



**PRELIMINARY SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES INQUIRY INTO TEACHER EDUCATION**

Monash University, Faculty of Education offers the following preliminary submission in response to the Terms of Reference. This response is offered with a view to highlighting some specific issues that require particular attention during the period of review and are drawn from the experiences in teacher education in this Faculty for a considerable period of time. Further to this, the Faculty is more than happy to further assist The Inquiry in any way it can.

Terms of Reference 1

Examine and assess the criteria for selecting students for teacher training courses.

The ENTERS and GPAs of those students entering Education has steadily improved in recent years. However, it is equally important to be reminded that one element of ENTERS is related to demand and supply. In the mid 90s when demand (related largely to employment possibilities) for teachers was low, supply appeared to be in excess of demand which inevitably impacted ENTER scores. In the current “teacher shortage” environment, demand dramatically outstrips the ability for Faculties of Education to supply graduates and ENTER scores reflect this trend. At the same time, there is also a need to differentiate between undergraduate and post-graduate teacher education programs, hence GPA scores also influence the nature of selection.

Despite this backgrounding to selection, it needs to be made clear that the Faculty of Education does *not* take the view that it should *not* admit students with lower ENTERS or GPAs as it is but one measure (despite it being a major one) for course selection. The Faculty regards it as important to maintain a range of equity measures to take account of group disadvantage or individual circumstances (such as poverty, difficult family circumstance, or illness, etc.) which may hinder applicants in demonstrating their potential to benefit from study at Monash.

The Faculty, similarly, does *not* take the view that those with lower ENTERS will necessarily be less able teachers. Despite this, it is good for the profession to have highly able students enter teacher education and for teaching to once again be seen as a career of first choice for many capable students. The higher ENTERS and GPAs now needed to access our courses do not appear to have been at the expense of equity groups or of the diversity of the student body but we must continue to monitor the situation.

Terms of Reference 2

Examine the extent to which teacher training courses can attract high quality students, including students from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

All eight Victorian Universities offer undergraduate education programs although the University of Melbourne offers only pre-primary and primary teacher education at the undergraduate level (the same profile as the Peninsula campus), their secondary teaching course being graduate entry only.



Clearly teacher education is experiencing a 'boom' with teaching once again becoming a career of first choice. Nevertheless, even taking this into account, Monash Education is doing very well in attracting students. Monash consistently attracts over two thirds of the first preferences for undergraduate places in Victoria. For the Faculty, the major inhibitor to growth is a shortage of HECS places to meet the demand by qualified and able students and there is always difficulty in placing students for meaningful practicum experiences.

In 1998, 40% of all school leaver undergraduates commencing teacher education at Monash had ENTERS over 80, in 2002 this was 59% and in 2003 it was 76%.

- Clayton increased from 72% for 1998 to 89% for 2002 and 92% for 2003,
- Gippsland from 26% for 1998 to 34% for 2002 to 55% for 2003
- Peninsula had a remarkable increase from 13% for 1998 to 44% for 2002 to 70% for 2003.

This compares with a 2003 Victoria wide average of 44% and a University of Melbourne figure of 63%, the latter offering a similar suite of early childhood and primary undergraduate courses to the Peninsula Campus.

In 2002, half of the students entering the Clayton campus, had ENTERS over 90. In 2003, the number increased, but the proportion dropped to 35% because early in 2003 the Faculty was asked to take unplanned for Science/Education students to enable Monash to meet its commitments in relation to science targeted places. These additional students had ENTERS in the mid to high eighties. Given the shortages of teachers in these fields, and the general quality and success of the students, the Faculty believes this was a socially and educationally responsible decision to make.

In interpreting this data, it should be recognised that less than 50% of the Faculty's load is in undergraduate places and, of the undergraduate students, fewer than 50% are school leavers. Similar comparative data is not readily available for mature age undergraduates or for graduate entry teacher education. However, our informal feedback suggests that the mature age entrants achieve just as well as the school leavers and the Faculty plans to monitor this in future. Applications are very strong for the graduate entry teacher education programs and entry GPAs are rising. At Peninsula Monash has over seven eligible first preference applicants for each place, at Clayton we have six, and at Gippsland four ('eligible' means they have at least a bachelors degree appropriate to their chosen specialisation).

The improvement in the quality of our undergraduate students at Peninsula is remarkable with 70% of ENTERS over 80 compared with a state average of 44% and compared with 63% for a similar market at the University of Melbourne. We now enrol the strongest cohort of students in primary and early childhood education in the State. In part this improvement is due to the calibre of students enrolled in the double degree programs. These double degrees are each taught over two campuses (Peninsula and Clayton or Peninsula and Caulfield), which to the surprise of some, is seen by a good proportion of students as an advantage rather than a disadvantage (MEQ 2003). The option of double degrees for primary teachers is an innovation that, in our view, will enrich the profession considerably.



The Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies, the new qualification developed in 2003 and offered locally and in Singapore has also proven an immediate success in terms of both enrolments and feedback from students. We anticipate a flow on of students from Singapore coming to Australia to study at the post-graduate and research levels in future years.

At the secondary level we offer a very wide range of specialisations. During the difficult years for teacher education in Victoria (the late nineties), our wide range of offerings almost certainly contributed to our capacity to maintain enrolments against a State-wide trend and to attract the most able students. This, however, comes at a cost a point to which we shall return to later in this response.

