ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE CANVASSED IN SUBMISSIONS TO THE
NEW SOUTH WALES REVIEW OF TEACHER EDUCATION
(as at February 2000)

Introduction

The Minister for Education and Training, The Hon. John Aquilina, has asked Dr Gregor Ramsey to
undertake a Review of Teacher Education in New South Wales. A copy of the Terms of Reference
is available on the Review’s web site.

Dr Ramsey has consulted extensively with the universities, the employers, the professional
associations and the wider education community. In addition, more than 150 written submissions
have been received.

The submissions received to date have been especially informative in assisting Dr Ramsey to identify
the important issues and how they may best be addressed.

This paper is a synthesis of some of the significant issues raised in the written submissions received
as at February 2000. It does not purport to provide detailed information on every issue raised. Nor
does any comment in the paper indicate that a final view or conclusion has been reached.

The paper is being made available at this stage of the Review process to assist those with an interest
in its outcomes to clarify their thinking about particular issues and to stimulate further input to the
Review. Dr Ramsey would welcome further advice on any issue affecting the review by 30 March
2000, particularly advice which considers how solutions can be developed in response to the issues
which have been identified.

The Review

A significant number of submissions commented on how many reviews and reports there are in
relation to teacher education and noted the general lack of action arising from them. Some commented
that while welcome, they were not confident that the current review would be able to overcome the
resistance and entrenched interests which have worked against other reviews and inquiries.

The following comment contained in the submission from a regional university is indicative of the
sense of frustration many expressed about the failure to effect significant reform across teacher
education and the teaching profession over the past decade and more.

“Those undertaking this review will be well aware of the plethora of reports, with
accompanying recommendations, that have been made at the national and state levels
over the past 20 years. Many, but not all such reports, are mentioned, or quoted in the
June 1999 report of the MACQT, Identifying the Challenges: Initial and Continuing
Teacher Education for the 21st Century.

Change arising from the reports and recommendations has, generally speaking, been
minimal. Why is this so?
Recommendations run into opposition in at least two major ways. First, even when recommendations are tagged there is usually no sanction for not implementing them.....Second, the diverse range of stakeholders in teacher education have their own agendas which often thwart the implementation of worthwhile recommendations.”

However, a number of submissions also expressed the view that the current review is occurring at a time which makes the achievement of successful outcomes more likely, seeing it as perhaps a last chance to successfully position teacher education and the profession for far-reaching emerging challenges

“There are considerable expectations for this review. It is important that this review does not revisit old territory. It is well positioned to provide the basis for practical action which will take teacher education to a new era.”

The Environment

Many submissions spoke about what they saw as enormous challenges shaping the environment in which teacher education and teaching are occurring. There is a general belief that significant change needs to occur in order to guarantee the quality and relevance of teacher education and to ensure that teaching is aligned with the needs of a knowledge society. A submission from a consultant expressed the view that insufficient account was being taken of the information technology revolution, seeing this revolution as having far-reaching implications for teachers and their work.

This submission spoke about the emergence of “learning professionals in the dot.com society”, people who straddle business, industry and education and who have in common the fact that they see the online world as full of “learner shoppers”. The submission saw these “learning professionals” as potentially revolutionising teaching and and the role of schools.

“Learning will be the biggest business of the 21st century. Much of the demand is already there - but unmet. For the products and services that the learning shoppers want to purchase aren’t available as yet. They all have to be created - from scratch.

It’s just like the beginning of TV; you couldn’t just transfer the radio programs to the screen.

All the TV programs now available had to be made. So too do all the online learning products - for all the world’s shoppers. That’s why there is so much excitement and activity in the dot.com world. The market is beyond comprehension.”

“No single classroom teacher could now be a sufficient resource for a class of today’s demanding net students. It will take teams of professionals to replace all the old customs (such as the one size fits all lecture) and tools (like study guides/textbooks).”

Another submission, from a university lecturer, also explored what it saw as the shifting environment in which teaching occurs and of the need for new understandings about what it means to be a teacher and what constitutes teaching.

“The current way of conceptualising "teacher" reflects a traditional adherence to discipline areas, and precludes the involvement of multi-skilled educators in the school environment. This approach freezes schools into traditional cultural practices, and makes
it difficult for them to respond with flexibility. The current paradigm for thinking about teacher education programs is outdated, and has been over-taken by changes to work patterns and practices.”

A number of submissions commented on the level of uncertainty which characterises the environment in which universities and schools operate. The following extract, from a submission by a university faculty of education, dealt specifically with this issue.

“Today we have an educational environment which is characterised by uncertainty and constant change - a reflection of the state in the wider society.

Accompanying globalisation and the massive industrial restructuring of the last decade, has been a collapse of the liberal consensus. As a consequence, there has been deep uncertainty about what education is for. Those inside educational institutions are having to mediate between the various groups who have an interest in education: students (or their parents) who see themselves increasingly as consumers; governments, which are demanding that education contribute to national or State needs as they define them; industry/business/professions, that pressure the various educational sectors to develop outcomes which facilitate the transition from education to work and which will enable lifelong learning.”

Similarly a submission from a university faculty of education explored the forces which are inexorably changing the nature of teachers’ work and the pressures which are building around the profession.

“Changes in teachers” work reflect those occurring on the global and local scene such as rapidly increasing and changing applications of technology, decreasing public funding, decreasing community respect for teachers and public education, increasingly complex society, a drift towards an increasingly “consumer oriented” and litigious environment, and exploding access to knowledge. These issues are leading to increased pressure on teachers from a crowded curriculum, high accountability expectations, and closer scrutiny and at times interference from the community, bureaucratic and political levels. At times, these changes are seen by many teacher educators to be at odds with the values of the profession: the preparation of reflective teachers capable of providing quality teaching and quality learning to meet the needs of students and school communities as well as contemporary Australian society. Arguably more important and more positive than any of these, however, is the move from teaching to learning.”

A submission from a regional university dealt especially with the consequences of the widening gap between changes in the broader society and the failure of teacher education and teaching to stay in alignment with these changes.

“There is no doubt that the roles of teachers in all educational settings, and the knowledge and skills needed to undertake these roles professionally, are changing dramatically. There has been a huge increase in the social welfare demands on teachers in the past twenty years, whether they are in schools or other early childhood settings. Recent policies of “inclusion” have meant that teachers are now dealing with a much larger range of academic abilities and behavioural problems. For high school teachers, increased retention rates and high youth unemployment rates have changed the student mix in classes, especially in the senior school. At the same time, the teacher has had to become expert in forms of knowledge delivery that did not exist until recently, particularly in
the area of information technology. For primary school teachers, the curriculum demands are unrealistic. These and many other changes require responses from teacher education programs. The changing expectations of school education around social justice issues, diversity, information technology, and modern approaches to pedagogy all have impacts on teacher education.”

A number of submissions referred to the problems which have emerged in teacher education as a consequence of the declining funding base for universities in general and for teacher education faculties in particular. The view was often expressed that the continued reduction in funding had now reached a point where teacher education was simply incapable of being re-shaped to meet new imperatives. The following, from a professional association, explored this idea.

“...the continuing withdrawal of resources from teacher education programs and the university sector in general is occurring at a time when social and economic conditions and the consequent demands of a complex society are placing increasing demands on classroom teachers. While the situation calls for better educated, more thoughtful and responsive practitioners, the number of staff, for example, in teacher education programs has generally decreased while student numbers have remained constant or even increased. The capacity of teacher educators for innovation, evaluation and reflection has been drastically weakened. Moreover, the capacity to service the basic essentials of teacher education programs is impaired.”

This submission went on to note that there were two apparent consequences arising from the reduction of the resource base. First, university staff now have workloads which preclude spending appreciable amounts of time in schools. Second, the relevance and currency of university teacher educator’s experience of the work of schools and other educational settings is compromised.

A submission from another professional association observed that the review was occurring at a critical time in the history of initial teacher education and that “it is not time for defending old territories but rather one of seeking out new possibilities”. It called for the establishment of a Teacher Education Board, with functions including:

- analyses of teacher supply and demand in NSW for both Government and non-government schools
- the targeting of sponsorship and scholarship opportunities to address labour market needs
- the accreditation of teacher education programs, and
- the setting of standards for university and school-based teacher educators.

Teaching as a Career

The review received a number of submissions from teachers. In general, they expressed strong personal commitment to teaching, irrespective of perceived difficulties in their work. The following, from a primary teacher in her first years of teaching, is typical.

“I love my job. I don’t love the money or the tiredness and stress I feel or the responsibility, but I love that I am helping every student I teach to grow and learn with knowledge, that I can be creative and teach others what I love in art and to care for our precious earth and to find fun, easy ways to enjoy learning. I am happy with the belief
that I am doing something so worthwhile and that most children really appreciate it and I am proud of that.”

Many submissions acknowledged that the great majority of teachers work hard and are committed to their students. At the same time they also often noted that such qualities, admirable though they may be, of themselves will be insufficient to position teaching to face the profession’s emerging challenges.

A significant number of submissions dealt with the need to raise the status of teaching. In general, teaching was portrayed in the submissions as a low-status profession. Mention was repeatedly made of the fact that many students see teacher education as a second or third choice option, the difficulties which many young teachers experience teaching in “hard-to-staff schools”, the disillusionment of a significant number of teachers in their mid-career years who believe that the profession offers at best only limited opportunities for advancement and the general lack of a strong professional identity.

A teacher education lecturer expressed the weak appeal of teacher education to high quality students in the following terms.

“Very few of today's high school graduates consider teaching as a serious career alternative. It is often regarded as a fall back option, rather than a first preference. Whilst the status of teaching remains low, it will not attract high quality candidates from other careers, or suitable secondary school graduates.”

Other submissions raised the desirability of setting standards for entry into teacher education courses, claiming that the universities and the employers needed to do more to ensure the quality of recruits. In some the view was expressed that such standards would actually serve to attract better quality people into teacher education courses and into teaching more generally.

Another submission, from a university, spoke about changes which have arisen as a consequence of teaching no longer being the most obvious pathway to achieve social mobility for many able young people in Australian society. Simply, in contemporary society there is such a diversity of opportunities which people have to select worthwhile, interesting and well-rewarded careers that teaching long ago lost the near monopoly it had on that part of the market where energetic, talented young people once gathered.

A submission from a consultant canvassed some of the problems accounting for low morale in the teaching profession.

“The problems of teacher inadequacy are rooted in many complex socio-political factors including the sheer size of the schooling industry (which in turn leads to excessive workloads and inadequate salaries), teacher frustration caused by politically driven, and otherwise ill-conceived, curriculum and administrative changes in schools, the power of the teacher unions and their unwillingness to promote professional excellence, the isolation of the controlling bureaucracies from the chalkface, "Country Club" cultures dominating the leadership styles of many school administrators, negative community perceptions of teaching as a profession and negative student perceptions of teaching as a career.”

In dealing with morale and issues associated with the profession’s identity of itself, a number of
submissions touched on the need to transform the outlook and practices of often highly experienced teachers who have failed to keep pace with change, in education and more generally. Many of these submissions spoke about the need for the “revitalisation” of the profession. The point was made in many submissions that the number of such teachers was far greater than those enrolled in teacher education courses or at the beginning of their careers. Their impact on the profession’s work and standing made it imperative that issues associated with them be confronted. A submission from an educational administrator described such teachers in the following terms.

“(such a teacher) has been teaching for 20+ years, often in the same regional centre, has become cynical, employs the same teaching methodology as in his/her first two years of teaching, has lost the love for the art of teaching and, I fear, for children.”

A number of submissions spoke about the ever increasing and unrealistic expectations which society has of teachers, expectations acting as a disincentive to enter or continue teaching. One submission quoted a 4th year student talking about the profession:

“Which other profession has such great expectations placed upon them”

Are all the inadequacies of students the sole responsibility of the teacher or should society, care givers, parents, or all other professions have a responsibility for the adequate education of all children?”

Other submissions explored issues associated with the complexities confronting teachers arising from issues such as the enormous diversity of values and beliefs within many communities. Comment was made on how often teachers are confronted with issues and dilemmas which are seemingly incapable of resolution.

The word “malaise” was used in a number of submissions to describe the current state of the teaching profession. In general, submissions expressed the view that accountability for this “malaise” could be sheeted home to all groups: the universities for generally failing to adequately support teacher education; teacher education faculties for often allowing their approaches to become ossified and irrelevant; employers and unions for creating a “closed culture” built on restrictive industrial practices; and teachers themselves for failing to grasp the need for the revitalisation of their profession in a changing world.

The statement in a submission by a union expressed the views of others on this matter.

“Reasons for the current malaise within the profession, and community perceptions that it is a profession and career with little going for it, are complex and require immediate action at the highest government levels and more importantly overt political commitment to the teaching profession.”

