

## **TITLE PAGE: Early Teacher Development – Trends in Initial Teacher Education**

### **INSIDE PAGE:**

**A background paper prepared by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) for the Asia Society's Global Cities Education Network (GCEN)**

### **Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership**

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) was formed to provide national leadership for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership with funding provided by the Australian Government.

AITSL works with the education community to:

- Define and maintain standards for excellence in teaching and school leadership
- Lead and influence excellence in teaching and school leadership
- Support and recognise excellence in teaching and school leadership

Within the field of initial teacher education AITSL has been tasked with the ongoing monitoring and review of the national approach to accreditation of initial teacher education programs.

AITSL works with stakeholders to provide support and guidance for further improving initial teacher education within Australia.

### **Acknowledgement**

This paper is substantially based on a paper prepared by Dr Graeme Hall for AITSL. We acknowledge the contribution of Dr Hall to the thinking presented in this paper.

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ISBN: 978-0-9874004-7-5

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## Executive Summary

As the international education reform agenda focuses on teacher quality, initial teacher education is receiving increased attention as the foundation for attracting, preparing and retaining quality teachers. This policy focus is accompanied by the emergence of a wide array of new models of initial teacher education. What these models share is a commitment to quality, a desire to prepare teachers for the reality of the classroom, and a strong emphasis on linking theory and practice.

A recent paper prepared by Linda Darling-Hammond, Professor of Education at Stanford University (2013), identified common features that contribute to developing and sustaining a high quality teacher workforce. Of the three global cities profiled in the paper (Melbourne, Singapore and Toronto), each identified the alignment of theory and practice and rigorous professional experience as key features of high quality initial teacher preparation. In addition, these successful approaches across systems built upon high quality initial teacher preparation programs by providing strong supports for early career teachers. Ian Menter (2011), Professor of Teacher Education at Oxford University, suggests that “a strong and sophisticated professional development framework throughout every stage of the career,” is a requirement for such a challenging and complex profession.

### ***The Australian context***

In an Australian context, approaches to initial teacher preparation and support for early career teachers have been informed by an end to end system of development and progression through career stages. This approach is underpinned by shared agreement nationally about what teachers should know and be able to do through the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (the Standards) endorsed by all Education Ministers in 2011. The Standards provide a common understanding and language for teachers to be able to reflect on and share their professional practice. The concept of development throughout a teaching career is embodied in the structure of the Standards, which describe teacher practice at four career stages.

The Standards are being implemented across Australia through both mandatory (regulatory) and voluntary (policy guidelines) levers which underpin and end to end system of career development, from:

- Entry to the profession with *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures*, aligned with the Graduate career stage of the Standards;
- Full teacher registration with *A nationally consistent approach to teacher registration*, aligned with the Proficient career stage of the Standards; and
- *Certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers in Australia* aligned with the Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher career stages of the Standards.

In addition, two other nationally endorsed documents – the *Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework* and the *Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders* – describe and promote the type of professional culture that must exist in schools for teachers to grow and develop to their full potential.



### Success factors for reform of initial teacher education

Examination of case studies and literature from around the world lead to four broad success factors for successful implementation of new approaches to initial teacher education.

1. **A clear vision of effective teaching** that informs the entire program, provides a basis for prioritisation and resource allocation, and ensures all those involved in supporting pre-service teachers present a coherent message.
2. **Integrating theory and practice** so that professional experience in schools is central to the program, and graduates leave with a full toolkit of effective teaching strategies and the capacity to continually review and improve their approaches.
3. **Highly skilled and well supported supervising teachers** who are accomplished adult educators as well as expert teachers, equipped to play the pivotal role they are assigned in these programs.
4. **Sustainable, scalable partnerships** that bring the resources and capabilities of all parties to the table, and engage systems to ensure the benefits of successful approaches are spread widely.

At a practical level, organisations seeking to implement and promote effective approaches should pay particular attention to:

- Engaging early with a broad range of partners, including universities, individual schools, school systems, teacher unions and professional associations.
- Developing, disseminating and reinforcing a shared view of effective teaching, and using this to inform all aspects of a program, including resource allocation.

- Designing the program so that there are high levels of coherence between theoretical and practical components, and the links between them are made explicit.
- Carefully selecting, training and supporting supervising teachers, who play a central role in any such program.
- Aligning assessment with the program's vision of effective teaching, and making assessment as authentic as possible.
- Paying early attention to scale, including through partnerships with systems and districts as well as individual schools, and communicating successes and challenges.
- Evaluating programs and researching the elements of them, with a strong focus on the outcomes achieved for graduates and their students.

