

Coalition education white paper and HE based Teacher Education

Introduction: 'Teacher Education in a time of austerity' seminar and follow-up briefing.

"I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data. Insensibly, one begins to twist facts to suit theories instead of theories to suit facts." (Sherlock Holmes, from 'A Scandal in Bohemia', Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1891).

'This bias...has assumed new significance in the past decade, when politicians have been using international educational indicators as the basis of the common language of global benchmarking...so comparative educational studies are often turned into a political tool for creating educational policy or a mode of governance, rather than remaining in the research realm of intellectual inquiry.'¹

The purpose of the 2 November UCU seminar was the three-fold: to describe, examine and evaluate the data on current HE based Initial Teacher Education (ITE), particularly collaboration with schools; to examine forensically current Coalition government and past Conservative Party 'theories' on HE based ITE; and to elaborate how a UCU teacher educator members network could contribute to 'untwisting' the facts of HE-school collaboration in ITE from the inadequately evidenced 'theories' stemming from Michael Gove's Department for Education (DfE).

Delegates at the seminar requested a briefing on the structure, volume and quality of the current HEI-schools collaborative system of ITE that sets out its strengths as a basis for members to respond to the White Paper on education, including ITE, expected from the DfE in late November.

'Theories'

Across the policy landscape the Coalition government is making policy in ideological haste, with Michael Gove's DfE the headlong pacemaker: he and his ministers trail policies in speeches that then quickly reappear as the parameters of legislation or forthcoming White Papers.

¹ 'The Finnish Miracle of PISA: Historical and sociological remarks on teaching and teacher education', Hannu Simola, *Comparative Education Vol. 41, No. 4, November 2005, pp. 455-470, page 455.*

This has been the case in Coalition policy on ITE, from Michael Gove's speech to the National College of School Leadership² when he propounded his 'teaching is a craft best learnt on an apprenticeship basis in schools' thesis, supported by other speeches and press statements on increasing academies, 14-19 'University Technical Academies', 'Free' and 'Studio' schools; the number and powers of 'superheads'; enforced collaboration between 'high' and 'low' performing schools; the 14-19 curriculum, vocational education, qualifications and assessment; and, most recently, his trailers for a national funding formula in the school sector.

All of these hints and trailers, including his recycling of failed 1980s conservative policies on teacher professionalism and ITE, will be brought together in his White Paper on education, due to be published on 24 November. The White Paper was again trailed by Michael Gove in a recent 'TES' article:

'The education secretary is expected to unveil reforms to the BEd and the PGCE as he looks for greater efficiencies in how entrants join the profession and moves training away from universities'.³

'Facts'

Following the 2 November seminar, delegates unanimously agreed that a short paper from UCU that described the current successful collaborative arrangements for HE based Initial Teacher Education (ITE), teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD), the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL) and including collaboration between School Centred ITE (SCITT) and employment based ITE (EBITT) should be produced as soon as possible. This forms the major part of this briefing.⁴

The importance of addressing Coalition policy makers from an informed, evaluative UCU teacher educator standpoint was again recently underlined by the first speaker from the 2 November UCU seminar, James Noble-Rogers, Chief Executive of the University Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), in the 'THE', where:

'Proposals from Michael Gove that could see funding for teacher training moved from universities to schools risk "throwing out the baby with the bathwater" as far as quality is concerned.

² http://www.michaelgove.com/content/national_college_annual_conference

³ <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6063581>

⁴ UCU is grateful to UCET for permission to quote from their evidence to the 2009 Select Committee on Education.

James Noble-Rogers said that if the education secretary's White Paper, expected in the next few weeks, removed universities from the equation it would be "damaging" for the quality of training and for schools.

The UCET chief executive added that he believed there was a lack of understanding within government of the way courses were structured. "We're not entirely convinced that ministers are aware of the extent to which schools are already involved in teacher training," he said. "The partnership between schools and universities is already quite strong."⁵

Facts that support useful theories

This section sets out HEIs' contribution to the volume and quality of initial teacher education (ITE) and continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers in the primary and secondary school sectors.

