

Developing Teacher Education

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The focus of this series is on teacher education, with particular reference to the problems that research has revealed in established approaches to teacher education, to solutions that have been offered to these problems, and to elucidation of the underlying processes of teachers' learning on which effective solutions must depend. While different countries have inherited different systems of teacher education, and are therefore faced with different problems, all countries are faced with the same dilemmas of helping beginning and serving teachers to teach as well as possible within their existing schools while at the same time mobilizing their critical and creative thinking so they can contribute to the development of better schools for the future. Authors in this series explore such opportunities and challenges and seek to understand and explain how the processes of professional learning and of facilitating that learning can best be understood.

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**Teacher education
in transition**
Re-forming professionalism?

**John Furlong, Len Barton,
Sheila Miles, Caroline Whiting
and Geoff Whitty**

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Contents

<i>Series editors' preface</i>	ix	
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi	
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xii	
<i>Tables and figures</i>	xiv	
1	Teacher education, policy and professionalism	1
	Introduction	1
	Teacher education and teacher professionalism	4
	Contexts for policy analysis	6
	Voices in the context of influence	9
	Neo-liberal perspectives	9
	Neo-conservative perspectives	10
	The views of the profession	12
	The concerns of the state	13
	Conclusion	15
2	The policy context of MOTE 1 – the early 1990s	18
	Introduction	18
	The historical legacy	19
	The 1960s – teacher education and social democracy	19
	The 1970s – fragmentation and autonomy	20
	Key policy texts of the 1980s	21
	Conclusion	25
3	Continuity and change in course provision	26
	Introduction	26
	The 'topography' of provision – a national system with local variation	26

	An analytical framework	28
	Course structures	29
	Time in school	29
	Patterns of school experience – serial and block practice	30
	Course content	31
	Curriculum courses	32
	Subject studies	32
	Educational and professional studies	33
	Pedagogy	34
	Assignments	35
	Personnel – a growing role for teachers?	36
	Location of other course elements	37
	Involving teachers	37
	Teachers as mentors	38
	Teachers in other roles	40
	Models of professional training	41
	The reflective practitioner	41
	Competences	42
	Conclusion	43
4	New populations, new professionalism?	45
	Introduction	45
	New routes, old models?	46
	The Articled Teacher Scheme	48
	Course size and recruitment	50
	Training in school	50
	The Articled Teacher Scheme and professionalism	54
	The Licensed Teacher Scheme	54
	Licensed teachers and professionalism	59
	Models of integration – professionalism re-formed?	60
	Conclusion	64
5	The policy context of MOTE 2 – the middle 1990s	67
	New policies – new challenges	67
	The first moves – the new circulars and SCITT	68
	Measuring outcomes – a new role for competences	69
	More new routes	71
	The rise of the TTA	72
6	Partnership – the changing role of schools	76
	Introduction	76
	‘Ideal typical’ models of partnership	77
	Complementary partnership	78
	Collaborative partnership	79
	A growing role for schools and teachers	82
	Time in school	82

	Location of training	83
	Teacher involvement in courses	83
	SCITT course contributors	87
	Forming partnerships	88
	Numbers of schools	88
	Selecting schools	90
	Contracts	92
	Supporting partnerships	93
	Conclusion	96
7	Partnership – the changing role of higher education	98
	Introduction	98
	The changing policy context	99
	The 1950s, 1960s and 1970s – the expert emerges	99
	The 1980s – the expert re-formed	100
	The 1992 reforms – the expert suppressed?	101
	Who are the teacher educators and under what conditions do they work?	102
	Increasing central control of the curriculum	103
	Financial and other pressures	104
	Institutional contexts	106
	The changing nature of the teacher educator’s work	106
	Professional ideals	106
	Working with competences	107
	Working in partnership	110
	Managing partnerships	112
	A new model of partnership	116
	The HEI-led model of partnerships	117
8	Researching student experience	119
	Introduction	119
	The outcomes of training	121
	Overall quality and value	121
	Teaching skills and understandings	123
	The contribution of schools and higher education to professional development	127
	Quantitative findings	127
	Qualitative findings	130
	Higher education – learning from ‘theory’	132
	Conclusion	138
9	Policy and practice in the late 1990s	142
	Introduction	142
	Tightening the grip – Ofsted inspections	144
	Inventing a content	149
	From competences to ‘standards’	150

viii Teacher education in transition

	A national curriculum for teachers	152
	New Labour, new professionalism?	156
	Conclusion	159
10	Teacher education in new times	161
	Introduction	161
	Exception – or global phenomenon?	163
	Globalizing trends	167
	The continuing role of the state	168
	Resistance to reform	171
	The search for a democratic professionalism?	174
<i>Appendix:</i>	<i>The methodology of the MOTE studies</i>	178
	Aim 1 – Mapping the changing face of provision	179
	Aim 2 – Examining the outcomes of training	184
<i>References</i>		192
<i>Index</i>		201

Series editors' preface

During the last decade, initial teacher education in England has been the subject of massive change. At one level, this change can be seen as a long overdue recognition of the capacity of schools, and especially of the teachers who work in them, to make a major contribution to the professional education of those entering the profession. How this can best be done, against a background of almost a century in which teachers have had very little such involvement, but in which both what is sought from schooling and our understanding of schooling have expanded greatly, is a highly exciting question. What problems, and especially what opportunities, it will involve we are only beginning to discover. One of the aims of this series is to contribute to the exploration of the opportunities and to the solution of the problems.