At the time of the introduction of double degrees, there was a perception in a number of faculties that teacher education would be used as a 'back door entry' to programs for which students would otherwise not achieve the ENTER and entry to double degrees was therefore restricted to those achieving the ENTER for either constituent degree. It is our belief that this perception has largely disappeared as the quality of entrants to teacher education and, in particular, to the double degrees has improved. Indeed, minimum ENTERS to the double degree in Science/Education is generally some five points above those for Science alone, and, at Clayton, minimum ENTERS for double degrees with Arts hover around 90 (TR 1). We are now sought out by other faculties to engage in double degrees.

Programs such as Post-Graduate Diplomas in Education (1 year duration) have been important mechanisms for attracting highly suitable people into the teaching profession. Their one year duration has been important in providing a limited time for the re-education of these people while providing an opportunity for career change. The value of such programs has not been well recognised nationally and as with all initial teacher education programs, they cannot provide everything – despite the fact that most people assume completion of teacher preparation should create a ready and experienced teacher; a view that does not apply in most other professions. Society rightly demands life-long learning, multiple careers and multiple pathways to be available and currently Monash offers a range of choices and pathways into initial teacher education through double degrees, concurrent degrees and Graduate Diplomas in Education, but more pathways possible if well conceptualized and constructed in ways that are responsive to the knowledge of learning to teach so crucial to creating reflective, thoughtful and capable professional pedagogues.

In terms of career change, a large disincentive exists whereby little or no recognition of relevant prior experience applies in terms of status, pay or working conditions. Those entering initial teacher preparation need to cease employment and study for a full year to make the transition into teaching. Once this is completed they then generally commence at the bottom of the pay scale.

Scholarships that are well targeted and provide worthwhile financial assistance could assist in redressing some of these disincentives. However, there is a crucial need to make a career change worthwhile and relevant prior experience needs to be afforded greater credence.



Analysis of VTAC data provides information about demand for undergraduate programs by school leavers. Our applicants are from a range of schools, both government and non-government, and from a wide range of locations across Victoria. The percentage of enrolled students under 25 from low SES backgrounds has remained at around 22% for the past five years. While this compares favourably with the University figures (around 16%), we would like the figure to increase to the population proportion of 25%. That this percentage has remained steady, however, during a five year period in which ENTERS have risen substantially is positive. In other words, higher ENTERS have not been at the expense of access by low SES students. The percentage of students over 25 from low SES backgrounds is considerably lower and closer to the university figure of 12-13%. The explanation for this is that 85% of our students over 25 years of age are in postgraduate and research courses and, while they may have initially come from low SES backgrounds, they are typically already employed in occupations that are not low SES. Only 10% of each of these groups is classed as low SES but, amongst over 25 year olds undertaking undergraduate degrees, 20% are low SES.

Each year Monash enrolls around 25 students into second year after they have successfully completed a transition Diploma of Foundation Studies at the Gippsland campus. This provides an alternative route for students with potential who, for various reasons, have not qualified for direct admission into first year. They complete two first year units in Education during the Diploma year. Across our courses, the success rate for low SES students is almost identical to that for all students. The number of Indigenous students enrolled in Faculty programs increased from 5 in 2002 to 15 in 2003 and 2004 so that the proportion of indigenous students in the Faculty exactly matches the population proportion (and is almost double the university participation rate). However, given past history, the teaching profession needs considerably more indigenous teachers in schools and the Faculty is committed to increasing these numbers. During 2003, the Faculty offered five full fee indigenous scholarships and, working closely with Monash's Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies (CAIS), actively promoted these scholarships in schools and other community settings so that all were taken up -- all at Peninsula or Gippsland. Disconcertingly, this did not increase overall numbers for 2004, but with the pipeline effect over a period of years it should.

Across our courses, the success rate for indigenous students is almost identical to, and usually slightly higher, than that for all students. Not surprisingly, 70% of the Faculty's enrolment is female and this applies also to higher degrees. Somewhat to our surprise, however, only 20% of our students come from rural backgrounds compared with population of 24%. Although this is only second to Nursing within the University, and the University figure is 12%, we would have expected a higher figure. By contrast our attraction of isolated students is double the population average. The success of each of these groups is equivalent to the general population.

Term of Reference 3

Examine attrition rates from teaching courses and reasons for that attrition

Over recent years there has been an increase in student retention to the extent that it has caused us difficulties in maintaining commencing load in some of our programs! For example, the Bachelor of Primary Education course at Peninsula has retention



rates of well over 90% each year. The one course that causes us concern is the part-time off-campus Graduate Diploma in Education at the Gippsland campus where retention is quite variable but often hovers around 75%. In part this is as a result of the nature of the cohort, in that many are attempting to make a career change while being in full time work and/or with childcare commitments. Often they underestimate the extent of the time commitment required, particularly but not only, in relation to undertaking school placements. In response to this problem, during 2004 a member of our Student Services team at Gippsland kept ongoing email contact with students in the course and we believe that we are less likely to lose students this year. However, we will not know this until school placements begin, which is typically the time when students ‘drop out’.