Key headline facts:

- Around 77% of the 30,000+ new ITE students⁶ recruited each year are in mainstream programmes run jointly by HEIs and schools. Most of the rest are linked to HEIs through school-centred (SCITT) or employment-based (EBITT) provision that is managed, validated or otherwise supported by HEIs.
- In 2008, 85% of primary and 86% of secondary NQTs rated the overall quality of the initial training they received as being "good" or "very good"⁷⁸.
- Mainstream provision run by HEI-school partnerships are, on OFSTED evidence, of higher quality than SCITT or employment-based routes⁹¹⁰.
- 94% of all secondary and 97% of primary trainees attend institutions in the highest quality categories¹¹.

⁵ 'THE', 18 November 2010.

⁶ The Good Teacher Training Guide 2008, Alan Smithers & Pamela Robinson.

⁷ Includes students on HEI, school and employment based routes.

⁸ From a TDA survey responded to by 14,000 (44%) of NQTs.

⁹ The Good Teacher Training Guide 2008, Alan Smithers & Pamela Robinson. Also, according to TDA figures, 92% of secondary HEI providers are in quality categories A and B compared to 64% of SCITTs.

¹⁰ Although quality categories do not yet exist for EBIT provision, OFSTED did express concern about quality in its report: "An employment-based route into teaching" (January 2005)

¹¹ TDA data.

- The undergraduate route remains popular with both schools and NQTs and allows more time to be spent on areas such as SEN, inclusion etc (*"primary UG programmes were rated significantly higher than primary PG, most notably in the following areas, including preparedness to work with learners with special educational needs."*)¹².
- Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) has reported that "primary and secondary teacher training programmes continue to be well led and managed, and resources are targeted appropriately"; and "Training programmes are constantly updated by providers to take account of government initiatives, for example the Rose review on the teaching of early reading and 14-19 curriculum developments".¹³
- An increasing proportion of entrants to postgraduate programmes have degrees at 2:1 or above.¹⁴
- Postgraduate professional development for teachers provided by consortia of HEIs, schools and others has been shown to have a demonstrable and transformational impact on classroom performance.¹⁵

Quality

The current evidence base for what constitutes good quality teaching is determined by the professional standards against which teachers are assessed for entry to and progression within the profession. The extent to which the ITE standards are met for the award of QTS is subject to rigorous internal and external moderation procedures involving staff from HEIs and partnership schools.

HEI procedures are also subject to annual scrutiny through university procedures and through the submission of Self Evaluation Documents to the TDA and OFSTED. The quality of teaching is assessed through observation, scrutiny of documentation, discussion with trainees and staff and analysis of written assignments.

¹² TDA 2008 NQT survey, p.22.

¹³ 2007/08 annual report (similar conclusions were reached in earlier reports).

¹⁴ From 49% to 58% in primary since 1996/97 and 46-54% in secondary (although this might reflect general increases).

¹⁵ 2008 TDA commissioned evaluation of the impact of postgraduate professional development. Similar conclusions were reached in the 2007 impact report and in earlier reports into award bearing CPD by OFSTED (2005) and a report by Soulsby & Swain commissioned by TTA (2003).

Entry into the teaching profession

Quality of entrants and preparedness to teach

The kind of teachers the nation requires will in part determine the characteristics sought. There has however been no formal national debate about the type of teachers needed¹⁶ although there has been considerable political and press rhetoric. The ITE requirements set currently by the Secretary of State are generic, context-free and assume a shared understanding about the qualities, attitudes and values expected of teachers. There are only indirect references to the important characteristics needed to prepare pupils for the society and economy of the future (e.g. intellectual curiosity; empathy; commitment to social justice; cosmopolitan outlook; and the capacity for self-management and resilience).

Currently, the Secretary of State does require that entrants:

- To PGCE and other graduate programmes have a first degree or equivalent qualification and have achieved GCSE standard in English and mathematics and (for primary) science.
- Have the necessary intellectual and academic capabilities, communication skills, personal qualities and attributes, values and level of medical fitness.
- Are subject to face-to-face interview, CRB checks and General Teaching Council England (GTCE) registration. (However, Michael Gove abolished the GTCE three months ago)

Admissions

ITE providers decide whom to admit on to courses.