The shift to a largely school-based system has however been far from the only change in initial teacher education during the last decade; and indeed it can properly be seen as merely one part of a broader and quite systematic change. The enhanced role of schools in initial teacher education, and the correspondingly reduced role of higher education, was achieved neither through consensus nor through gradual development: it was achieved through unilateral government intervention of a quite unprecedented kind. It is this degree of government direction which characterises the broader change. As the authors of this book themselves describe this change, 'the system has been moved from one of diversity and autonomy to one of unanimity and central control. What the government, and particularly the TTA, had wanted, was a common system with common standards and procedures no matter who was providing the training or where: this was how the TTA defined quality. By the end of the 1990s this had been largely achieved.' This book offers an excellent account of that change.

As series editors, we especially welcome this book, for several reasons, as

one of the first of the series. As was to be expected from such a distinguished group of authors, among England's leading sociologists of education, it is a highly scholarly account of this crucial last decade, providing a carefully documented history of government initiatives interwoven with thoroughly researched evidence about the consequences of those initiatives for the organization and practice of teacher education in England. It provides too a national picture of the ways in which different groups in schools and higher education have found the changes as empowering or constraining, and the benefits and disadvantages they have experienced. Furthermore, it cautiously considers how best these initiatives and changes can best be understood in relation to other developments, in England and internationally. This will surely be regarded in future years as the authoritative text on what happened in English teacher education in the 1990s.

This is however a book of more than academic importance. It is a book which definitively takes stock, telling us where we have got to nationally in initial teacher education, showing us a broad but perceptive and reliable picture of the strengths and limitations of the system at work. It tells us about the reality to which we have to attend, here and now. Whatever our individual enthusiasms, interests, fears and agendas, it describes the national context in which we are working and to which we must address our efforts if we want them to have more than local significance. It tells us both that the last decade has seen some significant achievements in initial teacher education, which we would be very foolish to ignore, and also that the immense potential of real partnership between schools and higher education is generally very far from being realized. The picture it offers is not a simple one, but rather one which challenges us to think deeply.

Finally, this book is valuable because the challenge it offers is quite explicit. As the title makes clear, it is a book which asks questions, and these questions are about the nature of teacher professionalism. Although the main text is one which describes and explains, there is a sustained sub-text which asks important questions, rooted in a contrast between teachers', and especially teacher educators', traditional aspiration to a professionalism of collective and even individual autonomy and, on the other hand, government's wish to promote a new teacher professionalism, rooted in disciplined conformity to high common (and if necessary imposed) standards. The central question is: do teachers and teacher educators have a credible alternative conception of teacher professionalism which they can offer to politicians for the twenty-first century?

*Hazel Hagger
Donald McIntyre*

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Most of all, we are indebted to the many lecturers, teachers and students who collaborated with us on these projects at a time of intense pressure on the education service in general and on initial teacher education in particular.

1 Teacher education, policy and professionalism

People are always wanting teachers to change. Rarely has this been more true than in recent years. These times of global competitiveness, like all moments of economic crisis, are producing immense moral panics about how we are preparing the generations of the future in our respective nations . . . Few people want to do much about the economy, but everyone – politicians, the media and the public alike – wants to do something about education.

(A. Hargreaves 1994: 5)

Introduction

Hargreaves is right. Today, people, and especially governments, do want teachers to change. In England, one of the central areas that contemporary governments have looked at in their attempt to change teachers has been the system of initial teacher training. It may be a false assumption, but it has nevertheless been assumed that one significant way of influencing the skills, knowledge and values of teachers – in other words, their professionalism – is to change the form and content of their initial training. As we will demonstrate in this opening chapter, this has meant that initial teacher education has increasingly become a major site for political debate and struggle in recent years.

It was not always so. At the beginning of the 1980s, and indeed throughout most of this century (Gardner 1993; 1996), the content and structure of teacher education and training courses in England and Wales was principally a matter for universities and colleges themselves (Wilkin 1996); as a policy area, teacher education was something of a backwater. But, by the

end of that decade, it had become a key issue in government educational policy. Central control had increased dramatically and, once established, the speed of change imposed on the system became progressively more intense. The changes of the 1980s included the establishment of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE) (DES 1984) and its subsequent modification (DES 1989a); the revision of conventional training courses – the one year PGCE and the four year BEd – including government specification of course content (DES 1989a); and the introduction of shortened BEd courses, part-time PGCEs and conversion courses for graduates wishing to convert their first degree to enable them to teach shortage subjects. Other more radical innovations launched at the end of the decade included the development of the largely school-based ‘articled teacher’ and ‘licensed teacher’ (DES 1989b) routes to qualified teacher status (QTS).¹

In this ferment of policy change those in higher education who were traditionally responsible for initial teacher education lost a significant proportion of their professional autonomy – their ability to employ whom they wished and to define the form and content of training courses. As a result, initial teacher education, during the 1980s, increasingly became a major site for ideological struggle between the government and others, especially those in higher education, with an interest in the professional formation of teachers.

