhance quality teaching from graduation to proficiency

ACDE asserts that Initial Teacher Education bridges the years from entry to completion of a pre-service teacher education course, and critically also includes the first 2 years of teaching and full registration as a proficient teacher. The important leadership work on Threshold Learning Outcomes from Bachelor and Master degrees in Education completed in 2011 through an ACDE project (Health, G., 2011) contributes strong foundations for this reform along with the Australian Standards for the Teaching Profession.

An essential contributing factor to a high quality profession and retaining our highly capable teacher graduates is strengthening the first years in teaching for better student learning. A significant gap in teacher professional education is Induction to the profession, and strengthening the links between graduate outcomes and emerging professional capability is essential.

Effective Induction and developing beginning teachers' capacity to engage with the students' families and communities is particularly relevant to student learning. Initial Teacher Education faces a number of challenges as it strives to support the development of a diverse and inclusive teacher workforce. It must relate and respond to the Australian community, graduate teachers from diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and ensure teaching is contextualised from the background and needs of learners (Patton et al, 2012). A quality Induction programme supports beginning teachers connections to community and contexts and informs teaching decisions.

ACDE proposes a national Graduate Certificate in Professional Teaching (GCPT) led by the Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession in partnership with universities. The Graduate Certificate programme provides a strong framework in which the Induction programme is situated, has regard for the local contexts of learners and communities and is organised over the first two years of teaching. It will be recognised as a pathway to further study within the profession.

Such an approach scaffolds improving evidence-based decision-making in the first years of teaching. It maintains the focus on initial teacher education through professional development and rigorous induction for improved student learning, rather than 'survival' in the classroom, as is so often reported.

This programme will focus on improving school student learning and drive school-based mentoring and high quality learning for teachers in local contexts. Significantly, it

is a programme of learning based on quality research and will embrace and model the digital and knowledge economies in its implementation.

Reconceptualise professional experience

As the teaching profession moves towards a standards-based approach to professional learning at all stages of a teaching career (Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, 2011), a range of new demands is being placed on higher education providers and education systems. Employers demand that graduates of teacher education programmes demonstrate their readiness to transition into the profession with a repertoire of professional practices and evidence they satisfy benchmark academic and professional standards. Even with the assurances provided through quality Induction outlined above, the current approach to professional experience struggles to provide necessary confidence. This may be due to inconsistency in the quality of placement, variation in teacher judgment and overwhelming discrepancies in the assessment of graduating teachers.

There is an urgent need to urge stakeholders across the sector to discard redundant processes and nomenclature from the previous era and transform the purposes and practices of professional experience. This must embrace evidence as the platform for future discourse, policy and practice levels. Specifically, ACDE is prepared to lead a process that:

- builds consensus on a reconfigured national approach to professional experience
- brings consistency in key elements of professional experience policy and practice across all universities in Australia offering initial teacher education
- conceptualises an evidenced-based standards approach to graduate assessment within initial teacher education programmes across the national higher education sector
- establishes authentic assessment strategies in and throughout initial teacher preparation programmes including a suite of assessment tasks, tools, rubrics and self-auditing frameworks, and a national agreed graduate assessment profile

Strengthening the relationship between the school and university, the professional teacher, teacher educator and pre-service teacher to drive student learning is a fundamental priority for Initial Teacher Education. It is essential

that the profession promote and generalise across the highly successful models of Partnerships for Professional Experience that exist in almost all universities with school and early childhood education providers. We must rethink the way experienced teachers engage with the practicum and the way they are rewarded.

Current arrangements, including funding and payments, are a major hurdle to transparent engagement with the profession. Marginal increases in pay to individuals have been an ineffective incentive for teacher involvement in pre-service education for decades and a fresh approach is long overdue.

Remuneration has been a point of contention, conflict and confusion. There are better ways to manage this. While it is not an area for Australian Government's direct involvement, a national reform debate and agenda that takes some pressures off the remuneration barrier would be a welcome initiative. ACDE will collaborate in the leadership of this national debate which has been avoided to date. ACDE has proposals that can be a catalyst for these discussions. The Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession will provide an appropriate body to lead this discussion and importantly connect data and people for strong partnerships in professional experience.

Re-balance initial teacher education content and pedagogy.

Initial Teacher Education through robust partnerships between higher education, schools and their communities must foster commitment to innovation and life-long learning. The relationship between content and pedagogy is iterative and finely balanced in excellent teaching. Teaching requires well educated, highly knowledgeable and skilled practitioners with advanced capacity to think critically and make decisions for improved student learning, based on research and evidence.

