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Professionalism and teacher education in Australia and England

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Abstract

In the past decade, notions of teacher professionalism have been associated with increased accountability, standards, performance assessments, and teacher testing, and impacted by alternative pathways into the profession that downplay professional education and foreground subject content knowledge expertise and opportunity to learn on the job. This paper examines the relationship between teacher professionalism and teacher education in Australia and England. It analyses the ways in which professionalism is constructed in teacher education policy and related directives in each country. We argue that professionalism in these countries is being (re)constructed through performance management, standards and increased accountability as managerial professionalism. Teacher education policies fail to acknowledge the importance of preparing research literate teachers and teacher-researchers. They also fail to capitalise on opportunities for teacher education research to inform evidence requirements for accountability purposes. In these ways, teacher education policies in Australia and England are de-professionalising teachers and teacher educators.

Introduction

This paper examines the relationship between teacher professionalism and teacher education[1] in Australia and England by analysing the ways in which professionalism is constructed in teacher education policy and related directives. We argue that the ongoing 'practical turn' continues to de-professionalise teachers (cf. Sachs, 2001; Whitty, 2008; Zeichner, 2012) and that the policy imperatives fail to acknowledge the importance of enhancing the research literacy of teachers or to prepare new teachers to become teacher-researchers (see BERA, 2014). Moreover, we suggest that current policy fails to draw on the latest research on what constitutes high quality professional education for teachers and also fails to realise the opportunities for using teacher education research as part of evidence requirements for accountability purposes. We draw on two recent policy documents – the Australian *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures*[2] and the English ITT *Core Content Framework* – to illustrate the ways in which teacher professionalism is currently being constructed in Australia and England. We also include analysis of two key reviews of teacher education in each country that have informed those documents.

Australia and England have been well known 'borrowers' of each other's policies (Lingard, 2010; Phillips, 2000). In this paper we identify some of the similarities of their approaches to teacher education. However, we also note some significant differences. We suggest that rather than policy borrowing that the two different approaches to teacher education offer some 'policy learnings' for each and other jurisdictions. As Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012, p.169) have argued, 'The changes that are needed to build a strong profession of teaching that can meet (the) challenges around the globe will require us to learn from each other about what matters and what works in different

[1] In this paper, we use the term 'teacher education' to encompass 'initial teacher education', 'pre-service teacher education' and 'teacher training'.

[2] First published in 2011. Revised 2015, 2018, 2019

contexts'. To this end we explore some of the effects – intended and perhaps unintended – of the two approaches evident in England and Australia.

Teacher professionalism

Teacher education policy reflects idealised notions of the teacher and teacher professionalism. Through their policies and directives, governments prescribe and shape professionalism, often involving contradictory and entangled messages and characterised by 'ad hocery, serendipity, muddle and negotiation' (Ozga, 1990, p.360). Education policies in many countries, and certainly in Australia and England, have been influenced by rankings on international assessments and related concerns about economic competitiveness; what Thomson et al. (2014) have called 'PISA envy' (p.xiii). Deficit discourses and practices associated with neoliberal reform are increasingly de- or re-professionalising educationists through an acculturation process (Ball, 2016). Teacher education has been constructed as a policy problem (Cochran-Smith, 2005) with governments setting out to improve it by increasing regulation and tightening accountability mechanisms. Professionalism has become associated with increased levels of accountability as demonstrated through greater use of professional standards and measures of teacher performance to link teachers' work with national goals and economic agendas (Connell, 2009). At the same time, looming teacher shortages have prompted governments to support alternative pathways into the profession (for example, *Teach for Australia* and *Teach First*) which also become part of the solution to the problem of teacher education. The role of teacher education in developing knowledge for teaching is devalued while discipline knowledge and learning on the job are positioned as key determinants of effective teaching.