It was against this background of policy change and political struggle that, in 1990, four of the present authors, then based in different universities and colleges in England and Wales, applied to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to mount a national research project to monitor the changes being introduced. The result was the establishment of the first Modes of Teacher Education (MOTE) project, which ran from 1991 to 1992.²

What became apparent during the life of this first project was that the 1990s were not to be a period where the system would be allowed to settle down to accommodate all of the changes introduced; rather it was to be a period of further radical reform. The same research team therefore applied to the ESRC to fund a second project to extend and develop findings from the earlier MOTE study and explore the implications of the next round of reforms. The second project ran from 1993 to 1996.³

As we had predicted, the second period of our research saw the policy process intensify. In 1992 and 1993 the government issued two new circulars for primary and secondary initial teacher education (DfE 1992, 1993a) which radically altered the relationships between schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) and sharpened the emphasis on practical training. What we had not anticipated was the breadth and depth of subsequent reforms. During the life of the project, these included the abolition of CATE and the establishment of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), which took over most of the functions of CATE as well as the funding of all initial teacher education in England (though not Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland); the development of a new inspection framework for initial teacher education from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted); the ending of the articled teacher scheme, and the establishment of school-centred teacher training

(SCITT) schemes, which did not necessarily entail any higher education involvement; and the launching of The Open University's own teacher training courses by distance learning.⁴

The empirical parts of the MOTE projects were therefore undertaken against a background of rapidly changing policy and since their completion the pace of reform has not slackened.⁵ As we discuss in more detail in Chapter 9, in the late 1990s the TTA and Ofsted extended and sharpened their roles and there were ever more detailed interventions into the curriculum with new 'standards' for training and the development of a national curriculum for trainee teachers in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology (ICT) (DfEE 1998a).

It is important to recognize at the outset that changes in the field of higher education were by no means confined to initial teacher education during the 1990s. As Bridges (1996) highlights, the curriculum changes thrust upon universities' and colleges' schools of education were certainly not unique; they were mirrored, perhaps indirectly, in many sections of higher education. If one looks further afield, the vast majority of public service professionals in the United Kingdom and in many other parts of the world were experiencing changing and more challenging relationships with the state during the same period (see for example Dunleavy and Hood 1994; Pollitt 1994; Bottery 1998; Carter 1998; Clarke and Newman 1998).

Nevertheless we would suggest that, perhaps because of the historically tenuous hold that teacher education has had within higher education (Gardner 1996), the scope and depth of the reforms were particularly strong in our own field. Certainly the scope of the reforms we witnessed more than justified our initial interest in the implications of what was happening to the professional formation of teachers in England and Wales. We would suggest that the vast majority of these policy initiatives on initial teacher education during the period we studied were indeed framed with the explicit aspiration of changing the nature of teacher professionalism. As we will demonstrate below, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the New Right and other critics were increasingly successful in establishing the issue of teacher professionalism as a legitimate topic for government policy; and it is a concern that has now been taken on by the new Labour government (DfEE 1998b). Moreover, as we will also argue in Chapter 10, such a concern was not an entirely domestic affair in that our evidence would suggest that, in other parts of the English-speaking world, similar issues were coming onto the agenda.

We would also suggest that an explicit attempt to change teacher professionalism through initial teacher education had at times to be pursued alongside two other policy concerns that were also significant in influencing the policies actually produced. These were first, the imperative of maintaining an adequate supply of well-qualified applicants for initial teacher education; and second, the aspiration on the part of the state to establish greater accountability for the content and quality of initial teacher education. These three policy concerns – teacher professionalism, maintaining supply, and creating greater accountability within a national framework for training –

have all been influential on the policy initiatives that have been produced in recent years. However, we would maintain that it has been concerns about the nature of teacher professionalism itself that have remained the most enduring focus of national policy in this area and that they have influenced policy in the other two areas.

Teacher education and teacher professionalism

We trust our health to the physician; our fortune and sometimes our life and reputation to the lawyer and attorney. Such confidence could not safely be reposed in people of a very mean or low condition. Their reward must be such, therefore, as may give them that rank in society which so important a trust requires. The long time and great expense which must be laid out in their education when combined with this circumstance, necessarily enhances still further the price of their labour.

(Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, quoted in MacDonald 1995)

Despite the widespread use of the term, the concept of a 'professional' remains deeply contested in our society. As Hoyle and John (1995) have suggested, debates around the notion of what it means to be a professional focus on three central issues – knowledge, autonomy and responsibility. Moreover, they suggest that, despite many recent challenges in relation to teachers' professionalism, these three issues remain important to consider. Their significance can be illustrated by examining a traditional conception of professionalism.

The idea that an occupational group such as lawyers, doctors or teachers have a specialized body of knowledge is central to any traditional definition of professionalism. Professionals are seen to base their practice on a body of technical or specialist knowledge that is beyond the reach of lay people. Hoyle and John (1995) argue that traditionally this knowledge is seen as having two component parts: first it has been tested by scientific method, thereby acquiring validity; second it is supported by a variety of theoretical models and case descriptions which allow it to be applied in specific cases. It is because professionals need to develop this body of 'knowledge-based skills' that they need long periods of training, significant parts of which need to go on within higher education.

Professionals, through specialist and usually long periods of training, are taught to understand this research validated knowledge and to apply it constructively and intelligently according to the technical rules governing the conduct of the profession.

(Hoyle and John 1995: 46)

Closely related to the idea that professionals utilize a specialist body of knowledge is the argument for autonomy. This, Hoyle and John (1995: 77) suggest, is because professionals are seen as working in complex and unpredictable situations:

As professionals work in uncertain situations in which judgement is more important than routine, it is essential to effective practice that they should be sufficiently free from bureaucratic and political constraint to act on judgements made in the best interests (as they see them) of the clients.

Of critical importance here is the suggestion that professionals make judgements on behalf of clients *as they see them*. It is for the professional to interpret those interests. To draw a distinction utilized by Hoyle and John, they do not act as an 'agent' of someone else (for example the government); they act as a 'principal' making their own judgements.

This brings us to the final dimension in the classical conception of professionalism – that is, responsibility. Exercising judgement in relation to clients' interests does not simply demand the application of specialist knowledge, it also entails values. Professionals need to balance their own and their clients' interests through 'a voluntaristic commitment to a set of principles governing good practice and the realisation of these through day-to-day professional activities' (Hoyle and John 1995: 104). Significantly, although the capacity for making sound judgements is a vital quality for professionals to have, it is not one, Hoyle and John argue, for which there are any obvious forms of training.

