Troubled times in Australian teacher education: 2012-2013

Final Report 2013 of the OLT National Teaching Fellowship

Finding the balance: Managing synergies and tensions in whole-of course design

Margaret Lloyd, PhD
Queensland University of Technology
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  • Dr Debra Edwards, La Trobe University
  • Dr Jennifer Masters, La Trobe University
List of acronyms and terms used

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACARA</td>
<td>Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACDE</td>
<td>Australian Council of Deans of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACECQA</td>
<td>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACER</td>
<td>Australian Council for Educational Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AITSL</td>
<td>Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALTF</td>
<td>Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APST</td>
<td>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQF</td>
<td>Australian Qualifications Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATAR</td>
<td>Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATEA</td>
<td>Australian Teacher Education Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aus-VELS</td>
<td>Australian Curriculum in Victoria (Victorian Essential Learning Standards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CoAG</td>
<td>Council of Australian Governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEECD</td>
<td>Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DET (NSW)</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training (New South Wales)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DETE</td>
<td>Department of Education, Training and Employment (Queensland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIICCSRTE</td>
<td>Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIISRTE</td>
<td>Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAS</td>
<td>Educational Access Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go8</td>
<td>Group of Eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITE</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTAS</td>
<td>Learning and Teaching Academic Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NADLATE</td>
<td>Network of Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAPLAN</td>
<td>National Assessment Primary Literacy and Numeracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>NITEAC</td>
<td>National Initial Teacher Education Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSAI</td>
<td>Non-self-accrediting institution</td>
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<td>NSWIT</td>
<td>NSW (New South Wales) Institute of Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>OLT</td>
<td>Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUA</td>
<td>Open Universities Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCA</td>
<td>Provider Course Accreditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider</td>
<td>An institution that provides a course</td>
</tr>
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<td>QCT</td>
<td>Queensland College of Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>RUN</td>
<td>Regional Universities Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAI</td>
<td>Self-accrediting institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCSEEC</td>
<td>Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood</td>
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<td>Teacher Education Institution</td>
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<td>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>TER</td>
<td>Tertiary Entrance Rank</td>
</tr>
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<td>VIT</td>
<td>Victorian Institute of Teachers</td>
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Executive summary

The 2012 OLT National Teaching Fellowship described in this report has mapped and analysed the complex and competing internal and external agencies impacting on the whole-of-curriculum design in contemporary higher education in Australia, particularly on degrees in Education with an emphasis on initial teacher education. The Fellowship was conducted at a time of both heightened public and political scrutiny of teacher education and the imposition of new nationally-consistent accreditation processes. This scrutiny culminated in a call by the previous Federal Government for TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency) to conduct a comprehensive review of teacher education beginning in 2014 and the incoming Government announcing it will establish a short term ministerial advisory group to report on the “priority issue of improving teacher quality” (Pyne, 2013).

Given the volatile nature of the sector during the time of the Fellowship, the original aims were modified in order to better track the policy landscape of the time. The consequence of this is that this Fellowship is timely but also fixed in time in that the synergies and tensions it has identified and the advice it has offered, through a set of considerations, may be particular to the time in which it was created. The major outcomes of the Fellowship are:

1. **Audit of the agencies impacting on curriculum design in initial teacher education**
   The audit has resulted in a comprehensive document that describes each of the agencies currently impacting on curriculum design in initial teacher education. It is divided into two sections:
   - accreditation and design of degree courses in Australian higher education, that is, applicable to all courses including Education; and,
   - accreditation and design of initial teacher education (ITE) programs.
   The full audit can be located at:
   <dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINAL_Audit.docx>

2. **Mentoring in selected institutions**
The mentoring scheme involved capacity- and community-building in selected teacher education institutions during their curriculum redevelopment, through:
   - conducting on-site forums and workshops at the three mentee institutions (University of the Sunshine Coast, La Trobe University (Bendigo), and the Australian Catholic University)
   - engaging in both face-to-face and online conversations with curriculum design teams to assist in identifying and balancing the agencies and forces impacting on their particular institution and in their particular context
   - systematically disseminating Fellowship progress and sharing knowledge and experience with and between the mentored institutions.
3. **Development of model**
A robust, theorised model of the agencies and forces impacting on whole-of-course curriculum design in teacher education has been developed. I based the model on the metaphor of an underground railway where the agencies of influence become discrete lines and the points of connection or junctions indicate potential synergies between the requirements set in place by each agency (as detailed in the Audit). A detailed analysis document explains and justifies the components of the model.

The full analysis document can be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINALAnalysis.docx>

An annotated animation of the model can be found at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/model.mov>

4. **Development of case study**
A discipline case study of a faculty, namely the Faculty of Education, QUT, was developed. It tracked the Faculty as it revised its undergraduate pre-service degree programs, through its *Curriculum ReFresh* project, to satisfy external course accreditation; ensure professional registration for graduates; adhere to University guidelines; meet community and industry needs for quality, change-adept graduates; and maintain the distinctiveness, integrity and reputation of the institution. The Faculty was one of the first to develop programs for national accreditation and was a test case for the sequencing of processes between ACECQA (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority) and AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership) through the Queensland College of Teachers.

The case study can be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINALCaseStudy.docx>

5. **Development of portable guidelines**
Through the Fellowship I was able to develop portable guidelines for whole-of-course design. This resource, when viewed in connection with the other outcomes of the Fellowship, will assist other faculties of education across Australia, as well as other disciplines in higher education. This dissemination will be timely given that all disciplines will soon be required to embed nationally agreed threshold learning outcomes, and some courses are already – or will soon be – subject to external accreditation.

The guidelines can be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINAL_Guidelines.docx>

6. **Identification of the synergies and tensions**
The main aim of the Fellowship was the identification of the synergies and tensions surrounding whole-of-course design in Education. Little synergy was found and this largely took the form of overlap or duplication of agency requirements. I have identified 10 interdependent tensions which are detailed in this report and also presented as part of the analysis document. These are:
1. Authority
2. Knowledge
3. Graduate identity
4. Literacy and Numeracy
5. Entry and Participation
6. Early Years
7. Crowded Curriculum
8. Teacher Educators
9. Public Perceptions

The tensions are described in full in the Analysis document which can be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINALAnalysis.docx>

Seven considerations are offered to temper the identified tensions. These take the form of cautious advice drawn from the audit, the analysis, the mentoring scheme and the case study. These are:
1. Establish a hierarchy of agencies, streamline the process
2. Redistribute the responsibility, reduce duplication
3. Reconsider the use of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APSTs) in accreditation
4. Question the representation of teacher knowledge
5. Break the nexus between qualification, registration and employment, extend the continuum
6. Set expectations for teacher educators, expand the definition
7. Frame the future with care

The considerations are discussed in full in a document which can be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/Considerations.docx>

7. Dissemination
The dissemination of the Fellowship was achieved through a variety of forums including: formal presentations and seminars; peer-reviewed publications; discussion papers for peak bodies; mentoring activities and informal discussions.

8. Evaluation
Both formal and informal evaluation of the Fellowship was conducted.

As noted, the Fellowship was conducted at a time of great volatility in higher education and in teacher education in particular as it moved to nationally-consistent external accreditation. It is hoped that its outcomes will be of direct benefit to the institutions undertaking national accreditation in the near future and assist agencies in streamlining current processes. Its considerations are offered with the caveat that complex situations are rarely solved in simple ways. Time is needed to formulate future strategies thoughtfully and to allow change to take effect.
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Introduction

This report details the outcomes of a 2012 Office for Learning and Teaching National Teaching Fellowship concerned with whole-of-course curriculum design in initial teacher education and the agencies, particularly around course accreditation, which have impact on this design. At a glance, the complexity of initial teacher education in Australia can be summarised in the following occasionally contradictory statements:

1. Nationally-consistent accreditation of initial teacher education programs was announced in 2011 and began in 2012.

2. There has been an increase in the number of students in Education programs across Australia, particularly initial teacher education and particularly since 2012 when course entry was uncapped.

3. There has been a significant and welcome increase in participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Education programs.

4. 9.5% of all university places in Australia in 2012 were in Education (a rise of 5.2% from 2011) against a rise across the sector of 3.0%.

5. There has been an apparent doubling of the number of initial teacher education programs from 2006 to 2013 (currently >430). This number is inaccurately inflated by the official listing of both newly developed and accredited programs and those that may be discontinued.

6. Initial teacher education programs have the highest percentage of students entering with low ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank), that is, below 50 and between 50 and 60. The Go8 has suggested that entry to teacher education should be a minimum of 70.

7. Student entry data for 2013 shows the majority of entrants have an ATAR between 60.00 and 80.00. Approximately 20 per cent have an ATAR above 80.05.

8. Only 27 per cent of students in initial teacher education programs are ATAR entrants.

9. There is a reported oversupply of teachers in Australia, particularly in primary schooling.

10. There is a reported undersupply of qualified teachers of secondary mathematics and science and teachers in remote locations.

11. There are new demands on staff in early learning centres to have teaching qualifications.

12. There has been an apparent drop in the test scores of Australian school students in international tests.

13. There have been marked improvements in NAPLAN results in some jurisdictions.

14. Federal, State and Territory governments have made commitments to improve teacher quality through additional course entry requirements.

15. Teacher education institutions have been called upon to set more rigorous expectations for course completion and graduation.
16. National professional standards for teachers have been introduced at four career stages.

17. There are plans for testing of Education students’ and graduates’ literacy and numeracy at various points in their programs and a national exam (prior to exit) has recently been touted.

18. There has been public commentary supporting career-change entry typically categorised as flexible options.

19. Intensive employment-based programs such as Teach4Australia and Teach Next have been established in Victoria and have received favourable attention from some stakeholders.

20. Work has begun to develop nationally-consistent approaches to: selection for course entry, to professional experience and literacy and numeracy assessment

This report presents a summary of each of the Fellowship outcomes, namely, the audit, the mentoring scheme, the model, the case study, the guidelines, and the identification of synergies and tensions. An addendum to the discussion of the tensions adds a set of considerations, advice cautiously tendered, as how the overarching goal of national consistency might be achieved within the current agenda of quality and improvement. This report also includes details of the Fellowship dissemination and evaluation. It concludes with a coda that adopts a musical metaphor to tie together and make final sense of the components of the Fellowship.
1. Audit

This Fellowship has sought to identify and map the competing internal and external curriculum agencies that impact on whole-of-course design in teacher education in contemporary Australia. The term, agency, is here taken to mean the authorities, processes and frameworks with the potential to shape and define what is taught or how it is taught. External agencies include:

- TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency), which has an influence over all courses in all higher education institutions in assuring equivalence in standards.
- The LTAS (Learning and Teaching Academic Standards) project, which has articulated threshold learning outcomes in many disciplines and is aligned to the AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework) and thus has an influence over the philosophical direction and content of courses of study.
- National discipline authorities that have the power to change the content and context of a graduate’s future profession and workplace, e.g. ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority), responsible for the core curriculum in all Australian schools; this, in turn, influences the nature and content of units of study and field experience in pre-service Education degrees.
- Professional bodies, e.g. AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership), which has accredited all pre-service teacher education courses across Australia since late 2012. The first calls for national accreditation of teacher education can be traced to a report commissioned by Teaching Australia (Ingvarson, Elliott, Kleinhenz & McKenzie, 2006).
- Jurisdictional regulatory authorities that have an impact within a specific state, for example, the QCT (Queensland College of Teachers) has imposed accreditation requirements in addition to the national standards for pre-service education courses and has advocated a pre-registration test for graduates hoping to teach in Queensland.
- Professional bodies, e.g. AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership), which has accredited all pre-service teacher education courses across Australia since late 2012. The first calls for national accreditation of teacher education can be traced to a report commissioned by Teaching Australia (Ingvarson, Elliott, Kleinhenz & McKenzie, 2006).

Internal agendas include graduate standards, university policy and practice, and core understandings of disciplines as espoused within respective institutions. These agendas may be clearly defined in university guidelines or be the tacit but firmly held views of course designers or teaching teams regarding philosophy, form, and selection and sequence of content. Cumulatively, the diverse agendas – whether internal or external, explicit or implicit – bring seemingly overwhelming demands to the task of whole-of-course design. Sometimes, these may be in consonance. For example, an expectation for graduates to demonstrate critical problem-solving or enhanced communication skills might conceivably be seen in the university’s published graduate attributes as well as within discipline-specific threshold learning outcomes and in professional registration standards. But some agendas will not be so readily aligned, bringing with them forces that potentially threaten the cohesion of the learning experience for students. The course that a student sees and experiences should be seamless and provide a logically sequenced and scaffolded entry to their chosen profession. Each institution’s courses must also be unique and truly reflective of its watermark and mission.
The audit of agencies was intended as an interim developmental process but it rapidly gained a presence of its own. It quickly became apparent the audit contained current information that was useful to and was being used by the mentee institutions in coming to terms with the demands of the differing agencies. These institutions had access to progressive versions through a shared online folder.

The audit also became a document that required continuous, almost relentless, updating. Policies would change or be amended and public announcements would be made, particularly in the lead-up to the 2013 federal election, and this meant that sections of the audit would need to be edited. While all efforts to ensure accuracy were made, the audit is presented with the caveat that “it is the privilege of historians — not contemporary commentators — to know how things ended, and therefore what they were” (Horne, 1964, p. 9).

The audit is divided into two sections:

A. Accreditation and design of degree courses in Australian higher education, that is, a record of agencies that impact on all courses including Education; and,

B. Accreditation and design of initial teacher education (ITE) programs, which focuses on agencies that impact on teacher education programs.

Section A begins with an overview of the higher education sector in Australia. It documents the work of TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) with particular reference to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Learning and Teaching Academic Standards project (LTAS). It makes reference to the policies and processes within higher education institutions, particularly in regard to graduate attributes/graduate capabilities, institutional watermarks, and, where relevant, to core curriculum. Section A concludes with an outlining of policies and processes external to higher education institutions, namely, course development informed by external agencies and course accreditation by external agencies.

Section B begins with a snapshot of teacher education programs in Australia (2013) by referring to: enrolment and entry, teacher education institutions (TEI), and teacher qualifications (as AQF Levels). The snapshot concludes with an example of course offerings from one TEI. Following this, seven agencies are introduced and discussed.

- The first agency documented in Section B is the national councils and committees that impact on teacher education, namely, the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC), the Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE) including the Network of Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching in Education (NADLATE) and the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA).

- The second agency identified, and it should be recalled that “agency” has a broad meaning, is the influential recent government reviews and reports. A selection from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria are discussed.
The third agency is AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership), which is the key external professional accrediting body for teacher education. This discussion includes reference to: Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APSTs) (AITSL, 2011b), and the Standards and Procedures for the Accreditation of ITE Programs (AITSL, 2011A, 2012). Details of accreditation processes for non-self-accrediting teacher education institutions are also included in this discussion.

The fourth agency is ACECQA (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority). Its role is in the accreditation of programs that prepare teachers to work with young children in early learning centres, long day care and kindergarten as well as school settings.

The fifth agency is the jurisdictional regulatory authorities, or more simply, the eight state and territory Teacher Registration Boards that have oversight of the AITSL Program Accreditation process. Particular attention is given to the additional state-based requirements imposed by New South Wales and Queensland.

The sixth agency is the national curriculum authority, namely ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) and the state curriculum or studies authorities. This section also includes reference to the International Baccalaureate and the Early Years Framework.

The seventh and final agency is industry and community expectations. These are initially described through an historical overview of schooling in Australia through the:

- C18th — from the First Fleet, as education to curb “moral evils” and where school teachers, predominantly convicts, were selected on the basis of their good character, literacy and numeracy;
- C19th — the rise of government schooling and the first certification of teachers;
- C20th — education goes to university and teachers need registration; and
- C21st — national and international quality.

This short history ends with a case study of one family with four generations of teachers, each having received their teacher education in differing eras and under markedly different conditions. The discussion of this agency concludes with a conversation analysis of the term ‘quality’ and its particular relationship to entry to teacher education programs.

