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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, 17 August 2006

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 Bird, Ms Corcoran, Mr Fawcett, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Hartsuyker, Mr Henry, Ms Livermore, Mrs Markus 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.

WITNESSES

Committee met at 9.34 am

ARNOLD, Professor Roslyn, Dean and Head of School, Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania

SKILBECK, Professor Malcolm, Private capacity

CHAIR (Mr Hartsuyker)—Welcome. Thank you for appearing before the committee. We certainly appreciate the effort that you have made in convening the conference, which has added a great deal to the work of the inquiry. We look forward to the opportunity today to discuss that with you at length.

I declare open this public hearing of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training into teacher education. The inquiry has examined a broad range of issues which impact on how well we are training our teachers for the complex and demanding role that they play in educating our children. This inquiry has generated a very significant amount of interest, having received over 170 submissions and they are still coming in. Our schedule of public hearings is now drawing to a close. We have been around all states and territories and we have held a range of hearings in regional and rural areas. Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Prof. Skilbeck—I have played a very active part in the development of teacher education both in Australia and internationally.

CHAIR—Thank you. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I advise you that the hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as proceedings of House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. We have received a copy of your submission. Thank you very much for that. I invite you to make some introductory remarks.

Prof. Skilbeck—Thank you very much for the opportunity to join in the discussion with you. I would like to say, yet again, how important the work of this committee is for the Australian teaching profession and for the Australian community generally. We are at a turning point in education in Australia and in teacher education in particular. There is widespread agreement throughout the education profession and beyond the education profession that important changes are occurring and further changes are needed in schooling. As witness to that, last night in Melbourne I attended a meeting organised by some secondary school principals and deans of education. It was an interesting example of a developing trend—namely, a close working partnership between the players in teacher education. What was striking about that was a document prepared by the Australian Principals' group of iNET (International Networking for Educational Transformation) outlining radical changes that they believe are needed in schools. Normally, school principals tend to be rather conservative. This document was quite striking in that it pointed to quite fundamental changes in the structure, organisation and content of schooling.

The implications of this for teacher education are quite striking for two reasons. First of all, as you know, there is a huge turnover occurring in the teaching profession, and it will continue to occur over the next decade, mainly as a result of age related retirements but also as a result of

mobility out of the profession, which is a strong feature. That is one factor which of course gives rise for concern. The other factor is the need to bring into the teaching profession through this window of opportunity people with rather different ideas and expectations about schooling from what we have had. For this to happen, as was made clear in the Hobart forum, we think that we have to have some new kinds of partnerships established. A distance between the players has grown over the years, partly as a result of the disappearance of the old teachers colleges in which the employers—government departments mainly—played a very significant role and partly as a result of the development within universities and the repositioning of education faculties, which Professor Arnold knows a great deal more about than I do.

There have been a number of developments which have made it difficult for the major players to combine and work together. The most obvious example of that is in the organisation of the so-called practicum—the teaching practice or school experience—where instead of true partnerships there tends to be a division of powers and responsibilities, not a sharing of responsibility. That is widely recognised within both the academic profession and the school teacher profession as a problem which needs to be addressed and solved quite quickly.

Some of us take a more radical view and would like to see the locus of initial teacher education move much more towards the school sector. There are some difficulties with that, and we are well aware of those difficulties. We would like to see those difficulties addressed rather than be told that it cannot or should not be done. We believe it should be done, and if there is a general agreement that it should be done then we should face up to the consequences and the implications, which include costs. The redistribution of funds would obviously be one element. There are industrial questions which involve the teachers unions.

There are also questions about the capability of schools and teachers to handle much of this work. We think that there is an important job for universities to do in helping to enhance that capability. That might sound slightly paradoxical in moving the orientation of teacher education more towards the schools sector. Doesn't that mean that the schools can do it? No, it means that they are the right place. That is the place where students should have more experience, more time, longer periods; therefore, we need to think of the capacity and the capability of the institutions. Not all schools can do it, so we have to identify particular schools and work very closely with them. That is one line.

The second line, which came out quite strongly in our Hobart conference and is widely recognised in the literature, is the need to reflect this reorientation in the knowledge content of teacher education—what it is that teachers are being taught; the subject matter. Professor Arnold will be saying something about that in a moment, but I would like to make the point that we are talking about educational content knowledge, which is not quite the same thing as, say, physics or history. History is the resource or the source—and quite apposite today, since there is an important history conference taking place. History or physics or French, as a language and a culture, are the resources which have to be converted into pedagogical knowledge; educational subject matter knowledge. We think that is a very important exercise to be done by educators, both those in schools and those in universities, working together. I could elaborate, but our document makes the point in greater detail so I do not need to do that. I am very happy to answer questions from the committee.

Prof. Arnold—Thank you again for the opportunity. I have reread this submission that was made as a result of the meeting in Hobart in June and I am even more committed to it now than I was when it was first composed. But there are a couple of points that I will add and a couple that I will iterate—a couple of the points that Professor Skilbeck has made. With regard to my own background, I have been in teacher education for about 30 years now. Originally, literacy and English education were my discipline bases.

As a further elaboration to this, one of things that I wish to put on the table is that one of the things we need to do in teacher education is pay a lot more attention to the literacy levels of both graduates and our own teachers. That might be a bit radical, but it is well known that the ability to write well not only reflects one's thinking but actually creates one's thinking. If we were to expect schools to give more attention to intensive composing and thinking in literacy classrooms across the curriculum and if universities expected the highest levels of communication skills from graduates, that would be something that would have a lot of support in the community. I want to put that on the table as something that I would like to bring forward. It is referred to here under 'discipline' but I would like to elaborate on it further if need be. It is something that is emerging as an area that is enormously important in a global community and in terms of developing intellectual skills.

The other point that I would like to make is that, while you would have probably heard quite diverse opinions from people in this area, among experts in education there is quite a lot of unanimity of thought, which I think is reflected in this document. Professor Skilbeck has highlighted that in terms of the relationships with schools. I think there is a capacity not to split the profession into schools versus universities but to reward those schools or university faculties of education or colleges which are able to demonstrate a sustainable relationship with schools and use schools a bit like medical faculties use hospitals: have staff in the schools who are committed to the professional development of teachers as adjuncts to the university. That provides status for those teachers and it also encourages the university faculties to look outwards rather than inwards, which sometimes they have a tendency to do. So there is the clinical model, the literacy and the unanimity.

The discipline base is something that I think is worth revisiting. I know there is some debate around what is the core of any discipline, be it history or literacy or numeracy, but there is agreement about what matters in terms of being able to understand current literature, critique it and be able to teach in classrooms with some sense that certain things matter more than other things or certain things have a greater value base than other things. So I think it is time to get back to what you could almost call a common-sense basis: that, in literacy, no matter what you say about various theoretical approaches to literacy, parents expect teachers to be able to improve the reading and writing of their children. They probably do not care much from which theoretical perspective the teacher comes, but they want the practice to be effective. I think that is something worth getting back onto the table.

The other thing that has been exercising my mind recently is the need to offer high-end teacher education programs which might offer the possibility of fast-tracking people who show an intellectual calibre and a deep commitment to teaching. They would be able to do perhaps a master's of teaching where, instead of the usual two-year program, they might—provided they commit to using summer schools and working intensively—come into and out of a teacher education qualification course speedily but with a lot of expertise demonstrated. There are

people in the professions who would love to become teachers but they do not necessarily want to spend a long time going back to base. If we could assess through interviews—and this is partly touched on in this document—things like their enthusiasm, their commitment, their capacity to engage others, their sense of empathy and their intellectual rigour, we could then bring them in, tailor-make a course that lifts their expertise and exit them, even with their being able to take forward some of the credits that they get in their courses to further postgraduate work. Say they get a distinction average over the course of doing this. They can carry that as a kind of capital into further postgraduate work, provided they activate it in, say, five years, and so you get further professional development.