This instance apart, however, student progression to graduation is generally very good. There has been, for example, a steady downward trend in the numbers of students being asked to “show cause” over the past five years across all campuses:

Table 1: Trends for students asked to “show cause”

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Clayton	62	34	30	32	13
Gippsland	48	42	39	21	23
Peninsula	19	9	11	14	12
Total	129	85	80	67	48

We attribute this to a number of factors. There are better processes and procedures which include identifying and counselling students 'at risk' mid-year, and we have a single Faculty-wide Academic Progress Committee which operates in, we believe, a much more consistent, fair and transparent way than the somewhat idiosyncratic processes that preceded it. We have implemented a standard unit guide which clearly sets out the expectations for both students and staff and provides valuable information for students on the assessment and administrative procedures that operate within the Faculty. Such information has had a significant impact on the number of “show cause” and grievance procedures experienced by the Faculty as students have clearly been advised on their rights and responsibilities at the commencement of each unit. Finally, and probably most significantly, the quality of students entering our courses has improved.

The consequence of the improved retention and progress is that we commence relatively fewer students but graduate more, in our view a much more satisfactory situation for the students themselves and for meeting our responsibilities to the profession and the broader community. One of the challenges we face is persuading colleagues, governments, and local professional and community members of this latter point! Some 95% of our undergraduates are in full time employment four months after graduation.

Graduations in the Graduate Diploma in Education, having increased through the nineties dropped in the period 1999-2001 but this was offset by additional places for undergraduate entry (with a resulting lag in graduations). Over the past decade we have increased the number of teacher education graduates by 77% from 452 to 800. During the same period, there was a shift from a 1-year graduate diploma to undergraduate double degrees requiring 2 years of Education study, and there was a



shift from 3-year to 4-year primary qualifications. Even allowing for the reduction in load to the Graduate entry Bachelors degree, which some teachers used to upgrade from 3- to 4-year qualified, there has been considerable growth in the overall load commitment to teacher education in a decade in which there was a decline in places in many institutions. In 1994, the total load for initial teacher education was 892 (of which 331 was Grad Dip Ed.). In 2004, it is 1876 (of which 630 is Grad Dip Ed.).

The average age of students of the Faculty is 34 years. These are not school leavers! It is a nation wide phenomenon that some 50% of students entering initial teacher education are mature age students and this is also true of Monash Education. Given the good achievement levels of these students and the indications that mature age entrants to teaching on average spend longer in the profession than school leavers, this is an advantage to the profession. Finally, these figures also make clear the fact that beginning teachers are no longer dominated by the stereo-typical young 22 year old student; a point that many in the community need to be more cognizant of.

Term of Reference 4

Examine and assess the criteria for selecting and rewarding Education faculty members.

Although the Faculty tries to ensure equity in teaching loads and in student staff ratios, each of these can mask issues that influence the quality of our offerings. In particular, each broad program area needs to have a critical mass of staff to ensure the range of expertise to undertake good teaching and research. Staff numbers need to be sufficient to ensure that no person has to teach across too many units or in areas outside their expertise. Minimal numbers of staff must be maintained to make a program area viable and optimal numbers are needed to make the same area excellent and competitive.

What is of concern, however, is the age profile of those enrolled in our higher degrees by research suggesting that we may not be producing the next generation of academics. Over 44% of those in our doctoral programs are over 50 years of age and another 28% between 40 and 50 years. Many of our graduates justifiably see their higher degree as a culmination of their professional career and we applaud that. However, inevitably they will not have many active years to contribute to building a research trajectory, and possibly too few will be either willing or able to enter higher education as the next generation of academics. Those who have established professional careers often would have to take a drop in income to enter higher education at a level matching their research profile. Those who do enter will not have as many years to build their research and teaching profile. The age profile of Education faculties in Australia bodes ill for the next decades unless we are able to educate a new generation of Education academics fairly quickly. It seems that we must find ways of encouraging younger people within the education community to enter higher degrees and preferably full time.

In terms of rewarding faculty members in teacher education, there is always a tension as most teacher educators were once themselves teachers – in fact this is a very important factor in shaping what teacher educators know and are able to do. However, the demands of teaching are not the same as the demands of being a university



academic and the transition can be slow and, as the literature demonstrates, the career change is difficult.

Inevitably then, teacher educators tend to find themselves with the highest teaching loads, the least time for research and perhaps some of the most demanding administrative roles as their ability to co-ordinate and run teacher preparation programs requires time and skills that do not allow for the simple differentiation between research and teaching common in many other Faculties. Therefore, teacher educators do not traditionally find themselves in a position where their skills and expertise fully match (or are necessarily appropriately valued) by the institutional requirements that drive the economies of university faculties.

Term of Reference 5

Examine the educational philosophy underpinning the teacher training courses (including the teaching methods used, course structure and materials, and methods for assessment and evaluation) and the extent to which it is informed by research.

Teacher educators at Monash University believe that all the phases of a teacher's professional development (from preservice through to the later stages of a teacher's career) should be conceptualised as professional learning. This view draws on their extensive research on the professional development of student teachers and beginning teachers, as well as work by other researchers.