The audit concludes with a comprehensive set of appendices. These are:

1. Higher education sector in Australia
   1.1 Details of selected higher education institutions in Australia (in alphabetical order)
   1.2 Summary of student numbers 2012 (adapted from DIICCSRTE, 2013a)
   1.3 Commencing and total student numbers in Education by state, higher education provider and academic organisational unit, 2011
2. Selected excepts from Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold standards) 2011
3. Learning and Teaching Academic Standards in disciplines:
   3.1 Architecture
   3.2 Science
4. Examples of university graduate attributes/capabilities
4.1 The University of New South Wales
4.2 The University of Melbourne
4.3 Deakin University
5 Initial Teacher Education - Elaboration of Priority Areas (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC)
6 Additional Requirements for Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Queensland
6.2 Additional Requirements for Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Queensland (April 2012)
6.3 Additional Requirements for Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Queensland (October 2012)
7 Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) Template D
8 AITSL National Professional Standards for Teachers (Graduate standards) (AITSL, 2011b)
9 Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (AITSL, 2011a)
10 AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership) Templates
10.1 AITSL Template A
10.2 AITSL Template B
10.3 AITSL Template C
11 The first 30 teachers in the Colony of New South Wales
12 Official teacher records (19th Century): Queensland and New South Wales
12.1 Extract from teacher register (Queensland)
12.2 Extract from teacher register (NSW)

The full audit may be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINAL_Audit.docx>
2. Mentoring scheme

A mentoring scheme guided by principles of reciprocal leadership was a key component of the Fellowship. The role of catalyst, collaborator and change agent was adopted in three different Faculties of Education: University of the Sunshine Coast, La Trobe University, and the Australian Catholic University. This comprised face-to-face meetings and workshops. These were intended to be at the beginning (Interaction 1) and conclusion (Interaction 2) of the Fellowship period, with online mentoring in the intervening period. Accommodation needed to be made due to the availability of key staff at each institution and also to fit into where each institution was in terms of its curriculum redevelopment. Also, the planned forums took different forms in each institution and are thus renamed as interactions.

Interaction 1: This comprised two to three days on site at each institution including: sharing findings with faculty leaders and respective course design teams; familiarisation with processes and practices impacting on the mentored institution’s pre-service degrees in education. Interaction 1 involved Faculty seminars at both La Trobe and University of the Sunshine Coast.

Interaction 2: This was typically three to four days on site at each institution including: presenting the final guidelines and theorised model and seeking feedback on how well this fits the institution’s experience in redeveloping their courses. Interaction 2 involved a Faculty workshop in February at the University of the Sunshine Coast followed by a later visit for individual meetings in June 2013.

Table 1 – Schedule of face-to-face interactions with mentee institutions

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<td>July 30 – August 2</td>
<td>March 18 – 21</td>
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<td>August 14 – 17</td>
<td>February 14 – 15</td>
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<td>Australian Catholic University, Melbourne</td>
<td>September 10 – 14</td>
<td>March 12 – 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Catholic University, Brisbane</td>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>March 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note to Table:
1. Key staff from the University of the Sunshine Coast met with staff, including the AD (T&L) from the Faculty of Education, QUT. This was an informal meeting where internal design processes and strategies to engage staff were shared.
3. Model development

It has long been known that a visual image has an inherent capacity to simplify complex information and to bring a vividness and immediacy to an explanation. The model for this Fellowship has been devised to graphically show the connections between the agencies at work and to act as a critical step towards identifying the synergies and tensions between them.

Figure 1 shows the final model I developed. It has taken the metaphor of an underground railway and is drawn in the style of Henry Beck’s 1931 design for the London Underground as a schematic or simplified topological map.

A critical justification of the railway metaphor lies in the singularity of each line (agency) and how each operates independently – with incidental points of contact potentially representing the synergies between the agencies. A further justification of the railway metaphor lies in its resonance of the differences between the Australian states and territories, that is, the former colonies independently established railway systems using different railway gauges necessitating the need to change trains at borders and reducing the efficiency of national rail travel and freight services. Dinham (2013) contended that:

... this [the current debates around teacher quality] is not helped by the situation whereby education is constitutionally a state and territory responsibility yet funded substantially through the Commonwealth tax system. The “rail gauge mentality” is unfortunately alive and well. Australia has a population similar in size to Florida yet is bedevilled by duplication, mistrust and competition and there are worrying signs that the national initiatives and agreements are pulling apart. (para. 12)

It is understood that the model in Figure 1 does not stand on its own and is thus supported by a full explication available at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINALAnalysis.docx>

In order for the diagram to be large enough to read easily, it appears, with its key, on the following page.
Figure 1 – Mapping the agencies in whole-of-course design in initial teacher education

The thick line (in red) in Figure 1 is the central line positioning the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards (AITSL, 2011b), which all initial teacher education programs in
Australia must meet as a minimum condition (AITSL, 2011a). These standards, marked as ‘stations’ arbitrarily beginning with Standard 1.1 and terminating with Standard 7.3, are:

- AITSL Program Standard 1: Program outcomes [1.1, 1.2, 1.3a, 1.3b]
- AITSL Program Standard 2: Program development [2.1 (a-d), 2.2]
- AITSL Program Standard 3: Program entrants [3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5]
- AITSL Program Standard 4: Program structure and content [4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7]
- AITSL Program Standard 5: School partnerships [5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7]
- AITSL Program Standard 7: Program information and evaluation [7.1, 7.2, 7.3]

The completed map in Figure 1 is composed of nine discrete lines built from and connecting to the single central line marking the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards. The nine lines, each marking a different agency meet at differing points or stations where passengers might transfer between lines. The agencies used differ from those in the Audit typically through explicit selection. For example, while the Audit considered national councils and committees together, the model only draws upon the requirements of SCSEE (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood) because of its explicit role in the accreditation process. Further, the less tangible agency of knowledge is included drawing upon requirements by several agencies cited in the audit, namely, AITSL through the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, ACECQA (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority) and the AQF (Australian Qualifications Framework).

At first glance the model – and the railway metaphor – might give a false sense of cohesion or synergy between the agencies. It is necessary to refer to the Analysis to explicate the complexity of agencies affecting each line and each station rather than presuming a connection to be a synergy. As hoped, the model made clearer the tensions (see Section 6 of this report), that is, what has been omitted, is contradictory or that inadvertently replicates requirements as well as where the agencies’ requirements align.

The analysis is located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINALAnalysis.docx>

An animation of the model with narration may be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/model.mov>
4. Case study

This descriptive case study of curriculum redevelopment in the Faculty of Education, Queensland University of Technology, took place formally over a period of 15 months (from July 2012 to October 2013). It also drew from events prior to this date, namely, from October 2011 when the process of program development, known as Curriculum ReFresh, began in the Faculty. The data for this period came from my field notes (from direct observation and engagement) as well as documents and physical artefacts from the period, particularly from an online archive (SharePoint) used for communication and reporting during the redevelopment. As noted, what is particularly important about the period of the Fellowship is its volatility, caused primarily by external policy being released and processes being developed while the curriculum redevelopment was underway, and internal University processes being revised while the Faculty was undergoing a restructuring process. Professor Nan Bahr, the Faculty’s Assistant Dean, Teaching and Learning, quipped at a planning meeting that developing new programs at this time was akin to ‘building a plane while flying it’.

The Faculty of Education, Queensland University of Technology1, was chosen as the site for this case study for a number of reasons: Firstly, it was one of the first to undertake curriculum redevelopment and accreditation under new nationally-consistent processes. There were few models to follow and few with direct experience to offer advice. This meant that the experience of the Faculty could sensibly be used to guide others. This rationale has been supported by the events of October 2013 where a meeting was convened between the Queensland College of Teachers, ACECQA, and QUT to review the dual accreditation processes at work and help to devise means to streamline or simplify duplication of effort.

Second, the Faculty was chosen because the scale and breadth of its offerings2 meant that it provides a comprehensive case of interactions with all stakeholders and all agencies impacting on teacher education. It is also of interest that the Faculty took this opportunity to reduce the number of initial teacher education programs it offered from seven to three. Third, Queensland is regarded as the most complex of all regulatory jurisdictions in terms of the governance of teacher education, with the longest experience of teacher registration and course accreditation of all states and territories.

And, finally, as my home institution, it gave me the opportunity to support the institution’s curriculum redevelopment as a participant observer while allowing a high level of access to the processes under review. While the latter is frequently seen as a limitation or the source of potential bias, locating the case in my institution brought an added dimension to my mentoring of three other institutions during their parallel but quite distinct curriculum redevelopment journeys.

The full case study may be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINALCaseStudy.docx>

1 <www.qut.edu.au>
2 <www.qut.edu.au/study/study-areas/education-courses>
5. Guidelines development

To be effective, guidelines need to be clear and concise. They need to offer sufficient advice to provide useful starting points as well as pointers to final outcomes. They should avoid prescription and respect the context-specific knowledge of the person(s) using the guidelines. Despite their development in teacher education, the guidelines developed through this Fellowship are intended to be generic. They were based on the observation of curriculum design processes in four tertiary institutions during 2012-2013, a comprehensive audit of all relevant documentation, a selective audit of institutional processes from publicly available sources and a review of contemporary literature. These guidelines can be usefully read in association with the Office for Learning and Teaching’s recent publication, The DYD Stakeholder Consultation Process (Dowling & Hadgraft, 2013).

GUIDELINES TO WHOLE-OF-COURSE CURRICULUM DESIGN

It is widely accepted that “the fundamental purpose of curriculum development is to ensure that students receive integrated, coherent learning experiences that contribute towards their personal, academic and professional learning and development” (Flinders University, 2009, para. 1). TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency) outlines how this should be achieved and assured, particularly in its Provider Course Accreditation Standards (TEQSA, 2012).

The key to successful curriculum design is in ensuring that the course provides a defensible answer to everyone’s questions whether they come from TEQSA, students, employers or discipline communities. The words of a children’s poem written in 1902 by Rudyard Kipling can be reappropriated to help frame a generic approach to whole-of-course design.

\[
\begin{align*}
I \text{ keep six honest serving-men} \\
(\text{They taught me all I knew}); \\
\text{Their names are What and Why and When} \\
\text{And How and Where and Who.} \\
I \text{ send them over land and sea,} \\
I \text{ send them east and west;} \\
\text{But after they have worked for me,} \\
\text{I give them all a rest.}
\end{align*}
\]

This seemingly simple question-based approach\(^3\) has its origins in ancient times. Hermagoras of Temnos, a 1st Century BC rhetorician and teacher of rhetoric in Rome, is said to have divided topics into seven ‘circumstances’. These are: Who (Quis); What (Quid), When (Quando), Where (Ubi), Why (Cur), In what way (Quem ad modum), and By what means (Quibus adminiculis).

\(^3\) Also commonly applied in journalism as the Five W’s, Five W’s and One H, or the Six W’s.
The circumstances are neither discrete nor do they describe a sequential or hierarchical process but, despite this, those responsible for developing whole-of-course design need to respond to each circumstance. The order of response matters little since each response needs to be developed in tandem. The seven ‘circumstances’ shown in a circular pattern in Figure 2 were adopted as the basis for the guidelines. Lines, as radii or chords, could be imagined between the circumstances to show potential connections, such as, When does Who achieve What and by What means.

![Figure 2 – Circumstances or key questions](image)

The Guidelines provide guide questions for all disciplines with specific detail in regard to Education, particularly in initial teacher education. In responding to these questions, course designers need to create an environment where regulatory conditions can be met without losing what inspires students to become part of a culture of informed and committed professionals or without making teaching a formulaic heartless process of transmission. A focus on minutiae sometimes means losing sight of the bigger picture.

The following summarises the guidelines as simple active statements responding to the circumstances as interrogatory questions. There are clear connections between the actions and the best advice that can be given is to not see the guidelines as an ordered list. Figure 2 might better be interpreted as how balls look and act when in the air and managed by a competent juggler. A view of the whole must be maintained at all times and guidelines must be interpreted in terms of your context – your colleagues, your institution and your best intentions for the program you are developing. The statements in italics at the end of each list are the affective guides; they are intended as a gentle word of advice to the curriculum designer to help keep the whole in sight.
Who (Quis)

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE INVOLVED?
WHO ARE THE AGENCIES INVOLVED?
- Make a comprehensive list of all stakeholders, what they expect of you and what you expect of them.
- Develop an evidence-based response to AITSL Program Accreditation Standards 3.1-3.5 (Program Entrants), Standard 5 (School Partnerships), and Standard 6.2 (Program Delivery and Resourcing).
- Develop a rationale to satisfy TEQSA Provider Course Accreditation (PCA) Standards, particularly 1.8, 4.2, 4.5, 5.3; and Provider Registration Standards, particularly (1) Provider Standing.
- Be aware of state or territory entry requirements, in response to literacy and numeracy competence. Liaise with student admissions in your institution to ensure that entry requirements are in place.
- Identify individuals to lead collaborative processes, develop unit outlines and supplementary documentation, and ensure professional experience processes are robust.
- Do not lose touch with the human element – who will your graduates teach, or heal, or build a house for? Who will they work with? Who will they become?
- Who will teach your program now and into the future? What is lost and what is gained?

What (Quid)

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?
WHAT WILL BE TAUGHT AND ASSESSED IN YOUR PROGRAM
- Establish the need for the program. [Link to Why/Cur]
- Determine what your profession and community need.
- Review what is currently on offer in your institution and in others.
- Consult with external agencies and/or industry bodies. [Link to Who/Quis]
- Carefully identify the needs for each part of the program, for example, first year, capstone, or professional experience. [Link to In what way/Quem ad modum]
- Identify the graduate attributes/capabilities to be included. [Link to Who/Quis]
- Consider the content for your program – decide who will select and sequence content. [Link to Who/Quis]
- Map assessment (and moderation processes) to learning outcomes.
- Check draft program against all internal and external requirements. [Link to Who/Quis]
- Check volume of learning against AQF Level of program.
- Does the ‘what’ make sense as a cohesive whole? Does it make sense to your students? Does it link to future pathways?
When (Quando)

WHEN MUST YOUR PROGRAM BE COMPLETE?
- Determine who/what governs the process and take note of their deadlines/schedules. [Link to Who/Quis] [Link to What/Quad]
- Set in place routines for collecting evidence for future reporting cycles. [Link to Who/Quis] [Link to What/Quid]
- Use electronic diaries or calendars to plan future meetings of relevant committees and working parties. [Link to Who/Quis]

Where (Ubi)

WHERE WILL YOUR PROGRAM BE CONDUCTED?
- Identify where your program will be conducted: on campus, online, overseas, or in blended mode.
- Set in place strategies for students to succeed irrespective of location or study mode. [Link to What/Quid]
- If external sites are used for field studies (professional experience or work-integrated learning), then ascertain the suitability and safety of the sites and the quality of supervision required. [Link to Who/Quis]
- Determine any internal or external requirements for the use of alternate sites. [Link to What/Quid]
- Consider carefully what the location of the learning environment means to your teachers and students. Is it a comparable experience? Are the conditions optimum?

Why (Cur)

WHY WILL YOUR PROGRAM BE CONDUCTED? AND WHY SHOULD YOU BE THE ONE TO CONDUCT IT?
- Determine the intellectual purpose for your program.
- Determine the community benefit and need for your program.
- Determine the worth of and benefit to a particular cohort of students.
- Locate evidence of the need for your program.
- Develop the rationale why it is you or your institution that should be the one to offer this program.
- The why/cur question can be about hearts and minds as well as the facts and figures of market forces.

In what way (Quem ad modum)

IN WHAT WAY WILL YOUR CURRICULUM DESIGN BE CONDUCTED?
- Establish how extensive the design or redesign process will be. [Link to What/Quid]
- Decide who will be affected – both positively and negatively. [Link to Who/Quis]
• Develop an appropriate strategy that provides a respectful solution and that encourages buy-in from academics and other stakeholders.

• Remember to thank individuals and acknowledge their contribution to the process. [Link to Who/Quis]

• Remember that the program is about more than the academics who teach it. Remember it is more than about the present, it touches the future. [Link to Why/Cur]

• Respect diversity of opinion but always keep program coherence as the main priority. [Link to What/Quid]

• Think about the additional stress brought by the process. Who are the winners? Who are the losers? What are the pitfalls?

By what means (Quibus adminiculis)

BY WHAT MEANS WILL YOUR CURRICULUM DESIGN BE CONDUCTED?

• Establish how extensive the design or redesign process will be. [Link to What/Quid]

• Decide who needs to be involved, who needs to be consulted, who needs to be advised. [Link to Who/Quis]

• Develop an appropriate strategy that provides a timely solution. [Link to What/Quid][Link to When/Quando] [Link to Where/Ubi] [Link to Why/Cur]

• Ensure the process is properly resourced with administrative support.

• Establish and maintain modes of communication with all stakeholders.

• Allow sufficient time to do this well, to compromise, to work out all the details.

• Involve as many stakeholders as practicable. Be open, transparent and fair.

The full guidelines may be located at:
<dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/13358841/FINAL_Guidelines.docx>
6. Identification of synergies and tensions

The subtitle of this Fellowship refers to “synergies” and “tensions.” Much of the work of the Fellowship was dedicated to identifying these synergies and tensions.

Synergies

The selection of the term ‘synergy’ was deliberate and draws its meaning from its Greek root, synergos, meaning ‘working together.’ It was never intended in this Fellowship to mean that the demands of the agencies were the same but that they were, rather, differing but compatible versions of a single idea or goal.