I have one other point to make and then I will stop. It is a point about the capacity to relate well. People are often mystified about what creates effective learning, but it is fundamental to have a positive relationship between the learner and the teacher. I think we have not given enough attention to understanding exactly what that means. We know that babies learn phenomenally well in the first five years of life because for the most part they have a positive relationship with their parents. If we could model that and replicate that in teacher education and teaching and reward those people who do have the kinds of relational skills to create that positive environment, that would be a good way forward. There is more that I could say but I will stop here.

CHAIR—Thank you, Professor. I will start with a couple of quick questions. When we started this inquiry, there were two streams that came through. We had—and it was just in the way that the witnesses appeared before the committee—a number of people from principal based organisations and a number of people coming more from the pure research point of view who gave evidence, and they were presenting diametrically different interpretations of what was the best way to turn out good teachers.

The principals came with the point of view of a very strong focus on practicum and the importance of time in schools. Those involved in research based work had concluded that a very strong subject basis and theoretical basis to one's subject skills with a reasonable degree of quality practicum related to the theory of pedagogy was the way to produce a good teacher. They thought a strong subject knowledge, against a backdrop of adequate practical teaching in front of a class, with theory of pedagogy did the business. The principals were more of the view that more time in school produces a better teacher. That was the view that they expressed. I am interested in the radical proposals, as you put it, that were put forward by the school principals. How radical are they, in your thoughts? What were those radical proposals?

Prof. Skilbeck—If it does not sound unduly conceited, throughout my career I have always tried to occupy the rainbow bridge. The rainbow bridge is what connects theory and practice. As far as any profession is concerned, teaching just being one example, the same principles apply. I think they apply across a wide spectrum of professions. Say we take the language that you have used, theory of pedagogy. That is precisely what we are talking about. You could call that a theory of practice. What is the practice that we are talking about? The practice in Australian schools is the effective and successful education of all young people—and I underline 'all young people'.

This is where we perhaps get into some troublesome waters. There have been some very strong criticisms made of university courses around Australia. No doubt you are familiar with

the Victorian parliament's Committee of Education and Training report on teacher education. By the way, I do not think that report crosses the rainbow bridge. I think it tends to divide rather than join together the parties that you have identified. It pillories universities to some extent, but many of the criticisms are quite justified in my view, having worked and been in universities for much but not all of my career.

The real issue here is the place where prospective teachers should spend a substantial part of their time. I take it that the place where prospective teachers should spend the larger part of their time is the working environment where they going to spend their careers as qualified teachers. That does not mean to say that every working environment, every school, is a suitable and appropriate place. Many are not, because people can acquire bad habits as well as good habits; they can acquire ignorance as well as knowledge. So we have to be very selective and very careful in identifying the kinds of schools, rather as we do with hospitals. Ros referred to the medical profession. We do not train doctors in every hospital in Australia. We have certain hospitals which are suitable for that purpose.

The analogy breaks down to some extent when you consider the volume issue. We are talking about an increasingly large number of teachers being trained over the next decade. We have a very large number of schools—10,000-odd schools in Australia—and a quarter of a million teachers, so the analogy is a bit weak in that respect. But we can still identify a sufficient number of good schools, and the question then is what kind of program and who provides it. The program has to be provided jointly. Students certainly have to spend time in university, but let us not forget those people who are doing graduate degrees or diplomas in teaching—and, if we take the University of Melbourne as an example, everybody will be doing that after the year 2008. They have already spent 12 years in school and three or four years in university. That is 15 or 16 years in the formal environment of schooling, speaking generically. It is time for those people to spend the bulk of their time in schools taking programs jointly designed and jointly delivered by universities and schools people in a true working, intellectual, practical partnership. What do they study? They study the theory that underlines, provides the basis for and gives understanding of and explanations of the phenomena that they are experiencing in their daily lives in a school. That theory is very complex. Those phenomena are very complex.

As Ros has said, human relationships are fundamental to this. Nobody can claim that the analysis of human relationships is a simple, straightforward matter. It calls upon a complex set of theories. I do not believe we have it in the way in which we teach in universities now. We teach units which might be called social foundations of education or contemporary issues, or something like that. Those units are not directly and fundamentally connected with the reality of the environment that these people have to manage, direct, stimulate, control, orchestrate and so on. So I believe that the shift that I am talking about—just as Ros says that you think through writing—is that you will develop the right theories through experiential understanding and knowledge. We will create a theory of pedagogy. We do not have one. I have spent my life trying to work out what it is. I am familiar with the historical, cultural, philosophical, psychological and sociological foundations of education. I still do not believe we have a clear grasp of pedagogical theory in teacher education. We have to construct it through shifting the orientation. That is what I mean by the rainbow bridge.

CHAIR—You talked about the shift into schools in your opening address. We have heard from a range of people about the importance of those partnerships between universities and

schools, and the overwhelming view was that these partnerships should be voluntary; they should not be mandated. There are a range of stakeholders. We have the various state governments as employers; we have the various private groups, churches and so on, that are also employers. From a practical viewpoint, as far as nailing down some recommendations we can make to achieve the necessary shift, how do you see that working, with those stakeholders coming on board and willingly and cooperatively and positively being part of what is a major change, rather than being dragged along? What do you see as the way forward here?

Prof. Arnold—I would want to put my hand up for a very pragmatic approach—that is, having people apply for funding and demonstrate and win funding to be able to implement these things. That funding might be to make alterations to the existing school to be able to accommodate university staff, for example. It might be something like capital or renovation or whatever, so that when university staff go into a school they actually have a place that is identified as theirs. I have seen that in America and it works beautifully. There is a seamless transition between your university office and your school office and that kind of thing. Likewise, universities are able to have people come in on a seconded basis. I think we need funding for creative ways of developing partnerships so there is scope for people to put their hands up and say, 'In our area, this is the way we want to do it.' That is not a particularly innovative way of suggesting it. But I do not think there would be too many people who would not think it was a good idea to enable people to create the partnership that suits their area, because the stakeholders would see a benefit in it. Underlying all this is the appeal to best outcomes for students. Their views are not often heard in this sort of thing. There has to be something radical done in this area of teacher education, so I would be putting my heart around giving people—

CHAIR—That is one element of it, so far as the physical funding for that part. Then we also have the cooperation of the existing staff from the school and whether there needs to be a restructure of the salary progression and the—

Prof. Arnold—Absolutely.

CHAIR—professional progression of mentor teachers through the school. Have you got some thoughts on that?

Prof. Arnold—One of the things that has been dropped off the agenda a bit is giving people a kind of academic upgrade for doing this kind of work. It could be that, being mentors, they are simultaneously enrolled in a university program which gives them some capacity to reflect on the experience and get a further accreditation for it. If there were ways that that could be supported financially, it would be attractive.

I sense one of the issues here is that, in the first five years of education, when teachers are in the schools, they have just come out of universities and, provided they have had a good experience—you cannot always guarantee that—there is a wish to develop further. We are not really capitalising on that initial enthusiasm in that first five years, and I think that is a bit of a shame. So if there were encouragement given for them to put their hands up early and say, 'Yes, I do want to be a leader in the profession and I do want to undertake this kind of mentoring,' they also, in the first five years, would have a lot of credibility with the emerging student teachers. There is a sense of shared experience, difficulties encountered. So I would certainly be

looking to get those people in the first five years and to win them into this kind of mentoring program.

