QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY RESPONSE TO TEACHER EDUCATION EXPERT PANEL DISCUSSION PAPER

APRIL 2023

Contents

Introduction

QUT Education, within the Faculty of Creative Industries, Education and Social Justice at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the proposed areas for reform identified in the Teacher Education Expert Panel (TEEP) Discussion Paper (2023).

QUT has a rich and extended history in providing high quality teacher education and leading transformative educational research to inform policy and practice. We offer a suite of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs, at both Bachelor and Master levels, preparing teachers to work across the education continuum (i.e., prior to school early education, primary and secondary education). We take great pride in our work with diverse students who have travelled different pathways to university, and, paying it forward, prepare our graduates to teach in diverse settings and contexts, with diverse children, families and teaching teams, across geographic locations. Recognising the complex and changing nature of teachers' professional work in diverse settings, we also offer continuing professional learning programs and postgraduate courses that address priority areas in education, including Graduate Certificate and Master of Education programs that specialise in educational leadership, early childhood education, inclusive education, First Nations educational practices, STEM, TESOL, trauma-aware education and school guidance and counselling. Contributing to evidence-based policy and practice, we offer postgraduate research programs, including a professional doctorate, and partner with sector colleagues to engage in applied research spanning a wide range of topics.

This submission has been developed by teacher educators and researchers involved in the provision of initial teacher education at QUT (see Attachment 1 for contributing QUT researchers). Our submission follows the structure of the Discussion Paper, addressing each of the proposed reform areas in turn. However, drawing on our collective expertise, we believe the priority and key driver to strengthen ITE is to increase opportunity and investment in Work Integrated Learning, including but not limited to professional experience (reform area 3).

Prior to addressing the reform areas, we offer some comments to contextualise our response.

- ***It is important to acknowledge the focus here is <u>initial</u> teacher education***. ITE is one element of the ongoing professional journey of a teacher. As noted with respect to medical and other professional training, "competence is a threshold for entering the profession rather than an end stage of development" (Duijn et al. 2020) and while formal tertiary education and qualifications are essential "the acquisition of knowledge and skill and development of competence, and the formation of identity are more gradual and never fully finished" (Wijnen-Meijer et al. 2020). Initial teacher education is simply that – the entry point to a career teaching.

- ***All stakeholders have a role to play, and interlinking responsibilities, in attracting, nurturing, supporting and sustaining a highly skilled professional teaching workforce.*** In addition to Higher Education Providers (HEPs), this includes governments, employers, professional associations, unions and leaders within education settings and teachers themselves.

- ***QUT has a longstanding commitment to high quality evidence-informed teacher education.*** All of our education programs are informed by theory, contemporary research and practice wisdom and underpinned by strong reciprocal sector partnerships. We are committed to critical reflection on practice and draw on our longstanding relationships with education sector partners to inform and drive continuous quality improvement in all aspects of our work.

Summary Of Key Points

Reform Area 1: Strengthening ITE programs to deliver confident, effective classroom ready graduates

- Teaching is demanding and complex professional work, and our 'initial' teacher education programs address the knowledge and skills required to enter the profession. While there is always room for improvement, QUT is already addressing the proposed core content.

- Teachers do not teach brains, they teach children and young people which requires a holistic focus (e.g., cognitive, social, emotional and physical) and ability to tailor teaching to individual and group contexts.

- While the practices identified are recognised to be effective, they sit within an expanded toolkit of evidence-based pedagogical practices. We strongly believe that graduate teachers need to enter the profession with a robust toolkit of evidence-based practices, and the critical reflexivity to work with diverse learners, selecting and evaluating the pedagogical practices that will work best for individual and groups of students.

- As a leading provider of specialist programs which prepare Early Childhood Teachers to work with children birth to 8 years, we are concerned about the lack of attention to evidence-based early childhood pedagogies recognised to support successful transition to school.

- We reject the conceptualisation of 'enabling factors' in the Discussion Paper. We believe this presents a deficit view of diversity, assumes that all students from these groups experience barriers to their learning, and promotes a narrow conception of differentiated teaching approaches.

- We believe the proposed core content is addressed in most, if not all, ITE programs, and believe the current level of prescription in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) and Accreditation Standards and Procedures is sufficient. If it is deemed necessary to be more explicit, we propose the core content could be embedded under APST 2.1 and APST 4.2. The TPA is designed to assess graduate performance across the APST in diverse education contexts. We do not support any narrowing of this to evaluate a partial set of knowledges and practices.

Reform Area 2: Strengthen the Link Between Performance and Funding of ITE Programs

- Our review of the literature suggests that there is no evidence that performance-based funding for individual universities will improve the quality of ITE programs and/or provide a solution to current teacher workforce challenges.

- The proposed performance measures focus on input and output indicators rather than quality outcome measures, and we see challenges in their expanded use to measure quality in ITE.