A number of submissions noted that students in areas of high demand infrequently choose teaching as a career, and that shortages in subjects such as mathematics and science are indicative of the appeal of other areas of the labour market to undergraduate students and to teachers. A submission from a university teacher education faculty claimed that the universities and the employers needed to be much more pro-active and imaginative in attracting quality students and mature age entrants into teacher education courses where shortages were occurring and anticipated. Particular concern was expressed in some submissions about the quality of some teachers employed in areas of subject shortage.
Some submissions, as well as identifying the problems, proposed strategies to increase the standing and morale of the profession, to increase its sense of professional identity and to attract future teachers into areas of current and anticipated shortage. Some of these submissions also touched on the desirability of ensuring that the composition of the profession in terms of background better reflected society as a whole.

Typical is the following from a faculty of education in a regional university.

“We need to ensure a supply of properly trained teachers from diverse backgrounds by providing incentives and support such as scholarships, bursaries, stipends and identified career pathways so that talented people are not discouraged from entering the profession.”

**Models of Delivery**

Many submissions explored current models of teacher education in New South Wales and what teacher education might look like in a changing environment. Reference was often made in these submissions to instances of perceived “best practice” where often “one-off” initiatives had been implemented to generate an innovative solution to particular issues.

A number of submissions, generally from universities, put the point of view that in general current approaches were working and that the review should provide advice on desirable modifications to ensure continued relevance and quality of performance.

Others, from across all groups and including some universities, expressed the view that current approaches and practices were poorly suited to a rapidly changing landscape and that a major re-positioning of teacher education was required. A submission from a university academic expressed a point of view echoed in some other submissions with the comment that: “If students and beginning teachers succeed in New South Wales, it is now often in spite of, not because of the quality of teacher education...”

Those submissions which explored possible future models of teacher education generally came to three key conclusions:

1. the most successful current “best practice” initiatives had a strong focus on the integration of course work and a field experience component, while noting that “best practice” was poorly shared between the universities
2. diversity in models of delivery should be a defining strength of teacher education in New South Wales, even within a co-ordination of present programs and resources
3. future models should be constructed on the integration of theory and practice, with the roles of universities, schools and the employers being substantially re-defined

Contrary to the view expressed by some universities, a submission from a university faculty of education claimed that “...what is needed is a new vision of teacher education, a different structure that operates according to a different logic, and players other than the present universities alone”.

A submission from a professional association endorsed the view that new models of teacher education were required in New South Wales. This submission argued that there should be some defining characteristics of such models. These would include:
greater delivery of components in the school or workplace
- a more effective placement of teacher education students in quality school contexts with trained, specialist in-school teacher educators
- new partnership arrangements between universities, TAFE and schools which build on the collegiate model of education provision
- use of fractional appointments shared between school and university to co-ordinate teacher education programs.

The Poor Cousin

A number of submissions touched on the profile of teacher education within universities and how Commonwealth funding of universities has led to the erosion of teacher education faculties. A submission from a regional university expressed views about these issues similar to those in other submissions

“The tendency has been for teacher education to have been used as a de facto source of funds for the establishment of other areas of learning, and for teacher education to have been used as a means of assuring the survival of other faculties, while essential teacher education units and their staff have been paid out of the system. This has left gaps in contemporary teacher education infrastructure, with some units having been dissolved altogether, others accommodated in larger groupings where the identity of teacher education is difficult to maintain, and even most of the better survivors in a parlous state in facing the twin prospects of a nationwide shortage of teachers and the fairly certain desire on the part of the Commonwealth to remove itself from the frontline of responsibility, possibly in favour of a form of deregulation or devolving the responsibility to local authorities.”

This submission went on to argue that the universities needed to come to terms with the role and place of teacher education within their culture and practices.

“The university system of the past decade has, by and large, not honoured the call of the Martin Report (1965) that teacher education should receive the very best of resources that a higher education system can provide. It has tended, rather, to see it as something of a foreign body, not altogether at home in a university culture, of some threat to traditional standards, and, hence, something over which great control should be exercised.”

A submission from a professional association described the Commonwealth’s role in resourcing teacher education as “dominant, tenuous and ambivalent”. It argued that State governments appear reluctant to resource initial teacher education, including internship and induction, because of the Commonwealth’s role.

The review received comments across all groups about the need for teacher education to have a higher profile in many universities. The belief was often expressed that unless this happens, teacher education will be largely incapable of coming to terms with the need to develop new structures and “new ways of thinking”.

Internships

A significant number of submissions expressed support for models of teacher education which incorporated an internship structure leading into employment. Particularly commended was the
University of Sydney’s M.Teach program. A submission from a teacher education lecturer observed that the strengths of the M. Teach program were:

- the utilisation of case-based methods as a common core, supported by use of information technology,
- sound preparation in curriculum areas,
- a concluding one-term internship addressing important issues of induction.

Other submissions commenting on the internship model or proposing similar structures referred to the funding implications which arise. The view was generally expressed that present funding arrangements are inadequate to sustain the implementation of models which incorporate an effective internship program. A submission from an employer argued for a stronger focus on the notion of internship, perhaps through a special "training wage" for interns or non-financial compensation for supervising teachers, such as access to professional support, eligibility for continuing education and promotion.

The view was supported in submissions that performance in the internship should be a significant factor in considerations about a teacher’s future employment.

On-line delivery

Reference was made in many submissions to the desirability of using technology to build greater flexibility into the delivery of pre and continuing service teacher training courses, including the identification of course components which may readily lend themselves to on-line delivery.

A submission from a university outlined the extent to which a teacher education program in early childhood education had moved to incorporate on-line learning, including the option for students to undertake the entire program in distance mode. This submission also described the ways in which the teacher education program could be integrated into employment.

“Students also have the flexibility to move freely between any combination of internal/external study mode on a semester-by-semester basis. Students nearing the end of their program increasingly take the opportunity to combine part-time internal or external study with full time or part-time teaching jobs. In effect, these students are taking the opportunity provided by program flexibility to create their own transition to teaching pathways.”

A number of submissions commented on the importance of on-line delivery of teacher education programs to meet the needs of students in rural and remote areas. A submission from a community group commented:

“With the shortage of teachers in rural and remote areas of the state (and unfavourable urban areas) it is essential that new initiatives are developed to address the ever increasing problem of the cost of undertaking teacher education for students from remote areas and teacher shortages.”

“The cost of a tertiary degree for many students from rural areas is prohibitive. Boys, in particular, from isolated areas have the lowest participation rate of any group, in tertiary education.”
Many families have had huge costs in educating their children through secondary education as many of these students have no other alternative but to board away from home in order to access their education.”

“Rural teaching scholarships, as used in previous years, could enable rural students to undertake teacher training. Rural students need financial assistance to access university as many are ineligible for the Youth Allowance, which discriminates against the rural community, due to the prescriptive nature of the Actual Means Test and Assets Test.

A student receiving a scholarship would then be required (or bonded) to teach in a rural area for a specified number of years on completion of their course.”

This submission also canvassed the possibility of a training program for para-professionals who could undertake some of the tasks of teachers, especially in the context of supporting the on-line delivery of the curriculum in rural and difficult to staff schools.

Partnership models

A number of submissions expressed the view that teacher education could no longer be seen as the responsibility of only the universities. The view was often put that partnership arrangements need to be developed involving all of the sectors which have a stake in teacher education. For example, a submission from a teacher education faculty argued that teacher education needs to prepare teachers to work in and teach in a wide variety of sites where learning occurs - schools, TAFE, the workplace, public and community institutions. The submission put the point of view that the current distinctions between secondary, TAFE and university educators will need to become more blurred. It called for specific partnership arrangements between universities, TAFE and schools with jointly developed teacher education programs. The submission further argued that particular consideration should be given to the concept of professional development schools, saying that the work done in the US and Japan could provide a model for a partnership between the school and the university. It noted that the intention of professional development schools is to tie universities into a close working relationship with schools and systems, so that teacher pre-service preparation is closely connected with the needs of the profession, including teacher recruitment.

A submission from a regional university spoke about the importance of the relationship between the school and the university:

“Just as schools need to relate closely to their communities so teacher education faculties need to relate closely to schools and to the profession. Some faculties are diffident about this, preferring to look inwards to the university.”

A submission from a regional university described a pilot initial teacher education project which sought to more closely integrate trainee teachers into schools and to focus more clearly on “real” problem solving. A number of innovations were built into the model, for example in relation to mentoring teachers:

“Mentoring Teachers will not be expected to add this role to their already existing ones gratis. The Faculty of Education will offer the equivalent of eight credit points of post-graduate study towards a Masters degree upon the completion of a reflective paper which summarises their professional experience in the mentoring role.”
Some submissions raised the desirability of shared appointments within partnership models. For instance, a submission from a university spoke about the concept of outstanding teachers being able to work in faculties of education to stimulate new thinking about how to work successfully and cooperatively with schools, thereby improving the quality of teaching and learning. It also called for initiatives which would encourage and facilitate a stronger research base in teacher education in the universities.

A submission from a faculty of teacher education argued that teacher education belongs within universities but that its profile needs to be greatly enhanced. At the same time the submission also put the point of view that this “...is not in any way to suggest that every component of the teacher education program should be on university campus and under the direct control of a university academic. Clearly, there are increasingly important roles for teacher professionals themselves and the resources of TAFE to play in partnership with a teacher education program...”

This submission drew attention to the strong partnerships which have emerged between many universities and other professions.

“In Australia, at this time, professions of high status and significance have invested their initial and ongoing training in the University system with, in each case, significant professional interface. In medical, legal and engineering training, for instance, the effectiveness of the university program is assessed in many ways by the quality of the links which are forged between the academic and professional domains.”

**Teacher educators**

While comment was made in some submissions that any number of teacher educators work hard to ensure the relevance of their work, more generally the view was expressed that too many are poorly informed about contemporary schools. One submission noted that this even extends to the extent that some are “even unqualified” to teach in a NSW public school. The lack of engagement in the practicum by many teacher educators was frequently commented upon. Such comments are indicative of the extent to which many submissions expressed the view that quality teacher education must be predicated upon a close and continuous relationship between the universities and schools.

Many submissions canvassed the criteria which should apply in the employment of teacher educators. One submission stated that “no one involved in teacher training should be allowed out of a classroom for more than four years”. Another, from a teacher educator, called for the appointment of teacher education lecturers to take full consideration of their teaching background and experience, as against their research and academic portfolio.

A submission from a university laid out a set of expectations concerning teacher educators:

“Teacher educators, therefore, need to foster enabling relationships with student teachers and to establish learning environments conducive to risk-taking. They also need to introduce student teachers to strategies that can assist them to develop reflective skills and support them as they struggle to make sense of their practical experiences by reconsidering their assumptions in the light of new experiences; drawing connections between theory and practice; and making moral judgements about alternative courses of action open to them as teachers. To fulfil these responsibilities, teacher educators require complex pedagogical knowledge and an understanding of the contexts in which student teachers gain their practical experience.”
A number of submissions commented on the seeming reluctance of teacher education lecturers to “fail” students who were demonstrably unsuitable.

The Practicum

Importance

Many submissions canvassed issues about the practicum.

Without exception they identified the practicum as central to quality teacher education.

“A strong, well co-ordinated practice teaching regime is the sine qua non of teacher education. It must be properly funded and this funding has to take into account teacher remuneration for supervising teachers.”

And:

“Although the practicum is considered expensive and organisationally difficult, its role should be strengthened not reduced in any recommendations regarding teacher education.”

The view was repeatedly expressed that the review should make recommendations which strengthened teacher education by strengthening the role of the practicum.

In general, submissions called for:

- models of delivery which incorporate the practicum as the focal point of students’ learning
- a general increase in the amount of time provided for field experience, including the establishment of a minimum time requirement
- the establishment of specific standards in relation to the practicum
- defined roles in the practicum for teachers and teacher educators, including standards of performance
- the integration of the practicum into the curriculum of the teacher education course
- a greater level of importance to be given by the employers to practicum reports
- the establishment of a culture of “high achievement” in the practicum
- ensuring that in the practicum students were immersed in a culture of “best teaching practice”
- integration of the practicum over the full period of the course
- diversity of practicum settings for all students
- a longer practicum or internship at the conclusion of the course, possibly in a setting similar to that where the student is most likely to be employed.

Submissions identified a need for the universities and schools to work more closely in establishing, managing and evaluating the practicum. A submission from a regional university referred to “the traditional conceptions of power and authority between teachers and university teacher educators that need to be challenged”. The submission suggested such initiatives as: increased opportunities for communication between teachers and lecturers; joint planning and evaluation by lecturers and teachers; and incorporating an “action research cycle” into the program.
To a greater or lesser extent the majority of submissions which referred to it expressed dissatisfaction with most current approaches to the practicum and called for change.

