

THE ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PRINCIPALS
of
TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS
[ARPT]

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Chris Wardlaw PSM
Chair
National Review of Teacher Registration

Dear Chris and Members of the Review Panel

On behalf of our Association, thank you Chris for the opportunity given to member representatives to meet with you recently on 1st May, and for the invitation to subsequently provide you and your panel members our reflections with regard to the current Review and, in particular, to the Technical Schools Division of the Victorian Education Department journey with respect to the training of 'trade' and technician teaching staff.

The attached paper is a blend of contributions from members, and is set out to provide umbrella recommendations and background to the training undertaken, followed by the 'headings' you presented on 1st May. These headings were in turn discussed with the broader membership at our function on 2nd May. Each section provides its own set of background and recommendations.

The headings adopted are:

- 1.0 Registration in general
- 2.0 Attracting vocational education teachers
- 3.0 Training and development
- 4.0 Placement
- 5.0 Development
- 6.1 Reward

We are privileged to include as an Appendix A an historical perspective and guidance provided by member Ron Ritchie, former Director of the Technical Schools Division.

We would welcome an opportunity to have further discussion at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Seamer

PRESIDENT



brought lack of motivation and a school perception he was a student 'that would let the system down' to Cobden Technical School. At this school 'teachers who had expertise in the trades' taught in an environment 'equipped with workshops of all sorts'. This transfer unleashed Tim's appetite for learning and success.

Such has been the case for so many students who have become and still are the backbone of our practical / trade workforce. The article has led to numerous affirming responses on radio and in letters to the editor.

Key people associated with the implementation of the curriculum in Technical schools are aware that while not every student was catered for, the vast majority of students responded to the quality, and the breadth and depth of the subjects offered, ranging from the academic applied sciences to the vast range of practical / vocational courses. Students with special needs were addressed as a priority. High academic standards were maintained.

Since the loss of Victorian Technical schools, the key providers of a genuine practical / vocational curriculum as an optional focus, the introduction of the **Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning** (VCAL) has endeavoured to give an 'applied' option for students who having reached the higher year levels have opted not to seek a purely academic pathway.

Victorian school experience, affirmed recently by a number of principals, indicates there is a significant issue associated with implementation of practical studies at junior levels and within the VCAL program due to **the shortfall in numbers of trained teachers who have the relevant experience and motivation to support the practical / vocational study components.**

The Internship Model

The Victorian 'Technical Teacher' training institutions, (initially the Technical Teachers' College, most recently State College of Victoria at Hawthorn), have over time engaged mature age teacher trainees in a two year practical studies training program that followed on from appropriate qualifications in their trade and substantial work experience. It was not expected that the candidates would have a university degree qualification.

The trainee was supported at the college on college days and by mentors in the schools while gaining practical teaching experience. Teachers with 'industrial' experience completed their teacher training by attending the teacher training institution 2/3 days per week and concurrently teaching 2/3 days per week under the supervision of experienced mentors. This model of teacher training provided both pedagogical and practical teaching support. Upon completion of teacher training, teachers had accumulated practical teaching experience between 80 days (based on 2 days per week in a school environment for one year – Diploma/Degree personnel) and 240 days (based on 3 days per week in a school environment for persons with a trade apprenticeship background).

Within their assigned training schools the trainee teachers were expected to take responsibility for actual classes (at a reduced teaching load) but were supported by more experienced mentor teachers. As part of their training they were required to 'observe' experienced teachers in classroom situations and undergo critical appraisal in their own classrooms. Under this model, problems with student discipline, teaching technique and professional performance could be dealt with early and expeditiously. Trainee teachers were trained in a real-world environment and experienced every facet of school life and school operations on a daily basis.

In the current situation, a number of schools have pointed to graduates entering their schools from Latrobe, RMIT, and Deakin, where practical studies have been evident. However, where there have been brief 'teaching round' school experiences, these have been described as inadequate preparation for a practical studies classroom environment.

It is apparent very few graduates from the former Technical training program remain in Victorian secondary classrooms. Indeed appropriately qualified 'trade' teachers are now few and far between in

- Appropriate professional qualifications will differ according to the level(s) of schooling involved, the subject areas to be taught, the needs of schools and the constantly evolving and expanding expectations of teachers.
- Highly qualified persons do not necessarily make effective teachers. Too often we have witnessed teachers who are highly qualified but do not have the personal/interpersonal skills to relate effectively with young people. Conversely, we have observed teachers who are not academically highly qualified but who have the ability to engage young people and create a highly effective teaching and learning environment!!!
- Teacher quality and professionalism is the responsibility of the employing systems and authorities, state, catholic or private. This responsibility may be partly delegated (or considered shared) with school principals who are the local administrators of education delivery and thereby responsible for monitoring teaching quality and professionalism.