The three concepts of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility, central to a traditional notion of professionalism, are often seen as closely interrelated. It is because professionals face complex and unpredictable situations that they need a specialized body of knowledge; if they are to apply that knowledge, it is argued that they need the autonomy to make their own judgements. Given that they have that autonomy, it is essential that they act with responsibility – collectively they need to develop appropriate professional values.

This view of what it means to be a professional, which still has wide currency within our society, has been challenged on many counts. For example in teaching, as elsewhere, there are profound debates surrounding the nature of professional knowledge. The suggestion that professional knowledge can be based on 'scientific principles' and that it can be 'applied' in a straightforward way has been deeply contested (for example Schön 1983, 1987; Hirst 1996). The demands that teachers should be granted autonomy and that they should define what it means to act responsibly has also been challenged. New Right critics, for example O'Hear 1998a, 1998b; Lawlor 1990, have argued that claims for autonomy have more to do with professionals protecting their own interests and avoiding accountability than with the unpredictability of situations. Rather than acting with responsibility, the 'educational establishment' have been concerned 'to organise the system for their convenience rather than to respond to the demands of its consumers' (Ranson 1990: 8) – parents, employers and children. As a result, from the 1980s onwards, there has been an increasing shift from what is sometimes called 'licensed' autonomy to 'regulated' autonomy (Dale 1989).

However, it is not our aim at this point to provide an overview of the debates concerning the nature of teacher professionalism. Rather it is to highlight the point that changes in the nature of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility can alter the nature of teacher professionalism itself. It is for this reason we would argue that the policy initiatives in initial teacher education of the 1990s are so significant. As we will see below, many of the changes introduced in the 1990s have been concerned to influence the nature of professional knowledge, skills and values that student teachers are expected to have and are given the opportunity to develop. Debates around the form and content of initial teacher education are therefore debates about the very nature of teacher professionalism itself.

Of course a great many other factors affect teacher professionalism too. During the past decade, initiatives such as the introduction of the National Curriculum, league tables, and teacher appraisal (to mention only a few) have served to challenge traditional conceptions of autonomy within the teaching profession. However, we would suggest that the aspiration to change teacher professionalism by influencing the nature of the knowledge, skills and values to which *new* teachers are exposed is at least as significant. The assumption behind policy within this area has been that changes in the form and content of initial teacher education will, in the long run, serve to construct a new generation of teachers with different forms of knowledge, different skills and different professional values.

But how and why did the initial preparation of our teachers become such a political issue and what have the implications of the changes actually been? The aim of this book is precisely to explore these questions, drawing on the two MOTE projects to document the changes in initial teacher education that we have witnessed and to contribute to a discussion about their causes and implications.

The empirical work in our two MOTE studies had a number of different elements. They both included a questionnaire survey of all initial teacher education providers in England and Wales. These two national surveys, carried out in 1991 and 1996, covered all forms of initial teacher education – the Licensed Teacher and SCITT schemes as well as those led by higher education. In addition, case studies were undertaken of 50 individual courses. In the first project the case studies included five Licensed Teacher schemes; in the second project they included three SCITT schemes and two distance learning courses.⁶ Most of the case studies comprised two principal elements: site visits to interview and observe lecturers, school ‘mentors’ and students during their training; and follow-up questionnaires to students at the completion of their course and during the first year of their teaching.⁷

Contexts for policy analysis

In some ways, our research on initial teacher education reported here may be considered to be part of what in recent years has come to be known as

'policy scholarship'. Unlike 'policy science', which excludes wider contextual considerations 'by its sharply focused concern with the specifics of a particular set of policy initiatives', policy scholarship is concerned with 'internal contradictions within policy formulations, and the wider structuring and constraining effects of the social and economic relations within which policy making is taking place' (Grace 1991: 26). In exploring the origins and implications of policy change, we therefore need to begin by recognizing the complexity of the policy process and its various facets. Furthermore, teacher education policies, like any other, necessarily go through many stages and phases between the time they are originally conceived and when they come to have an effect on what students actually learn during their training. In order to develop a fuller conception of the policy process, we will draw on Ball's suggestion (Bowe and Ball 1992; Ball 1994) that we need to distinguish between a range of different 'contexts' in policy analysis.

Bowe and Ball (1992) usefully distinguish between three key policy 'contexts', each of which they argue may have their own complexities and contradictions in the policy process. They are 'loosely coupled' and, according to Ball (1994), there is no one simple direction of flow between them. First there is the 'context of influence' where groups close to the government use their networks to try to initiate particular policies. They help create a 'policy discourse' which, as we will argue in Chapter 10, may itself be influenced by debates taking place in relation to other areas of government policy, and even in other countries. In this policy discourse, there will necessarily be competing voices that change over time and have different degrees of influence over those in power. However, as Bowe and Ball also point out, those involved in the 'context of influence' do not themselves directly determine policy. As pressure groups frequently find, there is often a gap between their concerns and specific policies themselves. There is, Bowe and Ball suggest, an 'uneasy relationship' between the 'context of influence' and the 'context of text production' where 'texts' include both the official documents that 'represent' the policy and the 'spin' that is put upon them for the benefit of the contexts of influence and practice.

