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**HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL
TRAINING

Reference: Teacher education

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING
Thursday, 29 September 2005

Members: Mr Hartsuyker (*Chair*), Mr Sawford (*Deputy Chair*), Mr Bartlett, Ms Bird, Ms Corcoran, Mr Fawcett, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Henry, Ms Livermore and Mrs Markus

Members in attendance: Ms Corcoran, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Hartsuyker and Mr Sawford

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

The scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities. To examine the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australia's schools.

Specifically, the Inquiry should:

1. Examine and assess the criteria for selecting students for teacher training courses.
2. Examine the extent to which teacher training courses can attract high quality students, including students from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
3. Examine attrition rates from teaching courses and reasons for that attrition.
4. Examine and assess the criteria for selecting and rewarding education faculty members.
5. Examine the educational philosophy underpinning the teacher training courses (including the teaching methods used, course structure and materials, and methods for assessment and evaluation) and assess the extent to which it is informed by research.
6. Examine the interaction and relationships between teacher training courses and other university faculty disciplines.
7. Examine the preparation of primary and secondary teaching graduates to:
 - (i) teach literacy and numeracy;
 - (ii) teach vocational education courses;
 - (iii) effectively manage classrooms;
 - (iv) successfully use information technology;
 - (v) deal with bullying and disruptive students and dysfunctional families;
 - (vi) deal with children with special needs and/or disabilities;
 - (vii) achieve accreditation; and
 - (viii) deal with senior staff, fellow teachers, school boards, education authorities, parents, community groups and other related government departments.
8. Examine the role and input of schools and their staff to the preparation of trainee teachers.
9. Investigate the appropriateness of the current split between primary and secondary education training.
10. Examine the construction, delivery and resourcing of ongoing professional learning for teachers already in the workforce.
11. Examine the adequacy of the funding of teacher training courses by university administrations.

The Inquiry should make reference to current research, to developments and practices from other countries as well as to the practices of other professions in preparing and training people to enter their profession.

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Committee met at 9.05 am**HASTINGS, Ms Wendy, Registrar, Teachers Registration Board of South Australia****OWEN, Ms Susanne, Project Officer, Teachers Registration Board of South Australia**

CHAIR—I welcome witnesses from the Teachers Registration Board of South Australia. I remind you that public hearings are recorded by Hansard and a record is made available to the public through the parliament's web site. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. Do you wish to make a statement in relation to your submission?

Ms Owen—Yes, I do.

CHAIR—I invite you to make some introductory remarks.

Ms Owen—Thank you for the opportunity to speak. To give you wider information on my own background, I have been a secondary and primary teacher and a member of high school leadership teams in the metropolitan area with the responsibility for coordinating student teachers as well as many ongoing studies at universities in South Australia. I am nearing completion of my doctorate. So I have a wide experience to draw on.

In terms of the teachers registration board, the context is that we are a board that has existed in South Australia for 30 years, so we are longstanding board. In more recent days we have had a change of legislation. Since March of this year we have been operating under the Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2005. That has had significant changes for us. But the focus of our work is to maintain a registration system and professional standards for teachers and to safeguard the public interest regarding the teaching profession in that all members of profession are competent educators and fit and proper persons to have the care of children.

What I want to highlight here is that, because we have been around for a long time, our new legislation has given us new responsibilities and new opportunities. That is what we want to focus on here. We are an independent statutory authority, but we are governed by a 16-member board. That board, under the new legislation, includes employers, unions, tertiary, legal and a parent of a child who is currently in schooling in South Australia. At least half of our board are teachers. We cover preschool, primary and secondary education across the government, Catholic and independent sectors. I would point out that preschool is a unique group for registration purposes compared to other states of Australia.

I will highlight some of our legislative responsibilities. Particularly in relation to the teacher education program, our responsibility is to confer and collaborate with teacher education institutions with respect to the appropriateness for registration purposes of teacher education courses and also to confer and collaborate with other teacher regulatory authorities. Our legislation says to 'promote uniformity and consistency in the regulation of the teaching profession within Australia and New Zealand'.

To highlight that issue, in the current years each state or most of the states now have a legislative responsibility for regulating the teaching profession, including a role regarding the appropriateness of teacher education courses for registration purposes. That is very important because we are increasingly working through the AFTRAA—the Australasian Forum for Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities. This is an organisation with terms of reference from MCEETYA. In terms of teacher education courses, AFTRAA is working on national alignment. Some of the areas of alignment that we are currently working on are in regard to the rationale for teacher education courses, the standards for graduates and course design and approval processes. These are early days in terms of our working together, but we believe they are very fruitful for the long term.

Looking at South Australian teacher education courses and registration appropriateness of those courses, I would like to highlight that under the new legislation we now have a minimum four-year qualification that has been legislated for all those who are entering or re-entering the register. In terms of our work with the university sector, there are a range of ways in which we work together. The first way is that a member of the Teachers Registration Board is the official tertiary representative. This person and relevant members of the TRB are actually involved in the development and formal recommendation of new courses in the universities. Once the university person and a member of the secretariat have looked at the teacher education courses when they change, a recommendation is formally presented to one of our subcommittees—that is, the admissions committee—and then formally presented to the board.

The second way in which that link with the universities and teacher education courses occurs is that the board is represented on university committees involved in reviewing teacher education courses. I am trying here to emphasise a partnership approach that occurs in South Australia between the Teachers Registration Board and the universities, and across the universities, in terms of teacher education courses.

A third way that linkage occurs is that the Teachers Registration regularly meets with the deans of education. It is this conferring and collaboration that comes from the legislation we are discussing here. Also, the project officer in my position and the principal qualifications officer from the secretariat are regularly involved in presentations to teacher education students on the profession and registration. That is an ongoing partnership to make sure that student teachers are aware of registration, aware of teaching as a profession and aware of the role that the Teachers Registration Board has in that process.

Behind all of this, I am talking about a very productive relationship. We are a small state. There is a very productive relationship between the registration group, universities and, I believe, the school and employer sectors. In terms of registration and the universities, we are aware of the work that they are doing to constantly update and improve their programs. We have an ongoing relationship with the universities and employers to make sure that we have streamlined exit processes. We streamline the procedures such that, when students have completed their tertiary education courses, they can be out in the schools to meet the demands of the work force.

We are also aware of the issues of attraction and retention that are important for South Australia, particularly given the age profile of the register. We have people up to the age of 92 on the register.

CHAIR—Still teaching classes?

Ms Owen—I am not quite sure about that, but they are certainly very proud of being part of the profession. We are very conscious of the significant university initiatives that are occurring to attract a wide background of people into the profession and to ensure high retention and opportunities for continued professional learning. I am sure a lot of that information was conveyed by the university sector.

Some of our work in recent years, as we have been moving to the new legislation, has been to highlight some research around student teachers and improving the professional side of the work of the Teachers Registration Board. The board has undertaken some work with regard to practicum with student teachers and in collaboration with the university. We have also, within the last five or six years, worked with the Queensland registration board, which is the other long-serving board in Australia, on continued professional learning. That is a significant issue in terms of our new legislation. We are currently undertaking some work with beginning teachers—who initially have provisional registration and then, after 200 working days or its part-time equivalent, move to full registration—about the kind of support and induction they have had. This is obviously with a view to working together with our partners in the universities, employers and et cetera to make improvements.

All of this provides a context for something that is very exciting and that flows from the new legislation for us, and that is to look at professional teaching standards and promotion of the profession. It is still early days but we have begun creating or establishing a working party. It has had its first meeting. It is about to have a second meeting in the next few weeks. That working party is looking at professional teaching standards for registration purposes, which cover those entering the profession, those who are moving from provisional to registration after a period of working in the schools and in preschools and also those who are renewing their registration, which occurs on a three-yearly cycle.

The working party is also looking at a code of ethics which we believe underpins the values that relate to professional teaching standards. We are obviously working within the MCEETYA national framework and with our partners in AFTRAA around this process but it is about having a local context that is coming from the profession here in South Australia. So our partners in that working party are the employers, the unions, the principal and subject associations, the tertiary sector and parents. We believe that not only will our working party allow us to consultatively develop professional teaching standards, particularly in the work that the working party members do with their networks and the work that the TRB does, but also it may well provide some wonderful opportunities for us in terms of graduates and looking closely and working with the university around graduates and also with the induction of beginning teachers and support for them and for continued professional learning. So, it is early days but there may be lots of opportunities for us here in South Australia in the future.

Just to make a few final comments about some issues that we are aware of in the teachers registration board, we are very aware of the issues around the practicum, around the funding of the practicum and also making sure that there are plenty of high quality opportunities for students to develop their skills in professional practice. I believe, again drawing from the kind of work the working party does and the meetings with the deans of education and the partnerships we have established in South Australia, that it is an issue we will continue to work through in the

next few years. We are aware of some very innovative programs that the teacher education programs are establishing involving a wide range of opportunities for students to learn the skills of working in a school, including the traditional model of supervised practicums, but a range of other models.

We believe that another issue is to reculture schools and reculture the profession in terms of the support that is needed to build a professional learning community, not only for our graduates and those who are involved in teacher education courses, but also for beginning teachers and indeed for our continuing teachers as they revitalise their work in the profession, over many years sometimes. We are looking at the issue of continuing professional learning and, I guess again through our working party and through our partnerships in South Australia, looking at how we can continue to foster the enthusiasm of our teachers for professional learning, through taking long-term courses at universities but also through mentoring and through working together collaboratively within their schools to seek opportunities on a daily basis to revitalise the profession and their professional learning.

CHAIR—Thank you. I want to touch on something you raised in relation to the standardisation you alluded to in your address. Are there any significant differences between the processes that you go through in this state and other registration authorities? Do you see the benefit in moving to perhaps a national teacher registration system rather than a state based teacher registration system?

Ms Hastings—There are some differences. Our legislation, certainly even the latest legislation, is talking about looking at the appropriateness of courses. It is up to the board how they interpret that. Other legislation has a pure accreditation role in that sense. We believe, though, that, given the aim for consistency and uniformity, through a partnership we can work towards uniformity and consistency in that area. But there is a slight difference in our legislative responsibilities that we need to work through. We have had this legislation now for six months and it is one of those ongoing working issues that we will need to look at. I think it will come out very clearly when we are looking at professional standards and aligning not only with the national standard framework but also with what other states are doing. There will need to be a little bit of give and take, but, at our own state level, I think we will get closer to having what I would refer to as more of a federation model rather than a national registration authority.

From a board perspective we have always looked at having a federation model like other professions—for example, the nurses—and having our own state based legislative context but fitting in very closely and working very closely together, which I might say we have had with Queensland over the last 30-odd years. I would say that South Australia and Queensland have had not an insignificant role in the establishment of other boards in other states, particularly those in Tasmania and Victoria. So there has been a long history, even before registration authorities, of working together on a state wide basis for some kind of consistency and uniformity. I can only see that getting much stronger within the current environment and climate and certainly within our own state legislation. Each state has that legislative responsibility of working together. That is the focus of the mutual recognition legislation as well.

CHAIR—With regard to the state based system, what particular issues are South Australia specific that would prompt you to see the benefit of a federation model rather than a national model?

Ms Hastings—I think that the board’s view is that they would retain their state ‘originality’—maybe that is the word—but just the pragmatics of working together on a more national model provides some challenges. I think there is enough challenge in a sense at the moment, given that the other boards are quite new—mostly they have started in the last three or four years—in working together. Maybe at the end of the day that may well happen, but I think that the federal model in the sense of the model for nurses and other professional bodies has worked and they have proved to have worked very closely together in the past. I think there are issues that are both legislative and of a state context that need to be clearly understood in our work, but I do not think they are insurmountable in the sense of having a very strong working relationship together.

CHAIR—We have been talking with a number of witnesses in relation to the issues that universities face in placing students in quality practicum. We have had a number of different responses in relation to whether it would be of benefit to universities that we have a more systemic approach to the placement of students in practicum—I will not call it a quota and I would hesitate to call it that, but there could be an understanding or an expectation that schools would take a certain proportion of beginning teachers or trainee teachers as part of what they do—and ways we could achieve that. Do you see the benefits of perhaps taking a fair bit of the administration away from universities in trying to place students would be a positive thing? Do you see that a more systemic system would have benefits?

Ms Hastings—I will preface anything I say by saying that I believe the important thing here is the quality of the practice that we are talking about here. It may well not be achieved by looking at quotas in schools. That is one model that could be explored, but I would put more emphasis on making sure that we provide student teachers with the quality supervision they need. That could be done in all sorts of models. My background is that I am a teacher. I have held leadership positions in schools and been responsible for practicum. I have certainly been brought up in demonstration schools in the past.

CHAIR—You have an ally over here.

Ms Hastings—I know. He was around in my time so he was the person sitting behind me. I have also worked as a staffing officer for the education department and headed up the recruitment unit for the education department for five years, as well as being registered for the last 10. So my background is very strongly in recruitment and in teaching as a profession. I believe there are all sorts of models, and we need to look at all sorts of models and not just have one or the other. Once again, the quality is the most important thing. We need to come up with ways of ensuring that that happens.

Susanne said that South Australia is small enough to have very strong partnerships, both informally and formally, to achieve some of these issues, and perhaps small enough not to have some of the complexities of some other states, where there are a number of stakeholders that may or may not be working together at any given time to do these things. South Australia is quite different in that respect. It has had a long history of working together to achieve a range of issues, not only in the sense of practicum. The universities at this point in time, plus Tabor College, work very closely together in looking at how practicum is allocated. It is not that the big university has the most placements in schools. They actually have a committee that sits down and works together to ensure that there is—dare I say it—equitable distribution of places and there is a lot of give and take. That is one model, but it is not the only one.

Ms Owen—One of the wonderful things about what we see happening in South Australia is the range of models that is starting to evolve, which includes the traditional practicum, the supervised one-to-one situation, but also many opportunities for students to be involved in camps, in regular contact with a group of students as mentors—all sorts of programs. I think in some ways that is being fostered because of the collaborative partnerships approach rather than, necessarily, a mandated approach.

Ms Hastings—One of the big issues is country placements. Obviously South Australia has always had these issues and will probably always have these issues. The employers have put into place a number of innovative programs including country scholarships, making sure that students have opportunities to go country and to have those experiences. The basic reality, however, is that if students are working and have jobs in the city it is very difficult to say that for five, six or whatever weeks they have to give up their jobs to do that. So there are practical issues associated with this that we need to come to grips with if we are going to make inroads into ensuring that our students have the best possible chance and can make choices about where they want to go.

When we get into the recruitment end of all this, that is when it really hits. As both a staffing officer and someone working in recruitment for such a long time, I can see how it becomes very difficult sometimes when people have not had the opportunity to realise that north of Gepps Cross is not country. South Australia has always had that issue, in the sense that there is a perception that country is way out in the middle of nowhere. If they have not had the opportunity to experience that before—and the graduates and first year out teachers that we have spoken with as part of a couple of surveys that we have done—they have really thought that once they get there it is the most challenging and worthwhile experience they have ever had. But the issue is really getting people to understand that and being able to give them the opportunities when they can make those choices. That is really a strong reason why we need to look at practicum and funding of practicum in a very broad sense.

Mr SAWFORD—Wendy, congratulations on your very diplomatic answer to the chair on the federated model. I do not have to be diplomatic. The reason is that we do not want to be taken over by Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Canberra. If you look at innovation in education over the last 50 years, a lot of it has come out of Tasmania, WA and SA.

Ms Hastings—Yes.

Mr SAWFORD—Following on the point about country, we are about a third of the way through this inquiry and it has become very clear in states that we have been to, including here—and probably the University of South Australia is an exception, but I will come back to that in a moment—that in terms of the cohorts of people who are entering teaching these days there seem to be two groups. There is a very large group of metropolitan, middle-class females—and there is nothing wrong with any of those categories but it is a big group—and there is an increasing trend throughout Australia for people to come in from other occupations, which I think is a very positive thing because it brings diversity that I think otherwise you do not get. But in all of that diversity, and acknowledging country scholarships—30 or 40 is just the tip of the iceberg; it is just tokenism—and some very good work done with Indigenous and Torres Strait Islanders throughout Australia, disadvantaged areas have very poor representation and not only in universities, where it is worse than it was when I went through. It is very poor too in country

provincial, regional, remote and rural areas—very ordinary. You have acknowledged in your submission the need to establish regional tertiary campuses.

I live at Osborne Heights, or North Haven, as it is now known, and on my way home yesterday I was thinking about this issue. For instance, Magill is not easy to get to. If you do not have a car, Flinders is very difficult to get to. I know kids at Taperoo, for example, who have to pool cars; many of them do not have cars. Mawson Lakes is another one—it is very difficult to get to. Those places are way off the public transport interchanges and corridors. Adelaide have a very limited location in terms of how many people they have got. I think that the University of South Australia have a city campus but I am not too sure whether they use it for teacher education—maybe you can tell me that. We need to do a lot more, don't we? The diversity that we all aim for is a word and a term; it is not a reality. I notice that with regard to legislation, Susanne, you were saying:

... the new legislation strongly highlights issues regarding the promotion of the teaching profession and professional standards ...

So you have got that on one hand and you have got reality on the other hand, and trying to reconcile those two is not always easy. What can the Teachers Registration Board do about the reality of our situation that I think is not in the best interests of the teaching profession or teacher education in this country?

Ms Hastings—That is a very tough question.

Ms Owen—I think that it is probably going to come back to working together. There are significant funding issues in looking at what universities are doing, as I understand it. I think they are putting out programs to try to make courses available through the online process. I think that they are attempting to deal with that issue but that probably is outside of the scope of the universities. I think it is to do with funding, scholarships and HECS fees. There are a lot of complexities involved in this question.

Ms Hastings—As Ms Owen has outlined, the board have just started to look at what we call professional standards for teacher registration purposes. Those sorts of issues are going to be quite high on those agendas, given the diversity of people that we have on our working parties and given that, in considering the requirements we set for registration purposes, we are looking at a group who is gaining entry to the profession from provisional to full registration. That is quite an interesting group in the sense of what the board can do to support teachers who are new members of the profession. As you said, they could be people who have been in other professions for a long time or they could be graduates. So there needs to be a wide interpretation of what we mean here and what we require for that group of people.

It will also reflect on the requirements that we are looking at for renewing registration. I am still registered as a teacher. What sort of requirements are we going to have for people like me who are out of the teaching force in the sense of being practising teachers? What are we going to look at in the sense of practising teachers? What accessibility do they have to professional learning, development courses et cetera? A lot of the issues that you are talking about are going to come out very clearly.