Sachs (2016) suggests that performance cultures, increased accountability, and teacher standards are shaping policy and practice, and that governments are constructing organisational or managerial professionalism which in turn is creating a risk averse teaching profession exhibiting compliant professionalism (see also Ball, 2003). Likewise, Evetts (2013) suggested '*organizational professionalism* is a discourse of control …. It incorporates rational-legal forms of authority and

hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision-making. It involves the increased standardization of work procedures and practices and managerialist controls. It relies on externalized forms of regulation and accountability measures such as target-setting and performance review' (p.787). These types of performance cultures and standardisation imply a low level of trust in teachers and teacher educators. Thus, governments set out to define their work (in standards) and establish mechanisms by which they are required to provide evidence of their (increased) performance. However, it has long been argued that standards draw attention to specific kinds of performances, outcomes and dispositions that frame teaching as a technical activity and do not account for the broader political, social and philosophical underpinnings of good teaching (Beyer, 2002). In addition, despite statements of standards purporting to be a roadmap for professional growth from graduation or beginning teaching, to a more competent level of teaching, and then increasing competence and leadership, the reality is that the standards are more often used to regulate transition points (both in terms of professional registration and career progression including promotion) rather than frame and encourage ongoing professional growth and learning. Evans (2008) draws out this distinction comparing functional development and attitudinal development. The major driver behind functional development is improvement in people's performance and is usually attained by imposition. Attitudinal development, on the other hand, focuses on people's attitudes to work; it is intellectual and motivational and is concerned with improvement of individual practice. Organisational or managerial professionalism incorporates functional development.

Alternatively, professionalism can be thought of as *occupational* professionalism involving collegial authority, trust, autonomy, professional judgement and guided by codes of professional ethics (Evetts, 2013). In a similar way, Sachs (2003) argued for an activist teaching profession incorporating democratic professionalism which focussed on collegial relations and collaborative work practices. These ways of thinking of professionalism is usually favoured by teachers rather than governments. Teachers' enacted professionalism comprises behavioural (what teachers actually do at work), attitudinal (attitudes held) and intellectual (teachers' knowledge and understanding and their

knowledge structures) components (Evans, 2011). It is constantly re-shaping itself through the dynamic agency of its practitioners and in some cases different generations of teachers experience professionalism in a context of standardisation in parallel professionalisms (Stone-Johnson, 2014).

The role of research in constructing professionalism can be thought of in two ways: research for and about teacher education and research for and about effective teaching. Reviews of teacher education research have regularly concluded that it is small scale, often undertheorized, fragmentary, and somewhat parochial (e.g. Menter, 2017; Sleeter, 2014). This then morphs into claims about a paucity of evidence of its effectiveness and assumptions that therefore it must be ineffective. Moreover, teacher education research is regularly misused and misconstrued (e.g. Zeichner & Conklin, 2017) in order to manufacture a narrative of failure in order to provide a rationale for tighter accountability and significant reform agendas in teacher education (e.g. Cochran-Smith et al., 2018). In the main, teacher education research seems to occur parallel to teacher education policy, rarely informing policy and even more rarely as part of teacher education accountability approaches.

While research for teaching has been increasingly judged through a 'what works' lens and its value for teachers judged according to the use or not of prescribed methodologies (Burns & Schuller, 2007), there are calls for rethinking professional identity around practices that are informed and improved by and through teacher and classroom research. This involves teachers being research literate in order to judge the value of publicly available research for their teaching, and also being researchers themselves in order to investigate and improve their classroom practices. Both of these approaches frame a professionalism that involves informed professional judgement and teaching decisions designed to enhance student learning. The BERA-RSA report envisages a repositioning of teacher professionalism where 'a new environment of self-improving education systems teachers will need to become research literate and have opportunities for research and inquiry. This requires that schools and colleges become research-rich environments in which to work' (BERA, 2014, p.5).

Drawing on this discussion about the ways in which professionalism is and can be constructed, we examine current teacher education policies in Australia and England. In both Australia and England there has been a focus on ensuring that future teachers enter schools 'classroom ready'. In England this has been particularly obvious in the ways in which universities have been constructed as out of touch with the needs of teachers, and practices that prioritise extended time in schools learning a 'craft' rather than education theory valorised. This has seen the prioritisation of behaviour management techniques, practical wisdom over scholarship, subject content knowledge, and conformity. We explore the context of Australia first.

Teacher Education in Australia

Apart from a small *Teach for Australia* programme, teachers in Australia are currently prepared in bachelor's and master's degree programmes at universities before commencing teaching employment. In 2019, 325 accredited teacher education programmes (68% undergraduate and 32% postgraduate) were offered by 48 providers across Australia. Since 2011, one-year postgraduate programmes have been phased out and replaced by two-year master's programmes. In 2017, 18,397 preservice teachers completed an ITE programme (AITSL, 2019).

