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Janet Holmes
Inquiry Secretary
Standing Committee on Education
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

28 April 2005

Dear Janet

Please find attached a submission from the Australian Curriculum Studies Association to the House of Representatives Inquiry into Teacher Education.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K. Schoo'.

Katherine Schoo
Executive Director

***Submission to the Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training
Inquiry into Teacher Education***

From the Australian Curriculum Studies Association

Introduction:

The issues addressed in this inquiry, 'the scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities' and the 'preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australia's schools' are ones that have been subject to considerable discussion, over many years, by the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA) members and Executive.

In this submission ACSA has commented on the nature and processes of teacher education including the practicum.

The following documents are attached to support ACSA's comments:

- Attachment 1: Australian Curriculum Studies Association - Policy on Teacher Education *including* Principals of Australian Curriculum Reform.
- Attachment 2: Australian Curriculum Studies Association - Teaching Curriculum Studies in Teacher Education Programs
- Attachment 3: Australian Curriculum Studies Association – Background information.
- Attachment 4: Australian Curriculum Studies Association - Executive

The Teacher Education Course

The Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA) is committed to intellectual quality and rigour and has absolute commitment to the highest standards of academic and social outcomes possible for those undertaking teacher education courses.¹

A fully qualified graduate teacher today must be a high level professional educator with a solid knowledge base in several content areas, an understanding of the literacy and numeracy demands of those content areas and high level understanding in propositional and procedural professional areas eg. pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment and reporting.

In addition teachers need to be able to teach a diversity of students in differing contexts; they need cross-cultural understandings of an increasingly multicultural

¹ ACSA, Teacher Education Policy- 3m.

society; they need an understanding of differing social backgrounds and circumstances as they impact on students' daily lives.

Given the complexity of the profession today and the processes necessary for teacher education courses, including the integral combination of theory and practice it is essential that universities be providers of such courses.² Universities provide the appropriate environment for deep theoretical work, i.e. reflection, dialogue and debate, to interact with schools and to ensure that all aspects of teacher education come together to produce the type of educator required.

Government funds and regulatory arrangement³ (viz. accreditation of university courses and teacher registration) need to be provided to ensure these courses are conducted by highly qualified theorists and practitioners ensuring quality outcomes.

The basis of good practice is to produce teachers who can work powerfully with young people. Both the community and student populations are more diverse than in previous times creating a need for practitioners who not only respond to increasing diversity among the student population but have the predisposition and ability to appreciate diversity by not imposing one view on learning or learning methods⁴. For similar reasons, in terms of the volume of material to be studied, the time necessary for maturing, evolving thought and reflection on a complexity of issues, it is not possible to reduce the length of teacher education courses. ACSA does not support any reduction in the time taken to complete a teaching degree. Across Australia this is four or five years depending on whether dual degrees are end-on or concurrent. We support the need for at least two years of professional study within these degrees.

ACSA is opposed to the apprenticeship model of school experience. Teaching is a profession because education is a field of enquiry, theory and practice with its own distinctive problems, subject matters for enquiry, concepts and modes of organisation. It is important that pre-service teachers work together with teachers in school settings on educational issues and problems. Problems should be identified and explored together and pre-service teachers should be encouraged to engage in reflection and discussion with teachers facilitating the transition into the complex domain of teaching. University studies and school experience should be integrated. Studies should be integrated into what pre-service teachers are practising and theories should be married to practice.

Indigenous pre-service studies

ACSA believes that indigenous studies should be mandatory and that educators have a responsibility for the development of cultural and civic and citizenship knowledge and values of our society.

'Curriculum workers who are contextually-aware, ethically-sensitive, culturally-inclusive and socially-just are familiar with the connections that the present has with both the past and the future; they recognise the rich diversity of living within a multicultural Australia and a globalised world; and they appreciate the enormous

² ACSA Teacher Education Policy- 2i-vi.

³ ACSA Teacher Education Policy- 3vi

⁴ ACSA Teacher Education Policy-1iv,1vii,1x,1xv

complexity associated with being sensitive to the ethics of being responsive in ways that are socially-just and equity-driven in their curriculum thinking and practice. Within the Australian context, curriculum workers work towards reconciliation through an authentic inclusion of Indigenous content and perspectives in the curriculum and which challenge practices that restrict learning outcomes for indigenous students.⁵

The Federal Government report, Indigenous Strategic Results Project *What Works? Explorations in improving outcomes for Indigenous students* (McRae et al., 2000) concluded that effective teaching practice is essential to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students. The Australian Council of Deans of Education report that Indigenous Studies do not have sufficient priority in pre-service teacher education courses.