For primary provision, where the number of applications regularly exceeds the number of places, providers have significant choice. Academic qualifications are one factor used in selection. Account is also taken of personal attributes and commitment. Some providers will also seek to reflect the nature of the communities they serve¹⁷ and contribute to the development of a more diverse teaching profession.

¹⁶ Although reference has been made in the context of Robin Alexander's Primary Review.

¹⁷ For example, the PGCE with English as an Additional Language developed in partnership between Newman University College and local schools, and programmes run by institutions such as the University of East London and London Metropolitan University.

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)

All student teachers must demonstrate that they meet the Secretary of State's QTS standards. These enshrine the basic professional knowledge, skills and understanding teachers are judged to need.

However, further professional development is needed to progress beyond basic levels of competence. The development of a suite of standards covering different stages of a teacher's classroom career, each of which refers to the importance of professional development, is a crucial new area of work for HEI/school partnerships.

This is especially the case with both special educational needs learners and challenging schools. ITE programmes do equip teachers to begin to teach in these and other difficult areas but targeted and specialised training is required during and after the induction year (possibly as part of Master's level programmes) to secure additional expertise. This is particularly true for those qualifying via the postgraduate route, as OFSTED found in its 2008 report on how well new teachers are prepared to teach pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. That report indicated that PGCE providers "*struggle most to ensure good quality provision within the time available*"¹⁸.

Trainee numbers, national planning and diversity of entrants

The number of places allocated to primary programmes and programmes in each secondary subject are set by the DfE using its Teacher Supply Model. Places - and funding - are then shared amongst ITT providers by the TDA on the basis of quality as measured by OFSTED¹⁹, although marginal account is sometimes taken of other factors.

The Supply Model has flaws, but the major problem is that constantly changing targets cause instability in the sector and can put high-quality (and irreplaceable) provision at risk. While the introduction of 3-year allocations has helped stabilise provision, more consideration should be given to long-term supply needs and the maintenance of a sound and high-quality teacher education base. This problem has been exacerbated this year, as the TDA was required by Michael Gove to effectively freeze admissions 'until after the CSR 2010'. ('TES', June 10)

The TDA's obligation to make allocations on the basis of quality has improved standards to the extent that some 90% of trainees are in high quality provision. The success of the sector implies that there is now limited scope to distinguish between providers on the basis

¹⁸ OFSTED 2008 report: "How well new teachers are prepared to teach pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities"

¹⁹ As required by the 1994 Education Act.

of quality so other factors, such as regionality, diversity²⁰, CPD provision and, importantly, research expertise, could also inform allocation decisions.

Routes into teaching

The main routes are:

- PGCE through traditional HEI-school partnerships at graduate or Master's level (especially for entry to secondary schools).
- One-year programmes (mostly PGCEs) offered by SCITT consortia (often in partnership with HEIs).
- 3-4 year undergraduate programmes offered by traditional HEI-school partnerships (especially for entry into primary schools).
- Employment-based routes/graduate training programmes under which trainees are employed and trained "on-the job" (often with HEI input).

In addition there are programmes such as "Teach 1st" and "Overseas Trained Teachers" that are sometimes delivered solely or jointly by HEIs. While these represent valuable routes, their current and potential scale should be kept in perspective as it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to expand numbers through these routes quickly or sufficiently and without sacrificing quality to a precipitate hike in volume.

All newly qualified teachers must demonstrate that they meet the Secretary of State's QTS standards, so all ITT programmes must adhere to the Secretary of State's requirements which stipulate that students on postgraduate and undergraduate programmes must spend a minimum of 18-24 and 24-32 weeks respectively in schools or comparable settings. Schools must also be involved in the design, planning and delivery of programmes.

Each route makes a valuable contribution to ensuring a good supply of high-quality and committed teachers. The current generation of new teachers has been described by OFSTED and others as the "best ever"²¹.