One example of this is shown in the connection to AITSL Program Standard 4.1 (see Figure 1). This synergy comes from:

AITSL Program Standard 4.1, which states that:
Program structures must be sequenced coherently to reflect effective connections between theory and practice.

that connects to:

TEQSA – Provider Course Accreditation Standards
Section 1: Course design is appropriate and meets the Qualification Standards
1.3: The content of the course of study is drawn from a substantial, coherent and current body of knowledge and scholarship in one or more academic disciplines and includes the study of relevant theoretical frameworks and research findings.
...
1.7: Course documentation shows that the course of study has an overall coherence and is designed to provide appropriate engagement by students in intellectual inquiry consistent with the nature and level of the units being taught and the expected learning outcomes of the course of study.

TEQSA – Application Guide (TEQSA, 2012)
Section 5: Course delivery methods and structure
5.2 requires details of:
• the overall structure of the course(s) of study for which accreditation is sought
• content of the course of study
• a list of core subjects; and a list of any elective subjects available
• all specialisations on offer (including major and minor subjects)
• credit points for each subject
• rules of progression
• other protocols for the course of study
• prerequisites for specific subjects.

These are made synergistic through their connection to coherence. Institutions preparing programs for accreditation can identify this idea, cultivate it, and then, as required, provide
evidence of it. There is little synergy possible in the demands made by agencies, which are bound by micro-detail, particularly where isolated lists of content or skills are offered.

A second synergy lies in the prescription of the length of graduate-entry initial teacher education programs by both AITSL and TEQSA. Similarly there is a synergy between the length prescribed for graduate-entry programs by both AITSL and ACECQA, that is, of two years. A problem, although later resolved, arose in Queensland where the stated preference of the current Minister for Education was for a graduate-entry program of one-year’s duration. The length of these programs, however, may return to the discussion table following the preparation of a policy paper for the education ministers in November 2013 (Ferrari, 2013b).

Further, as mapped in Figure 1, there is a connection between TEQSA (particularly Provider Course Accreditation and Provider Registration Standards) and the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards in regard to:

- Standard 1: Program Outcomes
- Standard 3: Program Entrants
- Standard 6: Program Delivery and Resourcing
- Standard 7: Program Information and Evaluation

But these are rather more like duplications and overlaps than genuine synergies. It is not, for example, clear why AITSL requests similar evidence to TEQSA, such as library and technology resources, when this could be effectively monitored by a single agency. Gaining accreditation from both agencies is a duplication of institutional effort.

Similarly, the majority of the connections between the agency of ACECQA and the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards is through Standard 5: School Partnerships. In this instance, the connection loses its synergy through its detail. That is, the ACECQA demands initially match and then exceed what AITSL has asked for, particularly in regard to the length and location of professional experiences.

What appear to be synergies tend to lose this affinity when interrogated. They are more frequently only superficially alike or, in some instances, duplicate requirements.

In hindsight, it becomes apparent that the instance of duplication may have been purely coincidental. This is because the agencies’ requirements were being built in parallel, that is, at the same time during 2011 and 2012 rather than in sequence. It would be rare that one agency had access to the developing agenda of another. The capacity to dovetail or streamline may have been affected by the simple alignment of timelines.
Tensions

The greatest pressure on the design of an Education degree at this time arises from the number of agencies seeking to have the predominant voice in that design. This creates a clamour and makes it difficult for institutions to know how best to proceed. What emerges from the clamour are the interdependent tensions described in this section and represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Tensions in course design in initial teacher education

The ten identified tensions are: (1) Authority; (2) Knowledge; (3) Graduate identity; (4) Literacy and Numeracy; (5) Entry and Participation; (6) Early Years; (7) Crowded Curriculum; (8) Teacher Educators; (9) Public Perceptions; and (10) Policy Pendulum. The following will describe each of the tensions in order and then offer suggestions – dubbed as Considerations – as to how these tensions might be tempered.
Tension 1: Authority

Almost all agencies impacting on the course design of Education degrees appear to have presumed a tabula rasa and refused to acknowledge the existence of others. They have taken a monocular view of themselves as “the” authority with perlocutionary power over how initial teacher education courses are designed, conducted, accredited and monitored. These agencies have extended beyond state and national authorities to include state governments, particularly departments of education. The exception is TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency) which references other agencies and the need to meet their requirements (TEQSA Threshold Standard 1.3) as well as those of the provider institutions.

The noted singularity of vision from multiple agencies has been shown diagrammatically in the model through the use of unbroken lines to map each agency and the identified connections between them (see Figure 1). This has led to the development and enactment of post hoc processes of streamlining, for example, discussions have begun in late 2013 on how to synchronise the differing processes adopted by AITSL and ACECQA to accredit programs for early years teacher education (see Tension 6). Further, the 11 non-self-accrediting institutions offering teacher education in Australia have found themselves in a Catch-22 situation where both TEQSA and AITSL require confirmation of acceptance by the other.

In some instances, the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards appear to have re-interpreted or reduced the concepts within the TEQSA requirements thus subsuming its authority. For example, one of the two references to the Australian Qualifications Framework in the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards is in Standard 1.3, where the acceptable length of programs is outlined. This effectively ignores the more complex concept of ‘volume of learning’ from which it is drawn. AITSL also mandates four-year programs where the majority of undergraduate AQF Level 7 degrees are of three years’ duration. There is no mention of the AQF Levels in the AITSL Program Standards despite these being critical to the approval of programs in higher education and in distinguishing between the differing program models described in AITSL Program Accreditation Standard 1.3.

Further, it is not apparent why the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards have included Program Delivery and Resourcing (Standard 6) when this is clearly applicable to institutions as a whole and therefore under the purview of TEQSA (see, for example, Provider Registration Standards, particularly Standard 7, and Provider Course Accreditation Standards, Section 2). Similarly, it is unclear why state jurisdictional authorities have retained, and in the instance of Queensland increased, requirements for annual reporting by institutions when this is amply covered by AITSL Program Standard 7 (Program Information and Evaluation). The overlap creates duplication and makes possible, although unlikely, the potential for one agency to be satisfied while the other is not.

As noted, two state governments are entering or repositioning themselves in this arena. For example, in Queensland, the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, Minister for Education, Training and Employment announced in July 2013 that Queensland teacher education institutions will continue to offer one-year graduate entry programs. Although subsequently tempered to
allow the continuance of one-year graduate-entry programs to 2017, the announcement was in direct contravention of AITSL and ACECQA requirements. The Queensland College of Teachers countered with the condition that this was only possible where such programs had met their Phase 2 Accreditation⁴. Victorian higher education providers have also decided to continue to offer one-year graduate entry programs but only until 2016. From 2017, Victorian institutions will offer two-year graduate entry initial teacher education programs that align with both the AITSL and ACECQA requirements. The Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT) has announced that a one-year graduate entry initial teacher education qualification (plus a three-year undergraduate degree) will continue to be accepted by the Institute for the purposes of teacher registration into the foreseeable future.

An additional agency may need to be added to the struggle for authority. This is the employers, particularly state government education departments. For example, the Queensland Fresh Start action plan states, under Explicit Graduate Expectations, that:

Teacher employers will develop explicit statements of expectations of graduates, highlighting the capabilities, competencies and attributes critical to graduates’ employment prospects for each sector. Initial teacher education programs that respond to these expectations will better position graduates for future employment in Queensland schools, and become more attractive to aspiring teachers.

(Queensland Government, 2013, p. 3)

In its Great Teaching, Inspired Learning blueprint, the New South Wales government has also foreshadowed the development of a framework of attributes for assessing suitability for teaching that will be drawn up for use by teacher education providers and schools. It is unknown if the employer “explicit statements of expectations” or “framework of attributes” in the NSW blueprint will adopt or reflect those published by AITSL through the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Similarly, it is not known how these will equate to the proposed federal plan to assess prospective teachers on personal qualities, motivation, communication skills and their community service record (Pyne, 2013).

It could be contended, however, that these more affective characteristics are subsumed by AITSL Program Standard 3.1, which states that: “All entrants to initial teacher education will successfully demonstrate their capacity to engage effectively with a rigorous higher education program and to carry out the intellectual demands of teaching itself.” These are, in turn, embedded in the TEQSA Threshold Standards, particularly Provider Course Accreditation Standards, Section 3.

It can be contended that the agencies of SCSEEC and QCT in Queensland, through the development of their lists of priorities and elaborations, have subsumed the role of the community and replaced the need for individual institutions to consult with their communities and meet school and system needs. This creates tension in how institutions can authentically respond to AITSL Program Standard 2.1. This intervention may thus preclude an institution’s capacity to respond pro-actively to community demands as these have been pre-determined by external agencies. This, in turn, might limit an institution

being markedly different from others and thereby realising its own mission or institutional watermark.

A further tension emerges from the ways that these agencies demand a response from both institutions and the accreditation panels. The QCT has developed a template (Template D) that is a formal part of the accreditation process and the reporting back to institutions in that state. The SCSEEC elaborations are illocutionary and accreditation panels are asked to simply take note that these elaborations have been covered. There is no formal feedback process for reporting on these elaborations to either the institution, the responsible teacher regulatory authority or AITSL.

Tension 1 (Authority) explains how institutions need to apply to and seek approval from multiple agencies to conduct their programs in initial teacher education. This results in duplicate effort and in the potential for agencies to disagree or to make subsequent requests for change. Institutions are potentially entering a complex iterative loop of submission and resubmission. There is an increasing potential for programs to become more alike and less responsive to individual communities and less aligned to institutional watermarks. Suggestions as how to temper Tension 1: Authority may be found in Considerations 1, 5 and 7.

**Tension 2: Knowledge**

There are several agencies competing to define the requisite knowledge for graduate teachers. These are (i) curriculum authorities, (ii) AITSL, (iii) AQF, (iv) SCSEEC and (v) ACECQA (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority).

Curriculum authorities

Education, in terms of school systems, has traditionally been under the control of state governments, and prior to this, was under the control of respective colonial governments. Each state and territory has thus developed its own school structures, protocols around starting age and matriculation, and curricula. In 2010, Phase 1 of the Australian Curriculum, developed by ACARA, was released and progressively introduced across Australia. Work has continued into Phases 2 and 3. The common national curriculum has been adopted in principle in all state and territory jurisdictions. Despite this, New South Wales has adopted a variant form known as the Australian Curriculum in New South Wales. In Victoria, *Aus-VELS*[^5], extending from its existing VELS (Victorian Essential Learning Standards) describes how the Australian Curriculum will be delivered in Victorian schools. In addition, customisation is occurring in each of the states. The implication of this is that content and curriculum methods taught in initial teacher education programs will differ in each state and territory. This also alters the responses from any teacher education institution in regard to AITSL Program Standard 4, particularly for secondary teaching programs, as this needs to reflect what has been decided as curriculum content in schools.

[^5]: See <www.ausvels.vcaa.vic.edu.au>
A tension has been created by the specification of discipline units for secondary programs (Program Accreditation Standard 4.5) at first and third/final year level. This comes from pre-service teachers’ presumed capacity to succeed with third/final year level (in terms of experience and prerequisite study) and the potential mismatch between the breadth of knowledge needed to teach relevant school curriculum content and the specificity of final year university discipline units. Institutions now need to ensure individuals have a path between the required first and third year units so that students have appropriate prerequisites and skills sets to ensure success in their studies; and that these create a cohesive program of study. In some institutions, this may question the viability of all pre-service undergraduate secondary programs.

AITSL – APST and AQF
It is apparent that the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011b) are seen as the de facto knowledge base for all initial teacher education programs. A critical problem lies in the difference between the definitions offered by AITSL and that outlined by TEQSA, with the latter defining its learning outcomes in terms of (a) Knowledge, (b) Skill and (c) Application of Knowledge and Skill. There is also a tension in AITSL’s restriction of the concept of volume of learning into the length or duration of the program (See AITSL Program Standard 1.3). There are hierarchical levels in both the AQF levels, from Level 1 to Level 10, and the APST Career Stages, namely, Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead. A person may enter teaching at Level 7 with an undergraduate degree, Level 8 with an undergraduate degree with honours, or Level 9, with a Masters degree. It is of interest to consider (i) how AQF Level 7 matches the APSTs at Graduate level, and (ii) how the two hierarchies “progress” and how closely are they aligned. Figure 4 provides verbal descriptors of “knowledge” at the three AQF levels of initial teacher education qualifications.
Figure 4 – AQF dimension descriptors (Levels 7, 8 and 9)

The progression from AQF Levels 7 to 9 is clearly one of increasing autonomy and expertise. A critical development is in the aspect of skill, which results in a Level 9 graduate’s ability to: analyse critically, reflect on and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories. This has developed from more controlled or task-driven analyses at AQF Level 7. Level 9 requires original research as well as the capacity to apply existing research to bodies of knowledge or practice. Each level displayed in Figure 4 includes a capacity to communicate, that is, to transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others at differing levels of complexity.

Table 2 shows the descriptors of APST 1.2, APST 5.2 and APST 7.4. APST 1 is a component of Professional Knowledge, APST 5.2 is from Professional Practice while APST 7.4 rests within Professional Engagement. These may then, arbitrarily, appear to respectively relate to AQF Knowledge, AQF Skills and AQF Application of Knowledge and Skills.
### Table 2 – Descriptors by career stage of selected teacher professional standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APST 1.2: Understand how students learn</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Highly Accomplished</th>
<th>Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>APST 5.2: Provide feedback to students on their learning</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.</td>
<td>Provide timely, effective and appropriate feedback to students about their achievement relative to their learning goals.</td>
<td>Select from an effective range of strategies to provide targeted feedback based on informed and timely judgements of each student’s current needs in order to progress learning.</td>
<td>Model exemplary practice and initiate programs to support colleagues in applying a range of timely, effective and appropriate feedback strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared with the AQF Knowledge (Levels 7-9) descriptors shown in Figure 4, differing trajectories between the performative and theoretical become apparent as do the mismatch between criteria. The following can be noted:

- AQF Level 7 appears to align with APST Graduate level. This can be determined semantically through the use of similar verbs, such as demonstrate and understand without the addition of qualifiers to indicate anything other than the “broad coherent knowledge” expected at Level 7.

- Each of the AQF descriptors in Figure 4 include a capacity to transmit knowledge to others, this is only a feature of the Highly Accomplished and Lead levels of the APST where teachers take leadership and mentoring roles.

- The APST descriptors at Proficient are performative in nature (as noted through the verbs, structure, participate and provide) and privilege peer knowledge and experience over research or theory. In the examples provided in Table 2, research (which is a key component of AQF Level 9) is applied by Lead teachers as an agent in evaluation.
• The proficient and highly accomplished levels appear to be concerned with professional learning whereas AQF Levels 8 and 9 appear to have assumed such basic acquisition of contextualised knowledge. There are implications here in determining suitability for teaching in higher education (see Tension 8: Teacher Educators).

The main concern in this is that initial teacher education courses may be at AQF Levels 7, 8 and 9 and each will be accredited against the Graduate stage of the APST, which does not appear to match the requirements of levels other than Level 7. This is not surprising as each was designed for quite different purposes. For example, the TEQSA Provider Registration Standards make clear the pre-eminence of theoretical over performative outcomes in higher education. These are stated as:

1.2 The higher education provider has a clearly articulated higher education purpose that includes a commitment to and support for free intellectual inquiry in its academic endeavours.

1.3 The higher education provider delivers teaching and learning that engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry.

Tension 2 (Knowledge) thus arises through the need to balance educational theory with performance in the classroom. The basis for this may be in the differing interpretations of who a graduate actually is and what they need to further their education and prepare for the workforce (see Tension 3). A subsequent issue arises in how to gauge equivalence between the AITSL APST career stages and AQF levels for those wanting to teach in initial teacher education programs (see Tension 8: Teacher Educators).

Suggestions as how to temper Tension 2: Knowledge may be found in Considerations 3, 4 and 6.

Tension 3: Graduate identity

There are a number of competing graduate identities as perceived by differing agencies: AITSL, employers, state government departments, and TEQSA/AQF.

The AITSL Graduate is a graduate teacher, that is, someone in transition from the first day to a time, perhaps two to five years hence, when he or she is deemed to have reached the Proficient Career Stage. The AITSL Graduate, as defined through the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, is someone who demonstrates the application of knowledge and skills rather than demonstrating either knowledge or skills in isolation. The definition offered is:

Graduate teachers have completed a qualification that meets the requirements of a nationally accredited program of initial teacher education. The award of this qualification means that they have met the Graduate Teacher Standards.

