

Changing Patterns of Teacher Education in Australia

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Abstract

This paper is designed to portray the historical development of teacher education in Australia. The paper is presented in three parts, each of which represents a 'turn' in the evolution of teacher education. The first details the historical development of teacher education prior to the establishment of the first teachers college in Australia in 1850. The second relates to the training of teachers from 1850 until 1988 and a focus on the 'craft' of teaching. The final turn, which was initiated in 1988, illustrates the emergence of a more scholarly approach with the embedding of teacher education into universities. In conclusion, the likely future turn is explored through an articulation of the tensions that currently permeate teacher education in Australia and which threaten the quality of teacher education in the future.

Introduction

Teacher Education in Australia has been undergoing an inordinate amount of scrutiny since the 1970s and the country's teacher educators currently await the outcomes of yet another federal review of the education 'industry'. On 17 February 2005, the Commonwealth Minister for Education, the Honorable Brendan Nelson, requested the House of Representatives Standing Committee to instigate an inquiry into teacher education. The Australian Commonwealth Government had for some time been expressing grave concern about literacy and numeracy standards in Australian schools and held 'poor teacher training' responsible for such outcomes. While it is the contention of most teacher educators that such a statement is ill-informed and based on

evidence that is largely anecdotal, emotive and politically motivated, the inquiry continues. The terms of reference require the Standing Committee to report on the scope, suitability, organization, resourcing and delivery of teacher training in Australian public and private universities, and to investigate the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australian schools (Parliament of Australia: House of Representatives website 2006). The current inquiry represents yet another of the many twists and turns evident in the development of teacher education in Australia over the past 150 years.

The intense interest in schools, the work of teachers and teacher education is reflected in the many government reports undertaken around Australia in the last two decades. These include: the *Teacher Education in Australia* report (National Board of Teacher Education and Training, 1990); the *Beginning Teachers' Competency* report (Louden, 1992); the *National Competencies Framework* review (Australian Teaching Council, 1996); the *New South Wales Review of Teacher Education – Quality Matters* (Ramsay, 2000); the *National Standards and Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education* (Australian Council of Deans of Education, 2001); *Teacher Standards and Professionalism* report (Australian College of Education, 2001); *Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership* (MCEETYA, 2001) and the refreshing review of the teaching profession. *Prepared to Teach* (Louden *et al*, 2004), which provides a broad data-base on which to critique teacher preparation programs in Australia. Most recently, a report entitled *Teacher Education Accreditation* (Ingvarson, Elliott, Kleinhenz, and McKenzie, 2006), advocates a central regulatory teacher education authority in Australia and a national approach to teacher education accreditation.

Public interest in pre-service teacher education programs in Australia has been prompted by many factors such as current school reform literature; technological change; issues of globalisation; the predicted crisis in teacher supply; the intensification of teachers' work; changing pedagogies; and new education organizational structures. As a result, teacher education in Australia is reconstituting itself in new ways in response to government initiatives, sector demands and public scrutiny. Throughout the country, teacher educators are responding to change and designing an array of new programs that will better prepare teachers for new challenges. In order to understand these new initiatives

it is important to review a number of twists and turns within the history of teacher development in Australia.

In summary, teacher development in Australia began with an apprenticeship model based on pupil teachers, and Model and Normal schools. As in most western countries, a move towards a more formal teachers' college education emerged at the start of the twentieth century, when the craft of teaching acted as a key force in shaping teacher development. In recent times, a more scholarly approach to teacher education has been evident as a consequence of the emergence of a national system of higher education in Australia and the inclusion of teacher development programs in university courses. Despite these developments it is argued in this paper that Australia is on the brink of returning to an apprenticeship model, thereby completing a full cycle of teacher development by returning to a situation reminiscent of the 1850s when schools and school teachers were the central players in teacher development. It is the author's contention that teacher educators in Australia may well be forced to return to a highly centralized, government mandated school-based approach to teacher education.

This paper examines the historical development of teacher education in Australia from its nineteenth century origins through to the present day where teacher education is in a period of turmoil and uncertainty due to limited funding, political intervention and a demoralized teaching profession. The paper is presented in three parts: the first details the historical development of teacher education, prior to the establishment of the first teachers' college in Australia in 1850. This period was dominated by the use of pupil teachers. The second part of the paper elaborates upon the common approach to the training of teachers across Australia from 1850 until 1988. During this period emphasis was placed on an apprenticeship model linked to the 'craft of teaching'. This approach involved educating student teachers in teachers' colleges. They were taught the necessary skills and content knowledge required to implement the craft of teaching. The third part of the paper deals with the post 1988 period which saw teacher education included in university courses, thereby ensuring a more scholarly approach involving not only practical preparation for the classroom but also the study of education. In conclusion, the paper explores the future of teacher education in Australia by articulating the tensions that currently permeate the thinking of teacher educators.