The contribution of the HE sector to this success is clear. In terms of scale, it produces some 77% of new entrants, a figure that could not be reached solely through school or

²⁰ Progress has been made in regards the recruitment of ethnic minority trainees in recent years, with recruitment up from 5% and 7% respectively in primary and secondary in 1998 to 8% and 14% now. More could still be done on this and in the recruitment of male teachers (currently 13% in primary and 37% in secondary) and in the recruitment of students with disabilities (although around 8% of student teachers record a disability, reliable trend data is difficult to come by).

²¹ TDA strategic plan 2008.

employment-based routes (even if head-teachers and other school staff were willing to take lead responsibility for teacher training and supply).

Comparison of school and employment based routes with HE-school partnership provision

OFSTED reports suggest that traditional HE-school partnership programmes are on average of better quality than either SCITT or EBITT provision, although SCITTs, *with HEI support*, have improved and some are now as good as the best HEIs.

Comparable data for EBITT provision is not available as that is only now becoming subject to the same quality and allocations regime. However, a January 2005 OFSTED report concluded that around 50% of EBITT provision failed to comply with basic requirements and that training was poor for some 20% of trainees. In a subsequent 2007 report, OFSTED found that EBITT provision, while strong in regards classroom management and pupil behaviour, had weaknesses compared to mainstream provision in terms of *"the application of subject knowledge to teaching, assessment and evaluation"*.²² More recently, SCITT and EBITT provision has been identified as requiring further improvement in respect of the teaching of early reading²³.

Delivery of ITT: HEI-led new, innovative and diverse approaches

The content and delivery of ITE is largely determined by the Secretary of State's course requirements and QTS standards and the OFSTED inspection process. In the past this context has dissuaded providers from adopting innovative approaches, fearful of falling foul of central regulation and jeopardising funding. However, following demonstrable improvements in quality, there has been some lessening of central requirements which has allowed some scope for innovation.

Increased flexibility has also enabled the sector to respond to broader government priorities in relation to, for example, the teaching of early reading, where both Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI) annual report and a special OFSTED survey of selected HEIs conducted in 2008 were complimentary about what the sector had achieved (*"Overall, those providers surveyed had responded well to the Rose review, and they were preparing trainees well to teach early reading"*)²⁴.

²² OFSTED summary, 19 January 2007 (NR-2007-02)

²³ Letter from Sir Jim Rose to Ed Balls, 24 November 2008.

²⁴ July 2008, page 4.

Further significant contributions of higher-education institutions to high quality teacher education

- The introduction of Master's level PGCEs. These provide students with the opportunity to achieve, on average, 60 Master's credits and to undertake focussed research, develop research skills and provide a base for further professional development in the context of, for example, the government's aspiration for a teaching profession qualified to Master's level, comparable to that of other high-performing nations.
- Higher education allows space for student teachers to share and reflect critically on collective experiences with their peers while away from the classroom and to develop professional skills and knowledge applicable to a variety of school settings.
- The scope that the scale of HE provision allows to innovate and respond to government priorities. HEIs have, collectively and individually, helped to develop and implement policies relating to, for example, the Williams review of mathematics, the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MTL), Leading Literacy Schools²⁵, the last government's Every Child Matters policies, Teach 1st, 14-19 etc²⁶).
- The opportunities for student teachers to work in an environment of educational research and enquiry with access to library, ICT support and CPD opportunities up to doctorate level.
- In the context of the previous government's *Every Child Matters* policy, opportunities for student teachers to engage with expert practitioners from related professions such as social work, health etc, relationships that will continue in some form within Coalition policy.

Partnerships

The development of formal partnerships between schools and HEIs in the delivery of ITT has been one of the most significant developments in teacher education over the last twenty years and is, in some respects, a forerunner of more recent moves to develop closer relationships between schools and universities in the context of raising aspirations and achievement. The principle of schools working in partnership with HEIs in the design, delivery and evaluation of training is one that the HE sector, UCET and UCU will continue to champion and support.

There are, nonetheless, difficulties.

²⁵ 100% of HEI ITT providers are participating in the Leading Literacy School project.