(AITSL, 2012a, p. 4)

The employing authorities see the graduate as a beginning teacher in need of induction. State governments are currently announcing increased mentoring for beginning teachers and more systematic induction programs. The previous federal government’s Better Schools plan called for:
• New teachers will have a dedicated mentor and extra support for their first two years on the job
• Every teacher will have an annual performance review and access to ongoing professional development and support at every stage of their career

(Australian Government, 2013b)

State governments expect graduates to be “school-ready, classroom-ready and community ready” (Langbroek, 2013, para. 4). This is somewhat contrary to the notion of a beginning teacher being someone in need of ongoing support and mentoring. It also appears contrary to the Teach4Australia and Teach Next programs where it is presumed that the students involved are in an ongoing apprenticeship model of preparation. More broadly, it is contrary to the “10,000 hour rule” described by Gladwell (2008) as how long it takes to become a “phenom” or expert in a given field.

The TEQSA/AQF Graduate is a person at the end of a cohesive program of study that has stated cognitive demands described in terms of knowledge, skills, and the application of knowledge and skills. The difference between this identity and the AITSL Graduate is evident in the limited or incomplete reference to the AQF in the AITSL Program Accreditation standards. It is similarly difficult to align the AQF requirements of knowledge, skills, and the application of knowledge and skills with the AITSL Professional Standards domains of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement beyond the organising categories. The former is theoretical while the latter is performative.

There is another, perhaps more provocative identity emerging from contemporary media reports and political announcements. This is unfortunately of a person with limited motivation. This was first given public voice in an address by the Hon. Christopher Pyne, then Shadow Minister for Education, to the Sydney Institute entitled Achieving Teacher Quality: The Coalition’s Approach (July 16, 2012). The transcript of the speech offers that:

A 2009 survey of school leavers revealed that only 1 per cent of ‘high achievers’ (defined as TER over 90) had teaching or education as their first preference for university.

... those people who wanted to study education were the most likely of all school leavers to rate the ‘level of HECS’ and ‘having confidence in meeting the demands of the course’ as major influences on why they wanted to study education. Rated less important than other fields was the idea that teaching ‘extended on subjects liked as a part of Year 12.’

So, this evidence suggests that increasing numbers of students are choosing to study education, because they think it is cheap, easy and it does not extend or deepen the knowledge they gained during Year 12.

When I think about the pipeline of new teachers that we need to address our slipping student outcomes, these are not the characteristics that I would like to distinguish it.

(Pyne, 2012, paras. 36-39)

This describes a graduate teacher regrettably as someone with a poor personal academic record and lack of motivation. It is also an indicator of the growing acknowledgement of the importance of affective characteristics in teaching. More regrettably, it connotes a
perception amongst young people that teacher education does not redress presumed individual deficits nor does it provide intellectual challenge.

Tension 3 (Graduate Identity) is a lynchpin with clear dependence on other identified tensions, particularly Tension 4 (Literacy and Numeracy), Tension 5 (Entry and Participation), and Tension 9 (Public Perceptions). Suggestions as how to temper Tension 3: Graduate Identity may be found in Consideration 3.

Tension 4: Literacy and numeracy

On the surface, it appears that all agencies are agreed on the self-evident need to ensure the literacy and numeracy of all teacher education students and that, rather than a tension, this is, in fact, a synergy. One tension, however, emerges from the understanding of whether it is the literacy and numeracy of Australian school children or their teachers that is in question. For example, the Queensland College of Teachers have made demands on both. This can be noted in its Template D, under Current Priority Areas as:

- Ensures graduates develop the capacity to teach literacy and numeracy.
- Ensures graduates possess requisite levels of personal competence in literacy and numeracy for teaching.

In some instances, the references are to the scaffolding of literacy and numeracy, that is, as teaching strategies rather than the personal literacy and numeracy of graduate teachers. For example, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011b) makes reference to this aspect of literacy and numeracy through:

- Focus area 1.4: Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
- Focus area 1.5: Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities;
- Focus area 1.6: Strategies to support full participation of students with disability;
- Focus area 2.1: Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area;
- Focus area 2.5: Literacy and numeracy strategies; and,
- Focus area 4.1: Support student participation.

Aligned with this is the naming of literacy and numeracy as one of the SCSEEC priority areas, which makes it clear that through their teaching practice, teachers develop students’ literacy and numeracy within their subject areas. Literacy and numeracy is also referred to in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education priority, that is looking for:

Knowledge and understanding of effective strategies for meeting the learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including specific literacy, numeracy and English as a Second or Other Language strategies.

(SCSEEC, 2012, p. 5)

The second meaning of literacy and numeracy is in terms of personal capabilities. The perceived lack of literacy and numeracy skills has become the central theme of state and federal policies in regard to entry to initial teacher education programs and inferred in political and media commentary. For example, AITSL Program Standard 3.1, in describing
the requirements for program entry included the expectation that applicants’ levels of personal literacy and numeracy should be “broadly equivalent to those of the top 30 per cent of the population.” The immediate response to this was to ask what this actually meant in terms of Year 12 results, frequently interpreted as an ATAR, or for other forms of program entry. The definitive response to this has been published (in July 2013) with the title Year 12 Study Score Results as proxy indicators of personal literacy and numeracy (AITSL, 2013a).

Reiterating the AITSL requirement on personal literacy and numeracy, the Hon. Peter Garrett, then Minister for School Education and Minister for Early Childhood and Youth, in an address to the Eidos Institute in Brisbane (December, 2012) said that:

> We are already some way down this reform path, with all Australian Education Ministers agreeing in 2011, to a national approach to assuring the quality of initial teacher education courses.

> ... we agreed to measures to improve the quality of entrants into initial teacher education, and to make sure that graduates have been assessed to ensure they have the knowledge and skills they will need in the classroom.

> ... we want to ensure new teachers are top of their class. To achieve this we are committed to drawing our new teachers from the top 30 per cent of the population in literacy and numeracy.

(Garrett, 2012, paras. 54-56, emphases added)

This sequence begins by calling on the authority of “all Australian Education Ministers” to establish a national problem with the quality of teacher education, a pathological condition to be cured. This then flows to the quality of program entrants (see Tension 3: Graduate Identity). Lastly, committing to graduates being the “top of their class” reinforces the deficit. This is then equated directly to literacy and numeracy with an arbitrarily applied notion of “the top 30 per cent.”

The magical “top 30 per cent” was then repeated in the Higher Standards for Teacher Training Courses (Australian Government, 2013a), a continuation of the Better Schools initiative. This announced a four-point plan that included “a new literacy and numeracy test, requiring students to be in the top 30 per cent of the population for literacy and numeracy by the time they graduate” (Garrett & Bowen, 2013, para. 11).

The apparent synergy between the AITSL Program Standard, the then Minister’s 2012 speech and the 2013 joint ministerial statement represents a “genre chain” (Taylor, 2004) because, taken together, they are one message rather than discrete texts. The last link in this chain, however, added an exit test for graduates. This aligns with, but is not attributed to, a recommendation from the Masters Report (Masters, 2009) commissioned by the Queensland state government that led to significant but unresolved development of a pre-registration test for graduates. Interestingly, it is planned that the test be part of students’ coursework and thus become the institutions’ responsibility (Australian Government, 2013a).

The NSW Great Teaching, Inspired Learning plan (NSW Government, 2013) makes further demands, which also includes literacy and numeracy requirements both on entry and prior to graduation:
• Entrants into teacher education will be high academic performers, have well developed literacy and numeracy skills and show an aptitude for teaching.

• Teacher education students will need to pass a literacy and numeracy assessment before their final-year professional experience placement.

Further tension thus arises from the curious pattern of testing that emerges from this chain of pronouncements. That is, to enter teacher education, you must be in the top 30 per cent of literacy and numeracy. This may be through Year 12 results (as outlined in AITSL, 2013a) and/or from a proposed national test (as suggested by the previous government’s Better Schools initiative). To exit teacher education, you will be tested to show you are (still?) in the top 30 per cent. At time of writing, AITSL had begun the development, in conjunction with ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) of a test of literacy (as reading and writing) and numeracy that pre-service teachers will need to pass prior to graduation. This has been described as follows:

To ensure that all new teachers have the reading, writing and maths skills they need to be effective teachers and positive role models, an online test is being developed that all ITE students will need to pass before graduating.

AITSL is working with the university sector and teacher employers to develop the assessment framework and has commissioned the Australian Council for Educational Research to develop the test.

Intended for implementation in 2015, the test will measure reading, writing and numeracy.

There are elements of literacy and numeracy that cannot be assessed through an online test, such as speaking and listening, and extended written communication. These will continue to be assessed through activities such as professional experience placements and essays. AITSL will work to assist providers to explore ways of further improving this assessment.

(AITSL, 2013b, paras. 9-11)

Literacy and numeracy is thus both an entry and exit criterion for teacher-education students. The possibility of a national exam was raised in November 2013 (Ferrari, 2013b). This may temper the requirements being proposed by state jurisdictions.

The literacy and numeracy tension, Tension 4, has a direct connection to the graduate identities described in Tension 3. That the standard of literacy and numeracy of a graduating student is called into question is, in and of itself, offensive to higher education institutions and causes tension through its challenge to the reputation of teacher education. There is a direct connection with Tension 5 (Entry and Participation) as literacy and numeracy is cited as a key aspect of altered entry conditions; and also to Tension 9 (Public Perception) concerned with the public respect of and confidence in teachers, teaching and teacher education. Suggestions as how to temper Tension 4: Literacy and Numeracy may be found in Considerations 1 and 2.
Tension 5: Entry and participation

Program entry and participation is of prime interest to all agencies. AITSL Program Standard 3 outlines its requirements with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy (see also Tension 4). Requirements from other agencies are:

- Successful completion of Year 12 English, Mathematics and Science (Queensland College of Teachers)
- The “best and brightest school leavers” as indicated by HSC Band 5 results in a minimum of three subjects, one of which must be English (NSW Government, 2013)
- Test for emotional intelligence, resilience and commitment to teaching (Australian Government, 2013)

It is of interest to add that since the 2013 Federal election and the Hon. Christopher Pyne becoming the Minister for Education (and Leader of the House) that the emphasis on extended entry has continued. In a speech to the National Conference of the Independent Education Union of Australia in Canberra on October 3, 2013, he said that:

The Government will improve admission standards for university teaching courses.
And the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership has already started this work.
We’ll establish best-practice guidelines to encourage universities to base admission not just on academic achievement, but on the personal qualities that make good teachers.
And by this I mean being truly motivated to teach and work with children, exhibiting good communication skills, and having a record of community service.
We should be admitting to university courses people who have marked down teaching as their first or second preference, not their last.

(Pyne, 2013, paras. 49-53)

Universities set their own entry scores and these differ between states and institutions. Apart from Queensland, which has a unique OP (Overall Position) scheme, all states and territories award an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank, a number between >33 and 99). Universities may also offer ATAR bonus points for Year 12 students seeking entry to tertiary study. These may be part of an Educational Access Scheme (EAS) (based on educational disadvantage) or be determined by regional or subject criteria. For example, La Trobe University, whose Faculty of Education is based in Bendigo, automatically allocates regional students a bonus dependent upon home postcode while Charles Sturt University offers a Regional Bonus Points (RBP) scheme, which automatically adds five extra points to an ATAR to students who live in a regional area within Australia.

Professor Ed Byrne, AO, Vice Chancellor, Monash University, in a newspaper article headed Entry standards for teachers are too low, suggested that ATAR entry to teaching degrees

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7 See <www.uac.edu.au/eas>  
8 See <www.latrobe.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/96>  
9 See <www.csu.edu.au/oncampus/getting-to-uni/regional-bonus>
was as low as 40 (Byrne, 2013) while Ingvarson (2013) reported on the marked drop in entry rankings for education degrees. It is not known whether or not the reported fall in ATAR is affected by the addition of bonus points. The data presented in Figure 5 would indicate that the majority of institutions have set and imposed a minimum entry ATAR between 60 and 80. There are some exceptions to this and, where lower, these are typically regional universities or non-self-accrediting institutions. The higher ATAR requirements were for double/dual degrees and for the one instance of a multi-institutional qualification (Australian National University and University of Canberra). Figure 5 graphs the data for Education entry in 2013 and clearly shows the majority of entrants have an ATAR between 60.00 and 80.00 with approximately 20% with an ATAR above 80.05.

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\begin{align*} 
\text{Figure 5 - Share of Year 12 offer by ATAR band for Education, February 2013 (DIICCSRTE, 2013a)} 
\end{align*} 
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Professor Fred Hilmer, AO, Vice Chancellor of the University of New South Wales and Chair of the Group of Eight (Go8) has recommended a minimum undergraduate entry of 60 with entry to teacher education being a minimum of 70 (cited in Mather, 2013). This was on the basis of a concern with costs to the institution whereas others who are protesting against lowering entry scores are doing so in regards to an oversupply of teachers and the subsequent un- or under-employment of graduates (Dinham, 2013; Ingvarson, 2013). This oversupply, particularly of primary teachers, is the main driver for the requirement in QCT’s Template D for institutions to comment on how the program reflects and responds to current workforce demands. The undersupply of secondary teachers of mathematics and science reported by the Productivity Commission (Australian Government, 2012b) has been cited as an argument for maintaining graduate entry programs at one year (rather than the two prescribed by AITSL and ACECQA) and in the accelerated programs, Teach4Australia and Teach Next, only offered in Victoria.
More contentiously, the term “cash cow” has been applied to teacher education programs in universities. Professor Katherine Merseth, a noted teacher educator from Harvard University, (cited in Ramirez, 2009) declared, in relation to US schools of education, that “the dirty little secret about schools of education is that they have been the cash cows of universities for many, many years, and it’s time to say ‘show us what you can do, or get out of the business.’” (para. 1).

The Productivity Commission hinted at a parallel situation in Australia by describing: A concern in relation to the surplus of teachers is that new university funding arrangements that commenced in 2012 have given universities greater scope to increase the number of teachers they train. The Australian Government is monitoring whether this will exacerbate general surpluses. (Australian Government, 2012b, p. 11)

Dinham (2013) has suggested that: To control present over-supply in some areas (e.g., primary, secondary humanities), universities should not be permitted to arbitrarily over-enrol teacher education candidates. This situation has a direct impact on lowering entry scores and the status of teaching, which in turn can deter higher quality candidates. ... Reducing primary CSP [Commonwealth supported] places would both free up resources to target areas of shortage and lead to higher entry standards for primary teaching. (para. 5)

A more positive recount of the increasing numbers enrolled in initial teacher education comes from Professor Greg Craven, Vice Chancellor, Australian Catholic University. In a 2013 speech, he offered that: ... the demand for teaching graduates to meet workforce needs across the sectors is a complex phenomenon that is unavoidably difficult to quantify. Recruitment, retirement and resignation of full-time staff reflect only some of the teaching workforce demand measures. There is a significant need for a flexible and available workforce, estimated to be as much as 20 per cent of the current full-time equivalent staff numbers, across the year and locations. (Craven, 2013, p. 4)

The focus of the public debate (see Tension 9: Public Perceptions) has been focused on ATAR entry. The expressed concern appears to be ill placed as (a) the ATAR entry is typically between 60.05 and 80.00; and (b) the majority of student entry to initial teacher education is not through ATAR. This is supported by the AITSL finding, reported in its Initial Teacher Education Data Report (AITSL, 2013a), and identified that: Twenty-seven per cent of all students commence initial teacher education programs on the basis of their senior secondary results (expressed as an ATAR), while 40% of commencements, by domestic students, in undergraduate programs are on the basis of an ATAR.

The data indicate that for those students who do enter initial teacher education based on their ATAR score, the majority have an ATAR of between 61 and 80, and 28% have an ATAR 81 and above. Over 70% of students are non-ATAR admissions. (p. 8)
In regard to entry, it would seem that the mode preferred by Dinham (2013) is of graduate entry only. The extant argument is that teaching requires a maturity and life experience beyond that of school leavers who have undertaken an undergraduate program. Much of the support for this argument comes from comparison with teacher qualifications in Finland where teachers hold masters degrees and where school students perform consistently highly in international tests.

Tension 5 (Entry and Participation) is contentious. It is an issue more complex than a simple discussion of falling ATAR entry and needs to consider the multiple modes of becoming a teacher and the mission of broadening participation in tertiary studies. The public attribution of blame for Australia’s presumed falling school standards to teacher education (see McDonald, 2012), and specifically, to entry to teacher education programs is not defensible but remains, remarkably, unchallenged. The argument is disinformation based on the core and substantiated belief that learning outcomes are dependent on teacher quality along with an emotive reaction to the 2009 results of Australian children in international tests. It is, incidentally, of interest to note that the results for children in Finland fell from first to third/fourth place in these tests overtaken by Shanghai, China and South Korea. It is also of interest that this perceived drop in standards has not sparked a similar public outcry in Finland as it has in Australia. Suggestions as how to temper Tension 5: Entry and Participation may be found in Consideration 1.