- We believe the Australian Universities Accord review is an appropriate context for consideration of access and quality of all higher education programs including ITE. As the Discussion Papers note, a range of indicators already exist, and the results made publicly available. Each of these existing indicators has limitations and to expand their use beyond the purpose for which they are currently used, is not supported by any robust evidence and risks further reducing their validity.

Reform Area 3: Improve the quality of practical experience in teaching

- We strongly support this reform area, and believe it has the greatest potential to strengthen ITE and ensure that graduates are well prepared to enter the profession.

- The provision of quality Work Integrated Learning (WIL), including mandatory professional experience, needs to be adequately funded and resourced, with cost implications for HEPs and schools. From the HEP perspective, government funding has not kept pace with the real cost of placements and HEPs are cross-subsidising WIL. This is not sustainable. We advocate the need for additional targeted funding for ITE providers to strengthen and sustain high quality WIL, recognising increasing costs, including placements in regional, rural and remote schools.

- We support further investigation and piloting of comprehensive system level agreements between school systems and universities. To support effectiveness, these need to be the outcome of genuine collaboration between stakeholders, underpinned by a shared sense of responsibility and accountability for the preparation and ongoing development of the teaching workforce.

- We do not see the need for or value of another National Framework, and /or establishment of a National Authority with oversight of WIL.

- The provision of quality WIL is dependent upon the active engagement of schools and teachers. We recognise the Federal Government has long provided targeted funding to schools for specific initiatives. Funding is required to build the capacity of schools to provide quality WIL and to ensure that teachers have the time to supervise and mentor ITE students. In addition, funding for in-school mentoring during the first two years of teaching would significantly enhance transition and retention in the teaching workforce.

Reform Area 4: Improve postgraduate ITE programs for mid-career entrants

- We support accelerated models such as Queensland's Turn to Teaching (Internship) as a short-medium term strategy to address current workforce shortages, supported by other workforce strategies to strengthen professional recognition and remuneration, manage workload and support teachers to undertake their professional work. We do not however support this as the preferred model going forward as there is currently no evidence-base to attest to the impact, outcomes and efficacy of accelerated programs. There is a need for investment in research and evaluation in this context.

- We advocate the need to enable students to make informed choices and to select the ITE program that works for them. We firmly believe that the accelerated programs do not suit all students.

- We also note the potential to strengthen the pathway between Vocational Education and Training (VET) and ITE, and share QUT's pathway from the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care into the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) as an exemplar of a successful model.

1.0 Strengthen ITE Programs to Deliver Confident, Effective Classroom Ready Graduates

General comments

- We agree that ITE students should be taught evidence-based practices. **Reflecting on our ITE programs, we are confident this content is addressed** through core units, embedded content across our ITE programs and professional experience units, linking theory, research and practice.

- QUT's ITE programs have been designed to enable our students to meet the Graduate Level APST, and address other evidence-based content that we consider to be foundational to effective teaching and learning in diverse education settings (e.g., the sociology of education; inclusive education). **We question the value of promoting the identified content areas as opposed to other core content, believing these are well covered in the current APST and Accreditation Standards**. Promoting a place-based approach to learning and teaching, we agree that HEPs are best positioned to use their expertise and knowledge of their student community and sector partners to design quality ITE programs. We reject any move to expand upon the proposed core content, to specify dosage and/or to introduce a (more) prescriptive national ITE curriculum.

- **We strongly believe that graduate teachers need to enter the profession with a robust toolkit of evidence-based practices, and the critical reflexivity to work with diverse learners, selecting and evaluating the pedagogical practices that will work best for individual and groups of students**. At present, the identification of core content lends itself to a siloed approach to learning and teaching. For example, the core content is silent about socio-cultural-emotional factors that impact on learning and, hence teaching. If the core content is endorsed, there is a need to situate this within the holistic and integrated nature of learning and teacher's professional work, with emphasis on critical reflection and professional and ethical judgement in practice.

1.1 The Brain and Learning

- We believe that initial teacher education should provide ITE students with a strong grounding in child and adolescent development, derived from the cognitive and communication sciences (Gathercole & Alloway, 2004; Starling et al., 2012). Knowledge of the relationship between language and cognitive processing—especially the relationships between executive function and working and long-term memory—is necessary for teachers to understand and enact APST 1.1 'know students and how they learn'. However, **teachers do not teach brains, they teach children and young people which requires a holistic focus (e.g., cognitive, social, emotional and physical) and ability to tailor teaching to individual and group contexts**.

- There are gaps in applied research in neuroscience, as evidenced in the AERO meta-analysis, particularly in relation to the "applied evidence-based, the uncertainties about the applicability of specific principles across subjects and age ranges, and the challenges of implementation in practice" (Perry et al. 2021, p. 260). As a result, it is not presently readily applicable to either student learning or classroom practice. **There is a need for further investment in applied research.**

- We believe any required content relating to the brain and learning should be augmented through the addition of content related to epistemic cognition (cognitions about the nature of knowledge and knowing) that are considered to play a key role in all teaching and learning processes and outcomes. Epistemic cognition is a robust body of research spanning diverse disciplines in teaching and learning, which indicates that our beliefs about what we think knowledge is and how we gain knowledge can determine the type of teaching that takes place across different fields of education (for a review see Ferguson & Lunn, 2021). This body of work can augment the brain and learning content by helping preservice teachers to teach in ways that are epistemically valued in their teaching contexts.