Mr SAWFORD—Is there a bit of danger that you are suggesting a little bang approach against a big bang approach? You seem to be saying that the strategy ought to be synthesised and individual rather than analysed and comprehensive. Is that what you are saying?

Prof. Arnold—I might be saying that, and I can explain why I am saying it. It is difficult to make a radical whole-of-system change. I think I am saying it from my own experience of trying to effect change, that maybe we cannot do it for the whole sector and that maybe we have to say that there are some people who will come on board with the change, welcome it and put their hands up for it.

Mr SAWFORD—In your introductory comments, you were talking about literacy levels. One of the things that has always worried me is that, when you put 100 teachers together and give them a word, they will have a hundred different definitions. The public then have no idea of what the teachers are talking about, and the teachers themselves have no idea of what they are talking about. If you look at the work of the press gallery at Parliament House—which is the worst press gallery I have seen in 20 years—you will see that it has no style, no substance and no insights compared with that of their colleagues in European countries where there is style, there is substance and there are insights. So I take your point about the literacy level. I think that focus is right.

I worry about the synthesised, individual approach because I cannot see it having an impact. I have seen too much of that in the last 30 or 40 years. It was a good idea when it started. I am a bit more tied to what Malcolm was saying, in that I think you have to have that reconciliation of theory and practice. The term 'rainbow bridge' is lovely, but education is the impact of mind on mind. Education is the quality of the relationship, as you say. Education is the quality of the program you present.

Prof. Arnold—I might have misunderstood your question.

Mr SAWFORD—I think you will both be very happy—without breaking the privilege of this committee—with the direction that our report will take. All of us will pay tribute to both of you for your contribution, because you have directed us in a particular way. When you read the report you will see a lot of what you have been saying. But, as to the two arguments that you are both presenting, I would hate to see a little bang approach. I have seen so many little bang approaches in the last 30 or 40 years.

Prof. Skilbeck—Can I comment on that. I think we need both little and big bangs. I have personally been involved in many little bangs—

Mr SAWFORD—So have I.

Prof. Skilbeck—and one gets rather frustrated that nothing happens. One of the problems about funding innovation is that you fund while the innovation is sexy and then you stop funding, and the bottom drops out of the whole thing. Many people, as you would know perfectly well from your own experience, feel somewhat disillusioned in the education

profession when that happens: 'Oh, here's another innovation.' We all gear up to implement it, we are being encouraged to implement it and then, lo and behold, a few years later, the powers that be decide something else is better and more preferable, and the funding shifts or it just vanishes.

I support Ros very strongly in this: we still need to encourage and foster the innovators and the creators, who will always be somewhat out in front, like the group that we brought together in Tasmania. That was a very powerful, significant group of people, representing interests throughout Australia. From our point of view, it somehow worked beautifully, but we have to carry that momentum forward.

As I mentioned, last night in Melbourne we had an outstanding meeting with about 30 educators—school principals, deans, lecturers in education, the Victorian Institute of Teaching, the chair of the Victorian parliamentary committee of education and training and others. That group will meet again in six months. We said that we will come together again in six months to see what we have achieved as a result of our discussions. We have to keep fostering such groups. They do not necessarily need a lot of money. They need a small amount of seed funding and they need recognition, encouragement and the opportunity to extend their influence beyond that environment. We have some structures in Australia, and we have to have a stick as well as a carrot. The most useful structures that we have at the moment, which have just been put in place, are the state institutes of teaching.

Mr SAWFORD—I do not disagree with that. Could I simply say that one of the things that has happened in the past is that we have let the innovators go, in many ways, and in some ways we have allowed many of them to be self-indulgent—and, having been one of those at one stage, I understand that. But you also have to win the debate. Often the innovators have been let off the hook a little bit too easily. Also—and this leads on to what you were saying—I think they have to be encouraged, mentored, trained, or whatever the word is, to be able to win the debate. Many of the innovators do not do that; maybe another group of people does it for them. But what is the point of having innovation, if it just floats around and gets resurrected, unless you win the debate? In politics, you need to win the debate. It is very easy to muck around with the idea, but the real courage is in winning the debate and convincing others, isn't it?

Prof. Arnold—Could I make a suggestion? There is a group of supporters that we might have forgotten here—that is, believe it or not, the students. When a teacher is very effective or when an innovator is very effective, the students are able to identify that and, in turn, they influence the parents. I think that might be one aspect to winning the debate—certainly to win the rhetorical debate by being able to communicate your vision. Unless students are better learners, thinkers, speakers or whatever at the end of it, the enterprise really has not done what it should do.

Prof. Skilbeck—I come back to the institutes of teaching. I do not want to let them go. Right now, the institutes of teaching are specifying across the country a framework of professional standards, using the MCEETYA general framework and translating that into specificities. Those institutes can be seen as either bureaucratic gatekeepers or stimulators of development and change for the profession, and the good ones will go in that direction. They will specify—as has been the case with their predecessor bodies or in the case of Queensland and South Australia, for example, where the institutes have been around for a long time—the requirements for

registration in order to practise the profession. If they are persuaded by the arguments in your report, they are the ones with the capacity to translate those into formal requirements for registration.

I can give a very concrete example. If we think that the partnerships that we are talking about entail a much longer time spent in schools then the requirement for registration can be specified in such crude but important terms such as 'days in schools'. That is a very powerful structural instrument. We have to use those as well as the creative and innovative model. We put the two together. After all, the structures come out of creative thinking and innovation in the first place. Innovation becomes regularised—normalised, if you like—through the creation of structures.

I agree entirely with you about winning the debate. From my experience, there are two different kinds of people in change processes: the creators—the up-front people—and the hard sloggers who come from behind, carry the thing forward and carry conviction. I believe that they have different temperaments, but they are both in the teaching profession, the education profession. They are there now.

Ms BIRD—Both of my questions relate to teacher registration bodies. I am glad that you raised that. You were talking about fast-tracking professionals. My great concern is that what we have heard from teacher registration bodies is that there seems to be a real focus on serving time. We met some students who were former journalists—despite Rod's view of journalists. People had quite profound professional backgrounds and I think they certainly fit that model. Certainly, when I did my Dip. Ed. there were a lot of mature age, professional career-changing people. I am just worried that teacher registration bodies will, as you said, perhaps become the bureaucrats rather than the leaders. How do we avoid that happening? What recommendation should we make to lead those bodies away from that route?

Prof. Arnold—Demonstrated expertise. Some people take a long time to demonstrate that; other people take a short time, depending on all the human qualities and their capacity to get something out of their experience. This is a bit radical but, rather than saying 'days in schools', I do not think it would be too hard to say 'the quality of experience' and 'the quality of expertise demonstrated'—namely, expertise as a teacher and expertise as a person who is teaching a particular discipline.

Ms BIRD—If you had teaching schools as we have teaching hospitals, you could task them with the job of doing that.

Prof. Arnold—Yes.

Ms BIRD—The second question I had relates to that. The other thing I am conscious of, having a son doing science teaching, is that these kids work for a living as well as study. The things most disruptive to his life are the work placements in schools because there is no flexibility around them. He has to talk to his employer and say, 'Now I can't work these days,' whereas with uni he can say, 'I'll do a night class if I've got to work that day,' or whatever. I am wondering if you have a view from the students or even some ideas on how going to a more school based model may impact on that.

Prof. Skilbeck—I certainly have views on that; I am sure we both do. For five years I was vice-chancellor of Deakin University when it was at its height as a distance education provider. It has become more generalised, more diffuse, as it has changed over the last 10 or 15 years. Through the incorporation of the Melbourne campuses and so on it has become much more like a normal looking university. The reason I went to Deakin was precisely that it was grounded on the thesis that the university should go to the student, not the student to the university. That is a radical idea.