By conceptualising the professional learning of student teachers as part of a continuum of learning (cf. Feiman-Nemser) that embraces their early years of teaching and beyond, we provide our students with richer opportunities for professional development than traditional notions of teacher 'training'. From the moment of their entry into our programs, students are invited to think of themselves as members of a professional community, and to reflect on the knowledge, beliefs and practices that membership of such a community entails. As prospective teachers, they are challenged to clarify their beliefs and values in relation to teaching and learning, to form a beginning repertoire of strategies to facilitate their own as well as their students' learning, and to develop a commitment to ongoing professional learning. The most reflective student teachers understand that all the frames of reference they encounter in their preservice program are provisional, and the very best remain disposed to continually interrogate their knowledge and practice – a disposition which remains a feature of their professional engagement in years to come.

The coherence of our program is derived from the way in which students experience it as an ongoing process of professional learning, in which they are continually invited to scrutinise their knowledge and beliefs and to critically reflect on their teaching practice experiences. To facilitate such professional learning, we ensure that student teachers' practicum experiences are placed at the centre of the program, providing a point of reference not only for Method units but for all units comprising their Education Degree or Graduate Diploma. Teacher educators facilitate student opportunities of a collegial dialogue with their lecturers and school staff through communication while on placements, and thereby creating links between university classes and their practicum experiences.



The knowledge and experience of the teacher ensures that the preservice teacher education programs remain vital and relevant programs that prepare prospective teachers for the professional challenges ahead of them. Teacher educators at Monash are committed to researching their own teaching practice, publishing (and editing) in major national and international journals on research in teacher education. They reflect critically on their pedagogy and curriculum, continually reviewing their practices in the light of what research says about the complexities of professional learning. In addition, many staff have a track record of working successfully at the interface between the academy and the profession, retaining active links with professional associations and the teaching community at large. Several have held positions of responsibility within professional associations, helping to organise and present at conferences, editing association journals, and engaging in collaborative research with associations and other stakeholders to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Victorian schools. They have also played key roles in highlighting the importance of supervising student teachers and inducting beginning teachers into the profession. They are, in short, well-respected by the professional community as teacher educators who are committed to providing a quality teacher education that equips students for entry into the teaching profession in Victoria and beyond.

The Faculty has overseen the development of a suite of double degrees, beginning, for both primary and secondary teachers. In 2004, our partner faculties in these programs comprised: Art & Design; Arts; Business and Economics; Information Technology; Law and Science. The move into double Bachelors degrees saw the Clayton campus of the Faculty taking its first undergraduates. These courses enabled those who wished to be secondary teachers to enrol in a teacher education program as an undergraduate but at the same time not have to commit completely to teaching since they had the option of using the non-Education degree to enter some other field. Thus, the way these courses have developed, these students maintain most of the flexibility of the traditional 'end-on' Graduate Diploma course, with the added advantages of two years of Education study with more extended practicum experience, thus enabling them to 'try teaching' relatively early in their study and qualifying them to teach in States that require two years professional study in Education as a minimum. Prospective primary teachers have also been offered the option of developing a specialisation and a primary qualification.

The Faculty also considers it important to provide generalist teachers of high quality and this is recognised through the extension of the single primary and early childhood education degrees. The four-year Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECE) introduced in 1997 added to the suite of teacher education programs offered by the Faculty. It is innovative in focussing on the age range 0-12 years. It prepares teachers to work in both the child-care and school sectors, and the latter at both early childhood and primary levels. When the three-year Bachelor of Adult Learning and Development (BAL&D) was introduced in 1999, it 'rounded out' a comprehensive range of initial teacher education offerings of the Faculty, from early childhood to adult years. The BAL&D is an 'end-on' qualification that prepares teachers for the TAFE and adult sectors, catering largely for students who have some qualifications, but have not completed a degree. Credit for previous qualifications and recognition of prior learning is available for these students who then typically complete two years of FTE study to complete the Bachelors degree. The three-year Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies (BECS) was added to the suite of teacher education courses in



2003. It too is an 'end-on' qualification that prepares teachers for the childcare sector (0-6 years). Credit for previous qualifications and recognition of prior learning is available for these students who then complete between one and two years of FTE study to complete the Bachelors degree. Markets have been identified locally.

In the area of graduate course offerings, the Faculty has continued with its commitment to end-on teacher education programs with Graduate Diplomas of Education in Early Childhood (introduced in 2001), Primary and Secondary. However, the need for the Faculty to respond to the needs of students has seen these courses being offered in a wider range of modes. For example, the Grad Dip Ed. (Secondary) now allows oncampus based students at Clayton to take off-campus units.

In recognition of the requirement that primary teachers are able to teach across a wide range of curriculum areas, and the difficulties in accomplishing sufficient expertise in a one year course, the primary graduate diploma has for a number of years 'over-taught', so that students were undertaking many more hours of study for a 6 point unit than university policy allowed and staff were teaching many more hours than could be sustained. In 2003, the Faculty redesigned the course to be ten 6 points units instead of the former eight, but to be taught over one calendar year. The course is, therefore, now weighted at 1.25 of an academic year.

As indicated above, not all bachelor degrees and graduate diplomas are offered on all campuses. Given the geographic proximity of Clayton and Peninsula, the Faculty does not believe it should reproduce courses on those two campuses. To do so would not be an effective use of resources and may undermine the capacity of the Peninsula campus to attract the numbers of students needed for critical mass. Rather, the Faculty sees itself as offering the full range of levels of teacher education from early childhood to adult and a wide range of specialisations on the two-site metropolitan campus formed by Clayton and Peninsula. It sees itself as offering primary and secondary teacher education at Gippsland although not all specialisations may be available. At present, it does not believe that critical mass could be achieved in either early childhood or adult education at the Gippsland campus although in the future some aspects of each program might be offered by supported distance education in collaboration with the metropolitan campus.