The arrival of the first fleet in Australia

The early years of teacher education in Australia have been studied by Hyams (1979) and others (Garden, 1982; Boardman, 1995; McGuire, 1999) and more recently in the comprehensive works of Gardiner (2004). In hindsight, it is clear that British colonization of Australia gave rise everywhere to procedures, policies and practices in teacher education that were similar to those of the mother country.

The First Fleet, which brought the first British settlers and convicts to Australia, included a small group of children. With no teacher being present, the clergy took responsibility for the education of the children. In the very early days of white settlement few children were educated, due mainly to labour shortages, and the need for children to work the land. There was also an acute shortage of qualified teachers (Gardiner, 2004). The clergy was relied upon to provide education for the poor, while better-off families made private arrangements for the education of their children, following English practices (Partridge, 1968). In the very early years of European settlement there is no evidence of any trained teachers in the colony.

The vocational orientation to teacher development in early Australia

As immigration to Australia increased, trained teachers from England and Scotland took up some teacher positions (Partridge, 1968), however, by the early 1800s, schools still employed mainly untrained teachers, some were even ex convicts (Jones, 1974). In the fullness of time the churches and the state eventually took up the responsibility for educating young Australians. As a result a small number of fee-paying church schools were established for the social elite (Gardiner, 2004) and more scantily resourced government schools for poor working families and the children of convict families. Moves were made in the early 1800s to implement the monitorial methods of British education (Hyams, 1979) but without any sustained success (Turney, 1964).

By 1825 the need for formal training of local teachers was recognized and a three month training course was established by Archdeacon Scott for teachers in Anglican schools, but this proved unsuccessful (Hyams, 1979). Meanwhile, teachers continued to be recruited from the general population and the ranks of reformed convicts. Many had some formal

education but none had any teacher training. Most teachers experienced low status, low pay and oppressive supervision by church and state authorities as they were directed to instruct young people in the most onerous manner to fulfill the demands of government and religious bureaucrats. It was agreed that the training of prospective teachers was a matter of importance, but there was disagreement over the form it should take.

With the expansion of the pastoral industry in Australia in the 1830s, the value of education for young Australian citizens was more widely recognized as shown by the growth of schools. Many were modeled on English grammar schools which required a particular type of teacher who held a teaching qualification. As a result a demand arose for the establishment of teacher training programs to supply teachers for schools financially supported by the new social elite in Australia.

In 1847 it was decided to establish educational boards to cater separately for denominational schools on the one hand, and national or state schools on the other. Teacher training was a priority for both, and initially it was hoped to establish a Normal school (Hyams, 1979). Such schools were designed to train teachers as well as educate students, their key purpose being to establish sound teaching standards for replication elsewhere. Model schools, designed to set the standards for the development of schools elsewhere in the colony, were also initiated in 1850. The students of the Fort Street Model School, Australia's first training institution, were given a one-month period of training and while this provided a quick turnover of teachers, the preparation proved inadequate (Hyams, 1979). Religious authorities were also keen to establish Normal schools, and by 1859 one of their training schools in Melbourne was recognized as a Normal school (Hyams, 1979). A similar development took place in Queensland with the development of a Normal School in Brisbane. Unfortunately, the concept of the normal school, while successful in England, failed to gain popular support in Australia, especially during the period of the gold rushes in the 1850s when teachers often deserted their schools in search of a fortune. Those who stayed behind provided mainly didactic teaching of poor quality, based on limited or no formal training.

In the 1860s the apprenticeship system, based on the English model of teacher training, was introduced in an effort to improve the preparation of teachers (Turney, 1969). Both normal schools and the apprenticeship model (pupil-teachers) co-existed across the three most