- **We also argue that all core content identified in the Discussion Paper needs to be accompanied by a clear focus on critical reflection and reflexivity as knowledge processes** - not just with respect to culturally responsive teaching as identified in this discussion paper. This focus on evaluative thinking can support preservice teachers to interrogate the core content with respect to individual teaching/learning contexts, rather than simply using the knowledge as a tool that remains unexamined.

1.2   Effective Pedagogical Practices

- We perceive the Discussion Paper's suggested direction is a somewhat fragmented presentation of 'effective pedagogical practices' that is not reflective of current practice is schools or the broader research literature. We also believe prescription of practices is risky because it assumes that our knowledge of effective practice is fixed and adequate. We contend that ITE has an important role to play in critiquing and contributing to evidence-based future-oriented practice, and equipping teachers with the skills to evaluate new evidence.

- **While the practices identified are recognised to be effective, they sit within an expanded toolkit of evidence-based pedagogical practices**. Mastery learning, assessment for learning (referred to as formative assessment in the Discussion Paper), and explicit instruction are only successful in the context of positive, inclusive and supportive learning environments where students are receptive to learning. We support a more balanced mindset about pedagogy, that includes teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches (objectivist and constructivist perspectives), and enables teachers to draw together their knowledge of students and curriculum and pedagogy to select the right approach at the right time for the students they are teaching.

- **As a leading provider of specialist programs which prepare Early Childhood Teachers to work with children birth to 8 years, we are concerned about the lack of attention to evidence-based early childhood pedagogies**. The need for alignment and continuity of curriculum and pedagogy as children move from prior to school early education into school is well documented (Docket & Perry, 2020). We draw attention to Queensland's Age Appropriate Pedagogies and focus on the use of a range and balance of pedagogical approaches in the early years of school, including child and adult-led teaching and learning. https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/age-appropriate-pedagogies

- **A very large body of research into the effects of quality teaching has consistently identified teachers' emotional support as predictive of students' learning outcomes.** For example, in a Queensland longitudinal study, Thorpe et al. (2020) used data linkage to track students entering school from Prep through to Year 8 in secondary school. The study identified high emotional support in preschool (as measured by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System - CLASS) was the single greatest predictor of student behaviour in school over time. Findings from another Queensland longitudinal study (Walker &

Graham, 2019) suggest that a lack of positive emotional support—as measured by the CLASS (Pianta et al., 2008)—contributed significantly to conflictual teacher-student relationships in the first year of school. Of relevance to this Discussion Paper, Walker and Graham found an association between higher scores in instructional support and more conflict in teacher-student relationships. Drawing on prior research, they cautioned that instruction must meet children where they are in their learning, particularly when those children have language and/or self-regulation difficulties, and that emotionally supportive teaching is even more essential in these circumstances.

QUT practice snapshot

QUT's Master of Education (Inclusive Education) includes a core 13-week (12 credit point) unit on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and our undergraduate programs are underpinned by inclusive education units that teach inclusive practice within an MTSS framework. MTSS is multi-tiered and multi-dimensional in that it includes *three* tiered domains to support children's academic, social-emotional <u>and</u> behavioural developmental. While MTSS is grounded in the procedures of Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS) (e.g., universal screening, progress measures, data-based decision making, and tiered levels of support), we promote this framework because of its integrated and comprehensive approach to supporting the whole learner (Sailor et al., 2018). We agree that MTSS provides a useful scaffold for determining and organising which practices and supports will be implemented **s**choolwide, leading to greater coherence between programs, consistency between classrooms, and more predictability for students.

- **We advocate replacement of 'formative assessment' with the expanded and more contemporary focus on 'Assessment *for* Learning' (AfL)**. Formative assessment is framed as teachers monitoring and adapting their instruction and providing feedback. Assessment *for* Learning (Willis, 2011) connects several of the strategies into a larger learning story where students learn with teachers and become metacognitive about their learning so that they can adapt their learning during the learning. We promote use the conceptions of Assessment *for* Learning for its integrative pedagogical approach that can draw in relevant practices from the other sections, e.g., intended learning and success criteria from 'explicit modelling and scaffolding'. An AfL approach would more effectively underpin a more contemporary, aspirational conception of learning (as life-long, 21st century) beyond the narrow, definition of learning implied in this document, i.e., how the brain processes, stores, and retrieves information.

1.3   Classroom Management

- Teaching is demanding and complex professional work, and our 'initial' teacher education programs address the knowledge and skills required to enter the profession. While there is always room for improvement, QUT is already addressing the proposed core content proposed under classroom management, this includes building capacity to establish and teach rules and routines; implement proactive practices; model and acknowledge desired behaviour; and respond to persistent misbehaviour. Informed by neuroscience, we have also introduced a core unit on Trauma-Aware Education in our ITE programs which addresses the impacts of childhood trauma on learning and behaviour and provides preservice teachers with practical strategies to teach self-regulation and positive behaviour.