Partnership between Universities and Schools

Given the nature of current day educators and graduate students the teacher education process needs to draw heavily on the capacity of universities and schools to produce quality outcomes. In order to produce these quality outcomes it is necessary to establish a real partnership between teachers in schools and academics at universities to ensure an understanding by teachers of what is trying to be achieved in university courses and to benefit from the wisdom of practising teachers. Such a partnership requires a level of resourcing not currently available to universities.

Primary- Secondary Divide

The ACSA curriculum conference for practitioners this year is titled *Blurring the Boundaries*. This title reinforces ACSA's belief that boundaries between primary and secondary education should be blurred and education faculties must reflect the need for fluidity between early, middle and secondary phases of education. However, it is essential that teachers have specialist knowledge in teaching different age groups of children.

ACSA advocates a model for preparing pre-service teachers for two phases of learning. This would not only give them more flexibility in their career but also a greater understanding and ability to meet the needs of students. The phases of teaching advocated are: early childhood/primary; primary/middle schooling; middle schooling /secondary; secondary/post compulsory.⁶

Recruitment and retention

Marketing strategies need to be developed to attract a range of people to the profession of teaching. The aim of such marketing tools should be to attract a diversity of students that is reflective of the multicultural population. Secondary students do not perceive teachers as having good working conditions and adequate rates of pay and it is of concern that teachers do not advise higher achieving students to enter teacher education courses.

The terms of reference indicate a concern with attrition rates from teaching courses.

⁵ ACSA - Teaching Curriculum Studies in Teacher Education Programs- Part B

⁶ ACSA Teacher Education Policy-3ii, 3xii.

Research needs to be carried out into reasons for attrition from teacher education courses. Given that 80% of students work part time while studying it could be that one reason for attrition is financial difficulties but it also could be that students make wise decisions about their suitability for teaching.

Of more concern is the current high attrition rate of beginning teachers in the first five years of teaching. Teaching is a complex and difficult job. Support is needed for beginning teachers (eg. mentoring, planning time, lower class sizes) to ensure that these important years promote a continuum of professional learning in transition from pre-service education to a competent, experienced professional.

Teaching out of Field

It is common in secondary schools for teachers without specialist preparation in shortage curriculum areas (eg. Maths, English and Science) to be assigned to teach the younger grades unable to be covered by the limited pool of specialist teachers in these areas. These teachers need ongoing support to develop their expertise in these out-of-field areas.

Ongoing professional learning

Induction is a part of professional learning and structured models need to be developed to ensure professional learning takes place. There is a clear role for professional association in ongoing professional learning. Those engaged in professional associations demonstrate professionalism through their voluntary commitment. They are generally practising in the profession and display expertise in the area.

Finally, in considering the terms of reference ACSA questions the underpinning philosophy of the review through its use of the word 'training'. ACSA recommends the use of a more appropriate terminology around people preparing to become teachers eg. Teacher Education. 'Training' suggests a linear process through which people might pass and turn out the other end as a teacher. It marginalises the complexity and nature of teaching.

The ACSA Executive would be very pleased to provide further input and appear as witnesses, if required.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lesley McFarlane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Lesley McFarlane
ACSA President

Attachment 1:

Australian Curriculum Studies Association Policy on Teacher Education¹

Introduction

Education is the key social activity by which society reproduces the traditions and forms of life it considers desirable, and produces new traditions and forms of life it considers preferable to realise its aspirations for humanity. Accordingly, the theory, organisation and practice of teacher education should reflect these broad responsibilities at all levels including pre-service education and in-service education of all kinds.

Teaching is a profession because education is a field of enquiry, theory and practice with its own distinctive problems, subject matters for enquiry, concepts and modes of organisation. The practices of the education field include curriculum, pedagogy, administration, teacher education and research. Each practice is constituted by specific forms of communication, organisation and production (creative work). The curriculum of teacher education should provide understanding of these practices, the research programs which inform them, and the critiques which are made of them.