populous of Australia's eastern colonies (NSW, Victoria and Queensland) for the next forty years. The first pupil teacher was appointed to the Brisbane Girls' National School in Queensland in 1860. In Queensland pupil teachers were recruited from promising students at the age of 13 or 14 on the recommendation of the head teacher. They were then trained in an ad hoc manner in the classroom to become the future teachers of Queensland. In some cases the students were required to sit an examination before entry, however, this practice did not last long. In neighbouring colonies, pupil teachers embarked on four long years of teaching and studying, with an examination at the end of each year. Pupil teachers received instruction from the head teacher before or after school and in some cases also on Saturdays. During the day they were responsible for instructing lower classes under the supervision of the teacher, although at times they assumed sole responsibility. They received a minimal salary, which was less than the average farm labourer's wage, and 5 to 6 weeks annual holiday (Logan & Watson, 1992). The instruction given to pupil teachers mainly benefited the student's personal education, while providing limited instructional skills necessary for teaching. During the 1870s some pupil teachers also attended normal schools (Anderson, 1960) with a view to enhancing their training but the quality of the supervision was questionable and it was deemed that the service provided by pupil teachers was inadequate (Hyams, 1979). Nevertheless, by 1880 the apprentice system of teacher training was widely used throughout Australia. Pupil teachers were young and enthusiastic, and shamelessly exploited but they were cheap! It is not surprising, therefore, that the pupil teacher system persisted well into the early twentieth century.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century there was talk in some colonies of a move towards the development of specific teacher training institutions and in South Australia efforts were made to make it compulsory for pupil teachers to attend a training school but this move was not followed in the other colonies. As Hyams (1979) duly acknowledged, the platform for Australian teacher education in the twentieth century was built on the coexistence of the normal schools and the pupil-teacher or apprenticeship models of teacher training. Central to both was a commitment to learning in the field. Basic teaching competencies were modelled by Master teachers and then reproduced by the apprentices in ever greater degrees of complexity until the point was reached when the apprentice was decreed job-ready for admission into the profession. By the mid 1890s, however, teacher

organizations were being formed across Australia, and they uniformly opposed the pupil teacher system as a form of cheap labour (Anderson, 1960).

The turn of the century and a shift towards the craft of teaching

With the dawn of a new century there was evidence of new theorising about teacher training generated by developments overseas. The influence of psychology and the impact of liberal or child-centred theory about education was reflected in a renewed interest in the role of theory in teacher development and the importance of instruction in student learning. In 1920, an argument was made for the establishment of teacher training colleges in all the former colonies, now states of Australia, and fledgling state departments of education identified the need for an expansion of teacher education. Across Australia, prior to 1939, there was a significant growth in the number of teacher training colleges, although the pupil teacher system still continued to operate in some states. For example, in Victoria in 1906, only one fifth of the state's teachers had trained at the Melbourne Teachers' College (Education Report, Victoria, 1906). The rest, located mainly in rural areas and provincial towns, had trained as pupil-teachers. By the 1920s the number of former pupil teachers was steadily declining (Browne, 1927) as the number of teacher training institutions increased. The key responsibility of teacher training institutes was to provide programs to develop professional teachers for a rapidly growing nation experiencing an economic boom. In South Australia state teachers' colleges provided initial training for both junior and senior teachers. In Victoria, students completed one year at a teachers' college and then progressed to university for further study. By 1914 universities had made a commitment to the professional preparation of teachers by acknowledging the need for educational theory, and there were even suggestions for teachers' colleges to be absorbed into universities (Hyams, 1979), although this did not take place formally until 1988. Hindering this process for many years was the conflict between the educational values of universities and the professional, practical concerns of colleges (Hyams, 1979). A pronounced binary system of tertiary education emerged in Australia between the two world wars. An elite university system remained essentially disconnected from teacher education which, in turn, became firmly embedded in training colleges which ranked as second tier institutions.

Teacher training now became the responsibility of teachers' college lecturers, most of whom were former school teachers, and the curriculum comprised a course for entry into the ranks of the teaching profession. Initially, training colleges across Australia trained primary and secondary teachers together. This was because there was little distinction drawn between training for the different sectors. The key focus was on teaching content and teaching methods, as well as generic bodies of knowledge deemed appropriate for all age groups of students. College training increased greatly in popularity but there were frequent concerns expressed about the quality of teaching staff and the many and varied number of subjects which it was claimed were often taught in an inadequate manner (Penny, 1966, in Hyams, 1979). Despite these common concerns, teacher training programs developed independently across all the states of Australia. The curriculum was determined in each state by the demands of each government education system. The centralized nature of state control of the curriculum emphasized the need for children to reach set standards of achievement. This left little flexibility for teachers, however, during the 1930s and 40s colleges began introducing more components of educational theory, psychology and methods of teaching (Turney, 1964). Despite this diversification, teacher training programs remained essentially conservative (Hyams, 1979). As Vick (2003) states in his work, the functions of teachers' colleges' were two-fold, one of which was to develop techniques and skills of teaching. It was this emphasis on the 'craft of teaching' that characterised the work of teacher training colleges in Australia from the turn of the century until the late 1980s. Teaching was claimed to be a 'calling' (Schultz, 1923) and it was the brief of the colleges to extend the skills, personal qualities and capacities of student teachers and to nurture the teacher in preparation for entry into the profession of teaching. Nevertheless, an investigation of the literature at that time suggests that teacher development was still craft oriented with the curriculum more concerned with teaching methods and content than with the promotion of the on-going personal-professional qualities of the trainees.