I cannot give you an answer but I know that we are going to have long debates about this. I do not think the board can solve this issue. It will need to be done in consultation and partnership with a lot of other players. But I think the board can take up certain aspects. My belief is that we should look at support and mentoring and the mechanisms around teachers who are newly onto the register who are going to full registration. We should also look very clearly at what we can do for those teachers who have been in the profession for long time. How can we support those people and retain those people, and in particular their experience and expertise, to support the newer ones coming on? How can we get all that together? It is a huge challenge but I think we have at least started discussing how that will happen.

Mr SAWFORD—In the past, people who came from disadvantaged areas and country areas often hung in there, teaching for much longer than did people from other backgrounds. You have mentioned scholarships in your submission. Do we need to have another look in a modern context at scholarships and bonding? One of the off-putting things for people in country areas is that they cannot live on the living allowance and they need to work. There is a significant difference between Austudy and the dole—I think it is \$100 a fortnight. It pays almost 50 per cent of your board. There are basic markers that are disincentives for people from the country—and for people who happen to live in west, north or south of Adelaide. There are big disadvantages for those people too.

People would probably wear bonding if there were no HECS debt. I think people in country areas and disadvantaged areas are absolutely spooked—they should not be but they are; that is the reality—by HECS. Then you get this anomaly. We are so desperately short of maths and science teachers yet they pay a higher debt than other teachers. There are all of these things. I would think that the registration board should have a very strong point of view on all those issues. If you do have a view, have you the ability to influence government and all the stakeholders or are you just kicking a ball uphill and against the wind?

Ms Hastings—At this point I believe the board have some views on the matter. I do not think they have formulated their views properly. Certainly in the last six months we have formulated a lot of views on a lot of things and this is going to be brought into focus when we continually work through them. We have until the end of next year to look at our professional standards issues—and this will certainly be one of those issues—but at this point in time the board does not have a strong view on that.

Up until six months ago the board was not involved at all through legislative means in developing professional standards in the way of teaching standards for the profession. It did not have that legislative role. It was generally a disciplinary body that issued licences. That is not denigrating the work of the board at all; it is just meaning that the functions of the act have strengthened so much in the last six months that I can assure you that the board will have those views. I would hope that the board can have a very strong influence in some of these issues. At this time I cannot say what they may or may not be.

Ms Owen—Going back to the working party, the sorts of things that we are involved in in our consultations are focused on professional teaching standards. Obviously, in the consultations that occur we see the process of establishing those standards as being as important as what the standards eventually are. I think it will really lift the profile of the Teachers Registration Board

and it is an incredible opportunity to bring all the partners together for renewed conversations and future planning.

Mr SAWFORD—There has been some criticism of inquiries into teacher education. This is the first time that the House of Representatives has made an inquiry into teacher education. Justifiably, people can say that there have been about 79 inquiries in the last 25 years. There are all these sets of recommendations. We can tell you that later in the year, hopefully, our secretariat will put all that together in congruent categories and we will have a very good look at that. We are all of the view that we are going to try to put up about 10 markers. In terms of directions for the future, we have probably got one or two and they are not actually standing up yet; they are just lying down. If you were to contribute to one of those markers, where would you be guiding us to look and go?

Ms Hastings—One of the main issues is the funding associated with the practicum and the placements in our universities for the students that want to undertake teacher education courses.

Mr SAWFORD—Do you have any ideas about how you would organise the funding? We were talking to Flinders University the other day. In terms of what they want to do and the flexibility they need to be able to place people in country areas, they got about half the funding they need and require. That may be a sweeping generalisation; it may be quite wrong. I got the feeling, talking to the University of South Australia yesterday, that it was pretty similar. If you want to have the flexibility of the other placements you need some other ways of funding. To make that happen, is it reasonable for the state and the Commonwealth to put in an equivalent amount? One of the things the Commonwealth is very suspicious of, quite rightly, is giving money to state governments. It just goes straight up the wall. It goes straight into a big black hole and no-one knows where it is. What are the practicalities of funding that? You sort of nodded when I said they were operating on about half the funding they require. Let us accept that that is a given: how do you do it? How do you get that funding and how do you guarantee that it goes to where it is meant to go?

Ms Hastings—It is not an area I can comment on. I can comment on a number of discussions I have had with the universities about the issues that have been created. They believe that they have very high-quality people who want to enter courses. I take it, as you have, that there are issues with being able to create places for them and also to fund the practicum. From my past experience, that has always been an issue, together with getting high-quality teachers to be able to do that supervising role. But how that will happen I think will require a lot of negotiation and discussion with a lot of stakeholders because, at the end of the day, we have to do something. On our register at the moment we have 36,700 teachers, of which probably a third are between 45 and 60. Then we have another little cohort up to 92, as Susanne has said. As a profession, we really do need to make sure that we are injecting people at the other end of this continuum. We are not doing that particularly well.

The other issue is to retain some of these people when they have come into the profession and then leave it relatively soon after they are in there. There is a huge number of issues that need to be addressed. I think they have to be addressed in a partnership and, if that means federal and state government funding, that is the way I believe that it needs to go. That is my personal view; it is not the view of the board. Whatever happens, we need to focus on these issues. That is the major issue: getting people into the profession and being able then to give them the opportunities

to experience some of these different locations, as well as meeting the issues you are talking about, such as diversity and getting into the profession people from disadvantaged backgrounds that need to be in the profession.

Mr SAWFORD—And the profession needs them.

Ms Hastings—Absolutely, it does.

Ms CORCORAN—You said that the functions of the board include looking at teacher education institutions with respect to the appropriateness for registration purposes of education courses. My question is about how you assess these courses for appropriateness for teacher education. Do you look at the outcomes of these courses at all?

Ms Hastings—I go back to two different sets of legislation, because, as I have said before, we have quite different responsibilities under the new legislation. Prior to March, we worked in a reasonably informal way, although we had the same legislative responsibility in conferring and collaborating. It was less of a formal way, and I think that was a historical process that had been built up given that at one stage we had teachers colleges as part of the department. Normally, as part of the secretariat, we would meet with the course coordinators and work on the development of the courses. Tabor College is a good example. When Tabor were setting up their courses, we worked with them from the very beginning on the development of courses. There was not only the tertiary person off the board on their development group but also one of the secretariat members, our qualification officer. Therefore, the board was privy to all of the discussion that went on regarding development of the courses, which, at the end of the day, were accepted by the board.

That is the same sort of process that we are looking at now, except it will be more formalised. We will be looking at meeting with the deans, with the heads of teacher education faculties and with course coordinators on an ongoing and regular basis. We will not only look at new courses but also look at some of the concerns, difficulties and issues we have with regard to registration and the universities have that I have already talked about—for example, their difficulties with practicum and their difficulties in getting people to do all sorts of things. That will feed back in from our professional standards point of view. It will become more formalised. It will certainly be a matter both for the universities and the board to come to an agreement on at the end of the day. We will not only look at that in terms of our requirements but also look at it in terms of a more national approach in order to achieve uniformity and consistency. That was not in our legislation before.

Ms CORCORAN—Do you have a set of requirements that are laid down? Do you take an interest in what the courses teach?

Ms Hastings—We take an interest. The board has not set down a set of requirements at this point. It is about to. It is going to work through the professional teaching standards for entry to the profession. That will require a much more formal and more transparent approach in determining what the board recognises and what the university process is in getting there.

Ms CORCORAN—In working through all that, will you have a look at what the teacher who comes out the end of the system is able to do? Is that part of your assessment process?

Ms Hastings—It will be part of our professional standards—what we will be requiring in terms of entry to the profession. More importantly from the board’s perspective, focus will shift from what we call provisionally registered teachers—which is the entry to teacher registration—to the fully recognised or fully registered teacher. That is where the board will be focusing very clearly on some outcomes. We will also provide some requirements—and this will obviously be aligned with the national standards and with other states—and expectations that the board will have for a person to go from provisional to full registration.

There are requirements at the moment, and there have been for thirty-odd years. But it is a checklist of requirements based on a principal’s assessment. It may well be that in the future that will also be the case. Certainly, the requirements will be reviewed, looked at and redeveloped in line with the standards currently. But it may also involve other evidence. That is something that the board needs to tackle at the time. I am not trying to avoid the question. We are really in a—

Ms Owen—Transition.

Ms Hastings—transition time at the moment. I would love to say: ‘Here it is. This is what is going to happen.’ I cannot, because that is a board decision and it cannot be made until after a very wide consultation has occurred. But it will—at the end of the day at least—align with what other states are doing and what the national framework has outlined.

Ms Owen—Just to pick up on that, what we have at the moment are a set of practices and protocols around the process of looking at teacher education courses for registration purposes. What we are really saying is that under the new legislation and in line with other states it will be a more formalised, written down and consultatively developed process.

Ms CORCORAN—You talked about ‘reculturing’ the profession. That suggests to me that there are things that need to be changed. Is that correct? What did you mean by ‘reculturing’?

Ms Owen—I used the word ‘reculturing’. That was with regard to a sense of an ageing teacher work force and a sense that perhaps we need to do a lot more as a profession. It is that notion of being a profession. We are talking here about a move from the notion of teacher as technician to the notion of teacher as professional. That idea has been around, but we are never quite sure where we sit. Through the knowledge we have and the research into education and the role that teachers play in the very broader sense, not only in terms of preparing people for the work force but in that broader sense of education fitting into society, it is about refocusing on continuing professional learning. It is about acknowledging that when people come into the profession we all have a responsibility to work together to ease their passage and to pass on our wisdom. It is that sort of a sense. In the consultations I said that I thought the process of professional teaching standards was as important as the end products, as the standards themselves. I think it is about reviewing and revisiting with all of the teachers on our register and the stakeholders that notion of teaching as a profession and how we work together to keep that enthusiasm alive, to make our newcomers feel welcome and to pass on that wisdom and knowledge.

Ms CORCORAN—You talked about the importance of the selection of teacher education students, using a range of criteria including interviews and reports and things like that. The university representatives we have spoken to have all said to us that that is fantastic in the ideal

world but we do not live in the ideal world and the TER score or equivalent in each state is really the only practical way of going. Did you make that point because you see there is room for improvement or is that a statement about what would be great if we could only do it?

Ms Owen—We are also aware of those realities. I think it is a very good process to interview people and select them but I also acknowledge that the reliance on TER scores certainly has increased in recent years. I think as our status as a profession increases and there are jobs—that is a reality too—it would be nice to interview as well, but I think we have the basis increasingly for higher scores. The focus for us is on giving students good quality experiences in both their knowledge building at university and the way that they enter schools and work with schools so that people feel very comfortable about being part of that profession in the wider sense of the word.

CHAIR—I have one final quick question. Jim Davies, Principal of the Australian Science and Mathematics School, raised the issue of a flat-lining curriculum in the face of rapidly changing technology, nanotechnologies and so on. You were very focused on professional learning in your address. How aggressive does the board wish to be in relation to ensuring that our teachers are on the leading edge in those subjects that are enjoying rapid technological change? How are you doing that?

Ms Owen—At the moment we are conscious that many of our teachers do undergo considerable professional development, but it is about ensuring that every person who is on our register has that same commitment to their ongoing professional development. I think that will come through the professional teaching standards process. Are you talking about the IT area?

CHAIR—Yes, IT and sciences.

Ms Owen—It will be about how we work through the consultation processes to raise that debate, perhaps to seek additional funding with our partners so that we work together to identify those areas where there need to be more opportunities for professional development. We will foster that through the professional teaching standards process and the mechanisms that we use to ensure that everybody has kept their level of knowledge up to date.

CHAIR—Are you focused on that differential, say, with English literature?

Ms Owen—No.

CHAIR—You will not be on the leading edge to the extent that science and IT are.

Ms Hastings—We have not been in the past. We have looked at registration as a means of practising your profession. How you actually then employ it somewhere else is a different issue and has always been so. I do not think that situation will change a lot. I think that we as a board will have a lot more say on a number of much broader issues, but I do not think we will be looking absolutely at differentiating between the core work that people are doing.

Mr SAWFORD—Following on from that, both the universities have reported to us that professional development over the last 25 years has significantly declined. We talked to Catholic Ed yesterday and they still have a significant group of advisers or consultants who seem to

provide a very useful link in terms of professional development in their system. The state system used to have a significant consultancy force—I remember being one of them. Does that exist anymore? Has it gone?

Ms Owens—There has been a significant shift in the role of the central DECS, so I think that perhaps that layer of professional development providers no longer exists or that there are minimal opportunities for that.

Mr SAWFORD—Is that correct; it has finished?

Ms Owens—I am not going to say that there is nothing going on; I am just going to say that I think that the amount of professional development provided through the education system has significantly declined, without a doubt.

Ms Hastings—Certainly through the advisory service that you are referring to.

Ms Owens—I think that through the universities there are certainly plenty of opportunities for people to undertake professional development. A lot of times I think it comes down to other issues: what is the value placed on an advanced qualification? In the past, I think people have seen it as perhaps a stepping stone to promotion or to some sort of monetary increase. Increasingly, perhaps people do not see that. It is about valuing professional development in terms of money. Again, I think it is about reculturing the profession—that it is not just about that; it is about our ongoing skills and knowledge so that we can do our job better.

Ms Hastings—It may well impact once we look at our requirement—whatever that might be—for renewing one's registration after a period of time. I think that will be quite a significant issue in the sense of professional development and what we mean by that and what that requirement is, going from three years of registration to the next three years.

CHAIR—Thank you for appearing before the committee today. We may contact you if we require further information. The secretariat will provide you with a proof copy of your evidence, and a copy of the transcript will be loaded on the committee's web site.

[10.04 am]

ALAGUMALAI, Dr Sivakumar, Coordinator, Postgraduate Programs and Science Education, School of Education, University of Adelaide

BURLEY, Dr Stephanie Mary, Senior Lecturer in Education, Historian of Education, Lecturer in Curriculum and Methodology in the Studies of Society and the Environment, Academic Lecturer in Charge of the Practicum, University of Adelaide

PARSONS, Ms Miriam, Coordinator, Bachelor of Teaching, University of Adelaide

CHAIR—I welcome the witnesses. I remind you that public hearings are recorded by Hansard and a record is made available to the public through the parliament's web site. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and, as such, warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. Do you wish to make a statement in relation to your submission?

Dr Alagumalai—I will give a broad overview of what we do, then I will pass it on to my colleagues, because I think it would be quite tricky for one person to represent the whole school, as we do a lot of things. The School of Education in the Faculty of the Professions—which contains other professions, like commerce, economics, law and architecture—have a history of over 120 years of educational research and teacher education in South Australia. We currently offer a range of degrees at both undergraduate and graduate level. We have a very strong commitment to the nexus between research, teaching and learning, which underpins the structure of our comprehensive programs and the courses included in them. Furthermore, our courses are benchmarked with other Go8 universities, and our international collaborations in research, like the OECD report on neuroscience and the science of learning, and the TIMSS and PISA studies, introduce broader issues into our theory and practice of education.

Our preservice programs have interacting course streams—namely curriculum design and methodology, pupil-teacher interaction in the classroom, and family and cultural context of learning. Most of our academics teach courses in all programs, and they bring their research expertise and insights to guide and support our students. We are the basis for communities of practices and learning, and we have a number of interesting initiatives to allow networks with colleagues from the department, industry, the community and professional bodies. The University of Adelaide perpetual email system, which was started recently, allows students to have an email for life, and the launch of our SMARTE—Science, Mathematics and Related Technologies Education—portal by the Thinker in Residence, Professor Susan Greenfield, allows for learning, sharing and professional development beyond us. We are committed to continually enhancing and reinforcing our tradition in educational research and teacher education in South Australia and to the attraction, retention and motivation of educators to the current and next generation of learners. My colleagues Stephanie and Miriam will provide further insights into the details of some of our programs.

Dr Burley—Thank you for the opportunity to share with you and expand upon some of the things that we have already put in our submission. I would particularly like to address what we do in our 12-month intensive postgraduate diploma course, which focuses on middle and senior secondary schooling and has a component for the adult learner. I would like to address three particular aspects, which I will come to in a minute. However, the first thing that should be made really clear is that we have a triangular approach, in the sense that we are looking at the students who come to us with their varied knowledge, skills, experiences and personal qualities, and we see our role as providing a program where students will work very closely with schools. The three things are interlinked throughout the year. The particular features that I want to address that I think that you will find relevant, topical and critical are: firstly, the personal, academic and vocational qualities that these students bring to us, the profession; secondly, the programs that we provide and how they are actually linked, in theory and practice, significantly and consistently throughout the year; and, thirdly, some practicum considerations.

Firstly, I will talk about the students and what they bring. Our cohort of 157 full-time students and 71 part-time students in the one-year postgrad Dip. Ed. bring their expertise and their discipline knowledge. Of that full-time group, 38 per cent have either a PhD, a master's degree, two degrees or an honours degree. They are highly academically qualified. The gender balance is 41 per cent males to 59 per cent females, and 42 per cent of that cohort are either bilingual or multilingual. I think it is interesting to note the calibre of the students that are applying in considerable numbers to teach. And they bring not only academic qualifications. I think we have to focus on the commitment and maturity and other skills they bring as well. This may be because their average age is 30 and the students have thought through this decision very carefully, but we should note that they are bringing with them vocational experience, parental experience and travel and work experience, and many are coming from other professions, so they bring a wealth of experience. They can therefore reflect on and contribute to discussions on this very important issue for all of us.

The second aspect of the program I would like to highlight is how we interlink theory and practice. First, we are very conscious in our courses that we must do so. There is no other way to do it; we know that. Second, we organise our timetable so it is designed specifically for students to be able to go in and out of schools throughout the whole year. We organise two very different practicum, and I will come to that the moment. The third way in which we interlink theory and practice is by employing 30 registered teachers to come in every year. They bring their expertise and grassroots experience by providing curriculum workshops, methodology workshops, liaising with schools during the practicum and giving tutorials. We try to improve every year. An initiative that we put on this year is a module, mandatory for all students, focusing on professional standards, practicum preparation and potential positions. That module ensures that students are aware of their professional responsibilities in line with Canberra and DECS professional standards, and our own mapped graduate attributes are interlinked—so it links students with the standards and with our attributes. This module highlights students' responsibilities and our close working relationships—because we call in people for this module as well—with DECS, ISB, CEO, Lutheran schools, DECS resource centres and the teacher registration board.