Recommendations

- 1.1 Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are required to ensure that practical skills and knowledge are given currency alongside academic qualifications – for example, successful completion of an apprenticeship and five years experience as a tradesperson could have the same currency as a three year Diploma/Degree.
- 1.2 Whilst undertaking a teacher training course and teaching concurrently part-time in a school, a person with industrial experience could be granted Permission to Teach / provisional registration until successful completion of their teacher training – and thus be eligible for registration.
- 1.3 Recruitment processes should ensure that teacher applicants possess both the minimum requirements for registration, together with the personal aptitude/ability to relate effectively to young people. Once appointed to a teaching position in a school, close supervision and effective monitoring must be provided for a specified minimum period according to clearly articulated guidelines which are consistently applied.
- 1.4 The registration process should be “owned” by both the employing systems and their school principals.
- 1.5 Any registration process needs to be flexible enough to practically manage real system problems of remoteness, undersupply of specialty teachers, and the need to attract and retain the best people. (See RRR below)
- 1.6 The registration process should not be seen to be a creature of the teacher unions. Although unions have an important role in the education system they are primarily concerned with salaries, terms and conditions and are not the primary guardians of teacher quality or teacher professionalism.
- 1.7 Any registration process must be flexible enough to admit outstanding people who would be an asset as an educator to our students and our schools. In many instances the personal qualities of a teacher outweigh in importance the academic qualifications they hold.

2.1 Attracting Vocational Education Teachers

- The obvious structural attractors are working conditions, career pathways, permanency, salary and superannuation. The amount of money to be earned or the prestige attached to teaching have never attracted anyone to a career in teaching. People are attracted because teaching is an intrinsically worthwhile profession that helps children to reach their potential and contributes to society.

- Excellent schools are always a successful amalgam of quality administrators, quality teachers and quality support personnel. The continuing challenge is to attract and retain outstanding personnel in those roles in schools. Any registration process that inhibits or prevents outstanding applicants from entering the profession because they fail on a technical measure is obviously reducing the overall potential quality of the profession.
- Students will prosper or do better when exposed to adults with a variety of real world experiences. Many students will relate better to teachers or instructors in practical workshop situations than essentially academic focused classrooms.
- It is recognised that TAFE institutes are the main training organisation for the nation's apprentices. When apprentices complete their schooling they become the nation's trades workforce. These people are the potential pool for teachers in secondary colleges (as was the case when Technical schools existed). However, there is a view that under the AITSL definition, these people, however long their industrial experience, do not qualify for teacher training. This must be revisited at a national level to enable direct entry to the teacher training sequence.
- It defies common sense to assume that the best teacher workforce in a school all come from the same narrow background of school to university to teaching. Opening up teaching to those with experiences and expertise beyond this normal narrow channel can only improve overall educational outcomes, as referred to above.
- Senior education administrators have often thought it ironic that outstanding teachers like Sir David Attenborough or Professor Brian Cox would probably be ineligible to teach in our secondary schools.
- There have always been successful individuals in the trades and corporate world who for various reasons seek an alternative and for them a more rewarding occupation. Some of these gravitate at a mature age to teaching.
- Social media awareness programs could be set up to justify a range of 'attraction benefits'.
- We have a severe current shortfall. Members have reflected on their early introduction to teaching. We journeyed into teaching prior to reaching higher salaries elsewhere. Government realised the benefit of identifying potential teachers whilst students were in Year 10. Provision of a Bursary was an investment that led to a 'Studentship' allowance during post secondary school studies.

Recommendations

2.1 Attract future teachers with industrial experience early, before they access the higher wages. This could be a telling initiative - a combination of free access to TAFE, completion of a Year 12 equivalent, receipt of an allowance (perhaps a portion of a teacher's salary) on the condition that they must complete, for example, 5 years post apprenticeship in their trade. As for the previous studentship programs, the candidate should teach for at least 5 years, or repay a proportion of their allowance. Aspirants would be aligned in early training with a teaching goal in mind.