The work of the late Cliff Turney from Sydney University exemplifies the strong practical focus evident during the 1970s and 80s. Teacher education programs across Australia adopted his ideas with gusto and there was barely a training program in Australia that did not have a 'Turney influence' involving 'micro-teaching'. The Sydney Micro-Skills documents and videos (1975) celebrated the fact that

teaching was a craft that could be learned through the teaching of discrete skills such as questioning and reinforcement. It was argued that these skills could be emulated, practised and reviewed to the point that they were successfully acquired prior to entering the teaching force. Teacher education programs positioned this discourse as central to teacher development and supplemented such learning with educational theory and research from the U.K and the USA. This research was very teacher-focused, generating the view that the more we learned about the craft of teaching, the better our teaching practices would become.

While practice teaching in the field was a very important part of this discourse, the colleges had little control of their students when they were on practical work in schools. As is the case today in Australia, many students and teachers saw the school practicum as the most valued component of teacher training and training colleges were expected to respond to the needs of schools. Teacher training programs, despite their perceived autonomy within independent tertiary institutions, were dictated to by school teacher demands. Teacher education institutions were not initiators of change in education. The place of educational research and scholarship remained outside the college curriculum, which was generally categorized as technocratic and reductionist in its orientations. By this time, the Universities of Melbourne, Sydney and Western Australia had introduced diplomas in Education but most training colleges remained independent of universities until well into the 1970s. Thereafter, state governments across Australia transformed teacher training institutes into Advanced Colleges of Education: multipurpose organizations that were governed by independent councils or boards (Dyson, 1995). This move ostensibly released teacher development from government control but it failed to shift the curriculum away from state government school syllabus requirements. Consequently teachers' colleges and universities continued to coexist as partners in 'training teachers' for local state based education systems.

In the 1950s and thereafter teachers were in high demand as the population and the Australian economy expanded at a rapid rate. The early 1970s saw the extension of most two year teacher education college diplomas into three-year programs which included some discipline-based electives, for example sociology, in addition to the traditional curriculum based on methods and psychology. Despite the opportunity to adopt a more scholarly approach to teacher education within teachers' colleges, and to align the curriculum more closely to

that of universities, there is little evidence of such a shift. A substantial part of the extended programs in teachers' colleges consisted of more practice teaching in government schools where the aim was to model and replicate 'good teaching' practices prior to entering the profession. The success of practice teaching was evaluated by practising teachers in consultation with teachers' college lecturers who visited schools at regular intervals to observe and critique 'student teachers' in action. In the 1970s most college lecturers were recognized as good teachers but many lacked post-graduate degrees and a strong research background. Due to the acute shortage of teachers throughout Australia in the 1960s and 70s, the quality of teacher education fell prey to the high demand for ongoing training and the mass production of teachers within a system that focused mainly on acculturation and promulgation of like minded teachers rather than on the quality of the programs. In many ways teacher development during this period sustained the discourse of training and the acquisition of the craft of teaching. There was little recognition of research-based practice or the balance between deep content and pedagogical knowledge, and little regard for teaching as a profession.

Teaching as scholarly pursuit

By the 1980s many universities had introduced diplomas in education whereby graduates were admitted into secondary schools as teachers of specific disciplines. This introduced a new dimension to teacher education in which content knowledge was prioritized. It was argued by universities that it was through the acquisition of deep content knowledge in discipline areas that the quality of secondary teaching would be enhanced. There was little interest from universities in primary school trainee students who were perceived to have poor entry qualifications which led to high failure rates. By contrast, university-based teacher education courses for secondary students enhanced the belief that secondary teachers held a higher status than their primary colleagues within the teaching profession

In both universities and teacher training institutions there was a growing acceptance of practice based on theory in the teacher development curriculum. Some teacher educators and many practising teachers argued that the replacement of the craft focus with a more academic program was detrimental to teacher development but it certainly enhanced the professional status of teachers.

A widespread public concern with the status of the teaching profession was reflected in initiatives taken by state governments to regulate the teaching profession and the accreditation of teacher education courses. For example, the Queensland government funded the establishment of an inter-systemic Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authority – the first of its type in Australia. In 1974, the Board of Teacher Registration (BTR) was established in Queensland to heighten the quality of teacher education and the status of the teaching profession. The Board was authorized to monitor entry into teaching and to regulate ongoing registration of teachers in Queensland. The BTR has monitored the development and accreditation of all teacher education programs within Queensland for the past 32 years. Only graduates from BTR accredited programs are eligible for registration as professionals licensed to teach in the state of Queensland. Other states in Australia have taken a long time to follow this model (up to thirty years in some cases). The accrediting role of a statutory body such as the BTR placed new demands on teachers' colleges and universities. For example, the BTR mandated that every teacher education course must comprise the following components:

Professional studies (including sociology and educational psychology at introductory and advanced levels)

Discipline or content studies

Curriculum studies and

Professional practice consisting of a mandated number of days including at least 80 supervised days of teaching and 20 days of wider field experiences.