The third aspect I would like to highlight for you is the practicum. In the graduate diploma we aim for two very different practicum experiences. The aim is for quality rather than quantity in terms of days. We have two five-week blocks but we ensure that those five-week blocks are

intense and rigorous and that they have two very different experiences. It would be easy just to send them out for one long block but we do two blocks. One is in government and non-government, one in urban or rural if possible and one may be single-sex or coed—we try and vary the experience. The approval rate of our students from all schools, government and non-government, is highlighted by the fact that 88 to 91 per cent of schools—that is, mentor teachers in schools—have attributed to our students a rating of good to outstanding. That is in the first practicum. In the second practicum it moves up to 91 per cent. You can see from the graphs here that over the last three years we have had an improvement—they show the acceptable levels, the unacceptable and the withdrawn. There is quite a difference there.

However, within the practicum we do have concerns that are like those of the other universities, so I will not go on too much about that. They probably told you that, with increased numbers in courses and increased pressures on teachers in schools, there is a huge difficulty in finding the placements that are required. As I said, we have two five-week blocks in this program and this is a difficulty despite using more than 100 schools in the current practice.

It is exacerbated by the fact that rural placements, which we encourage, are presently financially impossible for most of our students who, given their age, are renting, have families and are working to support themselves. We encourage it, 20 students out of the cohort went interstate or to the country in this last practicum but it is not enough. To give our students a quality rural experience, to encourage students to go to work in rural and regional areas and to alleviate pressure in the metropolitan schools we strongly recommend that federal funding be made available for rural placements, much like the rural medical scheme, having similar advantages for all concerned.

It will help several different stakeholders but, ultimately, it will help students, and that is what we are here for and that is what we want. We want better teachers in country schools. This is one way that perhaps we could do it. Those are what we consider to be some of the exciting and critical aspects of the postgraduate diploma at the University of Adelaide. They are for a particular clientele, students who have made their decision when they have finished their course. My colleague Ms Parsons will address you on a program that we have designed for students in year 12 who decide that they definitely want to teach. Thank you very much for your time.

Ms Parsons—Thank you for the chance to talk about the Bachelor of Teaching program. The university's four-year Bachelor of Teaching double-degree program was introduced in 2004. It is aimed primarily at undergraduate students. The first three years are focused on building a sound knowledge base for teaching through study of at least two learning areas. At the same time, the double-degree pathway gives pre-service teachers the opportunity to make links to education through the completion of one education course for each of the first three years of study. Teaching practice is not undertaken until fourth year, after students have completed their subject based degrees. This ensures that students bring sound discipline based knowledge to their first teaching experiences. The first- and third-year school based interactive experiences build a first-hand educational context for students in helping them to gradually prepare for classroom life.

CHAIR—What does first- and third-year interactive classroom experience mean?

Ms Parsons—Those are both school based subjects where students go for 10 half days or equivalent time into schools. In first year, it is a primary school and, in third year, a secondary school. They observe and do group and individual work.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Ms Parsons—The quality of the Bachelor of Teaching student cohort is high. In 2004 the TER for students entering the program was 91.4, in 2005 it was 82. Currently there are 133 students enrolled across first and second year, one third are male. The school is committed to attracting high-calibre students to its education programs through promotion of teaching as a profession. Retention and success of students in the Bachelor of Teaching program is supported by identification and monitoring of students considered at risk. These include students of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, country students, male students and international students.

Formal and informal structures within the school are used to support students as needed. Student mentoring is a strategy considered highly important in building support mechanisms for students. The recently established first- and second-year mentoring strategy enables the development of personal and professional relationships amongst students. In reflecting our graduate attributes, the skills and values that students can potentially develop through mentoring relationships are crucial in their ability to form effective relationships as beginning teachers. As a small school, we are able to establish and maintain personal relationships with all our students. A commitment to modelling the profession is enacted both in our learning and teaching programs and through informal enrichment activities. As is expected of teachers in schools, our students are encouraged to participate in school life at the university through representation on the school board, at public events and through organisation and involvement in social activities.

A research based approach is taken in the design of the first- and second-year Bachelor of Teaching courses. The first-year school based course, Primary Schools Interaction, encourages classroom research through its work and assessment plan, which includes data collection and analysis, identification of a primary school issue for research and a reflective journal. The second-year course takes an inquiry based approach reflective of current trends in university courses. The course introduces students to a framework for analysis of selected issues including mental health, bullying and students with special needs. Assessment is through a portfolio that incorporates both field study and case analysis. In modelling and sound teaching practice, student work is assessed through rubrics and courses evaluated through the university student experience of teaching and learning.

Collaboration with other faculties within the university occurs at program level. The Bachelor of Teaching reference group includes representatives from each of the four degree programs that our students are enrolled in along with teaching. Meetings with relevant faculty members and DECS personnel ensure effective coordination and forward program planning for students.

Beyond the university, connections with the teaching profession are considered vital in promoting the successful transition from preservice education to first-year teaching. In linking preservice education to professional learning for established teachers, a mentoring strategy is currently being developed in partnership with DECS country recruitment. The strategy aims to impact on both student teachers and their mentors by providing a professional learning program

in mentoring for established teachers working with students on practicum. Taking current research on teacher induction into account, this initiative is a step forward in contributing to successful beginnings for new teachers.

Another project in continual professional learning has been implemented this year through the School of Education with the languages team at DECS. In connecting preservice languages teachers with the field, a reciprocal arrangement has been made. With the university based teacher education in language methodology, I am offering professional learning support to individual language services and programs that preservice teachers can participate in along with established language teachers. Both of these strategies are examples of how the University of Adelaide is working in partnership with the schooling system to optimise resources and outcomes for teachers at all levels.

CHAIR—Just going back to the 12-month graduate diploma, I am pleased to hear of the high quality of entrants who have got into it. In an ideal world, is 12 months enough, or would you prefer two years?

Dr Burley—I believe that 12 months is definitely enough. The program is highly rigorous; we start before the university normally starts and we work with the schools in their available times. If you make a quality course, if you factor in all the essential items, you can definitely have a highly rigorous course that is relevant for students. I think that is highlighted by the fact that the schools are supporting our program by such reports. I have not got references but, anecdotally, we invite principals in to our schools every year and they are very much in favour of the course.

Dr Alagumalai—I did some work in Singapore and New Zealand and they have similar one-year programs. One of the things we have been looking at is the structure the Western Australian and Victorian universities have. All the universities in WA and Victoria offer a one-year Graduate Diploma in Education program. So we have a comparable program to the graduate diploma in WA and Victoria and the practicum ranges from eight to 12 weeks and I think we are at the upper end of that provision to support students. So we are, in a sense, taking on our neighbouring countries. Coming from Singapore, I was trained in an equivalent one-year graduate diploma and I think what we have at the University of Adelaide is in very good standing.

Dr Burley—I think it is a question of quality. I think you have to juggle quality and quantity. We certainly believe that quality, good preparation, thought and collaboration works very well. We have a huge number of students who apply for our postgraduate diploma. I think that is indicative of the fact that it is recognised as having the professional standard that is required. With the ongoing links between preservice and beginning teaching, schools often say they would like to take students who have been at university for four years and done the rigorous one-year diploma because they have their own particular slant. So I think it has a number of strengths for a particular group of students.

CHAIR—We have had some discussions with various teachers about the issue of universities placing students in quality practicum placements. We have been questioning witnesses about a more systemic approach to placing students where there would be an expectation, subject to the schools and needs matching, that schools take a certain number. I will not call it a quota. So rather than an intense placement activity by the university, there would be an expectation that schools take a certain proportion of graduates. What are your thoughts on a system like that?

Dr Burley—In the middle schooling and senior secondary, I have found that in the main the schools have been very supportive regarding the placements given the stresses that they are under. They have supported us and I am really glad to have had the opportunity to say that publicly. In the main the schools have been superb. In the secondary focus it is also difficult to get all the subjects. We need all the schools. I think that the way it works at the moment is that, without it being made mandatory, it is better to get teachers who really want to do this. If you make it mandatory you are starting to get into problems.

The system has worked well for many years but the increased numbers are causing problems. I think one of the solutions, which I have already mentioned, is the rural practicum. I think another is if teachers could be given a reward—not financial but in terms of time. This would be attractive to teachers. Another—and this is something we are working on; it is in our submission—is if they could get accreditation for the work that they do in mentoring. That would bring the mentoring to a more professional standard. They are some of the considerations that we are thinking of. Certainly we have had a very good response from schools but it is not enough. We run into the possibility of enrolling a student in a degree at the university and not being able to fulfil our obligations if we cannot get them a placement. That makes us extremely vulnerable, and it is coming to that.

CHAIR—Do you think if we could solve the issue of country practicum by providing the support that that would also, as a second benefit, solve the numbers problem by making more places available in metropolitan schools?

Dr Burley—Absolutely. I said that. There are three things that would enrich our students' experiences. It would attract students, hopefully, to the country, which would be fantastic for country schools and students, but it would also do exactly that.

Mr SAWFORD—The Dip. Ed programs have had a mixed result. You have given a very positive view of the one-year Dip. Ed. In the states we have had thus far, there has been a lot of criticism of the one-year program. There has been a lot of support for the double degree but not a lot of support for the Dip. Ed. That has come from principals and young teachers themselves. So it has been a problem. I know you emphasise very much quality and I am sure that that is a determining factor. That is the evidence that we have received. It seems to me that what Miriam was talking about—the double degrees for the school leavers—seems to be a very sensible approach to teacher education.

Dr Burley—I am positive because I am passionate about what we do and I do think that we are constantly trying to change. We do have our courses evaluated every year and we listen to the student voice and try to alter things that we think can be improved. However, as I articulated with regard to the practicum reports, the schools, by their very reports on our Dip. Ed students, are saying that they highly approve of what the students are doing, which in turn is what we are doing. Eighty-eight per cent of the mentor reports for three years are now saying that they are good to outstanding. So they are approving. It is not just me who is giving a quality thrust. They are approving. That is why I used those figures.

Mr SAWFORD—I do not doubt what you are saying. I am saying that, in the evidence that we are being presented with from the Secondary Principals Association at an Australian and a

state level, we are having that criticism come to us that there are question marks about the one-year Dip. Ed.

Ms Parsons—It is important to also note that the recent OECD report clearly states that research shows that there is no documented evidence that more time on teaching practicum makes for better or more effective teachers. That is shown in that research.

Mr SAWFORD—We might have some evidence in this inquiry that might counteract that. We will not go into that just at the moment. One of the things that is impressive about your cohorts is that you have the highest male component in your courses that I have actually come across—41 per cent to 59 per cent. Did you do something in order to get that? Did you target that? How did you get that percentage up so high? Did it just happen with no target?

Dr Burley—This is the second year that we have looked at those figures. I would have said that in the time that I have been there it has been roughly a third to two-thirds, but it is increasing. I wonder if it is perhaps because people are coming to our course older and they have had—

Mr SAWFORD—That is happening in other universities as well. That is a national trend that is happening.

Dr Alagumalai—I think we have something unique happening in our universities. We have engineers wanting to come back to teach physics and mathematics. I think they add value to our physics curriculum topic, which I think is a good sign, and we want to maintain that momentum. So there has been a rethink by some of the engineers, I think, to want to deal with us and take up teaching as a profession.

Dr Burley—They are male.

Dr Alagumalai—Yes, they are males. It is a positive move forward for education.

Mr SAWFORD—I will come back to the maths in a moment. Yesterday we talked with the University of South Australia. They have a target equity program, and I think 39 per cent of their total cohort met those characteristics. But from an Australian point of view—and other than acknowledging the big trend of mature age people coming back into the profession, which I think is a terrific thing to happen—when you look at it and also at the other factors you see that the cohorts are very metropolitan based, very middle class and very female. There is nothing wrong with any of those criteria but there seems to be an exclusion of people from disadvantaged areas and a diminishing number of entries from country, provincial and, in particular, rural and remote. I think all of the departments in every state that we have been to, including South Australia, do something very positive for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islanders but, other than that, the disadvantaged do not seem to get a look in and country people seem to be diminishing from the courses in great droves. What is the situation at the University of Adelaide?

Dr Burley—To my knowledge the Fairway scheme is still in existence at the University of Adelaide, although I cannot speak about the relative specific details of that scheme. It is definitely targeted at students in disadvantaged schools which have a very small history of

students going on to tertiary studies. That is all that I can say in that regard. We do not have any evidence as to where our students come from in terms of socioeconomic aspects.

Mr SAWFORD—Do you think you should?

Ms Parsons—We do have it for our undergraduate programs. In our cohort this year of Bachelor of Teaching students, in terms of socioeconomic status, out of 133 students 41 of those are high, 18 low, 68 medium and six unknown. Those are the figures that we have for socioeconomic status.

Mr SAWFORD—Have you got country figures?

Ms Parsons—I do not have the figures. We are proactive in working as to country recruitment in encouraging our students to take up country scholarships and in working with DECS to assist students on country placements through third year and fourth year for their practicums. We are hoping that this is really going to not only encourage country students to go back to teach in the country but also help city and metropolitan based students to get a feeling for or understanding of what it is like to teach in the country.

Mr SAWFORD—Education seems to always provide extremes in arguments. One of the powerful parts of your submission is that it is extremely balanced. Yesterday there was media comment about outcomes based education and defining the syllabus, and we have had technicians against professions and phonics against one word. I have always found that they are very unnecessary debates when in actual fact all of those things are valid in the right circumstances. Do your education and teacher education courses deliberately go for the balance? That is the impression you give in your submission: that you are deliberately inclusive of all ways of educating rather than going for a research end rather than a teaching end and that you are balanced between scholarship and research. That comes across very strongly in your submission. Is that deliberate? Is that the way you operate or were you trying to make another point through doing that?

Dr Alagumalai—What comes through very strongly from our experience is the passion for teaching and learning. We want to get that through and that is what we keep on emphasising to our current cohort. There is a passionate aspect of this profession that you have got to enjoy to sustain 30 or 40 years of teaching. That is where we strike a balance: we bring in what is happening in the broader world from theory into practice. Because we are small in number, the students get to interact with each other. There are students in the preteaching program interacting with our graduate diploma programs and our postgraduate students. They are all in the same vicinity and we want to maintain that synergy. The recent launch of our portal was to bring that interaction beyond our boundaries. We want to ensure that that passion stays on. I am passionate about teaching because of that very thing. I love teaching and I think all of us do. Sometimes in research that passion is not quantified or talked about.

Mr SAWFORD—I would like to ask one last question. When you say ‘small’, we have had some evidence given to us during this inquiry that teacher education is regarded in some universities as a ‘cash cow’. Should all universities have teacher education? They do not have all the other areas.

Ms Parsons—Education is fundamental to learning. Learning happens in every discipline of the university. Therefore education, in my view, should be an integral part of any university's teaching and learning offerings.

Dr Alagumalai—One of the recent trends at the School of Engineering is that some engineers now want to do engineering education. So we now actually have a student from the engineering faculty wanting to interact with us. There is an opening up and a recognition that education is important. The nursing education people are also considering what we are doing in our school. There is a broader conception of what we do, rather than the narrow idea of just training teachers to go to schools. We can make a huge and broad contribution not just to the community but also within and between universities. We want to make that happen.

Dr Burley—That broader role of schools of education in universities is very appropriate and increasing. Especially with double degrees, we are working with other disciplines. But each school of education does not necessarily have to do everything and I think you can specialise, as we have. We recognise what we do and we try and do it well, but we cannot do everything and we do not try and do everything. So we have two major programs directed to specific groups of different clientele.

Ms CORCORAN—I am not from South Australia, so forgive me for not knowing about your university. You have listed the three courses that you run. I understand that the Bachelor of Teaching was introduced just last year.

Ms Parsons—That is right.

Ms CORCORAN—Were you in undergraduate teaching before that?

Ms Parsons—No.

Ms CORCORAN—So you have taught teaching at postgraduate level, the one-year course, for some time, but this is your first time in undergraduate teaching?

Ms Parsons—Yes.

Ms CORCORAN—One of our terms of reference is to look at the way teaching courses are informed by research. In your presentation you made the point that there is a strong nexus between research and how you teach. Can you give me an example of how that works?

Dr Alagumalai—One of the big issues now emerging from the OECD report is the connection between neuroscience and education. Harvard University runs a countrywide conference every year on learning and the brain and the science of learning. We think about some of the bigger things happening out there and we bring them into our courses at the undergraduate level. It is not only about psychology, sociology or philosophy. There is another, new dimension developing. We keep students informed of the broader picture. That is connected to a masters level topic and we again have that connection happening. That is one area of work.

The other thing is the broader question of mentorship. Mentorship is a big thing happening in the profession between teachers, and we are saying it starts with us. Those broad research things

come back to inform us. We are also learning from our students. As Stephanie pointed out, we have students coming in with PhDs in chemistry and biochemistry. That informs our content. They will say, 'That is an old theory of science. Here is a new philosophy.' That interaction informs us. So we are both a learner and an educator at the same time. It is that openness that keeps our place very exciting.

Ms Parsons—I will give an example at the undergraduate level. The move now is for teachers to be researchers in their own classrooms and to use their students as the basis for making improvements to their programs. When our teachers go out into schools in first year they are asked to select one student in the class, to gather some data about that student—whether that be through a questionnaire or examining a piece of work—and to use that as an analysis for them to consider how they might develop or change their own teaching. This information is also sent to the host teachers into the schools so that they can look at what the student-teacher is working on, make suggestions and, in some cases in discussions I have had with teachers, think about those processes for themselves as well. There are certainly processes that we are using in our professional learning programs with established teachers in schools.

Ms CORCORAN—Are staff at your university doing research themselves which then flows into their teaching?

Ms Parsons—Yes, all the time.

Dr Alagumalai—It is nearly a one to one—what we research is what goes into our teaching.

Ms CORCORAN—Thank you very much.

CHAIR—Thank you for appearing before the committee today. We may contact you if we need further information. The secretariat will provide you with a proof copy of your evidence and a copy of that will be posted on our web site. Thank you very much.

Proceedings suspended from 10.42 am to 11.03 am

LE DUFF, Mr Garry, Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

FOTIADIS, Mr Kostas, Principal, St George College, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

RUCH, Mrs Paquita May, Principal, Harvest Christian School, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

THOMSON, Mr Luke Ashley, Headmaster, Trinity College Gawler, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

CHAIR—Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and as such warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. Do you wish to make a statement in relation to your submission, and some introductory remarks?

Mr Le Duff—Yes, we would like to make a brief statement. First of all, thank you for the opportunity to meet with the committee and to discuss our response to the inquiry. We note that many of the matters raised in the association's submission have been discussed in other public hearings and presented in various other written submissions. For your information, the independent sector in South Australia employs approximately 2,600 teaching staff across 97 independent schools. Those teachers are supported by about 3½ thousand non-teaching staff.