**University supervisors**

Comment was made in a number of submissions about how little time most university supervisors spend with trainee teachers during the practicum. Some submissions extended this to observe how little is occurring in most instances to build a strong partnership between the universities and schools in teacher education. A submission from a school suggested that a model should be implemented whereby a university commissions a number of schools in a partnership with shared responsibility for teacher training, covering mentoring and the practicum.

**The supervising teacher**

Comment was made in a number of submissions on the importance of the extent to which the supervising teacher was fully engaged in the process, including the post-practicum period. The argument was put in these submissions that positions should be created, perhaps with limited tenure, where outstanding teachers would have a special mentoring role for student teachers. The need for effective training of in-school mentors was also raised, as was the need to raise their profile in the continuum of teacher education across the university and the school.

The view was put that often supervising teachers are poorly selected, their quality is a lottery and that they are not trained for the role. A submission from a professional association called for the establishment of standards for school-based teacher educators.

Submissions referred to what can be seen as a culture amongst teachers of resisting involvement in the practicum. Some submissions commented on the cynicism which pervades many schools about the value of pre-service teacher education. These submissions put the view that the practicum is often seen by executive and classroom teachers as an "add on" rather than a significant part of their professional lives and the work of the school.

Many submissions raised issues related to the practice of direct payment to the supervising teacher. In general, the view was expressed that consideration should be given to non-monetary compensation which would enable the supervising teacher to undertake the role at a higher level of professionalism. Views expressed included the notion that it should be a matter for the individual school to determine how such funding was applied to best support the practicum and that more emphasis needs to be placed on the concept of “professional responsibility”.

**Relevance**

Comment was made in a number of submissions on what is discerned as an often poor alignment between the content of the teacher training course and what occurred during the practicum. Evidence was cited, for instance, of trainee primary teachers having little or no opportunities to teach in some Key Learning Areas in the practicum as a result of the supervising classroom teacher's program or the teacher's reluctance to teach aspects of the KLA.

A submission from a faculty of education included a number of comments by current students on their practicum experiences. The following highlights some key issues about the practicum:
“We argue that the current B.Ed. course needs to be embedded in a more practicum-based learning framework. This practicum experience should be a less isolating experience than it currently is, which we feel is the result of a lack of in-school support from university lecturers. We also feel that practicum should be more related to what is actually taught at university, and should provide opportunities for us to put theory into practice. For instance, students should be matched to schools where their elective is taught.”

It is possible to discern an underlying view that teacher preparation in this area needs somehow to be better integrated into the school or school types where the person is likely to later teach. One submission from a school commented that: “...in recent years we have noticed that the appointment of teachers, especially to socio-economically disadvantaged schools, commenced their careers...with a limited knowledge of welfare issues related to the students under (their) care”.

A submission from an employer put the following point of view about the practical component of teacher education programs:

“There is a need to strengthen practical components of teacher education programs related to content of direct relevance to employing authorities in NSW. This includes priority syllabus implementation; standards-referenced assessment and reporting; classroom management; use of information technology; and, for secondary teachers, HSC implementation and vocational education in schools. This may require the establishment of new models of initial teacher education that could include:

- greater delivery of formal components in the school or workplace
- more effective placement of teacher education students in quality school contexts with trained, specialist in-school educators
- new partnership models between universities, TAFE and schools which build on the collegiate model of educational provision.”

Funding

A submission from a university teacher education lecturer identified a need for increased funding to support the practicum, “...in particular through a return to at least original levels in terms of an adequate total number of days in each major program...”. Another commented that the system of payment to teachers distorts the relationship between the university and “colleagues in the field”. It argued that: "the relationship, which ought to be predicated on considerations of collaboration and shared obligation, is reduced to a purely instrumental one, where a token fee is exchanged for (sometimes minimal) service”. This submission went on to argue that "the most satisfactory relationships between the university and the field are likely to arise from a situation where an educational setting...negotiates with the university to provide high quality professional experiences for pre-service teachers in ways which are seen to meet both the expectations of the students’ course and agreed criteria for entry to the relevant field of practice”.

A submission from a teacher education lecturer raised issues related to funding:

“It costs my.....program approximately $1000 per student for a 7 week practicum as a result of payment....for teachers who supervise students. A number of pertinent questions arise:
- do other professions pay for on-the-job training?
- with teachers losing 48% of practicum payments to tax and with school
  global budgeting in operation should alternative payment methods be
  investigated? (ie lump sum payment to schools)."

A submission from a faculty of education identified the present payment arrangements as an inhibitor
to change in teacher education practice and asked that the review carefully consider the issue with
a view to more flexible arrangements which would facilitate the school-university partnership.
Similarly, a submission from another university called for the consideration of other funding
arrangements, including giving supervising teachers credit towards post-graduate study.

While not supportive of the practice of direct payment, a university submission warned that any
attempt to discontinue it would be fraught:

“Burdened as they are with increasing demands on their time teachers are becoming
less willing to accept the extra burden of supervising a student teacher. Payment for
this supervision is often not an issue with teachers and even an increase would not be a
sufficient inducement for them to become involved. While Australia stands out in its
payment of teachers for this task, attempts by any government to remove it would be
resisted by teacher unions and would severely damage the field-based component of all
teacher education courses. Even among teachers for whom payment is not an issue, its
removal would be seen as a further indication of the lack of respect and support for
teachers’ work.”

Best practice

Submissions talked about the importance of trainee teachers being exposed to good teaching practice
in schools. A submission from a professional association explored issues around professional
development schools, arguing that the model may work if universities fundamentally change the
ways in which they see schools, from "separate" to "integrated". A submission from a school argued
for the appointment of teachers with high levels of expertise and achievement to schools in which
they would have particular responsibility for teacher education.

A submission from a regional university noted that a major problem was the lack of disseminated
information about best practice and practicum models. It also commented that this applies equally
to research.

“There is a need for either a new organisation or for one of the existing organisations to
fill the gap noted here, otherwise teacher education schools/faculties will tend to become
increasingly isolated and not benefit from each other’s ideas and activities.”

The submission went on to explore the importance of a partnership in ensuring a quality practicum.
It quoted a 1989 discipline review of teacher education in mathematics and science:

“The practicum should be jointly owned by the higher education institution and the
schools. There should be no minority partners in this joint ownership. Implied here is
joint planning, joint implementation, joint review and joint revision. Structures for this
require the establishment of a joint standing committee which includes representatives
at least of teacher education staff, schools and students.”
**The Curriculum**

Many submissions commented on the teacher education curriculum. Most frequently they explored the extent to which the curriculum was relevant to teaching in contemporary educational settings and whether it had been sufficiently responsive to the forces now shaping teaching.

Many submissions explored issues related to whether the teacher education curriculum should prepare students for specific teaching contexts or whether a more “global” perspective should underpin it. A submission from a professional association argued that the curriculum of teacher education programs needs “to strike an appropriate balance between preparation for the practicalities of a local context and entry to a world-wide profession”. This issue was also explored in a submission from teacher education faculty in a regional university. The argument was put that teacher education needs to prepare teachers for employment in NSW, nationally and overseas.

“...it is likely to become increasingly important that teachers be prepared to be flexible and mobile in their work, both within and outside Australia, and hence there is an important obligation for teacher education, training and preparation programs to reflect these changing realities.”

A submission from a university academic argued that greater emphasis needs to be given to highlighting and teaching the generic skills that teachers have (communication, computers, critical thinking, organisational etc) and which are transferable across a range of job sectors. Another submission expressed the view that approaches to teaching and teacher education need to take full account of the fact that learning outside the classroom will increasingly be a feature of learning for young people:

“...this will include more structured workplace learning and a range of other non-classroom learning experiences as well as young people combining working and learning all of which will contribute to the mosaic of learning preparing people for the transitions beyond compulsory schooling.”

A submission from a teacher educator commented:

“All teacher education must focus on the how of change not just the what, for example how best, as a teacher, to lead, participate in and manage ongoing change. There is ample research to demonstrate that the capability to manage change is one of the key core requirements of any professional. Emphasis must remain on learning rather than teaching. The central concern is for what happens in the class, but not necessarily with the classroom as a site, but in the context of teachers working with groups of learners.”

A submission from a university academic called for a much stronger focus on defined outcomes at the various stages of preservice education which a trainee teacher would be required to attain. These outcomes would be categorised within the frameworks of: being a teacher; teacher as learner; teacher as colleague; teacher as community partner; teacher as facilitator. This would include making explicit the expected outcomes of the practicum.

The question of relevance featured strongly in most submissions which dealt with the curriculum. At times the conclusion was drawn that at least some aspects of the curriculum offered in particular places were irrelevant to contemporary teaching. A submission from teachers in a regional area observed that “according to some of our beginning teachers, teacher preparation programs are a
reflection of the past and not the present or indeed the future.”

However, other submissions argued that issues related to relevance were complex and ran the risk of driving a curriculum which would fail to provide the contextual framework underpinning quality teaching. A submission from a university academic expressed concern about the current strength of arguments for “immediate relevance and job training in education, which is leading to a disturbing move from the “pure” sciences and humanities towards applied subjects and professional accreditation courses”. The submission observed that the “loss of liberal studies, and with it aspects of broad cultural and scientific literacy, has serious consequences for teacher training - science and maths in particular, but also languages - and hence, for the curriculum of future decades”.

Some submissions argued for a more holistic approach to teacher education, claiming that teachers need a more sophisticated understanding of the contexts in which students lived and learned. A submission from an employer expressed the view that the teacher education curriculum should incorporate some basic principles

- Teachers should be aware of the concept of resilience and understand the protective role of positive teacher/student relationships. They need to understand the fundamental importance of respecting students and ways that this might be communicated even when a student is not behaving well.
- Teachers need to learn to teach social skills including negotiation and conflict resolution in the context of everyday lessons.
- Teachers need to be given an understanding of child and adolescent development and ways in which schools can support students. The effective use of student welfare programs such as social skills enhancement, mentoring, anti-bullying and peer mediation needs to be covered.
- Behaviour management should be taught to prepare teachers to maintain a positive learning environment without habitually using authoritarian methods.
- Mentoring should be a feature of teacher education programs. Student teachers should be given mentors and should learn how to mentor students and how to set up mentoring programs.
- Teachers need to be trained in collaborative working to prepare them to be part of a learning support team, professional learning team or other team within their school. They should understand the importance of team working and the benefits of modelling participation, cooperation and conflict resolution to students.
- Teachers need to be given skills for working with parents and caregivers. They need to know how and when to best communicate with parents and caregivers and how to involve them in their child’s education.
- Teachers need skills in facilitating student participation in planning and decision making. A deep understanding of learning can be promoted in teacher education by observation of non school-based teaching and learning eg, home schooling or instruction in traditional crafts.
- Teachers need to be prepared to teach thinking skills explicitly in every curriculum area. Focussing on thinking skills in the classroom is important because it supports active cognitive processing which makes for better learning.
- Effective teachers have a commitment to themselves as learners. Active learning enables them both to give interesting lessons and to understand how it feels to struggle with some concepts. When teacher education programs emphasise this aspect they prepare teachers to adapt to the increasing rate of change in education.
Primary teacher education

Issues were raised in relation to the extent to which teacher training courses adequately prepared trainee teachers in aspects or areas of the curriculum, particularly in primary education. Comment was made in a submission by a school that in many instances newly appointed teachers in their first year of service had “...little or no knowledge of the State Literacy Strategy or the underlying philosophy of the English K-6 syllabus and an Outcomes and Profiles approach to learning.” The view was expressed that training and development at the district level needs to be provided within a model which will “capture” those teachers who, for whatever reason, have missed training in key curriculum areas and ensures that they are provided with their own copies of the documents which support the curriculum they are required to teach.

Difficulties in primary teacher education where trainee teachers were required to be “expert” in 6 Key Learning Areas were raised in a number of submissions, with the suggestion that in areas such as IT and LOTE there should be an opportunity for specialist primary teachers to be trained. This would facilitate the appointment of such teachers to districts or clusters of schools by the employer. The idea of increased specialist training for primary teachers was supported in a submission from a university academic, with the “overcrowding” of the primary curriculum seen as placing unrealistic demands on primary teachers. This submission called for a minimum 4-year initial teacher education program for undergraduate entry and a minimum 2-year professional training for graduate entry. On the other hand, a submission from a community group expressed concern about “creeping specialisation” in the primary years.