This regulated context generated a common curriculum across all education faculties in Queensland, however, the BTR has argued that the teacher education curriculum is richer as a result of the introduction of a regulatory authority. In the 1970s, universities and teachers' colleges celebrated the introduction of the foundation disciplines of sociology, psychology, philosophy and history. Nevertheless, teaching methods and the 'practicum' still remained the central focus of most teacher education courses. The 1970s saw increased debate amongst academics and practising teachers about the theory-practice divide and the centrality of field based learning – 'the prac' – to teacher development. Regulatory authorities, practising teachers and teachers' unions

remained strongly committed to the view that 'student teachers' needed to spend sustained periods of time observing registered teachers, replicating observed practices and engaging in reflection of their own and others' practices as the key to successful learning in the field. In retrospect, it is clear that the responsibility for the confluence of theory, teaching practice and reflection clearly rested with the individual student, for few courses actually incorporated strategies for reflection and school practitioners received no professional training as mentors or tutors. Moreover, despite the move towards a more comprehensive curriculum within universities and teachers' colleges 'student teachers' were still encouraged by their mentors or field based supervisors to 'collect the tricks of the trade' while in schools. From within the teaching profession there was still a strong belief that the only guarantee of success as a teacher came from school-based learning. Clearly there was a disjuncture between the requirements of the teacher education institutions and their 'professional partners' in the schools. The BTR in Queensland has had minimal success in breaking down this divide, a divide which continues to bedevil teacher education in Australia to the present day.

Teacher Education in Contemporary Australia

During the 1980s, Australia experienced a major political change of heart which had far-reaching implications for education (Lingard, Knight and Porter, 1993). Higher Education was a major focus of debate at a time when economic rationalism was shaping the discourse on political intervention in health, education and business at all levels of decision making. In particular, educational changes instigated by government reforms (Dawkins, 1987, 1988) resulted in a confluence of education, marketing and reform in the university sector which resulted in a unified national system of higher education in Australia. The main outcomes of the Dawkins reforms included:

the amalgamation of 47 Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE) with 19 existing universities to create thirty-eight universities (two of which are privately funded);

the introduction of a Higher Education Contribution Scheme that requires all domestic students who gain a place in a university course to pay a uniform charge to the Commonwealth government on completion of their course and when financially capable of doing so;

encouragement of universities, mainly due to funding reductions, to become increasingly financially autonomous by generating increased private funding through competition for students, research grants, and entrepreneurial business initiatives.

These reforms, which drew marketisation and modernisation together within the university sector (Marginson, 1997) have had a long term impact on the context in which university academics and teacher educators now operate (Coaldrake and Steadman, 1998) thereby effectively changing the shape of higher education in Australia. All teacher education programs are now conducted within universities as a result of the establishment in 1988 of a unified national system of higher education. This change resulted in the demise of teacher training colleges and the repositioning of teacher education programs within faculties of education in established universities or newly amalgamated universities and teachers' colleges. In Queensland, for example, The Brisbane College of Advanced Education (an amalgam of existing teachers' colleges) became legislatively tied to either the Queensland Institute of Technology, to form the Queensland University of Technology or QUT, or were subsumed as an education faculty within Griffith University. As a consequence education faculties had to design new teacher education programs that met four key criteria, namely: the rigor of university accreditation processes, the regulations of the teacher registration authorities, the demands of a teaching profession under threat, and the outcomes of increasing research into teacher education. This confluence of these factors called for innovative teacher education programs that moved away from the technocratic and craft orientations of the past to focus more on a combination of deep subject and pedagogical knowledge that facilitates effective professional practice in schools. The impact of scholars such as Lee Shulman (1998) and Alan Tom (1997) was forceful and brought new insights to teacher development programs. Teacher educators have experienced a major challenge in their beliefs and work practices since 1988 as they have reconstructed their professional identities away from that of teachers' college lecturers and the associated craft of teaching towards a more scholarly and theoretical approach to the study of education. As both university academics *and* teacher educators, it was mandated that they shift their work from teaching-only responsibilities into the domains of research, teaching and consultancy. Furthermore, schools were undergoing a review initiated by a Labour government (*Strengthening Australia's Schools*, 1988) that was driven by the theory of economic rationalism and the foregrounding of education as a key factor in