The majority of single and double Bachelors degrees are offered in the on campus mode essentially by 'face to face' teaching. The initial teacher education graduate diploma programs at Clayton and Peninsula are each offered on campus, and the secondary graduate diploma course at Gippsland is offered off campus (distance). The Faculty anticipates also offering it on campus at Gippsland from 2006.

The Faculty offers 25 secondary curriculum specialisations ranging across the humanities and social sciences, creative and performing arts, mathematics and sciences, business and information technology. Until recently, there was a limited range of these specialisations offered at the Gippsland campus and they tended to be of a more generalist nature than those offered at Clayton. In order to provide both on- and offcampus Gippsland students with a full suite of discipline specialisations, the Faculty decided to make the majority available in the distance mode so that where the specialist expertise was not available at Gippsland, the curriculum unit could be



taught by distance by the staff at Clayton who already teach it on campus. The intention was and is that students enrolled in the distance Graduate Diploma at Gippsland or the on campus double degree with Education could select from the same range of specialisations as a Clayton student without the expertise having to reside at Gippsland.

The offering of curriculum units by distance has, on the one hand, expanded curriculum options for students at Gippsland but, on the other hand, reduced on-campus students' face-to-face interaction with staff and each other and the incentive to be 'on-campus'. Also, many local off-campus students who have family or work commitments that inhibit them from attending regularly on campus would like to come on campus at times to meet and work with other students. For 2004, we decided to offer a bigger selection of the curriculum specialisations on campus at Gippsland to ensure that each student had the option of studying at least one of their two specialisations on campus.

Although the majority of undergraduate and graduate courses are offered only in the on campus mode, even within the traditional delivery model there is an increasing understanding within the Faculty of the need to recognise and accommodate, as far as reasonably possible, the family and working circumstances of students. Timetabling of units, for example, now allows for choices of tutorial times and attempts to enable students to concentrate their class times. Where possible, placements are organised to suit students' personal circumstances through the development of student profiles and well-publicised placement times. There are also a variety of placements models that operate across the Faculty such as block placements, internships and school-based units. Until recently, most courses were available only full-time: now all but two are available part-time. Students enrolled on campus can take advantage of distance availability of a unit, and can transfer from one campus to another if their circumstances change.

Term of Reference 6

Examine the interaction and relationships between teacher training courses and other university faculty disciplines

As many of our undergraduate programs are double degrees that are conducted in conjunction with other Faculties within the University, we have maintained strong links with these faculties. In 2004, our partner faculties in these programs comprised: Art & Design; Arts; Business and Economics; Information Technology; Law and Science.

Term of Reference 7

Examine the preparation of primary and secondary teaching graduates to:

- *Teach literacy and numeracy;*
- *Teach vocational education courses;*
- *Effectively manage classrooms;*
- *Successfully use information technology;*
- *Deal with bullying and disruptive students and dysfunctional families;*
- *Deal with children with special needs and/or disabilities;*
- *Achieve accreditation; and,*



Deal with senior staff, fellow teachers, school boards, education authorities, parents, community groups and other related departments.

It is important that the preparation of teaching graduates is reflective of the needs of the profession. However, these needs do not remain static. While the accreditation process requires attention to the areas listed above, it would be an impossibility to provide effective grounding in all these areas in all programs. While fundamental knowledge is provided in these areas of teacher education, it is imperative that this fundamental knowledge is expanded on through practice and in-service within the profession. Teacher education is a partnership between universities and schools and as such each partner needs to accept responsibilities associated with such a partnership.

In collaboration with a TAFE provider, we now offer our students in award teacher education courses at Clayton the opportunity to take a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, which enables them to teach in the VET sector as well as VCE programs.

The Victorian Institute of Teaching accredits teacher education programs of the Faculty every five years. The Double Degree and Single Degree programs and the Graduate Diplomas in Education have just completed the process for the second time and all have been approved. Such accreditation processes are valuable mechanisms for providing external feedback on our courses and affirmation that our courses respond to the current requirements of the profession.

In 2003, Monash University carried out a survey of employers [MES 2003]. Some 70 employers of Education students were surveyed. The data suggested that they were generally well satisfied with graduates from Monash, describing them particularly as having good interpersonal skills, working well in teams and being able to learn new skills. They commented on students being professional, competent, well skilled and enthusiastic, able to develop professional knowledge, understand professional ethics and understand different viewpoints. These qualities resonate with our vision of our graduates.

The Faculty is committed to graduates being 'students of the world' and able to educate the next generation in all that this means. One aspect of this is to ensure that students have experienced countries and cultures different from their own. Each year a group of students travels to the Cook Islands to undertake a school placement, and two years ago a group travelled to London for a placement supported by scholarships which the Faculty obtained from Timeplan, a private organisation that places teachers. In addition, each year a group of students travels to Europe to study European music. These experiences are universally regarded as valuable but at this stage only just over 3% of our students have an overseas experience as part of their program. In part the difficulty is that the majority of our undergraduate programs are double degrees and all involve extensive placement and finding space for a 'semester abroad' is challenging. Many of our other programs are very intensive (the Grad Dip) or largely involve part time students in full time employment. The Faculty has, however, plans to extend the opportunities for overseas placement and is considering the possibilities inherent in our overseas campuses, accrediting sites of teaching practicum supervision locally, nationally and internationally, and through partnerships with Universities overseas.