Teaching is the nexus of student engagement in learning with, for and from advanced theoretical knowledge of excellent education and pedagogical practice and the capacity to employ the appropriate teaching strategies to enhance learning (content). Initial Teacher Education must develop teachers' knowledge, skills, attributes and capability to enable improved student learning. ACDE strongly commends a shift in the balance in Initial Teacher Education to engage more deeply with the learning of students, from the early years of initial teacher education programmes and to continue this relationship through at least the first 2 years in the profession.

The mid-late 21st century classroom is unimaginable. It is, however, very likely connected, dynamic as the knowledge and digital economies drive new pedagogies, as well as new knowledge or content. Knowledge counts and knowing how to engage students, sparking the next inquiry and using the latest knowledge to make decisions, and solve problems is critical for

all in a globalised economy.

As the nature of learning settings changes, the professional culture must change. It must demonstrate cultural competence and embrace new ways of learning by modern students, new communication technologies and expertise from the best sources of knowledge. Two possible examples include partnerships with discipline experts and letting student experts lead by “flipping” classrooms—physically and virtually. Teachers must respond to local contexts, including, rural communities, Indigenous contexts, early childhood and the post-compulsory years of schooling.

The Australian curriculum identifies key knowledge areas and Australia needs more specialist teachers in key areas, such as STEM and LOTE. Every generalist teacher is not able to an expert in all areas. As a result, special initiatives in recruitment to teaching and partnerships which provide expert knowledge in schools and early childhood settings must be encouraged. These partnerships build career alternatives, and retain our best teachers and attract new specialists, such as in STEM and LOTE, to teaching.

A critical review of new initiatives is needed to learn from the success and challenges of programmes such as Teach for Australia, the Victorian government Career Change, Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, etc. As well, for example, part-time arrangements for those with skills and capabilities which complement teaching are required.

Response to TEMAG questions

1. What characteristics should be fostered and developed in graduate teachers through their initial teacher education?

Families and communities have high expectations of schools. They want quality schools and teachers and are increasingly making conscious decisions about the schooling choices for their children. Workplaces, communications and social environments are changing rapidly and schools at all levels have an important responsibility to prepare young people for the challenges of a changing and complex world. Similarly, the focus of schooling is broadening as school populations become increasingly culturally diverse. There is a need for schools and early childhood settings to focus on the knowledge, skills and capabilities required for students to develop capability and capacity in literacy and numeracy, problem solving, creativity, innovation, scientific and technological skills, learning for a knowledge society, and with an awareness that schooling is merely the beginning of a journey of lifelong education and learning.

The development of quality teaching practices, responsive to learners and their contexts, is a career long journey. Graduate teachers require ongoing mentoring and support for induction to the profession as well as to the educational and community contexts. Graduate teachers, like graduates in other professions, are at the start of their professional journey and need sustained and targeted support if they are to continue to develop across the span of their professional careers. Teachers are a vital aspect of the schooling process and it is therefore necessary that strategies are developed so that teaching is viewed as an attractive career choice, especially in high demand areas (currently including science, mathematics and technology).

ACDE's proposal is that a formal framework for this development includes:

- all initial teacher education students are welcomed to the profession through a special strand of registration with the Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession
- Initial Teacher Education spans across the first two years of teaching through formal Induction and accredited professional learning programmes

1.1. How can those best suited to the teaching profession be identified?

Selection into Initial Teacher Education needs to focus on those who are both genuinely committed to the teaching profession, and who have the necessary academic background to complete successfully the required university course. These capabilities: a) to undertake their course of study and, b) to work with

young people for their learning, are essential. When applicants provide information about these two capabilities, it is assumed that they will be more successful in their course and develop readiness to begin their careers. While it is sometimes proposed that Interviewing students could provide some useful information about their likelihood to succeed there is currently no evidence to link selection methods with improved results for learning outcomes of young people after graduation. The logistics of these intensive selection activities are costly as well as unproven. A potential strength of wider selection processes is to develop a more diverse teacher population, to recruit and attract teachers to regional, rural and remote settings and to build selection approaches which welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrants, as well as those from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Most universities select the majority students on a 'number' based on Year 12 (or equivalent) outcomes that is not sufficiently nuanced to make a reliable prediction about their suitability for teaching. Almost all universities also apply additional criteria to the selection of those applicants who do not have a clear academic attainment rank. For example, Queensland will move (in 2016) to require successful studies in specific discipline areas prior to entering a teacher education programme. This will add to the OP (or equivalent) score required currently by universities. Other States seem to be implementing similar schemes but this practice is in direct opposition to the national approach recommended in this ACDE submission.