implementing economic reform. Such reform was divisive and unsettling and the focus of extensive review and rebuttal within education sectors across Australia (Lingard, Knight and Porter, 1993). Concurrently, a literature supporting a standards movement within the profession of teaching raised the question of teacher quality and argued for an improved image of teaching in the community (e.g., *A Class Act*, 1998; Ramsay, 2000). Throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century the profession of teaching and teacher educators in Australia have faced various dilemmas (O'Donoghue, Aspland and Brooker 1993). On the one hand there was a declining public and political confidence in education and a reduction in the resourcing of education while, at the same time, teachers were being asked to rethink their time-honoured practices and engage in ever more professional learning initiatives. Likewise, as the teaching profession was being subjected to ever greater regulation by both state and commonwealth authorities, it was also attempting to reclaim its autonomy through an increasing professionalisation of the workforce. Sachs (2002) has argued that paradoxes such as these have led to extensive differentiation across the profession of teaching (and teacher education) of both what it means to be a teacher (or a teacher educator) and what it means to become a professional worker within in the education domain.

Recent changes are certainly having a long-term impact on the reconceptualisation of teacher education in Australia and innovative teacher education programs are flourishing. Universities like Edith Cowan (ECU) in Perth, the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, the University of Wollongong (NSW) and the University of Newcastle (NSW), which have some of the largest teacher education faculties in Australia, are developing creative ways of designing, delivering and evaluating courses. The importance of attracting a clientele in an increasingly competitive world and preparing students for continually changing workplaces, plus demands for increasing flexibility in tertiary courses in response to student circumstances, are now significant factors to consider in designing new courses in teacher education. As in other domains, teacher educators can no longer take anything for granted and are rapidly learning to live with uncertainty and complexity. There is now widespread agreement that students need to be prepared as future educators for a range of schools systems in Australia and other countries across the globe. Universities in general are taking into account the need to prepare students for work in complex, rapidly changing environments and

teacher education faculties in Australia are no exception. They are developing new programs that value the teacher as scholar. They also recognise an outcomes based approach to curriculum development, a principled approach to course implementation, and a high level of commitment both to quality auditing and to critical inquiry from both staff and students. An important aspect of the new approach to curriculum development in teacher education is to enable prospective educators to become aware of the social, cultural and political contexts of learning and of the social consequences of their own actions as educators. A number of these initiatives are described below. These programs are responsive to the need for educators to become critical, reflective change agents through the productive pedagogies of teacher education (Gore, 2002). Many teacher education programs now commit to an investigative orientation to teacher education (Aspland 2004, 2005). The challenge for teacher education institutions is to meet the changing demand for graduates while maintaining academic standards and viable levels of resourcing to do more with less. Some examples of how universities are achieving these aims are detailed below.

In one university in Queensland, a process of reconceptualising its pre-service teacher education programs took three years to generate a new and innovative Bachelor of Education program. The process of reconceptualisation led initially to a vision statement, part of which appears below.

The vision of this reconceptualized course is to graduate pre-service teacher education students who are:

- *Life long learners who possess a strong knowledge of the content and discourses of the disciplines from which their projected teaching areas are derived, and who will be able to contribute to the framing of new knowledge communities and areas of inquiry*
- *High level thinkers, capable of understanding the complex knowledges that shape the work of educators, particularly in reference to how students engage in high quality learning; and*
- *Educators who actively reflect upon and investigate the dynamic socio-cultural and socio-political constructs in which their work is embedded.* (QUT, Bachelor of Education, 2003)

As detailed in the institutional brief, this program is designed to graduate beginning teachers and educators who are:

1. well respected in their field through their professional work,
2. committed to life long learning,
3. experts in current curriculum knowledge and leadership,
4. capable of demonstrating a refined repertoire of pedagogical practices, and
5. competent in knowledge facilitation and the construction of diverse, culturally-responsive learning environments that best facilitate enhanced learning for a variety of learners.

This course example includes a suite of pre-service teacher education programs (in Early Childhood, Primary, Secondary and Adult and Workplace Education) which are outcomes-focused and which are set within professional standards for teachers. The outcomes focus necessitated the development of a number of course standards which reflect the emerging professional standards developed within the state, and which are elaborated as sets of teacher practitioner attributes. In this innovative program, the attributes have been used to shape the overall structure of the programs and to inform the development of subjects. At the same time, much work has been done on using the teacher professional attributes as a framework for the pedagogical and assessment practices used in the programs. In particular, attention is being given to how professional learning may be documented within a portfolio with reference to course standards and teacher practitioner attributes (Adapted from Macpherson and Aspland 2003).