The curriculum of teacher education should attend explicitly also to the professional responsibilities of teachers. Teachers are subject to a bond of obligation to students, to care for them and to help them to work towards their intellectual, psychological, social, moral, spiritual, political and cultural well-being and towards responsible autonomy. This bond gives the professions of education their moral distinctiveness as professions, and gives teaching as the preferred route into this profession a distinctive character. Education for teaching must emphasise the broad social responsibility of teachers, for their students, for their own roles as citizens, and for their roles as personal and professional participants in individual and collective development of society.

Because teaching is a distinctive and demanding profession, the educational experiences which precede entry to the teaching profession, and those which subsequently sustain informed membership of the profession should exemplify productive relationships between universities and the several education professions which include teaching, educational administration, educational research, curriculum consultancy and related forms of work.

Control of entry to the profession should be accomplished through the requirement of accredited initial qualifications. The accreditation of initial teacher education should be jointly agreed among the teaching profession, employing authorities and universities. Teaching is presently, and should remain as, a *graduate profession*, with entrants to the teaching profession holding appropriate and mutually agreed university qualifications.

¹ This policy should be read in conjunction with the Australian Curriculum Studies Association Principles for Australian Curriculum Reform.

The curriculum of teacher education

1) The curriculum of teacher education should recognise that:

- i) The study of education and the study of society are inextricably linked. Entry to the professions of education requires extended, broad and ultimately highly focused study at all levels. Any accredited pre-service teacher education program should require at least the equivalent of two full-time years of study in addition to at least the equivalent of two full-time years of study in disciplines other than education, providing a basis of competency for entry to the profession **and** for continuing study in the field of education as a priority.
- ii) In-service education for teachers should continue to engage teachers in broad social analysis as well as studies of the particular specialisms within which they work. There should be both continuing opportunity and obligation for teachers to renew their professional knowledge through a combination of graduate study and other forms of in-service and post-initial staff development.
- iii) Teachers are key players in informing and promoting social stability and social change (cultural production and reproduction), through analysing and acting upon the ways in which certain kinds of knowledge are selected, interpreted, and represented in the discourse, practice and social relationships of educational work.
- iv) Teachers must be prepared to enact curriculum which responds to, and enhances the richness of the diversity of cultures and languages of Australian society. The teacher education curriculum must exemplify these aspirations.
- v) Teachers have a particular responsibility to understand and enact the imperatives of multiculturalism. In particular they have a responsibility to work towards the realisation of the educational aspirations of the wide diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This curriculum practice must be informed by the active participation of the associations recognised by indigenous people as appropriate and by the appointment of indigenous people to positions in teacher education, together with the provision of appropriate staff development programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers and teacher educators.
- vi) All non-indigenous teachers (and other education professionals) should be required to complete pre-service education studies to develop further their:
 - cross-cultural awareness from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective; and
 - understanding of the preferred ways of learning, curriculum approaches, forms of organisation, uses of technologies, educational sites (including building design and location) of different groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Where this has not been accomplished, for example by teachers already employed, participation in such in-service education should be mandatory.

- vii) Education is a social, historical and material construction expressed in particular discursive, institutional and practical arrangements which typically serves the interests of particular social groups at the expense of others. The teacher education curriculum at all levels must develop teachers' skills in identifying these interests and their relation to the total institutional milieu, and the skills necessary to enable them to act individually and collectively to redress any disadvantage experienced by individuals and groups.
- viii) The institutional settings of education, schools, colleges, institutes, universities and systems should exemplify socially just practices.
- ix) There is a need to broaden the perspective of educators away from narrow technical vocational objectives, towards a perspective expected to stimulate in-depth understandings of education as a socio-political force and product in society.
- x) Teachers require an orientation to their practice which is responsive to the need for change based on social, cultural, political and economic analyses. Teacher education institutions should exemplify such practices and inform them with relevant and active research, scholarship and consultancy.
- xi) Students of education should interact with students in other fields in both curricular and extra-curricular activities, and should include in their undergraduate programs a reasonable depth of study in other disciplines. However, the curriculum should make it clear that education is a distinctive field of theory, research, scholarship and practice, not merely an applied activity derived from other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, mathematics or management.
- xii) Educators should learn to make quite different, distinctive and educationally justifiable interpretations of the so-called 'disciplines' from the practitioners of those disciplines. For example, science education is not merely the induction of students into the discipline of science as scientists understand it, but a *disciplined interpretation* of scientists' views mediated by the views of philosophy of science, history of science, sociology of science and so on. This disciplined interpretation is the subject matter of research and scholarship in science education theory, organisation and practice. It is this research and scholarship, which is the primary source of knowledge, which informs science teachers' work.
- xiii) Education relates to other disciplines such as psychology, sociology and philosophy in dialectical ways. As a field it is *not* an applied version of any other field, but has an extensive literature of its own which is the fundamental source for the curriculum of teacher education.
- xiv) Practical experience is an integral part of pre-service teacher education, but should *not* be seen as 'apprenticeship'. The practicum must express the goals of the whole teacher education program and allow students opportunities to teach in several different ways and to explore in detail the context and rationale of educational programs to which they are exposed. Educators from schools and universities participating in the supervision and organisation of the practicum of undergraduate and graduate programs should be involved in the development of the rationale and substance for the entire program, not merely the practicum component. Employing authorities should collaborate with universities to create real opportunities for teachers to work in such program development and teaching in the universities.

