

SUBMISSION
TO THE
INQUIRY INTO TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

It is recommended that the Commonwealth Government lay down a balanced, national framework for the pre-service and in-service training of teachers, similar to that laid down for the pre-service and in-service training of general medical practitioners.

The national framework should have the following parts:

- An approved four year Course of Study at a university;
- An Internship of one year to be served in an Approved Training School;
- An induction programme in an Approved School, which meets the needs of the beginning teacher;
- A continuous programme of Approved Professional In-service Education.

State Boards of Education should be established and empowered to:

1. Accredite pre-service Courses of Study at a university:
2. Approve Training Schools and their programmes:
3. Approve Induction Programmes:
4. Approve programmes of Professional In-service Education: and
5. Grant Registration of two kinds to teachers:
 - a Preliminary Registration to Interns:
 - b Full Registration to serving teachers.

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PREFACE

Terms of Reference

This submission does not directly address the Terms of Reference although some of its recommendations relate to some of them, namely to Nos 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Rather it responds to the concluding paragraph of the Terms of Reference, which states that: 'The Inquiry should make reference to...**the practices of other professions in preparing and training people to enter their profession.**

I refer especially to the training of general medical practitioners and also to the training of lawyers.

Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments

In this submission I refer only to the role of the Commonwealth Government, assuming that, for the sake of simplicity, it controls a national policy on teacher education, but I recognise that any national policy will have to be negotiated by the Commonwealth Government with the State and Territory Governments.

Consultation

In preparing this submission I have consulted some of my former colleagues in the South Australian Education Department, namely, J R Steinle, Director-General of Education, J R Giles and P I Tillett, Deputy Directors-General of Education, P G Edwards, Associate Director-General of Education, A G Anderson and R Goldsworthy, Area Directors of Education and R F Smallacombe, Deputy Director of Curriculum. Their opinions, suggestions and advice have guided my thinking but the opinions and recommendations contained in this submission are mine alone.¹

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DISCUSSION

Teacher Training Then and Now

Fifty years ago all trainee teachers at Adelaide Teachers College, whether they were training to teach in junior primary, primary or secondary schools, studied both a first degree in arts or science and a Diploma in Education at the University of Adelaide.

Lecturers at the University of Adelaide taught the BA and BSc subjects. These degree courses required three years' study (10 units) - two subjects studied for three years (6 units), one subject studied for two years (2 units) and two further subjects studied for one year each (2 units). The graduates of these courses had a sound academic background to teach English, Latin, French, History, Geography, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.

The Adelaide Teachers College lecturers, who were all graduates of a university and experienced classroom teachers, taught the Diploma in Education subjects *pari passu* with the degree. The diploma was offered in three divisions to junior primary, primary and secondary school teachers. Students were required to study the Principles of Education for three years, Educational Psychology for two years and Hygiene for one year.

In order to gain a diploma they were required to show that they had 'obtained adequate practical experience in teaching and school management'. This experience was gained by weekly half-day periods of observation and three periods of observation and teaching practice of one week each in approved schools. This method of gaining skill and confidence in teaching and classroom management was, in retrospect, quite inadequate, for it took the students, after leaving the university and college, several years of trial and error, often working alone or in a school where regular support and guidance could not be given, before they gained confidence and competence.

This combination of academic and professional study and classroom observation and practice remains the model followed today in South Australian tertiary institutions, which offer courses of teacher training. These courses last for four years and fall into two broad groups:

- either* a first general degree in arts or science of three years *plus* one year of professional study towards a diploma in education
- or* a four year course of study, equivalent to a degree+diploma, taken *pari passu*.

Both schemes contain a practical programme of observation and teaching practice.

On graduation a teacher may be granted full registration and enter a school and classroom without participating in any further formal programme of professional development, although, of course, many do.

Again, in my view, current pre-service programmes, designed to produce confident and competent classroom teachers, are inadequate, even haphazard.

General Medical Practitioners - Their initial and on-going training and registration

These programmes for training teachers may be compared with the training of general medical practitioners.

Students, who wish to enter a university to train as general medical practitioners, face a total integrated programme of activities, which may last up to ten years, at least twice as long as that followed by teachers. Their programme consists of four parts: first, an academic course at a university Medical School lasting six years and leading to a double degree, MBBS. The successful graduates are then required to complete a year, possibly two, of internship in an Approved Training Hospital where they are taught the basic procedures of their profession. At the end of this period of training the interns may be granted Registration as doctors but they do not then begin to practice independently.

Graduate doctors undertake a period of residency for several years in selected hospitals where they gain further experience under the supervision of senior practitioners. Only then, when they feel confident in their skills and judgement, do they take up private practice in their own right.