There are complexities within individual policy texts that need to be recognized as well. As representations of ideas, policy texts such as acts of parliament and government circulars are themselves the product of struggle and compromise. As a result they are not necessarily internally coherent; they cannot always be read as a direct expression of a particular ideological perspective. Different parts of them may therefore directly or indirectly give rise to contradictory interpretations and outcomes.

The third context that needs to be recognized, and the one that is most central to this book, is the 'context of practice', of which there may often be more than one. If texts are to be influential, they have to be what conventional policy analysts would call 'implemented'. But implementation allows, indeed demands, interpretation and the policies themselves in a real sense are changed in this process. As Bowe and Ball (1992: 22) say:

Practitioners do not confront policy texts as naive readers, they come with histories, with experience, with values and purposes of their own. They have vested interests in the meaning of policy. Policies will be interpreted differently as the histories, experience, values, purposes and interests which make up any area differ. The simple point is that policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts.

We therefore need to ask how particular policy texts are responded to – accepted, challenged, bypassed and in some cases transformed by those outside government who are responsible for implementing them. However, this is not to say that texts can be interpreted in any way the reader wishes. Rather, texts, as Fiske (1987: 26) suggests, need to be seen as a ‘potential of meanings’ that can be achieved in a number of ways.

Of course this potential is proscribed and not infinite; the text does not determine its meaning so much as delimit the arena of struggle for that meaning by marking out the terrain within which its variety of readings can be negotiated.

Yet, as Bowe and Ball (1992) point out, in some cases the ‘potential of meanings’ is more loosely defined than in others. Drawing on the distinction between *writerly* and *readerly* texts, they describe those policies where there is a broad terrain of interpretation as *writerly* – meaning that those responsible for implementation have at least some freedom to rewrite the policy for themselves. Other policies are much more *readerly*, being more precisely written and often more thoroughly policed. As a consequence they have to be read more directly as they were intended by those who wrote them. As we will see later in this chapter, successive policy initiative texts within the field of initial teacher education have been deliberately designed progressively to delimit the degree of interpretation available to those responsible for implementing them. There has been a concerted attempt to make policies more and more *readerly*. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognize that, however tightly written and policed they may be, policies still have to be interpreted if they are to be realized within a particular context of practice.

Much of our MOTE research concerns ‘contexts of practice’. In Chapters 2 to 7 we examine, on a national scale, the way in which the various policies that have been introduced have in reality influenced the content and structure of initial teacher education in universities, colleges and schools. We investigate how they have been accepted, challenged, bypassed, transformed and what their consequences have been for course design. We also examine the outcomes of these changed policies by looking at what we might call the context of student experience. It is one thing for course leaders to design new courses in response to particular policy texts; how those new courses are actually experienced by students could well be a different matter. In Chapter 8 we therefore draw on our two MOTE projects to describe the changing context of student experience.

Substantively, therefore, our research focused on contexts of practice, including the context of student experience. However, if we are to understand the background and implications of our findings, it is important to set out the context of influence and the context of text production as well. In the remainder of this opening chapter we look at the first of these – the context of influence. We identify the range of different voices within the contemporary policy debate on teacher education that have attempted to shape and influence the texts actually produced.⁸

Voices in the context of influence

In understanding the context of influence of policy change since the early 1980s, it is helpful to identify four different voices in the policy debate on initial teacher education. The first two are part of the New Right (neo-liberals and neo-conservatives) and the third came from within the teacher education profession. All of these three groups have been directly concerned with the nature of teacher professionalism. As we will see, over the last 20 years the degree to which these different voices have influenced substantive policies has varied as the political fortunes of the different constituencies have risen and fallen. A fourth, technocratic or managerial voice, from administrators within central state bureaucracies (Salter and Tapper 1981) has sometimes given priority to different policy concerns, such as the need to ensure the supply of teachers and a desire to introduce more accountability into the system. More recently, this last voice has sometimes seemed to lend support to the political project of the New Right, though under the new Labour government, it may now be moving in a somewhat different direction – what O'Brien (1998) calls 'centralist progressivism'.

Neo-liberal perspectives

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, successive Conservative governments were concerned to challenge the social democratic consensus of earlier years and to restructure the Welfare State (Dunleavy and Hood 1994; Pollitt 1994; Clarke and Newman 1998). Their policies and motivations were shaped and nurtured by what have come to be known as New Right ideologies, though one of the difficulties in using this term is the danger of implying a coherence and homogeneity of ideas that does not in reality exist. There are two major strands of thought within the New Right position, those of the neo-liberal market advocates and the neo-conservative defenders of the traditional forms of authority and national culture. Political analysts have delineated the differences between these two traditions but also some points of commonality (Gamble 1983, 1988). Both neo-conservatives and neo-liberals are critical of egalitarianism and collectivism, which they allege have encouraged an anti-enterprise and permissive culture.

Central to the neo-liberal position is the claim that market forces are both an efficient and a fair means for allocating resources and more responsive to the felt needs of individuals becoming self-reliant and independent of the state. As Henig (1994: 5) notes:

In a strange twist, the shift away from democratic processes and institutions is defended by reference to values we associate with democracy. Markets, it has been argued, can become more democratic than democracy itself.

Market forces are alleged to be an efficient means of creating the conditions and relationships necessary for freedom of consumers, for allocating scarce resources, generating diversity and providing the form of flexibility the changing world order requires. As a result, Conservative governments attempted to extend free market principles into whole new areas of social activity, including the provision of welfare services. In the field of education, the establishment of open access to schools, league tables, local financial management and the introduction of new types of school (grant maintained schools, city technology colleges) are obvious examples of attempts to introduce a competitive 'quasi-market' (Whitty *et al.* 1998).