The association's submission was based on consultation with heads across 96 member schools. Only one member school is not a member of the association in South Australia. Our association does not necessarily have a single position on the matters raised in our submission and it welcomes this opportunity to explore some of the suggestions that my colleagues sitting on either side of me helped develop. The heads here today have been involved in the consultations with the membership over the months prior to the preparation of the submission.

I would like to present to you the overall critical message that emerged from those consultations—that is, that teaching is a very demanding profession and that it is fundamental that teachers are adequately prepared to enter the work force to meet the demands now placed on schools by governments and the community. We are aware of the work currently being undertaken to prepare teacher standards. We believe that they need to reflect what a teacher must now know and do and to accommodate the changing nature of schooling. There needs to be further debate and consultation to formulate an agreed understanding of what teachers are and what they do, and this understanding should then inform the development of teacher education courses. We believe that that overall key message also applies to ongoing professional development provided by teacher education institutions and other authorities such as ours that are funded through Commonwealth programs.

The more specific points included in the submission are as follows. (1) The AIS consultation indicated some concern about the lack of readiness of new teachers to enter the work force. This

consultation process identified concerns regarding the lack of knowledge about school organisation, classroom management and the depth of subject knowledge of graduate teachers, particularly at senior secondary levels. (2) Students appear to have a good knowledge of pedagogy but cannot relate this to managing in a classroom. Particular attention was drawn to the diversity of needs of students, especially those students with disabilities. (3) Student teachers need a higher level of understanding of the changing roles of schools within their communities and of the organisational structures of schools. (4) The TER should be one of the criteria used in determining entry into teacher education programs. Much more focus should be placed on the importance of personal qualities to meet the increased role of schools in providing for the safety and welfare of students. Skills in building positive relationships with parents in the wider community were also identified during the consultation. (5) The teaching profession should take a greater level of responsibility in promoting teaching as a career. (6) There should be greater collaboration and cooperation between schools, teacher education faculties and teacher professional associations. (7) The importance of school practicum and the need for this to occur in a supportive school environment was also a focal point of discussion during the consultation. Significant emphasis was placed on the need for the practicum to occur in a positive school environment where teachers and the wider community were supportive of student teachers. Opportunities to undertake practicum in a wide variety of schools was also recommended. The idea of an internship incorporated into the current teacher education courses was also raised. (8) Some concerns were raised about the superficial level of supervision provided by universities during practicum. The ninth and final point of the submission is that, given the predictions of teacher shortages, there is a need for school jurisdictions and individual schools to undertake work force planning.

The submission also makes reference to the need to explore a variety of pathways into teacher education. Attracting young people, including school leavers and mid-career professionals to teaching will necessitate a greater understanding of the end benefits involved in teaching—in particular, greater emphasis on the professional standing of teachers in the community, the quality of the work environment and matters regarding financial remuneration.

Since having made the submission to the committee, we have had further consultations within the membership. I would like to draw your attention to four further points. These are as follows: the availability of professional development to develop leadership skills and the promotion of leadership among teachers; the need for teachers to have higher skill levels in curriculum development and assessment; a greater level of knowledge about how schools are resourced; and the importance of teachers having a wider general knowledge of the world. In simple terms: to produce global citizens, you need global knowledge. That is the presentation that outlines our submission and some additional points.

CHAIR—On the issue of the quality of the graduates coming to your schools, how would you rank the average beginning teacher in a mark out of 10?

Mr Thomson—This is a very topical debate—how to measure certain things. It really depends where they are going and what they are doing. I would say that the quality of some of the primary school teachers is very good, but we are finding that the quality of middle school and senior school teachers is declining in our school.

Mr SAWFORD—In what way?

Mr Thomson—In our school particularly we find it is a subject-depth issue. We find the teachers in middle and senior school are able to talk a lot about how to approach the art of teaching but are finding it more and more difficult to engage students with a depth in their subject that we want them to have.

Mr SAWFORD—If you had a defined syllabus, why would that be a problem? Do you have a defined syllabus, outcomes based?

Mr Thomson—We have a defined syllabus and we have outcomes—we have both. The problem is that we are involved in the process of retraining. We tend not to place new teachers into senior class positions where they require that knowledge and we work them up to that level over a period of time.

CHAIR—Do you think that that trend would be even more so than a new engineer who does not get to design the high-rise building straight away, that he is designing something that contributes to the building but is not responsible for the total design of it?

Mr SAWFORD—I thought you were going to say the ‘outhouse’.

CHAIR—I was thinking of an example but one did not come to mind.

Mr Thomson—I think there is a shift occurring, partly because of the generalist nature of some of the education degrees that can now be undertaken which do not necessarily have a specialist degree program in a certain subject area preceding them. I do not think it is unfair to suggest that people learn over time, but I do think that the preparation for particular subject learning and teaching is not as high as it has been in the past.

CHAIR—If you went back 20 years, would you have expected a graduate teacher to be able to take on a year 11 or year 12 class—a beginning teacher of yesteryear—or has it always been thus but to a lesser extent?

Mr Thomson—No, I think you could have—the issue was not on whether or not they had the content knowledge, for example, or the depth and breadth of their understanding of the subject; the issue would more be working with them on how to approach that with students in a teaching and learning dynamic. Yes, it is probably a fair thing to say that 20 years ago the issues in the classroom were different. It was not about content; it was more about how to approach that with senior students.

Ms CORCORAN—Is that typical of new teachers who have come straight from university to your school or is it also the case for teachers who have come to teaching as a second occupation, a second career?

Mr Thomson—That is a very good point. We find we are wanting more and more to have mature age students as teachers for the very reason that they bring with them some breadth and depth that it takes longer to accumulate with a younger teacher.

Ms CORCORAN—So at the risk of making a big generalisation: if you had new teachers in front of you, one of whom has been in another career beforehand, the person who has done

something beforehand will be better able to go straight in to teach a year 11 or year 12 class? Is that what you are saying?

Mr Thomson—Yes. We feel that we are tending to favour mature age graduate teachers, in the senior areas especially, although yesterday we appointed an agriculture teacher who is straight out of university but has a doctorate in her program and a depth of knowledge that we do not often find.

Mr Fotiadis—In answer to the question as to how you measure a graduate, it is like: how long is a piece of string?

CHAIR—There are two parts: how do you measure it and is it up to your expectation?

Mr Fotiadis—I think that schools supplement their selection choices by engaging in an interview process that attempts to identify the skills, knowledge and understandings that graduates could bring to the school and whether those skills, knowledge and understandings are compatible and congruent with the ethos, the culture and the aspirations of the school.

There is always going to be such generality that, sometimes, we will lose the specificity of the topic, which for me are some of the topics that Garry raised in the presentation. It is absolutely critical to be more explicit about what the role, responsibilities and duties of teachers are within the school. Comparing a teacher of today to a teacher of 20 or 30 years ago is, I think, an inequitable kind of approach because the responsibilities and expectations that schools have now as opposed to 20 years ago are different in terms of pedagogy, social interaction, personal qualities and content that we try to impart to students. So the first and most critical thing for many of us would be to define and articulate what our expectations are of teachers. Once we have done that, then we can look at the best preparation for giving us that end product that we believe best suits the needs of the new or evolving learning environment. At this point in time, if each one of us were to define what a teacher is or what a teacher ought to do, you would find many different views among us. That is the first point.

The second point is that we all share the view that all new graduates that come to the school lack the experience which would allow them to engage in more productive and effective ways of learning and teaching. Consequently, our proposal is that it would be a good idea to consider a more sustained and planned pre-service practicum within a school environment for the new teachers, under the supervision of experienced educators or instructors—or whatever we eventually call teachers, so that they can impart to them not only the theory they are acquiring through their university studies but also that theory in application.

If you ask many graduates they say that, as soon as they walk into the classroom, the first and most important thing is survival—how they survive. Therefore, most of their theory goes out of the window. They almost instinctively revert back to how they were taught, and they draw on those things to survive until their experience teaches them to modify the way they interact with students. So we see defining the role of teachers in a more explicit and agreed manner and preparing courses that will give us that agreed role in responsibilities as two critical preconditions to changing the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom.

CHAIR—Your comments are interesting insofar as we are probably receiving two strands of thought on the practicum issue and the preparedness of teachers in that much of the ACER-type research is saying that a teacher with very strong subject knowledge supplemented by an adequate amount of practicum that is relevant to the pedagogical theories that have been taught is appropriate. But when we speak to witnesses who have come from the coalface, from the schools, there is a much stronger emphasis on a greater degree of practicum producing a better teacher. If we go back to ACER, they say that their research does not support that. There are two interesting streams.

Mr Fotiadis—If we define the teacher as the person who is simply going to impart content knowledge to a student, then those two points are very critical—if that is the exclusive role of teachers. But, if the teacher has to impart content knowledge within a social context dealing with a range of abilities, interests and needs of individual students; if the teacher has to deal with social issues that children bring to the learning environment; and if the teacher has to deal with domestic violence, single parent families or whatever, which changes the quality of interaction and relationship that is developed, then teachers need a different set of skills. So, again, it goes back to what we define as the role of the teacher and how we best prepare those teachers to undertake those roles and responsibilities.

Mr SAWFORD—The general structure of teacher education courses, particularly over the last 20 years, appears to not have had as much emphasis on classroom management, as a generalisation, and much more emphasis on, I suppose, the intellectual challenge of a course. One university in Australia, the University of Central Queensland, turned that on its end and went the other way and started concentrating on classroom management. They have a very strong relationship with their local schools and have a very high demand for their teachers because they are classroom ready. The criticism of that course is that their subject knowledge is not as strong. Getting that balance right between subject knowledge and classroom management is the issue.

Both Adelaide last year and Flinders this year are embarking on double degree courses. This seems to me to be a very sensible approach to teacher education. What is your view? Does that potentially—because we do not have the results yet—cover, Garry, your first couple of comments, in which you criticised the lack of readiness in terms of depth of subject knowledge on the one hand and classroom management on the other hand?

Mr Le Duff—Before passing to the people on either side of me, one of the elements that we found was that there were frequent comments about the lack of connectivity between schools and the training institutions. That double degree concept—and it sounds like the University of Central Queensland has a much stronger link with the schools—might solve some of the difficulties. But fundamental to us would be having much stronger connection between the education and training that the young people are exposed to and what happens in schools. They should get experience across a range of schools. That would be our position.

Mr Thomson—The challenge is the balance—I agree with you totally. But maybe to extend that out a little further, I wonder whether the expertise for the classroom management aspects is best placed in the school. Maybe the school should increase its role in training teachers for the very specific day-to-day rudiments of the profession, and the universities increase their role in the depth process.

Mr SAWFORD—That is a good point. That is the University of Central Queensland view. That is interesting.

Mrs Ruch—We are representing a process that happened prior to our coming here today. The view given to us by other principals and held by us is that we should not look at the end and try and give a grade but rather look at the beginning of the process and see how at the university stage communication between schools can clearly help to find what we need from the students who are coming from the universities. At the moment, we hear little from the universities. When a supervisor comes to us for a student teacher, they come for a very short time. They have a few minutes with us. They spend X number of minutes with the student. Then out they go. That is really all we hear of them. That is not what we really require.

The beginning of the process is the important thing. We need to look at, as Kostas has said, what the higher expectation and the wider view of teaching today is—the wider curriculum. We are teaching so many more things now than when we began teaching. The need for pastoral care for our children in the classroom and behaviour management is for all of us sitting here—or for me particularly in a smaller school—a real issue that we deal with on a daily basis. Teachers need to know inclusive practices to have children with special needs in their classes. They can know all the depth they like, but if they cannot cope with any of those other things they are not even going to be able to convey the message of what they know, except to the higher stream of students in some schools.

Mr SAWFORD—Can I get some specifics about the practicum and the supervision?

CHAIR—Could I ask one question before that. When was the last time the university rang you up and asked you how they and their students were going?

Mrs Ruch—I cannot remember.

CHAIR—You cannot remember when?

Mrs Ruch—No.

Mr Thomson—To be fair, we have designated people on the site who look after student teachers. So the communication is likely to occur at the level. But we never get overwhelmed.

Mr Fotiadis—For example, we have an memorandum of understanding with Flinders University, because of our unique relationship with them. We have a different kind of relationship with the institution and a different set of interactions that are far more effective for our needs. But it is unique. It is not a status quo but rather an exception.

Mr SAWFORD—Give us an example of a practicum of five or six weeks. In that five or six weeks what contact do you have with the university and what contact do you have with the supervising lecturer or whoever? What happens?

Mrs Ruch—During that time we receive—

Mr SAWFORD—Is it five weeks?

Mrs Ruch—Yes, it is around that. It depends; it can be quite different but for a country stint it is usually that. We are given a document that really requires us to give information back rather than give information, if you like, to the university about what we would like. When those supervisors come, of course we speak generally to them and we talk about those things.

Mr SAWFORD—How long do they spend with you?

Mrs Ruch—Again, it is the country we are talking about. Perhaps it is different in the city, so I will let my colleagues speak. They would come for half a day, perhaps talk with me for an hour then see the student in their classroom situation. That would be the length of it.

Mr Fotiadis—Unless there are specific issues of concern that the school raises with a university, the supervisor will pop in once or twice a week. Depending on the number of students who are at a particular school, the attention to each individual student may be no longer than half an hour.

Mr SAWFORD—So it varies—you are half a day and five weeks; you are once or twice a week on a regular basis.

Mr Fotiadis—Absolutely. Unless, as I said, there are specific problems or challenges that a student teacher is facing. Then we will call them and have a longer conversation with them.

Mr SAWFORD—Can I move onto entry into teacher education courses. TER is very efficient but very cold and calculating and it does not measure personal qualities. The University of South Australia has 2,300 entrants. To interview all those, the resources and the costs and so on would be prohibitive. Are there other ways to assess personal qualities that would be more efficient than, say, the interview process?

Mr Fotiadis—The first thing that we have to accept is that assessing personal qualities is a subjective process. Consequently, who is going to assess them, for what purpose and what outcomes are we trying to achieve? We know that personal quality assessment in other fields of endeavour, like medicine, has sometimes proven to be discriminatory in its nature. For example, students who are from non-English-speaking backgrounds were automatically disadvantaged through an interview process, where their language skills were not what the assessors were looking for. If we accept that, yes, there is a process where one can assess personal qualities, we need to identify which of those personal qualities we want to assess and how we make the process as objective as possible. It is going to be time consuming and resource intensive; there is no doubt about that. But it is a process that we have to be convinced as a nation, as a community, that is really going to be to the benefit of our future citizens. If we are then we will find the most appropriate way of doing it.

Mr SAWFORD—Some people have suggested personal portfolios, profiles that are existing from a school or work record, or references.

Mr Thomson—I would have thought, again, that the nature of the relationship between the school and the university is crucial here. Schools know best the students who are exiting them. In many cases they have had them for 12 years. They are in a position to make some important decisions with that person on the sorts of career choices they might take.

I wonder whether we could see the loop of exiting school, entering university and entering school as a model. I know that many independent schools would do that with their really excellent students. They would say to them: 'Have you ever thought of teaching? If you do go into teaching come back to us.' Certain people do exhibit characteristics that really predispose them to teaching. I think that somewhere in there there needs to be a dialogue. I am not sure where the best place for it is, but there is something about the connection between universities and schools that can make that connection easier.

Mr SAWFORD—One of the things we have discovered is that many of the entries into teacher education are metropolitan, middle class and female. There is nothing wrong with any of that, but there seems to be discrimination against people from disadvantaged backgrounds. In fact, it seems to us that a diminishing number of people from disadvantaged backgrounds are going into teacher education. It was not the case 30 or 40 years ago. There is a diminishing group coming from provincial, regional and country areas. There are a whole range of reasons for that. Is that your experience? The only star in the sky that balances that a bit is that we have an increasing trend of mature age people with lots of other experiences who want to become teachers. That is only part of the problem. Do you have a view on targeted entry of people, particularly undergraduates, into teacher education courses?

Mr Le Duff—My understanding is that at least one of the universities—

Mr SAWFORD—The University of South Australia has 39 per cent. It is very high.

Mr Le Duff—But also, some of the universities—I cannot recall which—have a deliberate policy of looking at particular targeted groups. I thought it was Flinders University. The other point, from our perspective, is that the only way you would achieve this would be through some sort of deliberate policy. There would be certain places allocated for, for example, young Indigenous students who may wish to enter teaching so that you did in fact have some sort of deliberate policy up front.

Mr SAWFORD—It seems to be that in all states there are definite links to cover that for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students, but for disadvantaged groups there are not. For students from country areas it is a bit hit and miss. We have 30 or 40 scholarships here in South Australia. That is just the tip of the iceberg. That is just tokenism. It is a good thing but it is not the answer.

Mr Le Duff—There are schemes like the Fairway Scheme at the University of Adelaide that are targeted not at teacher education but at trying to encourage young people from particular schools and particular regions to enter university. That is not to say they are all going off and doing teacher education but there is that generic support, if you like. I cannot speak from the point of view of the association, but I would imagine that the only way that you would achieve that increase in various disadvantaged groups would be through quite deliberate policy decisions to do that.

Mr SAWFORD—What sort of policy decisions?

Mr Le Duff—You would take it another step further than what you have in the generic schemes. For example, you would take the Fairway Scheme at the University of Adelaide to the

next step. Then there would probably be some sort of quota system to try to encourage young people from different backgrounds to enter the teacher ed courses.

Mr SAWFORD—Scrap HECS for them; bond them.

Mr Le Duff—I would rather not make a deliberate statement about that. We need to explore all those things.

Mr SAWFORD—I see that you are nodding.

Mr Fotiadis—They are all defensible options. They need to be considered within the broader context. They are all options that are worth considering. I think we are entering another complex area—that is, how we attract appropriate students to the teaching field. That involves another lot of topics.

Mr Thomson—I think it is probably worth putting on the record that across our sector we all share a difficulty in attracting males to primary school positions.

Ms CORCORAN—I have forgotten who said it, but right at the beginning you talked about a lack of readiness. You were not talking about academic or subject based readiness but simply about how schools operate. Later on you talked about an internship. I am wondering if this lack of readiness could be addressed through a combination of an internship and more or different practicums. I am interested in your response to that. I am also very interested in the idea of an internship. Do you have a model in mind?