Perhaps I am influenced by my own personal experience. I did all my study at night, and in the minimum time, by the way. I sympathise with your son and you, and I have children and they all complain. But I am not personally persuaded that we cannot combine full-time study and full-time work. That sounds like a paradox—okay; we all have to work a bit harder. Of course, a slight problem is not only the organisation of the university timetable but the organisation of the school day.

Ms BIRD—No, it is not the uni that creates the problem.

Prof. Skilbeck—That is where we come back to our principals. The most recent document that I referred to, produced by the secondary school principals, talks about 24-hour-a-day schooling.

Ms BIRD—That's a big bang!

Prof. Skilbeck—It sounds absurd—24-hour schooling for five-year-olds? Don't talk nonsense! Basically they are saying, 'We've got some incredibly inflexible structures in education.' We know that. To give a very small example, regarding having a partnership model, I have been, as you no doubt have, Ms Bird, into hundreds of schools around Australia. Not a single school I have been to provides a proper home base for teacher educators, just as there are no universities in Australia that provide a proper base for schoolteachers working in partnership. They come in and they give a lecture. In other words, the actual design of the buildings does not recognise the reality of the partnership. The design of the school day does not recognise the very factors that you have mentioned.

If we are serious about social change, economic change, globalisation, a knowledge society and a world in constant flux—not a new idea, of course; it is from Heraclitus—then we will address those structural issues. We will not solve them quickly; the structure of schooling is very enduring. It has been around a long time and it works up to a certain point. But if we are serious about the combination of work and study, which I happen to believe is of great value—it is not a hardship; it is a value—then we have to make the adjustments in the structures.

What we are really looking to the committee for is some vision in this sense to help to move ahead. We are not going to get all these things sorted out straightaway. We have some structures to sort them out straightaway. We have the institutes of teaching and so on around the country, we have state governments and we have departments of education. They are all handling the everyday business. We want a more visionary statement which says: 'This is the direction to go in. These are the steps we can take to move in that direction.' We need to take the steps.

I am convinced that from the profession, at least the more sensitive, tuned-in members of the profession, and there are many of them, there will be strong support for it. There will be all the people who say: 'It can't be done. Why should we make these difficult moves that are so impossible, so costly? They're so impractical,' and so on. The direction is the key thing, and flexibility of provision, flexibility of access, is absolutely fundamental. The universities can make some changes by ensuring that all students, regardless of where they live or where they work, have access to study. We have the technology right now to make this feasible.

The schools have to be pushed a bit harder, because they—and the parents, of course—are locked into a very rigid model of education. So it is a matter of saying, 'Shift a bit in this direction.' After all, upper-secondary students, aged between 15 and 18, are young adults. They do not have to be supervised in classes hour in, hour out, every day, attending between the hours of 8.30 in the morning and 3.30 in the afternoon. We can restructure at least for that group. That would be a start. You cannot start with kindergarten or preschool, perhaps, but you can start with upper secondary.

Ms CORCORAN—I have two questions. I just picked up your point about who is looking after the people who teach the teachers, and I wondered if you wanted to talk a little bit about that to us. You have made the comment in your submission that we seldom talk about the teacher educators. Do you want to add a bit more to what you said there?

Prof. Arnold—I suppose what I want to add is that we run the argument that it is lifelong learning for students. It is lifelong learning for teacher educators. I have been in the profession for 30 years and I am still learning an enormous amount, because there is a tremendous amount to learn about human dynamics and human learning. Within universities, for example, there is not necessarily a requirement that people retrain in their discipline base or their theoretical input or whatever, but, hitting the point that you were raising, should there be? I would say yes.

Where academics are involved in the professional development of their colleagues, there would be nothing wrong with a requirement that they demonstrate the continuing capacity to upgrade qualifications, to upgrade understanding and to develop an even deeper theoretical and practical understanding—in an integrated way. You need integrity. One of the things that students will commonly either applaud or denigrate teachers for is the degree to which there is integrity between what they say and how they behave. That, I think, is the heart of your theoretical-practical interface: whether you can live the theory in a way that is understood by others.

Ms CORCORAN—When you say integrity, does that mean believability as well, that they have demonstrated understanding of what it is at the coalface?

Prof. Arnold—Yes. You do not have any credibility if you cannot demonstrate how to do it. You can talk about it in an abstract way, but nobody believes you.

Ms BIRD—The students think you are at the uni because you are a failed teacher, that you are in trouble. That is not an uncommon view.

Prof. Arnold—Exactly, yes, and that means reliving your professional life as an educator in a university profession.

Ms CORCORAN—Is this a rotating thing, almost?

Prof. Arnold—Yes. It is very enlivening. It is a bit threatening—

Ms CORCORAN—Yes, I imagine it would be very threatening.

Prof. Arnold—but it certainly revitalises your practice.

Prof. Skilbeck—I think one thing to avoid is what has happened in the United Kingdom, where so-called 'recent and relevant experience' has been converted into a formal requirement to go from a university position, which somebody might even have occupied for 20 years, and teach in a classroom. Many academics would not be able to do that and it is probably a foolish requirement. What is required is a reinterpretation of what you mean by 'recent and relevant experience', and that is where I would come back to the partnership model. If teacher educators and school people are working in harmonious partnerships, they will be spending time in each other's backyards—a lot of time.

That is why I made the point about a space in the school. Spaces in schools for adults are often rather inadequate anyway. They can be pretty appalling and are not always very good for children either. But we would need to visualise the situation: all you would need to do in many cases is put up a portable in the schoolyard and say, 'This is the place in this school where the university teacher educators and the schoolteacher teacher educators get together,' and they meet on a regular basis.

The academics might be doing some collaborative research. There is a lot of interest in so-called action research, which combines theory and practice. They might be doing that. They might be doing observational studies of children. They might be working with parents—particularly with parents of children with special learning difficulties. There are highly specialised people in universities—speech therapists, hearing specialists, people dealing with behaviour disorders—who can work with parents and children in the school environment. That is my point. That for me is recent and relevant experience for academics.

Some of the academics will be very good at classroom teaching. But the people who are best at classroom teaching are the classroom teachers—that is why they are there. They are the ones who should be communicating the knowledge and understanding of what it is to be a teacher. If you are talking about, for example, knowing what the state regulations or requirements are governing all teachers, then perhaps the university academic has that at his or her fingertips more so than the classroom teacher, so that person should be teaching that. If you want the latest view on brain research, you are not going to get that from the average schoolteacher, but you will get it from a particular academic specialist in the university. It is horses for courses. I strongly believe in the need for people to have recent and relevant experience in schools. That is valuable.

Ms CORCORAN—Does that recent and relevant experience include the academic going out to your portable classroom and sitting there having a cup of tea? Do they need a formal reason for going out, other than the need to be there sometimes to observe and absorb? Would that be—

Prof. Arnold—Yes.

Prof. Skilbeck—Just being in the school community and seeing the school as part of the working environment of the academic? Yes, I believe that strongly. And it is an enriching experience. It is a wonderful thing. It is slightly uncomfortable and inconvenient: 'Who am I? What am I doing in this environment when I am comfortable in the university?' You also have practical things. You have a travel route that gets you daily to the university, but you have to develop a new travel route. Instead of going to the university, two days a week you are going to two or three schools around the suburbs—small things like that. People are not used to it. They have their comfort zones in the faculty. Isn't that right, Ros?

Prof. Arnold—Yes; absolutely.

Ms CORCORAN—We all have.