Tension 6: Early years

The education of very young children (0-5 and 0-8 years) has had increased attention in recent years with the release of the Early Years Learning Framework and the changing demands for qualifications for staff in day care, kindergarten and similar settings (Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010)).

ACECQA (Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority) was established in 2011. It enacts the National Quality Framework, recommends curriculum content for initial teacher education and gives approval to degree programs. Its role in accreditation parallels that of AITSL but is handled through desktop audits rather than panel processes. It refers to four broad criteria: qualification requirement (duration and structure), professional experience (where appropriate), age focus, and curriculum specification. ACECQA has set additional requirements for field experience. The AITSL Program Accreditation Standards regard early years as a non-traditional setting (Program Standard 4.7) and subsequently demand that preparation for teaching in early years also includes preparation for primary teaching (to Year 6 or 7, depending on jurisdiction).

The early years tensions arise from:
• The need for institutions to complete two accreditation submissions, and the subsequent synchronising of responses to/from each of the jurisdictional agencies representing AITSL and the national agency, ACECQA;

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10 For details of the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results, see <pisa2009.acer.edu.au/multidim.php>
• The absence (but slow emergence) of a streamlined process for the handling of the two submissions and reaching of consensus;
• Scheduling the ACECQA requirement for additional field experience placements;
• Scheduling of the AITSL requirement for the content for both primary preparation and early years content (as specified by ACECQA); and,
• Scheduling of the AITSL requirement for field experience placements in differing grades in the primary school.

Early Childhood education is included in the Current Priority Areas listed by Queensland College of Teachers in its Template D, a requirement for accreditation in Queensland. This, in detail, requires:
• specific measures to ensure that pre-service teachers have the appropriate skills for teaching reading
• play-based curriculum is given priority in courses and professional experience to ensure that all beginning teachers can demonstrate an understanding and application of it
• explicit instruction at university, and during the practicum, in developing behaviour management strategies that are specifically appropriate to young children.

This adds further requirements for the Queensland-based teacher education institutions.

Tension 6 might be seen as an exemplar of other tensions described in this analysis. This is particularly Tension 1 (Authority); and Tension 2 (Knowledge). Because of the current attention on early years, it was deemed appropriate to present it as a discrete tension.

Further, and in conclusion, the duplicate processes of seeking accreditation from both AITSL and ACECQA for early years programs cause a clear and obvious tension. Institutions are left to prepare duplicate submissions and to await approval from both agencies. Processes between AITSL, through its jurisdictional authorities, and ACECQA have, at time of writing, not been formalised. Anecdotally, it appears to remain an ad hoc and inconsistent process. Suggestions as how to temper Tension 6: Early Years may be found in Considerations 1 and 2.

Tension 7: Crowded curriculum

The number of agencies and their demands on initial teacher education programs have conspired to make scheduling of all required elements a difficult task, particularly in graduate-entry programs. The duplication and extended field experience outlined for early years preparation courses (Tension 6) is an example of this crowding. There is a similar issue in planning secondary programs in terms of whether major or minor studies will be included.

This crowding is particularly the case in Queensland where the Queensland College of Teachers has, on top of demands for content, made specific demands on time. This is:
• a subject or part of a subject that reflects the ESL dimension of work in settings where there are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
• at least two subjects, or the equivalent, that build capacity to assess well and act on the basis of assessments to identify learning needs, determine appropriate levels of student support and in a variety of ways ensure learning is personalised for all students; and,
• at least two subjects, or the equivalent, that build capacity to work with students who have special educational needs or who, for whatever reason, fall behind and need special support to catch up.

AITSL is the only other agency that has specified a time component in their description of requisite content or dispositions. AITSL’s requirements are in Program Accreditation Standard 4 relating to the composition of programs in terms of fractions of the whole program, and in the length of field studies experience. It is of interest to note that the time demands made by the Queensland College of Teachers were reduced in the iterative release of its Template D. It initially also asked for two units each in behaviour management and in assessment.

Graduate entry programs, particularly where they will be AQF Level 9 Master of Teaching programs, need to find the time to include specific units of study relating to research and the supervision of research projects. The requirements can be detailed as follows (AQF Council, 2013):

**Purpose:** The Masters Degree (Coursework) qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for professional practice or scholarship and as a pathway for further learning.

**Knowledge:** Graduates of a Masters Degree (Coursework) will have:
- a body of knowledge that includes the understanding of recent developments in a discipline and/or area of professional practice
- knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to a field of work and/or learning

**Skills:** Graduates of a Masters Degree (Coursework) will have:
- cognitive skills to demonstrate mastery of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on theory and professional practice or scholarship
- cognitive, technical and creative skills to investigate, analyse and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories and to apply established theories to different bodies of knowledge or practice
- cognitive, technical and creative skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract level
- communication and technical research skills to justify and interpret theoretical propositions, methodologies, conclusions and professional decisions to specialist and

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The first draft of QCT requirements was circulated to teacher education institutions in Queensland in April 2012. This was revised further and reissued in October 2012. In November 2012, this, with further revisions, became Template D (an addendum to Templates A, B and C supplied and required by AITSL). It formed a part of the formal program accreditation process for teacher education institutions in Queensland.
non-specialist audiences

- technical and communication skills to design, evaluate, implement, analyse and theorise about developments that contribute to professional practice or scholarship.

**Application of knowledge and skills:** Graduates of a Masters Degree (Coursework) will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills:

- with creativity and initiative to new situations in professional practice and/or for further learning
- with high level personal autonomy and accountability
- to plan and execute a substantial research-based project, capstone experience and/or piece of scholarship

**Volume of learning:** The volume of learning of a Masters Degree (Coursework) is typically 1-2 years; in the same discipline; 1.5 years following a Level 7 qualification or 1 year following a Level 8 qualification; in a different discipline 2 years following a Level 7 qualification or 1.5 years following a Level 8 qualification.

These requirements need to be added to those currently in place for initial teacher education accreditation. They add significant differentiation in how a course is designed and delivered at AQF Level 9 to one at AQF Level 7 (see Tension 2: Knowledge). Suggestions as how to temper Tension 7: Crowded Curriculum may be found in Considerations 1 and 4.

**Tension 8: Teacher educators**

Just as there are seemingly different perceptions of graduates (Tension 3), there are differing perceptions and demands of the academics who are both university academics involved in research and scholarly activity and teacher educators with contemporary school experience.

AITSL Program Accreditation Standard 6.2 states that:

Programs are delivered by appropriately qualified staff, consistent with the staffing requirements in the relevant National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes, including an appropriate proportion who also have contemporary school teaching experience.

The evidence required by AITSL Program Accreditation Template B includes:

- Provider/faculty/school staff recruitment policy and professional development policy; and,
- A list of staff involved in the delivery of the program, including their qualifications and teaching experience.

The TEQSA Threshold Standards make specific reference to what is required of academic staff in regard to their teaching.

TEQSA Provider Registration Standards:
1.4: The higher education provider’s academic staff are active in scholarship that informs their teaching, and are active in research when engaged in research student supervision.

TEQSA Provider Course Accreditation Standards
Section 4 Teaching and learning are of high quality
4.1: The numbers, qualifications, experience, expertise and sessional/full-time mix of both academic staff who teach or tutor the course of study, and support staff, are appropriate to the nature, level, and mode of delivery of the course of study and the attainment of expected student learning outcomes
1.2: The higher education provider ensures that staff who teach students in the course of study:
- are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching (qualified to at least one Qualification Standards level higher than the course of study being taught or with equivalent professional experience)
- have a sound understanding of current scholarship and/or professional practice in the discipline that they teach;
- have an understanding of pedagogical and/or adult learning principles relevant to the student cohort being taught;
- engage students in intellectual inquiry appropriate to the level of the course of study and unit being taught; and,
- are advised of student and other feedback on the quality of their teaching and have opportunities to improve their teaching.

Section 5 Assessment is effective and expected student learning outcomes are achieved
5.2: Assessment is undertaken by appropriately qualified academic staff, and timely, adequate feedback is provided to students on their assessed work.

There is a superficial synergy between AITSL and TEQSA requirements, particularly in regard to professional experience. A tension emerges, however, in the ambiguity of the AITSL requirement for “appropriate proportion who also have contemporary school teaching experience” as it is unclear what is meant by the terms “appropriate” and “contemporary.” These same individuals are required to hold a qualification higher than that being taught. This means that those teaching in undergraduate (AQF Level 7) must hold a Masters or similar qualification (AQF Level 8 or higher). Meeting both criteria is rare and for institutions, appointing appropriate lecturers and tutors will be a balancing act. There may also be workforce or industrial difficulties for institutions who have staff who meet neither condition, particularly at AQF Level 9 (Master of Teaching). The AITSL and TEQSA requirements use the conditional “or” but this is typically qualified, adding to the ambiguity.

As a demand of the National Protocols and TEQSA Provider Registration Standards, higher education providers are required to be concerned with scholarly work and research outputs. This is evidenced through the ERA (Excellence in Research for Australia) process. In the 2012 report, it was noted that:
The ERA report outlines how the quality research undertaken by our universities stacks up against a rigorous evaluation process. It highlights the specific research strengths of individual Australian universities as well as the research strengths of the higher education sector as a whole.

ERA 2012 confirms that researchers at Australian universities compete with the world’s best in a wide range of disciplines. World standard research performance in Australia occurs at universities of all shapes and sizes and in all States and Territories. Results like these prove our investment in publicly funded research is working and is money well spent.

(Australian Government, 2012a, p. ii)

This emphasis, coupled with the TEQSA requirement (Provider Registration Standard 1.4) for academic staff to be active in scholarship that informs their teaching and to be active in research when engaged in research student supervision adds to the complexity. A further tension emerges in the absence of requisite qualifications of those who supervise and assess pre-service teachers during their field experience and also of those invited to serve on accreditation panels.

As noted, since the 2013 Federal election, the Hon. Christopher Pyne, Minister for Education (and Leader of the House) has continued to outline plans for teacher education. For example, on October 3, 2013, in relation to teacher educators, he said that:

That is why the Government will set up a Ministerial Advisory Group to look into initial teacher-education courses and to advise improvements.

This Group will consider teaching methods imparted, the trainees’ knowledge of the school subjects to be taught, and the adequacy of “in-school” training opportunities.

Overall, the Government wants to work with universities to make teaching courses more rigorous and attractive.

Pyne, 2013, paras. 55-57)

Although the statement refers to curriculum more broadly, there is a key link to “teaching methods” and the “adequacy of ‘in-school’ training” and it is expected that the intensity around Tension 8 will continue in coming years. Suggestions as how to temper Tension 8: Teacher Educators may be found in Consideration 6.
Tension 9: Public perceptions

If contemporary media and government pronouncements are to be accepted, then school education is in crisis (see Ferrari, 2013a). Standards, as measured in international tests, are falling and Australian students are ranked lower than in previous years (see McDonald, 2012). Through a series of syllogisms, the blame for this poor outcome lies in the quality of teaching, and however unwarranted, teacher education is clearly culpable in this and is in urgent need of review. The international results have received attention over the marked improvement in national results noted through the NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy) testing administered by ACARA. Improvements have been seen in differing jurisdictions and within particular cohorts.

Politicians and think tanks such as the Grattan Institute have entered the debate and made public comments that have done little to reassure the public. Instead, these reinforce the public perception of a system in collapse. For example, wide coverage was given to a July 2012 address by the Hon. Christopher Pyne, then Shadow Minister for Education, to the Sydney Institute entitled Achieving Teacher Quality: The Coalition’s Approach (Pyne, 2012b). The then Shadow Minister recalled that “most people have been exposed to both great teaching and terrible teaching in the course of their – or their children’s – time at school. They intuitively understand the importance of teacher quality” (para. 23). This subjective measurement arguably looks to equate the quality or characteristic of the teaching, namely, “great” or “terrible” with the quality of the teacher as an individual. The rare, albeit regrettable, instance of personal experience becomes the norm. It is of interest that one of the initial arguments for nationally-consistent accreditation of teacher education would “assure the public that graduates from specific programs are professionally qualified and competent. By doing so, accreditation can help to raise professional status and drive quality improvements within the pre-service sector” (Ingvarson et al., 2006, p. 2).

One of the targets for public comment is the entry score for teacher education programs (discussed in detail in Tension 5: Entry and Participation). For example, in a national newspaper article, Professor Ed Byrne, AO, Vice-Chancellor, Monash University, wrote that:

> Entry standards in other professional degrees can be just as exacting as standards for professional registration and practice. Just like teachers, being an exceptional doctor is made up of more than just the ability to get a high ATAR, but as a starting point ATARs matter.

> Why shouldn’t the teaching profession be more like other professions? There would be public outrage if future doctors were being admitted to university with ATARs of 40, so why accept this of teachers? Surely future generations of Australian children deserve better.

> Teachers are important. They deserve to be respected and valued. Higher admissions standards - alongside other improvements in teacher education - would be a powerful means of fostering that respect. It would improve attractiveness of teacher education and raise the status of the profession.

> Do we want our children to be taught by the best and most capable teachers? Do we want to make better schools a reality? If the answer to both these questions is yes, the current trend has to be reversed.

(Byrne, 2013, paras. 12-15)
As noted, a related tension is associated with the oversupply of teachers coupled with increasing enrolments in teacher education programs. The culpability here is accorded to universities and their admission policies. This, in turn, is seen as a failure of the demand-driven policy or uncapped enrolments introduced in 2012 as a means of broadening participation in tertiary education (see Behrendt, Larkin, Griew & Kelly, 2012; Bradley, Noonan, Nugent & Scales, 2008).

The contemporary mantra of negative commentary concerning teaching, teachers and teacher education needs to be challenged. A brief respite in this recent narrative has been the acknowledgement of the quality of his teachers by the 2013 Young Australian of the Year, Akram Azimi, an Afghan refugee. Mr Azimi gave credit “to his Warwick Senior High School teachers who he says helped nurture him from ‘an ostracised refugee kid with no prospects’ to become the school's head boy and top the tertiary exams” (The University of Western Australia, 2013, para. 7)12. Similarly, Professor Glyn Davis AC, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, in his 2007 Australia Day Speech, praised Australian teachers as “heroes.” He appealed to his audience with the exhortation:

So next time a public speaker takes a cheap shot at school teachers, reflect for a moment on just how much our political system, our way of associating, our peaceful streets and national consensus about the norms of public life, are learned from teachers.

... Teachers are, for me, the heroes of this and every Australia Day.

(Davis, 2007, paras. 77, 84)

Suggestions as how to temper Tension 9: Public Perception may be found in Consideration 7.

Tension 10: Policy pendulum

The final identified tension lies in change and the potential for change of many of the aspects surrounding higher education in general and teacher education in particular. The policy pendulum is responsible for much of the previously cited volatility of the times. Two areas are of main interest in the policy area. These are: demand-driven admission, and the nomenclature of teacher “training” versus teacher “education.”

Demand-driven admission

The policy pendulum on demand-driven admissions to universities is the first to be discussed in this section. As noted, a change was made in 2011 for the 2012 academic year, in response to the Bradley Review (Bradley et al. 2008), that universities could enrol all eligible students. This has led to an overall increase in higher education enrolments as intended. The rise in enrolments in teacher education programs has been close to double that of the general enrolment. Through this period, there has been a marked and welcome increase in participation in teacher education by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. There has been a similar rise in

Troubled times in Australian teacher education: 2012-2013

regional participation. A pendulum swing back to a capped system stands to jeopardise this participation.

At the beginning of 2013, however, there was a perceptible backlash against demand-driven entry across all disciplines (Mather, 2013). In July, 2013, in response, Universities Australia reiterated its support for “uncapping” to Senator Kim Carr, then Minister for Higher Education (see Trounson, 2013). While continuing to support this process, Senator Carr was reported to have said:

What I have said is that we need to have a look at the remarkable growth that has been in the system, growth that we have encouraged. Growth that we say is valuable. But we need to also look at the quality.

Trounson (2013) reported that a similar intent had been expressed by the Hon. Christopher Pyne, then Shadow Minister for Education. Despite this reassurance, doubt remained in the sector concerning the status of demand-driven admission. By November 2013, the federal government had announced a review of the demand-driven funding system to be led by Hon. Dr David Kemp and Andrew Norton13. In parallel to this is the Australian Education Union’s call to “cap places offered by unis” (cited in Ferrari, 2013b, p. 9).