The ACDE believes that, in light of the contrary evidence, adding complexity to the entry requirements for Initial Teacher Education is a misplaced and resource intensive exercise. There is better evidence to support working on the Threshold Learning Outcomes of graduates and on effective support in the beginning years of teaching.

ACDE supports the UA/AITSL initiative in defining Selection for Initial Teacher Education through the Capability Framework which includes two key Capabilities identified by a recent study of all Australian teacher education providers:

- capability to undertake and be successful in the course of study, including work at university, other higher education institutions and in schools
- capability to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to engage with the profession of teaching and enhance the learning of young people
(Universities Australia, 2014)

1.2. What are the skills and personal characteristics of an effective beginning teacher? How can teacher education courses best develop these?

Beginning teachers require a broad range of skills and knowledge including appropriate levels of literacy and numeracy. The balance of sound content and pedagogical knowledge is vital. They also require a range of personal attributes including a strong desire to improve student learning outcomes and opportunities, persistence, resilience and a deep commitment to professional renewal through reflective practice. The balance of content and pedagogical knowledge throughout university courses is critical for pre-service teachers to develop the skills, knowledge and attributes for quality teaching and life-long contribution to the profession.

University courses build on and enhance the knowledge, skills and personal attributes of pre-service teachers. Initial Teacher Education programmes enable their students to build awareness of their own positive attributes and those to be developed, through instilling in them the skills required to be reflective practitioners. Initial Teacher Education courses must focus on graduating pre-service teachers with a broad range of professional experiences (both at university, in school and in community settings) that develop the skills required to facilitate the learning of the diverse student populations that exist in contemporary education. Increasing the capability to build strong reflective practice, based on working with young people and their learning, and sound peer feedback must continue in beginning years of teaching. The challenge of building partnerships with schools and educational settings during the Initial Teacher Education programme is strong. Universities and schools and systems are caught between the structures of their institutions and flexible sustainable practices require support and are difficult to formalise and manage. Yet this is a fundamental way to deliver on the development of the characteristics needed for successful teaching.

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate Level provide a sound basis for the desired qualities of the graduate teacher. These nationally agreed standards provide a comprehensive overview of an effective graduate teacher, but require greater understanding by the profession and its leaders. Combined with the Threshold Learning Outcomes there is enough well-researched definition to underpin our recommended approach.

1.3. What teaching practices should be developed in graduate teachers through their initial teacher education?

These have been discussed above, but in summary, ACDE is committed to strong focus and achievement in each graduate in the following areas:

- strong pedagogical and content knowledge
- proactive classroom management techniques
- reflection on practice to enhance student learning
- Innovative and engaging teaching strategies, including digital technologies

that cater for
a diverse student population

Standard 3 of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers provides a comprehensive overview of the nationally agreed approach to quality pedagogical practice.

1.4. How can the teaching practices that produce the best student outcomes be identified?

Teachers require a vast array of skills and strategies but most importantly, a capacity to know, understand and respond to the particular needs of each learner and their community. It is simply not possible for every graduate to have experience and demonstrated capability to respond to every learning need and every possible setting. However, in increasingly diverse classrooms, teachers must be prepared to identify and cater for the learning needs of all students. This is perhaps the most critical aspect of modern education and graduates must be prepared to embrace and cater for diversity in the student cohort. This diversity is both broad and complex – and often includes socio-economic, emotional, psychological, family and other matters, in addition to the matters of differential cognitive and learning ability.

ACDE argues that the key to sound teacher education and preparation of graduates who demonstrate innovative, effective and reflective classroom practice is the development of teaching collaborations and partnerships and with communities of learning within the profession.

1.5. How can teacher education programmes encourage teachers to reflect on evidence to support their choice of teaching practice?

Critical reflection on practice which informs and drives improved teaching is a fundamental skill for effective teachers. University courses place a high priority on developing reflective skills and practices for the purpose of improving student learning outcomes and opportunities. This is a foundational component of quality contemporary initial teacher education courses.

The challenge for Initial Teacher Education programmes currently, is that pre-service teachers do not teach alone, so their teaching is always supported by the mentor teacher. This is appropriate, but it is also therefore necessary to expand the view of initial teacher education to include Induction so that beginning teachers are able to have a structured introduction to teaching which supports quality practices. Building on this in the early years of teaching practice and encouraging ongoing learning across the profession will consolidate this foundational learning in practice.