Prof. Arnold—Just to follow that up, there is something that an academic can do—anyone can do it who has an empathic approach to life. Teachers often worry about the things that happen in classrooms. If there is a person there who can listen and perhaps give another angle on it and encourage a different perspective, that can be a good thing. To have a mentor in the school who can put another perspective on those issues and help with the problem solving instead of it continuing to go around the same complaint base, as sometimes happen, can be a good thing. That can give a bit of insight into how strategies might be changed to solve those problems.

Ms BIRD—I have a pragmatic question on that. How does that fit with the academic's work requirements? Is that teaching? Is it research? Will they be hidebound by some of those rigid structures?

Prof. Arnold—That could be overcome. It could be regarded as research into teaching. If they capitalise on it and then write it up, they get their required publication out of it.

Ms BIRD—What we heard from Western Australia was that action research is very difficult to get funding and recognition for.

Prof. Skilbeck—That is certainly true. Funding for education research is—and this is a truism—unsatisfactory. You have the Australian Research Council, which is the major funding agency, and that tends to not take much interest in what it might describe as fairly low-level localistic activities. You have constrained university budgets. That is certainly an issue. We certainly need to think about better ways of resourcing this kind of work. The resourcing goes back to the way that schools are funded and the way that universities are funded. Those would have to be the sources. You will not get it through Australian Research Council support for this kind of activity. Why can't we put it into school budgeting? By the way, in Victoria, for example, it is within the capacity of the schools to do this now because—

Ms BIRD—We fund flagpoles. Why not innovative training?

Prof. Skilbeck—What a good thought.

Prof. Arnold—If I might suggest something, under this partnership model, part of the funding could be for doing that kind of action research, writing it up, disseminating in, communicating it and—as Mr Sawford said—winning the argument around here. There could be several

components within that partnership thing, such as improved pedagogy and researching it and writing it up—and doing it in a collaborative way. One of the difficulties for people in faculties of education is not only getting funding for the research but getting access to a site for the research. By doing the partnership, you have the site ready made. You have the research issues sitting there waiting to be researched. Marry the two and give support for them.

Ms CORCORAN—You talked earlier about moving the locus of initial education to schools, and I thought you were going to talk about something like the university course we saw in Queensland—I think it was in Central Queensland.

Prof. Skilbeck—I know it, yes.

Ms CORCORAN—They—and forgive my faulty memory—seemed to have this immersion short course but lots and lots of time in schools. And they were very keen on that course and gave us glowing reports of how these students were then well accepted into schools. We did not hear this evidence in the committee formally, but anecdotally afterwards. And talking to teachers that I know I have also heard the comment that, 'Yes, they are great for a bit, but their grab bag isn't very deep.' Do you want to comment on that? It is a very different way, from our point of view anyway, of training teachers.

Prof. Skilbeck—I am reasonably familiar with that program because, in the study that I did with Helen Connell, we looked at a number of innovative programs around Australia—Wollongong, for example, Newcastle and Central Queensland. But there has been a formal evaluation of that program carried out by Lawrence Ingvarson of the ACER. He draws some interesting comparisons between that program and a well-known Melbourne one—whose name I won't give, but you can find it if you consult Ingvarson's research. Much to the surprise and consternation of many people, his evaluation ranked the Central Queensland program right up there and the Melbourne program right down there. That study was based largely on student perceptions, student evaluation—a very important consideration.

Ms CORCORAN—As in: the teacher students or the three-year-olds—sorry, the 18-year-olds?

Prof. Skilbeck—The trainee teachers. Well, it would be even better if it were; we should have a bit more of that. It did not, of course, take up your point. We do not know, regrettably—and I have here material for the committee secretariat which deals with the research findings from the United States—what in fact is the impact of most of our programs. We are acting and operating on a belief system—as is true of most of human life, anyway; that is nothing special to education. But we are concerned that we do not have sufficient systematic knowledge of the impact of different forms of intervention or treatment in education—not only in teacher education but also in schooling for that matter.

I am not a great believer in rather narrow-minded impact studies; I think that causality is far too complex for that. But it would be good to compare different programs to know how well people do a few years later. You have the problem of diverse variables—their experience beyond the initial teaching years, of course, is enormously varied: different school settings, different personal life settings, and so on. Even so, we could do some longitudinal studies which would enable us to answer your question, because we do not know whether the Central Queensland

program will equip people to be better teachers over a period of five or 10 years beyond teacher training. Do they stay in the profession, for example? Does it give better retention rates? We are working in the dark.

Nevertheless, we can operate on certain principles—and we can even operate on common sense, as Ros indicated. It is common sense that if you are going to learn any kind of practical craft, you have to have experience. Teaching is a craft—okay, it is a profession as well, but it is a craft; it involves a lot of highly practical skills. It involves rehearsal of those skills. It involves experience. Where do you get that? Well, in the obvious place. So we do have a common-sense answer. Then we have an answer in terms of principles. Who are the people who have certain kinds of knowledge and expertise? Where can you best learn certain kinds of things? The Central Queensland program is based on that. Maybe a weakness, as you pointed out, is that it is too compressed. I am not sure that I entirely agree with Ros and also with your counterparts in Victoria when they say, 'Compress the time.' That may be a good thing, but I say, 'Do not compress it too much.'

So I do not know the answer to your question because I have not heard those anecdotal comments or discussed them with people. I just know that that kind of program is moving in the direction that I would support.

Ms LIVERMORE—Professor Arnold, you talked in your opening comments about the way that, when you compress the teaching courses for career change professionals, you can assess their readiness for teaching in other ways—by assessing personal qualities, such as initiative, enthusiasm and those sorts of things. I thought that people with those qualities sound like the kinds of teachers that we would all like to see in classrooms. Are those qualities also assessed in people coming through the traditional undergraduate courses? If not, why not? Why should there be one set of criteria for career change teachers? If those things are seen as positive and necessary, why isn't that assessment happening?

Prof. Arnold—No, it is not happening formally, and I wish it were. There are 500 studies at least which tell us that teachers make a difference. Do we need any more studies telling us that? What we need is very long term, longitudinal evidence of what those deep qualities are that good teachers exhibit over a period of time and in various contexts. I want to posit—I am presenting my own theoretical perspective here, but it is drawn from long-term research I undertook in writing development—that they are things around sustained enthusiasm and the sense of spiritedness that people demonstrate that is enormously attractive.

Ms BIRD—It is sad that I remember people saying 26 years ago, when I did my teacher training, that they wish they had this, so I am a bit sad that we are still hearing it.

Prof. Arnold—You can pick it in the way somebody presents and you could interview for it. It is a quality that most human beings can recognise in another human being, but it is not yet brought into the initial assessment, and I wish it were. The capacity to engage people is a gift, but if people have no skill in engaging others then I personally would not want to graduate them into the teaching profession, because it is a fundamental art when you stand up in a classroom.

Ms LIVERMORE—In your experience, is it picked up in a less overt way through the assessment of people's practicums? Is it something that works its way through?

Prof. Arnold—It can be picked up but, if you have a look at the criteria that are listed in some of the assessment sheets for classrooms, sometimes people add on 65 skills. But there are some skills that are more fundamental and integrated than others, and I am suggesting what they might be. Some work needs to be done not to keep adding on lists of low-level skills that people should be demonstrating but to get some that we know can be integrated. A deep-seated enthusiasm might be one capacity to engage, and a capacity to identify where students are at emotionally and cognitively might be as well. That is a high-level skill but it is one that can be taught so that, by observation of students and talking with them, good teachers are able to make a very good guess as to what students need next to lift them to the next level, and that kind of skill could be expected. To add to my comments about the compression of the model, I would not wish people to do a compressed teacher education qualification, unless they had the aptitude for it.