- xv) Teacher education programs should include studies of the various ways that people learn. This knowledge should inform both the ways teacher education programs are taught and experienced, and the implications for classroom teaching.

2) Teacher education and educational research

- i) Teacher education must occur in institutional contexts which provide a combination of good teaching based upon internationally recognised scholarship, research and consultancy in the field of educational enquiry. Teacher educators themselves must be committed to such aspirations. Universities are responsible for ensuring that teacher educators are involved in scholarship and research which informs their undergraduate and graduate teaching, and other forms of consultancy and teacher development with which they are engaged.
- ii) Educational research has its own distinctive problems for enquiry and its own methodologies, and should be related directly to the issues and challenges of educational practice (including policy-making, administration and other educational practices, not just teaching), and support teachers and other education professionals in the enhancement of their work. To this end, educational research should be conducted collaboratively, and with careful attention to the way in which it relates to teachers and to teacher education.
- iii) Teacher education must include the introduction of teachers to the several educational research traditions, but should especially develop the skills and understandings necessary for teachers to conduct their own research and to participate meaningfully in research initiated, organised and conducted by others.
- iv) Teachers' own research, analysis and critique involves the identification and critique of the ideology embedded in all educational practice, discourse and organisation and informs individual and collective action in each of these registers of culture to eliminate injustice, inhumanity and ignorance in education, its institutional context and in society.
- v) As well as being committed to research and scholarship themselves, educational researchers must work with teachers to improve teachers' research skills and to support research conducted by teachers in their own work situations.
- vi) Teacher educators engaged in educational research should recognise the reciprocity and mutual dependence between their own knowledge and the knowledge of other practitioners of the education professions. The production of both 'academic knowledge' and 'professional knowledge' should not be romanticised or privileged, but the quality of each should be enhanced by authentic, informed and shared participation in research activities.

3) The organisation of teacher education

- i) Pre-service educational programs for teachers should be designed with active participation from organisations of teachers, employers, parents, teacher educators, educational researchers, curriculum consultants, students and system administrators and policy makers.

- ii) The education of educators for different educational worksites in the 'education industry' should be integrated, for example, primary, post-primary teacher education, adult education and vocational education should be specialisms within the one degree structure to allow specific practical and theoretical comparisons.
- iii) Pre-service teacher education may be integrated with the study of other disciplines in four year programs and 'combined' degrees. Pre-service post-graduate teacher education should also consist of at least two years of education studies at post-graduate level following completion of a degree in another field.
- iv) Further study for teachers in disciplines other than education should be encouraged to allow teachers to improve their knowledge of such disciplines, however such further study should not take place without graduate study in education. In general, the major emphasis of graduate study undertaken by teachers should be in the education field itself.
- v) In-service teacher education should as far possible be integrated with formal post-graduate study. Opportunities for teachers to study at higher degree level should be increased, and formal qualifications recognised for salary purposes. Credit for in-service training in short courses should be available, provided that the qualification granting university is satisfied that the assessment requirements for relevant studies have been met.
- vi) Educators have substantive, moral and legal authority which requires that pre-service teacher education programs be accredited and routinely evaluated to ensure public accountability. These responsibilities should be shared equitably among stakeholders.
- vii) There are several professions involved in education, including for example, educational administrators and educational researchers. Any evaluation and accreditation of programs for these specialisations should take account of the relevant stakeholder groups in each case. For example, the recognition of doctoral programs and higher degrees by research, should largely be the responsibility of educational researchers. Members of the specialist education professions should come from the teaching profession, and be entitled to consider themselves continuing members of the teaching profession.
- viii) Educational change and improvement *requires* adequate professional development which is of high quality; it cannot be accomplished by improved material provision alone, and is unlikely to be enhanced by increased surveillance of teachers' work. Professional development requires long term engagement with support staff including teacher educators, and conditions of work and work release which nurture reflection on practice. The 'privatisation' and 'commercialisation' of teacher education, especially mid-career professional development, seriously threatens the coherence and quality of provision.