TAFE colleges would be a fertile environment for identifying potential teachers.

2.2 The Commonwealth Government must ensure that a form of permanency is built into the employment contract to attract non-degree based qualified people. In addition, generous superannuation and guaranteed salary levels are required.

2.3 Although problematic, a potential drawback would be the capacity to virtually guarantee a placement on completion of training, and as far as possible, in an Institution of the candidate's choice, given travel time constraints in the current environment, and particularly in relation to mature age candidates.

2.4 Government can play a role in placing apprentices or employing teachers in the making, either directly or through contracts. Suitability for teaching would be a necessary prerequisite.

2.5 A program which provides for people in industry to 'sample' life as a teacher could be instituted as a recruitment tool. Whilst personnel from industry may not be able to 'teach' (because of registration requirements), they could be employed under the supervision of experienced teachers to provide specialist information.

3.1 Training and Developing

- Current prerequisites for entry into teacher training appear to be degree oriented. In the past, principals, particularly in the Primary sector, have commented on the degree qualification stream leaving some graduates under prepared for teaching itself. Currently, there are reports of teachers of practical studies not having the real work / life experience that occurred in association with the Technical teacher training scheme.
- The market based training programs have failed to produce a rational and effective system of training teachers.
- At present all teacher training is essentially controlled by universities. It is astonishing that there is no meaningful dialogue between the employers of teachers and those who train them. There is no apparent agreement between teacher employers and teacher trainers on who to train, how to train them and what to train them in. There are little if any supply and demand parameters and no control of entry into teacher training that really takes into account personal attributes or fit and proper persons tests. There are particular traits required for teaching, particularly in the practical studies 'workshop' areas.
- There are real concerns about the emphasis on theory at training institutions as against the practical requirements to teach successfully. Historically teacher training institutions, primary and secondary, prioritised secondment of successful experienced teachers to refresh the staff profile. This element is not dominant in the modern era in Victoria. A corollary is the need for only the most competent teachers to take on the role of trainee supervisors in schools. Recent initiatives have provided stronger links of training institutions with the training schools, for example through Monash and Deakin.
- In Victoria in the past, almost all Primary and Technical school teachers were trained by Department controlled Teacher Training Colleges. These colleges were staffed by former experienced and outstanding teachers and were sensibly attuned to state-wide demands for speciality subject expertise. They also interviewed all aspirants for personal suitability. In other words the Training Colleges selected the best available people to meet the needs of Victorian schools.
- The Teacher Release to Industry Program (TRIP) was much sought after and successful in providing teachers with the opportunity to gain industrial experience. Unfortunately many teachers who participated in TRIP did not return to the classroom.

Recommendations

3.1 As stated above, we strongly recommend that the internship teacher training model be promoted and wider adoption of this model supported to supplement the emerging arrangements already initiated in Victoria. Changed models of supervision would be needed in schools to accommodate the extended school based work of the trainee cohorts. Training using the Victorian model would seem the logical choice, with Teacher training facilities available both in capital cities and in most rural centres; apprentices are familiar with block release time tables.

3.2 Teacher training should be returned to Government with the Commonwealth having the major responsibility. The employer, the state education department, needs to be directly involved in the selection of worthy candidates to enter teacher training courses.

3.3 Secondment of talented practising teachers to short term membership of training institution staffing should be promoted to ensure up to date school based expertise and enthusiasm has input to the faculty and the training cohorts. A strong emphasis on practical teaching methodology is required.

3.4 TRIP could be considered for teachers without previous work experience in industry.

4.1 Placement

- As indicated above, successful placement of trainees into training schools relies on close liaison between college and school personnel. School based experience is critical for the development of student management skills and explicit teaching, under the guidance of highly competent staff.
- ‘Placement’ implies a measure of compulsion in locating newly trained teachers. School based selection of trained staff is acknowledged.
- Placement into a rural and/or remote area could counter any attraction to teaching for mature age persons. However, involvement in smaller communities can be invigorating.
- Wherever the location, the imperative is for there to be a supportive collegiate environment.