1.6. How does reflection on evidence translate into student outcomes?

Pre-service teachers must develop skills in using classroom data to reflect on and plan their teaching practice and this area of skill development is essential in Initial Teacher Education. It is through evidence-based planning that teachers are able to make informed decisions about the appropriate content and pedagogy to drive student learning. University courses include this aspect of professional work with pre-service teachers in teaching degrees, and reflection and research are integral to all courses, but especially in relation to the professional experience. Professional experience enables pre-service teachers to develop focused reflection in authentic contexts, guide and inform new decisions for teaching, and to then importantly debrief with teachers and university academics to build further enquiry, knowledge and capacity as teachers.

2. What teaching practices should be developed in graduate teachers through their initial teacher education?

Reviews of teacher education in Australia report strong agreement with the view that graduate teachers needed to be more 'classroom ready' and more able to address the learning needs of students (e.g. State Education and Training Committee of the Parliament of Victoria, 2005; National Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007). There is also evidence that the quality of teacher education is strengthened when universities establish closer partnerships with schools and increase the amount of time pre-service teachers spend in schools with scaffolded and supportive professional experience. Quality experiences in schools equip pre-service teachers with deep knowledge of teaching and learning and develop their understanding of and commitment to teaching as well as a sense of the value of the work of a teacher.

Beginning teachers who graduate with a strong philosophical vision for teaching cope more effectively with their first year of teaching. This correlates with reviews of teacher efficacy including the report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009), entitled *Creating effective teaching and learning environments: First results from the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)* which found that teachers who believed they had the capacity to learn how to teach were more able to use evidence to solve problems and self-moderate their teaching.

Teacher education practices should therefore focus on teacher professionalism and how teaching influences student learning. However, the cognitive elements of teaching are more likely to be developed when pre-service teachers have successfully engaged with and mastered the relational dynamics in classrooms.

ACDE believes that responsiveness to evidence, such as student progress and engagement in classrooms, and resilience, are vital characteristics for teachers. These two “Rs” facilitate observation and analysis which, in turn, powers innovation. Suggestions in our submission to TEMAG aim to build on the strengths of Initial Teacher Education to capitalise on the Threshold Learning Outcomes.

2.1. How can teaching practices that produce the best student outcomes be identified?

An effective pedagogy for teacher education clearly establishes links between the knowledge about learning and teaching and the practical knowledge of (doing) learning and teaching (Loughran, 2006; 2008). The supporting learning processes needed to achieve this balance places pre-service teachers in an active and participatory learning role in their teacher education programme. Classroom-based learning is seen to occur through active and collaborative teaching experiences with more experienced mentors who engage pre-service teachers in discussions about their teaching actions and student responses. Extensive classroom experience with professional mentors supports pre-service teachers to develop the cognitive insights they need to become responsive and resilient teachers.

The focus on collaborative and professional discursive processes and the use of evidence in teaching and learning aligns with the concept of an applied professional learning model for teacher education. The broad framing of the professional work of teachers through the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the Threshold Learning Outcomes give a sound basis for such work.

Pre-service teachers need to learn to use evidence to support their understandings of how each element of knowledge guides their teaching and learning. Evidence from over thirty years of ongoing review of teacher education in Finland (Niemi and Jakku-Sihoven, 2005) supports the view that an effective framework for teacher education includes a capacity for research. In Finland, all beginning teachers are required to know about recent advances in research in the subject(s) they teach and to have a general understanding of teacher education research. Pre-service teachers are required to study qualitative and quantitative research methods as part of their teacher education programme. Furthermore, they are expected develop an internalised research attitude toward the task of teaching and to apply this knowledge through active processes in schools.

2.2. How can teacher education programmes encourage teachers to reflect on evidence to support their choice of teaching practice?

Teacher education programmes must actively foster the development of applied links between planning and the use of evidence in teaching and learning under the guidance of expert teachers. All pre-service teachers require opportunities with teachers over extended periods of time to gain knowledge of students and the curriculum and to develop deep professional understandings about the goals and purposes of classroom activities. Pre-service teachers and mentor classroom teachers bring different knowledge and experience to their interpretations of classroom events and it will take time and support for the pre-service teacher to engage effectively in deep discussions about teaching and learning. Judgemental feedback fails to provide sufficient information for developing teachers reflect on their practice and to make adjustments in their teaching. Teacher education programmes therefore need to engage pre-service teachers in the processes of learning and teaching rather than on how they perform as a teacher.

2.3 How can reflection on evidence translate into student outcomes?

Reflective practice in teacher education is an iterative learning process that is designed to refine skills of observation in learning and teaching (Pollard et al, 2008). Reflective practice in initial teacher education sets the ground for teacher self-knowledge and for building pre-service teachers' capacity to understand complexity and diversity in schooling. It also provides an important framework for building professional understanding and capacity as a teacher.