We have other feedback from employers that they hold our programs in high regard, and we are increasingly sought out by organisations interested in engaging their employees in our award courses. However, we do not require our courses to attend to graduate attributes explicitly or assess them directly. We have, however, audited courses to determine whether the attributes are attended to. We are not convinced that out of context assessment of 'graduate attributes' is particularly helpful, but we do consider it remiss of us not to have assured that they are systematically embedded in our courses and that we should address this as part of a process of reviewing our teacher education programs in particular.

Employment rates for Monash Education students are very good. Some 95% of our undergraduates are in full time employment four months after graduation and the Good Universities Guide rates graduates chances of employment as 'better' (than average). At Clayton and Peninsula, the placement officers keep an informal record of where the graduates of the BEd and GradDip gain positions, but we do not systematically collect data about the particular destinations of the range of our students.

Term of Reference 8

Examine the role and input of schools and their staff to the preparation of trainee teachers.

While University-school links are an important partnership in teacher education, it is important that the value of both sectors be recognised. Universities are important in developing the framework which will help sustain teachers throughout their career, while schools are important in developing the day-to-day structures teachers need to operate in the profession. If teachers are to be an important part of this process, the valuing of these teachers and recognition of their expertise is essential. If students are to participate in education beyond compulsory years of schooling, it is essential that they have experienced excellent role models. The importance of an inspiring teacher cannot be underestimated.

The management of placements has improved over the past several years. Still, we are sensitive to the feedback from MEQ: 2003 and from forums of students that there are problems. When placements are found just before the school experience is to begin or are changed at the last minute, the student and the school are less than well positioned to prepare for the placement. The reality, however, is that there are too few schools and teachers who want to (or choose to) take the numbers of students we need to place in order to fully meet our requirements.

Students are individually placed to suit their areas of specialisation, the level at which they will teach and, where possible, their circumstances, and to provide a variety of contexts and levels. We make several thousand placements a year, and 80% of these are placed reasonably efficiently but the additional 20% take as much time as the 80%. It is not an exaggeration to say that placement officers could spend up to a day and possibly contact ten or so schools in order to place a single student in some specialisations.



We are constantly searching for ways to better manage the process and are developing improved software and processes to assist with the placements and communication about placements. This work has begun and we anticipate the new software will be ready for 2005. The Faculty undertook a review of possible school placement models in 2003 and looked at other models of professional practice such as social work and medicine. Some further work is continuing in this area and the models of school placements within the Faculty will continue to evolve. Continuing efforts are made to create good working partnerships with schools and there are many opportunities for stakeholders to participate in parts of the teacher education program such as through principal 'mock' interviews, guest lecturing, and secondments and so on. Despite this, it is fair to say that although student teacher placements are a high priority for the university, they are not so important to schools and there is the inevitable difficulty that with increasing demands on schools to take student teachers, that placement issues in fact increase.

Exploring the notion of quality in teacher education is interesting. Within the community generally there would be little understanding of what comprises quality in teacher education for a dominant view of teaching is that of "teaching the information". Whereas in teacher preparation, the generic skills, knowledge bases (content and pedagogical) are attributes that we strive to help our students grow beyond. Perceptions of quality in teacher education then vary dramatically dependent on the "needs and expectations" of particular stakeholders. Principals want beginning teachers to work as though they are already experienced and fully equipped to teach. Teacher colleagues hope to have beginning teachers who will have few problems with the variety of social and behavioural issues that daily confront them. Teacher educators want thoughtful capable teachers who will be leaders in the profession and bring the new ideas of teaching and learning to life in their schools. It is therefore important to be wary of making judgements about the quality of teacher education from a stakeholders' viewpoint.

Sadly, there have been multiple reviews into the quality of teacher education, many producing similar reports in response to the demands and expectations of sponsors. It is disappointing that limited action has been taken based on the findings to date and that yet another review is in progress that continues to explore issues that surround teacher education but do not delve in the heart of the matter (consider for example the case for developing a pedagogy of teacher education (Loughran, in press) and the importance of that approach to teaching *and* learning about teaching). The reality of teacher education is that it prepares teachers for teaching but it does not have the ability to "build experienced teachers". Quality teacher education requires a sensitive, careful and well conceptualized approach that appropriately balances the knowledge of practice with the skills, attributes and abilities of teaching that are evident in teaching as a discipline in its own right. Until these issues are genuinely valued and embraced, teacher education will continue to be asked to do more than is possible with less than is supplied and in the quickest possible time.

Term of Reference 9

Investigate the appropriateness of the current split between primary and secondary education training.



There is a wealth of research in this area, both in Australia and internationally. It would be an appropriate task to access this extensive body of knowledge. There are important issues at the heart of this split and they can not be easily dealt with in a simple response here.

Term of Reference 10

Examine the construction, delivery and resourcing of ongoing professional learning for teachers already in the workplace.