Another submission, from a teacher education faculty, adopted a somewhat different perspective in relation to the primary curriculum:

“...a teacher education course for primary students needs to include depth studies in areas reflecting those in which the students will subsequently teach. Such studies need to be seen by the students as relevant. Thus an English course might treat substantial literature related to teaching itself, literature that sheds light on aspects of childhood and the very best of children’s literature. Optionally, students might also be able to take traditional subjects in depth such as Australian literature, American literature, and so on. The whole would constitute a subject major. Similarly, depth treatment at adult level of other KLA subjects - Mathematics, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and the like should get core treatment in teacher education courses. The aim should be the development of in-depth expertise and proficiency in the crucial areas of English and Mathematics and one other KLA, with all KLAs receiving strong attention with regard to pedagogy and "method" or curriculum studies. These latter studies should accompany the depth subject studies such that the link between personal proficiency in a subject and the teaching of that subject is transparent.”

This submission also argued that the link between education theory and practice should be “manifest everywhere in the course content rather than having them artificially separated”. The submission also argued that the teacher education curriculum structure should be such that it allows students "flexibility in their studies to cater for the diverse areas in which appointments are made”.

Broadening the teacher education curriculum

Submissions commented that teacher training courses, while needing to develop students’ knowledge about the curriculum and their skills in teaching the curriculum to students, also need to prepare
students for the full spectrum of working in contemporary schools by addressing issues such as: the professional responsibilities of teachers; professional ethics and conduct; and their accountabilities. A submission from a professional association observed:

“Most trainee teachers are totally unaware of the wider role of the teacher. Some are unprepared to participate in the many hours of unpaid work which most teachers perform. Teachers now undertake far more school related roles as a member of a team, this also is sometimes not understood. The “whole school” role of teachers needs to be effectively communicated to potential teacher trainees before they start their training or very early within their training.”

Similarly, a submission from a beginning teacher captured how overwhelming the whole school role is:

“One area I was not prepared for was the management plan division. Basically every school has a management plan and all staff are allocated roles towards the management of the school. Last year I was in charge of Aboriginal studies, fundraising and the environment club. They were being kind that year. This year my management plan includes art, drama, environment, gymnastics and peer mediation. This means I am to assess how each of these is implemented in the school and to report on this, if any new resources or information comes from the Department of Education we must inform and educate the staff on it. I was also trained to be the anti-racist officer for my school.”

A major theme emerging from consideration of the submissions is that the scope of many teaching training courses is too narrowly defined and reflects little or no appreciation of the complexity of the work of teachers. In relation to ethics, a submission from an industry group called for a mandatory professional ethics unit in all teacher education programs to ensure teachers “.........are aware of standards and norms of professional practice and conduct consistent with those generally accepted in business”. A submission from a community group also dealt with ethics, arguing that teacher education needs to include a much stronger focus on the human and citizenship rights of children and young people with disability to be physically and socially included in regular schools.

“In our view teacher training ought to promote an ability/rights and citizenship model of disability, rather than the “deficit”, “medical aetiology” based model of disability that currently tends to underpin teacher education.”

A submission from a teacher education faculty argued that the teacher education curriculum needs to take greater account of the ethnic diversity of many schools in which graduates will teach:

“There is a continuing movement of children to our schools from non-English speaking countries. Many have suffered the experiences of poverty, social disruption and in some cases, the effects of war. In some schools, as many as 70% of students may share such backgrounds. In many schools, 30 to 40% of students may come from families who have experienced similar circumstances. The increasing attention to promoting awareness and knowledge in schools of Aboriginal culture is different from the experiences of many of our Teacher Education students’ school days. These are all matters for teacher education programs to address in helping our students embrace the learning and teaching opportunities which the increasingly diverse school populations allow. Teacher education programs need to ensure that students are able to work constructively with the diversity of student interests and skills in the achievement of curriculum goals.”
This view was supported in some other submissions, including the observation that: "One view is that current teacher graduates are equipped to educate mono-cultural, English speaking, Anglo-Saxon, middle class children, that do not have a disability".

A submission from a professional association put the point of view that: "...most trainee teachers are totally unaware of the wider role of the teacher....The "whole school" role of teachers needs to be effectively communicated to potential teacher trainees before they start their training or very early within their training". Similarly a community organisation put the point of view that importance should be placed on teachers knowing the community in which they will teach or are teaching.

**The overcrowded curriculum**

A number of submissions dealt with the perceived overcrowding of the teacher education curriculum, as emerging issues resulted in particular requirements being placed on teacher education courses. A submission from a university academic argued that "employers should not make any further demands that particular subjects be included in the university curriculum to address specific, temporary needs of school students. Requests for particular material to be included may be appropriate, but not at the expense of preferring the present and particular over the universal and permanent. Such requests should in any case be referred to a teacher registration board for assessment and decision". Another submission commented that employing authorities should exercise considerable care in mandating particular requirements for teacher education programs.

**Rural and remote education**

A number of submissions raised issues related to the preparation of teachers to teach in rural and remote areas. In general, they expressed the view that teacher education courses need to incorporate units which will enable students to gain knowledge and skills to support teaching in regional, rural and isolated locations.

A submission from a regional university commented on the importance of a specific “rural-regional focus in teacher education”.

"Not only are there particular features and demands of teaching and schooling in rural and remote areas, but there are major disadvantages and difficulties associated with rural-regional education. This is clearly acknowledged in recent inquiries by the Human Rights Commission on rural and remote schooling and the Senate Standing Committee on regional development, and was further clearly affirmed in the Regional Australia Summit (held in Canberra on October 27-29 of this year)."

**Aboriginal education**

While concerns were expressed in some submissions about the number of mandated courses, submissions which dealt with issues in Aboriginal education generally supported the mandating of a course in Aboriginal education in all teacher education programs. There was also a call for the training of all teachers involved in the teaching of Aboriginal Studies. A submission, from a faculty of education, argued that despite the good intentions of governments and education authorities, teachers’ skill development in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies has failed to keep pace with curriculum development and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies should be a mandatory core component of pre-service courses.

**Early childhood education**
A number of submissions canvassed issues related to the preparation of early childhood teachers.

Some submissions expressed concern about the extent to which K-6 teacher education courses were adequately preparing students for early childhood education teaching.

A submission from a university noted the linkage between the quality of early childhood educators and the level of student outcomes. This submission noted important differences between the training of early childhood teachers and that of primary teachers:

“Primary teacher education programs, in contrast to early childhood programs, focus on the demands specific to working in primary schools and provide in-depth coverage of mandated syllabus documents. For these reasons, they have not been able to include in-depth coverage of theories of child development and social contexts of the family pertinent to the early childhood years, and how these translate into sound pedagogical practice. Nor have these programs been able to provide the management, administration, leadership and legal components required by graduates of early childhood teacher education programs.”

Concerns were also raised by what the submission identified as the arbitrary decision of the Department of Education and Training to require teachers to be K-6 trained:

“We note with concern the statement that has recently appeared in job advertisements for the DET that applicants be accredited to teach K-6. This statement now precludes early childhood graduates from appointment to permanent DET positions, although they remain in demand as targeted graduates and casual teachers with DET schools. They are also highly sought after by the independent school sector. The sudden and unannounced (at an official level) change in policy by the DET, however, constitutes a narrowing of career opportunities for graduates of early childhood programs.”

Consistency

Reference was made in submissions to the need for greater consistency between courses offered by the universities. One submission commented that it could be “disconcerting” as the employer to have to deal with the different experiences of new graduates depending on the program they have completed; suggestions were made that there would be value in the application of an agreed set of broadly based competencies.

A submission which dealt with the lack of consistency across courses identified a need for an agreed and detailed statement about the role of a NSW classroom teacher and saw this as a means to improve consistency between teacher education courses.

Information Technology

Comment was made in a number of submissions that high levels of skills in information literacy are critical for teacher effectiveness but that in substantial measure teacher training courses are not adequately preparing teachers for this key aspect of their work. Such observations were made in relation to both pre-service and continuing teacher education. For example, a submission from a university academic made the observation that "...the Department of Education and Training is more interested in computers as mark books and for report writing, thus preserving technical interests
and controlling teachers’ work”. This submission expressed the view that teacher education had failed to date to come to terms with information literacy in ways which would significantly impact on teachers and their work.

A submission from an employer referred to a US report which showed that there is an alarming inconsistency between what teacher training faculties know about technology and what they are training teachers to do. The submission claimed that in NSW it "appears that IT training for teachers is neither adequate nor effective, since there is a lack of emphasis on the application of IT to classroom activity/practice/methodology". It quoted US evidence that ".......the teacher education institutions that reported the highest levels of student teacher technology skills and experience were not those with heavy computer course requirement, but those that make use of technology on a routine basis throughout their teacher training program”.

Most submissions endorsed the view that the information technology revolution posed an enormous challenge for teachers, schools and teacher education institutions. A submission from a university academic argued that:

“Changing technology is part and parcel of the rapidly changing social, cultural, political and economic times in which we live. And it is clear that changing technology is a key driver of these associated changes. Both university lecturers and teachers in schools, however, are ill-equipped to deal with the enormity and complexity of the technological changes going on around us. In relative terms, our programs of study and schools as sites of learning, are largely low tech learning contexts in a high tech world. If this does not change, they will rapidly become redundant.”

Similarly, a union submission put the point of view that:

“There can be little doubt that new technologies are profoundly affecting educational practice at all levels. Technology has the potential to reorganise curriculum knowledge requirements and the resources that teachers use to prepare and deliver their programs. Its use requires not only new teacher skills, but a reconceptualisation of what it means to teach. Teachers require an in-depth knowledge about the organisation of knowledge itself in order to use the new technologies. A new pedagogy is required which is dependent on the appropriate and systematic integration of information technologies and school practices.”

Submissions generally talked about the importance of teachers having advanced IT skills (and by implication working in sophisticated IT environments) to ensure that students are well prepared for employment in the “new millennium”. They commented that by and large schools are not technology friendly environments and that perceived high levels of resistance to change generally in schools has inhibited progress in IT.

A submission from a faculty of education argued that the use of IT in learning in Australia is “in its infancy” and that there needs to be a greater level of research into how it can be best utilised in teacher education programs. It argued that there is a need for teacher education students to be better prepared so that they use the intricacies of technology to facilitate learning.

Many submissions attempted to come to terms with what teaching and learning might look like as a consequence of the information technology revolution. A submission from a teacher education faculty explored a possible scenario.
“In The Age of Spiritual Machines, Ray Kurzweil, one of the world’s leading and most respected software engineers, and one whose carefully based prognostications have mostly been realised so far, predicts that there will be a dramatic shift in the role of teacher with their primary function “to attend to issues of motivation, psychological well being, and socialisation”. This is because intelligent course-ware will have emerged by then as a common means of learning with computers playing the central role in education. Students of all ages are likely to have thin, tablet-like interactive devices with high-resolution displays suitable for reading and learning materials, which are accessed through wireless communication. Systems will be increasingly voice-activated. Distance learning, including learning from home, will be commonplace and might well be incorporated into schooling especially at senior (HSC) levels.”

Some submissions identified a need to remain especially cognizant of emerging equity issues in the area of information technology which schools will need to address:

“It is obvious that the speed of change will continue to accelerate and that the distribution of resources within society will increasingly differentiate between the technically literate and illiterate. The ability to develop technical literacy is greatly affected by the resources of the home and the school. In the future access to bandwidth may also be affected by geographical location, possibly increasing the different access between rural and urban children. Access to communication technology and information technology will change social interaction within the community so that those with access are connected to resources for learning and leisure and those without are not. The school learning environment will increasingly be required to provide equity of access and opportunity to technology.”

A submission from a community group called for student teachers to be trained in the use of adaptive technology in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

A significant number of submissions put the point of view that the resistance of older teachers to incorporating computers into their pedagogy was the single biggest obstacle to improving teaching practice in NSW schools. A number made the observation that in many classrooms students are so much further advanced in their computer skills than teachers and that their knowledge threatens the traditional authority which teachers are able to exercise in the teacher-student relationship.

VET

Some submissions dealt specifically with issues related to the VET sector.

One submission, from a university academic, provided a valuable picture of the contrast between developments up to the early 1990s with the present.

“There has been a pronounced shift to the casualisation of TAFE teaching with much of vocational teaching and learning now being provided by part-time teachers in TAFE institutions. Moreover non-degree level training qualifications are now often regarded as the minimum qualification needed by these teachers.

Government policies of competition have encouraged the private sector to compete with TAFE in supplying vocational education and training programs. And non-degree
workplace trainer qualifications have become the qualification of choice for many of TAFE’s competitors.”

“Where there was once a commitment to professionalism of the TAFE teaching workforce including initial and continuing development there now appears to be no human resource plan for the future, or even a recognition of its importance. Today less than one half of one per cent of the TAFE salary budget is allocated to staff development.