In 2009, federal government policy began to regulate teacher education more closely. The *Smarter Schools—Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership* was a significant reform agenda at that time which resulted in the development of *Teach for Australia* and the establishment of the *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership* (AITSL) to provide leadership and oversight of national professional standards for teachers, national programme standards for the accreditation of teacher education, and nationally consistent teacher registration. While these reforms were still being implemented, the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) was established in 2014 to review teacher education. In announcing the review, the Minister for Education set the tone:

> And there is evidence that our teacher education system is not up to scratch. We are not attracting the top students into teacher courses as we once did, courses are too theoretical,

> ideological and faddish, not based on the evidence of what works in teaching important subjects like literacy. Standards are too low at some education institutions - everyone passes. (Pyne, February 18, 2014)

TEMAG was chaired by a university vice-chancellor with a legal background and comprised seven government selected members including two school administrators, two senior university administrators, an academic in mathematics education, a chief executive of the independent school systems, and a CEO of an entrepreneurial start-up. It was tasked with making 'recommendations on how ITE in Australia could be improved to better prepare new teachers with the practical skills needed for the classroom' (TEMAG, 2014, p.ix). The final report provided 38 recommendations and the Australian government's response promised swift and decisive action to ensure:

- Stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses
- Rigorous selection for entry to teacher education courses
- Improved and structured practical experience for teacher education students
- Robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness
- National research and workforce planning capabilities

(Australian Government, 2015)

Following objections from the states and territories who were responsible for regulating the teaching profession in their jurisdictions including the accreditation of teacher education programmes, the TEMAG recommendation for a new national regulator was the only one not accepted for action. Since 2015, the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* document has been updated to reflect the new policy directions resulting from the TEMAG review. We now turn to analysis of the constructions of professionalism evident in the TEMAG Report and in the new standards and procedures for accreditation.

(Re)constructing professionalism in Australia

The *Action Now: Classroom ready teachers* TEMAG report (2014) and the subsequent *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (AITSL, 2019) have contributed to constructing professionalism in Australia. TEMAG positioned itself as responding to the urgent need to improve the quality of teacher education and set about recommending a rigorous standards-based accountability mechanism to do that. Much attention was also given to ensuring the 'right' type of person was admitted to teacher education and to ways in which teacher education programmes must provide evidence of their graduates' effectiveness as well as other evidence of the effectiveness of their programmes. Far less attention was given to the curriculum of teacher education and there was no questioning of the view that all beginning teachers should successfully complete a university-based teacher education degree programme before being employed. University-school partnerships were highlighted as important, but this was framed in accountability terms aimed at ensuring that programmes responded to the needs of schools and employers. Both TEMAG and the subsequent accreditation standards and procedures were largely silent on alternative pathways into teaching other than to suggest that they could be possible if they were deemed equivalent to the established degree routes.

In its review, TEMAG (2014) claimed to consider 'wide-ranging evidence and research' in recommending that the Australian Government act 'on the sense of urgency to immediately commence implementing actions to lift the quality of initial teacher education' (Recommendation 2). It claimed that 'the Australian community does not have confidence in the quality and effectiveness of new teachers' (p.1) and that concerns about the 'declining performance of Australian students in international testing' (p.2) meant there was an 'appetite for change'. In these ways, a case for change was argued, framing teacher education as a problem which needed improvement. Research was cited in the arguments for change, but mostly referred to previous government reports, governments commissioned research consultancies, and/or reports from multinational entities like the OECD and McKinsey & Company. While claims were regularly made of evidence supporting the changes and recommendations, research by teacher education academics rarely featured. Thus, evidence and

research to support the claims and recommendations are constructed in a particular way. As Helgetun and Menter (2020) recently suggested, evidence is often a rationalized myth in teacher education policy because policies are usually politically constructed and ideologically based.

Building on this deficit view of teacher education, the government response took the official position that 'the accreditation of courses is currently not sufficiently rigorous or evidence-based' (Australian Government, 2015, p. 4). To increase this rigour, eight principles were outlined for accreditation of teacher education including: demonstrating programme impact; relying in evidence in accreditation decisions; rigour assuring robust and nationally consistent decision; evidence of continuous improvement; flexibility, diversity and innovation; partnerships; transparency all elements of initial teacher education, from entrant selection to program outcomes, and making the data public; and, research that informs program design and delivery, and informs the continual improvement of teacher education programmes (AITSL, 2019, p.3).