Ms BIRD—Following on from that, one of the things we heard from some of the schools was that, if they pick up those inherent problems in a practicum—that somebody is completely not engaging and has the wrong personality to work in a classroom—that does not follow through to the uni results, and it is therefore a frustration that people who should be weaned out of the system as a result of practicums are not. Would you agree that it needs to be within the power of unis to do that?

Prof. Arnold—Yes. It needs to be picked up early, and students need to be given an offer of help and then an offer of a pathway out without shame and guilt so that, if they are enrolled in a bachelor of education and cannot meet the practicum requirement, they might graduate with a bachelor of arts or something so that they have not entirely lost the opportunity, and it would not take a lot in a university to do that.

Mr FAWCETT—I noted your lament on the lack of longitudinal studies, so you may not be able to answer this question, but I am particularly interested in any evidence that you may be able to provide about the effectiveness in teaching and engaging students, particularly high school students, of career change teachers versus teachers who have come through from school into university and straight back into school.

I guess I premise that on two things. We have been talking about this overlap of theory and practice. If at the end of the day schooling is about preparing people for life, one could argue—I know there are some teachers here, and my wife is a teacher—that if you come through school, then go straight to university learning about school and then go straight back into school, you have not actually experienced a lot of life outside the window of school. What I hear from a lot of teachers in Wakefield, particularly in areas where there is a fair bit of social disadvantage, is that there is a real skill involved in being able to (a) know your subject and (b) relate the subject to the real world and engage people—both young men and young women—into wanting to learn and being able to go out and apply that. What they are saying to me is that people who have had experience outside the viewpoint of education at schools are really good at that. In terms of big bang, little bang stuff, if the evidence is there, should we actually be saying that we need to put a lot more resources and a lot more incentive into encouraging career change—whilst not denying those who want to come through the other stream? Should we be putting an increased emphasis on that?

Prof. Arnold—I do not know that it will entirely solve the problem, but I think we are at a stage where it is worth looking at some different ways of building over a lifetime career teachers

who can engage in the ways that they need to engage. It could be that you are a little insulated if you stay in a school all your life or, by the same token, a university—

Ms BIRD—Or parliament.

Prof. Arnold—I was going to say that, but I wanted to be respectful! You are coming up against people who do not immediately believe what you have to say and who are questioning a little more. It makes you think, 'I have got to find a different way of approaching this and engage in some creative problem solving' when people do not sit there immediately absorbing what you are saying.

Mr FAWCETT—Do you have any evidence that would support a larger commitment of resources into that area?

Prof. Arnold—I do not off the top of my head, because I do not think we have applied particularly radical and creative ways of addressing this issue to date.

Prof. Skilbeck—It is not exactly evidence, but there are some ways of looking at the question. As far as evidence in terms of straightforward research, no: there are no published studies that I am aware of in Australia or anywhere else that draw those comparisons. They would be rather difficult, because the experience of career change people is extremely diverse. For example, in Western Australia I have met geologists who have found that the mining industry is not requiring their skills at the moment and they become secondary school physics teachers—which is fine—and, in New South Wales, there was a former bank clerk who became a school teacher.

A point we have not touched on at all is the ability to educate teachers in such a way that they will see the value of working in Emerald in Queensland or in some remote community in the Kimberley. We interviewed some people and we discussed the problem of placing teachers in remote schools in Australia, which is a very serious problem. There is, of course, a mentality issue there. Some of these people were career change people. You might find a similar mentality from somebody coming straight from school.

What I do want to say—we make this point in our submission—is that we want to change the selection procedures for people entering teaching, but we do not think that it is sufficient to rely on year 12 exam results. We do not rely on year 12 exam results for career change people. Many of them are in fact interviewed and they are selected. No selection process is perfect. We think the very points that Ros has made about aptitude for teaching in terms of human relations experience, attitudes towards people and so on are not captured in higher school certificate or VCE exams.

If you were doing chemistry for the VCE in Victoria and doing an exam in November, what does that have to do with your capacity or your potential capability as a chemistry teacher? The only thing it has to do with it is that you have a grounding in the subject matter. You may be hopeless at communicating or in showing any interest in other people's learning, yet we use your chemistry score, combined with your scores in other subjects plus a bit of a reference from the school, to admit you. That is clearly inadequate for entry to a profession. But there are some difficulties. If we go beyond that and say, 'We're going to introduce, as we recommend, a more varied portfolio approach towards selection,' then you have to set up structures for doing that.

Are you going to interview people? If so, we would have to train interviewers and provide resources and facilities or use our present resources and facilities to interview, which we do not do at present. Secondly, the state employers, in particular, say, 'Hey, we've got a huge teacher shortage coming up; we can't be all that selective.'

Ms BIRD—Do not make it more difficult.

Prof. Skilbeck—Yes. So there are some counter-arguments. But, taking the point about a direction, our proposal is that there should be a more intelligent approach towards selection. There is a further argument against it, which is put forward by some academics, namely, that you should not try to identify attributes in advance, because you get to develop those very attributes in the course. We think that is a rather strange argument, because why then would you use the fact that people get a certain score in physics or French? Why don't you start from scratch and teach them that? We use that kind of attribute argument for subject knowledge; we are not prepared to use it for personalities. Our view is that, all things considered—accepting the objections—we would like to see emphasis given to that.

Speaking personally, I do not think anybody should enter the teaching profession going direct from school to university to school. At the very least, they should have a one- or two-year gap between the end of secondary school and entering university. Moreover, you have to look at the statistics on career mobility. Increasing numbers of people, according to our studies, anyway, are indicating that they are not identifying teaching as a lifelong, permanent career. They see it as a career option. If it works well, if it is good and they have a good experience, they will stay with it. I know that you are not looking at the whole business of a teaching career, but there are some very serious impediments. For example, after between 10 and 13 years a ceiling is reached in salary, and that is not a good incentive for a career when we are trying to get high-quality people. We are faced with the problem of presenting this as a challenging, worthwhile, high-quality, well-recognised career, which it is not.

Ms BIRD—We have had evidence that that is not an aspect of education but that it is an aspect of the generation. We have had others say that every profession is getting the same feedback.

Prof. Skilbeck—Yes, fair enough, okay, so we live in that kind of society. But that is not necessarily a problem. All I am saying—

Ms BIRD—So you do not capitulate—

CHAIR—I will just stop you there for a minute. There are two points that raise themselves there. We have discussed the issue of selection with a range of witnesses. If I could summarise, the general consensus amongst the academic world is that the resource that would be involved in a detailed interview process or some form of interview process would be a resource better put into training the students. Given there is a view that the output of students coming through the system is quite measurable, do you think that, as an alternative to an interview process, there could be some sort of executive selection type model that attempts to identify the attributes or, as in the case of the AIS, identifies the attributes that will later be trained up so that we can have a supplementary short exam that identifies that, as opposed to an interview?

Ms CORCORAN—Or you could add one more option: there is a whole bunch of people who know these students very well—that is, their current secondary school teachers.

Prof. Skilbeck—I would certainly give precedence to school reports if they can be strengthened and so on, but I personally do not accept the argument against interviews, having worked in the UK system. If you can interview all students in the UK, why can't we interview them in Australia?

CHAIR—We have received evidence to the contrary, that many feel it is not justified on a cost-benefit basis.