Teacher training versus teacher education

“What’s in a name” is a well-known aphorism and here the name in contention is “training” in comparison to “education.” The distinction is an important one. Teacher training belongs to a period prior to 1974 when Teachers Colleges became Colleges of Advanced Education and, in 1988, when the Dawkins Revolution (Marginson, 1997) swept Colleges into universities (see Higher Education Funding Act 1988). Since that time, the term “teacher education” has been adopted as a measure of increasing professionalism of the teaching and the requirements for a four-year undergraduate or graduate entry program.

The Better Schools plan (Australian Government, 2013) purposefully used the title “Higher standards for teacher training courses.” Teacher training is the term used in the United Kingdom with their adoption of ITT (Initial Teacher Training) in contrast to the Australian ITE (Initial Teacher Education). The use of the term by the Australian Government is at odds with the use by AITSL of the term, ‘Teacher Education’ throughout its documentation despite the performative nature of its requirements (see Tension 2: Knowledge). The incoming Minister for Education, the Hon. Christopher Pyne also uses the term “teacher training” and refers to pre-service teachers as “trainees” (see Ferrari, 2013a).

These terms are connotative of teaching as a skill disconnected to theory. It opens the door to school-based preparation (as seen in the UK) as opposed to higher education preparation and resonates with the arguments concerning nurse education in hospitals versus in universities. It also harks back to the pupil-teacher programs of the late C19th to mid C20th where promising boys and girls stayed on at their schools to be trained as teachers. This program ended, in a policy pendulum from another era, when it was discredited by the South Australian government in 1912 (See Consideration 7). Suggestions as how to temper Tension 10: Policy Pendulum may be found in Consideration 3.

Tempering the tensions

The 10 tensions identified in this Fellowship are interdependent and affect all teacher education institutions in Australia. While conjectural, each tension demonstrates an abiding conceptual problem with how teacher education is perceived and how it is enacted. The synergies identified are almost incidental and tend to represent duplication rather than genuine alignment. Each institution needs to balance these synergies and tensions in order to create cohesive and meaningful programs. Each agency should consider its own requirements in the light of what others are also demanding. The abiding question that remains is how any or all of the well-intentioned requirements put in place can serve to improve or maintain teacher quality as well as high levels of schooling outcomes in Australia.

This section will cautiously offer seven considerations as to how to resolve or, at least, temper the identified tensions. These are offered as a set of personal observations based on the findings of the Fellowship and with the caveat attributed to H. L. Mencken that “for every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong.”14 The considerations are:

1. Establish a hierarchy of agencies, streamline the process
2. Redistribute the responsibility, reduce duplication
3. Reconsider the use of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) in accreditation
4. Question the representation of teacher knowledge
5. Break the nexus between qualification, registration and employment, extend the continuum
6. Set expectations for teacher educators, expand the definition
7. Frame the future with care

14 More correctly, *Explanations exist; they have existed for all time; there is always a well-known solution to every human problem — neat, plausible, and wrong.* Noted in “The Divine Afflatus’ in New York Evening Mail (16 November 1917); later published in Prejudices: Second Series (1920) and A Mencken Chrestomathy (1949).
Consideration 1: Establish a hierarchy of agencies, streamline the process

Tension 1: Authority has pointed to the number of agencies impacting on curriculum design and program accreditation in initial teacher education in Australia. The multiplicity of agencies at work has led to costly, unproductive and time-intensive activity for all stakeholders. It has also given rise to the issues raised in Tension 7: Crowded Curriculum whereby this crowding stands to threaten the potential of institutions to develop coherent and cohesive programs of study.\(^{15}\)

While there is no overarching national arbiter, some agencies have greater or more perlocutionary power than others and these include TEQSA, AITSL (through the jurisdictional regulatory authorities) and ACECQA. How these agencies differ rests substantially in the way they have come into being, that is, through acts of state or federal government or through less legislative means.

Intervention is needed to assign a clear leadership structure to reduce or resolve, that is, better align and coordinate the number of agencies at work in the accreditation of initial teacher education programs. Such a structure would need to be backed by appropriate legislation, most usefully at a federal level with the agreement and backing of CoAG.\(^ {16}\)

A critical companion activity to this is to encourage each agency to accept that there are other agencies with an equally legitimate interest in the whole-of-course curriculum design and accreditation of initial teacher education programs, and in the light of this, to review their requirements in order to remove duplication and resolve differences with others. For example, as noted in Tension 6: Early Years there is a need to resolve the tension arising from the initial defining by AITSL of early years as a non-traditional setting for teaching and learning.\(^ {17}\) There is similarly a need for agencies to subscribe to a glossary of agreed definitions, such as the seemingly obvious term “school,” which is left undefined but clearly has differing meanings in different policies and in different jurisdictions.

To achieve the goal of a nationally-consistent approach to initial teacher education, a more purposive role might be accorded to the SCSEEC national elaborations released in December 2012 and developed in consultation with teacher education institutions and peak bodies such as the ACDE (Australian Council of Deans of Education) and ATEA (Australian Teacher Education Association). Attention to these elaborations could then more usefully inform how institutions address AITSL Program Accreditation Standard 2: Program Development and allow genuine differentiation between communities.

The role and advocacy of state governments, outside of state regulatory authorities, also needs to be tempered and aligned to the published nationally consistent approaches. Indeed, any jurisdictional intervention needs to be balanced against the reciprocity between jurisdictions in terms of teacher registration. There is a high level of portability for qualified

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\(^{15}\) Cohesion and coherence are fundamental goals cited by TEQSA (Provider Course Accreditation Standards 1.3, 1.7) and the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards (Standard 4.1).

\(^{16}\) Council of Australian Governments, see <www.coag.gov.au>

\(^{17}\) Refer to AITSL Program Accreditation Standard 4.7.

\(^{18}\) It is important to note that there is currently no formal feedback loop or means to report this information to institutions. Similarly, institutions are not required to provide a summary of how the national elaborations have been addressed.
teachers irrespective of the location of their initial qualification. The justification for jurisdictional variance is difficult to sustain. Similarly, the phasing in of the Australian Curriculum and the harmonisation of school structures\textsuperscript{19} also challenges the need for jurisdictional variance.

In regard to entry to initial teacher education programs, with the change in government at federal level in September 2013, altered requirements will be put in place (see Tension 5: Entry and Participation and Tension 10: Policy Pendulum). The previous federal government had flagged changes with the inclusion of literacy and numeracy testing (see Tension 4: Literacy and Numeracy) on exit as well as the testing of more affective characteristics such as emotional intelligence and resilience on entry. While this is generally welcomed by the higher education sector (see Craven, 2013), resolution is needed as to who will take responsibility for such testing and how might national consistency be achieved. The experience of the aborted pre-registration test in Queensland would also indicate that these outcomes are more difficult to achieve (and more costly) than might be expected.

Consideration is also needed as to when the affective expectations might best be met. For example, asking that entrants to initial teacher education have a record of community engagement might be of less value than asking the same question at the end of their teacher education program. A school leaver from a rural area, for example, may have had less opportunity to take part in such activities and thus be disadvantaged. By exit from their program, pre-service teachers are older, more mature, more mobile, and more likely to be given responsibility within community groups. As Craven (2013) pointed out, “it is not how a student enters the university, but how he or she leaves ... that is important” (p. 9). The AiTSL Program Accreditation Standards also acknowledge this through their inclusion of Standard 3.2 which states that:

\begin{quote}
Providers who select students who do not meet the requirements in 3.1\textsuperscript{20} ... must establish satisfactory additional arrangements to ensure that all students are supported to achieve the required standard before graduation.
\end{quote}

What is currently in place is a system akin to a car with too much oil in the engine. While oil is as necessary as are nationally-consistent approaches to and guidelines for teacher education, I believe we have reached a situation where accreditation processes are getting in the way of achieving shared goals. The institutions are left in situations where they are accorded little trust and obstructed from developing cohesive, meaningful and distinct programs.

\textsuperscript{19} The National Youth Participation Requirement (NYPR), agreed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2009, harmonised the compulsory school age across states and territories. See <www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/1301.0~2012~Main%20Features~Primary%20and %20Secondary%20Education~105>

\textsuperscript{20} Standard 3.1 states that: All entrants to initial teacher education will successfully demonstrate their capacity to engage effectively with a rigorous higher education program and to carry out the intellectual demands of teaching itself. To achieve this, it is expected that applicants’ levels of personal literacy and numeracy should be broadly equivalent to those of the top 30 per cent of the population.
Consideration 2: Redistribute responsibility, reduce duplication

There are currently over 400 discrete initial teacher education programs offered by 49 institutions\(^{21}\), frequently across multiple campuses and jurisdictions. In addition to the frequent internal reviews and the seven-yearly TEQSA audit, each will be reviewed every five years by AITSL and also, where relevant, by ACECQA. This is costly and represents a considerable workload for all stakeholders. Professional accreditation is essential but, as alluded to in Consideration 1, the current process is overwhelming in its complexity and the need for multiple submissions. There is a pressing need to redistribute the responsibility and bring greater efficiency and sustainability to the process of program accreditation. Advice might sensibly be taken from reviewing how other disciplines, such as Medicine\(^{22}\), Engineering\(^{23}\) and Law\(^{24}\) conduct their professional accreditation processes.

The existing external accreditation requirements follow similar structures that are, in part, responsible for the duplication. Most ask for details of:

- curriculum design
- teaching/assessment methods
- program development
- professional experience (practicum) and school/learning centre partnerships
- entry and exit
- logistical and resource planning.

These might sensibly be broken up and reviewed in differing ways or perhaps in differing cycles. It is useful to look at the current AITSL Program Accreditation Standards and determine their level of responsibility. These levels might be:

- institutional, with a need for review every 7-10 years or aligned to TEQSA audits.
- program, with a need for review every 5 years or when significant changes are made.
- individual, where responsibility is devolved to the pre-service teacher.
- professional, where responsibility taken up by schools or learning centres is respected and resourced (discussed in Consideration 6).

For example, in the present arrangements, if a university submits three undergraduate degrees for accreditation to an AITSL panel, namely Early Years, Primary and Secondary, then three specialist accreditation panels are convened and a chair, typically a teacher educator, is appointed. Each program accreditation panel – comprising of individuals chosen

\(^{21}\) See <www.aitsl.edu.au/initial-teacher-education/accredited-programs-list.html>

\(^{22}\) Medicine is overseen by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) through a model of delegated course provider accreditation authority. The AMC derives its authority from legislation in each state and territory. See <www.amc.org.au/index.php/ar/bme/schools/medical-school-accreditation-program-and-status-report>

\(^{23}\) Engineering is overseen by Engineers Australia through an established process with clear links to international standards, namely, the Washington Accord, the Sydney Accord and the Dublin Accord. See <www.engineersaustralia.org.au/about-us/program-accreditation>

\(^{24}\) Law is overseen by state- and territory-based Law Societies, with particular attention to specialisations held by individuals.
on the basis of their specialist understanding of curriculum and classroom practice – is then required to consider a full application, that is, one that responds to all seven program accreditation standards (AITSL, 2011a, 2012) and the institution’s response to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate stage (as Standard 1.1 and/or Standard 1.2). This also includes additional jurisdictional requirements. Each panel’s first meeting is face-to-face followed by a teleconference. The interim period is interspersed with email communication involved with panel members checking the feedback/reports to be sent to the institution.

This means that these three specialist panels are each reviewing the same information such as the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards relating to delivery and resourcing (Standard 6) and program information and evaluation (Standard 7). This is repeated – with newly convened panels - when the institution submits its suite of graduate entry programs. These considerations might be more sensibly considered once, at the institutional level, rather than considered at program level on multiple occasions by up to six panels. In reality, oversight of these particular program accreditation standards (Standards 6 and 7) might be handled administratively by AITSL on a scheduled rotation or deferred to TEQSA.

Details around program entry (see Tension 6: Entry and Participation) might also be considered by AITSL at institutional rather than program level with differentiation for undergraduate and graduate-entry programs (Program Accreditation Standard 3). This isolating and more centralised oversight of entry requirements will gain greater importance if/when plans for expanded and more affective requirements are enacted. Such plans are being formalised by AITSL as national selection guidelines for admission into initial teacher education (see AITSL, 2013b). These are likely to include an interview and/or testing of personal characteristics such as emotional intelligence and resilience. This will be in conjunction with the ATAR\(^{25}\) (or OP (Overall Position) in Queensland) set by the individual institution and, in some instances, minimum results or the satisfactory completion of specific subjects at Year 12 (or equivalent) as set by the jurisdictional regulatory authority. It will similarly include literacy and numeracy tests (see Tension 4: Literacy and Numeracy) and the formalising of both the content and conditions of such testing.

There is a singular need to devolve much of the responsibility for entry and exit requirements to the individual pre-service teacher. Institutions may, however, be asked to support the pre-service teacher in his/her preparation for the exit tests and to show evidence of where this support is offered and the form that it takes.

The specialist accreditation panels might then consider an abbreviated submission, one that focuses on program outcomes matched to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Program Accreditation Standard 1) (see Consideration 3, which recommends

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\(^{25}\) Australian Tertiary Admission Rank, or ATAR, is a percentile awarded to students by application for undergraduate-entry university programs upon completion of Year 12 in all Australian states except Queensland. The number functions as a rank of all students entering the tertiary education system, based on the number of students in Year 7. The maximum rank attainable is 99.95 with a minimum of <30.00 and increments of 0.05.
further abbreviation of requirements), curriculum (Program Accreditation Standard 4), and field experience and school partnerships (Program Accreditation Standard 5). Panels could also satisfy themselves that the institution has followed appropriate processes in how the program has been developed (Program Accreditation Standard 2), that is, in how it has collected appropriate data and feedback from its community and critical stakeholders. It will also make an overall judgement as to how effectively the submitted program has met the SCSEEC elaborations and any additional requirements put in place by the responsible state or territory regulatory authority (see Consideration 1). As noted, appropriate feedback loops are needed to ensure that these overarching requirements are met.

The requirements around field experience and school partnerships will need to be reviewed when/if the planned development of a national approach to professional experience is announced. This is proposed to entail “a common assessment framework so that all teaching students are assessed against the Graduate level of the Australian Teaching Standards” (AITSL, 2013b, para. 8). This may represent a major change to program structures and mean that institutions may no longer need to provide bespoke documentation, namely, at-risk forms and practicum evaluation reports. Depending on the specificity of the common assessment framework, the need may arise for institutions to redraw segments of accredited programs particularly where the practicum periods have been given a specific focus, are developmental or are embedded within coursework. In this case, accredited programs may need to be resubmitted for re-accreditation.

Consideration 3: Reconsider the use of the APSTs in accreditation

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) are a critical component in ensuring teacher quality and re-establishing confidence to the public perception of the teaching profession (see Tension 9: Public Perceptions). For teachers, they represent a clear path for personal professional growth. For employers, they represent a way to acknowledge excellence and a way to encourage experienced teachers to stay in the classroom. The standards also represent a national measure of accomplishment for teachers transferring between jurisdictions or schooling systems.

An institution’s response to the APST at the Graduate career stage forms Program Accreditation Standards 1.1 and 1.2. Through the work of this Fellowship, I have come to believe that there is a need to reconsider the re-appropriation of these standards from individual professional benchmarking to a key measure in the accreditation process. This is because:

1. The APST were written to seek responses from individual teachers. This implies that:
   a. the respondent is a practising teacher in a classroom, and
   b. the evidence of his/her achievement of a specific career stage is drawn directly from a classroom environment and with the imprimatur of their role as teacher and system employee, that is, with access to confidential material such as student records, and
   c. as a continuum, that is, from Graduate to Lead, the standards might not sensibly be isolated from each other or from the developmental trajectory they collectively describe.
2. The Graduate career stage is the first of four (Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished and Lead). The Graduate career stage is intended to describe an entry level, that is, a teacher up to the first five years of their professional practice (the maximum time he or she has to demonstrate that achievement at the Proficient career stage)\(^{26}\). A teacher at the Graduate career stage typically has Provisional Registration with their respective state/territory teacher registration board/authority. Equating this identity with a pre-service teacher prior to graduation is open to question (see Tension 3: Graduate Identity). Further, there are clear problems with aligning the trajectory between the career stages and the AQF descriptors (see Tension 2: Knowledge).

3. Not all standards are created equal! The current accreditation process asks for a discrete response to each of the focus areas in each of the standards. This presumes that each is of equal value. This can be questioned by comparing the following:

- APST Standard 1.1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.
- APST Standard 5.2: Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of providing timely and appropriate feedback to students about their learning.