- ix) The enhancement of the teacher education curriculum for indigenous people requires organisational arrangements which recognise specific learning needs and personal and cultural obligations. Strategies include longer periods of time for study which recognise the difficulties of living in two different cultural contexts, which allow people to meet community obligations, and which provide ongoing professional development support to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers have the skills and credentials to teach in schools throughout Australia. Particular attention must be paid to the needs of indigenous people teaching and wanting to teach in remote communities.
- x) Teachers should be expected, encouraged and rewarded to continue their studies of education in contexts which nurture their own research, analysis and critique, and which provide support for them to bring about changes in ways of educating, ways of organising educational work, and ways of representing education to different audiences and stakeholders.
- xi) The standing of teachers and teacher educators and the quality of people attracted to the education professions are significantly related to the material conditions of employment. That is, the organisation of teacher education must entail attention to the industrial conditions of teachers and other education professions, and to ways of improving these conditions.
- xii) Teachers (and others in the education professions) are responsible first and foremost for the learning of young people. They have ethical, moral and legal responsibilities which mean that they are uniquely bound by a code of caring which transcends their association with (and loyalties to) particular specialist knowledges and practices. Teachers must therefore work with other educators across, for example, subject-matter boundaries, the primary-secondary divide, and institutional and sectoral boundaries to improve education.
- xiii) Entry standards for the teaching profession must be strictly observed. These standards must attend to the principles identified here. Such standards may include the identification of competencies, and the specification of national standards of entry should not allow the lowering of any existing state standards. Temporary appointment of teachers who do not meet entry standards should not be permitted except in rare and bounded cases scrutinised by regulatory authorities. In such cases, enrolment at least half time in approved university teacher education programs must be mandatory. Regulatory arrangements should be national.

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ACSA Principles for Australian Curriculum Reform

An ACSA Policy Statement*

The purpose of these principles is to establish the Australian Curriculum Studies Association's (ACSA) position on curriculum in Australia. The position taken is intended to inform the theory and practice of all curriculum work in all institutional contexts, formal and informal, and across the full diversity of education in Australia. The intention is to provide a framework of principles to guide the Association in its own curriculum initiatives and in its responses to national, state and local curriculum issues. The principles also have an educative intent: to stimulate critical reflection on current curriculum work as a day-to-day experience, on moves to change curriculum, on policy initiatives, and on the institutional contexts which help to shape the realisation of curriculum. Curriculum work is taken to embrace curriculum formulation, development and realisation, and curriculum research and evaluation.

The principles provide guidance to all curriculum workers, including teachers, parents, students, administrators, policy makers, and others whose work impinges on curriculum development, realisation and evaluation. The principles are formulated on the basis of the most recent understandings in the curriculum field and are directed at excellence in provision and equity in outcomes for all participants in the many facets of Australian education.

The Australian Curriculum Studies Association (Inc)

ACSA was constituted in 1983 with the following general objectives:

1. To provide a national voice on curriculum issues which is informed by the most recent national and international research in curriculum theory and practice. The aim is to articulate a distinctive Australian position on curriculum which is derived from informed critique of the historical and material context of Australian educational work.
2. To encourage and promote curriculum research which engages all curriculum workers' understandings and interpretations of their own work and its context with a view to developing more critically informed practice, organisation and discourse in all curriculum work. Such research will be conducted by all curriculum workers and will examine ways of exploiting opportunities afforded by particular institutional contexts and of confronting concrete and hegemonic constraints imposed by particular forms of institutional and system life.
3. To create forums for the discussion, exchange and critique of information coming from curriculum theory and practice.
4. To assist liaison between all people working in curriculum to support collective action and to stimulate critical dialogue about curriculum practice, the social and institutional organisation of curriculum work, and the discourse in which curriculum work is objectified with the aim of improvement in each of these registers.