Mr Le Duff—Before we answer the question about the internship model, I would like to emphasise the importance we see in an enhanced role for schools in working with the universities to try to close the gap between theory and reality, and the importance of calling on expertise within schools so that can happen. I think Kostas raised the possibility of an internship.

Mr Fotiadis—Yes. For me, an internship means a more planned and sustained interaction at the coalface by an undergraduate. We do not see it as an addition to current study but rather a reconceptualisation of what teacher training is about. Within that reconceptualisation, the notion of more intense and more sustained practicums will become a topic that is debated between schools and universities so that at the end of it we can get better quality graduates who are more ready and attuned to the needs of teaching and learning. That is how we perceive the internship. But, as Garry said, it is not one that can be imposed; it is one that needs the interaction between schools and universities to ensure that it can best address the needs of teachers and students.

Ms CORCORAN—Do you see any value in having an internship—I do not even want to use that word—or something like that for a first year out teacher who is not yet quite fully fledged and is going through a semi-educative process whilst they are starting to teach? Is that another way that might work? They are formally qualified—maybe that is wrapped up in how they are registered, I do not know. Is there room for that sort of thing?

Mr Fotiadis—It is about intensifying the relationship between an undergraduate, or first-year graduate, and an experienced teacher. We do not see that relationship as being static, or one-to-one, for the whole period because teachers might not necessarily end up in the school where they

have been practising their practicum. Consequently, it is about providing those people with a range of contexts in a range of situations, metropolitan, country, low socioeconomic, middle-class and so forth, so that they sense and get familiar with the diversity of needs in the schooling environments that they have to engage with. Therefore, as I said, it is about interaction being more sustained and better planned.

Ms CORCORAN—You talked about having discussions with universities about what you as a group think teachers should look like when they come out of the system. I am not criticising you, but why has this discussion not taken place? What is the forum for that discussion? I am assuming that it needs to be with not just independent schools but also the Catholic schools and the department. If that conversation is not already happening, it needs to happen. Maybe we should make it one of our recommendations—I do not know. Is it really not already happening?

Mr Le Duff—An interesting point is how you go about devising education and training programs for any profession. I sense that there were opportunities for interaction but it is too late. It is in the actual course stage. I think we need to have the interaction at a much earlier stage around some of the fundamental questions that Kostas and others have raised. There are committees. We do get invited to be on the BEd committee of Flinders and other universities. But, in a sense, it is inviting the client into something that has already been designed. My sense of the part the client plays is that you ask the client first and then you design the course. You do not design the course and then ask them if they want it. What does it mean to engage the client in that process? My view is that it ought to be much earlier on. Yes, we do have committees but, to me, those committees are starting the consultation at too late a stage in the process.

Ms CORCORAN—We will ask the other organisations as well, but do you think that if I asked that question of DEST and the Catholic Education Office they would have the same sort of reaction as you have?

Mr Le Duff—They serve on the same committees. I obviously cannot speak for them.

Ms CORCORAN—I understand that.

Mr Le Duff—Having worked in various institutions, including in higher education, I can say that there is a concept of what a client is and that, in relation to who actually decides what the client wants, sometimes from an institution's point of view you can assume you know what the client wants. What you have got to do is work with the client to find out what they want and then do the designing. It is quite a significant shift in mind-set.

Mr Fotiadis—This is also about the nature of the discussion. At the moment what we are discussing with universities in most instances is a piece of the jigsaw puzzle. We have never had the opportunity of discussing the whole of the picture. In other words, yes, we will look at the BEd, but let us look at the BEd within the context of an overall teacher training program: how does it fit with the needs and aspirations of teachers and with the skills and knowledge that are required to be effective teachers? We do respond to specific courses, but we have never had this ongoing discussion about the whole jigsaw puzzle.

Ms CORCORAN—When the University of Adelaide established their undergraduate course—which I understand is two years old, so obviously it was planned only a few years ago—were you aware that that was happening? Were you involved in that?

Mr Le Duff—I think that would fit under my general description that we would have been involved in a developmental phase but it would have been quite some way down the track before that occurred. That is not what I see as a client based process.

Mr Thomson—If part of the role of this process is to take the opportunity to consider new paradigms, new approaches, there are around the world some really interesting and exciting processes. I would cite Columbia University, New York, as being one of the most successful teacher training institutions over the last century. They have always fundamentally linked themselves to a school or within a school environment. They have never sought to separate themselves out, from the time of Dewey right through to now. That is part of what Kostas and we as a group are trying to say, that we actually need to rethink that relationship. Schools not only provide a student-teacher educational discourse, they are also in themselves an intellectual centre for a whole range of training opportunities that are underexplored. Whether every school actually takes on an education department of its own that operates within the school, that is immersed within the culture of a school environment, or whether it is something less than that, I am not sure. That is something that I think we need to consider, that the paradigm might need to change.

Mr Le Duff—I think it is also our responsibility to engage the universities in the sorts of policy changes and structural changes that are occurring in schools. There are a number of quite significant policy committees in this state around matters of school retention, social inclusion and so on. It has to be a two-way process. For the universities and university staff to have some sense of how the demands on schools are changing, we need to engage them in those sorts of policy committees. In this state we do have the opportunity for the three school sectors to work on those sorts of policy initiatives. We should be engaging the universities in those sorts of discussions so they have a greater understanding of how policy being developed by government, be it Commonwealth or state, is actually impinging on schools and how that then affects the role of a teacher in a school and flows on to the development of education and training programs.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—This committee is a bipartisan committee and works pretty functionally together. One of the things we are not undertaking to do is to bash up universities and education faculties. In your executive summary and in your submission you drop a bombshell, I think, which has gone somewhat unnoticed. You highlighted that your member schools are concerned about graduates' knowledge and skills. You say, as you did in your introduction here today, that your new graduates, for the most part, do not have an adequate knowledge of the school organisational structure and that concern has been expressed about the depth of subject knowledge of graduate teachers, particularly in the secondary year levels where specialisation is more important, or at least more relevant. You also say in your submission:

More significantly, a number of member schools indicated that while new graduates have a good knowledge of pedagogy they are in many cases not able to relate this to the practical reality of managing a classroom situation. In short they are unable to actually 'teach a class'.

I think that is a very frightening comment from you. It begs the question: if both schools and knowledge are inadequate, what is happening over those four years?

Mr Le Duff—I emphasise that that is a collection of different viewpoints rather than a consolidated view of every one of the member schools. If we talk to the secondary heads they may focus on the secondary element in terms of depth. Others will focus on other matters. In our discussions today what we have done is go across many of the things you have mentioned. Perhaps the strongest message that we are giving is that the universities and the schools need to engage one another much more strongly to overcome some of those perceptions. We felt there was a wide enough concern to raise and identify those matters. Whilst they might come across as being very strong, I think that generally we feel it is important to record them. I would have thought that we have presented today some of the suggestions as to how those things may be overcome.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—You did actually qualify it by saying that in the primary year levels it was not so much of an issue, but in the secondary year levels, especially when specialised teachers were needed, the depth was not what you were looking for. I would have thought that, in a way, there was a trade-off with those two things—perhaps universities would concentrate more on getting classroom management skills up at the expense of depth of knowledge of subject areas—but you are actually saying that both are inadequate. We would like to come up with a recommendation or a view as to the best way to address that. Four years is a long time for a student to be in organised formal studies.

Mr Thomson—It is in Australia. In Germany you would not be a teacher until you are 28, 29, and you would have undertaken significant postgraduate work both in subject specialism and in pedagogy. It has come to be a long period for Australia, but I am not sure it is necessarily that across the world. I think the point here is that universities' priorities are not always the same as school priorities and we need to have the dialogue. That is probably the most important point that seems to be coming out.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—It sounds to me that, if you had the choice, in a totally free and open labour market you would not necessarily employ graduates; you would employ other people who did not have teaching qualifications.

Mr Thomson—In some cases that would be true. What we have not mentioned here is that in some cases we felt, when we were discussing this as a group, that international graduates may well fit the bill in certain areas better than our graduates can in some areas.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Just a quick question, although I do not expect you to answer it quickly. How are you going in terms of getting adequate numbers of teachers in your different areas of specialisation or subject areas in secondary education?

Mr Thomson—I do not have a cross-sectorial point here, but it is worth saying that in our environment technology is an area that we find very difficult to fill. As I said before, we are finding it increasingly difficult to attract males to primary teaching.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—What about maths and science?

Mr Le Duff—From a sector point of view—and also I am out visiting schools in various capacities—probably the most severe challenge for schools is in the area of language teaching. That is right across the board.

Mr SAWFORD—Foreign languages?

Mr Le Duff—Yes. That is No 1. No. 2 is science and mathematics—and technology and the vocational education and training area, because you are trying to respond quickly to individual student needs in an area and you have an administrative process of teacher registration and so on. The other thing I think is important is that these shortages are probably heightened in schools like Paquita's, where you are near or in a country area. There is certainly evidence starting to emerge now that even our near country colleagues, such as those in the Barossa Valley, are having considerable difficulty attracting teachers right across the board. I think we are probably at the beginning of quite a severe shortage in certain areas.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—I appreciated your remarks in your introduction where you talked about a greater need for work force planning. Just quickly, do you think there is merit in universities offering places to students coming to study specifically in areas that more closely match what the demand will be?

Mr Le Duff—We did have a committee here with the CEOs, or a representative, from each of the three school sectors and the heads of the faculties from the universities. One of the tasks of that committee was to engage in discussions about where the shortages were and so on. I would have to get back to you about how that is progressing. I know the department here has done some work force planning and has looked at the potential impact of the ageing work force. Certainly from my point of view, in moving across the schools, even on the evidence that I have personally, I would say we have some quite significant challenges in the state in terms of teacher shortages. One of the elements that we need to look at is how we can use other pathways to bring people who may have developed their skills in other professions into teaching. We need to be flexible to meet those quite significant challenges.

CHAIR—Thank you for appearing before the committee today. We may contact you if we need further information. The secretariat will provide you with a proof copy of your evidence and the transcript will also be placed on our parliamentary web site.

[11.54 am]

BRENNAN, Professor Marie, Australian Technology Network of Universities

CHAIR—I welcome Professor Brennan. Do you have comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Prof. Brennan—I am the Dean of Education of one of the member institutions of the Australian Technology Network of Universities. The five institutions are Curtin, QUT, RMIT, UTS and the University of South Australia.

CHAIR—Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that these hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and, as such, warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. As we have only very recently received this submission, we have not had a chance to go through it in detail. I ask you, if you would, to just take us through that submission and make any comments you wish to.

Prof. Brennan—I am very surprised that you only recently received it, as I think it was submitted very close to the deadline. There are several things that I want to raise for your attention. One of those is an issue that was raised yesterday at the University of South Australia and that I am sure you will hear everywhere, which is the issue of indexation of the operating grant. Teacher education may be expensive, but not having good teacher education is more expensive for the country. So we have to think about what that actually means. For us, in the universities, it is a really serious issue when Australian universities have found it very difficult to balance their budget except by use of international students. Certainly RMIT, QUT and University of South Australia have had very large records in the area of international education.

But of course no other country wants somebody else to train their teachers, to provide teacher education, because education is part of building your own nation. So what people have tended to do is to focus very strongly in the education faculties on small numbers of students who come from overseas and also students who are able to upgrade their qualifications—they might have a diploma of education in their own place, and we provide the upgrade qualifications—or else the international students tend to be located in the postgraduate areas, as people have often been unable to get postgraduate qualifications in education overseas, particularly at doctoral level. Of course, that is a relatively short-term market. The issue for us is how we actually balance the budget enough, because most of us are significantly cross-subsidising the baseline domestic teacher education from other sources of income. So most university faculties of education in the ATN would receive almost as much in their own budget from other sources than from the DEST income. So it is getting to be well into the 40 per cent range in most cases. That makes it very difficult to justify cross-subsidisation, particularly in light of things like the Hilmer report and other issues about fair trade and fair trade practices. So I think we have to be careful in the university sector how we work through the internal cross-subsidies. But all of the faculties find it extremely hard, if not impossible, to operate without international money and without significant cross-subsidy from consultancies and other forms of research.

There are almost 10,000 teacher ed students in the ATN. That is a fair whack of Australian student teachers in their education programs. As a number of places will point out, there is a number of mechanisms by which the university is interconnected with the education faculty. People do double degrees. We do not get the money that goes into the other faculty. The other faculty, in teaching half the program—for example, science—will get a significant amount more per student than we do in education. Out of the amount we get in education, we have to fully pay all of the practicum. So it might be, for example, a four-year double degree, of which we take two years of teaching load. I think that is quite a useful model. A number of universities, including all of the member states here, have those double degrees. To pay for the practicum from the two years of money has been really difficult for us. It is the single most contentious issue inside every faculty of education and in the relations with our partners. It is a difficult one to follow through.

I also want to make a couple of points about the practicum in particular. I think one of the things that characterise the ATN universities as a group is their history as places where people got professional work education. They have a long history of doing that—as RMIT has—going back well into the last century and even the one before. Technical schools in Australia actually started as a result of tertiary technical work—very similar to the German polytechnic institutions, which have now become universities as well. So there has been a long history of thinking about work and how you prepare people for work. I expect you would have noted, in the NCVER submissions to you, a long list of relevant research projects. I want to refer to one of them. It is about learning on and off the job. Much of that data was looking at apprentices and at workplaces other than education workplaces, but these same issues hold for education as well.

Many people seem to think that the solution to a teacher shortage or the solution to communication problems or the solution to the problem that student teachers, when they finish their degree, are not able to walk on water like an experienced teacher can at eight o'clock every morning is therefore to just immerse them in schools. The research findings suggest that the most important aspect of learning is to learn both on and off the job, that you need both dimensions and that that applies to an apprentice as much as it does to a student teacher. For us it is really interesting. If you put them into an immersion setting, they do not learn nearly as fast or as well—nor do they last the distance—as having both on the job work in the practicum and time out to reflect on it, time out to think about it, time out to prepare and time out to orientate themselves. Student teachers have to jump the desk. You have probably had lots of evidence from students who find that a difficult concept personally and identity wise. That is a really big issue. You are used to being on the other side of the desk from the teacher. Becoming the teacher is a really big issue, whether that is occurring in a workplace, an early childhood setting or a school.

We struggle with the issue of the nature of the balance. We know that in England some of the research was very clear on their approach. The teacher training authority has published some of that research. It shows quite clearly that at the places where they went to the school based programs only—they had a number of different models available to them—the people either left before the course finished or did not last more than two years. That is a really big issue for us when we cannot afford the investment in the initial teacher education if we do not actually have the investment for the longer term. That might not last for the whole of the rest of their lives. We know that people move from lots of jobs. As people will no doubt have brought to your attention, people often move from education to other educational work but not necessarily work

in a formal schooling setting or a university or a child-care centre. So for us the issue of being able to invest in preservice education has to be integrally related to postservice education. But we want to really draw your attention to the fact that just having immersion does not work. People say, 'Just put them in schools for a year and they will all learn it,' but the people put in those schools tend not to last. That would be my major warning to the committee about that particular model.

The kinds of balances do tend to depend on the kind of program. I hear people, whether it is the people being quoted often in the media or even the people making submissions to your inquiry, constantly making blanket statements as though we are all talking about, say, a four-year education. Well, it is not a four-year education. For most people in secondary it is a one-year Dip. Ed. Even in Queensland, sad to say, the Queensland registration board has actually reduced its requirements back to one year after having led the way by saying you needed at least 18 months to two years. I know that a lot of that is in reaction to a perceived scarcity of teachers, but I think that is an extremely dangerous thing to do. As for the one-year Dip. Ed. model, if you have got two 15-week semesters, two weeks out for the intersemester break and then you take five weeks of prac out of that, there are only 16 weeks of any kind of classes.

You look at your own agenda. I would suggest that your terms of reference only begin to touch a small part of the responsibilities of a teacher education program. They do not begin to address a whole set of other areas that, in our view, are important. To me, the idea that you can become a teacher quickly—the quick and the dead—in eight weeks a semester of classes is really quite ludicrous. When people are quoting teachers who find that they cannot deal with a classroom, they are usually the one-year Dip. Ed. students. They are not the people who have had four or five long-term practicum experiences, because they get weeded out very early on. We have even had people who have gone up to their final five-week practicum and decided: 'I like kids but I don't really want to teach,' or, 'I don't know enough,' or, 'This is not the way I want to spend my life,' and they move into another program in the university.

So the issue of the practicum has to be taken back to: which kind of program is it? Is it a double degree, is it a one-year, is it a four-year undergraduate, is it a two-year or 18-month end on degree? I think the issues need to be understood slightly differently in each of those, but I do not know a teacher education faculty in Australia, and certainly not in the ATN, that would want to undermine the practicum. We want to build it. We have tried different things, such as the internship model towards or at the end. I think there are ways we could think seriously about a different version of induction for first-years. You might have a two-year induction process where you might be half time in study and half time at the university and perhaps lower that in the second year. After a year without doing those kinds of inductions, I think that that would be something that we could explore seriously with employer authorities.

I think that most of our universities would be willing to work very closely with employer authorities to invent new kinds of induction into the profession in order to avoid that horrible first-year-out shock when everybody goes home and has a migraine at 4 o'clock and then stays up and works all night to get their preparation done for the next day. Those kinds of days are not gone. The level of teachers' work and the business of it makes it very difficult for people to put enough time into the induction of the new people. But we have found that our processes of close liaison between the university and the schools and working closely with people either who are in schools or who have very recently left schools as our liaison people have ensured that the kinds

of professional conversations that people have do avoid what some of the last witnesses might have suggested to you.

We hear very soon if there is a graduate who has had a problem. Usually it is a very minor problem—an ex-student comes back to us. We are also very good at suggesting to people that they might not actually want to do this because they might not last or they might not be very successful. But the actual experience usually weeds them out. I have not found very many of the kinds of people whom the Association of Independent Schools suggested there were earlier.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—At what stage in the four-year program do you think you are able to have those conversations?

Prof. Brennan—In what sense?

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Counselling people out of teaching.

Prof. Brennan—We have them at each year level, depending on the program. I have just had somebody expelled from the program on the basis that she was totally unsuited and medically unfit.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—To teach or to finish the degree?

Prof. Brennan—To teach. Therefore she could not continue the degree. As a dean, I have a responsibility to our students, to the profession and to the parents and the students of Australia to give them people who are fit to practise. We take that very seriously. We also find it quite difficult to do. It is an extremely upsetting thing to do, to actually counsel someone out—particularly if they really want to do it. We cannot force them to stop their enrolment. Usually if there is somebody seriously problematic the practice place identifies that on their first visit. We are then contacted immediately and the person is given an ‘at risk’ form with some specified things they need to do. If they have not done those things in a few days and things have not improved then they fail the practicum. Because the practicum is a compulsory part of the course, you cannot continue in the program if you fail it.