- High quality classroom interactions are characterised by teacher knowledge of students' academic and emotional needs, use of consistent routines and scaffolding, and proactive approaches to supporting behaviour, including supporting students to regulate their attention during the class (La Paro et al., 2004).

- **As a nation, we need to support teachers to work with students in classrooms who (as examples) are experiencing mental health concerns, who are emotionally dysregulated due to the trauma in their lives, who are homeless or living in poverty, who have a disability or combination of these**. These necessitate appropriate and considered adjustments and supports informed by current evidence-based support practices and research. While only capturing some of these students, to provide some indication of demand, 22.5% of students are recorded as having adjustments for disability across Australia (NCCD, 2022). Here responsibility is shared across the education ecosystem. ITE providers need to be resourced with adequate funding to teach preservice teachers well about inclusive learning, positive behaviour support and effective classroom management. Teachers need time and funding support to access high quality ongoing professional learning opportunities, including postgraduate education programs. Government and employers need to create and maintain a supportive work environment, with attention to work culture and the conditions that support genuine inclusion and enable the meaningful participation of all students.

1.4   Enabling Factors for Learning

- **We reject the conceptualisation of 'enabling factors' in the Discussion Paper. We believe this presents a deficit view of diversity, assumes that all students from these groups experience barriers to their learning, and promotes a narrow conception of differentiated teaching approaches.** By centering cognitive psychology and then addressing the contextualisation of cognition as 'managing diversity' there is a sense of 'othering' (i.e., most learners and other learners). As noted, QUT's approach is to equip our ITE students with the knowledge, skills and reflexivity to create inclusive learning environments and select from a toolkit of evidence-based pedagogical practices to engage diverse learners. Instead, we advocate a focus on meaningful inclusion, drawing on the definition of inclusion in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2008). In our teacher education programs, our focus is acceptance of and responsiveness to all forms of human diversity. We teach teachers how to create inclusive learning environments, using practices such as universal design and accessible pedagogies (Graham, 2020) which we believe benefit all learners.

- Furthermore, **the legislation and literature on meeting the needs of students with 'diverse learning needs' is not adequately represented in the discussion paper**. The 'acceptance of diversity' is not a legal entitlement; rather, Australian students with disability have a human right to receive an inclusive education as per the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD; United Nations, 2006). These rights are currently operationalised through the 1992 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE). To comply with the DDA/DSE, education providers are obligated not simply to 'accept' diversity through non-discriminatory enrolment, but to facilitate access to education through (i) provision of reasonable adjustments, (ii) consultation of students in the identification, design, and implementation of those adjustments, and (iii) elimination of harassment and victimisation. The DSE are reviewed every five years and, in each review, **the failure to make reasonable adjustments has been identified as a key barrier for students with disability negatively impacting their engagement, learning and behavioural outcomes** (Australian Department of Education, Skills and

Employment, 2020). This failure includes those often described as having 'additional needs'; namely those with high-incidence disabilities like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Developmental Language Disorder (Graham & Tancredi, 2019). **In addition to these omissions, Section 4 of the Discussion Paper, 'Diverse Learning Needs', gives the impression that the practices identified in the Paper are effective for all, *irrespective of delivery*.** However, this is incorrect.

- Inclusive practice is an essential component for students with disability, including those with 'additional needs'. **The key distinction for students with disability is this: while the practices described in the discussion paper have the *most potential* to be effective for all students, this potential will be thwarted if those practices are not delivered *accessibly*;** that is, if language or sensory barriers are not removed (either through the application of universal design principles or provision of reasonable adjustments). This is a very sophisticated element of teaching practice, and a perennial challenge that we are seeking to address at QUT. Researchers in QUT's Centre for Inclusive Education have developed a pedagogical framework consisting of evidence-based practices known to reduce language and cognitive load, along with a complementary classroom observation measure and a 10-week program of professional learning (Graham & Tancredi, 2023). The aim is to achieve the most effective teaching practice for all students at Tier 1 of an multidimensional MTSS to reduce the number of students requiring adjustments and/or supports at Tiers 2 and 3. The result, Accessible Pedagogies, comprises a set of evidence-based, instructional practices that prevent barriers arising from extraneous language and cognitive load (Bussing et al., 2016; Gathercole & Alloway, 2004; Starling et al., 2012; Sweller et al., 2019).

QUT Research Snapshot

We value the Discussion Paper's focus on "self-reflection and reflexivity to be an ever-evolving career practice, acknowledging that this is the foundation of intercultural development" (p. 20). However, what has been missing to date is a clear pedagogy of teacher education which can support such self-reflection and reflexivity in diversity education more broadly, and culturally responsive teaching specifically.

A cross-institutional, transdisciplinary ARC study (2018-2022 with ACU, Griffith University, QUT, SCU) has shown that responding appropriately to the diversity of a student population requires ITE students to have a robust understanding of three interrelated bodies of knowledge: teaching about, catering to, and teaching for diversity (see Rowan et al., 2021).