²⁶ Links between entry to teaching in the schools and FE sectors needs to be further investigated in the context of 14-19 policies by the DfE and the Wolf Review of vocational education after the publication of the 2009 Parliamentary Skills Committee report chaired by Sir Mike Tomlinson, at: http://www.policyconnect.org.uk/fckimages/skills_report.PDF

- HEIs often find it hard to identify suitable placements and do, on occasion, have to involve schools less than ideally placed to provide high-quality training experiences.
- The level of support given to students in school is often outside the HEI's control, despite the fact that HEIs are ultimately held accountable for all aspects of training. Consideration should be given to making it a requirement that schools should, if they are to receive the top OFSTED ratings, engage with HEIs on the training and development of teachers. The solution should not be, as some have suggested, to locate training solely in schools. Not only would that destroy existing high-quality provision, but it is also extremely unlikely that school staff (who are often reluctant to engage in existing forms of ITE) would relish having lead responsibility for training some 30,000 new teachers each year.

The HEI-school partnership also benefits schools. For example, OFSTED's 2006 report *The Logical Chain* about CPD in effective schools stated: *"Almost all surveyed schools were involved in a partnership with a provider of initial teacher training. This had significant benefits for staff development. Teachers learned useful mentoring skills and improved their teaching by reflecting on their practice with trainees. Some HEIs offered credits on award-bearing courses for teachers who were involved in initial teacher training. One university worked very successfully with two of the survey schools to raise standards in literacy through its Master's degree course."*²⁷

The role of education research

Globally, the best teacher education is routinely informed by education research. Funding should also be provided to allow both trainee and serving teachers to refresh and enliven their teaching by accessing research findings and engaging in school-focused research. This can be done through existing funding mechanisms and by developing (for those not receiving RAE support) new capacity for practice based research and by facilitating the recruitment of a new generation of researchers with experience of working in, and with, schools.

Education research also makes a valuable contribution to national debate, policy setting and international comparison. HEI research has, for example, contributed to policy development on gender and attainment, the inclusion of reluctant learners and leadership in relation to low achievement.

²⁷ Page 15: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Leadership/Management/The-logical-chain-continuing-professional-development-in-effective-schools>

These contributions by HEIs have, in recent years, received invaluable support from the £30 million Teacher & Learning Research Programme (TLRP)²⁸. The TLRP programme ended in 2009 and although some of its strands have continued real consideration should be given to re-investment in further education research and its operationalisation in capacity building to enhance teacher professionalism, school effectiveness and learner outcomes.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) provision

CPD can have a hugely positive impact on the performance and retention of teachers. But it must, as OFSTED pointed out in the *"The Logical Chain"*, be targeted to the needs of individual teachers, be properly planned and have clearly identified outcomes.

Effective CPD takes many forms, and *The Logical Chain* makes the point that a range of opportunities need to be available. Effective provision is offered by a number of organisations, including HEIs, subject associations, local authorities, the GTCE (now abolished), NCSL and others. The HE sector often works in partnership with such bodies through the recognition of work submitted to GTCE, subject associations, local authorities, NCSL and others for Master's level credit.

Masters in Teaching and Learning

UCU strongly supports the MTL and equally strongly supports UCET's "in-principle" support for the development of the MTL and would similarly seek to help make it a success. The benefit of relevant and targeted Master's level study is well documented. For example, a 2008 TDA-commissioned report on the impact of its postgraduate professional development (PPD) programme found that: *"The majority of respondents referred to significant improvements in the quality of the learning environment for pupils. These included: more effective behaviour management creating better conditions for learning, more exciting and stimulating teaching, use of a wider range of interventions, better responses to pupils' needs, more effective use of personalised learning strategies."* (p7.)

Earlier reports reached similar conclusions:

- A December 2006 TDA evaluation report²⁹ on PPD referred to the positive impact it had on the retention of teachers and on their commitment, self-confidence and innovation. It also pointed to a positive impact on pupils' learning and on the practice of other teachers in the schools concerned.

²⁸ Funded by HEFCE; DCSF; the Scottish Executive, the National assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Executive.

²⁹ TDA PPD Impact Report, Peter Seaborne.