In the field of initial teacher education, there has been a recurrent assertion amongst neo-liberals that initial training is unnecessary, even harmful – the product of 'producer capture' by the educational establishment. As a leader article in the *Daily Telegraph* put it in 1996:

We have argued for years that the twin causes of the disastrously low standards in schools are teacher training institutions that fill their students' heads with rubbish and inspectors who have enforced adherence to a defunct ideology.

Often the implication is that teacher training courses actually diminish the effectiveness of teachers. From a neo-liberal point of view, if the quality of training itself is to be improved, the government needs to insist that it is opened up as much as possible to the 'market' of schools so that practical work takes precedence over higher education-based training. Market realities are the best 'educator'. Ideally, there would be a free market in training itself, where schools would be allowed to recruit whomsoever they wanted – trained or untrained. If this were the case then it is assumed that headteachers would favour straightforward graduates over those who had 'suffered' from professional training.

Neo-conservative perspectives

Neo-conservative ideas are rather different for they emphasize traditional authority and national identity. They have particular force in the field of education. From the neo-conservative perspective, the central aim of education

is the preservation of a refined cultural heritage. In the words of the Hillgate Group (1989: 1), education 'depends on . . . the preservation of knowledge, skills, culture and moral values and their transmission to the young'. As a view of education, neo-conservatism found its first contemporary vocal expression in the Black Papers issued in 1969 (Cox and Dyson 1969). One can also see the influence of this line of thinking in the establishment of the broad structure of the National Curriculum with its emphasis on traditional subjects.

The views of neo-conservatives on teacher education in the 1980s were trenchant. For example, the Hillgate Group (1989) accused most courses of being intellectually 'feeble and biased' and being overly concerned with topics such as race, sex, class and even 'anti-imperialist' education. According to the Hillgate Group, these 'preoccupations' appeared 'designed to stir up disaffection, to preach a spurious gospel of "equality" and to subvert the entire traditional curriculum' (Hillgate 1989: 5). If our cultural heritage was to be passed on to our children then teachers themselves had to be thoroughly educated in the disciplines they taught. The primary task for initial teacher education, from this perspective, is therefore to develop professionals who are themselves experts in their own subject area. Such preparation should take precedence over training in pedagogy; indeed according to Lawlor (1990) the chief weakness of current approaches to initial training is that they are dominated by preparing students on *how* to teach rather than *what* to teach.

On the development of practical teaching competence, neo-conservative commentators, like the neo-liberals, have argued for a school-based, apprenticeship model. For example, O'Hear (1988a, b) argued that teaching was an essentially practical skill that could not be learned from the kind of theoretical study of teaching that he suggested dominated current courses. In similar vein, the Hillgate Group argued that there was a long tradition going back to Aristotle of regarding some skills, including many that are difficult, complex and of high moral and cultural value, as best learned by the emulation of experienced practitioners and by supervised practice under guidance. 'In the case of such skills, apprenticeship should take precedence over instruction and even when formal instruction is necessary it can never substitute for real practical training' (Hillgate Group 1989: 9).

For both neo-liberals and neo-conservatives, therefore, higher education-based training is at best of secondary importance; at worst it is positively harmful. As teaching is an essentially practical activity, the most important 'trainer' beyond being deeply immersed in your own 'subject' is experience itself. Students need a thorough grounding in what they are to teach and then to actually do the job of teaching; there is no other way of learning. Lawlor (1990: 38) made the point most forcibly by arguing for the entire abolition of formal training, which she believes often 'undermines' the subject specialism of graduates who enter teaching. Instead, 'graduates [should] be sent to school to train on the job, designated to an experienced mentor – a senior teacher in the subject'.

It is hard to underestimate the influence of the New Right critique of initial teacher education during the 1980s and early 1990s. As we will see below, their views progressively had more and more influence on policy texts produced during that period.

The views of the profession

But what of the profession's own views? One of the problems in answering that question is that it depends on what we mean by the profession. The interests of the teaching profession in schools (itself represented by competing trade unions) have not always been the same as those of teacher educators in higher education. For example, they might agree about the threat to professional status from the Licensed Teacher Scheme but be rather more enthusiastic about school-based training within properly accredited courses, provided resources flowed from higher education into schools. Often, however, the different professional groups have worked together. Their different representative bodies had a common forum in SCETT (Standing Committee for the Education and Training of Teachers) and, despite the growing centralisation of government policy, in the early part of the 1980s at least, professional groups continued to have a voice in the contexts of influence.

School teaching unions had other priorities in their conflicts with the Thatcher government by the late 1980s and, for the most part, the professional voice in relation to teacher education increasingly became mainly that of higher education-based teacher educators.⁹ Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a number of training institutions had already begun to redesign their courses to place greater emphasis on practical training. As Wilkin (1996) argues, the developments were particularly noticeable within CNAA validated courses.¹⁰ Although not directly responsible for curriculum design, the CNAA provided a 'generally supportive but critical environment in which the college leadership could introduce innovative courses which gave greater priority to the practical aspects of training' (Wilkin 1996: 114).

The initial reason for redesigning courses in this way was to respond to continued demands from students and from teachers that the theory taught in training institutions should be more directly relevant to schools than it had been in the past. From these redesigned courses, as well as from the Articled Teacher scheme (see Chapter 3), developed a body of research and writing (Furlong *et al.* 1988; Benton 1990; Wilkin 1992; McIntyre *et al.* 1993; Furlong and Maynard 1995) that provided clearer professional and intellectual justification for a restructuring of initial teacher education that involved a growing role for schools in the process.