The other issue that I wanted to raise with you concerns the ways in which the universities tend, particularly in the education area, to get caught in the squeeze play of the constitutionality of responsibility for education. There is a significant set of issues whereby the Commonwealth funds the universities. Now teachers are part of the university sector. When I went university you had separate teachers colleges that were owned and run by the state department, but that was a long time ago. That is not occurred since 1973. It is a very different kind of responsibility to be thinking through how we relate at the state level and how we relate to the Commonwealth, and it is not always easy. There may be opportunities for the state to put in extra places. There is certainly a very close relationship between supply and demand and quotas.

For example, in our secondary area we have quotas and subquotas on every single specialisation. I could fill art specialisations 50 times over with people with the highest grade point average, but we can only take a certain number and we have squeezed in as many as we can. I could fill phys ed, again, with really high grade point averages. I could fill that several times over. We get lots and lots of people and we have expanded. We have put on a double

degree. Every place does that. There is no point in providing opportunities for people to do lots of teaching if there are no jobs. There is nothing worse than a whole set of graduates with competition for places. We will have subquotas on science, maths, phys ed et cetera. That is also how we deal with the case when we get short-term income from the Commonwealth or elsewhere. We tend to put them in those quotas where the area is of most demand. If we are trying to deal with primary, early childhood, adult and vocational education or design and technology, then it takes a while to get the programs up and running.

Despite the comments of my independent school colleagues previously, most universities invite in all the stakeholders at the time that proposals are going up for new programs—not just after they have started and when everything is in place. All the universities are self-accrediting universities and all members of the Australian Technology Network are compliant with the 9002 Quality Systems international standards. We pride ourselves on doing that partly because so much of the rest of our work is connected into other industries for whom that is a really important aspect of their accreditation. So the ATN is particularly strong on that.

The only other thing that I want to put forward at this time is that the different kinds of universities offer really different opportunities to innovate because they have different kinds of partnership arrangements. I think you would find that all of the ATN universities are strong with industry partners because that is an expectation from the centre of the university. That is the nature of those kinds of institutions, as distinct from some of the other institutions which may have very good relations but for which it is not necessarily their core business.

CHAIR—With regard to the previous witness, have we got a communication breakdown?

Prof. Brennan—I need to write to one of those members who is a member of the committee and who has not come to any of its meetings nor sent a deputy. If you do not go to the meetings, it is a bit hard to have the communication.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Does he know that he is on the committee?

Prof. Brennan—He does. His secretary regularly sends apologies. There are difficulties, and for the independent schools it is a serious issue. They do not have a big infrastructure like those of the Catholics or the state department, so they have to find somebody from a school. I am not trying to pay out on them. I do understand that there are pressures on them. But it is difficult when people are invited to come to the five-year review, to the external advisory committee or to other kinds of committees but do not, and then complain.

CHAIR—As I am not one of the former teachers on this committee, could you elaborate on what you see as the deficiencies—you have mentioned some of them—in a one-year graduate Dip. Ed.?

Prof. Brennan—It seems to me that people need time to build the identity of a professional. It does not matter how long you might have done para-activities in the area. I think one of your members, who is not here today, asked that question yesterday in relation to plumbers: ‘I’ve got a good plumber. Can’t he just jump the fence and pass on his skills?’ It takes time to develop the identity. It takes time to understand the complexity of the institution in which you are going to

work and in which you need to familiarise yourself. It takes time to build from your specialist knowledge into the knowledge that is useful for the pedagogy—for the teaching and learning.

I had an honours degree when I came in. Many people have many higher degrees than that nowadays and much experience. But what I know from my specialist area does not necessarily translate to what I can teach and how I can teach it. So, for me, there is the development of what the deans of education called in one of their late 1990s publications ‘pedagogical content knowledge’. It is not the same as just specialist knowledge; it is re-contextualising it, picking things out of it and making it sensible and communicable to people of different experiences, different ages or different orientations to that particular field of study. If you have people who are not very good at a particular thing, you have to have different kinds of knowledge. It is not just about having knowledge of the mechanisms of teaching or the methodologies of teaching; it is also about having enough knowledge of the field to be able to pick out of it. It is why a really good maths teacher will know their field very well, but their being able to give 100 fabulous examples out of everybody’s ordinary, everyday life is what gets the kids interested.

CHAIR—We heard evidence this morning from the University of Adelaide, who said categorically that a one-year degree of quality, a one-year diploma, is enough.

Prof. Brennan—I think that was probably enough 50 years ago—maybe even 30 years ago. But in my view it is not enough in the current climate. If we are talking mostly about school education, the job of the school has become so much more complex—there are so many more functions. It is the only common institution, apart from taxes, that everybody belongs to. And everybody of course is an expert on it because we all went to school.

But it seems to me that there is so much more complexity in the kind of society in which we are living and many more of the kinds of issues that you raise in your terms of reference—issues of children who have different kinds of emotional disabilities or learning difficulties or who are experiencing bullying or a lack of friendship groups or who are transient. There is so much more of that, and the nature of knowledge and the fact that it has expanded so significantly means that, even if you have a PhD in your field, you will still need to keep up with your content knowledge. So I think there is an issue of how you make it work and how you undertake knowledge development on the job—learn on the job. No-one would want to ever say that you learn it all ahead of time. You have to learn on the job. That is a really important dimension which has grown significantly in the last 20 to 30 years.

In 1986, I think there were something like 12,000 teachers doing upgrade qualifications in postgraduate areas. There is nothing like that now. Huge percentages of the teaching force were always engaged in postgraduate work. We are not doing that now. It is not just because of the fees, although that is important; it is because the job has expanded and it is much harder to find time. Most people are working 60 hours.

So, if I think about a one-year Dip. Ed., I am not trying to be disrespectful to the people—including myself—who got one, but I am saying that I think we would be better off, if people already have a degree, to have a two-year or at least an 18-month course in order to provide the time for that identity building, for the building of the knowledge, and for building the kinds of orientations to the classroom and the non-classroom work of teachers. It is very difficult for someone who is, say, 22 to build enough understanding of what you have to do with kids who

might be deeply troubled or who might need to have their family patterns addressed, in order to be able to say, 'Well, your dad and grandad might have left school at 13. That's fine, but the world's changed. You actually have to finish school. That means we have to change what happens in schools, but it also means we have to change what happens for you.' That kind of work is very hard to get into your head. It is hard enough to just think about managing a class, but those are the other aspects of the job.

Again, I do not expect beginning teachers to be perfect or to be experienced, but I do think that an 18-month or two-year award is a much safer bet, and I am extremely concerned that Queensland has just resiled from its requirements. We certainly are not going to be doing that here in South Australia, and I know that the universities generally have always expressed a concern about the one-year Dip. Ed. Doing those one-year Dip. Eds used to only be the province of a few universities. For the Group of Eight, that was their only real education preservice training—and it was training; it was not education. So we have to think about what it means to be educated in a broader sense as a teacher, whether you are dealing with vocational education or whether you are dealing with undergraduates.

Mr SAWFORD—Marie Brennan, you talk good sense, so thanks for your contribution this morning. I have three quick questions. The old definition of knowledge—Bloom would have described it as a lowly intellectual skill, and I actually think it is a lowly intellectual skill, but the concept has changed dramatically. We paid a bit of a political penalty on our side for using that term for an educational policy—although I do not want to go down that track—against my protest, of course. Is this concept of knowledge really appropriate? Wasn't Bloom right?

Prof. Brennan—If that is your first question, that could take thousands of PhDs. But, no, I do not think Bloom was right. I think all of us are engaged in producing knowledge every day, from in the womb onwards. Most of it is not conscious, and the job of Education with a capital E is to build knowledge that is explicit, that other people can get hold of, and to keep investing in the new kind, developing new ones.

Mr SAWFORD—Can I stop you there? The word 'knowledge' is not explicit. The words 'interpretation', 'translation' or 'exposition' are, but 'knowledge' is not explicit.

Prof. Brennan—Because it is connected to wisdom.

Mr SAWFORD—That is not explicit either.

Prof. Brennan—No. When concepts are complex, it is more than information and it is less than wisdom—it is in that blurred area in between.

Mr SAWFORD—Wouldn't we be better off using the specific term?

Prof. Brennan—No, because most people understand that knowledge is about being able to think, being able to do, being able to find resources. It does not necessarily mean having all the information in your head at any one time. So, for me, a lot of the moves to generic skills from the late eighties on have actually been about trying to expand and define what counts as knowledge and being able to find things, identify information—being able to do all that.

Mr SAWFORD—But they are all specific.

Prof. Brennan—But they are all dimensions, subdimensions if you like, of knowledge.

Mr SAWFORD—Okay, we can agree to disagree.

Prof. Brennan—Okay.

Mr SAWFORD—I have two more questions. Queensland University of Technology and the scholarship thing: you made a reference in the submission to scholarships for people from low SES backgrounds. Do you know how many?

Prof. Brennan—I do not know exactly how many at QUT. I tried to ring them this morning, but the dean is ill. Our university has—

Mr SAWFORD—What worries me is that we do country scholarships, we have the Fairway Scheme, but when you start to ask the next question—what are the numbers?—the numbers are so small it is just pinprick stuff.

Prof. Brennan—The number of scholarships?

Mr SAWFORD—Yes.

Prof. Brennan—Yes, they are. They are always small. Where do you get the money from? You usually get it from a nice philanthropist. I had some wonderful people who gave the scholarship \$50,000 in memory of their mother, who loved teaching and loved working with Indigenous students. She gave it to a poor, Indigenous student. It is only enough to give two scholarships for four years of HECS. The problem is the money. The \$2,000 scholarships from the Commonwealth are a useful static kind of allowance that we referred to yesterday, but they do not actually help for the living allowances and things.

Mr SAWFORD—The other one was about the differential between the salaries of academic staff and teaching staff. It seems to me that there is huge value in the interchange from the school system to the university system and vice versa.

Prof. Brennan—It is a huge problem for us.

Mr SAWFORD—It is a huge problem. How do you overcome that?

Prof. Brennan—Most people who do the swaps do it because they do not really worry about money, but it is very difficult. For example, my lecturer B level is 50-something, has a PhD, has spent years in it and earns less than his first year out honours student, who works in the country. If I am trying to buy current teachers in to help work on the practicum, for example, or teach the latest wonderful thing about literacy and ICTs or teach a really good thing about design and technology, it costs me more than twice as much as I would normally pay to bring in a teacher on half-day teacher release time. That is how I fill up my budget. More than a quarter of my overall staff are in those casual positions just to make ends meet. Some of it is not really something we want to do. From the point of view of a major employer like DECS, they second a couple of

people to us on specific projects. But they are also tight. They have trouble and so do the Catholics in finding somebody. Both the Catholics and the Department of Education and Children's Services in South Australia have seconded people to us for less than the full cost of the salary.

Mr SAWFORD—The Catholics did say to us yesterday that they still have their advisory consultancy base, which I assume, from what people were telling us later in the afternoon yesterday and also here this morning, DECS does not have anymore. I used to be a consultant. There used to be about 70 of us. We used to run in-services, we used to link with the teachers' colleges and the universities of the day.

Prof. Brennan—They have learning advisers in the districts now, but they have had to cut back significantly on advisory capacities, yes. That is true nationally. Looking at the infrastructure that has gone out of education, in 1979 I joined the Victorian education department's curriculum and research branch and it had 400 people in it. There are almost none left now in any state department other than on Commonwealth projects, such as the Quality Teaching Program for specific safe schools or the antibullying stuff or democracy.

Mr SAWFORD—The state governments have got away from a lot of responsibilities that they had before.

Prof. Brennan—They have been cutting costs madly. It is a really serious issue. Most of the public sector has been cut. It makes it very difficult when you are a public instrumentality, whether you are a department or a university, because you are also constrained by what it is you can do to raise money yourselves.

Ms CORCORAN—Marie, I think I must have misunderstood you, but I want to clarify this point. You talked about the registration of teachers and did you said that Queensland was going to go back and accept teachers with one year postgraduate qualifications—the graduate diploma stuff—but not here in South Australia?

Prof. Brennan—No, they accept them at the registration board here.

Ms CORCORAN—That was my question.

Prof. Brennan—You will still get registered as a teacher here, which is a nationally portable qualification. But Queensland's teachers' registration board was also the board that accredited the programs of the teacher education faculties, and they have reduced that back.

Ms CORCORAN—Now I understand.

Prof. Brennan—Before, they specifically required 18 months to two years.

Ms CORCORAN—Thank you.

CHAIR—Thank you for appearing before the committee today. We will contact you if we need any further information. The secretariat will send you a proof copy of your evidence and a copy of that transcript will be posted on our web site. Thank you very much.

Proceedings suspended from 12.29 pm to 1.30 pm

BEARD, Dr Lorraine Joyce, Executive Dean, Tabor College Adelaide

DAVIES, Mr Frank, Head of Education, Tabor College Adelaide

SLAPE, Mr Dennis Stanley John, Chief Executive Officer, Tabor College Adelaide

CHAIR—Welcome. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that the proceedings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. I invite you to make some introductory remarks.

Dr Beard—On behalf of Tabor College Adelaide, we would like to thank the committee for this opportunity to present and to share some of our thoughts. Our submission, which you have received, was very brief and there are a few points we would like to expand on. First of all, though, there is a correction on page 3 of our submission. The last sentence of the first paragraph reads:

However, Tabor College Adelaide, as a private Higher Education Provider, receives no practicum support funding at all.

When we wrote that we thought that was correct because we thought that the practicum component that the Commonwealth government pays was in addition to the Commonwealth Grants Scheme funding. We have now found out that it is part of it so that statement is not correct. We do receive Commonwealth Grants Scheme funding, but only for 30 students in national priority places in teaching, which accounts for only 15 per cent of our teacher education contingent.

Moving on, I thought it might be good to provide a little bit of background to Tabor College and our teacher education programs. Tabor is a multid denominational Christian education institution with a total of about 960 students. We offer courses in a range of disciplines, including teacher education. We have approximately 195 full-time equivalent teacher education students and, as mentioned, only 15 per cent of these students are in national priority places and the rest are full fee paying students. As our students do not generally come from particularly well-to-do families and are generally from similar economic backgrounds to students in public universities, we have made every effort to keep our fees as low as possible, which means that we actually receive less for a fee-paying student than for a Commonwealth supported student.

We offer a range of initial teacher education programs: Bachelor of Education (Primary)—undergraduate; Bachelor of Education (Primary)—graduate; Bachelor of Education (Middle School)—undergraduate; Bachelor of Education (Middle School)—graduate; Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education (Secondary)—undergraduate; Bachelor of Education (Secondary)—graduate. We also offer some postgraduate programs and a Master of Education course.

Tabor's teacher education courses were introduced in 1998 as a result of a vision and in response to a need. Prior to that, we undertook wide consultation with many stakeholders in Australia—and some overseas—over a number of years. Our teacher education courses were

designed primarily to serve the needs of the fast-growing Christian schools movement, but also to provide teachers who would be equipped to meet the needs of other non-government and government schools. We sought from the outset to develop courses that would meet contemporary needs, integrating theory and practice, philosophy and action. We wanted the educational philosophy of our courses to be outworked in the experience of all our student teachers.

We are very grateful to our colleagues on the Teachers Registration Board, the state universities and the various school sectors and government departments who have provided insight and advice over the years as we have worked to develop and offer distinctive Tabor teacher education courses.

In South Australia we are very privileged in that there is an excellent collegial relationship between the public and private providers of teacher education. We enjoy working with colleagues in the public sector and Tabor is part of a practicum partnership arrangement, chaired by Frank Davies, our head of education, who is here. This group includes representation from the three state universities and Tabor Adelaide and it organises the allocation of primary schools in the Adelaide metropolitan area for student-teacher practicum placements. Tabor actually maintains the state database record of these practicum placement allocations for all members of the partnership and Frank is also the South Australian coordinator for the National Association of Field Experience Administrators. We also work with the state universities and others in a professional development pathways network framework. This is concerned with professional development of teachers and the offering of units for their postgraduate studies.

To date, Tabor Adelaide has had 172 bachelor of education graduates, 92 undergraduates and 80 postgraduates. Of these, approximately 33 per cent have gained employment in government schools and 67 per cent in non-government schools. Our graduates are keenly sought by both of these sectors.

We would have to say that we have been surprised at the remarkable success of our teacher education programs. We have numerous letters of commendation on file from both the private and the public sector. Our teacher education programs have been unreservedly recommended for federal funding by Wendy Hastings, the registrar of the teachers registration board, with whom we have worked closely and well over many years; Leonie Trimper, president of the South Australian Primary Principals Association; Bob Heath, president of the South Australian Secondary Principals Association; Peter Lang, acting executive director of the Association of Independent Schools, South Australia; Peter Crimmins, executive officer of Australian Associations of Christian Schools; Alan Dooley, director of the Catholic Education Office; and many others.

Over 85 per cent of student practicums, both in private and public schools, have been graded as very high or outstanding. It would be good to look at what is distinctive about Tabor programs. We have read many of the other submissions and there is much that we could say we have in common with many of the universities but we will make a few comments. To begin I will quote from one or two letters that Tabor has received in a survey of stakeholders that we did last year. The first one is from the assistant principal at St Paul Lutheran school, who says:

Tabor College is a unique facility in that it places great importance on effective communication and the development of positive relationships. The members of Tabor's staff are very much in touch with their students' strengths and weakness[es], and use this knowledge to further develop students' abilities on an individual level. With regard to teaching practicums, the allocation of each student teacher is treated independently, with student teachers being placed in appropriate year levels, with complementary-skilled teachers, in close consultation with the school supervisor. I am particularly appreciative of Tabor's attempts in this area because they result in remarkable outcomes—both for the student teacher and the children with which they work. During each practicum, regular communication with and assistance from Tabor's staff is outstanding. It is reassuring to know that Tabor regularly offers and is always willing to provide valuable support as required.

I continue to be amazed by the quality of student teachers that are placed at St Paul. With each student teacher we encounter, it is clear that Tabor has very high expectations and sets very high standards. From first-year to final-year, Tabor student teachers are well prepared and highly switched-on. They are polite, respectful and bring a level of excitement to our staffroom.