Another innovative case of teacher education for the twenty-first century comes from a university in Western Australia. This university has the second largest teacher education clientele in Australia. In this program for primary education, students are introduced to the centrality of professional reflection and the self-auditing of professional learning experiences both in the contexts of work place learning and in the university program. As a result of course requirements, learning does not focus solely on content in isolation. Rather, students are presented with a range of learning opportunities over the duration of the course that are designed to:

- Facilitate professional reflection about teaching and learning experiences throughout the program;

- Audit professional learning in terms of the Graduate Teaching Attributes on which the course is built;
- Collect evidence of learning. This evidence is referred to as curriculum and educational artifacts and indicates to the assessor or employer the degree of professional growth towards pre-specified attributes that any student has achieved at any point during a four-year period.
- Engage students in small group discussions about individual and collective learning with a range of people: peers, lecturers, liaison lecturers, and teacher mentors in the workplace learning context;
- Scaffold, from first year, the building of a professional learning portfolio for presentation to significant stakeholders throughout the course and at the close of the course;
- Encourage students to present workshops, scholarly papers and posters that give insights into their professional learning (ECU, Bachelor of Education (Primary) 2004). (Adapted from Macpherson and Aspland 2003).

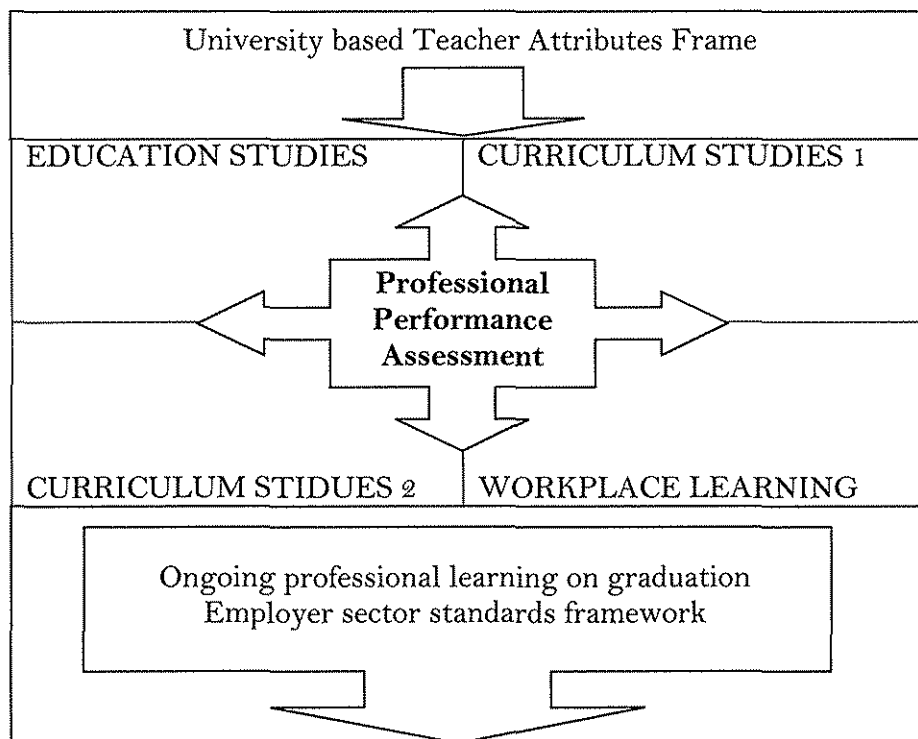
In New South Wales there are also several innovative programs. In one university the conceptual knowledge constructs of the teacher education curriculum have been reconstituted to create a Knowledge Building Community across the learning spaces in which teacher education traditionally unfolds: the schools, the university and the community (Kiggins and Ferry, 1999; Cambourne, 2001). This constructivist, problem based orientation to teacher education is designed to contextualize the delivery of teacher education courses in fields such as psychology and sociology and to do so in a way that presents the curriculum holistically and coherently rather than in a manner that is historically fragmented and irrelevant (Hoban, 1999). Another example from the same state focuses on the centrality of productive pedagogy as a framework for reconstituting teacher education (Gore, 2004). The empirical data that has evolved from the lengthy investigation of this approach is instructive for teacher education. A program of this type is designed to ensure that universities graduate better teachers into the profession through a commitment to ensuring that both the teacher education program and the preparation it provides for beginning teachers are serious about deep understanding of important concepts through meaningful learning experiences that occur

in an environment that supports learning engagement and values diversity (Gore, 2004).

In developing a highly innovative program in central Queensland, another university foregrounds a different conceptual frame to engage schools, communities and universities in a highly engaging teacher development program. This university developed its programs in partnership with teachers and principals of schools, providing students and staff with much greater contact with schools. Like many current Australian teacher education courses, this program culminates in a ten week internship designed to facilitate a better transition from student to professional teacher, where the students complete up to fifty percent of teaching responsibilities in an autonomous capacity while the classroom teacher engages in some other form of professional work (CQU website, 2006).