Teaching about diversity involves providing future teachers with information about the common needs and challenges of particular groups of learners (such as patterns of success or failure that have been linked to groups such as migrants, or children from low SES backgrounds). *Teaching to diversity* refers to strategies for teaching these particular groups of learners: working with the status quo. **Teaching for diversity, however, recognises that teachers need to create genuinely equitable environments that enable all students to achieve excellent outcomes. Developing the sophisticated skillset to teach for diversity takes time and deliberate effort. Teacher educators require a pedagogy of teacher education that ensures that future teachers are genuinely classroom ready, that is, able to understand the complexity of a social and geographical context and make decisions that will impact positively on students in the short and long term (Ryan et al., 2020; ARC DP180100160).**

ITE programs need to include courses and pedagogies that allow future teachers the space both to understand core content knowledge **and** to engage in critical reflection on such content to support teaching *about*, catering *to*, and teaching *for* diversity across diverse groups of learners.

ARC DP180100160 *Educating preservice teachers to teach diverse learners*. Team members Lunn, J., Rowan, L., Ryan, M., Walker, S., Bourke, T., L'Estrange, L., Johansson, E. 2018 -2021.

1.5 Opportunities

- **We believe the proposed core content is addressed in most, if not all, ITE programs, and believe the current level of prescription in the APST and Accreditation of ITE programs: Standards and Procedure is sufficient**. However, if it is deemed necessary to be more explicit, we propose the core content could be embedded under APST 2.1 and APST 4.2.

- The TPA is designed to assess graduate performance across the APST. We do not support any narrowing of this to evaluate a partial set of knowledges and practices.

2.0 Strengthen the Link Between Performance and Funding of ITE Programs

General comments

- There currently exists a very rigorous accreditation process for ITE programs that is supported and monitored by State Teacher Regulatory Authorities, working with AITSL. The current framework includes the identification and later evaluation of continuous quality improvement strategies and outcomes. In addition, the TPA offers another benchmark of the quality and efficacy of ITE programs and classroom ready graduates over time.

- The case is not made in the Discussion Paper as to why there needs to be a stronger link between performance and funding for ITE programs. **Our review of the literature suggests that there is no evidence that performance-based funding for individual universities will improve the quality of ITE programs and/or provide a solution to current teacher workforce challenges**. Specifically, there is a lack of evidence clearly tying performance funding to better outcomes for students (Doughtery et al., 2016), evidence that shows that performance funding does not impact graduation rates (Dougherty and Natow, 2019), and that performance funding has limited effects on student completion (Bell, Fryar and Hillman, 2018).

2.1   Performance Measures for ITE

- **The proposed performance measures focus on input and output indicators rather than quality outcome measures, and we see challenges in their expanded use to measure quality in ITE**. In particular, we note the following:

    - Any measures must account for new realities for students. For example, an increasing number of students undertake study on a part-time basis necessitating a review of current retention measures. This trend is evidenced in Student Progress Rates, which show that SPR has declined and not recovered since the pandemic, a phenomenon not unique to ITE. TEQSA's Higher Education Standards Panel Report (2022) also acknowledges this, the complex needs of mature age students, students in regional areas and those from low-income backgrounds. The use of current available data needs to be contextualised within these new realities.

    - The greatest attrition occurs in the first year of the degree in most HEPs, often following the first professional experience, when a student decides that teaching is not for them. We do not see this as negatively reflecting on teaching or our ITE program.

    - There are known limitations to student perception and outcome data. For example, QILT focuses attention on one year of study, and is not a reliable measure of quality across the program. The current response rate to the Graduate Outcome Survey limits its usefulness and reliability as a proxy output indicator.

    - Recognising that teacher attrition is impacted by multiple factors, most notably, wages, conditions and work intensification, it is unrealistic to link funding for ITE programs to the

retention of graduates. Instead, we advocate collective responsibility and a 'whole of career framework, that supports the transition of graduates to teaching, optimises the provisional year to build confidence and continue learning, and provides funding for evidence-based continuing professional development for all teachers across their careers.

- We believe the current review of the Australian Universities Accord is a more appropriate context for consideration of access and quality of all higher education programs including ITE. As the Discussion Papers notes, a range of indicators already exist, and the results are made publicly available. Each of these existing indicators has limitations and to expand their use beyond the purpose for which they are currently used, is not supported by any robust evidence and risks further reducing their validity.