Recommendation

4.1 That the placement of trainee teachers into training schools continue to be carefully managed.

5.1 Development

- Ongoing professional learning is a part of each Victorian school’s calendar – for individual, team and whole school purposes.
- Technology / trade teachers along with teachers from other methods have in the past benefitted immensely by positive ongoing linking with industry and commerce etc. Industry is outside of, (but dependent on) the educational outcomes of our schools and students.
- Mentoring is a critical professional learning component for initial and early years in the teaching profession. High performing teaching practitioners have much to contribute to the development of beginning and more experienced teachers. Victorian schools seek to better enable mentoring but staff members are time poor within class time.
- Further study and / or release to industry has in the past revitalised certain teaching staff and leadership.
- Most importantly, principals need to value and commit to the ongoing development and improvement of their staff. They need to be able to see their responsibility to the profession as part of the whole. Investment in the staff is investment in the students, and this is generally well done.
- Principals and school leadership teams must again be valued as assets by the teacher training institutions. It also needs to be recognised that strong links with a University Education Faculty is proving to be highly valuable to those schools that are engaging university personnel in professional development activity.

Recommendations

- 5.1 Foster training institution and school links with industry more so than is current practice.
- 5.2 Fund schools with targeted grants to promote increased mentoring activity. Identified practitioners to be released for sessions of classroom visits and follow up with the mentoree.
- 5.3 Continue to promote further study and / or release to industry, like a sabbatical, to teachers in the profession who are identified as worthy performers of their craft. Remuneration should be continued and guaranteed to such participants.

6.1 Reward

- Funding of education is and will be an ongoing priority for governments, but the grants are never sufficient to allow full delivery of the visions of school communities.
- For the committed staff there are rewards that go beyond the pay packet. Satisfactory performance leads to incremental remuneration prior to advancing to senior positions.
- The attractors of working conditions, career pathways, permanency, salary and superannuation have satisfied thousands of ‘tradies’ in the past. However, the differential between teacher salaries and the income accessible by highly competent ‘tradies’ will likely never be matched.

Recommendation

- 6.1 Investigate innovative ways to provide reward incentives to attract potential practical studies teachers to transition from private practice to the secondary education environment. Incentives to promising candidates for teacher training could include subsidy of HECS fees, etc.

Regional, Rural and Remote (RRR)

Australia is a unique country in the world. It is equal in size to USA, China and Europe but it has a mostly desert climate, a small scattered population (24 million) and has a high proportion of its population in a few metropolitan cities.

All these factors impinge heavily on education environments throughout Australia.

It has become urgent that the RRR environments must, in some way, be separated from the state-based Metropolitan environments.

A separate RRR system could be directly funded and controlled by the Commonwealth Government; the State schools; the Catholic private schools and the private schools could be taken over by the Commonwealth; and regional colleges (compare Bendigo College) established to manage and implement the system at the local level.

Many of the current barriers to the employment of non-degree-based qualified people as teachers could be trialled and solved by this process.

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With thanks to each contributor from the Association.

Graeme Seamer,
P r e s i d e n t

...../ APPENDIX A

THE NATIONAL REVIEW OF TEACHER REGISTRATION 2018

Learning from the Victorian experience

Appendix A

Notes re Teacher Training for Technical/Practical subjects.

Ron Ritchie – Former Director of Technical Education, Victoria

(ARPTI member)

Some Background

From the earliest days of the establishment of technical education in the early 1900s, there has been recognition of the need for training of technical teachers. "The education of the boys... to be as far as possible in the hands of 'technical' men, men with one foot in the industrial world from which they had come".* "...selected junior instructors from the best of the students in his trade classes, utilising them in the preparatory evening trade classes...". In pages 246-247 there is interesting commentary regarding the working arrangements around the mid-century between "council-controlled colleges" (especially Melbourne Technical College) and the "Departmental schools/colleges".

In due course, the need for formalising the training of technical education teachers became apparent and a Training Centre was established in rooms at MTC (eventually RMIT) in 1951. This was extended to a former primary teachers' college in Toorak in 1957 and in 1967 the specifically designed Technical Teachers College in Hawthorn was opened. The College provided basic teaching courses for trainee teachers who had already received academic or technical qualifications at other educational institutions.

It should be remembered that, by the second half of the 20th century, technical schools were widely established and teachers with "work backgrounds" were sought, employed and trained for the technical school system. Most subject areas – mathematics, science, art, commerce, needlecraft, home economics as well as craft, trade and technician subjects were covered by this arrangement. Only English and social studies teachers were secured via an academic preparation.