A neighbouring university, again in Queensland, places the centrality of workplace learning, innovative pedagogies and authentic assessment as the platform for developing teacher education. At the core of this program are found Professional Performance Assessments as key features that ensure the integration of courses across the program each semester (See Figure 1). Links to real world professional learning are central to the program and opportunities for students to make connections across research, university course materials and their professional workplace practices underpin the learning dimensions of the program. The program is also built on an Attributes Framework where the preferred attributes of the graduating teacher are foregrounded at the outset rather than at the conclusion of the program (USC Graduate Diploma of Education 2005).

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Graduate Diploma in Education (Aspland 2006)



The five cases illustrated here offer examples of how teacher education in Australia has repositioned itself in the higher education domain. In critiquing current programs across Australia it is evident that a set of key propositions form the parameters within which these and other new teacher education programs have been developed. They include the following:

- Teacher education courses are constructed around desired outcomes, such as professional attributes, that determine the nature of teacher education, teacher practices and student learning.
- Teacher education courses reflect strong links between theory and practice. University programs are currently being designed to demonstrate the relevance of their offerings to the needs of professional teachers and educators in the field, both nationally and internationally.

- New, more flexible, models of teacher education currently reflect the multiplicity of needs within increasingly diverse student cohorts.
- Teacher education courses are being enacted not only on university sites but also across a number of diverse educational sites, work sites and communities.
- Teacher education is being actively delivered in collaboration with significant stakeholders.
- Field experiences, practica, internships and associate teacher programs are central to teacher education courses.
- Teacher education courses are fostering real student critique and reflect a commitment to practitioner research.
- Teacher education courses encompass the development of interdisciplinary teaching teams.
- Many courses are incorporating problem-based and investigative approaches to student learning and actively incorporate pedagogies that promote active learning.
- Pre-service teachers are required to undergo some form of ongoing self-analysis to assess their current and evolving learning outcomes and attribute development.

It is evident that teacher education in Australia is making a commitment to a more scholarly orientation to teacher development. Boyer's (1990) seminal work identified four types of scholarship that lie at the heart of academic work – discovery, teaching and learning, integration and application. Building on Boyer's platform, it is argued here that contemporary teacher education programs in Australia, such as those outlined above, can be positioned at the intersection of the scholarship requirements advocated by Boyer (1990). These programs clearly recognize the bringing together of discovery research, pedagogical expertise, and learning and workplace learning (application), as central to what can be called the scholarly orientation to teacher education. What is emerging in teacher education in Australia are programs that call for teaching enhancement that involves pre-service teachers, teacher educators and practising teachers coming together as teacher educators to 'experiment seriously, co-operatively and doggedly with new curricula, and who are supported in the

dissemination of these experiences' (Trigwell *et al*, 2000). This is the starting point for new teacher education initiatives in contemporary Australia. The conceptual frameworks offered by these programs are useful in scaffolding the movement of teacher education away from the traditional craft orientation to one involving a predominantly scholarly approach. In this way university academics, as teacher educators, can confront the technocratic inadequacies of the craft approach that values atheoretical approaches to teacher development and the ongoing persistence of 'reflective practices of and on teaching' that is often considered a decontextualised and atheoretical process of professional learning. By engaging with a scholarly orientation to teacher development, and not simply practising reflective teaching or facilitating the acquisition of the craft, academic staff, pre-service students and practising teachers embed themselves as learners and researchers in practice that 'both educates and entices future scholars by communicating the beauty and enlightenment at the heart of significant knowledge' (Boyer, 1990).

The future

Based on the argument proposed above, teacher educators are being challenged to reinvent the way they have traditionally worked. This is no mean task within faculties of education where an ageing, conservative teaching force is struggling with ongoing demoralisation, fragile academic identities, changing political, social and cultural agendas, reduced funding, a demanding and diversifying clientele and demands 'from above' for ever greater degrees of accountability. Recent news also suggest a move towards a centralised set of professional standards for teachers across Australia and the introduction of a national teacher education accreditation authority (Ingvarson *et al*, 2006). Still to be released is the final report of the Commonwealth government's Teacher Training Review instigated in 2005. Interim reports and media comments suggest that the previous Commonwealth Minister of Education favoured a return to school-based teacher education. Teacher educators across Australia fear that the current minister for education, the Hon. Julie Bishop, supports similar thinking. If this is the case teacher educators may well find themselves reinventing the apprenticeship model of teacher development that characterized teacher training in Australia for almost a century.

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