Their professional development does not stop at this point. All registered general practitioners must satisfy the Royal College of General Practitioners, every three years, that they have participated in courses of vocational education. These in-service courses earn Vocational Registration, which is supported by the Commonwealth Government, which offers, through the Medicare Scheme, a financial incentive to doctors to participate.

The four stages in the pre-service and in-service training of doctors are:

1. Academic study;
2. Internship;
3. Residency or supervised induction;

4. In-service professional development.

The teaching profession could, with great benefit, adopt a similar four-stage system of training.

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The Future Training of Teachers

Stage 1 – Academic Study

All undergraduate students, who intend to follow a career in teaching, whether in junior primary, primary or secondary schools, should complete, at a university, four years of study made up of two elements – general academic study and professional academic study.²

1. The general academic education of teachers.

General academic studies should be the equivalent of a first degree in either arts or science (10 units). The student should study two subjects in depth for three years (6 units) chosen from the following list of teaching subjects: accounting, biology, business studies, chemistry, Chinese language and literature, economics, English language and literature, French language and literature, geography, German language and literature, Greek language and literature, history, Indonesian language and literature, information technology, Italian language and literature, Japanese language and literature, legal studies, mathematics, music, physics, science and Spanish language and literature.

The remaining four units should be the study of subjects of interest to the student chosen from the above teaching subjects or from other fields. Ideally a science student would choose arts subjects – Australian literature, theatre, arts, history and geography - and an arts student would choose some science subjects. Thus they would have, when they take up their teaching appointments, knowledge of two teaching subjects, a broad cultural background and a perspective on issues of importance to Australians.

² See Term of Reference 9. Investigate the appropriateness of the current split between primary and secondary education training.

Both primary and secondary trainees should study the same general academic subjects but the professional academic studies should be directed to the type of school in which the trainee hopes to work.

Secondary school students, who enrol at a university in a teacher-training course, need time to mature, learn wisdom and judgement, understand the world in which they live and gain confidence and maturity.³ Four years of study at a tertiary institution should enable them to develop the qualities which would make of them desirable role models for their pupils and knowledgeable teachers (teachers who do not 'know their stuff' are of little value to their students), sound advisers to the students' parents and respected members of their community. They will also build up resources that they can draw on when they are teachers.

It may be difficult to attract enough students, whose Tertiary Entrance Ratings are high enough to win a place in some courses such as mathematics, physics, chemistry or a foreign language. In order to ensure an adequate supply of these teachers it may be necessary to offer some students annual scholarships, renewable if the student is successful.

2. The Professional Education of Teachers

Whereas all teacher trainees should undertake general academic studies the professional studies should be specific to the type of school – junior primary, primary and secondary – where the trainee hopes to work.

What should be taught in professional studies courses has changed. In the 1950s students studied the Principles of Education, Educational Psychology and Hygiene. In the 1960s they studied the Theory of Education, the History of Education and Educational Psychology.

Today some say that too much sociology and not enough pedagogy is taught in the teacher training courses: whether these criticisms are justified I do not know, but courses should be a judicious and balanced selection from the following:

- Psychology – how children and adolescents learn; their emotional, spiritual and mental development; etc;
- Physiology – the physical growth of children and adolescents; their gender differences; etc;
- Sociology – the relationship between the school and the society that it serves; education and the generation of wealth; etc;

³ The same may be said of all undergraduates no matter which profession they wish to enter.

- History– a knowledge of educational literature; the work of educational reformers; etc;
- Pedagogy – classroom and school management; assessment and diagnostic processes; research; etc.

Whatever is included in a course of professional education, the lectures should relate theory to practice. In the past teachers lamented that the courses that they studied were theoretical and academic and did not apply to the classroom. Today courses should do so in order that there is no obvious gap between what the students are taught in the lecture room and what they see in the classroom. For example, the treatment of a topic such as ‘The School, Society and Student Achievement’, should introduce students to an academic consideration of the issues and demonstrate how student achievement is affected by society and how a school would respond. The research and the statistical measures used in developing the theory and in measuring student achievement should also be discussed.

In order to achieve a balance between theory and practice it may be desirable to create Laboratory Schools,⁴ centres where educational theories of learning can be tested in the classroom and refined until their efficacy can be established and the results published for all to see. These schools should be schools of excellence and they should offer in-service courses to practising teachers. Thus the integration of what is taught in the university and what is taught in the school, and how it is taught, would be achieved.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to establish and monitor the work of Laboratory Schools.