Prof. Arnold—I could compromise fractionally and say that you could have a very early prac—in the model of people coming in, getting some exposure to the ways you ought to teach, and then a prac in an enabling environment. In this model we have got the schools which are taking seriously their role of helping students—not the model of throwing a bunch of student teachers into a classroom that nobody else wants to take, building failure in. But put them into an enabling environment and then assess the capacity early on, so there is time to exit with grace.

Ms BIRD—My son had to do a short written piece on 'why do you want to teach' to get into it. He said it really stopped him and made him think.

CHAIR—If I could go back to another point that you raised in your submission, and again just then, and that is the ceiling on the staffing structure. I would guess there is a great opportunity there to build in the improved partnership, mentoring role as an additional part of the salary structure.

Prof. Arnold—Exactly.

CHAIR—In point 6 of your submission you make the comment that:

Despite the work of our researchers … our knowledge of the effectiveness and impact of different forms and elements of teacher education is not as strong as it needs to be for sound policy making.

It has to be one of the few disciplines where we are charging ahead in our development of knowledge and our development of techniques without actually having a research basis for it as strong as we would like. If you were to put out a tender for a longitudinal study to find out the things you believe we need to know, what would that tender look like? Perhaps you would like to take that on notice. If you were to produce a tender document setting out the width and breadth of that longitudinal study, what would it be?

Prof. Arnold—I would like to identify those teachers who have those qualities I mentioned earlier and look at how they engage in the inter- and intra-subjective engagement of those teachers with the children, and then I would identify how the children feel and think in working with such people. That would be step 1, to get this very deep analysis of what is happening in the mind and the head of the child and the teacher as they engage together. Then the second part would be: how do you build in a teacher education program that identifies and captures that and encourages it? It is a longitudinal study.

Prof. Skilbeck—Longitudinal studies are very difficult in one sense. The best example we have of a longitudinal study of the teaching profession in Australia is work that Professor Don Anderson, of the Australian National University, has been doing for the past 30 or 40 years. That is really a socialisation study: who are the teachers, what are their social backgrounds, what do they do, and so on. I would take a piece of work that might extend over about eight years—rather than a permanent longitudinal study—and I would start by interviewing recent graduates from teacher education programs. I would want to look at their career options—their image of a career, what is it. I would then look at what they intend to do about turning that image into a reality. These are people who are not yet fully qualified to teach. They have completed the formal requirements, but they do not become fully qualified as professionals until they have been teaching for quite some time. It might be two, three or five years; it varies.

I would want to follow up that cohort of people for up to about eight years maximum, and I would want to see where the choices take them and whether they have been reinforced. Many of them at the present time express an open-ended commitment to teaching. As I said earlier, they will continue to teach if it produces satisfaction. So I would want to look at what it is in the teaching environment that does produce satisfaction to those people.

There would be three classes of people, I think, that I would hypothesise. One would be those people who, after about three to five years, move out of teaching. There is research evidence—for example, a Western Australian study that shows that many of those who move out come back 15 years later. I would not worry about that, because that is too long a timescale for my study. I would just know that after three to five years they have left teaching. I would want to know why—what was the reason for their departure.

The second group would be the plodders who have stayed in teaching. They have settled down, they do not have any great career ambitions and they are quite happy where they are. The third group are the potential leaders and the aspirants, many of whom have gone back to do the study at university that Ros has referred to. They are active in professional associations. They are driving forces.

I would want to interview them and find out what it was about their experience as trainee teachers—whether it was a four-year, a two-year or a one-year program—that influenced their choices, their decisions. That would give me a pretty good understanding of the connection between different kinds of initial educational experience, not just different universities but the kinds of things they had, and their subsequent choices of a career. If my policy decision was that we cannot afford to educate all these people and have them dropping out of teaching or just being mundane plodders and that we have to have more leaders, I would have then identified those experiences that are likely to produce more people like that. Or as a policymaker I might say that it does not matter if we have mobility, because, as we said earlier, we are going to have career change people coming in, so I am not going to waste a huge amount of money on that. In other words, you have policy options coming out of that, and you have the basis for knowing what you might do. That is what I would do. So, if you are offering some project money—

Ms BIRD—We might recommend that someone should offer!

Prof. Skilbeck—Ros and I can get together and put in a bid!

CHAIR—As we are at the business end of the inquiry, I will just go back to a fairly simplistic question harking back to the partnerships. If we were to produce a 10-point plan to build a stronger partnership between our academic institutions and schools and all points in between, what would that 10-point plan look like? What would the federal government do? What would the state governments or other non-state employer bodies do? Where do the schools fit in, et cetera? Who should do what in your stronger partnership world?

Prof. Arnold—Step 1: I would make it incumbent upon the academics and the schools—presumably the school principals—to work together to frame up a study, make a commitment and demonstrate that they know how to get both communities that they are involved in on board with it. So the academic has to get a community within the faculty of education, for example—a bunch of like-minded people, so it is not a team of one. There might be three or four academics; perhaps a cluster group of principals. It might be a school or it might be a cluster of schools, and it could even be a cluster of cross-sectional schools. Instead of the normal situation where the government schools work with the government schools, in a particular region there might be three or four school principals who cross sectoral boundaries who work together. I would not be worried about that, but there might be others who would be. And they would say, 'In our little community, this is how we are going to work together.' Step 1 is to get the academics and the schools to commit together to get the relationship right.

CHAIR—Who makes them do that?

Prof. Arnold—The attraction of getting the funding. I do not think you can mandate it; this has to be a carrot, not a stick. It is the attraction of being seen to be doing something that demonstrates leadership, because an awful lot of people are happy to take on a leadership role. So we are looking to build leadership in the profession.

CHAIR—Okay, let us start at the top with the federal government. What should the federal government do that it is not doing?

Prof. Skilbeck—I can give you seven points in my proposals, but I am leaving three open because I need more time to think about it.

CHAIR—I invite you to answer this with notice too, if you wish, afterwards.

Prof. Skilbeck—I can just speculate at the moment—and this is in no particular order. The institutes of teaching are getting together. They are meeting as a national group, informally. They believe that they are establishing a national framework of standards. I do not know to what extent the federal government is involved in that initiative. I know the institutes are, at the state level. I would want to get into that, so I would recommend participation, perhaps through MCEETYA, but certainly an engagement with the institutes of teaching through their current endeavours—not to establish a uniform set, because the states want to maintain their separate identities et cetera, but to have consistency. So, one, let us get in. The federal government should be involved in any efforts to establish national consistency and professional standards relating to registration to teach.

Secondly, I would fund some innovative programs, as Ros has indicated. I would just have some start-up money, some seed money, to give prominence, recognising that they are not going

to go on indefinitely. But this would give prominence. It would be a signal by the federal government that this is important stuff and that we are going to encourage and identify a few people with some competitive tendering—not on a large scale; it is seed money—to get them moving.

Thirdly, in the funding of universities for teacher education, which is a Commonwealth government responsibility, I would have to re-fund, because some of the resources are going to have to be shifted from the university to the schools if there is a true partnership. That is going to be tough but the government has the capacity to do that. Fourthly, I would identify some training schools—though we would not call them training schools—flagship schools, that are going to be leaders in this kind of movement. Again, by competitive bidding we would invite schools to submit and demonstrate. We would show the criteria, the schools would compete and bid—

Ms BIRD—Rod, you would like these demonstration schools—

Prof. Arnold—I would be with him on that.