- A 2004 OFSTED report³⁰ found that Master's programmes helped teachers achieve significant improvements for their school in relation to the standards of pupils' work and the quality of teaching; pupil assessment and teachers' subject knowledge; improved their organisational, interpersonal and analytical skills; provided a greater understanding of current initiatives; and enhanced their leadership and management capabilities. target setting; curriculum planning; implementation of national strategies and self-evaluation; increased

These and other reports³¹ demonstrate that relevant study at Master's level:

- Has a transformational impact on teachers, their colleagues and their schools.
- Raises the status and professionalism of teachers.
- Encourages teachers to follow a critical, reflective, inspirational and innovative approach and to take risks in the context of their schools.
- Provides teachers with skills to evaluate the impact on classroom performance of different teaching strategies and models of professional learning.
- Develops problem-solving and research skills.
- Fosters a sustained engagement with continuing professional development.
- Helps teachers identify the connections between public education policy, research findings and classroom delivery.
- Helps develop a professional community that shares, discusses and adapts new ideas and approaches.
- Helps teachers support pupils in different contexts and in partnership with a range of different professional groups.

English Teacher Education: global and national comparisons

There is a considerable comparative research literature on international forms of teacher education. Globally, teacher education systems range from a very small percentage where school-led systems dominate teacher education through to a similarly small percentage of HEI dominated systems, with the most widely used, developed and successful systems being HEI-school collaboration, as in the current English system.

Teacher-education institutions also serve as key change agents in transforming education and society. Not only do teacher-education institutions educate new teachers, update the knowledge and skills of in-service teachers, create teacher-education curriculum, provide professional development for practicing teachers, contribute to textbooks and consult with local schools, they often provide expert opinion to regional and national ministries of

³⁰ The impact of award bearing in-service training for teachers on school improvement, OFSTED 2004 (HMI 1765)

³¹ E.g. Soulsby & Swain, TTA 2003.

education. Institutions of teacher education also perform similar services for school leaders who have significant impact on what occurs in schools.

Because of this broad influence in curriculum design and implementation, as well as policy setting within educational institutions, faculty members of teacher-education institutions are perfectly poised to promote education for broad swathes of public policy, for example embedding sustainable development into the curriculum. By working with the administrations and faculties of teacher education institutions, governments can bring about systematic, economically effective change.³²

There is also considerable analysis of the current English HE-school collaborative system. The 2005 systematic literature review of ITE in the four UK nations commissioned by the General Teaching Council Scotland, 'Models of Partnership in Programmes of Initial Teacher Education'³³, compared differences and similarities in UK nation models of ITE. On the basis of their comparative analysis they concluded that 'Having reviewed the evidence available to us in this study we believe there is a strong and urgent case for the development of a national framework for partnership in ITE (in Scotland). We recommend that this framework should be based on:

- an understanding of the broader context of the overall governance of teacher education
- a sufficiently sophisticated model of (student) teacher development, *especially avoiding an apprenticeship and developing from a reflective practice model*, recognising that such models have already been advocated by key stakeholders
- agreement that the roles and responsibilities of institutions and individuals in partnerships should be fully specified to include clear guidelines on appropriately shared roles for HEIs, local authorities and schools
- recognition of the continuum of professional development from ITE through Induction to CPD, including consideration of a fuller integration of the various national Standards already established for the different stages of this continuum
- a commitment to link initial teacher education partnership to 'school reform'
- a commitment to link partnership over initial teacher education to educational research and development

³² For example, see International Network Of Institutions Of Teacher Education; 'Five Years Of Work On Reorienting Teacher Education To Address Sustainability': By Rosalyn McKeown, Ph.D. University of Tennessee, U.S.A.
http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/esd/documents/workshops/kanchanburi/mckeown_reorienting.pdf

³³ 'Models of Partnership in Initial Teacher Education'; E. Brisard, I. Menter and I Smith, University of Paisley School of Education, September 2005.

- a commitment that, in developing partnership, relevant stakeholders will have to address the challenges which enhanced partnership will present to traditional assumptions and priorities, especially of schools and universities.'

It is this kind of careful, informed and practical analysis of what works well and could be improved in ITE and CPD that will undoubtedly condition HEI based teacher educators' responses to Michael Gove's proposals.