2.2   Opportunities

- Recent publications from Australian ITE providers indicate that collaboration within and across universities has afforded providers the opportunity to reflect on programs offerings, and has boosted ITE quality (e.g., Adlington et al., 2023; Buchanan, Harb & Fitzgerald, 2022); Jordan et al., 2019; McGraw et al., 2019; Spina, Spooner-Lane, Mascadri & Briant, 2022). For example, Spina, Spooner-Lane, Macadri and Briant (2023) report on the functioning of the QTPA, and provide evidence that educators at all four universities within the QTPA consortium found that ongoing collaboration had increased ITE quality by developing shared understandings nationally about the APST graduate standards, ITE program development, and assessment. Similarly, Buchanan, Harb & Fitzgerald (2022) write that collaborating across universities on TPAs is broadly beneficial to the ITE profession and graduating teachers and strengthens professional bonds between schools and universities. Rather than reward funding for individual "high quality" providers, additional funding could be available for providers to collaborate in meaningful ways. This approach builds in opportunities for ITE providers in regional settings to prepare teachers for regional and rural contexts, while collaborating with colleagues in metropolitan universities.

3.0 Improve the Quality of Practical Experience In Teaching

General comments

- QUT's ITE programs have a strong and enduring focus on integrating theory, research and practice enabled through strong sector partnerships and the careful sequencing and timing of content and the alignment of this with Work Integrated Learning (WIL), including professional experience which commences in Year 1. **We strongly support this reform area, and believe it has the greatest potential to strengthen ITE and ensure that graduates are well prepared to enter the profession.**

- Enabling quality WIL is a significant and costly element of our ITE programs. To provide an indication of the scale of this at QUT, our Professional Experience Office places approximately 2,600 students per year across more than 400 schools and early education settings, and these students are supported by academic staff across the placement.

- **The provision of quality WIL needs to be adequately funded and resourced, with cost implications for HEPs and schools.** From the HEP perspective, while acknowledging the critical importance of professional experience and exploring opportunities to expand WIL in ITE, government funding has not kept pace with the real cost of placements and HEPs are cross-subsidising WIL. Our most recent analysis shows the cost to run a Professional Experience Unit over a semester (based on 25 students) is significantly greater (+27%) than the cost to run a regular unit for the same number of students and well exceeds the income obtained through CSP revenue. This is not sustainable. We advocate the need for additional targeted funding for ITE providers to strengthen and sustain high quality WIL, recognising increasing costs, including placements in regional, rural and remote schools.

- We acknowledge the cost of WIL to schools, and advocate increased public investment to build the capacity of site coordinators and mentor teachers to contribute to the provision of quality WIL. There is also urgent need to expand bursaries to support students experiencing disadvantage to enable them to fully engage in WIL.

3.1 Effective provider-school partnerships

- QUT is signatory to the Queensland Professional Experience Partnership Agreement (PEPA), and benefits from this systems framework for professional experience, inclusive of all three school sectors (but currently excluding prior to school early education settings). The PEPA promotes the shared goal of growing a professional and skilled teaching workforce, and sets out shared roles and responsibilities in supporting quality professional experience. While this provides a valuable starting point, there is no requirement for schools to take students, and despite strong sector partnerships, it is increasingly challenging to place this volume of students.

- The focus on strengthening WIL provides opportunity to leverage existing successful partnership models ensuring opportunity to contextualise these to ensure these are effective in diverse communities. For example, while the Discussion Paper offers a number of case studies of 'effective provider-school partnerships', there needs to be evidence of scalability and adaptability in different geographic and socio-economic contexts. **We suggest the need to begin with a range of partnership models and to**

evaluate the impact and efficacy of these in different contexts to ensure they are fit for purpose and working for all stakeholders.

3.2   Opportunities

- **We support further investigation and piloting of comprehensive system level agreements between school systems and HEPs. To support effectiveness, these need to be the outcome of genuine collaboration between stakeholders, underpinned by a shared sense of responsibility and accountability for the preparation and ongoing development of the teaching workforce**.

- There is a need to increase funding to cover the real cost of providing quality WIL to HEPs and schools.

- While seeking high quality WIL opportunities for our ITE students, and recognising the value-add of some excellence programs (e.g., Kelvin Grove Teacher Education Centre of Excellence), we do not support a partnership approach that restricts placements to exemplar schools. **We aspire to improved partnership arrangements that incorporate as many schools as possible.** We want all schools to be wonderful places of learning for students and excellent workplaces and learning environments for teachers. An exclusive model, that limits WIL placements to a small number of exemplar schools undermines this ambition.

- We do not see the need for or value of another National Framework, and /or establishment of a National Authority with oversight in the area of WIL. We enjoy a strong and positive relationship with the Queensland College of Teachers (our State TRA) and believe this is covered in the current accreditation framework.

- The provision of quality WIL is dependent upon the active engagement of schools and teachers. We recognise that the Federal Government has long provided targeted funding to schools for specific initiatives. **Funding is required to build the capacity of schools to provide quality WIL and to ensure that teachers have the time to supervise and mentor ITE students.** In addition, funding for in-school mentoring during the first two years of teaching would significantly enhance transition and retention in the teaching workforce. This would be of shared benefit, supporting retention and smoothing the current disjuncture between ITE, the early years of teaching and ongoing teacher professional development.