TAFE Institute Directors, faced with financial constraints on their budgets have resorted to employing part-time teaching staff with minimum qualifications, such as workplace trainer Certificate IV courses. The costs associated with employing full time staff who require degree level teacher training are seen as too prohibitive in the current environment. And there is neither encouragement for the on-going professional development of teachers through award courses nor any partnership between TAFE and universities of the type that produced the special Master of Education course....”

The submission claimed that the continuing de-professionalisation of the TAFE teaching workforce will be exacerbated by the increased retirement rate of the next decade.

Another submission also raised this issue and identified problems associated with the fact that Training Packages can be delivered by a person holding a Certificate IV in workplace training.

A submission from an employer raised the desirability of exploring new models of teacher preparation for the VET sector:

“Although it is essential that TAFE teachers continue to hold a teaching degree, the current course structures need to be revisited and other models investigated. TAFE teacher education needs to better reflect the educational, industrial and business environment within which TAFE teachers work. This should also include stronger links with TAFE and industry in the planning, delivery and assessment of TAFE teacher programs. Post-graduate programs should also be restructured to prepare educational managers and leaders to operate in a business environment which has a customer focus.”

A submission from a union called for the review to deal with the preparation of teachers in the VET sector, seeing confining teacher education to schools as unfortunate and limiting the debate.

“The policy driven dismantling of the barriers between industry, enterprise, TAFE private providers and schools implies that teacher education needs to broaden the parameters of its definition to accommodate these changes. In particular the national Training Reform Agenda (NTR), the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF), new apprenticeships and traineeships and the influence of the National Training Packages (NTP) imply that the divisions between teacher training in the traditionally defined VET sector and teacher training for schools is no longer appropriate. Teacher training needs to address the needs of practitioners in all sites where education or training is being delivered.”

A submission from a university academic claimed that the quality of VET delivery in schools to date has generally been poor, in large measure due to the inadequate VET retaining programs for school teachers. It also noted the lack of planning between DET and the universities to address training issues for VET teachers in the school sector. The argument was put that if VET in schools
is to expand and the quality of delivery is to improve training needs to be provided to enable people to teach across both TAFE and schools.

“How should such teachers be trained” We do not believe that the most appropriate model would be the preservice model currently used for school teacher education...the case for making teacher education more school based is very strong. Hence, we should adapt the current inservice model for the training of vocational teachers in schools. This would not be difficult to do but there needs to be leadership from the DET to enable universities...to plan for this situation.

It may be that there is a need for a short period of full time study before such teachers are allowed to teach in schools but the advantages of the inservice model are considerable, particularly if the DET develops the mentoring skills of a number of its current staff.”

A submission from an employer identified a number of issues which need to be addressed in the preparation of VET teachers:

“In developing and delivering education and development programs for TAFE teachers who may be required to teach across different sectors of education, consideration needs to be given to the impact on training for teachers now being required to teach younger students and school teachers being required to teach adults.

This raises the issues of whether in future we need combined secondary methods/adult methods in education theory and practice as a core component of teacher education courses and whether all teachers should be trained as “dual citizens”. If a combined secondary methods/adult methods component was developed, given the low numbers of TAFE teachers currently being recruited, all would probably be required to do the combined component.. The answer may well be different as far as school teachers are concerned, given the larger numbers involved and the fact that the flow is more likely to be TAFE to schools rather than schools to TAFE. However, it should also be recognised there could be considerable benefits in an inclusion of adult learning methods in secondary teachers’ education programs.”

A submission from a teacher education faculty expressed the view that a new model was needed within which the preparation of VET teachers could be undertaken

“...the National Training Reform Agenda (NTR), the Australian Qualifications Framework (ARF), new apprenticeships and traineeships and the influence of the National Training Packages (NTP) imply that the divisions between teacher training in the traditionally defined VET sector and teacher training for schools is no longer appropriate. Teacher training needs to address the needs of practitioners in all sites where education or training is being delivered. This review provides the opportunity to look beyond the traditional views and recognise that schools are not the only sites where teachers work and that teacher education needs to be conceptualised quite differently.”

Some submissions took the view that a more robust and diverse program for the preparation of VET teachers had the potential to transform schools. For instance, a submission from a regional university teacher education faculty:
“Young people are staying on at school under the pressure of the conditions of the Common Youth Allowance and because full time employment opportunities are so limited for those who leave without their HSC credential. The culture, the expectations and the needs of our senior school students are now as diverse as the society itself. The traditional homogeneity of students in Years 11 and 12 has gone and teachers are finding the new clientele disaffected and sometimes disinterested in the curriculum choices which they present. The backgrounds and working experiences of school teachers are generally linear (school, university, work) and grounded in the culture of the school and the value of a broad and general education. Whilst this is no cause for criticism of either their abilities or intentions it is a cause for scrutiny. The diverging group of senior secondary students would be better served by teachers with a more generous range of teaching and training backgrounds. The parallels and experiences of a “new breed” of VET teachers would provide variety and give expression to the links between school culture and the real world which would ensure greater student identification and engagement.”

Another submission explored similar issues and canvassed changes that need to be accommodated to advance VET teacher training:

• increasing acceptance that senior secondary schools can no longer be places of high regimentation
• recognition that education and training does not necessarily occur in only one time and place and that community and outside school employment provides rich raw materials for teachers to build on
• the proliferation of partnerships between schools, industry, enterprise and the community
• arrangements are temporary and grow up around opportunities and circumstances
• curriculum can no longer be isolated or isolating particularly given the AQF and all it implies.

Many submissions addressed issues related to the need to facilitate mature age entry into VET teaching. One submission called for courses to be established which would enable people in industry to study on a part-time basis to become industrial arts teachers:

“A current Australian High Court judge once commented that he was able to attain his current position by completing all of his university study by part time attendance, yet it was impossible to become an Industrial Arts teacher except by full time study.”

This submission also called for the re-establishment of industrial arts teacher training courses in the Sydney area. A submission from a professional association was critical of the run-down of the resource base for the training of industrial-arts teachers, citing the loss of the Newcastle CAE state-of-the art facility for industrial arts education at the beginning of the 1970s. It suggested that far greater utilisation of TAFE should be made as part of the training of VET teachers.

Some submissions expressed concern about capacity to meet emerging needs for VET teachers. The following extracts are indicative of the issues raised.

“The increasing number of dual-accredited courses available in the senior years of secondary schooling is only likely to exacerbate an already existing problem. Although it is well known that the average age of school teachers has arisen over the last decade, it is equally true that there has been a rise in the average age of VET teachers (ABS,
Education and Training in Australia, February 1999), the median age increasing from 39 to 43 since 1986.”

“Current estimates of demand for VET teachers in schools in NSW puts the figure at about 1600 teachers over the next four years. This number indicates that there has been, and will continue to be, a shift in the qualifications and experience required by NSW teachers. VET in schools is growing exceptionally fast and with the release of the BOS Curriculum Frameworks documents the curriculum has been set, the courses designed and the expectations clarified. It is crucial that the Teacher Education programs in NSW adjust to provide the kind of training that is necessary to guarantee the success of these subjects and the achievement of the students choosing to study VET subjects in high school.”

Submissions also made reference to the continuing education and training needs of VET teachers. A submission from an employer commented on the need to examine whether current arrangements are sufficient or whether there is a need for the development of a wider range of programs and new models for maintaining technical currency. Another employer noted the importance of VET teachers having the opportunity for regular placement in industry:

“This is necessary if teachers are to satisfy Industry Training Accreditation Board (ITAB) standards.”

Some submissions expressed unease about the effectiveness of current approaches. Typically, a submission from a teacher education faculty called a new approach to the preparation of VET teachers, arguing for a radically different approach to the professional development of the "new VET professional" in TAFE.

“The commercial pressures on TAFE will increase therefore part time certificate level qualified teachers/trainers will continue to do much of the face-to-face teaching role in this institution. As a consequence TAFE institutes will not need so many professionally qualified teachers but rather VET practitioners capable of managing a casualised teaching work force. This kind of work would involve quite different combinations of professional skills than those developed by traditional teacher training degrees.

Some VET practitioners may also in the future be much more involved in Business and Human Resource Development activities, perhaps acting as consultants to small or medium size companies who outsource their HR needs to TAFE. Others may become project managers involved in managing specific Institute projects such as the internationalisation of VET programs or developing VET on-line learning.

Given the diverse nature of these sorts of professional activities, institutional support for the professional education of TAFE practitioners is, in the future, likely to involve a much more strategic and flexible approach to professional development based on meeting the needs of particular institutes.

Professional development programs for TAFE staff are therefore less likely to be based on a standardised view of the VET practitioner as teacher. But rather will be negotiated between the learner, the institute and the university and directed towards learning that is both relevant, interdisciplinary and meets the requirements of particular work roles and circumstances.”
Some submissions canvassed what should be the requirements for teaching in the VET sector, or more particularly in TAFE. The following requirements capture the areas which these submissions explored:

1. TAFE teachers should continue to be required to have both professional or technical qualifications and teaching qualifications. Technical competence of both full and part-time teachers should remain the basis for recruitment.
2. A degree in education should be the minimum teaching qualification for full-time TAFE teachers.
3. Appropriate programs should be developed to enable teachers to teach across schools and TAFE. This may not apply to all teachers.
4. The model for TAFE teacher education should be that of a structured partnership between TAFE NSW and universities to ensure that university programs meet existing and emerging skill needs.
5. Mentoring should be an essential component of initial teacher education, ongoing professional development and maintenance of technical currency.
6. TAFE teachers should be required to maintain the currency of technical and professional competence. This should be ensured through a properly constructed, targeted and well resourced professional development strategy.
7. Professional development must be an integral part of the teacher’s employment contract. It must recognise and build on the principle that students are customers and that TAFE core activities and commercial activities are TAFE’s business.

Management of Student Behaviour

A number of submissions dealt with this issue. In general, writers expressed the view that in large measure teacher training courses dealt with the management of student behaviour in a manner which took insufficient account of the reality of the situation which confronts many teachers on their initial appointment. The view was expressed that greater emphasis needs to be placed on child and adolescent psychology and on how theories of behaviour management can be translated into practice, including approaches to discipline.

A submission from a university academic touched on the extent to which the preservice preparation of teachers in behaviour management and the approaches of schools had effectively kept pace with current work in the area:

“....currently almost no highly trained clinical psychologists or neuropsychologists provide their services to schools. Yet, there have been substantive advances in these areas that have implications for assessment, instructional design, and behaviour management programs generally. In order to translate the developments into workable systems in the schools it may be necessary to combine the expertise of clinical and neuropsychologists with that of special education teachers, counsellors and educational psychologists.”

One submission dealt particularly with the importance of teachers through their training, including primary education, acquiring knowledge about and skills in teaching and dealing with all forms of discrimination, including homophobia.
“There is more to managing student behaviour than achieving reluctant obedience. Enough has been said to make it plain that prospective and practising teachers need expert guidance in dealing with homophobic behaviour, and in fostering a culture in which diversity is recognised and valued and students are encouraged to positively regard their own and others’ uniqueness. Teaching students to recognise and resist judgemental attitudes, to respect their own and others’ choices and to care for each other and their common life are part of moral education and good behaviour management.”

This submission called for the review to "lay some emphasis on the incompatibility of prejudice and the democratic values" and argued for a stronger focus on "ethics" in teacher education courses. Another submission argued that issues surrounding ethics were central in the work of teachers and that “.... a profession should see to it that its members are educated in ethics and in their social responsibilities”, and posed the question as to whether ethics should be a component of all pre-service education courses. The submission also argued that issues such as Aboriginal rights, sexism, homophobia and religious prejudice need to be dealt with before teachers enter the profession.

In general, submissions which dealt with this area stressed:

1. The importance of student teachers having contemporary knowledge about the management of student behaviour.
2. The integration of student behaviour into the craft of teaching, with comment made especially about how often poor behaviour arises where the pedagogy is inadequate.
3. Greater consistency in approaches between the teacher education courses.

**Special Education**

A number of submissions touched on issues related to the training of teachers to teach students with special needs, sometimes in the context of identifying units of study which should be mandated in teacher training courses. The view was generally expressed that the extent to which teacher training courses prepared trainee teachers to identify and respond to students with special needs was inadequate.

A submission from a community group drew attention to the need for pre-service teachers, given the increase in the number of special education students now integrated into mainstream classes, to have access to significant training on issues related to inclusion. It identified the present mandatory unit as inadequate and called for it to be replaced by integration into all aspects of the teacher education curriculum.

This submission put the point of view that special education training should be integrated into all pedagogical courses, “in a manner that conditions teachers to respond skilfully to the mixed ability in all their classes”.