3. Classroom observation and Teaching Practice.

Current undergraduate courses require students to observe teachers and students at work in schools, to prepare notes on what they see and discuss them with their lecturers. Students are also required to undertake teaching practice in selected

⁴ The idea of a Laboratory School was adopted by John Dewey (1859-1952) in 1896 at Chicago University where he tested his theories of education in the classroom and on the basis of his observations he published his work for all to see and either criticise or adopt. It is interesting to note that other educational reformers – Pestalozzi (1746-1827), Froebel (1782-1852) and Montessori (1870-1952) established schools where they tested their theories.

schools. However teaching practice should be delayed until the graduate teacher begins a year of internship in a Training School, because truly effective skill development can best occur when the student is teaching in a classroom after graduation. Meanwhile they should be left to concentrate on their academic studies.

However, the practice of visiting schools, observing teachers and students at work, keeping notes of their observations and discussing them with their course supervisor should continue. The students' observation notes should relate to their professional studies. To make observation and noting more effective the study of research methods and criteria should begin early in the students' course of professional studies so that their observation and note taking are meaningful to them and related to their course of study.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to accredit courses of teacher education.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to grant provisional registration to trainee teachers on their graduation.

Stage 2 - Internship

I have pointed out that doctors, who have completed their undergraduate academic studies, are required to undertake a year's internship in an Approved Training Hospital. I note too that lawyers, who have completed their first degree over five years, are required to undergo a year of study of legal practice. In a similar way teachers who have completed their academic studies should be required to undergo a year of internship in an Approved Training School where close supervision, support and coaching can be given by mentors chosen from the school's staff. Such an arrangement would parallel the time spent in residency that general medical practitioners undertake.⁵

Each employing authority would be asked to nominate a number of schools, both junior primary, primary and secondary, not only in the metropolitan area but also in country districts, where interns would be placed under the care of an experienced teacher in a one-to-one relationship for a year or even two in some cases. The schools would be large enough and in sufficient number for the work of supervision to be shared: no one school or one mentor should face a constant flow

⁵ See Term of Reference 8. Examine the role and input of schools and their staff to the preparation of trainee teachers.

of beginning teachers. The mentors should be teachers who have shown a high level of expertise and leadership in their teaching field. They should be paid a salary commensurate with their skill and a contingency allowance in the year when they are mentoring a beginning teacher in their classroom.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to approve and monitor Training Schools.

Since some schools are independent and cannot nominate a school to be a Training School but yet recruit teachers who have been trained by authorities which control a number of schools, the Commonwealth Government should contribute to the cost of each intern's salary.

Recommendation: The Commonwealth Government to contribute to the cost of the salaries of interns.

The internship programme would allow for the gradual development of teaching skills. It would allow the beginning teacher to observe the mentor for a time, say a term, and then to gradually increase contact time until, by the end of the year, the beginner would be able to teach the class full time.

While the development of teaching skills is the most important part of the year's activities there are other skills and knowledge for the beginner to learn: how to report suspected child abuse, how to monitor children with chronic disorders, administer medicines as required, how to cope with outbreaks of headlice, how to detect and report suspected student drug abuse, how to counsel students and parents, how to deal with parental complaints, how to apply basic first aid, how to manage excursions and camps and how to avoid situations which might lead to a charge of improper behaviour.⁶

An issue, which is becoming of increasing concern to some, is that many teachers are perpetuating poor language skills because they lack them themselves. It is also said that some teachers lack basic arithmetical and mathematical knowledge. Whether these claims are valid and the faults widespread I do not know: no doubt there are members of all professions whose levels of education have unsatisfactory aspects even after four or more years of tertiary education. Whether true or not the

⁶ See Term of Reference 7. Examine the preparation of primary and secondary teaching graduates to: teach literacy and numeracy; teach vocational courses; effectively manage classrooms etc.

supervising teachers should help the interns to amend any faults or failings that they have.

The internship would normally end after a year when the mentor and the principal of the Training School would be able to certify that the beginning teacher was able to act independently. In some cases, however, an intern may be required to undertake a further year of coaching.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to grant full registration to an intern who successfully completes the intern year.

Stage 3 - Supervised Induction

The supervision that occurs during internship should be continued during the first months of the teacher's first appointment. Interns should be appointed to schools where their work can be supervised, where they can be advised, counselled and supported by staff members who are not themselves fulltime teachers. In short the supervision should be real, in the classroom and not after school hours although such discussions should be encouraged. Interns should never be appointed to a one-teacher school or to a school where all teachers teach full-time.⁷

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to approve and monitor induction programmes.