An important driver of the TEMAG argument and recommendations was that graduating teachers must be 'classroom ready'. Indeed, this is the catch cry of the report's title *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers.* As a result, a more detailed accreditation *Program Standard 1.2* was written: 'Program design and assessment processes require pre-service teachers to have successfully completed a final-year teaching performance assessment prior to graduation' (Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership, 2019, p.8). This dominant focus on classroom ready was accompanied by far less prescription about the curriculum of the teacher education programmes or specifically what beginning teachers should know and be able to do, other than Recommendation 14 which stated 'Higher education providers deliver evidence-based content focused on the depth of subject knowledge and range of pedagogical approaches that enable pre-service teachers to make a positive impact on the learning of all students'. The assumption seemed to be that the already developed Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011) accurately detailed the required professional knowledge, practice and engagement, and that what was needed was a tighter

accountability framework around using them. Like Beck's (2009) analysis of New Labour's policies in England, the *Australian Professional Standards for Teacher*s depict a professionalism that is focussed mainly in what teachers do rather than what and how they think and what attitudes they hold. However, they were not challenged in the TEMAG report.

In addition, great emphasis was given to ensuring that the 'right' people come into teacher education. This focus on the person (i.e. teachers not their teaching) resulted in recommendations about required academic skills and desirable personal attributes and characteristics. In the end, measures of academic skills ended up being the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) and levels of literacy and numeracy. ATAR is a number between 0.00 and 99.95 given to school leavers that indicates their individual position relative to all the students who started secondary school with them in Year 7. Of course, many teacher education entrants are not secondary school graduates. In 2017, there were 31,532 commencements in teacher education programmes with 70% (n = 21,924) commencing an undergraduate qualification and 30% (n = 9,608) a postgraduate qualification. 37% (n = 8,206) of all undergraduate teacher education commencements entered from a secondary education pathway and 5,402 of those were admitted on the basis on an ATAR (AITSL, 2019). Thus, the political and media hype about ATAR and the quality of the teaching profession is misguided. In relation to personal levels of literacy and numeracy, TEMAG recommended that '[h]igher education providers use the national literacy and numeracy test to demonstrate that all preservice teachers are within the top 30 per cent of the population in personal literacy and numeracy.' Not surprisingly, in policy and practice, this 30% category proved rather challenging to associate it with a score on the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education Students (LANTITE) see https://teacheredtest.acer.edu.au.

Another aspect of requiring teacher education programmes to admit the 'right' people was the recommendation for selection processes to admit those with the 'personal characteristics to become a successful teacher' (Recommendation 10). This was translated into accreditation requirements for providers to use non-academic selection criteria (Program Standard 3). In practice, this has meant

everything from a short personal statement attached to applications to the use of commercially produced tests such as CASPer (computer-based assessment for sampling personal characteristics) see https://takecasper.com/about-casper/. Moreover, teacher education providers were required to 'publish all information necessary to ensure transparent and justifiable selection processes for entry into initial teacher education programs.' (Recommendation 11) suggesting a mistrust in providers to make appropriate decisions about selection of entrants to their teacher education programmes.

The TEMAG report regularly highlighted a lack of evidence about the effectiveness of teacher education. There was an opportunity here for teacher education research to be included as an integral component of the accreditation processes. While the accreditation programme standards did end up including as one of its principles 'Research – accreditation generates and relies upon a strong research base that informs program design and delivery, and informs the continual improvement of teacher education programs by providers', another principle 'Evidence-based – evidence must underpin all elements of initial teacher education, from the design and delivery of programs to the teaching practices taught within programs. Evidence is the basis on which panels make accreditation recommendations' (AITSL, 2019, p.3) ended up being more prominent in the actual requirement for accreditation. For example, Program Standard 1 requires providers to provide evidence of impact of the programme by including the following data as evidence: employment data; registration data; graduate and principal satisfaction surveys; the impact of graduates on student learning including case studies and surveys (p.10). Some time ago, Cochran-Smith and Power (2010) reminded us that teacher quality often encompasses a range of things including student learning outcomes, teacher recruitment, teacher qualifications, preparation and pathways, induction, professional development, teachers' working conditions, teacher assessment and effectiveness, employment, and attrition and retention. Many of these end up being used as proxies for teacher quality and teacher education quality and are invoked as part of accountability discourses and subsequently incorporated into standards and regulation. The calls for evidence of teacher education effectiveness in the *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* certainly included many of these

proxies in ways that mean the evidence purporting to signal effectiveness of teacher education are, in reality, not able to be directly related to the programme itself e.g. employment, retention.