Both are important in the daily life of a teacher but not comparable in a course of study or equivalent in terms of how each is taught, learnt or assessed. APST Standard 1.1 encompasses whole disciplines including child and adolescent development, cognitive science, psychology and sociology. APST Standard 5.2 is a topic that might be addressed in a lecture or tutorial and consolidated through guided reading. It is not known how the institution might reduce the understandings of the former into combined declarative assessment items. It is similarly not known how an institution might conflate the latter into something other than a simple, and typically undocumented, affirmative response.

Such informality downplays the importance of feedback in a real classroom where reinforcing learning or self-esteem is a critical application of the understandings and knowledge drawn from Standard 1.1 as well as respect for the child and an intimate knowledge of the school context. There are similar instances of inappropriate weightings through the standards and of instances where, as with feedback, “teachers in schools are best placed to assess whether the pre-service teacher has the appropriate interpersonal and communication skills to be an effective teacher” (Craven, 2013, p. 5).

Looking further at APST Standard 5.2, it must be accepted that this particular understanding might be one that develops over time and individuals may be largely unaware of the instances that progressively build to it. For example, the importance of feedback may be initiated through discussions in a tutorial but is necessarily consolidated over time through field experience. It may well be something that may take immersion in a particular teaching context to mature and may not come to an individual until they have begun their professional practice.

There needs to be an unequivocal acceptance that the APST were written for practising

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\(^{26}\) See <www.aitsl.edu.au/verve/_resources/Teacher_Registration_in_Australia.pdf>
teachers in a classroom, a fact most clearly seen when viewed across the career stages (see Tension 2: Knowledge). They may thus not be directly applicable to unmodified use in the program accreditation process. The nexus between the APST and Program Accreditation Standards should be broken and an acknowledgment made that what are now Graduate standards are, in fact, those better suited for a beginning teacher. I would suggest the renaming of the Graduate standard, perhaps as Beginning, and a subsequent and comparable recalibration for pre-graduate standards, which might retain the Graduate label.

To consider how the APST Graduate career stage may be repurposed to support the accreditation of initial teacher education programs and provide a personal benchmark for pre-service teachers, the following is offered:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Std #</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Know students and how they learn</td>
<td>Vital. Institutions can build meaningful coursework around this standard despite the overlap between its focus areas. A holistic response could be sufficient, which would allow a differential weighting to and sensible grouping of each focus area. Much of teacher education preparation is within the fields of study encompassed within this standard. The institutional response to this standard could and should also be aligned to its response to Program Accreditation Standard 2: Program Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Know the content and how to teach it</td>
<td>Vital. Teacher education is premised on the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) (Shulman, 1986, 1987) and more recently, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra &amp; Koehler, 2006). Institutions might sensibly provide a holistic response to this standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning</td>
<td>Highly relevant. This standard allows for institutions to address the more practical aspects of being/becoming a teacher viz., planning a lesson or unit of study, communicating in a classroom, and varying the strategies used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4     | Create and maintain safe and supportive and safe learning environments | Relevant but difficult outside of field experience. While of critical importance in a school setting, when reduced to the hypothetical circumstance of initial teacher education, this standard becomes a subset of others, for example:  
  • Standard 4.1 equates to Standards 1.5 and 1.6;  
  • Standard 4.2 equates to most of Standard 3;  
  • Standard 4.5 equates to Standard 2.6.  
  The focus areas of this standard are not generally suited as topics for assessment items. |
| 5     | Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning | Highly relevant but difficult outside of field experience or for institutions to substantiate. Institutions can address assessment strategies and provide experience in interpreting student data, particularly in reviewing NAPLAN\textsuperscript{27} and other datasets. Outside of field experience, over which the institution has little control, there is inordinate difficulty in providing authentic assessment of |

\textsuperscript{27} National Assessment Primary Literacy and Numeracy
Standard 5. There is similarly little control for the pre-service teacher in that he or she will be typically engaging with an assessment plan developed by the supervising teacher rather than being given responsibility for its design. Similarly, because of privacy and child protection, schools may be unwilling or unable to give access to pre-service teachers in the maintaining of student records. The teaching of assessment processes and practices in initial teacher education is essential but could be better positioned as part of Standard 3, that is, as part of broader planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6</th>
<th>Engage in professional learning</th>
<th>Limited relevance. Standard 6 is a clear example of the original purpose of the APST and their intended audience of beginning teachers. The achievement of this standard lies with and within the individual. The contention that all standards are not equal might also be raised in regard to this standard. The focus areas of this standard are not generally suited as topics for assessment items. The premise of an institution guaranteeing understanding, outside of formal and documented assessment, is not viable.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community</td>
<td>Relevant but difficult. Institutions can provide detail of the relevant ethical codes and legal requirements to pre-service teachers but cannot guarantee an individual’s understanding or application to real classroom settings or interactions with children. Information can similarly be provided about relevant professional associations but institutions cannot assure understanding or an undertaking to engage in further learning. Standard 7.3 is similarly out of the purview of the institution and overlaps, at the hypothetical stage, with Standard 3.7.</td>
</tr>
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I believe there would be further benefit in requesting AITSL to consider coding the Program Accreditation standards in relation to the TEQSA dimensions of learning, namely, Knowledge, Skill, and Application of Knowledge and Skill. This would be of significant assistance in meeting the Program Accreditation Standard which calls for a “effective connections between theory and practice” (Standard 4.1) (AITSL, 2011a, 2012). It would also assist institutions in aligning their learning outcomes between AITSL and TEQSA requirements.

This Consideration looks critically at the APST at the Graduate career stage but this should not be interpreted as an indictment. What is at question is their repurposing as Program Accreditation Standards 1.1 and 1.2. Their unmodified inclusion asks the institution to be responsible for what is, in intent, an individual’s responsibility and, furthermore, what was intended to be demonstrated in a classroom setting. The institution might support a pre-service teacher in their development of a portfolio – drawn from coursework, field experience and their own community work – but the APST should, in essence, be a guide for the individual and employing authorities.

Associated with this, is the need to ameliorate the ambiguous definition of the term, graduate, (see Tension 3: Graduate Identity). In this, as noted, AITSL is asked to consider renaming the Graduate career stage to nomenclature more in keeping with the intention of its descriptors being the guide for the first two to five years of professional practice.
Consideration 4: Question how teacher knowledge is represented

Tension 2: Knowledge has pointed to specific issues in the defining of the knowledge base required of graduates in Education degrees and the particular clash between theoretical and practical/performative knowledge.

It can be contended that the AITSL Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APSTs) (see Consideration 3, Tension 2) have become the de facto knowledge base for initial teacher education. This needs to be questioned and reviewed against the descriptors of learning outcomes embedded in the AQF Levels 7, 8 and 9 and an institution’s graduate capabilities/attributes. For example, the only reference to communication skills is in APST 3.5 (use effective classroom communication), which forms part of AITSL Program Accreditation Standards 1.1 and 1.2. The only cognitive skill cited is to “demonstrate knowledge and understanding.” Other skills are: identify, plan, describe. There is no instance of higher order thinking or critical analysis as a requirement in the APST at the graduate level. The only reference to research is associated with APST 1.2 and this is marked by its alignment with collegial advice (at the Proficient career stage) and with workplace knowledge (at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages). It thus has a qualified role tempered by atheoretical or undefined processes and guarantees the continuance of the status quo.

Other agencies posing knowledge requirements have done so in differing ways, that is, from a macro or abstracted level through to a micro or prescriptive level. ACECQA, for example, has provided a list of suggested content within prescribed categories known as specifications. The specifications are: (i) Psychology and child development; (ii) Education and curriculum studies; (iii) Early childhood pedagogies, (iv) Family and community contexts; (v) History and philosophy of early childhood; and, (v) Early childhood professional practice (including research). Institutions have some leeway in how the knowledge is sequenced but this approach can be seen as being inflexible in how the field of study is approached. This should be compared with how the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards are written.

The Queensland College of Teachers has specified knowledge described in terms of time, that is, by demanding a specific number of subjects (QCT, 2012) rather than by concept or content. For example, in regard to Special Education Needs, institutions were required to offer at least two subjects, or the equivalent, that build capacity to assess well and act on the basis of assessments to identify learning needs, determine appropriate levels of student support and in a variety of ways ensure learning is personalised for all students. While only affecting higher education institutions in Queensland, this is a problematic model in that it allows the institution no leeway in how the knowledge is presented and does not allow for a proportional offering in courses of differing length, viz. in the four years of an undergraduate AQF Level 7 program compared with the two years of a postgraduate Level 9 program. It also predicates a common template over what an initial teacher education course looks like and how it is conducted thus reducing any institutional differences (see
Consideration 7). This differs in nature to the requirement in the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards that professional studies in education will comprise at least two years of full-time equivalent study in both undergraduate and graduate-entry programs (Standard 4.2).

While prescribing a time allocation, this type of specification leaves decisions about structure and sequence to the institution. One instance where the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards deviate from this is in the prescription of year level for the major and minor studies (in differing teaching areas) in undergraduate secondary programs (Program Accreditation Standard 4.5). These requirements are that:

- A **major** is equivalent to a total of three-quarters of a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over three years. In most programs, this equates to six units, with no more than two at first-year level and no fewer than two units at third-year level.

- A **minor** is equivalent to a total of half a year of successful full-time higher education study, usually comprising sequential discipline study taken over two years. In most programs, this equates to four units, with no more than two at first-year level.

The number of units (or subjects) would appear reasonable and although not generally in question, it could be argued that there is a similar requirement for depth in a minor teaching area as for a major. This time allocation appears, however, to be pragmatically drawn from what has become common practice in institutions and refined over time. What is problematic is the specification of year level. While this condition was presumably added to ensure rigour, it belies the reality of the singular narrowness of third year discipline units in most degree programs and the need for the satisfactory completion of prerequisite subjects. In some institutions, it is difficult to distinguish what is a ‘third year’ unit as a typical program would begin with foundation studies, then offer a suite of subjects that cover all of the second year and the beginning of the third, and ending with a capstone unit that attempts to draw together high level understandings from across the course. A review of this condition is needed (see Tension 2: Knowledge). What appears to be a good common sense idea collapses when interrogated and when applied to real settings.

Similarly, consideration is needed of the knowledge requirements for primary graduates around the study of the discipline of each learning area and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies. Because the Australian Curriculum will be adopted differently in each state and territory, there are questions around what are the ‘learning areas’ of primary education. This also creates a differential in the number of units/subjects offered in different jurisdictions. The prescription of time/load as being for half of the program may be insufficient in some jurisdictions (see Tension 7: Crowded Curriculum).

As noted, the inherent complication with knowledge in teacher education is that it is not limited to discipline content. Teacher preparation is concerned with Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Shulman, 1986, 1987) and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge.

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28 Professional studies in education include discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogical studies, general education studies and professional experience.
Consideration 5: Break the nexus between qualification, registration and employment, extend the continuum

It might be useful to rethink a degree in Education as a general degree without a direct line to classroom teaching or, more purposefully, as an extension to “the continuum of initial teacher education, teacher induction, [and] continuing professional education” (Craven, 2013, p. 3).

There is a clear role for Education in the broadening higher education participation agenda and this is borne out in 2012 data for commencing students (DIICCSRTE, 2013) when demand-driven enrolment was put in place. The profile of those commencing initial teacher education is:

- A total of 50,442 students (9.9% of commencing students, a rise of 6.3% from 2011)
- 46,519 domestic students (12.6% of all domestic places, a rise of 7.4% from 2011)
- 3,923 international students (2.8% of all overseas places, a drop of 5.3% from 2011)
- 949 Indigenous students (16.3% of all Indigenous places, a rise of 18.2% from 2011)

A rationale for the notion of Education as a general degree is sustained by the reported oversupply of teachers, particularly in the primary sector, and the subsequent limiting of opportunities for graduates to become practising teachers in ongoing tenured positions. Despite this, the model of Education as a professional degree with direct entree to the teaching profession remains entrenched. Because of this, regulatory authorities have a major voice in the shape and conduct of initial teacher qualifications thus engendering the tensions in knowledge (Tension 2) and graduate identity (Tension 3). Employing authorities, particularly through state departments and despite their recent poor record in employing graduates (see Chilcott, 2013), are also beginning to push for input into initial teacher qualifications.

A radical argument can thus be posed to reconfigure the nexus between the institution, the regulatory authorities and the employers. Individual students could opt for either a general degree or path to the profession with the latter involving extended professional experience. Individuals could similarly opt to undertake the planned literacy and numeracy tests/interviews and to individually seek professional registration as a teacher. Institutions could assist students through targeted capstone units to prepare for this, perhaps through the development of a portfolio and the conducting of mock interviews.

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Once provisionally registered, individuals could then apply for employment. The individual would, at this time, also need to address any additional requirements the employer might impose. For example, some education systems require their teachers to hold a current First Aid Certificate. Others are interested in the applicant’s religious observance or engagement in community activities. These are sensibly and properly the responsibility of the individual to be reported to the employer rather than the responsibility of the institution. In this model, the regulatory authority and employers become part of the stakeholder consultancies undertaken along with schools and community groups. The Program Accreditation standards would stay in place, with modification to allow alternate paths, that is, teaching or non-teaching, for program entrants.

Consideration 6: Set expectations for teacher educators, expand the definition

It is important to acknowledge the range of individuals who act as teacher educators. This group includes academics (lecturers and sessional tutors) and those who act as mentors/supervisors in field experience. In some instances, on-campus and online tutors are practising teachers. Both TEQSA and AITSL describe the qualifications and experience of teacher educators and those who supervise field experience although the wording around the requirements is somewhat vague and omits some critical detail. The intention, however, is clear. For example, in regard to field experience mentors, AITSL (2013b) have advised that:

The national approach will also ensure that supervising teachers have the right training and experience and that there is an agreed professional experience structure, which clearly establishes the qualities and skills students must demonstrate. (para. 8)

Consideration needs to be given to what is the “right” training for supervisors and how it might be comprehensively delivered across the teaching profession. The Program Accreditation standards make this the responsibility of the institutions but this is problematic and requires review. The Program Accreditation Standards state:

5.5 Providers and their school partners ensure that teachers supervising professional experience (in particular the supervised teaching practice) are suitably qualified and registered. They should have expertise and be supported in coaching and mentoring, and in making judgements about whether students have achieved the Graduate Teacher Standards.

It is here acknowledged that AITSL has developed online modules on Supervising Professional Practice30 and that mentoring/supervising pre-service teachers sits well with the descriptors of the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher career stage of the APST. This means that a demand has been set and opportunities to meet that demand have been created. This might, however, need jurisdictional systemic support to succeed. A rethinking of requirements for teachers’ Continuing Professional Development (CPD) might include supervision and undertaking training might encourage more to agree to supervise pre-service teachers and to engage more meaningfully in the process.

30 <www.learn.aitsl.edu.au/professional-learning-programs/supervising-pre-service-teachers>
In regard to academics within institutions, the AITSL Program Accreditation Standards state:

6.2 Programs are delivered by appropriately qualified staff, consistent with the staffing requirements in the relevant National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes, including an appropriate proportion who also have contemporary school teaching experience.

Anecdotally, this appears to be an appropriate profile of a teacher educator. However, the use of the word “contemporary” is problematic in that it implies concurrent experience. Even if intended as an expression of recency rather than concurrency, the idea lacks value as it ignores the substance, that is, the length or depth of that experience. It also confines the experience to “school teaching” and devalues the role that many teacher educators undertake in boards of studies; in curriculum design, such as writing and reviewing subjects in the Australian Curriculum; and/or in leadership roles in teacher professional associations.

Above all, what this statement ignores is experience as a teacher educator and thus fails to recognise teacher education as a discipline in its own right. What teacher education institutions need is a balance of individuals from practising teachers contributing as sessional tutors, to experienced teacher educators with a substantial background in classrooms and/or curriculum and policy, and to discipline specialists whose knowledge of sociology, psychology and counselling, or child development and special needs is contextualised in the context of schooling.

In practice, the condition that “an appropriate proportion who also have contemporary school teaching experience” is typically satisfied through teacher education institutions’ practice of engaging practising teachers in sessional roles as tutors. This has afforded a useful reciprocal sharing of experience between the institution and the workplace/classroom and encouraged many practising teachers to undertake further study. Many early career academics in Education also have direct classroom experience before working in the tertiary sector.

The AITSL description of teacher educators has synergy with the broad definitions of the tertiary teacher offered by the TEQSA Provider Course Accreditation Standards. Its Section 4 offers that:

4.1 The numbers, qualifications, experience, expertise and sessional/full-time mix of both academic staff who teach or tutor the course of study, and support staff, are appropriate to the nature, level, and mode of delivery of the course of study and the attainment of expected student learning outcomes

4.2 The higher education provider ensures that staff who teach students in the course of study:

- are appropriately qualified in the relevant discipline for their level of teaching (qualified to at least one Qualification Standards level higher than the course of study being taught or with equivalent professional experience);
- have a sound understanding of current scholarship and/or professional practice in the discipline that they teach;
- have an understanding of pedagogical and/or adult learning principles relevant to the student cohort being taught;
- engage students in intellectual inquiry appropriate to the level of the course of study.
and unit being taught; and, 
- are advised of student and other feedback on the quality of their teaching and have opportunities to improve their teaching.