Some of the best known work in this field at the time came from research and development conducted at Cambridge and Oxford universities. The Cambridge research, undertaken by Furlong *et al.* (1988), involved an evaluation of two primary and two secondary 'school-based' PGCE courses where teachers had a far greater role in the design and day-to-day practice of the

training. The courses selected for study included both CNAAs and university validated ones. The research project was funded by the Department of Education and Science; presumably it was intended to point the direction for future course development. However, it was a different course – that developed at Oxford University – that in 1987 succeeded in drawing public and professional attention to the value of school-based training (Benton 1990). Although they were developed separately, and although there were important differences between them (McIntyre 1991), the Oxford and Cambridge visions of training and the role they assigned to school teachers were very similar.

Both the Oxford and Cambridge schemes insisted that no satisfactory initial teacher education course would be possible without much closer and more effective integration of school-based and university-based elements of the course than has been common. Both schemes also recognized the importance of the different contributions that practising school teachers and university lecturers can make. The conditions of university lecturers' work, McIntyre (1991: 114) suggests,

enable and oblige them, much more than is generally possible for practising teachers, to know about alternative teaching approaches being used elsewhere, to study relevant research and theoretical literature and to explicate and critically examine the principles which should or could inform the practice of teaching.

However, it was only practising school teachers who could directly introduce students to the practice of teaching (McIntyre 1991: 141) and

especially to the use of the contextualised knowledge (of individual pupils, of established relationships with classes, of resources and their availability and of schools, customs and procedures) which is such a crucial element of professional teaching.

The vision of professionalism promoted by the Oxford course was one of strong practical skills personally understood and justified through an intellectually rigorous process.

The 1980s were therefore a period of very lively debate within the field of initial teacher education in England and Wales, much of it focusing on the need for a new, more practically focused vision of professionalism. While there was some common ground between the different protagonists, there were very important and real differences between them.

The concerns of the state

It is also important to recognize that throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the ministry responsible for the production of policies – now called the Department for Education and Employment – was not simply responsive to the views put forward by those outside government;¹¹ it had its own concerns

and priorities that themselves served to influence and or modify the texts actually produced. As we have already indicated, two policy concerns have been particularly important for those at the centre – first, the need to ensure an adequate supply of teachers and second, the concern to re-establish a national framework as a means of enhancing quality.

The Department has for many years been responsible for managing the supply of teachers, which means modelling demand for teachers as well as the output of courses (DfEE 1997a). To predict demand, their model takes account of the movements of teachers into and out of maintained schools, projects these movements in each future year and derives totals of teachers needed by phase, sex and age. To predict supply, the model makes assumptions about in-course wastage and the balance between courses of different lengths. From these different calculations, the numbers of newly qualified teachers who need to complete courses in order to balance supply and demand in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools are calculated and assigned to particular training institutions.

The modelling of supply is therefore a complex but relatively straightforward technical process. Ensuring that there is an adequate supply of appropriately qualified applicants for courses is, at times, more problematic. In particular, the economic booms of the late 1980s and middle to late 1990s meant that, at those times, the issue of ensuring adequate supply became increasingly difficult and therefore a major priority for policy. As we will see below, this concern with supply in part stimulated the search for new routes into the profession; it probably also helped to maintain the existence of the BEd as the major route for the training of primary school teachers despite serious criticisms made of the degree by New Right and other critics (D. Hargreaves 1994; Lawlor 1990).

A second concern of the state has been and remains that of establishing a national framework of accountability. This concern was stimulated throughout the 1980s by extensive DES and HMI evidence which questioned the quality of existing approaches to initial teacher education. During the 1980s these two bodies issued a vast array of research findings (HMI 1982, 1988a), inspection reports and documents (DES 1983, 1988a; HMI 1983, 1987, 1988b) and directives (DES 1984, 1989a; DfE 1992), many of them implicitly and explicitly critical of existing approaches to teacher education. In almost every case, the focus of those criticisms was on the development of students' practical teaching competence.

Two stand out as of particular political importance – they were the two national surveys of newly qualified teachers in schools conducted by HMI in 1981 and 1987 (HMI 1982, 1988a). As we will see in more detail in Chapter 8, these surveys, each of which looked at approximately 300 new teachers working in England and Wales, were highly influential in the growing demands for reform, not least because their findings readily led to alarmist headlines in the press. The first survey found that, while the majority of newly qualified teachers were well trained, appointed to appropriate posts and given appropriate support in their new schools, a significant minority

were not. In the judgement of HMI, nearly one in four were in some respects poorly equipped with the skills needed for teaching. This view was corroborated by the new teachers themselves. On a range of key practical teaching skills, between one-fifth and three-fifths of teachers rated themselves as having been inadequately prepared. The 1987 survey revealed that things had improved somewhat, though there was still considerable cause for concern. In the view of HMI, 20 per cent of primary and 11 per cent of secondary teachers lacked some or many basic skills. Two-thirds of new teachers themselves were well or reasonably well satisfied with the training they had received; one-third were not.

Despite the improvement by 1987, newly qualified teachers in both surveys complained that in their courses too much emphasis had been placed on academic study in general and on education studies in particular and that there was too little emphasis on teaching method and teaching practice. Clearly something had to be done to increase the quality of training and particularly the quality of practical training in schools. From the state's point of view, that demanded re-establishing central control. As we will see, this linking of quality and control has become an increasingly important policy objective of the state throughout the last two decades.