The next one is from Chris Bayly, who has been the principal at Coromandel Valley and Port Adelaide primary schools. He writes:

I would like to compliment Tabor College on the quality of the student teachers that they have sent to my schools. I would be happy to employ any one of the students sent to my schools over the last 5 years. The students have excellent communication skills and are confident to engage in discussions about teaching pedagogy and student learning. They listen and learn from experienced teachers and apply what they have learnt. The amount of time they spend at schools on practicums through their course is excellent as it allows them to put into practice what they have learnt from their course work and take points of discussion back to Tabor College for further analysis and evaluation.

The final one is from Peter Scragg, Principal of Paradise Primary School, which is a state school. He writes:

For the last 15 years I have been involved as a school leader in working closely with teachers through [two state institutions] ... and Tabor College. I feel I am able to speak with some expertise of the nature of students from each of these organisations. I have found students from Tabor have been outstanding practitioners who are prepared to learn their craft with passion and an incredible enthusiasm that has impressed me as well as their future colleagues, the governing council and the students of my school.

At Paradise Primary School, the Tabor student teachers have had supervision [or] what I would more positively and appropriately describe as mentoring, in that the visiting lecturers have individually followed closely the growth and development of their students working. As professional educators the Tabor supervisors have also liaised closely with myself, as principal, and the classroom teacher to ensure the learning practicum has reached the maximum potential for their students. Having student teachers from Tabor has been an absolute asset to my school as they had an effect of revitalisation and joy to the staff and community.

There are another four points I want to draw out of that and out of our submission. The first is about practicums, which relates to terms of reference 5 and 8 of the committee.

Teaching practicum is a very high priority for Tabor Adelaide. Student teachers go into schools in the very first term of their courses, and practicums are included throughout their programs. The practicums are undertaken in both government and non-government schools. Undergraduate students are required to undertake a country practicum. Practicum timetables and

supervision are given much attention. All our student teachers, undergraduates and graduates, spend 100 to 110 days in practicum settings. We noted that the South Australian Primary Principals Association submission to this inquiry into teacher education said in a comment on teaching practicum arrangements:

There is now a significantly different process for teacher training through special training providers such as Tabor College in South Australia. Candidates spend a greater length of time in school-based components from the very beginning of their courses. A long term relationship is built up with a school over time.

We at Tabor appreciate the pressures that teachers in schools are under these days. Like other institutions in the country, we have to work very hard to find suitable practicum placements for our student teachers. We believe a solution to this national need must be found. We do not feel that compromising practicum placements is an option.

The second point is about application criteria and relates to your term of reference 1. We find that the use of holistic entry criteria works well for us. Our teaching students do not all have brilliant entrance scores. We certainly do consider entrance scores—TER scores here in South Australia for school leavers and STAT scores for mature age entrants—but we have found that these scores on their own are insufficient to indicate which applicants are likely to complete teaching courses or to become good teachers.

All of our teacher education applicants are interviewed by senior staff in our education department and a structured process for interviewing and discovering key factors is used. During interviews the ethos of Tabor Adelaide is discussed and the applicant's suitability to undertake teacher education is considered. Among other things, we look for a sense of vocation or calling. We look for personal maturity and interest in and experience of working with children or young people. We find that a sense of calling and a strong motivation to teach are very important to future success. Interviewing is, of course, very time consuming, but we also find it very worthwhile. Research has indicated that the teacher is the single most important factor in student learning, so for us, selecting applicants is very important. The quality of Australia's teaching profession is vital to the good of our community and we believe it is worthy of the investment of much time and money.

My third point is about the education faculty and the philosophy of education that we espouse, which relate to terms of reference 4 and 5. As in schools, where the quality of the teacher is the single most important factor in student learning, we believe that in tertiary institutions as well the faculty is the single most important factor in determining the quality of the education provided. We believe that the quality of our education faculty and the ability of our educators to teach well themselves are key factors.

Our salaries at Tabor are considerably lower than university salaries, but our education faculty really have a passion for teaching and for helping others to learn to teach well. In our setting, a sense of calling is important for the staff as well as the students. Our staff have a heart for people and desire, knowledge, understanding and skills to help them to achieve the best possible outcomes. Their Christian values, commitment and experience add an important dimension to what we offer and to how we offer it. As expected, we place a high value on pastoral care and supporting our students.

Tabor's Christian ethos and world view is a significant factor in the education that we provide. We believe that education should be transformational—transforming the individual student, those whom that student teaches and the wider community. The transformational model of education permeates our approach to teaching and learning. Christian character cannot be imparted didactically but must be modelled in relationships. What is learned in the curriculum of the individual units in the course must be evident in the actions and attitudes of staff and must permeate the entire culture of the educational community. Our approach is not just practical, however. The capacity to think critically, to reflect and to re-evaluate statements and assumptions is a principal outcome of transformational education and is consistent with our epistemology.

My fourth and final point concerns the adequacy of funding, which relates to the last term of reference. We would like to comment on the adequacy of funding for teacher education in relation to overall funding rather than in relation to the distribution of funding by university administrations. As a private higher education institution, the only government funding we receive is the Commonwealth Grants Scheme allocation for those 15 per cent of our teacher education students in national priority places. We are thankful that this year, as a Commonwealth recognised higher education provider, we have been assisted by fee payments for other students through the FEE-HELP system. This ensures the payment of fees for those students who might otherwise have been unable to meet their fee commitments, but it is not institutional funding in the usual sense of the term and it leaves students with a FEE-HELP debt for the cost of their tuition.

We would like to recommend that, in considering possible areas of improvement as to teacher education in Australia, this inquiry gives due consideration to the diversity of the Australian community and to the fact that about one-third of Australian parents elect to send their children to private schools, most of which are schools with a Christian ethos. While most teacher education students in state universities and in the Catholic sector are in Commonwealth supported places, this is true of only a very small percentage of those in Protestant higher education institutions. This seems to be an anomaly, particularly when the Christian schools sector is, we understand, still the fastest growing schools sector. Private schools receive government funding but private higher education institutions receive hardly any. We would like to see this anomaly addressed. It seems somewhat inequitable to us that people who wish to prepare to teach in secular and Catholic institutions are able to gain Commonwealth supported places—and rightly so—while only a very small handful of those who wish to prepare to teach in Protestant institutions are able to do so. If the inquiry were able to address this situation, we would be extremely grateful.

In conclusion, as a small and relatively new player in providing teacher education, Tabor Adelaide is extremely grateful for the excellent collegial relationships we enjoy with the other players here in South Australia. Although we have much to learn and always will have, we believe that we have a recipe for teacher education that works well for us and those we serve. We would be happy to elaborate or to discuss any other areas the panel may wish to explore.

CHAIR—Thank you. You mentioned the issue of country practicum. We have received evidence from a range of universities that it is very difficult for students to actually give up their part-time jobs and go out to country placements. How are you finding that?

Mr Davies—We find the same thing. They know when they first come into teacher education that they will be required to do a country prac. The country prac takes place in their third year. If they find a real problem with giving up employment or whatever, we have compassionate reasons as to why they can stay in the metropolitan area.

There are two reasons as to why they go country or rural. Firstly, we have not got the places in the metropolitan area in one sense but, secondly—and more important than that—we believe that our students need to go to experience rural education, because we need good teachers in rural areas. So, to answer your question, we do not demand that students go but we fully outline the rationale and the exciting prospects of working in a rural area. As a result, we find that very few choose not to take up that option. This is interesting: I often say to the married women, ‘If you need to stay with your family that is fine,’ and most of the time they say, ‘Please let me go to the country; please give me a break,’ and we say, ‘Fine.’ They go for three weeks. We also ask our students to get together in groups. We organise everything for them; they do not have to do any of that. They go into schools together in groups of two or three or whatever. If it were a problem we would certainly address it and we would accommodate them.

CHAIR—Does the college have difficulty placing all of its students that require practicum?

Dr Beard—It is becoming an increasing difficulty as we have more students. Frank might like to speak on that. He is also our practicum placement coordinator.

Mr Davies—As the recent National Association of Field Experience Administrators conference found, we have an ongoing national problem of finding practicum placements. The difficulty lies in the fact that teachers are so overloaded, so we do find it a problem. The way we get around that problem is to go to schools and provide PD for the schools. As you know yourself, teaching is very relational. If we have good relationships with our students, they are more likely to learn. If we have good relationships with our schools, they are more likely to accommodate us, so we make sure that the support that Tabor gives to the schools is outstanding. We make sure that the students thoroughly understand what their responsibilities are. I say to my students: ‘If you are not ready to teach that day you do not go to school. You respect the school. When you are in the school you are a guest.’ So we find consistently that schools welcome our students because our students know what is expected of them. But it is a problem, and it is becoming an increasing problem as we grow. It is a problem for all the universities. We meet regularly with the other universities at Tabor in the meeting I chair. How we can get more practicum placements is often on the agenda. It is a problem but we do manage it.

CHAIR—What support do the staff at Tabor give to the students when they are out on country placement?

Mr Davies—It is obviously difficult to get to them, so each senior staff member will take a list of students and ring them and communicate with them. We ring the schools. We talk before they go. We go through strategies. For instance, we tell them: ‘If you are going to a school to: firstly look up their web site, ring the principal, get in contact with the class that you are going to be teaching and send them a video of yourself so that when you get there the students already know you.’ While they are there, we have regular email or phone contact. Our students know that we are extremely approachable. It is one of the highlights of Tabor that we are not senior lecturers behind closed doors. They can ring us at any time. We send faxes, and so on. I will be

honest and say that that is hard to do. In a busy world, that is hard to do. But we know that they are there alone, so we try and do that.

Mr SAWFORD—Can you tell us a little bit more about Tabor College? Forgive my ignorance, but how long have you been established? Where did the name come from? It rings a bell—there was a famous educator in South Australia called Barbara Tabor. Is it named after her?

Mr Slape—No. Tabor commenced here in South Australia in 1979. Initially it was a Bible college, with Christian studies activities. But we had a real desire to move into the teacher training area the year before we started it.

Mr SAWFORD—When did you do that?

Mr Slape—We did that at the beginning of 1998. Prior to that—from 1993 through to 1998—we did a fair bit of research. Our first points of call were in fact the state universities. Initially, I met with one of the other members of staff with Kym Adey. Possibly most of us know Professor Kym Adey from the University of South Australia. We progressively met with the other two universities over a short period of time, particularly their education departments. We also had good contact with the Teachers Registration Board from the beginning. We conducted about five years of research between 1993 and 1998 before we moved into the area. But our goal was always to establish that first connection with the universities so that they could see from day one that we wanted to work with them, and that has continued ever since.

Mr SAWFORD—What faculties do you have other than teacher education?

Mr Slape—We last year moved into the area of performing arts. We also have a youth development program. It is a bridging, one-year course. We see out in the marketplace that often when students finish Year 12 they are not really sure what they want to do. So a few years ago we created this course. We have students coming into it from Year 11 and Year 12. It is a one-year, full-time course. Through that course, students get a lot of hands-on interaction in that setting. We go out into the marketplace. There is the normal lecture process but there is also a lot of workshopping and getting out into the community. At the moment we have an average of about 50 full-time students in that program. We help them—it is like a bridging situation—and we find that some go into the university sector, some go into TAFE and some go into the work force. We hardly lose a student from that program without them deciding mid-term that they want to go into the work force. We have also established one of the first BAs in South Australia with a youth work major. We have counselling programs and intercultural studies, and are looking at going into business studies in the next year or so. It is a fairly broad range.

Mr SAWFORD—So it is a four-year teacher education course?

Mr Slape—Yes.

Mr SAWFORD—And teacher practicum starts when?

Mr Slape—From the first term.

Mr SAWFORD—What sort of introduction is it?

Mr Davies—This is very exciting, because within three weeks they are placed in a school, very much in an observing capacity. They lead up with some days and then they have a two-week block. The exciting thing is that we put them in that placement, but then in the classroom, in the lecture room, we link the two together, so we link the practice with the rationale. When we talk, half of the time is spent on, ‘What happened in your classroom? Why did that happen? Why do you think the teacher did that? What are your thoughts on that?’ So they have that first practicum where they are observing: they are just paddling, they are just getting to know how classrooms work. Then, in the second semester of the same first year, they go into—

Mr SAWFORD—Before we go on to that, in those first three weeks, what sort of involvement do the supervising teachers from your education faculty have?

Mr Davies—We place the students in a school, and then we have teacher educators who go out from Tabor and spend time with them.

Mr SAWFORD—How much time?

Mr Davies—Officially, they have four visits overall, but we find it is often a lot more. In that first practicum, very few problems arise, because they are mainly just observing; they are not really getting involved with heavy teaching. Although, interestingly enough, we encourage those who feel they are ready to take on more to do so. We have a very strong relationship with those first practicum schools, so they understand that these are brand new people who have not had a lot of experience. For instance, we have some mature age students who have been SSOs, school assistants. They are far more ready to take more on. We have brand new people straight out of high school, 17 or 18, and they are the ones who sit there a bit nervously. So we accommodate as much as possible. We have regular links with the school. We have pro formas and procedures that we follow to ensure that the student is coping—and not just coping but being given opportunities to reach their potential as well.

Mr SAWFORD—What is the male-female divide amongst your undergraduates?

Dr Beard—About two-thirds female and one-third male, probably.

Mr SAWFORD—What is the country-city divide?

Dr Beard—Amongst our students?

Mr SAWFORD—Of your teacher education students.

Dr Beard—I have not brought the figures, but I cannot say—

Mr SAWFORD—Just roughly will do.

Mr Davies—I would probably say about a quarter from the country. We are increasingly getting far more coming from the country.

Mr SAWFORD—And what is the disadvantaged-middle class divide?

Dr Beard—We do not actually serve the higher classes, as I said, so our students come from the middle class or the working class on the whole. The Christian school sector that we also service also relates particularly to that sector. So most of our students who are fee-paying students find it very difficult to have to pay fees. It has certainly helped them to have the FEE-HELP loan system, but they still do not like the full fee debt that hangs over their heads when they finish. But it has made a difference.

Mr SAWFORD—For those 145 teacher education students, how many full-time equivalent staff do you have in your teacher education faculty?

Mr Davies—Probably seven full time, but we use a lot of sessional lecturers who are highly skilled in their particular area. So we have possibly up to about 30 sessional lecturers who would come in and be experts in their particular area, who would accommodate those student needs.

Mr SAWFORD—The three main universities have problems with the interchange between practising teachers and people in their education faculties because of the differentials in salaries. Do you have that same problem?

Mr Slape—No, not really. I think anybody who comes into our setting appreciates before they come—through the normal induction interview process—where we sit financially and where we sit with salaries. I cannot recall—

Mr SAWFORD—Is there a differential?

Mr Slape—Yes.

Dr Beard—The teachers in the schools would often be getting considerably more income than our teachers.

Mr SAWFORD—So it is the same situation.

Mr Slape—That is right.

Dr Beard—It is the same situation, definitely.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—There is probably even more of a difference.

Mr Slape—Yes.

Dr Beard—That is right, because our salaries are considerably lower than the university salaries, and yet our students are going out and will become teachers in state and private schools and will be earning normal salaries for teachers.

Mr SAWFORD—You mentioned mature age students being involved. That seems to be an incredibly growing trend right around Australia and probably one of the most exciting things about the entry to teacher education. What is that divide in Tabor?

Mr Davies—I would say it is probably one-third.

Mr Slape—I would say the same—a third.

Mr SAWFORD—Is that growing?

Mr Davies—It is.

Mr Slape—Yes, particularly over the last two or three years. At present we have 195 full-time equivalent students, as we mentioned earlier. There is a fairly high percentage of mature age students and it is growing.

Dr Beard—We do have quite a number of students in our graduate bachelor programs, which are two years in duration, and in those programs we tend to get more mature age people too.

Mr SAWFORD—I have asked the other three organisations this question, so I will ask you even though I have probably changed my mind since I originally asked it. Do you think all universities, public or private, should have a teacher education course?

Dr Beard—We probably all have our own ideas about that. Do you mean a teacher education course in terms of school teacher education?

Mr SAWFORD—Yes.

Dr Beard—We believe all universities should have PD for their educators.

Mr SAWFORD—In terms of teacher education.

Dr Beard—Personally, I do not necessarily think so. We favour the development of specialised universities and therefore we would probably say that some of the specialised universities may not train teachers or educate teachers for the schools.

Mr Slape—That would be pretty well my position as well.

Ms CORCORAN—You said that when we talk about the criteria for rewarding education faculty members it would also be useful to consider other factors that might contribute to high-quality faculty performance in training student teachers. What other factors?

Dr Beard—Perhaps not so much in terms of rewards—we found that question about rewards a little difficult for us in that we are not able to reward financially. I suppose the greatest reward our teacher educators would get would be the joy of seeing the students develop and grow. It is just wonderful to see what they are like when they come in first year and then how they go out after fourth year—they have just changed so much it is just fantastic. I suppose the other factors in selecting the teacher educators are the sorts of things I mentioned in our presentation today. To come and work at Tabor as a teacher educator people really need a pretty strong sense of calling because they do not get a lot of income and they have to work very hard because of our lack of funding. Their commitment and passion to be involved in teacher education and their

commitment to continuing professional development and those sorts of things are very important to us in selecting staff.

Ms CORCORAN—I am very interested to hear that you interview students as well as relying on the TER score. I do not think I am misrepresenting other places by saying that they think that that would be useful but it is just far too time consuming because of the numbers of students who go through their organisations. Do you find that you are placing most of the students you interview or are you rejecting half of them? What is the rate and how long does it take to interview that many students?

Dr Beard—Frank would be the best person to answer that. He spends lots of time interviewing.

Mr Davies—I interview the primary students. We have a senior staff member who interviews for middle school and someone who interviews for senior secondary. For my interviews, I believe that if you start well you finish well and so I give them at least half an hour and it is an informal interview where they just tell me about themselves. I ask questions like: ‘Are you involved with teaching children at the moment? What was your schooling like? What are your dreams—what would you like to see schools looking like?’ I find that that is very important.

Let me give you an example. I had a student who came for an interview who did not do particularly well on her TER score and then sat a STAT test and did not do particularly well on that. She said, ‘I know I am not going to get in but I am just coming anyway.’ In our discussion it turned out that she had a quite severe learning difficulty that had never been picked up. She had not known about it—she just thought she was dumb. We talked it through, I recommended some assessment for her and it turned out that she did have this severe learning difficulty to do with her eyes. I said, ‘Why don’t you come and do just one module and see how you go?’ She has now picked up dramatically. The reason I mention her is because I saw her earlier this week and she said, ‘Frank, I cannot believe how I’ve changed in the year. When I came for the interview I had a cry on the way to the car and I said to my husband, “Please take me out later on because it is going to be an awful day,” but on the way back I was saying that I thought there was hope.’