Thus, key documents for teacher education in Australia - *Action Now: Classroom ready teachers* (TEMAG, 2014) and the subsequent *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* construct teacher professionalism in Australia as being the right type of person with appropriate personal characteristics and levels of personal literacy and numeracy, who can demonstrate appropriate teaching practice against standards within a system that determines performance indicators and mechanisms for classroom readiness. Moreover, teacher educator professionalism can be interpreted as ensuring the production of graduates who are classroom ready at point of graduation via programmes that are accredited using nationally consistent standards.

Teacher Education in England

In contrast with Australia there are multiple pathways into teaching in England. In addition to university undergraduate (some of which are only three year) degrees and one year postgraduate (PGCE) routes into teaching, it is also possible to become a teacher in England without attending a higher education institution (HEI) by acquiring a teacher qualification through School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) consortia, and by participating in one of the school based salaried routes into teaching which have minimal contact with a HEI (for example, Teach First and Researchers in Schools). Whiting et al. (2018) indicate in their analysis of the diverse and complex ways in which one could become a teacher in England in the 2015-16 academic year that there were 13 possible routes open to those wanting to become a teacher in England. Little has changed since that time. It should also be noted that it is not a requirement for English academies[3] to employ qualified teachers.

[3] Academies are schools that have been removed from the control of local authorities and act as quasi private schools (see Hilton, 2018).

The diversity of routes into teaching can be traced back to *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010). The publication of this white paper is often regarded as a watershed moment for teacher education in England (Simon, 2019). In addition to the diversification of routes into teaching (e.g. the introduction of SCITTs and Troops into Teaching, and an expanded Teach First programme), it also led to reforms concerned with the quality of entrants into teacher education (requiring a minimum 2.2 degree) and a greater focus on classroom readiness and practical experience in ITE (Morris, 2010). Menter and Reynolds (2019) argue that a distinctive feature of this document (compared to previous reforms) was its emphasis on an apprenticeship model of learning to teach whereby prospective teachers would spend more time in the classroom learning the 'craft' of teaching. The white paper can also be seen as a reflection of global critiques of teacher education in response to performances on international tests (e.g. PISA) and subsequent global rankings (Maguire, 2014). Teacher education was thus, as elsewhere, also a 'policy problem' in England. As a response to that problem, *The Importance of Teaching* has helped to shape the developments in teacher education over the last decade. These developments include the Carter Review (Carter, 2015) and the ITT Framework (DfE, 2019b) which we focus on here to illustrate the ways in which teacher professionalism is being shaped in England through approaches to teacher education.

(Re)constructing teacher professionalism in England

The former Coalition government commissioned Sir Andrew Carter to examine the quality and effectiveness of initial teacher education provision in England (Carter, 2015). Carter was the head teacher of a large Academy and the leader of a SCITT provider (as well as being the ITT lead on the Teaching Schools Council). A small panel, including only one academic with expertise in the field of teacher education, was selected to work with him. While the Carter Review has clearly been influential in government responses to ITE, Mutton, Burn and Menter (2017) suggest that:

> The significance of the Carter Review lies not so much in the extent to which it will ultimately have an impact, or otherwise, on teacher education policy and practices in England

> but rather in what the process of the Review itself reveals about the way in which much wider and potentially intractable policy concerns are addressed within a specific national context. (p.28)

The detailed analysis – 'deconstruction' – of the Carter Review by Mutton et al. highlights many of the competing discourses that were shaping and continue to shape ITE in England. The review, as they demonstrate, is riddled with tensions that often mirror the differing interests of those who have, with varying degrees, an instrumental view of teaching and those who have a view of teaching as a complex activity requiring rigorous engagement with the moral purposes of education. In their deconstruction of the review Mutton et al. identified six unresolved tensions in the document. Four of these are derived from the work of Cochran-Smith (2005):

- Regulation/deregulation
- Multiple sites/university
- Subject matter/pedagogy
- Diversification/selectivity

To which they added:

- Moral purpose/professional behaviour
- Delivering 'urgent' content/teacher education pedagogy