However, it has also become more directly aligned with the other policy objective of reconstructing teacher professionalism. To this extent, the distinctive voice of Salter and Tapper's (1981) state bureaucrats has been rather less in evidence in recent years, as it has become increasingly politicized. Apple (1998) has suggested that the so-called 'conservative restoration' in education has been fuelled by four groups, the neo-liberals, the neo-conservatives, authoritarian populists and some members of the new middle classes. These might include key officials in new state agencies. Certainly, as we indicate in Chapter 10, a shift from the traditional bureaucratic state to what is sometimes termed the evaluative state has led to a growth in non-elected intermediary bodies – trusts, agencies and quangos – between government and service providers. These are often headed by a new breed of government appointees, who tend to have a higher public profile than conventional state bureaucrats and tend to be more directly involved in setting broader political agendas through close contacts with politicians (and not just ministers) and with the media. In relation to teacher education, both Chris Woodhead at Ofsted and Anthea Millett at the TTA have often seemed to relish this role. Significantly, Chris Woodhead openly joined a group of New Right critics of teacher education in a meeting with UCET in 1997 and even agreed to sum up their case (UCET 1997).

Conclusion

During the 1980s and 1990s there have therefore been a range of different voices within the policy debate on initial teacher education, but increasingly the teacher education profession and especially those in universities and

colleges have felt themselves under siege from the other groups involved. However, as we indicated above, there is seldom a straightforward relationship between particular voices in the context of influence and the actual policy texts that are produced. At different times in the 1980s and 1990s, the views of these groups had an influence on substantive policies. Some policy texts have prioritized neo-conservative ideas, some neo-liberal views and others those of the profession itself. Often those views have been influenced by and had to be achieved through the concerns of state-appointed officials.

As Bowe and Ball (1992) suggest, however, practitioners do not interpret policy texts naively – they have their own histories and values, they also work within their own particular institutional constraints. There is therefore potentially a gap between what is actually implemented and what is intended by those responsible for framing particular policy texts. There is perhaps an even bigger gap between what is practised and the aspirations of those in the ‘context of influence’ who argued for particular policies in the first place. Documenting and analysing the way in which practice actually changes is therefore a vitally important part of the policy analysis process. It is certainly as important as analysing the public pronouncements of policy makers themselves and we make no apologies for devoting a significant part of our empirical work to this end.

In our empirical work we had two aims. Our first, and most important aim was to document the ‘context of practice’ in initial teacher education, plotting the ways in which those responsible for designing and teaching courses actually responded to the range of rapid policy changes that were introduced between the late 1980s and mid-1990s. In the next three chapters we focus on the first period of our research – the early 1990s. We begin by examining the policy texts that were influential at the time and then draw on our research to describe the changing context of practice that emerged in response to these texts; in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 we do the same in relation to the period covered by our second study – the middle 1990s. Our second, and within the limited resources of our project, necessarily subsidiary aim, was to document the implications of the changes that were introduced for student experience itself. In Chapter 8 we report our findings on the changing context of student experience. In Chapter 9 we bring our study up to date by looking at policy initiatives in the late 1990s and in Chapter 10 we consider some of the broader implications of our research by exploring the global context of the changing face of teacher professionalism.

Notes

- 1 The nature of these new routes is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.
- 2 ‘Modes of Teacher Education: Towards a Basis for Comparison’ (ESRC project no. R000232810).
- 3 ‘Changing Modes of Professionalism? A Case Study of Teacher Education in Transition’ (ESRC project no. R000234185).

- 4 These developments are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.
- 5 The generic title of MOTE was used informally for both projects.
- 6 Limitations of access made it impossible to include all aspects in a small number of the case studies.
- 7 Full details of the methodology are provided in the Appendix.
- 8 In our final chapter, we comment on the relevance of two further 'contexts', introduced by Ball (1994: 26).
- 9 In the early 1990s, though, an 'alternative' school voice emerged from some of the early exponents of School-Centred Initial Teacher Education. See, for example, Berrill (1994).
- 10 The CNAA (Council for National Academic Awards) was the statutory body established to validate degrees in the newly expanded 'non-university' sector of higher education, that is, polytechnics and colleges of higher education.
- 11 In 1992 it changed its name from the Department of Education and Science (DES) to the Department for Education (DfE). In 1995 it was amalgamated with the Department of Employment to become the DfEE.

Reform efforts have targeted all stages of education, from pre-school to school-to-work transition, and have addressed nearly every aspect of the public elementary and secondary education system: curriculum and assessment, teachers'™ preparation and their professional lives, school organization and management, technology, and parental and community involvement. The Policy Center of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), in conjunction with the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (NCRTL), was awarded the contract to conduct the Systemic Reform study. Paused You're listening to a sample of the Audible audio edition. Learn more. See this image. Teacher Education in Transition: Re-forming Professionalism? (Developing Teacher Education) Paperback 1 Aug 2000. Review. "In many ways this is an excellent book and will be of interest to those who work in teacher education and those whose focus is on wider themes of professionalism and the shifting boundaries between the academics and practitioners. It will also appeal to those working with trainees in school who want an accessible history of the recent past in initial teacher education and an even handed account of the strengths and weaknesses of recent reforms." - John Williams Escalate Learning and Teaching 20030501. About the Author. Start by marking "Teacher Education in Transition: Re-Forming Professionalism?" as Want to Read: Want to Read savingâ€| Want to Read. Currently Reading. Read. Teacher Education in T by John Furlong. Other editions. The 1990s were a period of quite dramatic change for initial teacher education in England and Wales with wave after wave of Government sponsored reforms. The changes introduced were highly controversial as those in higher education who were traditionally responsible for teacher education felt marginalised; many believed that what was at stake in these reforms was the nature of the profession. The 1990s were a period of quite dramatic change for initial teacher education in England and Wales with wave after wave of Government sponsored reforms.