Pre-service teacher education programmes in Australia use rigorous reflective processes to assist pre-service teachers to adopt an attitude of inquiry about learning and the contexts in which it occurs. Action-based learning projects are undertaken as collaborative activities within schools to engage pre-service teachers in applied research about learning in real classrooms with teachers and their students.

3. What level of integration should there be between initial teacher education providers and schools?

3.1. What evidence is there that effective integration achieves good teaching practice? What are the most effective types of integrated experiences in preparing new teachers?

There is a need to modernise the notion of professional experience away from an old style voluntary or 'extra burden' view to one which values the engagement of pre-service teachers in the active work of teaching to enhance student learning.

For the purposes of this submission, the ACDE adopts the concept of

integration consistent with Smigiel and Harris, 2008, viz:

Work-integrated learning or professional experience describe programmes where 'students engage with workplaces and communities as a formal part of their studies'. Terms such as 'practicum', 'field-work', 'internships', 'cooperative education' and 'clinical placement' describe these programmes.

Despite the view of Wilson and Floden (2003, p. 17) that "there is simply not a sufficient body of literature to make claims that we know anything about the features of a high quality field experience", there is wide agreement in Australia about the basic features of a high quality practicum:

- design and implementation processes undertaken within a partnership involving teacher education institutions, schools, school systems and relevant professional bodies
- articulation of clear, progressive stages for the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, attributes and dispositions of beginning teachers
- integration of theoretical knowledge and professional practice. (Eyers, 2005)

This is a useful starting point.

The Australian teaching profession must move to a broader understanding of Work Integrated Learning, acknowledging:

- a range of practical issues act as barriers to high quality practicum programmes, including: a chronic shortage of placements
- host schools must deal with the differing expectations and systems of multiple teacher education institutions
- a lack of time for mentor teachers to meet and work with pre-service teachers and other school and university-based colleagues
- inadequate time for this element of their work being allocated to teacher educators by their home institutions

(House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, 2007; Rivers, 2006; Cameron & Baker, 2004; Hastings, 2004).

Effective relationships with schools and early childhood settings do not advance productively when universities and employing authorities enter into closed contracts and this restricts the scope of professional learning which can be experienced by pre-service teachers.

Further, alignment across theory and field work is essential to successful Work

Integrated Learning (Meyer & Land, 2005; Townsend & Bass, 2007); Longer placements are the preferred mode of engagement and have greater success for retention (10 weeks to 4 months) (Darling-Hammond; Ure, 2009); Opportunities to connect theory and practice must be built into professional experience formally rather than an ad hoc approach (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2005).

ACDE believes that for high quality and sustainable work integrated learning models we must look more broadly than the classic classroom-based models mainly relied on today.

Online collaborations and learning communities are forming around schooling and around specialised study areas within schooling, such as STEM, LOTE and cultural competence. Some pre-service teachers gain excellent and relevant experience in extracurricular or after school programme work, in vacation programmes, in Indigenous tutoring or cultural competence education, sports coaching, or in disability community support work. At present there is no structured way to give credit for such enhancements to professional experience and there is room for reconsideration. This can be accommodated in our proposed reconceptualised Initial Teacher Education approach, including the first years of teaching practice.

Technology allows experts to beam into the classroom and seminars with real time engagement and feedback are conducted online every day in the modern education world. Work Integrated Learning can and should move beyond the school and classroom. There are efficiency as well as effectiveness arguments to support such an extension of learning modes.

3.2. What are the cost implications of more integrated professional experience? Are there more effective ways in which professional experience might be funded?

There are difficulties in achieving change to costs in the current funding environment. The archaic funding arrangements promote perverse policy outcomes. They promote shorter and cheaper placements when the evidence points to longer term engagement. The current model of a daily payment is itself antiquated. It does not work well and there is disputation, not least about amounts and methods of remuneration. These arrangements strangle innovation and evidence based practice. They impede the development of a professional ethos in the teaching profession that sees mentoring as a professional responsibility rather than an option.

The current consensus around the payment of placements is under significant pressure and the consensus around it has broken. While the Federal government funds professional experience through CGS various states are indulging in enterprise bargain arrangements that factor in professional experience payments to mentors at levels which are above the Federal government contribution. This situation is unsustainable and promotes a poor professional culture. The current model of a daily payment should be phased out. It does not

work well and there is disputation, not least about amounts and methods of remuneration.

There is a need to link the supervision and mentoring of pre-service teaching to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. This could mean that all potential lead teachers commit to mentoring at least once every two years, for example; and that all potential highly accomplished teachers commit to pre-service mentoring once every three or four years, depending on need. Proficient teachers should commit to pre-service mentoring once every four years unless directed by their supervisors not to commit. Of course, a differentiated payments or other system made direct to school partners could be proposed.