There needs to be, however, a resolution of how the understanding of “contemporary experience” rests with the TEQSA requirement that staff who teach in a course of study are “qualified to at least one Qualification Standards level higher than the course of study being taught or with equivalent professional experience.” The problem lies in the equivalence of professional experience and academic qualification particularly when comparing the AITSL APST Career Stages and the AQF Level descriptors (see Tension 2: Knowledge and Consideration 3). An experienced teacher, perhaps certified as Highly Accomplished, may not be able, on the basis of the APST descriptors, to demonstrate equivalence to AQF Level 8 or 9 to enable their role in teaching undergraduate students, that is, at Level 7. Neither could they be seen to be qualified to teach in Masters programs (at Level 9) which, by definition, requires Level 10 (doctoral qualification).

The issue of who teaches the teachers is one that also needs review in terms of the duplication of reporting currently required for those teaching in the institutions (see Consideration 2) and in terms of who should take oversight of the preparation and support of those supervising field experience (see Consideration 1).

Consideration 7: Frame the future with care

In this final consideration, it is useful to reflect on Franklin D. Roosevelt’s hand-written observation – made in the draft of a speech to be delivered the day after his death - that “the only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today” (Roosevelt, 1945/1950, p. 616). There is much current commentary and public concern about the educational achievement of young Australians (see Tension 9: Public Perceptions), which mimics Roosevelt’s “doubts of today.” The decisions of the present – which will impact on the future – need to look beyond these transient doubts, many of which may not be quite as they seem. All agencies need to be cautious of the evidence, particularly around international tests and tertiary entry scores, being presented to discredit Australian teaching and teacher education. In many instances, the exception is being presented as the rule and anecdotes or nostalgic reminiscences are drawn upon as evidence of individual and institutional failing.

It is similarly useful to reflect on Santayana’s well-known caution that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” (Santayana, 1905, p. 284). At the beginning of the C20th, the majority of teachers in Australian schools had been trained through the pupil-teacher system. Through this system, future teachers were “recruited from promising students at the age of 13 or 14 on the recommendation of the head teacher” (Aspland, 2006, p. 145). They then undertook an apprenticeship of four years in the same school they had attended as a student. In Victoria in 1905, for example, it was estimated that only one fifth had trained at the Melbourne Teachers College (Education Report, Victoria, 1906, cited in Aspland, 2006) with the majority (~80%) having been pupil teachers. This model of teacher preparation was phased out across the country from 1921 to 1935 following growing concern about the inconsistency of training provided and the perpetuation of
ingrained but ineffective local practices. For example, a 1912 Commission of Enquiry into Education (SAPP 1912 No 27) in South Australia had “singled out the apprenticeship model of teacher training for scathing comment” (Grant, 2005, p. 9). At the beginning of the C21st, discussions around the viability of similar apprentice-based models of teacher education are resurfacing and are being implemented in the United Kingdom. The objections raised in South Australia in 1912 remain valid and should be remembered. The past should not be repeated and nostalgic notions should not guide policy. School-based preparation for teachers is a seductively simple idea, but one that has been resoundingly discredited in this country.

The first instance of formally published teacher standards and designated entry requirements can be noted in The South Australian Parliamentary Papers from 1877. The initial entry requirements were: good character, good health, aged between 17 – 36 years, ability to pass an entrance examination in eight specified subjects, and sufficient natural ability as demonstrated through one month of “pre training” (Grant, 2005). The century before this – at the time of the First Fleet settlement – saw the requirements to be a teacher limited to literacy and numeracy and of the first thirty employed as teachers in the colony, over half were convicts (Burkhardt, 2012; Groundwater-Smith et al., 2007).

For most Australian state and territory regulatory jurisdictions, the concept as well as the process of agreed accreditation standards – announced in April 2011 – is new. This means that, for some jurisdictions, much is to be learnt. In others, this means an un-learning of the accreditation processes in place for decades. For all, there are issues with surrendering state/territory authority to national structures. This means that both emotional and logistical readiness differs between states and territories. Patience is needed to embed the new processes. Tolerance is needed to allow freedom and flexibility in the programs being accredited in line with the new conditions and requirements. Some latitude is needed for institutions to respond to changes in the community in the intervening years between their accreditation and re-accreditation. For example, institutions need the space to respond to changes in the Australian Curriculum as new subjects are introduced.

There is a need for overall governance of and/or opportunities for peer support for the teacher jurisdictional regulatory authorities as they work through the new nationally-consistent processes. With additional changes predicted (through the developing work in entry, literacy and numeracy testing and practicum assessment), ongoing scaffolding will be needed. The processes begun need to be given time to mature and to become accepted practice.

Above all, there is an urgent need to ensure that compliance with published standards does not remove differences between the initial teacher education programs being offered (as described in Tension 1: Authority). Institutions have distinct watermarks and a unique set of

31 For details of these schemes, see <www.education.gov.uk/get-into-teaching/teacher-training-options/school-based-training.aspx?sc_lang=en-GB>
33 <www.aitsl.edu.au/initial-teacher-education/initial-teacher-education.html>
graduate attributes that they aim to achieve. These must not be sacrificed in a pedantic and formulaic approach. Programs can be comparable without being the same. For example, programs in RUN\textsuperscript{34} universities and regional institutions bring multiple benefits in allowing local students to study at home and to consider conducting their professional practice in this environment. This brings local knowledge and sensitivities to bear, slows the rotating door of teachers in country postings, and allows the institutions to customise their offerings. It also acts to encourage more students from regional centres to undertake higher education. A fine case in point is the award-winning RATEP (Remote Area Teacher Education Program) conducted by James Cook University\textsuperscript{35}. Another is the award-winning TEDD (Teacher Education Done Differently) program\textsuperscript{36} founded on sustained local educational partnerships to advance pre-service teacher education in a low socioeconomic regional campus of QUT.

Similarly, the Australian Catholic University has increased its enrolment and offerings in recent years but, again, has done so to meet specific community demands, including the call for broadening participation in tertiary education, and to customise their programs through inclusion of the preparation to teach religion and to undertake the university’s core curriculum.

The important questions to be asked are concerned with what is won and what is lost in the quest for quality. The finest standards – for programs or for individuals – are those that guide but not confine, allow scope for change and growth and show a path to the future. What is needed is a genuine commitment to national consistency, an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of others’ interest in the field of initial teacher education coupled with a willingness to compromise and share responsibility, an according of respect to teacher education institutions and the creation of systems that allow them agility in responding to the changes to national curriculum in the coming decade and to more imminent changes to program entry and participation.

\textsuperscript{34} RUN (Regional Universities Network) is a network of six universities with headquarters in regional Australia and a shared commitment to playing a transformative role in their respective regions.

\textsuperscript{35} 2012 AAUT Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning

\textsuperscript{36} 2013 AAUT Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning <www.olt.gov.au/system/files/AAUT%202013.doc>
7. Dissemination

The dissemination of the outcomes of the Fellowship has taken place in various ways:

Formal presentations and seminars
At time of writing, 12 formal presentations and seminars have been delivered. These (in chronological order from most recent) were:

- Webinar, ATRA (Australasian Teacher Regulatory Authorities), November 18, 2013.
- Academic Retreat, Faculty of Education, QUT, November 12, 2013.
- Professional Standards Committee, Queensland College of Teachers, November 1, 2013.
- QUT Fellows Forum, August 26, 2013.
- Public seminar, Curtin University, August 1, 2013.
- University of the Sunshine Coast, February 15, 2013.
- School of Curriculum, Faculty of Education, March 26, 2013.
- Queensland Independent Education Union, March 5, 2013.
- University of the Sunshine Coast, August 14, 2012.
- La Trobe University, August 1, 2012.

Peer-reviewed publications
At time of writing, one peer-reviewed conference paper has been delivered at the 2013 ATEA (Australian Teacher Education Association) Conference entitled Dancing to too many tunes: Contemporary course design in teacher education (Lloyd, 2013). Preparation of peer-reviewed journal articles is under way. These will be both sole-authored as well as developed with colleagues in the mentored institutions. It is of interest that an academic at one of the mentee institutions has developed and published a sole-authored journal article as a direct result of her involvement with the Fellowship (see Simon, 2013).

Discussion papers for peak bodies
Discussion papers have been prepared and the final audit and analysis reports have been made available for the three peak bodies in teacher education: NADLATE (Network of Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching in Education); ACDE (Australian Council of Education Deans); and QDEF (Queensland Deans of Education Forum).

The audit, analysis and guideline documents have been sent in hard-copy format to all teacher education institutions in Australia. Prior to this, Professor Brenda Cherednichenko, President, Australian Council of Deans of Education, sent a link to the audit and analysis documents in advance of the Council’s 2013 annual conference. The text of her September 14 email said that:
Ahead of the conference, I would like to introduce to some recently completed work by Dr Margaret Lloyd through OLT National Teaching Fellowship. This work might inform some of our thinking and discussions as we plan our priorities and activities for the next Triennium. We all remember Margaret’s wonderful contribution to the Teaching Teachers for the Future Project. In this piece of work Margaret has dealt with the complexity of contemporary course design in Education by documenting and mapping the complex and competing internal and external agencies impacting on the whole-of-curriculum design in contemporary higher education in Australia, particularly on degrees in Education.

This dissemination has ensured that the work of the Fellowship will be known to all 39 Faculties of Education at the highest level of institutional decision making. Subsequent dissemination, as a consequence of this sharing, has been made to the Queensland College of Teachers and to the Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment.

Offers to visit or consult with other universities have been made to continue dissemination of the findings of the Fellowship. The findings of the Fellowship have also been made available to Dr Carol Nicoll, Chief Commissioner and CEO, TEQSA and to Margery Evans, CEO, AITSL.

Mentoring activities
As well as being a key activity in the Fellowship, the mentoring activities also provided an opportunity for both formal (see presentations and seminars) and informal dissemination. A shared Dropbox folder <www.dropbox.com> was set up and shared with individuals in the mentee institutions. Simon (2013) acknowledged this by explaining that:

In addition to researching what the current offerings from each tertiary provider were at the beginning of 2012, it was important to develop partnerships with other Universities to share what was planned for the future. The work undertaken by Margaret Lloyd through an OLT Fellowship towards the end of 2012, and the subsequent knowledge and understanding she shared at workshop sessions at the University of the Sunshine Coast and through electronic access to program development materials devised for the purpose of collegial sharing across a number of Universities, provided further opportunities for reflection and for the effective progression of the University of the Sunshine Coast’s teacher education program development. (p. 80)

Informal discussions
Through the course of the Fellowship, every opportunity has been taken to visit institutions and to organise meetings with Heads of School and relevant staff. During these meetings, findings of the Fellowship have been shared and feedback sought. These informal meetings included:

- Edith Cowan University (Mt Lawley, Perth), meeting with Professor Lynne Cohen, Executive Dean, Faculty of Education and the Arts, Professor Mark Hackling, A/Prof Paul Newhouse and Dr Jenny Lane. August 2, 2013.
- Curtin University (Bentley, Perth), various meetings with A/Prof Lina Pellicone, Head of School, Education, A/Prof Jenny Jay, Dr Genevieve Johnson, Dr Jennifer Howell, Ms Val Morey and Dr Sue Beltman. July 29-August 1, 2013.
• La Trobe University (Bendigo), meeting with Professor Greg Heath, ALTC Discipline Scholar (Education) and Head of School, Education, Outdoor and Environmental Studies. March 19, 2013.

• Charles Darwin University (Darwin), meeting with Professor Peter Kell, Head of School – Education. April 11, 2013.

• Christian Heritage College (Brisbane), meeting with Dr Rob Herschell, Dean, School of Education and Humanities, and Colette Alexander. February 4, 2013.

Progressive discussions with the critical friends to the Fellowship have had the reciprocal benefit of disseminating findings to their host institutions. The critical friends were:

• Professor Glenn Finger, Dean (Learning and Teaching), Arts, Education and Law, Griffith University.

• Professor Tania Aspland, Head of Education NSW/ACT, Australian Catholic University (from May 2013); and formerly, Head of School of the Professions and Associate Dean Learning and Teaching, The University of Adelaide.

• Associate Professor Paul Newhouse, Director of Centre for Schooling and Learning Technologies (CSaLT), Edith Cowan University.
8. Evaluation

The evaluation of the Fellowship was conducted formally by an independent evaluator, Dr Ian Macpherson, a retired academic and former Assistant Dean, Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Education, QUT. The evaluation was based on surveys of selected academics at each of the mentee sites as well as the three critical friends. The surveys were conducted at critical junctures, that is, at a midpoint and at the end of the Fellowship period. The response was highly positive with each respondent affirming the value of the Fellowship program as well as confirming that it was conducted as planned.

Further to the formal evaluation, there was ongoing feedback from the critical friends throughout the Fellowship who provided advice on drafts. Incidental feedback came from those who attended seminars I conducted or who met with me during the Fellowship (see Dissemination). This feedback was unanimously positive with surprise expressed on differing aspects such as the number of initial teacher education programs in operation or the complexity of the external demands on course design. When given access to the final draft documents of the Fellowship, my Executive Dean, Professor Wendy Patton wrote that: “this is really vital work and needs broad dissemination -- you would be the only person in Australia I think with this sort of insight/overview” (personal email, September 16, 2013). A colleague who attended a seminar I delivered sent me a message which offered “I wanted to say thank you for such a terrific presentation – it unpacked for me what I have always misunderstood and found so confusing.” (Dr Deborah Henderson, personal email, September 21, 2013).

Finally, as is my habit, I conducted an ongoing informal reflexive evaluation based on the 4Rs model of reflective thinking, namely: reporting/responding; relating; reasoning; and reconstructing (Moon, 2001). Much of this personal reflection concerned the volatility of the period and the need to keep abreast of changes occurring in the sector. What was surprising was the volume and frequent negativity of public commentary on higher education, and teacher education in particular. I also needed to develop personal strategies to ascertain the substance and purpose of this commentary; and further, to maintain objectivity when my discipline was seemingly under attack.

Also, during the Fellowship, I remained active in teacher education at a national level. One critical activity was to chair a program accreditation panel for AITSL/QCT for a program to be offered in a Queensland university. I am, at time of writing, preparing to act as an interstate panellist working to accredit a graduate-entry program in Victoria (AITSL/VIT). This involvement has brought an additional level of involvement and cause for reflection as I was able to see, at first hand, the accreditation process in action. I also attended and contributed to a workshop, hosted by the Queensland College of Teachers, for institutions preparing accreditation submissions.
9. Coda

Groundwater-Smith, Ewing and Le Cornu (2007) ended their comprehensive text on teaching with a coda, explaining that it was:

... a piece positioned at the conclusion to a significant movement [in music]. It draws together the threads of the composition and relays back to the listener its major themes in the form of a series of echoes. In literature, the coda is a means of drawing the narrative to its conclusion (Labov, 1970) and reminding the reader of the work’s significant purposes and tenets. (p. 347)

It seems apt to similarly end the report of this Fellowship with a coda.

- The audit set down a steady beat on which to base the music.
- The analysis showed few synergies, phrases of smooth or gliding sounds. Rather, it revealed 10 interdependent tensions, to be played by the percussion section.
- The model adopted the metaphor of an underground railway system to “map” the various requirements and demands of differing agencies on teacher education programs: this added overlays of jazz-inspired trills.
- The guidelines tried to notate the emergent discordant tune.
- The seven considerations were devised to help the conductor dampen the cacophony of the tensions by controlling the sequence, tempo and volume of each of the players.

The overall conclusion of this Fellowship is that teacher education occupies a space made overly complex by too many agencies seeking to take charge. Teacher education differs from other disciplines within higher education because of its emotive connection to the community, appeal to the media for sensational but frequently disproportionate reporting, and to the political leverage to be gained through misrepresentation and brinksmanship. It is also a hallmark of the tension between state and federal control that dates back to the colonial era. In the midst of this, institutions attempt to create coherent bodies of knowledge and practice as a platform for their students to become scholars and practitioners and that represent their respective institutional watermarks, pay respect to its discipline and to prepare students for their chosen profession.

This Fellowship, through its analysis of synergies and tensions, and the audit it complements, has attempted to objectively and logically map the agencies impacting on whole-of-course curriculum design. It has cautiously offered considerations to temper the tensions and to help achieve the common goal of developing rigorous effective teacher education programs across Australia.
References