The current policy focus on initial teacher education presents a major opportunity to significantly improve this critical component of a high quality education system. Examination of existing effective practices can provide a strong foundation for further reform.

## **Towards a 'clinical' model of initial teacher education**

The history of teacher preparation can be seen as an ongoing effort to strike the appropriate balance between 'theory' and 'practice'. In most countries, the long-term trend has been towards a greater, and more sophisticated, component of theory. In many countries, this is evidenced by the transfer of initial teacher education to universities, from specialised 'teacher training' institutions.

An increased emphasis on theory has placed great weight on the time pre-service teachers spend in schools, which is seen as the component of these programs that develops practical teaching skills and most directly prepares pre-service teachers for their employment in schools. Many reform efforts in initial teacher education in recent years have focussed on strengthening school-university partnerships, and often increasing the duration and intensity of the professional experience component.

This trend has perhaps gone furthest in England, where schools have explicitly been placed at the centre of initial teacher education, including some use of models where universities were not involved at all. In Australia, a national agreement on improving teacher quality included funding for School Centres for Teaching Excellence, designed to improve the quality of professional experience placements. In the United States, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2010) has realigned its approach to accreditation to promote 'clinical practice'. Although used in different ways, sometimes just to describe any in-school experience, 'clinical' has become a commonly used description of best practice in initial teacher education.

Linda Darling-Hammond (2006) reminds us that many professions help candidates to bridge the gap between theory and practice by "engaging them in the reading and writing of cases". She goes on to point out that many highly successful teacher education programs also require candidates to develop case studies on students and on other key elements of teachers' work within schools and with parents and communities. This focus on individual clients (in this case students) and on individual interventions and activities is what sets particular kinds of professional experience apart as *clinical*.

Reinforcing this notion of teaching as a clinical profession (and continuing the health professions analogies), Stephen Dinham has proposed (2012) that "there is a growing recognition that teachers need to be able to 'diagnose' individual student learning and provide appropriate 'prescriptions' for improvement, to be clinical, evidence-based, interventionist practitioners in the manner of health professionals".

Interestingly enough, this "clinical" focus on the individual in the field of education had its roots as long ago as the 1960s, in the context of providing feedback to teachers on the basis of observations of their teaching, and especially of their responses to the identified learning needs of individual students. "Essentially, clinical supervision in education involves a teacher receiving information from a colleague who has observed the teacher's performance and who serves as both a mirror and a sounding board to enable the teacher to critically examine and possibly alter his or her professional practice" (Goldhammer, 1969). The clinical supervision cycle described in that paper actually provides the foundation of many current approaches to both initial teacher preparation and ongoing teacher performance and development.

## Transforming teacher education

There have been numerous studies that have analysed evidence about effective approaches to professional teaching experience in initial teacher education, and several of these have been distilled to identify guidelines or principles for quality learning opportunities. One such study in Australia (Eyers, 2005) identified six *Guidelines for quality in the practicum*. In summary these are:

- the practicum is designed as an integrating part of the program
- the nature and roles of high quality professional staff are defined
- high expectations of experiences in schools and other settings
- expectations of high quality assessment practice
- ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the program and
- expectations of high quality program support.

In the United States in 2010, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) published a seminal Report from its 'Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning'. A key contribution of this Panel and its report was the identification of ten "design principles" for clinically based programs, and strategies for implementing them at scale rather than as isolated examples of excellence.

The principles focus on the development of close partnerships between teacher education providers and school systems; accountability based on evidence of candidates' performance and their impact on student learning; and professional accountability of all stakeholders for the effectiveness of graduate teachers.

These ten design principles provide a useful framework for the consideration of both research and practice in the effective provision of clinical experience. While they have been developed in the United States context, they clearly have relevance and exemplify effective programs in many countries.

In Australia, for example, a recent development has been the endorsement by the Council of all Ministers of Education for the first time of a national approach to the accreditation of initial teacher education programs (AITSL, 2011). These *Standards and Procedures* are based on the Graduate career stage of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (expectation for the achievements of graduate teachers), explicit national Program Standards (a statement of requirements providing confidence that the desired outcomes will be achieved) and an agreed common accreditation process that is implemented at the state and territory level. Any initial teacher education program achieving accreditation under these arrangements would embody the NCATE principles as well as other similarly developed statements of the characteristics of effective programs.

These principles are well defined and are in many ways becoming mainstreamed. The focus is now shifting to implementing them in practice and at scale. This paper proposes four critical success factors for successful implementation of quality initial teacher education programs.