Alternatively, ACDE commends an approach which is based in Professional Development, reputation and achievement of professional standards around mentoring and leadership. A professional standard or code of conduct would be instrumental in outlining leadership, mentoring and developmental responsibilities of teachers as professionals. The Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession would negotiate and appropriately accredit such leadership.

3.3. What other methods, or combination of these methods, could achieve better outcomes than the current approach to professional experience?

A national strategic developmental approach rather than a hit and miss practicum approach based on evidence (Smith, 1991; Ericson, 2006) namely:

- identification of capacities and dispositions required to perform in the domain
- learning to perform in mentor supervised conditions (Ericson & Smith, 1991) in a reproducible manner—practice and preparation
- adapting reproducible performances in mentor supervised conditions across contexts—need prior experience, knowledge and extensive experience for growth and development
- specific extended domain related experience is shown to attain expert performance.

ACDE has plans to continue collaborative work in this important area.

Importantly, the ACDE and the proposed Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession and Australian Teacher Research Institute can bring together communities across teaching to work online in virtual “classrooms of teaching”. Such forums will compare and debate research findings, innovative approaches, experience and ideas.

3.4. How can partnerships between teacher education providers and schools be strengthened to make teacher education more effective?

It is critical that professional experience is seen within the context of a national market and within the Australian Professional Standards. There is a danger of individual states making individual requirements in professional experience. This tendency has escalated and this has set up the urgent need for a more uniform national approach from which quality and effectiveness can be monitored and benchmarked. Many of the additional or duplicated requirements and the cost to the Commonwealth are not understood in detail and are effectively a growing fiscal exposure for the Government.

So, we can strengthen by developing a national approach based on models that have been piloted and have proven successful outcomes. These models have been subject to rigorous research and the development of evidence about their effectiveness is in the public domain. They include:

- partnership/collaborative learning models
- reflective Model
(Ryan, Toohey, Hughes, 1996)
- clinical Model (Carnegie Foundation, 2001)
- (T)PCK (Shulman, 1987)
- professional development schools
(Darling-Hammond, 2009)

(See Ure et al 2009)

ACDE supports the establishment of the Australian Teacher Research Institute to scaffold and ensure that innovations in Initial Teacher Education are research led and informed, rather than succumbing to policy and change in response to anecdotal reports.

3.5. How can teacher education providers and schools best work together to select and train mentor teachers to effectively support pre-service teachers on professional experience?

Putting in place a developmental national professional development framework for:

- Level A Early career mentors
- Level B mid career mentor
- Level C lead mentors

ACDE's recommendation for a Framework for professional learning be developed and, coupled with the credentialed professional practice degree programmes, will support and enable this to be achieved.

3.6. How can consistency of good practice and continuous improvement across teacher education providers and schools be assured?

ACDE believes that the proposed reforms will achieve this, viz:

- establish an Australian Centre for the Teaching Profession
- establish a virtual Australian Teacher Research Institute
- enhance Quality Teaching from Graduation to Proficiency
- reconceptualise Professional Experience
- re-balance initial teacher education content and pedagogy.

4. What balance is needed between understanding what is taught and how it is taught?

4.1 What is the desirable interaction between content knowledge and teaching practice for developing teachers? What is the difference for primary and secondary teaching? Why is there a difference?

Teachers at all levels of formal schooling require strong content knowledge base coupled with structured, supported and critiqued professional experiences, and a deep understanding of student learning. The developing teacher will acquire and refine their skills and expertise in the dynamic interplay of these elements in their Initial Teacher Education course and then build on these through initial induction and mentoring programmes. ACDE believes we should formally credential and innovatively assess individual progress over the first years of teaching, awarding a Graduate Certificate in Teaching Professional Practice to those who engage in continuous professional learning through Induction.

Each beginning teacher will develop differently and in response to the young people they teach and their school or early childhood setting and community. For example, in primary schools the focus may be upon the learner acquiring the fundamental skills of literacy, numeracy, enquiry, and personal learning confidence through developmentally appropriate experiences where the teacher utilises a range of teaching and learning approaches. In the secondary school the teacher may build on the fundamental skills to facilitate a deeper understanding of the core disciplines that structure our knowledge.