“Teachers now and in the future must be flexible and imaginative, capable of developing innovative and often highly individualised responses to the learning needs of their students. They must have a high consciousness and commitment to the human and citizenship rights of children and young people with disability to be educated in regular school settings with highly effective supports. They must also have specialised pedagogical competencies that will enable them to respond in expert ways to the learning
needs of all their students, including students with disability.”

The view was expressed in another submission that a set of competencies should be developed for all teachers so that they could meet the needs of special education students.

A separate submission noted the increased expectation that teachers will fully consult with the parents of special education students and the increased accountability to parents for the outcomes programs are achieving. The submission identified a need for a stronger focus on this area in pre and continuing service teacher education programs. The submission was also critical of present approaches to the mandatory unit on special education in teacher education programs, arguing that greater effectiveness was needed in relation to issues such as: child and adolescent development; curriculum-based assessment and evaluation; and communication and team working skills.

Some submissions dealt especially with issues related to the education of gifted and talented children. In general, they called for:

1. a greater focus in preservice courses; and
2. increased support for teachers in schools, including issues related to technology.

Submissions canvassing this area made reference to how poorly many teachers are prepared to identify gifted and talented students and how limited is their training to adapt pedagogy to meet their needs.

“Gifted and talented students are found in all cultural groups and come from all socio-economic backgrounds. However, teachers within schools in low socio-economic areas or in schools whose population is drawn predominantly from an indigenous or ESL background tend to assume that gifted students are unlikely to be found within their schools.”

“The considerable majority of gifted and talented students in NSW are educated in mixed-ability settings in the regular classroom, yet the considerable majority of teachers have had less than one hour of instruction in their pre-service training on how to differentiate the curriculum for high ability students.”

One submission dealt specifically with the continuing education needs of teachers in schools in this area:

“NSW has 23 selective high schools catering for academically gifted students in Years 7-12 and 104 full-time self contained classes (Opportunity Classes) exist in 65 state primary schools, serving academically gifted students in Years 5 and 6. Yet the majority of teachers serving in these schools, and teaching these classes, have had no specialist training or even extended inservice on the education of gifted and talented students, and no previous experience developing differentiated curricula for groups of gifted students. By contrast, the majority of teachers who have full-time responsibility for other groups of “special needs” students, such as intellectually disabled, hearing impaired or visually impaired students, are required to have postgraduate training or significant inservice in the relevant field of education.”

The submission argued that pre-service teacher education courses should include a mandated core on the teaching of gifted and talented students as well as at least one undergraduate elective course
on the education of gifted and talented students, to establish a “cadre of graduates” who could be appointed across schools. The submission also argued that trainee teachers who have included these elective courses should have priority for appointment to selective schools and opportunity classes. It argued for a comprehensive induction program for teachers appointed to these positions which “should take place in school time and should include a component of mentorship whereby the new teacher shadows a teacher with experience and expertise in teaching gifted students in a similar setting.”

Reference was made in another submission to issues related to selective high schools. It made the point that while the students are selected the teachers are not. The submission put the point of view that when a vacancy occurs in a selective high school or opportunity class, the principal should be able to advertise for teachers who have gifted education qualifications, noting that under the current transfer system this is not possible.

## Teacher Standards and Competencies

Many submissions raised issues related to standards, competencies and the licensing of teachers. The following extracts are typical of comments made across most sectors.

“The quality of future graduates to the teaching profession can be guaranteed by the development of accreditation procedures that involve all institutions in NSW that prepare teachers.”

“Without clearly defined standards against which we as teachers or teacher educators can judge ourselves, we cannot expect others to recognise, acknowledge and suitably reward teacher achievements. Nor can we differentiate satisfactorily the competent professional from the incompetent; the competent from the truly accomplished. This situation leads to professional discontent when some teachers receive the same financial remuneration for less commitment, input and achievement of results in student learning.”

A submission from a professional association dealt at some length with issues related to standards, seeing it as “one of the most important issues”. The submission provided an insightful commentary on what is being lost as a consequence of the failure to establish standards in teaching:

“...there is no clear articulation of professional standards in NSW. As a consequence, there is no reciprocity with personnel and industrial policies in employing bodies that assist in a teacher’s career path progression from entry to preservice training, entry to internship, completion of initial teacher education, probation leading to certification or registration, accomplished professionalism in the classroom, and school and educational leadership. Furthermore, industrial and related personnel practices often work at cross purposes to effective professional development, professional growth as a teacher, and the status that should be accorded professional accomplishment.

The centre ground is held by a dated, adversarial industrial relationship between employers and unions that pushes key questions and issues of teacher professionalism to the periphery rather than the centre of the debate. At one instance, the present model of teacher professional growth is based on a time-served progression through incremental scales which implies that professional growth is taking place when it may not be. It implies that all teachers are the same in their
professional performance which, as any student, parent or colleague knows, they are not. It rewards the average, even the mediocre, at the expense of the exceptional. Exceptional talent is proven by gaining positions outside the classroom. Ironically, there is little recognition in a profession concerned with student learning for learning in the profession itself. Further tertiary study into the craft of teaching, for instance, and demonstrated impact on student learning is generally not acknowledged or rewarded by employing authorities in a substantial way. A standards framework would help in addressing these issues.

Standards need to be described in broad, generic terms yet with sufficient detail through indicators of achievement and examples for the individual to self-evaluate his or her professional development and, where necessary, for external assessors to act consistently. A standards continuum needs to be created between entry-level standards to the profession, competent professionalism, accomplished professionalism in the classroom, and executive educational leadership. Each needs to be recognised in terms of substantial remuneration and status.

If professional learning is the responsibility of the individual, it follows that effective professional standards should enable the process of self-evaluation and demonstration just as much as it should enable consistency in external assessment processes when competence is brought into question.

Any standards framework should not be narrowly conceived nor applied in a punitive way. A standards framework also needs to have the potential to evolve over time as the contexts in which teachers operate evolve.”

Some submissions made reference to the need to accredit teacher education courses. A submission from a teacher education faculty called for the quality assurance and standards procedures proposed in the Adey report (1998) for initial teacher education to be adopted in NSW.

A significant number of submissions dealt with issues related to teacher standards and competencies. Support for developing and applying agreed standards was expressed across most groups and was in most instances linked to the concept of teacher registration. Typically:

“...a comprehensive national framework of teacher registration will ensure that standards of entry into the profession are established and protected so that in the public interest in general, and in the interests of students in particular, only qualified teachers are able to be classroom practitioners. A system of teacher registration recognises that teaching is a profession, with unique knowledge, skills and aptitudes and has the capacity to affirm and enhance the status of the profession.”

A large number of submissions touched on the desirability of a system of teacher registration. The following comments are indicative. A submission from a professional association claimed that registration was "urgently required" and would be overwhelmingly supported by teachers. A submission from an industry group put the point of view that NSW should have a self regulating and non industrial registration body with responsibilities including: setting and maintaining professional standards; encouraging continuing professional development and improvement; and registration and quality assurance of teacher training providers. A submission from a university academic argued that a system of teacher registration should be established along the lines of the National Teacher Registration Boards in the US. It commented on the importance of the registration
process being in the hands of the “profession itself” and should be concerned with both course accreditation and individual registration for entry and continuance. A submission from a professional association linked the idea of teacher registration to an internship, and called for a consistent approach across schools in the internship to determine suitability for final registration. Another professional association claimed that it was time to revisit the issue of teacher registration in NSW, but within a broader concept than registration as in the 1998 bill but rather “one focused clearly on the professional standards of teachers”.

While expressing general support for the concept of standards, a submission from an employer expressed concern that where government becomes involved in setting standards “that it has more to do with hierarchical surveillance and extending the dominance of managerial culture than with promoting teacher development and a professional culture”. A submission from another employer expressed opposition to the concept of teacher registration, arguing that determinations about a teacher’s suitability should be a matter for the employer.

Some submissions made reference to the “standards” which now apply in the employment of teachers. A submission from an employer raised issues in relation to the quasi-regulatory role of the Teacher Qualifications Advisory Panel in NSW:

“At present it has stringent criteria specifying what disciplinary studies are appropriate in an initial degree for students who wish to embark on graduate entry teacher education programs for primary teaching. While we have supported the need for minimum requirements, there is evidence to suggest that numbers of good students are being precluded by present requirements.”

Another submission expressed the view that DET should move to an outcomes based approach to determining suitability for entry into the profession rather than solely an input model such the TQAP.

Further comment was made in this submission on the Panel, but in the context of accrediting teacher education programs:

“There is a need to establish a body or mechanism to accredit teacher education programs and teacher educators to ensure targets in terms of both standards and supply are realised. If it is not possible to establish a cross sectoral process then DET should firstly extend the role and processes of the Teacher Qualifications Advisory Panel (TQAP) to ensure its future relevance and effectiveness. The TAQAP should be given the capacity to require providers to submit programs for accreditation. Secondly the DET should develop a standards framework for the accreditation of graduates from initial teacher education programs. These standards would inform the accreditation process undertaken by the TQAP. Thirdly a new process should be established for the accreditation and certification of teacher educators.”

A submission from a university raised issues related to standards in teacher education courses, arguing that the focus should be comparability of outcomes within an agreed standards framework, not on uniformity across courses. It strongly supported a system of registration which would cover standards in teacher education courses.

While not dealing with standards per se, a submission from an education consultant called for a detailed job description for a classroom teacher in NSW schools.
Appointing the Best People

Suitability

In commenting on issues related to suitability for teaching, a submission from an employer touched on a number of inter-related issues:

“Often teachers are poor advocates for their own profession. In addition it would appear that teachers in NSW public schools do not tend to relate positively to.....their employer. A critical issue is to encourage the teaching profession to take greater responsibility for determining the criteria for entry to teaching and to maintain teacher standards.”

This view was supported in other submissions.

Many submissions expressed concern about the overall quality of those entering teacher education courses. A submission from a union stated:

“It is unsatisfactory that students of higher academic achievement continually opt away from teaching as a career and the union believes that there is a need to develop a set of industrial and professional conditions which are likely to attract to teaching in appropriate numbers, students with high academic ability and appropriate personal and potential professional expertise.”

This submission put forward the point of view that it may be desirable to consider incentives to attract people to the teaching profession, suggesting financial inducement, lower tuition fees and/or guaranteed employment on graduation assuming completion of all courses to a certain standard. A former teacher in a submission expressed the following views:

“...the entry level for teachers is being lowered little by little, each year, just to try to stem the tide of critical teacher shortage that the politicians seem to think will disappear if they stick their head in the sand.

Having taught for 18 years, I witnessed a number of students who although scoring very poor HSC results were accepted into teacher training and struggled their way through.”

Many submissions called for the reintroduction of scholarships for trainee teachers to encourage young people into teaching, given impending shortages.

Some comment was made on the quality of people who are allowed to continue in teacher education courses although demonstrably unsuitable. A submission from a university lecturer observed:

“Universities do not seem to be able to fail students who are not performing well and ultimately the field pays the price for having unsuitable people in its workforce. From the employer’s perspective, we would rather see unsuitable students ‘weeded out’.”

Another teacher education lecturer also dealt with this issue. The writer claimed:

“It has been made explicitly clear to me by my University’s administration that provided
a student continues to pass courses, I have no business whatsoever with any other aspect of the student’s character/personality.”

A teacher described experiences when acting as a supervising teacher in schools:

“...on more than one occasion....I failed students on practice teaching work and was then asked by the (university) personnel....to reconsider them and that the student was a final year student and that this was their last prac. And I should just pass them.”

The writer expressed the view that “many young people go straight from school into teaching training for whatever reason, some of these individuals have not chosen wisely and the university training course is the place to knock them out - not after they have influenced hundreds of young people’s lives and done irrevocable damage”. The writer also noted how difficult it can be to deal with clearly incompetent teachers once they have graduated from a teacher training course and have a recognised credential, such as a Teaching Certificate, from an employer.

Another submission which dealt with this issue called for a structured counselling program to assist trainee teachers who were clearly not suited to teaching to make the necessary changes in their programs of study.

Suggestions were made in submissions that new approaches needed to be taken by the universities in considering potential teacher education students. One called for appropriate recognition to be given to personal aptitude and qualities for teaching to be taken into account when employing teachers. It also called for “aptitude assessment throughout a training course in order to keep identifying those unsuited to teaching before they are employed in a school”.

Some submissions canvassed how “impersonal” systemic appointment processes are as a way of managing recruitment. One, from a community organisation, put the point of view that hiring and firing should be a matter for the individual school and should be based on contracts “rather than a State Head Office controlled employment dictum.”