To gain entry to any one of the courses applicants were required to have appropriate minimum technical college or university qualifications and have worked for minimum periods in appropriate areas of industry or trade. The successful completion of the courses led to the award of:

- The Trained Technical Teacher's Certificate (TTTC) for teachers of mathematics, science, art, needlecraft, home economics, commerce, etc
- The Trained Trade Instructor's Certificate (TTrIC) for teachers of craft and trade subjects
- The Trained Technician Instructor's Certificate (TTechnIC) for teachers of higher technician course subjects
- The Trained Secondary Teacher's Certificate (TSTC) for teachers of English, social studies, music and some teachers of mathematics, science, physical education and other academic subjects

The TTrIC and TTechnIC extended over two years with college attendance of two days each week and three days at an assigned practice school. The TTTC and TSTC was generally completed by one year of attendance at college for three days a week and a practice school for two days.

The above system undoubtedly proved very beneficial for the development of the technical school system, particularly following a very considerable expansion of technical schools following World War II. It can be noted that the system covered the development of professional diploma courses, especially in the "departmental" technical colleges from the end of the war until the formation of the Institute of Colleges in the mid-60s when the Technical Colleges within the system which provided professional-level courses were re-established as independent governing bodies.

* *The Tech (History of RMIT): Stephen Murray-Smith and Anthony John Dare*

Key Elements of the System

SELECTION

Participants were required to have appropriate qualifications in their specialty; and to have specified periods of practical experience relevant to their qualifications.

- For the TTTC: completed tertiary qualification and at least two years of practical experience relevant to the qualification
- For the TTrIC: completed trade qualification and at least five years of relevant practical experience as tradesmen
- For the TTechnIC: completed technician qualification and at least two years of relevant practical experience as technicians or higher technicians
- For the TSTC: appropriate tertiary qualifications and a minimum of two years industrial experience

Applicants were interviewed and assessed by committees of experienced teachers and college lecturers with emphasis on suitability, background, references and potential for teaching.

TEACHER TRAINING

As noted, the teacher training courses were composed of attendance at the technical teachers college, and participation in supervised teaching at assigned technical schools under the guidance of experienced teachers in the subject areas concerned. Courses at the college contained basic subjects including English, principles of teaching, educational psychology, and teaching methods.

MENTORING

A strength of the training system was the supervision of the teaching experience gained in existing technical schools, interspersed with attendance at the college for theoretical aspects of teaching by college lecturers chosen with a background of proven teaching success in the relevant subjects. In this way, trainees were able to experience a wide range of inputs and at the same time to have their progress monitored by a range of experienced and successful members of the teaching profession. Because of the periods spent in the school environment, trainees were able to not only gain classroom experience; but also to experience the full range of activities involved in a functioning school environment. The suitability of the trainee was being continually assessed.

CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT

This system was most successful during the period of rapid growth of the technical schools from around the early 1960s to the later 1980s. Thus the technical teacher training was integrated with the system and this enabled continuing development of teachers and administrators within the whole system to occur. When the separate systems of technical and high schools were terminated in the late 1980s, it was expected that technical education would be a part of the curriculum of the new secondary education colleges; but this met with mixed success and the technical teacher training system was abandoned.

Current Teacher Training

Various attempts have been made in the present day to provide aspects of technical education in the curriculum of secondary education. A need to underpin a profession of secondary teaching by requiring tertiary qualifications as a basis for teacher training has limited the ability of the system to provide for technical studies such as building construction, metal-working, motor mechanics and other practical studies. It is widely considered that there are many students who would benefit from inclusion of such studies in the curriculum.

For such studies to be effectively included, it is necessary to provide practical facilities as well as teachers with appropriate backgrounds. The experience of the technical education system in the second half of last century in providing a strong and effective training for suitable teachers could prove a guide to the inclusion of successful teaching of these subjects in the present secondary school curriculum.

A new system would need to provide for:

- Teachers who are proficient in their subjects (relevant qualifications and working experience)
- Teachers with traits suitable for teaching (psychological, ability and interest in the development of young people)
- Teacher training (the theory and methodology of teaching; particularly suited to this type of teaching – safety and operation of machinery and so on)
- A system in which schools would welcome practical subjects as part of the curriculum (the status of such studies to be on an equal footing to traditional subjects)
- A system which would welcome and nurture teachers suitable to teach the subjects (rewards, recognition, mentoring, continuous development opportunities)
- Facilities suitable for the studies identified

RGR: 26/5/2018