Teacher education in England operates in a highly deregulated market as demonstrated through the multiple routes into teaching (including in some instance, no engagement with HEIs) mentioned above and the discretion on the part of some schools to employ non-qualified teachers (Whiting et al., 2018). Without seeming to disrupt this deregulation it was clear from the recommendations from the Carter review that there was a perceived need to enhance some regulation of teacher education. This included the development of an 'initial teacher education framework' introduced in 2016, the updated version of which we discuss below (DfE, 2019b). However, these regulatory outcomes can be read as not so much controlling the supply of initial teacher education routes, or impinging on the school

focussed approaches, but further wresting the field of teacher education from distrusted university departments by prioritising school-based practice over the disciplines *of* education (sociology, psychology, history, philosophy etc.).

The review emphasises the importance of both subject content knowledge and subject specific pedagogy indicating that there is insufficient of both in teacher education programmes. Thus, the review appeared to validate the importance of education studies at universities that addressed issues of pedagogy. Hence, there was some disruption of the discourse circulating in government that subject content knowledge was of far greater import than pedagogical content knowledge. Such a view was perhaps best encapsulated in a comment reportedly made by Nick Gibb soon after becoming Minister for Schools, that he: "would rather have a physics graduate from Oxbridge without a PGCE teaching in a school than a physics graduate from one of the rubbish universities with a PGCE" (Williams, 17 May 2010). The review took somewhat of a neutral position on debates about the place of education studies in teacher education. Again, through the silence on, and lack of a vigorous defence of, university education studies, the review did little to challenge the views by those in government such as Gibbs.

The belittling of university education departments, especially those in universities considered by many within the Conservative Party as 'rubbish', has underpinned many of the approaches taken by recent governments led by the Conservative Party (either as the senior coalition partner or governing in their own right). Unlike in Australia, where the university entrance scores for prospective teachers at regional universities are often held up to ridicule, the 'quality' of pre-service entry levels was not addressed in the Carter Review - despite being a concern of *The Importance of Teaching*. There is thus little engagement with the tension of building a diverse workforce whilst at the same time ensuring that teaching is an academically selective programme. However, this silence, as recognised by Mutton et al. (2017), in relation to meeting the educational needs of a diverse student population is at best surprising, given the expectation that a diverse teacher workforce is often regarded as

beneficial to supporting the needs of *all* students, especially those from marginalised backgrounds, and at worst as symptomatic of an institutionalised disregard for populations marginalised by factors such as race/ethnicity and poverty.

In addition to the tensions identified by Cochran-Smith (2005), Mutton et al. (2017) also identify a tension between a consideration of the moral purpose of education and professional behaviours. There is they note some valorisation of the teacher as a potential inspirator who can open up the minds of young people to the wonders of the world. However, this is tempered by a similar advocacy of a very narrow managerial definition of professionalism, often addressing teachers' behaviour. Hence, any advocacy for a more democratic version of professionalism does not appear in the review - especially in relation to teachers' engagement with research. The review's commentary on research is very much focussed on teachers as consumers of research, rather than as producers of research.

A further unresolved tension, which Mutton et al. (2017) see as perhaps the most important, is: 'that between defining teacher education in terms of the content to be mastered or defining it in relation to the kinds of pedagogy that are required' (p.23). They identify an urgency in the review to address what are seen as deficits in teacher education and draw attention to Recommendation 1 which lists the core content that should form the basis of initial teacher education programmes. They suggest that such a list lends itself to a form of compliance where the various content expectations can be ticked off rather than to an intellectual engagement with the content taking into account issues of sequencing, troubling and reflection – all elements of good pedagogy. It is this 'core content' which reveals the ways in which the tensions are resolved in practice.

Following the Carter Review, the *Framework of Core Content for Initial Teacher Training* (ITT) (DfE, 2016) was released, and then replaced in November 2019, just prior to the national election, by the *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework* (DfE, 2019b). These frameworks can be read as evidence of such a compliance model being brought into effect. Here we focus on the latter

framework as an indication of the ways in which teacher professionalism is currently being (re)constructed in England.

The framework is designed to complement the Early Career Framework (ECF) (DfE, 2019a) and is divided into eight core content sections which mirror each of the teacher standards (see DfE, 2011, updated 2013). These sections are: High expectations; How pupils learn; Subject and curriculum; Classroom practice; Adaptive teaching; Assessment; Managing behaviour; and Professional behaviours. In each content areas the expectation (or as the document indicates entitlement) is supported by a list of statements indicating what pre-service teachers should come to know ('Learn that...') able to do ('Learn how to...').