QUT Practice Snapshot

QUT and the Queensland Department of Education's Centres of Learning and Wellbeing (CLAW) have developed a genuine partnership to promote teaching in rural and remote schools and ensure that students are well prepared for this context. In 2019 QUT and the Mount Isa CLAW piloted a weeklong WIL program targeting our third year ITE students. This is not professional experience. Instead, the program focuses on community engagement and building cultural responsiveness. Students engage in a range of academic, social, and cultural activities including visiting schools in the surrounding areas. In 2020, the program was expanded to include the Mount Isa and Atherton CLAWs. In 2023, the focus of both programs is on First Nations perspectives and for students to strengthen cultural awareness and experience in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Funds from the "Beyond the Range" program ($2000 per student) support travel, accommodation and living costs of the pre-service teachers. All participating students reported personal and professional benefits through their participation in this WIL program. Of

---

the students who participated in this program since its inception, approximately 50% have gone on to complete a rural or remote professional experience and gain employment in a rural or remote school.

4.0 Improve Postgraduate ITE Programs for Mid-Career Entrants

General comments

- Working in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Education, QUT is one of three Queensland Universities offering the accelerated *Turn to Teaching (Internship) program*.

> **QUT Practice Snapshot: Turn to Teaching**
>
> The QUT Turn to Teaching (Internship) program (TTT) is a novel, innovative and accelerated teacher education program that leverages our recently re-accredited MTeach (Secondary) course. The first cohort of TTT students commenced this year and will complete an accelerated program (equivalent to 18 months of full-time study) through the completion of a summer semester of study. Students complete 2 school placements in their first year, and a bespoke unit designed to orient them to the professional context of teaching, prior to embarking on their paid internship, working part-time and completing the remainder of their degree part-time. The TTT program is timely and offers shared benefits. It provides tangible support for mature age students seeking a second career in teaching. It addresses the current shortage of teachers, particularly in STEM, in rural and remote and high priority metropolitan secondary schools.

4.1   Better Pathways for Mid-Career Entrants

- In addition to the TTT program, QUT is working with other sector partners to investigate the potential to enhance flexible and accelerated pathways into teaching across the education continuum, including prior to school early education settings. **While recognising and valuing the knowledge and skills mid - career entrants bring to the MTeach program, we strongly believe effective teaching is informed by theory, research and practice, and do not believe this can be adequately covered in less than 18 months.**

- **We support models such as TTT as a short-medium term strategy to address current workforce shortages, supported by other workforce strategies to strengthen professional recognition and remuneration, manage workload and support teachers to undertake their professional work.** We do not however support this as the preferred model going forward based on the fact there is currently no evidence-base to attest to the impact, outcomes and efficacy of accelerated programs. There is a need for investment in research and evaluation in this context.

- We also note the need to enable students to make informed choices and to select the ITE program that works for them. **We firmly believe that the accelerated programs do not suit all students**. The Higher Education and school sectors have identified concerns about the cost and retention issues associated with such programs which have been implemented in Australia over the past decade.

- **We also note the potential to strengthen the pathway between Vocational Education and Training and ITE,** and highlight our pathway from the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care into the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). Recognising and valuing prior learning and experience designing and implementing education programs in early education settings, QUT provides up to 18 months advanced standing into the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). Students can complete the

program full-time or part-time, on-campus and online. We see the articulation from VET to HEP as another valuable and viable pathway into teaching, and note that the majority of students who travel this pathway enter ITE with considerable professional experience working as teacher-aides in schools and educators in ECEC.

References

Adlington, R., Charteris, J., & Nye, A. (2023). Formative performance assessment in preservice teacher education–working through the black boxes. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2015.1020104

Australia. Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2020). Final report of the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005. Available from: https://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv:91613

Bell, E., A. Fryar and N. Hillman (2018), "When intuition misfires: a meta-analysis of research on performance-based funding in higher education", in Hazelkorn, E., H. Coates and A. McCormick (eds.), Research handbook on quality, performance and accountability in higher education, London, UK: Edward Elgar.

Buchanan, J., Harb, G., & Fitzgerald, T. (2020). Implementing a Teaching Performance Assessment: An Australian Case Study. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 45*(5), 74-90.

Bussing, R., Koro-Ljungberg, M., Gagnon, J. C., Mason, D. M., Ellison, A., Noguchi, K., ... & Albarracin, D. (2016). Feasibility of school-based ADHD interventions: A mixed-methods study of perceptions of adolescents & adults. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, *20*(5), 400-413. https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054713515747

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), Cth. https://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2010C00023

Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE), Cth.

Dockett, S., & Perry, B. (2020). Early years transitions. In A. Kilderry & B. Raban (Eds.), *Strong Foundations: Evidence informing practice in early childhood education and care*(pp. 268-281). ACER Press. https://doi.org/10.37517/978-1-74286-555-3_18

Dougherty, K. and S. Natow (2019), "Analysing neoliberalism in theory and practice: The case of performance-based funding for higher education". *Analysis and Policy Observatory. https://apo.org.au/node/232706*

Dougherty, K. J., Jones, S., Lahr, S., Natow, S. R., Pheatt, L. & Reddy, V. (2016). *Performance funding for higher education.* John Hopkins University Press.