English language

A number of submissions made reference to the importance of high levels of English language proficiency for teachers in NSW schools. A submission by a professional association made reference to the need for a higher standard in the English language proficiency test for employment with the DET; a university academic spoke about the need for higher literacy standards for students entering teacher training courses. This submission also called for an aptitude test as one of the tools to determining suitability to teach. A submission from a group of educational administrators noted that “numbers of schools are highly critical of the level of English language competency of some approved teachers” in the public education system. A submission from a former student spoke about the frustration she felt when taught by a teacher whose proficiency in English was inadequate.

On the other hand support was expressed in some submissions for greater flexibility of pathways for overseas trained teachers to enter the NSW teaching service. A submission from a government agency identified a need “to reconsider English language testing to see if it adequately addresses issues of ‘standards’, for example, issues of pronunciation and different forms of English used, or issues of knowledge of Australia’s culture and education system.” This submission argued present practices focus too strongly on “Australian”, and therefore exclusive, standards of pronunciation and cultural practices. A submission from an employer put the point of view that the employers
should give recognition to the experience of teachers who have taught in Community Languages Schools and should exercise greater flexibility in the consideration of overseas and local qualifications and experience.

Some submissions spoke about the desirability of increasing the cultural diversity of the NSW teaching force to more fully reflect that of the general population.

**Rural and Aboriginal students**

A number of submissions raised a need for an increased number of students from rural areas to be encouraged to become teachers.

A submission from a school called for:

- teacher training institutions to actively recruit teacher trainees from final Year 12 students in isolated rural schools
- an increased range and flexibility of distance education courses to be made available to teacher education students
- the introduction by DET of teacher training scholarships for students from isolated rural areas.

Submissions also referred to the importance of attracting indigenous people into teaching as a career. These often noted the significant under-representation of Aboriginal teachers in all areas of the teaching profession. A submission from an employer canvassed a number of related issues.

“We are of the strong opinion that every effort should be made to ensure that Aboriginal communities are provided with teachers) especially indigenous teachers that can meet the needs of children in those communities, in terms of language, cultural understanding and role modeling. This may require further incentives in the form of scholarships, suitable training programs, particular registration requirements and other forms of support for the teacher living with indigenous communities. This will require Commonwealth-State funding agreements to ensure this provision is made. It will also require careful consideration of the types of resources that are needed to sustain such programs and to enable indigenous children to reach their full potential through schooling.”

**Targeted graduates**

The public education system’s targeted graduate program was questioned in a number of submissions, with one observing that it is “not foolproof” and that many highly suitable candidates are excluded from consideration and wait “an inordinate time for a permanent appointment”. The view was expressed in a number of submissions that the targeted graduate program should place greater reliance on reports written by principals following the second and subsequent practicums. It was argued that a major flaw in the targeted graduate program was that selection took inadequate account of the graduate’s capacity to manage a class and that too great a weighting was given to “theory”. Some submissions expressed a belief that in the competition for quality graduates, that the public sector was not able to exercise the flexibility available to private employers. A submission from a university academic noted that: “It is not uncommon for DET to miss out on the best initial teacher education graduates in areas of teacher shortage such as secondary TAS because private schools and business/industry are able to offer very attractive full-time employment”. This view was also expressed in a submission by a professional association.
Submissions on this topic observed that the program is flawed as there are many excellent graduating teachers who do not qualify and are lost to positions in other states, overseas and the non-government sector. One cited an instance where a student regarded as “unreliable and unscrupulous”, and who was certainly not outstanding, had been selected over others better suited to the profession.

**Mature age entry**

A number of submissions referred to issues associated with entry at a mature age into the teaching profession. Overwhelmingly, mature age entry was identified in submissions as strengthening teaching by increasing the diversity of teachers and by injecting people who brought a depth of understanding, knowledge and skills from other walks of life. The following comment is typical of those expressed across all sectors:

> “While students coming into Teacher Education directly from school bring a fresh and enthusiastic approach, mature students bring a breadth of life experiences, and often highly appropriate skills for cross-disciplinary teaching. ...a mix of such students in teacher education programs is highly beneficial; for all.”

A submission from a university made the observation that “...most teacher educators would prefer students to have some life experience outside the school/study environment”. It called for more attention to be given to the issue of advanced standing and prior recognition to facilitate the entry of mature age students to teaching and for teacher education courses to be differentiated for them, perhaps through accelerated site-based programs.

Submissions made reference to the value and skills brought by people moving into teaching from other professions and employment backgrounds. There was support for establishing appointment processes which made it easier for these people to gain permanent teaching positions. One submission commented that there should be a greater focus on employing people with “other” industry experience and argued that teacher training should be broadened to incorporate other than school experiences:

> “Teaching service selection strategies for NSW schools should be broadened to allow individuals with industry experience and a degree in a discipline relevant to an area of teaching speciality to apply for entry into teaching on merit. Pre-service practicum experience should include industry placement for all teachers regardless of their teaching speciality, inclusive of infants and primary school teachers.”

While made in the context of VET, a submission from a teacher education faculty remarked:

> “It is desirable that teachers/trainers should come from the variety of backgrounds which match the variety of their students. The pathways should be as flexible as possible allowing for vertical and lateral movement. Casualisation, shared work between sites and downsizing implies intensified work for those in paid full time employment. The current pathways into the traditional teaching areas are restrictive and generally take students from school to school. This pathway will certainly not guarantee the supply of VET teachers in schools.”

This submission went on to express support for more flexible pathways into teaching to be established:

> “The traditional pathways for teacher education entry are working against some new
and fresh ideas and conceptualisations of teacher education. The idea that people train once and “that’s it for life” no longer make sense. There are no inbuilt incentives for change. ...There is a clear need for shorter and more concentrated courses for teacher accreditation which acknowledge the industrial backgrounds and experience of the students whilst giving them the curriculum understandings and cultural appreciations of the school context that will fit them well for working in a variety of sites including schools.”

A number of submissions commented in highly positive terms on the Newcastle BHP retraining model as an instance of “best practice”.

A submission from an employer argued that a pathway should be established in which mature age entrants are employed as “apprentice teachers” in schools, and undertake an associated teaching qualification in out-of-school hours. It argued that this would be attractive to prospective high quality candidates from business and industry seeking a career change. This submission argued that all entrants into teaching should have at least two years other industry experience, and that a portfolio of this experience should be considered in the appointment process.

A contrary view was expressed in a submission from an educational administrator: “...those who retrain and enter the teacher profession late in life are a group at risk”. The writer argued that they are often out of touch with the values of the students they teach and that they need much more intensive field experience before being appointed.

It is possible to discern across submissions a belief that teacher training should not be narrowly defined as the opportunities for people to work in which they can “teach” are rapidly expanding. Quality, creative pathways into teaching for mature age entrants with strong “other industry” experience are seen across all sectors as highly desirable in the revitalisation of the teaching profession and ensuring the relevance of schools.

Professional Mobility

The review received considerable advice on the importance of facilitating a high level of professional mobility, both within the profession and between the profession and other occupations. There is a discernible level of unease about the extent to which teaching is, or is perceived to be, a “closed occupation”. This view was summed up in one submission which observed that: “The renewal of the profession requires that teachers are able to move in and out of the profession at different periods of their lives.”

Comment was made in a number of submissions on the near impossibility of re-entering the NSW public teaching service after having left it, including the non-valuing of any further studies which may have been undertaken during the period. One former teacher shared his experiences of trying to re-enter teaching with DET:

“I unsuccessfully attempted to re-enter the teaching service on several occasions. This negative experience made me ask the question: do I really want to resume in a teaching service that a) does not value my university experience (in fact actively resisted it) and b) makes it so difficult to re-enter. Other aspects of disillusionment with teacher education in NSW contributed to my decision to now work overseas. I am now in a culture and mission context that is more meaningful and educationally more intensive than the one I left. One can either say good riddance to bad rubbish, or one can admit to what some
have described as a brain drain from Australia.”

Submissions expressed the view the employers need to place greater value on the learning undertaken by their staff and should facilitate them “leaving” teaching to undertake this learning and their re-entry when it is possible to re-engage them.

One submission, from a community group, argued that the present NSW DET system of advertising promotions positions internally should be abandoned in place of public advertisements, believing that this would encourage teachers who have left to pursue other careers and who wish to return to teaching. A submission from a university academic saw the current merit selection process as contributing to a closed culture in DET, and should be “revisited” to discourage within school selection and to encourage staff from other schools and from other sectors. Another submission suggested that teachers should be required to transfer from a school after 5-7 years, noting that this would be “positive for both the teacher and the school”.

Submissions from educational administrators commented on the “closed shop” culture that even affects the promotions prospects of outstanding teachers who have been consultants. This submission observed that this culture is so pervasive that:

“...teaching staff in district and state office positions, selected on merit for their exemplary teaching and leadership capabilities, often find it difficult to get interviews for school-based positions.”

**People with Disabilities**

A submission by a community group commented on the need to remove barriers to employment and career opportunities for teachers with disabilities and argued that selection panels for student teachers and teachers should include at least one person with experience/knowledge of disability. This issue was also raised in a submission by another group, with a call for the review to look at issues of access to and progression through the profession of teachers with disability.

**The Early Years**

Many submissions spoke about the importance of the early years of teaching. They were often highly critical of the inadequacy of current approaches to induction in the profession. The following are typical:

- “Ours is the only profession where you jump in at the deep end and sink or swim. We need to do something about it.”

- “...the system of sending untrained teachers to the far-flung corners of the state or to the ghettoes of the western suburbs of Sydney (is) like sending untrained troops to fight experienced soldiers in areas where they are totally unfamiliar and unsuited... “and that” this practice has been used to staff undesirable schools in undesirable regions. Thus students in these areas of real need can face the prospect of getting taught by newly trained teachers most of their lives while the executive running the schools are in their first posting and as soon as their minimum time is up will flee to better pastures.”

- “The entrenched practice of placing large numbers of inexperienced teachers in
our most challenging schools and expecting them to cope while on the same teaching load as experienced teachers is both counterproductive and morally wrong.”

This last submission, from a university academic, went on to explore the notion of professional responsibility for professional growth in the early years.

“The profession itself needs to see itself as having a shared responsibility with teacher education programs in induction of new graduates into the profession, through induction programs, lighter teaching loads and active supervision. This shared responsibility should also extend to guiding, supporting and encouraging student teachers engaged in school-based professional experience. It is also noted that in similar roles in other professions this is generally accepted as a service to the profession, and so universities do not have to meet the same level of field experience costs as for teaching.”

A similar view was expressed in a submission from a teacher education faculty:

“Beginning teachers need time to adjust to the profession, to observe experienced colleagues in the school context, to conference with mentors or supervisors, and to participate effectively in induction and beginning teacher programs. The cost of reduced allocation, even for one semester, would be outweighed by better adjustment to the profession, higher morale, more effective teaching and learning outcomes, more positive attitude to ongoing professional development and reduced stress, absenteeism and resignations.”

A submission from a union put the point of view that present approaches to the induction of teachers represented a failure on the part of the employers. It argued:

“Attracting good teachers to the profession remains a strong concern, but retaining them and ensuring that their skills continue to develop and are recognised is an equally important issue. The first step of this process lies in the induction of a beginning teacher. Those teachers that are part of this process, through mentoring and the provision of professional support, should also have their input and skills developed and formally recognised within the profession, rather than the current reliance on the goodwill and voluntary labour of others.”

The submission called for a more structured approach to the induction of teachers. It noted that the regulation of industrial conditions for new employees is represented in some states and territories by beginning teachers being given a workload of face to face teaching hours that is slightly less than their colleagues. It commented:

“Whilst this may partially reduce the stresses associated with one’s first professional year, it does not necessarily address all the issues that face a new teacher - difficult classes, assessment and reporting, curriculum frameworks, meetings, communication with parents and colleagues, documentation requirements, and the day to day administrative and professional demands of teaching.”

Comment was made that consideration should be given to more flexible approaches to how teachers work in their early years following initial training. It was suggested that this flexibility could include a lighter teaching load as part of the teacher’s conditions of employment, associated with a mentor
A submission from an employer noted difficulties in relation to induction but expressed confidence that DET’s new Beginning Teacher Mentor Development Program will put in place a targeted and purposeful structure. In this regard the submission posed the question as to how tangible recognition could be provided for exemplary teachers who gain and demonstrate skills of whole-school leadership and mentoring of initial teacher education students and beginning teachers. A submission from an educational administrator called for the probationary period in DET to be extended to two years, arguing that at present it is effectively 2 terms.