Turvey et al. (2019) provide a critique of this Framework on the BERA blog. They argue that 'this new policy represents the single most significant shift in what new teachers will be taught in England since 1998' and 'presents significant risks in terms of the quality of new teachers'. Their principal concern is that it demonstrates 'low expectations for a graduate profession' and is based on limited research (primarily that commissioned by EEF) and presented as evidence of what works. In particular they focus on the way in which the framework appears to back up a Conservative Party obsession with young people's ability to 'recall' rather than 'nuanced' and complex understandings of how young people learn including a consideration of the social context in which they learn. It also reflects an obsession with student behaviour. It should not be forgotten that a significant aspect of the Conservative Party election Manifesto dealing with education related to behaviour:

> We also want to build on our record of raising standards, improving behaviour and promoting knowledge and creativity.
>
> **We will back heads and teachers on discipline**. We will expand our programme to help schools with the worst behaviour learn from the best – and **back heads to use exclusions**. (original emphasis)

Absent in the Framework is a mandate to engage with theory, any such engagement is regarded as an add-on. It is left up to institutions to determine what is required in terms of theory: 'Providers should ensure their curricula encompass the full entitlement described in the ITT Core Content Framework, as well as integrating additional analysis and critique of theory, research and expert practice *as they deem appropriate'* (emphasis added). There are several issues with this, including the time available to engage with educational theory given the imbalance between time spent on university studies and that on practical experience, and the extent to which such an engagement will be deemed appropriate by some providers. Hence, whilst it is clearly appropriate to extol the virtues of having high expectations of *all* students, where in various 'ITT' providers' curricula will pre-service teachers be expected to make sense of such expectations in the context of disparities in, for example, outcomes and school exclusions? Will it be deemed appropriate to consider these issues in the light of institutional racism, of school gender regimes, of poverty and their various intersectionalities? Such considerations are necessary to bring to the fore important questions about the purposes of education, highlighted as important in the Carter Review, but seemingly missing in the Framework. These absences point to an understanding of professionalism whereby teachers are the implementers of others' agendas.

The 'official' language related to teacher education gives an indication of the type of professionalism that is promoted in the English context. The policy framework in England is one that emphasises the 'training' of teachers rather than their 'education' both in the initial phases and in continuing professional development. In her analysis of continuing professional development, Sachs (2011) identifies two approaches, a 'traditional training approach' and a 'teacher learning orientation'. It is very much the former approach that underpins initial teacher education in England as made clear by the Initial Teacher *Training* (ITT) Framework (DfE, 2019). As Sachs says of this approach the focus is on ensuring the teacher can be a 'manager' of student learning whose focus is on the immediate needs of the classroom.

A teaching learning orientation, emphasising education – as in initial teacher education (ITE) - not training, and that is concerned with developing teachers' disposition towards treating their work as an intellectual activity requires teachers who understand how to use and undertake research. As we have noted earlier, the BERA/RSA report stressed that a self-improving education system requires research literate teachers – that is as both active consumers and producers of research. As Sachs (2016) has argued, this is evidence of a mature profession. Drawing on Mockler (2005), she claims that: 'A mature profession takes a transformative view of teacher professionalism, which seeks to develop teachers who are creative designers of curriculum and innovative pedagogues' (Sachs, 2016, p.422). There is some suggestion of this view in both the Carter Review and the ITT Framework. However, the Carter review raises teachers' engagement with research only in the context of advocacy for 'evidence-based teaching'. In the Framework there is only a minor reference to research where it is noted that teachers need to know that learning from educational research is 'likely to support improvement' (not will). The extent to which this aspect of being a teacher will be picked up by those responsible for delivering teacher education (especially outside HEIs) is debateable given that it could easily be read as a minor requirement within the framework with very little stress given to its importance as component of a mature profession.

Concluding comments

In our view, the documents considered here demonstrate significant policy borrowing in that they are both a product of and a contributor to powerful discourses about teacher professionalism, and indeed teacher educator professionalism. Despite a marked difference between the two countries in relation to available routes into teaching, with England being dominated by a range of pathways that reduce or eliminate the role of universities and university-based degree programmes remaining the main pathway into teaching in Australia, the policies in both countries engage a deficit discourse positioning teacher education as a problem (Cochran-Smith, 2005) and feature increased accountability, standards and performance management (Sachs, 2016) in a context of neoliberal reform (Ball, 2016).