5. To promote self-reflective and critically informed curriculum work at all organisational levels so that the dialectical relationship between the minutiae of daily curriculum practice and system organisation (and society generally) are clearly understood and worked on collaboratively in collective efforts at the improvement of curriculum theory and practice.

Curriculum Work

ACSA takes the view that adequate curriculum work takes account of the following:

1. Curriculum realisation creates quite different experiences for different individuals. Therefore, the specification and standardisation of curriculum provides no guarantee of uniformity or quality of experience. The explicit and implicit function of curriculum realisation (including the hidden message systems of the institutional context) may turn out to be quite contrary to the aspirations expressed for the curriculum. Curriculum work should reveal such differentials in experience and inform more appropriate action whenever differentials experience leads to or confirms educational disadvantage.
2. Curriculum is a social, historical and material construction which typically serves the interests of particular social groups at the expense of others. Curriculum work involves identifying these interests and their relation to curriculum and collective action to redress any disadvantage experienced by individuals and groups.
3. Curriculum work and the study of society are inextricably linked. Curriculum research conducted by all curriculum workers is directed at informing and promoting the role of curriculum in social change, through analysing and acting upon the ways in which certain kinds of knowledge are selected, interpreted, and represented in the discourse, practice and social relationships of curriculum work.
4. Curriculum work involves the identification and critique of the ideology embedded in all curriculum practice, discourse and organisation. Curriculum research informs individual and collective action in each of these registers of culture to eliminate injustice, inhumanity and ignorance in education, its institutional context and in society.
5. Curriculum work seeks to understand the ways in which credentialling practice can frustrate or support the improvement of curriculum work, and in particular the ways in which credentialling practices serve the interests of some social groups at the expense of the quality of education experience provided to other groups. Credentialling practice should conform to the principles described in this document.

Accordingly, curriculum work

1. should be a collaborative experience among all curriculum workers and system and institutional support staff and should not be divorced from political analysis and systematic consideration of the purposes of education and the role of the state in educational provision;
2. should involve collective critical reflection by all participants in order to refine curriculum practice, social organisation and discourse and the institutional and societal milieu in which these find expression;
3. should involve the identification of the values (scientific, aesthetic, humanistic, religious, political, economic) given expression in curriculum and should critically evaluate implicit and explicit values and their manifestation in the practice, social relations and discourse of classrooms, schools and systems;
4. requires the provision of appropriate resources (especially to engage previously uninvolved groups) to ensure authentic participation;

5. should expose forms of institutional life which confirm or sustain inequalities based on race, gender, class, appearance, disability, poverty or other social circumstances and act concretely to eliminate such inequalities; and
6. requires action at the personal, local institutional and system level which is informed by broader social, historical and material analysis. Curriculum workers act locally and think globally.

Curriculum Content

The Australian Curriculum Studies Association endorses curriculum which:

- is of personal, social and inherent worth and is of current and enduring value;
- is broadly constructed from a balanced, defensible and explicit selection from key areas of human inquiry and endeavour;
- prepares people for worthwhile paid and unpaid work as individuals and as members of society;
- provides people with the necessary socially critical knowledge, understandings and skills to exercise their political rights in a democratic society;
- is inclusive in its recognition of the cultural, political and economic contribution of all groups;
- is based on cooperation and success rather than competition and failure;
- embodies participatory, collective and empowering approaches to teaching and learning;
- engages people in authentic tasks; and
- promotes responsible, just and sustainable global citizenship.

** First published in Curriculum Perspectives, Vol 10 No 1 p30–31, March 1990. Revised- April 2004*

Attachment 2:

Australian Curriculum Studies Association

Teaching curriculum studies in teacher education programs.

The policy contains four sections:

- A Underlying commitments in teaching curriculum studies
- B A discourse for teaching curriculum studies
- C Approaches to teaching curriculum studies
- D Organisational considerations about teaching curriculum studies

The policy has been conceptualised within ACSA's "Vision for Australian Schooling", "Principles for Australian Curriculum Reform" and "The Policy on Teacher Education". The policy has been contextualised within ACSA's Policy Statements on Social Justice, Assessment and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.