Prof. Skilbeck—Let us not forget history. The demonstration schools should never have gone. I would not call them 'demonstration' schools, though; that word is no longer relevant. I would call them a different name. You have to have a futuristic name for them. Next, I would call upon the universities, since they are funded by the Commonwealth—which has a lot of control over universities—to show how and what they are doing in relation to educating the teacher educators. I would just ask them for information. I would collate the information—and there would be a lot of strange things there—and then out of that you could begin to get some principles or ideas about how teacher educators should be selected and educated and continue to be educated. Then I would require, if I can, all those teacher educators to demonstrate recent and relevant experience, as defined in our discussion. Of course I would be funding some longitudinal studies, as indicated. That gives seven—

CHAIR—What are the states going to do, and the Catholic and Anglican and various other church administrations—the non-government administrations?

Prof. Arnold—I would provide the release that might be needed for people to engage in these kinds of things to get a cooperative thing. If you have got a school putting its hand up to be a leading learning school—which is a term I tend to favour—then there might be some expectation that those systems provide the relief that might be needed for people to do things. It would be a quid pro quo: the federal government puts up this much but the other systems match it or partly match it—

Ms BIRD—In kind—

Prof. Arnold—in kind, yes, so that there would be a genuine commitment—

CHAIR—Support the salary structures to provide that base?

Prof. Arnold—Absolutely.

CHAIR—And also the mentor teachers and so forth?

Prof. Arnold—Exactly. I think that people have been slow to put money behind the expectation of expertise and commitment, so that too. I am convinced that there is a tremendous amount of altruism in the teaching profession, albeit not as widespread as you might wish, and I am not sure that we are actually building on that. The good people who go into teaching absolutely love what they are doing and get enormous benefit out of being effective. But I think that we have not quite tapped the ways that can translate into giving people a leadership role and giving them the incentive, and financial rewards to go some way to giving incentive.

Ms BIRD—We more regularly kill it off.

Prof. Arnold—Yes, and I think in the first five years that is one of the mistakes we have made. We have said, 'In 10 years time you can be a leader.' The youth of today have come through very good school systems where in many cases young women, for example, have been told that they can go out and do anything. That has lifted their capacity. Likewise, we have got a lot of people coming out of schools who have high-level intellectual qualities and so on and I think we can fast-track some of those people in that first five years.

Prof. Skilbeck—I would like to suggest something else that the employer groups could do, and some employers are already doing this. For example, some Catholic dioceses in Australia are funding, either completely or partly, teachers to undertake further study. Throughout Australia, with substantial Commonwealth funding and also state funding, we have a lot of short-term professional development, which is absolutely necessary for immediate changing requirements.

But what we have abandoned in Australia in the last decade or so is serious funding of advanced study. We were talking earlier about the need to develop the knowledge base. We need that strongly. I have talked to employers in Queensland, in the human resources section of the state Department of Education and the Arts, who have said, 'Under no circumstances will we fund people to do advanced qualifications in education.' This particular person was a very enlightened man, a modern employer, and I thought that was a very strange attitude. So I would use the Catholic diocese as an example. They are already funding people to, for example, occupy leadership positions, to become leaders in the profession and to undertake the very kind of advanced, more theoretical study which is not appropriate for initial teacher education but is highly appropriate for people after they have been teaching for a few years.

I would call upon the employers in the Catholic, independent and government state systems to return to an arrangement whereby they do subsidise and support their own employees to gain advanced knowledge as educational specialists. I would call upon them to do that, and they would have the capacity to do it—they lack the will in some cases. The decline in graduate study in education is partly a result of changes in funding through the Commonwealth, but the states have an opportunity to pick that issue and help. So I would call upon them to do that.

The second thing I would call upon them to do—and we have an example of this in Tasmania which may or may not survive—is to work in partnership with a university in establishing what I would call a school support service. One of your remits, I know, is the continuing education of teachers, and these services would be directed at supporting teachers to undertake highly specialised tasks. The instance in Tasmania is what used to be called special education, but there are other specialised tasks that can be undertaken.

I would like to see in each state and territory a quasi-independent body which reflects the principal partnership—a university or universities and the state department of education together establishing an entity which I would call a school support service, which is focused absolutely and entirely on targeted priority areas for development. It might be literacy, for example. In the ACT, they might decide that is what they focus on, and that would become a national resource. It is at the state level, but it is a national resource. It could draw in students from other states or internationally. They would be centres of educational excellence, if you like. And we do not have them. We have state departments which will claim to be doing this, but that is not the partnership at all. This partnership thing should involve all sectors. It would be cross-sectoral, but it would have to be largely funded through the state departments. There could be some Commonwealth contribution as well—after all, there is a lot of money coming from the Commonwealth into the Quality Teacher Program.

CHAIR—Do you think we should put an onus on the employer groups to have in their selection criteria and their focus that the principals that they select should have the attributes to develop beginning teachers rather than just manage the school per se, that an important cornerstone is staff development, retention et cetera?

Prof. Arnold—Yes.

Prof. Skilbeck—It is career development, which is absent. I have interviewed literally hundreds of young teachers who have told me that they have no career counselling or guidance in the profession, which is extraordinary. That is an old-fashioned concept of a profession. We need a much more systematic approach towards developing careers in education for teachers, and that means a role for the principal, of course—and not just the principal but the executive of the school.

Prof. Arnold—It could be devolved to the executive, but it needs to be built in.

CHAIR—It needs to be led.

Prof. Arnold—Led, yes. It is part of the professional development in schools. The innovation of people who are curriculum experts or learning experts in schools has been a good one, but I do not think there is a parallel in who in the school is in charge of the professional development of our teachers. It might be one dot point in somebody's performance management. But notch that up so that schools are identified as taking these things seriously. The other thing I will say quickly is that I think university courses need to be more responsive to the demands or the wishes of the profession. It is not, 'We have a course that we've been running for 10 years and this is what you can do, or nothing.'

CHAIR—Take it or leave it.

Prof. Arnold—They should say: 'What is your need? These are the courses that we can offer.'

Ms LIVERMORE—Is that the role of the registration bodies in each state—to be the enforcers, the introducers of—

Ms BIRD—Progressive characteristics?

Prof. Arnold—Yes, it could be that.

Ms BIRD—I want to quickly talk about something that we skip over every now and then. We have heard from professional associations. There are a lot of teacher professional associations that do tremendous work on a shoestring.

Prof. Arnold—They do.

Ms BIRD—Do you see a role for those associations in using some of that seed money to take opportunities to get involved in the partnerships that you are talking about?

Prof. Arnold—As somebody who spent a lot of my early life in a professional association as an English teacher, it is a resource which seems to sit outside the universities and the profession in some cases, and it is a lost opportunity. So I am in favour of what you—

Ms BIRD—Bring some goodwill—

Prof. Arnold—Absolutely.

Ms BIRD—That is on the brink of disappearing.

Prof. Arnold—It is still informally the way that a lot of people develop their discipline and pedagogical expertise.

Ms LIVERMORE—Is there a role for NIQTSL in that? Is that something that NIQTSL would be fostering or promoting?

Prof. Skilbeck—Teaching Australia do that.

Prof. Arnold—Teaching Australia and the Carrick Institute and organisations like that.

CHAIR—We are running out of time, so I guess we will have to wrap it up there.

Ms BIRD—It has been very interesting.

CHAIR—It has been a very interesting session this morning. I thank you for your efforts in appearing again before the committee, and thank you for your involvement in the conference in Tasmania. We value that input. We will contact you if we need further information. No doubt we will have more questions as the report-writing phase proceeds. The secretariat will provide you with a proof copy of your evidence as soon as it is available. A copy of that transcript will be located on the website. Thank you very much.

Prof. Skilbeck—Are you in a position to give us in any information about when it is likely that this report will be published?

CHAIR—The end of the year.

Prof. Skilbeck—Thank you very much. We are much looking forward to it.

Resolved (on motion by **Ms Bird**):

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

Committee adjourned at 11.06 am