Duijn, C et al (2020) Qualified but not yet fully competent: perceptions of recent veterinary graduates on their day-one skills, Vet Record, Vol 186, Issue 7, British Veterinary Association**,** 22 February 2020, https://doi.org/10.1136/vr.105329

Ferguson, L. & Lunn, J. (2021). Teacher Beliefs and Epistemologies. In Susan Faircloth (Ed.) Oxford Bibliographies in Education*.* Oxford University Press, United Kingdom.

Gathercole, S. E., & Alloway, T. P. (2004). Working memory and classroom learning. *Dyslexia Review*, *15*, 4-9.

Graham, L. (Ed). (2020). *Inclusive education for the 21st century: Theory, policy and practice.* Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group

Graham, L. J., & Tancredi, H. (2019). In search of a middle ground: the dangers and affordances of diagnosis in relation to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and developmental language disorder. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *24*(3), 287-300..

Graham, L. J. & Tancredi, H. (2023, in press). *Accessible Pedagogies.* Chapter 10 in L. Graham (Ed). Inclusive Education for the 21st Century: Theory, policy and practice, 2nd Edition. Routledge: Oxon.

Jordan, K., Littlewood, K., Kennedy, B., & McLaughlin, P. (2019). Tracking graduate teacher preparedness through a national capstone assessment. Transformations in Tertiary Education: The Scholarship of Engagement at RMIT University, 169-186.

Lunn, J., Bourke, T., Rowan, L., Ryan, M., Churchward, P., Walker, S., L'Estrange, L., Berge, A., & Johansson, E. (2022). How epistemic reflexivity enables teacher educators' teaching for diversity: exploring a pedagogical framework for critical consciousness. British Educational Research Journal, 48(4), 684-703.

McGraw, A., Keamy, R. K., Kriewaldt, J., Brandenburg, R., Walker, R., & Crane, N. (2021). Collaboratively Designing a National, Mandated Teaching Performance Assessment in a Multi-University Consortium: Leadership, Dispositions and Tensions. A*ustralian Journal of Teacher Education, 46*(5), 40-53.

NCCD (2022). *National Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability.* Retrieved https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia-data-portal/school-students-with-disability

Pianta, R. C., La Paro, K. M., & Hamre, B. K. (2008). *Classroom Assessment Scoring System^{TM}: Manual K-3*. Paul H Brookes Publishing.

Rowan, L., Bourke, T., Lunn-Brownlee, J., Ryan, M., Walker, S., & L'Estrange, L. (2021). How does Initial Teacher Education Research Frame the Challenge of Preparing Future Teachers for Student Diversity in Schools: A Systematic Review of Literature. Review of Educational Research. 91(1), 112-158. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-021-00434-y

Ryan, M., Rowan, L., Lunn Brownlee, J., Bourke, T., L'Estrange, L., Walker, S. & Churchward, P. (2020). Teacher education and teaching for diversity: A call to action. Teaching Education. https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2020.1844178

Sailor, W., McCart, A. B., & Choi, J. H. (2018). Reconceptualizing inclusive education through multi-tiered system of support. *Inclusion*, *6*(1), 3-18.

Spina, N., Spooner-Lane, R., Mascadri, J., & Briant, E. (2022). Enquiring into a teacher performance assessment: towards intelligent professional responsibility in initial teacher education. *London Review of Education*.

Starling, J., Munro, N., Togher, L., & Arciuli, J. (2012). Training secondary school teachers in instructional language modification techniques to support adolescents with language impairment: A randomized control trial. *Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools, 43*(4), 474-495. https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461(2012/11-0066)

Sweller, J., van Merriënboer, J. J., & Paas, F. (2019). Cognitive architecture and instructional design: 20 years later. *Educational Psychology Review, 31*, 261-292. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-019-09465-5

TEQSA Higher Education Standards Panel (2022). *FINAL REPORT - Improving retention, completion and success in higher education.* Autralian Government. https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/resources/higher-education-standards-panel-final-report-improving-retention-completion-and-success-higher

United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*. https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html

Wijnen-Meijer et al (2020) Vertical integration in medical education: the broader perspective, BMC Medical Education (2020) 20:509, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-020-02433-6

Willis, J. (2011). Affiliation, autonomy and assessment for learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice, 18(4),* 399-415.

List of Contributors

Prof Susan Irvine (Lead)

Dr Naomi Barnes

Aspro Terri Bourke

Dr Meegan Brown

Prof Karen Dooley

Prof Linda Graham

Mr Sam Liu

Prof Lori Lockyer

Prof Jo Lunn

Prof Dann Mallet

Dr Michele Mukherjee

Dr Peter O'Brien

Dr Lee Anne Perry

Dr Mallihai Tambyah

Aspro Jill Willis

This submission was also informed by roundtable discussions involving academics from the School of Early Childhood and Inclusive Education and School of Teacher Education and Leadership at QUT, and consultation across the Faculty of Creative Industries, Education and Social Justice.