In keeping with a commitment to a broader view of professional education and lifelong learning, the Faculty offers a variety of short courses ranging from half-day workshops through to certificate level courses carrying credit towards further formal studies in education. Students may undertake as professional development a short course that is equivalent to one of our units. If they participate but are not assessed they receive a certificate of attendance from the Faculty. If they complete the normal assessment for the unit they receive a certificate of completion. They can then gain credit for the unit should they later decide to enrol in a related award course. Offerings vary from time to time but include, for example, leadership development, managing change, curriculum design, student welfare, special education, mathematics and science professional development, workplace training and development, teaching languages other than English (LOTE) and teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), and integration aide and teacher aide courses. The integration aide and teacher aide courses are our biggest programs. (See Appendix D [C40]) One interesting development in short courses is that, in collaboration with a TAFE provider, we now offer our students in award teacher education courses at Clayton the opportunity to take a Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, which enables them to teach in the VET sector as well as VCE programs. Some of our short courses are marketed in conventional ways to individual students who approach as directly. At other times, a professional development course may be sponsored or subsidized by an employer, government or other organisation and delivered under contract. These include a considerable number of international cohorts who are resident for several weeks. For example, since 2002, we have provided programs for teacher education students from Hong Kong University who study a curriculum unit on the teaching of English while gaining an immersion language experience and visiting schools. Recently, they extended this program so that we also offer a course for advanced professionals. Recently, we won a tender with the Australia Japan Foundation to deliver short courses to Japanese Ministry personnel and teachers on integrated studies with a focus on Australian Studies.

Current funding for the professional development of teachers is inadequate. For example, approximately \$200 is available for each teacher in Victoria for professional development each year. Considering teacher release costs approximately \$200 a day, it does not leave much to ponder in terms of the perceived value of teachers' time and their ongoing learning. Clearly, it is exceptionally poor, especially when compared to almost any other workforce. However, it is even more appalling when compared with the corporate sector which, until recently (1990s) had to guarantee (training guarantee) 3% of total budget to professional development. As stated previously, teacher education institutions provide enormous funds for the supervision of teaching placements under an industrial award. Such funds could be diverted into the professional development of teachers under the regulation of the profession itself. In



this way the supervision of preservice teachers and the nurturing of new teachers could become an integral part of the professional role of an experienced teacher.

It is important that the development of the profession occurs through the development of individuals. In so doing, this would bring rewards to the profession and in time, to all employers. A long term view is needed to enhance this field of teacher learning and professional growth.

Term of Reference 11

Examine the adequacy of the funding of teacher training courses by university administration.

The Faculty has a commitment to excellent teaching and to high quality, current and internationally and locally relevant courses. However, in general, its DEST based initial teacher education programs cost more than they earn with unacceptable consequences for other academic work. The level of DEST funding will not support the level of preparation demanded by various Registration Boards but even in a slightly more deregulated environment in terms of full fee places, we will have to remain competitive and graduate teachers' incomes are not significantly influenced by the status of the University or by market forces such as shortages in specific areas. When accurately assessed, it is clear that the cost of school placements has escalated alarmingly as it becomes increasingly difficult to find suitable placements. This not only increases the cost of finding the placements but also means that only one or two students may be placed in particular schools thus increasing the visitation costs. We conservatively estimate the cost of placement for a one year Graduate Diploma student to be at least \$2500 per enrolment when one includes the administration of the placement, cost of teacher payments and academic staff time and travel costs for visits.

Many Faculties of Education now formally build the placement into the credit point structure of their degrees and diplomas but in general Monash Education does not do that. Thus the secondary graduate diploma involves 8 taught 6 point units plus 50 days of placement. This is not sustainable and is part of the reason that the faculty is experiencing very high student staff ratios.

Undergraduate degrees require conservatively \$4000 in placement costs but this is spread over the whole enrolment. Ironically, the double degree program provides the Faculty with a maximum of two years of load for a four year course so the proportional cost of placement is hardly any less. This also applies to the Gippsland primary B Ed, which, for sound pedagogical reasons, requires students to take a considerable part (40%) of the course outside the Faculty.

Dedicated time for academic and general staff development is planned to ensure that sufficient high quality 'tuition' is provided for students studying in modes other than regular on campus face-to-face classes, that the pedagogies adopted are innovative, excellent and appropriate to adult learning whether at a distance, in intensive blocks or on-line, and that all learning resources are of a high professional standard. In 2004, we participated in a major pilot project involving 30 staff across all three campuses in the development of units using WebCT Vista. The units will begin to roll out in 2005. Participants are working in professional learning teams so that support is available as



they move through the program, facilitated by the Coordinator of Flexible Learning and by the University's Centre for Learning and Teaching Support (CeLTS).

It is not unreasonable to expect a Faculty of Education to model exemplary adult teaching practice for its own students and for the University as a whole and one of the roles of the Faculty's planned research groupings will be to help realise the benefits of the research-teaching nexus, to ensure that our programs reflect and inform best practice, and that our research is informed by our practice. Although some of our pedagogy could do with 're-freshing', the pedagogy adopted in some units is outstanding and clearly leading practice (and also leading to excellent publications). We need, however, to find better ways to share this knowledge amongst ourselves and hence to extend its reach. For some staff researching their own practice in teacher education is their major research agenda, with seven of these, representing all three campuses, presenting papers at the recent Australian Teacher Education Association conference (a short bibliography of a sample of teacher educator research involvements is attached – appendix 1.) However, we can do better at building a culture of research on our curriculum and pedagogy and the recently formed research grouping, "Professional Learning" should provide a critical mass of staff that will enable such a research culture to be further developed.