In fostering a commitment to innovation and life-long learning, a shift is required in the balance of initial teacher education and to build on this in the early years of teaching, as proposed in this submission. Developing quality teaching draws on both subject content, and content and pedagogical knowledge, in the discipline of education:

- critical inquiry approach to learning and teaching
- explicit teaching of content
- pedagogy of differentiated learning—to acknowledge the diverse range of capabilities of different cohorts
- digital learning—identify how technology informs the design of pedagogy

This pedagogical-content re-balance provides scope for developing teachers to imagine a change in the culture of learning in classrooms and embrace new ways of individual and collective learning by twenty-first century students. This approach provides a foundation for new teachers to use new communication technologies to access the widest and best sources of knowledge and “flip” classrooms both physically and virtually so that content experts can be beamed in and students creatively demonstrate their own expertise and lead learning among their peers.

4.2. Should there be explicit training in how to teach literacy and numeracy in all teaching courses?

Teachers at all levels require a sound understanding of and the ability to implement literacy and numeracy programmes:

- at primary levels these will be more central as they provide the foundation building blocks for later learning and student confidence
- at the secondary teachers must also understand the particular literacy and numeracy demands of their specific discipline and draw on this understanding to incorporate appropriate teaching and learning strategies that ensure their students have effective command over these demands

4.3. How can the balance between the need for subject specialisation and a generalist approach to primary teaching qualifications be addressed?

Primary school teachers who complete a four-year Bachelor of Education degree should have solid core knowledge of several disciplines as well as the understanding and confidence to teach across the full curriculum. This can be achieved by requiring a Major and a Minor study in two content areas supplemented by the curriculum pedagogy Units, which provide discipline-specific pedagogy and cover the other primary curriculum areas. Alternatively, there can be a focus on Education studies as distinct from curriculum units, such as learning and cognition, social and emotional

development, sociology/change and society, managing learning environments, etc.

These learning experiences are then to be implemented in the structured professional experience sessions to provide opportunities for the developing teacher, under the close supervision of the school-based co-operating teacher, to practice the teaching of the whole curriculum.

ITE courses should provide a balance of generalist and specialist teachers in the key areas of STEM and LOTE and the Arts, for example. We should not expect every generalist teacher to do all things well, rather provide support instead, along with incentives to partner with specialists in the classroom and build career alternatives in the process, aiming to retain more of our best teachers for longer.

4.4 What, if any, changes need to be made to the structure of teacher education courses? Should content be studied before pedagogy (i.e. should 'what' to teach be studied before the 'how' to teach)?

At present it is possible to see a variety of teacher education 'models' in Australian Universities and this diversity supports valuable differences to reflect important contextual and cultural attributes.

All of the research literature and our experience would suggest that there is no single right way to structure the courses. There is evidence to suggest that some preparation programmes do not allow adequate time for the beginning teacher's development. The question of how the teacher education course is structured depends on:

- whether or not the preparation is for the primary or secondary level, and
- for an integrated 4-year course or a 2-year end-on course, etc.

The answers to these questions will determine the amount of discipline content needed. However, irrespective of the actual disciplinary knowledge included, it is essential that the course has an integrated approach to content, pedagogy, student learning, and the professional experience sessions.

Evidence of the appropriate nature of teacher preparation courses are:

- initial Teacher Education national peer review project led by the University of Tasmania, 2013
- benchmark tool for ITE courses, disciplines and components—ITE / literacy and numeracy and professional experience
- capstone assessment led by UWS, 2013
- reporting on professional placements in schools

- quality assurance processes: SEQs, CEQs, GDS, programme accreditation documents, etc

4.5. What barriers are there to restructuring teacher education courses to ensure they address these concerns, and how may they be overcome?

ACDE promotes a model of partnership in pre-service professional experience, in which working with pre-service teachers in the classroom adds significant opportunity and value to teachers in strengthening opportunities for improving student learning. There is also a significant contribution by teacher mentors contributing to the future of their own profession, as is the case in other professions. Historically, the biggest barrier has been the separation of university and school as different sites of teacher professional learning. Breaking down the barrier requires long term engagement in partnerships from both sides but this in turn requires a change in culture, fundamental changes to the way teacher and academic work is evaluated and respected, and a shift in workload arrangements to provide incentives, status and capacity to build and maintain collaborative activities across sites

4.6. Why does Australia face a shortage of maths, science and language teachers?

ACDE believe the present status of teaching and its desirability as a career, the constant negative media presentation of teachers and teaching, and the relatively poor remuneration of teachers as they enter their mid-career phase when compared with other career choices contribute to these shortages.

The past twenty years have seen a significant decline in student interest in science and mathematics both at secondary and tertiary education levels. Many different initiatives have been enacted to address this matter, including marketing the attractiveness and career prospects of graduates and the importance of mathematics and science to everyday life and work; retraining schemes for existing teachers and career change seekers and financial incentives such as reduced HECS and scholarships.