That is an extreme example, but if I or some else had not taken that time, her problem would not have become apparent. I personally believe this and I say it to the students: if you have a weakness, celebrate it because the really good teachers are those who have struggled. The really good teachers are those who know the difficulty of understanding some things so that when they are working with their students they will remember the difficulty they had.

I also need to address that by saying that we expect a high level of academic rigour. In one way, if someone came to us with a very low TER score or whatever, they probably would not be admitted, simply because as a duty of care I would need to make sure that they were not absolutely drowned by the amount of work that is required. So it is this delicate balancing act of looking at this person’s potential and asking them: ‘Where do you see your life taking you? Why do you want to teach?’ If someone came to us and said, ‘I don’t really want to be a teacher but it is good to have it up your sleeve,’ I am not sure that they would get in, because we do push our students hard and I think they would have difficulties in that context.

Ms CORCORAN—Of every 50 students you end up accepting into one of your courses, how many would you have interviewed?

Mr Davies—It is not a large percentage; it is a small percentage. If I am to be honest, I would have to say that people know who Tabor are and that, if they are applying for entry, they know that we would probably reject less than 20 per cent.

Mr Slape—Fifteen or 20 per cent.

Ms CORCORAN—So a lot of your students are self-selecting anyway?

Mr Davies—That is exactly right.

Dr Beard—They would not get to interview unless they were committed to coming.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—You train primary and middle school and senior secondary.

Mr Davies—Yes.

Mr MARTIN FERGUSON—Can you go into a bit more detail about the future job roles the senior secondary cohort will take on—for instance, specialisations?

Mr Davies—Basically, they will go into high schools in the area that they are majoring in. We are desperately short of graduates. I would get phone calls every week from state schools, private schools, independent schools and Christian schools, asking: ‘Have you any graduates in the area of SSOs, English or whatever?’ All our students are able to obtain jobs.

Dr Beard—One of the things that we are trying to do is address specific needs through our graduates. Frank might like to comment on our home economics program and the performing arts area.

Mr Davies—One of the difficulties we have in South Australia is home economics: no institution is offering home economics to senior secondary. We recognise this need and, as from next year, we are offering home economics up to senior secondary. Health and PE is another area. They could major in English or SSOs—all of the curriculum areas.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Maths and science?

Mr Davies—We are developing maths and science next year.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—So it will be on offer from next year?

Dr Beard—We will be up to the third year next year in our maths program. At the moment in the BA/BEd, we have them up to second year in the maths area. We have had fantastic feedback from our maths students. Another exciting thing with the students is that they were coming in saying that they hated maths and now they are going out and saying that they cannot wait to teach it. It has certainly opened my eyes to what teachers can do.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Based on what you have said about the way you interview prospective students and the support that you give during practicum and the four-year term, you probably also have some way of supporting new teachers who graduate from your college. Can you tell us about that?

Mr Davies—When students leave they go through an exit interview. We very clearly ask them about how we could do things better. They have nothing to lose because they have got their degree by then. They all struggle to find something negative to say, which is great, it is marvellous. One of the things they have said this time around is: ‘We wish we could have regular meet-ups or PD et cetera.’ I have only been the Head of Education this year but, based on that response, next year we will assign a senior staff member to particularly look at those first year out teachers to provide—at least each term or semester—a professional development day on site where they can come on campus with us, regular newsletters and some follow-up. Some graduates will not require that but for those who do we already consistently say to them: ‘If, in your first year of teaching at your school, you are having a difficulty and do not want to ask someone else or go to your principal, ring us and talk to us. If you are in the country and need resources we will send them to you.’ We have frequently done that. We are responding to that need. As I said, next year there will be an established program for first-year graduates, to continue mentoring and encouraging them.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—You do that as a friend or as a colleague.

Mr Davies—In fact, last week we had their final debriefing and I said, ‘You are my colleagues. You will never be student teachers again.’

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—How much demand has there been for that support? How many graduated last year and, of that number, how many have come back to you asking for some resource or for some advice?

Mr Davies—I would say a fair percentage.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Half?

Mr Davies—Easily.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—More than half?

Mr Davies—Easily. Sometimes it is informal. Sometimes it is just a phone call from someone saying to me, ‘Remember how in a lecture you were talking about this? Where can I get that information from again?’ We keep very strong contacts.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Behaviour management?

Mr Davies—Behaviour management and curriculum planning are the two areas where we particularly strive to do well and graduates know that and that they can come back and ask us about those things.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—If you have a student who wants to come to Tabor College to begin the student education studies and they are not well-heeled, being a private institution where they have to pay fees, how much are they up for and are they able to defer that through FEE-HELP?

Dr Beard—If they are an Australian student who is eligible for FEE-HELP, they certainly can. We have found there is a very high uptake amongst the education students. Probably about 90 per cent of those who are not in a Commonwealth supported place use FEE-HELP.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Which means the Commonwealth pays them and then recovers the money later through the tax system.

Dr Beard—That is right. We set the fees for our fee paying students. They range from around \$7,000 to \$9,000 per year because there are different amounts of practicum in each year and we have to incorporate practicum fees. The fees we get from our fee paying students is actually less than the total amount we get for our Commonwealth supported students with their student contribution plus the government allowance. We just do not feel that we can charge the sort of students that we get higher fees because of that.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—But that is a lot of money for a student to end up with as a bill.

Dr Beard—Yes, it is.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Why are they knowingly prepared to be up for that sort of bill to pay back when they are a salary earning teacher when they know they can get a degree for about a third of that cost at one of the other universities? Can you pin it down to one or two things?

Dr Beard—There are some who do not. They say, ‘If we could have HECS help, we’d come.’ But the majority who come do not have HECS help. Frank would be the best one to say why.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Can you pin it down to one or two things?

Mr Davies—To tell the honest truth, I ask that question of them: Why are you choosing to come here? They say it is because of our reputation and the fact that a lot of their friends and people in the youth groups have recommended Tabor. They have seen Tabor, they have come to the open day, they have felt the enthusiasm, passion and support. It is the reputation. People have been offered positions in other teaching colleges and they have chosen to come to Tabor because of the ethos of the college and what we do. They know we do it well. It is difficult saying that because it sounds as though we are blowing our own trumpet, but it is a common thing that comes out.

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—They must think they are getting what they are paying for.

Mr Davies—I am sorry that I did not bring along the written reports of the students who just graduated. One of the questions we asked them was: ‘Have we prepared you well?’ Without

exception the reply I have documented is, 'I could not be better prepared. I feel very excited. I feel as though I know exactly what I am doing.'

Mr MICHAEL FERGUSON—Congratulations.

Mr Slape—There was period when, say four or five years ago, because we really wanted to help these students—from what Frank has said, they come because of the reputation—we tried to do various things on the financial side. We created an internal loans scheme for a period. That was pretty heavy on our financial resources and we could not continue. FEE-HELP has been of assistance there. Those students who do not look to take FEE-HELP can more-or-less get any kind of arrangement they would like to have—even down to a weekly payment, a fortnightly payment or whatever. We try to make it as easy as we can financially.

Mr SAWFORD—Where is Tabor located?

Mr Slape—It is on the orphanage site. We purchased the site and all the buildings. The local council have the open space, but we purchased the site from the state education department.

Mr SAWFORD—Have you got the land back there as well?

Mr Slape—No. Because of the controversy about the open space and so on there was finally an agreement where we picked up all of the buildings and sufficient land around those buildings and the council acquired the open space, but the arrangements are very good. It can never be fenced. We can use the car park facility 24 hours a day, seven days a week, if we wish. There are many conditions on the respective titles that help both parties in perpetuity.

CHAIR—Thank you for appearing before the committee today. We may contact you if we need further information. The secretariat will provide you with a proof copy of your evidence and a copy of the transcript will be placed on our web site.

[2.24 pm]

GUTHRIE, Mr Hugh Berkeley, Manager, Teaching and Learning, National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd

CHAIR—Welcome. I remind you that these public hearings are recorded by Hansard and the record is made available to the public through the parliament's web site. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that these hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and as such warrant the same respect as proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of parliament. I invite you to make some introductory remarks.

Mr Guthrie—Good afternoon and thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you on NCVET's behalf. I must offer the apologies of NCVET's managing director, Dr Tom Karmel, who unfortunately has other commitments today and could not appear before you. These commitments were longstanding, so unfortunately he is not able to be here.

Although I am sure you are probably aware of NCVET and its role, I thought I might just provide some details to the committee. I will then talk a little bit about the way in which we may be able to provide some information for the committee. As you are aware, NCVET is a company owned by all the ministers responsible for vocational education and training—Commonwealth, state and territory. Our job is essentially collecting, analysing and brokering information about the vocational education and training sector.

So we come before this committee with a particular focus, and that is vocational education and training. Our principal roles are to gather and analyse statistics. We also conduct two major surveys, one of employer views and one of student views, in relation to vocational education and training. We manage a research program on behalf of DEST. This has had some focus on young people and VET in Schools. We also conduct research in our own right and undertake research on a commercial basis. Finally, we manage the VOCED research database which was referred to in the letter accompanying our submission. That essentially represents an international research database on vocational education and training.

We covered two aspects in our submission to you. The first aspect was to outline and bring to the committee's attention work that we had done or had commissioned in relation to VET in Schools. There is relatively little in that in relation to teacher education, although some of the research does bear a little bit on that, and I will return to that in a moment. The second aspect relates to work on the changing nature of the work of VET teachers and trainers. We have also done work in relation to the size, nature and scope of the work force, and we presently have under way commissioned work looking at building the VET work force and organisational capability. But I must stress that this is more in relation to technical and further education and private providers of VET than particularly related to schools. But I think there are some points that are relevant, because clearly those that might teach vocational education and training in schools potentially are those who might teach those subjects in TAFE or in a private provider or indeed provide those sorts of services in industry. So essentially there is a range of competition, I expect one might say, for potential work force in that area.

There are probably three elements that we are interested in. The first is the scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities. As the committee will be aware, a number of universities not only provide education for primary and secondary students; they also provide teacher training for VET staff. The second element is those that teach VET courses and the third element relates to the construction, delivery and resourcing of ongoing professional learning for teachers already in the work force, which is a significant issue I will get to later.

I am sure you are all aware of the significant growth that there has been in the VET in Schools sector since it was first introduced. Some 50.4 per cent of senior secondary students are engaged to some extent in VET in Schools. This has a particular focus on those who might be involved in teaching those subjects.

The whole issue of teacher and teacher training issues in VET in Schools is an underresearched area, from our perspective at least. I have been able to locate a little research to bring to the committee's attention. One lot of research has been referred to and that was the research by Polesel et al from the University of Melbourne. That suggested that there was a shortage of adequately trained teachers in the VET in Schools area and that there was concern over their industry qualifications and relevant experience. As you would be aware, anybody who teaches vocational education and training under the AQTF requirements would be required to have a certain number of years of experience in industry as well as have teacher qualifications and relevant vocational qualifications. So it means that most vocational education and training teachers properly trained come to this somewhat later perhaps than those who are concerned with primary and secondary education, where their education is both to hone their educational skills and to provide them with a discipline which they might teach. That is one of the areas.

One other area that this research drew attention to was the cost of training staff to meet AQTF requirements, which appeared to be quite onerous in relation to schools and the requirement for a certificate IV in assessment and workplace training. There is, as you would be aware, a new qualification, the TAA, which has recently been endorsed and will replace the certificate IV over a period of time. Those are the couple of issues that relate to VET in Schools in particular.

In relation to VET teacher training and some of the issues around that more generally, we are aware from a lot of the research that we have been doing over several years that the nature of their work is changing quite significantly and the time, place and nature of delivery in which they provide this training is changing. There is a large work force in the general VET sector. We tend to have the best information about TAFE but even that is not particularly good. We know relatively little about the private provider sector. The work force is largely part time or casual but research by various people tends to suggest that these people would prefer, all other things being equal, to have more permanent and full-time work. They tend to be relatively old in comparison with the Australian work force in general. I think the median age—but I would not be prepared to be quoted on this, although I will be—is something like 52 years. One of the significant issues is that whatever happens in VET in Schools over the next several years, there is going to be considerable and growing pressure to replace those teachers who might be leaving the VET sector. So it is likely that we will have shortages across the spectrum.

It is also important that not only issues of initial teacher training be considered. When I was speaking to one of my colleagues about this appearance today they reminded me that very often

you only realise the benefit of the formal education and training programs somewhat later. What a lot of vocational education and training teachers were looking for was the notion of survival skills and the opportunity to return to institutions at some later stage and perhaps refine particular skills that they might need to grow and develop their jobs over their careers.

This brings us, of course, to the nature of professional development. A lot of that occurs in a formal sense with programs that they might undertake, but also informally they might achieve professional development just because their workplace is a good place to work in, they have a good collegial atmosphere and they learn from each other and all of those sorts of things. With those few opening remarks I would like to offer the opportunity for any questions, Mr Chairman.

CHAIR—We have heard conflicting evidence as to appropriate durations for the number of teaching courses but, given the challenges with vocational ed and perhaps the fact that many of the potential teachers we are drawing on may have been away from formal study for quite some time, do you see there is great benefit in looking at some streamlined pathways to make it easier for people who may be a little reluctant to go back into formal study to try to utilise their skills but in a teaching capacity rather than in a practitioner's capacity?

Mr Guthrie—I draw on personal experience here. In the early days—this is going back to perhaps the 80s and 90s when there was a significant growth in the sector—there was a tendency towards a front-end program. This was quite expensive but most of the universities would grant people at least one year out of the degree course in relation to the trade skills that people brought to the program. This generally meant two years of teacher education and, as we know, a Diploma of Education only lasts one year in any case. So they were getting quite a considerable amount of training and this was a significant draw on the resources of a variety of systems.

We have tended to find over the period of time that the proportion of initial teacher training has been reduced. This does not mean that people do not do this for their own purposes, because they believe that this will provide them with career options. I think that it is appropriate to consider either a front-end model or a model which provides perhaps a shorter program but with the opportunity to return at particular times to a range of institutions. A number of TAFE providers provide VET teacher education, as you would be aware—one, I believe, even a degree, and I think that that is Holmesglen Institute of TAFE in Victoria. I think that as long as there are multiple pathways then the question of duration is a variable which can be considered to suit a variety of purposes.

CHAIR—Do you think we should be focusing more on trying to upskill people quickly given that they would be moving out of the work force to undertake full-time study with the challenges that that might present them given that they have been used to income for a long time?

Mr Guthrie—There has been a range of programs over the course of my experience in the VET sector, which is something like 21 years now, and I daresay there still is, now focused on fairly short front-end programs. These programs could then be recognised in other formal and longer programs. It would get people into the work force relatively quickly, perhaps, as long as they had the opportunity to hone their skills and develop their knowledge and skills in ways which were appropriate both to them and to their workplace.

Mr SAWFORD—We seem to have a very mixed picture, don't we, with VET? I was thinking in terms of the previous inquiry that this committee conducted, the one into boys' education. In particular some of the information that you have given us this afternoon about VET was repeated then. Fifty per cent of secondary schools have access to VET. When you put the next question about quality VET, the figure sometimes goes down to about 35 per cent, and principals and teachers in VET are saying this themselves. The age they mentioned then was 55 plus and most of those teachers were people who did tech studies or those sorts of things. That was the age group. There was minimal replacement, usually from people in the hospitality industry coming back into doing that sort of quick training and whatever. But that was it.

There has been incredible growth of VET in schools since 1990. I get the impression it has flat-lined; it is not going anywhere in particular. This group who are going to retire I think are around 55 or 50, because it was three years ago when we did that. Even you are saying 52. So we are around the mark, aren't we? When you take that into account, they are not going to be around much longer. We see some exciting opportunities with mature age people coming from various trades back into teaching, but that is not going to be enough either. There is a huge crisis coming in VET for schools, isn't there? In terms of teacher education we had an example from the previous witnesses—I do not know whether or not you were here—who said they were going to reintroduce home economics. I would have thought hospitality may have been a more viable program. Nevertheless, there is some recognition. But no-one seems to be actually doing it.

Mr Guthrie—There certainly is a focus in the current programs in information technology, management and commerce. So one would imagine that those fitted within the normal curriculum, as you said. As you also rightly mentioned, food, hospitality and personal services are relatively high areas. Most of the things relate to training packages. It is less so, but there still is activity in engineering and related technology. So I guess that goes back to the old tech studies program. Essentially a lot of the activities are around those areas in which schools have had some traditional involvement.

Mr SAWFORD—What would your organisation like to see? Not necessarily all the universities would have to do that. What sorts of things would you like to see the University of SA, Adelaide, Flinders and even Tabor doing?

Mr Guthrie—This represents a personal view.

Mr SAWFORD—That is fine.

Mr Guthrie—The personal view is to ensure that these institutions are listening to their clients—that is, the individuals who come to their programs for their own benefit and whose needs they serve. They might well be vocational education and training institution schools with significant VET involvement and all of those sorts of things, and they should say, 'What can we do to make sure that we are providing programs which meet your needs?'

Mr SAWFORD—Has TAFE got a role to play in teacher education and vocational education?

Mr Guthrie—I think it already is playing a role. As I say, a range of TAFE institutions would already be providing teacher education programs up to diploma and advanced diploma level.

Some of them would also—as I said, one that I am aware of is already—provide degree level training.

Mr SAWFORD—Which one is that?

Mr Guthrie—Holmesglen Institute of TAFE in Victoria. It was reported recently, I think, in *Campus Review*.

Mr SAWFORD—Is that worth going to see?

Mr Guthrie—There are some interesting programs in Victoria. I would also commend Box Hill.

Mr SAWFORD—We have been to Box Hill in a previous life. I think you are right; we could go back there.

Mr Guthrie—I think there is a range of TAFE institutions who have realised that they need to take this on board for themselves. In a number of cases they will do this by themselves and in a number of cases they will make appropriate arrangements with tertiary institutions, universities and the like. But, I am sorry, it would take me beyond my knowledge to describe the nature of those relations.

Mr SAWFORD—They are two good suggestions you have made.

CHAIR—I think you have fairly well covered it. Thank you for appearing before the committee today. If we have any further questions we will certainly be in touch with you.

Resolved (on motion by **Mr Sawford**):

That this committee authorises publication of the transcript of the evidence given before it at public hearing this day.

Committee adjourned at 2.45 pm