We will need to continue to prioritise professional development relating to the pedagogical practices and implications of flexible delivery, student diversity and globalisation for both curriculum and assessment. We will also need to continue to invest in support staff with web, e-learning and desktop publishing skills and professional development for existing general staff. With academic staff, we should focus particularly on three areas of quality teaching and learning. They are, firstly, the pedagogy of distance and/or on line 'delivery', secondly, recognising and addressing diversity and difference, and, thirdly, assessment and feedback (including also professional and academic conduct).



Conclusion

We hope the Inquiry finds this submission useful and look forward to continuing to assist the Inquiry in future.

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Appendix 1

Teacher Education at Monash University A Select List of Publications

Faculty of Education

The following select list of publications comprises books, chapters, articles and conference papers by teacher educators at Monash University that arise out of their research on professional learning, including the learning of student teachers and beginning teachers, and their own learning as teacher educators (see section 1.). The list also features writing by student teachers and graduates from Monash University in which they reflect on their experiences of preservice and beginning teaching – these publications were produced with the active support of teacher educators at Monash, and demonstrate their commitment to promoting a professional learning continuum that embraces both preservice and beginning teaching (see section 2.). Taken together, the publications listed in sections 1. and 2. reflect the experiences of student teachers, beginning teachers and teacher educators who have been involved in our undergraduate and preservice program.

The following bibliography also includes books and articles on curriculum and pedagogy, as well as textbooks written by teacher educators within the Faculty, some in collaboration with practising school teachers (section 3.).

Teacher educators at Monash have actively supported teachers in their efforts to write about their work, editing professional association journals and other publications that feature teachers' writing. Accordingly, section 4. presents details of their editorial work and other examples of professional engagement.

Section 5. provides a list of relevant dissertations completed by teacher educators within the Faculty.

1. Chapters and articles on teacher education and professional learning

- Berry, A. (2004). Self-study in Teaching about Teaching. In Loughran, J.J., Hamilton, M. L., LaBoskey, V & Russell, T (Eds.) *International Handbook of Self-study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices*. Dordrecht: Kluwer publishing.
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4. Editorship of Professional Journals and other examples of professional engagement by teacher educators at Monash

- Berry, A. Editor, *Labtalk* (2000) Vol 44, No.5., *Labtalk* (2001)
- Corrigan, D. Editorial Board, *Australian Science Teachers Journal*
- Corrigan, D. Editorial Board, *Chemeda*, Australian Journal of Chemical Education
- Corrigan, D., Executive Committee Member, International Organization of Science and Technology Education.
- Doecke, B. (1994-1997) Editor *Idiom*, the Journal of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English.
- Doecke, B. (1997-2002) Editor *English in Australia*, the Journal of the Australian Association for the Teaching of English
- Doecke, B. (1996-1997) Commissioning Editor, the Australian Association for the Teaching of English
- Forgasz, H. (2004 -) Managing Editor. Mathematics Education Research Journal [MERJ]
- Hildebrand, G.M. Australasian Editor, *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (USA-based) 2001-2002
- Hildebrand, G.M. Section Editor for the *Electronic Journal of Literacy through Science* (USA-based) – 2001-2003
- Loughran, J.J. Co-editor *Studying Teacher Education*. Taylor and Francis
- Loughran, J.J. Editorial Board Executive, *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*
- Loughran, J.J. Editorial Board Executive, *International Journal of Reflective Practice*.
- Loughran, J.J. Editorial Board Executive, *Research in Science Education*.
- Mitchell, I. J. (1989-2003) Senior Editor *PEEL SEEDS*, the Journal of the Project for Enhancing Effective Learning
- Rosewarne-Foster, J. Editorial Board of the *Australian Art Education* journal, and a member of the research council of the Australian Institute of Art Education.
- Triolo, R. (1998) *Analysis of the Civics and Citizenship Component in Formal Curriculum Documents of Australia and the United States*, (Carlton, Board of Studies).



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- Tudball, L. Life member and ongoing committee member, VASST Vice-President, Social Educators Association of Australia Member, Coordinating committee, Victorian Civics and citizenship education, PD strategy. Member IARTV Advisory committee on Internationalisation of education

5. Dissertation completed by teacher educators at Monash University

- Forgasz, H. (1995) Learning mathematics: Affect, gender, and classroom factors. Ph D, Monash University.
- Jensen, M-T (2002) Corrective feedback to spoken errors in adult ESOL classrooms: Teachers’ attitudes and practice. Ph D, Monash University.
- Mitchell, I. J. (1993) Teaching For Quality learning. Ph.D. Monash University
- Rosewarne Foster, J. (2001) Masterpieces: maternal subjectivity in the work of seven late-Modern women artists, PhD, University of Melbourne, Department of Fine Art, Classics and Archaeology, August, 2001.
- Snyder, I. (1990) The Impact of Word Processor on Students' Writing, Ph.D, Monash.
- Triolo, R. (1999) State Schooling and Civic and Citizenship Ideals in Victoria, 1872-1910. MEd thesis, Monash University.