All these initiatives have met with limited success due to the many layers of interrelated complexity, spanning teacher expertise and comfort with science and maths curriculum in the school years; the attractiveness of particular careers, including those grounded in science and mathematics as well as teaching itself and the culturally challenging and complex positioning of mathematics and sciences in schools, with student peers, in universities and in the workplace.

There is a population of native speakers in many languages in Australia. This population is under-valued. The current requirements for extensive study in the language in an undergraduate degree to be qualified eliminates many able native speakers and, for example, there is little reason for a native speaker to complete a major or sequence of 4–6 subjects in a language in which they are already

fluent. There is a need to review the need for a major in the language to be taught in the undergraduate degrees of LOTE teacher education candidates.

4.7. What can be done to encourage teaching students to develop a specialisation in these areas?

It has been long argued that the attractiveness of the Teaching profession can be improved by addressing, on a broad community front, the issues of status, reporting and remuneration of teachers. The Australian Teaching Standards should be utilised to provide a clearer classroom-based career for teachers. Stronger links with industry are required so that students in schools engage with industry-based scientists, mathematicians, linguists so that they experience and learn to understand the “real life” applications of these fields of knowledge and aspire to teaching careers in these areas. There is also a need to promote volunteer mentoring of teachers, engage subject experts such retired professionals with demonstrated success in these areas.

To encourage teaching students to specialise in STEM is to restructure an interdisciplinary curriculum model for mathematics and science teacher education through the development of integrative, issues-based units of study collaboratively developed by STEM researchers, teacher educators and social scientists. An active pedagogy approach to this curriculum will enable students to draw on and develop their knowledge base in mathematics and science, their capacity for creativity and scientific interpretation and their communication and teaching skills. Addressing this issue requires rethinking the curriculum of science, mathematics and education and creates focal areas where learning from the disciplines can come together to develop deep, integrated knowledge.

ABOUT ACDE

The Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) was established in 1991 as the peak association of the Deans of Faculties and Heads of Schools of Education in universities and other higher education institutions in Australia. A list of members is at <http://www.acde.edu.au/pages/page24.asp> as is the Annual Report for 2011–12.

In recent years ACDE has shown unique and innovative ways of working that facilitate institutional change, national collaboration, and increased capacity to lift national effort in key agendas. A process for collaborative responses and practices within and between member institutions is well established.

The development of this submission to the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group has been the result of extensive consultation within the ACDE Membership including:

- a full day meeting of all Deans and Heads of School on 2 April 2014 to develop ACDE priorities in the context of TEMAG and
- meetings of the ACDE Board and State and Territory Councils of Deans of Education

ACDE members are active in a range of consultative forums outlined. Most recently this has included work with the Universities Australia/AITSL Collaborative Working Group on:

- selection Guidelines for entry into Initial Teacher Education Programmes; and
- the development of a National Ethics approval for current research.

Major Projects

- Universities Australia survey of Selection Processes to Initial Teacher Education Programs
- The Respect, Relationships and Reconciliation Project, the 'RRR Project'
- The More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teacher Initiative, the 'MATSITI Project'
- Strategic Capacity Building for Australian Educational Research initiative: www.aare.edu.au/pages/page116.asp
- The Program Standards 3.1 & 3.2 Project—Literacy and Numeracy Attainment of Pre-service Teachers, the 'Program Standards 3.1 & 3.2 Project'
- ACDE Project: Bachelor Degrees in Education Threshold Learning Outcomes (pdf, 316Kb)
- Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project—Masters degrees in Education (pdf, 588Kb)
- Teaching Teachers for the Future—final report (pdf, 685Kb)
- AARE/ACDE National Education Research Futures Summit Final Report (pdf, 11,845Kb)

Major Submissions

- ACDE Submission to Senate Select Committee Inquiry on Teaching and Learning (pdf 767Kb)

- Higher Education Base Funding Review (pdf, 1.1Mb)
- Consultation on Postgraduate Places (pdf, 270Kb)

Networks

The Council is well supported by three networks:

- The Network of Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching in Education (NADLATE)
- The Community of Associate Deans of Research in Education (cADRE)
- The ACDE Vocational Education Group

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The ACDE looks forward to the opportunity to work further with TEMAG in the development of these ideas for reform. We then hope to engage as stakeholders with Government once directions have been clearly set. It is high time for an industry self-regulation approach which makes effective national standards for teaching quality.

There are barriers to teaching quality, mobility and innovation that can now be removed. This should be backed by solid, research-based accountability for student outcomes across Australian schools. Responsiveness to the evidence and resilience in the teaching profession are keys to the change needed. The leadership challenge is on for Australia's future teaching profession

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