A practice turn (Zeichner, 2012) is evident in the way that teaching is constructed in teacher standards framed as evidence-based practice and 'what works' framings of educational research (Biesta, 2007), and also in the assumption that developing competence in practical skills for teaching is the role of teacher education. In England, the role of an apprenticeship type of training is seen as the way to achieve this, while in Australia accountability requirements for capstone performance assessments against teacher standards aim to ensure that university-based teacher education programmes focus on developing practical skills for the classroom.

In both countries, increasing regulation of teacher education is evident. While a more deregulated market is a feature of the English landscape with many pathways into teaching, increasing regulation aims to wrest further control from universities. In Australia, increasing regulation similarly aims to define and manage teacher education work by defining outcomes by which programmes will be held accountable, some of which bear little direct relationship to the work of professionally educating new teachers.

While teacher testing for personal levels of literacy and numeracy is evident in both countries, the policies in Australia also aim to ensure that the 'right' type of person with the most appropriate personal characteristics is permitted to enter teacher education and the teaching profession, a concept no so far removed from the notion of a desirable teacher as the 'good' and often charismatic person often promoted in popular culture (Connell, 2009; Moore, 2004). Levels of mistrust in teacher education providers to be both prudent in their selection and admission processes and transparent in their practices, is clearly evident in the policies. Moreover, in these policies and the reviews that informed them, there is no engagement with possible impact that these measures to regulate entry into the profession might have for a diverse teaching workforce.

The policies in both countries are being formulated in what Helgetun and Menter (2020) call an 'evidence era' where 'evidence' is constructed as a 'truth'. Certainly, claims of evidence to justify various reforms are engaged. But claims for evidence-based teaching is often associated with a 'what works' agenda that takes no account of context and does not nuance findings. Thus, teachers are expected to engage with and be uncritical consumers of existing evidence to improve their practice. This research is often deemed to be more valuable than the rest based on the assumption that some methods are inherently more rigorous and thus that research is to be more highly valued than others. However, there is no expectation that teachers will be the creators of 'evidence' applicable to their own contexts as the product of their own research.

Winch et al. (2015) identify two popular conceptions of teachers' work, both of which are evident in the documents discussed here: 'teaching as a craft' and 'teaching as the application of technical protocols' (see also Maguire, 2014). They suggest that teaching should be reconceptualised as 'a professional endeavour' highlighting the importance of teachers' engagement with research as part of their professional identity. There are some differences across the two contexts, but we see these as only matter of minor degrees of difference. While teacher education at certificate and diploma level or in schools could provide opportunities for teachers to engage with and undertake their own research, the regulation of a two-year postgraduate master's teacher education programme in Australia certainly does provide more clear opportunities for graduating teachers to both critically engage with published research and also to develop their own research capabilities, since these are master's level requirements.

Finally, the notion of evidence is being widely engaged as part of accountability mechanisms with teacher education programmes being required to provide evidence of their effectiveness and impact. While there is an opportunity for teacher education research to provide evidence of effectiveness and impact, the evidence requested in the regulations usually relates to aspects that have little do with the actual teacher education programme and its curriculum. Instead, the evidence being required usually

refers to data rather removed from the programme, such as employment and retention data. In this way, teacher education research is further marginalised and the work of teacher educators is further de-professionalised.

Thus, the derision and mistrust of teacher education is evident in both contexts. The construction of teacher professionalism through the policies in Australia and England reflects a managerial approach dominated by performance cultures, increased accountability, and teacher standards (Sachs, 2016). What teachers and teacher educators do, and how they do it, are key components of a professionalism defined by standards and accompanying performance management processes. The importance of collaborative work which might be indicative of democratic professionalism (Sachs, 2003) and the extent to which teachers research and improve their practices, and invoke professional judgement involving interrogation of available research (BERA, 2014), rarely feature in the policy documents we analysed. The constructions of teacher professionalism contained within these documents are not restricted to Australia and England they are part of a global discourse (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012). However, in order to limit the damaging effects of such constructions, we need to learn about the ways in which they manifest in the local in order to support democratic professionalism across the globe.

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