A Underlying commitments in teaching curriculum studies

The teaching of curriculum studies in teacher education programs reflects a commitment to the ongoing professional development and learning of teachers (educators) as curriculum workers.

The capacities of curriculum workers are included in the following table.

<i>Teacher (Educator) capacities:</i>	<i>Key ideas, words and phrases *</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextually-aware, ethically-sensitive culturally-inclusive and socially-just 	<p><i>Past/present/futures orientations and connections (personal and collective)</i> <i>Diversity</i> <i>Complexity</i> <i>Equity</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically-informed, praxis-oriented and research/inquiry-based 	<p><i>Multiple knowledges</i> <i>Contestation/problematisation</i> <i>Eclecticism</i> <i>Synthesis</i> <i>Curriculum theorising</i> <i>Value position</i> <i>Ongoing constructions of knowledge</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner- and learning-centred 	<p><i>Responsiveness</i> <i>Flexibility and negotiation</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically-reflective and pedagogically-competent 	<p><i>Enabling conceptual frames and scaffolds</i> <i>Critique</i> <i>Critical pedagogy</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliberatively-passionate about their beliefs and values 	<p><i>Articulation and communication</i> <i>Advocacy</i> <i>Commitment and passion</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionally-responsible, politically-astute and collaboratively-participatory 	<p><i>Professional learning</i> <i>Empowerment</i> <i>Decision-making</i> <i>Collaboration</i> <i>Professionalism</i> <i>Quality</i> <i>Accountability</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformatively-reconstructive 	<p><i>Influence</i> <i>Impact</i> <i>Curriculum leadership</i></p>

*These ideas, words and phrases are suggestive of the contextual, conceptual and methodological languages associated with the discourse of teaching curriculum studies in teacher education programs. A separate attempt is not made to define them; rather their meanings may be elicited in the context of the various sections of this statement.

B A discourse for teaching curriculum studies

The content or knowledge associated with teaching curriculum studies in teacher education programs is more appropriately thought of as a discourse. The attributes of teachers as curriculum workers, along with related ideas, words and phrases (See Section A) form the basis of this discourse.

A brief representation of this discourse is as follows:

Curriculum workers who are contextually-aware, ethically-sensitive, culturally-inclusive and socially-just are familiar with the connections that the present has with both the past and the future; they recognise the rich diversity of living within a multicultural Australia and a globalised world; and they appreciate the enormous complexity associated with being sensitive to the ethics of being responsive in ways that are socially-just and equity-driven in their curriculum thinking and practice. Within the Australian context, curriculum workers work towards reconciliation through an authentic inclusion of Indigenous content and perspectives in the curriculum and which challenge practices that restrict learning outcomes for indigenous students.

There are multiple knowledges upon which curriculum workers draw in ongoing constructions of their professional knowledge or learnings. These learnings reflect both an eclecticism and a synthesis as curriculum workers develop and express their own values and beliefs about learners and learning. The professional knowledge of curriculum workers is characterised by contestation and problematisation within this diversity of values and beliefs; and, as such, is more a process than an end product. Professional knowledge conceived in these terms relates to curriculum workers who are critically-informed, praxis-oriented and research/inquiry-based.

Curriculum workers value the fact that their thinking and practice focuses on learners and learning. Given the diversities and complexities referred to above, curriculum workers are prepared to be responsive and flexible to learners' backgrounds, needs and aspirations through processes of negotiating learning experiences (including assessment) and outcomes.

In being responsive, curriculum workers frame their decision-making within their curriculum theorising. Emerging understandings associated with their

professional knowledge provide the conceptual frames and scaffolds for critiquing existing curriculum thinking and practice as a basis for transformative reconstructions. These reconstructions will include the capacities (and competence) for continuing to engage in curriculum theorising and in curriculum decision-making as it relates especially to critical pedagogical and assessment practices.

Curriculum workers are deliberately-passionate about their beliefs and values. They demonstrate these attributes as they articulate and communicate their curriculum thinking with confidence; and as they advocate their views to appropriate audiences with convincing, informed and passionate commitment.