Stage 4 In-service Professional Development of Teachers

General practitioners are required to undertake professional studies in order to gain Vocational Registration every three years and they are rewarded, under the Medicare Scheme, if they participate. The Royal College of General Practitioners lays down the structure and criteria for the in-service scheme.

Fully Registered Teacher should be required to obtain a Certificate of Continuing Professional Development every three years. The Australian College of Educators, an established national professional institution, could be asked to lay down the criteria that teachers should meet.⁸

⁷ See Term of Reference 8. Examine the role and input of schools and their staff to the preparation of trainee teachers.

⁸ See Term of Reference 10. Examine the construction, delivery and resourcing of ongoing professional learning for teachers already in the workforce.

Suitable activities for the award of a Certificate of Continuing Professional Development could be chosen from the following:

In-School Activities – the completion and publication of child studies and the publication of the results of school-based research; participation and leadership in staff development programmes; the preparation and publication of programmes of work, subject projects, handbooks, study guides, etc;

Conferences – attendance at and presentation of papers to conferences run by the employing authority, universities, professional associations, etc;

Post Graduate Studies – diploma, master and doctoral studies at a university and especially courses in specialist fields of education such as Teaching English as a Second Language; Teaching Aboriginal Children; Teaching Physically, Emotionally and Intellectually Challenged Children; Counselling Children, Parents and Teachers; Developing Child, Family and School Relationships; Educational Leadership; School Management etc.

Teachers, who hold a Certificate of Continuing Professional Development, should be rewarded for the effort made and the level of excellence achieved. Teachers Salary Boards should be requested to adjust salary scales to reflect participation in the professional development schemes and the salary difference for teachers who participate in in-service activities should be large enough to motivate the teachers.

The management of this scheme should not be difficult. Every three years teachers would forward to their employer a certificate signed by the course providers. The employer would adjust the teacher's salary accordingly. Those teachers who do not submit a certificate would have their salaries reduced. The Employer would advise their State Board of Education annually of the level of participation in their schools.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to approve and monitor the award of Certificates of Continuing In-service Education.

The study of postgraduate diploma, master and doctoral courses places heavy demands on teachers who are employed full time. Employers should be encouraged to offer scholarships and release time to teachers who wish to complete postgraduate studies of courses which are of benefit to the employer. They should also be encouraged to support teachers who wish to attend conferences relevant to their professional development and to enable them to study interstate or overseas.

Recommendation: State Boards of Education to encourage employing authorities to support the teachers who undertake in-service programmes.

STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Medical Boards regulate the medical profession. State Boards of Education should be created and empowered to perform the following functions:

- Accreditation and re-accreditation of courses of teacher training offered by a university;
- Approval and monitoring of internship courses for beginning teachers and Training Schools, where these courses are offered;
- Approval and monitoring of induction programmes in schools where graduate teachers are employed after they have completed a year of internship.
- Approval and monitoring of professional in-service education programmes;
- The granting of registration of two kinds to teachers:
 - a Preliminary Registration to Interns:
 - b Full Registration to serving teachers:

State Boards of Education would replace Teacher Registration Boards and assume their duties.

By bringing all of these functions under one authority it would be possible to achieve or go a long way to achieving an integrated and consistent national system of training teachers at both the pre-service and the in-service stages and a uniform national system of education.

The presiding officer of each State Board of Education should be a senior person with the status and ability to manage a board with the wide powers that are here recommended. The Minister would appoint the presiding officer. The Secretary to the State Board would be an experienced, highly qualified, energetic educator, with a broad vision for education and for training teachers. He or she would be the equivalent of a director-general of education or a chief executive officer of a large corporation. The Minister would appoint the Secretary. The members of the State Board would be drawn from the teaching service, the universities that offer courses of teacher training, the employing authorities, parent organisations,

business, commerce and primary and secondary industries. These persons would be nominated by their associations but appointed by the Minister.

Recommendation: The Commonwealth Government to establish and empower State Boards of Education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

State Boards of Education to establish and monitor the work of Laboratory Schools.

State Boards of Education to accredit courses of teacher education.

State Boards of Education to grant provisional registration to trainee teachers on their graduation.

State Boards of Education to approve and monitor Training Schools.

The Commonwealth Government to contribute to the cost of the salaries of interns.

State Boards of Education to grant full registration to an intern who successfully completes the intern year.

State Boards of Education to approve and monitor induction programmes.

State Boards of Education to approve and monitor the award of Certificates of Continuing In-service Education.

State Boards of Education to encourage employing authorities to support teachers who undertake in-service programmes.

The Commonwealth Government to establish and empower State Boards of Education.