A number of submissions dealt particularly with issues related to the appointment of beginning teachers to schools in rural and remote localities. In relation to teaching in an isolated school the observation was made that the teacher was often expected to have a high level of expertise in any number of aspects of schooling and that this unrealistic expectation, compounded by physical isolation and lack of access to services, made this time particularly difficult. The comment was also made that high levels of staff stability in many regional towns meant that the few beginning teachers appointed to them often encountered a school culture which stifled their professional growth. One of these submissions put forward the point of view that trainee teachers from metropolitan universities should have increased opportunities to undertake a practicum in a rural school.

The notion of an internship of at least one year as the primary structure for induction was generally supported, involving clear commitments by the employer to the teacher’s continuing education and to a systematic assessment of the teacher's suitability for permanent employment.

Casual Teaching

A number of submissions made reference to casual teaching and to how large is that part of the profession which engages only in casual employment.

Comment was made on how dispiriting casual teaching was while waiting for a permanent appointment. One submission observed that: “Many (casual) teachers appear isolated and in receipt of minimal support and encouragement. Little wonder that skills and confidence decline.”

A submission from a professional association commented that for many long periods of casual employment constituted a poor induction into the profession: “Those graduates who do not receive immediate appointment to schools upon graduating and work as casuals may be developing bad habits while waiting for permanent appointments. Upon appointment to permanent positions these problems may be difficult to rectify. They include not having commitment to big picture educational visions and whole school programs, and not following up student problems.”

A submission from a casual teacher expressed a range of frustrations about her situation and the implications of changes in policy:

“I am a first year out - 3 years trained primary school teacher. I am, to say the least, baffled at the length of time a dedicated and talented person such as myself has to wait for a permanent teaching position with the Department of Education.”

“My reason behind writing this letter is that I am disappointed with the Department of Education. My current situation is that I am 29 years old. I have children, a mortgage and a husband who runs a small business. We depend on the income that I get from
teaching. The new Department policy of not allowing casuals to do long term block work any more concerns me. Next year it is expected that I and all casuals will go back to day to day work and I was told today perhaps we will have to wait nearly six or seven years for a permanent position.”

"This is a plea for someone to listen to the casuals (in particular myself) who were depending on the “block casual” position because there was such a long wait for permanent work. I cannot afford (either financially or otherwise) to wait that long for a permanent position. I do not wish to leave the Department of Education because I believe that public education needs dedicated teachers and if I left I would be unhappy in the Catholic or private systems.”

One submission, in the context of casual teaching in rural schools, observed how poorly prepared casual teachers are to deal with the great variety of teaching situations in which they often find themselves.

“With the shortage of casual teachers in rural areas and hard to staff schools, teachers who are available need to be multi-skilled - the same teacher can teach a lower division class (K, 1,2) on any one day, primary another and then be called in to take secondary classes as well. This is a far from satisfactory situation as in some cases these teachers are merely "babysitting" the class. Many primary teachers would not be conversant with secondary school curriculums.”

**Gender and Ethnicity**

A number of submissions, across all sectors, commented on the dearth of male teachers in primary teacher training programs in particular and on the imbalance of males and females in primary schools. In general, reference to this issue took the view that this imbalance diminishes the effectiveness of primary schools in providing a full range of appropriate role models to students and serves to create a view of teaching as a largely female occupation. A consequence is that teaching therefore fails the test of being reflective of the wider society. One submission commented that the issue will be “further exacerbated when the male baby boomers retire”.

Another submission expressed the view that the unattractiveness of teaching to males had been exacerbated by issues related to child protection.

“An emerging issue appears to be the problem generated for male primary school teachers as a consequence of some celebrated child sexual abuse cases and the resultant child protection legislation enacted in NSW in December 1998. We urge the Review to take these matters into consideration when addressing the question of the supply of teachers and the need of many children from single parent families for significant male role models”.

This submission also expressed the view that while system-wide action would be undesirable, consideration could be given to targeting individual schools where the school’s social, cultural or religious contexts may make special appointments desirable. The submission noted that irrespective of such targeted action:

“...the most productive approach to addressing the question of the gender balance is to make teaching more attractive as a profession, in terms of working conditions, financial
rewards, and career opportunities as well as work satisfaction. In view of the gender imbalance in HSC achievement and meeting UAI cutoffs, there may be a good case for entry into teacher training programs being through interviews as well as academic achievement in the HSC. This would also ensure that quality people, irrespective of gender, are attracted to teaching.”

Some submissions called for strategies to be implemented which would increase the ethnic diversity of teachers in NSW schools. They generally stressed the importance of students in teacher education courses understanding the cultural diversity of classrooms and schools. However, a submission from an employer argued that specific strategies to increase the ethnic diversity of the profession were not desirable as “in general the home is the place for teaching about the specifics of a particular culture”, reinforced by community groups. The submission expressed the view that “the culture itself is sustained primarily by the community with its links to the country of origin, not by the school”. This submission argued that the exception to this argument is indigenous culture, noting the finding of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s Inquiry into Rural and Remote Education concerning the special needs of indigenous students, particularly in instances where English is their second language.

**Continuing Education**

Many submissions raised issues in other areas which have implications for the quality of continuing education for teachers. A number of these have been considered in other parts of this paper.

The views expressed in many submissions about the importance of continuing education was captured succinctly in the statement that “a teacher who gives up learning should also give up teaching.”

All submissions which referred to it stressed the importance of continued professional growth by teachers, especially given that their “business” was learning. A number of submissions pointed to the irony of how little importance was given to this professional growth by most employers and by the profession as a whole. Typically:

- “In other professions higher qualifications are valued and rewarded - it is ironic that in this "educational" profession, educational qualifications beyond the minimum are poorly recognised and rewarded.”

- “Many professions demand life-long continuing education of their members in order to maintain the currency of their registration. Teaching is too important to expect less of its members.”

- “Some teachers today are still teaching using the content and methods they were using 20 or more years ago.”

- “It is a grave error to leave unanswered the challenge of providing teachers new learning opportunities while they continue to teach.”

A submission from an external provider of resources and professional development commented on what it saw as the low morale of teachers in NSW government schools, with "...inadequate resources, lack of professional development and limited time to focus on the teaching of basic skills". The submission identified a need for a more thorough approach to pre-service and continuing education
in "classroom management", covering not only student behaviour but also teaching strategies and the integration of technology.

A submission from a faculty of teacher education took up the issue of the balance between pre-service and continuing service teacher education:

“Currently only around 2000 teachers are appointed each year, about 4% of the total school and TAFE workforce. There is an urgent need therefore to reach the large numbers of teachers currently in the workforce many of whom have not recently participated in professional development programs. In the past there were some 205 of the workforce engaged in higher degree study. Currently this has fallen to 2.5%.”

This submission also called for partnerships between the employers and the universities in the development and delivery of continuing education. A submission from a university academic, dealing with the continuing education needs of secondary science teachers, noted:

“...we should find ways of involving science teachers in actual research. Very few science teachers would have completed an honours degree, and hence they may not have been exposed to the excitement of research. This concern relates to a large cohort of teachers currently in the system, as well as those in the future. Perhaps an exchange program or opportunities to be attached to research laboratories may help teachers catch the enthusiasm and excitement of science, and hence convey this to their students.”

A submission by a university noted that post-graduate study would only ever cater for a small minority of teachers. It claimed that improvements in opportunities for further study would come through changes in course delivery, better articulation across levels from Diploma to Master to Doctorate and the introduction of summer courses. The submission called for a major strategy involving the universities in short-term in-service provision.

The submission went on to say:

“The present system of school-based funding for in-service fragments the efforts of potential providers, and blurs the focus on this crucial aspect of human resources management. Large-scale, centrally funded in-service programs are likely to be more effective in many ways, provided that the actual content and mode of instruction remain flexible and non-bureaucratic.”

A number of submissions touched on the low level of discretion at the school level for expenditure related to professional growth as distinct from meeting systemic priorities. A submission from a university observed:

“There is a lack of funding for ongoing professional development at school level at employers’ expense - freedom of choice for teachers in schools is almost non-existent. Teachers’ professional development is directed at systems’ requirements.”

One submission commented on the substantial issues confronting a DET district located in a rural area with high staff turnover and large numbers of beginning teachers: the need for better induction programs; the importance of provision of all documents; and the need for executive staff to be exposed to a greater diversity of schools.
Many submissions commented on disincentives to quality continuing education, including the fee arrangements for post-graduate studies and lack of recognition of further studies undertaken by teachers, including remuneration.

Comment was particularly made on the lack of systemic encouragement to undertake further studies and on the fact that no “value” is attached to such studies in terms of a teacher’s professional standing or advancement.

A submission from a former teacher saw DET’s culture and practices as working against the professional growth of its employees:

“The Department does not encourage, enable or reward its teachers for undertaking further study, such as a Masters degree. I had to take sick days when I sat exams for the Master of Letters degree in New England. The Department does not encourage through time release or financially, or reward financially or through new role definitions, people who have at their own expense and effort further deepened their knowledge of educational practice through the pursuing of a master’s degree.”

Some submissions argued that universities should have a major role in the career-long education of teachers. They observed that in a knowledge society there will increased need for teachers “who possess deeper and richer knowledge about the role they are undertaking.” These submissions also noted that in terms of trends the opposite is true - the numbers of teachers engaged in further university studies has declined dramatically.

A submission from a professional association argued that current DET approaches to continuing education were at best tokenistic:

“The provision of, the relevance of, and the timeliness of, much of the current in-service is inconsistent and ad hoc.

Political expediency has become the driving force behind the delivery and offerings whilst funding has been progressively cut over the past decade.

Regular changes to both the funding available and the time allocations for in-service courses, has had the effect of reinforcing the cynicism and disillusionment felt by many current teachers.

At present recurrent inservice funding for an average sized school is between $2000 and $3000 for a staff of 55.

Recent funding provided to enable high school staff to attend in-service course (sic) on the implementation and introduction of the new HSC syllabuses was less than the equivalent of one day relief per staff member.”

A submission from a union was critical of one-off short courses and argued that continuing education needed to be more collaborative and seen as a continuum of commitment involving the employer and the teacher.

*Leadership*
A submission by an employer raised concerns about the quality of people applying for educational leadership roles, claiming particular concern “about the growing shortage of quality candidates offering themselves for leadership positions in schools, including the principalship.”

A number of submissions expressed the view that much leadership preparation training was “low level” and provided inadequate support for aspiring and current leaders to access leading-edge professional growth.

Some submissions were especially critical of the failure of professional development programs to meet the needs of “middle managers” in schools, particularly in terms of their responsibility to supervise and be accountable for the development of teachers. One submission, by an educational administrator, said that “teacher growth should be systematically planned, compulsory and linked to salary increments (or maintaining the same salary)”.

The submission claimed:

“...most Middle Managers have lost the plot and forgotten that their prime role is to supervise their colleagues to ensure effective teaching and learning occurs. They have, in my view, lost the art of effective supervision in a collegiate atmosphere using the data from each other’s work site as the starting point for improvement in practice.”

“I strongly believe that teacher training institutions have a role to play in the re-skilling of middle management and that the DET should tender this out to these institutions.”

The view that new approaches need to be adopted to secure the professional growth of school leaders was widely expressed and supported. Reference was made in submissions to the value of facilitating teachers experiencing employment and exchanges in “other industries” so that they could broaden their appreciation of issues and changes in the wider society. This was observed in relation to both VET teachers and teachers more generally. There is recognition across these submissions that teaching will be significantly revitalised when teachers are able to engage with the rapidly changing society in which their schools are placed rather than being “cut off” from what is now occurring.

**Conclusion**

The submissions make abundantly clear that there are issues of great significance confronting teacher education and teachers at the beginning of a new century. They are indicative of a momentum for transforming teacher education and the teaching profession so that both are well positioned for success in the years ahead.

Many submissions identified a need for change in areas fundamentally affecting:

- how teaching is projected as an attractive career option to talented and able young people at the time they make career choices, including ways in which areas of known and anticipated teacher shortage are best addressed
- the pre-service preparation of teachers, including curriculum content and orientation and the integration of professional experience and learning
- the induction of teachers into the profession, including the relative responsibilities of the universities and the employers and the provision of flexible entry and re-entry
• the status of the profession and the extent to which it is capable of forging a stronger and more focused sense of its own identity, perhaps through the development of a standards framework for teacher education and professional practice

• the nature of pedagogy in a digital knowledge society which is already challenging many traditional assumptions and beliefs about the role of teachers and the nature of their work

• the quality of continuing education to ensure that teaching as a profession is strongly characterised by the extent to which its members engage in their own learning

• how best to ensure that teacher education institutions and schools achieve, maintain and can guarantee high levels of performance

• the quality of leadership preparation and of leadership performance in schools, particularly given the vital role which school leadership is seen as having in shaping pedagogy and improving student outcomes.

Further advice on these or any other issues relevant to the Review are welcome. The closing date is 30 March 2000.