Professional learning is an imperative for curriculum workers. It contributes to a sense of empowerment from within. It engenders a commitment to critically-informed decision-making; to a willingness to work collaboratively with a range of stakeholders; and to a sense of accountability and quality in all areas of curriculum activity. Overall, professional learning as an imperative for curriculum workers makes a significant contribution to professionalism.

Curriculum workers are curriculum leaders. They lead learning. As characterised in Section A, and as elaborated in this brief discourse, the work of curriculum leaders has the potential to influence the shape of curriculum policies and to have an impact on curriculum practice in ways that transformatively reconstruct learning experiences, assessment practices and learning outcomes for ALL learners.

C Approaches to teaching curriculum studies

Approaches to teaching curriculum studies in teacher education programs are intimately connected to the underlying commitments (See Section A) and to the elements of the discourse (See Section B). Approaches are geared towards understandings associated with the discourse; and towards capacities for engaging in the discourse as a dynamically-reflexive conversation about curriculum thinking and practice.

Features of these approaches are:

- Modelling of processes associated with contesting, problematising and theorising curriculum matters
- Raising difficult questions rather than providing easy answers about curriculum issues
- Encouraging curriculum theorising as an evolving professional responsibility to engage in career-long professional development (learning)

- Offering relevant contextual, conceptual and methodological frameworks for curriculum theorising
- Being democratic and inclusive in negotiating pathways for developing professional learnings (understandings and capacities) about curriculum matters
- Providing opportunities for nurturing an empowerment to articulate and advocate for positions and practices which are transformative for learners and their learning
- Working towards the attributes of curriculum workers (See Section A), and using the discourse in Section B in ways that recognise the uniqueness of each teacher education program

D Organisational considerations about teaching curriculum studies

Teaching curriculum studies is central in teacher education programs. Curriculum Studies has the potential to provide an integrative framework for scaffolding thinking and practice about how we *imagine* the diversities of learners and learning; how we *create* appropriate learning experiences and environments; and how we *envision* the worthwhileness of learning outcomes.

While it is simple to order professional learnings in curriculum studies from the preservice to the inservice and graduate levels, it is more realistic to see professional learning as a recursive process characterised by increasing levels of curriculum theorising. The focus of curriculum theorising at the preservice level may emphasise familiarity with contemporary curriculum policies and frameworks and their relevance for planning, pedagogy and assessment at the classroom level; while at the inservice and graduate levels, more in-depth considerations of issues and their relevance for curriculum reconstructions in classroom, school and wider contexts may be the focus. At all levels, there is opportunity for both individual and collective thinking and action, although a greater emphasis on the individual is conceded at the preservice level.

Attachment 3:



Purpose and Vision

The Australian Curriculum Studies Association Incorporated (ACSA) was established in 1983 as a broadly based educational association supporting the professional interests of educators in curriculum work from all levels and sectors within and beyond Australia.

ACSA works to support educators so that all students have access to a meaningful, relevant and engaging curriculum. ACSA provides national advocacy and leadership in curriculum. It is committed to curriculum reform informed by the principles of social justice and equity and respect for the democratic rights of all.

ACSA achieves these goals through alliances and interaction with education groups and broader local and global community organisations. ACSA seeks to cooperate with teachers and schools, professional associations, governments and government agencies in order to pursue its goals. ACSA acts as an advocate for the profession in forums where education policy is shaped. It engages in research, innovation, policy development, critique and dissemination of curriculum ideas.

Structure

The ACSA Executive Committee is responsible for conducting the affairs of the association through the secretariat, which is located in the National Capital, Canberra.

As outlined in the Constitution, the ACSA Executive Committee consists of three elected officers (the President, Vice-President, Honorary Secretary/Treasurer); five other elected members; an appointed Conference Organiser; an appointed Journal Editor and Newsletter Editor; and up to two co-opted members. Co-opted members must be members of the Association and shall be appointed by the Executive committee. All the ACSA Executive participate on a voluntary basis.

The Secretariat for the Australian Curriculum Studies Association is currently comprised of an Executive Director, Education Officer, Office Manager and an Administrative Assistant.

The secretariat is located at:

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Attachment 4:

E



Executive of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association

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Queensland Teachers' Union

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Mr Tony Mackay
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Incorporated Association
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Secretary/Treasurer

Mr Garry McLean
Assistant Director
School Service
Catholic Education Office, Melbourne

Members

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