## **Case study – The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education**

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in the United States released its report on *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice* in 2010. The report calls for a national effort to make the characteristics of effective programs the norm across the country. It identifies ten design principles for clinically based preparation:

- Student learning is the focus
- Clinical preparation is integrated throughout every facet of teacher education in a dynamic way
- A candidate's progress and the elements of a preparation program are continuously judged on the basis of data
- Programs prepare teachers who are expert in content and how to teach it and are also, innovators, collaborators and problem solvers
- Candidates learn in an interactive professional community
- Clinical educators and coaches are rigorously selected and prepared and drawn from both higher education and the P-12 sector
- Specific sites are designated and funded to support embedded clinical preparation
- Technology applications foster high-impact preparation
- A powerful R&D agenda and systematic gathering and use of data supports continuous improvement in teacher preparation
- Strategic partnerships are imperative for powerful clinical preparation

The report identifies existing examples of programs across the United States that already give effect to these principles, for example:

- The approach of St Cloud State University, which uses a 'co-teaching' approach between the pre-service and supervising teachers, and how found that student outcomes are improved in these classrooms.
- The partnership between Baylor University and the Waco Independent School District, which has shared governance, and where each organisation contributes half of the funding for the program.
- The long-term partnership between the Long Beach Unified School District, Long Beach City College, California State University at Long Beach and 46 community organisations. This partnership focuses on preparing graduates to address the specific priorities of the school district, and has greatly improved retention of graduate teachers in local schools.
- State programs to assess the effectiveness of initial teacher education programs through the assessment of graduates and the performance of their students. An example is the well-established California PACT program, which assesses pre-service teachers on a range of tasks and is mandatory.

The report calls on States, districts and other national organisations to join forces to spread these models of clinical preparation. NCATE has used its own role in accrediting teacher education programs to help achieve this goal.

NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education). (2010). *Transforming teacher education through clinical practice: A national strategy to prepare effective teachers*. Washington: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

### **1. A Clear Vision of Effective Teaching**

An initial teacher education program that successfully blends theory and practice is an inherently complex exercise. It requires contributions from individuals across a range of organisations, and coherence in the messages presented to pre-service teachers. This is



greatly assisted by a clear view of what effective teaching looks like, linked to evidence of its impact on (school) student outcomes.

From the earliest initiatives in the growth of Professional Development Schools, the focus has been explicitly on the learning of school students, the learning of pre-service teachers and the learning of teachers in schools (Goodlad, 1985), with student learning the main emphasis. The more recent development of the concept of teaching practice as “clinical” has reinforced the practitioner/client nature of the teacher/student relationship and the need for the efforts of pre-service teachers as well as of teachers to be directed towards student outcomes.

A clear vision of effective teaching provides a strong basis for prioritising content within a program and avoiding the ‘crowded curriculum’. In Singapore, for example, the National Institute of Education has removed many previous elective elements of its programs to focus tightly on student learning and the development of practical classroom skills. (Jensen 2012)

It has been suggested that “thinking about teaching as a clinical profession ... attends to all the dimensions of teaching: the curriculum, the teaching strategy, the assessment” (Hinds, 2002). In another policy brief, it is proposed that incorporating a range of clinical activities in professional experience “may allow new teachers to focus more on their students and their learning once they enter the classroom” (Grossman, 2010).

**Case Study: *The Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne***

Launched in 2008, the Master of Teaching at the MGSE presents a departure from traditional teacher education programs. Its clinical approach connects university theory, professional knowledge and classroom experience. The MGSE approaches teaching as a clinical practice profession “which focuses on student growth.” The teacher develops and implements practice centred on the learning needs of individual students by *analysing* where the student is most ready to learn; *intervening* to support learning; and *evaluating* the impact of the intervention of the learner.

Clinical teaching enables teachers to focus on individual students’ learning growth by:

- monitoring and evaluating their impact on learning and adapting the lesson to meet the needs of each student - rather than expecting the student to keep up regardless of their circumstances;
- using evidence about what each student knows and understands at the start of the teaching period to inform their teaching interventions;
- targeting their assessment and teaching practices to maximise the information obtained about their impact and optimise the chances of improving student learning;
- on the basis of the above, constructing appropriate teaching and learning environments for every student, whatever their developmental stage and current abilities; and
- continuously evaluating the impact of their teaching, to inform next steps.

The Master of Teaching program is a unique partnership between the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE), Government, Catholic, and Independent schools across the secondary and primary sectors; early learning centres in the early childhood sector.

Collaboration between the university and its partnership institutions is facilitated through local partnership groups established by the MGSE’s Partnership Coordinators. Central to this partnership is the role of the Teaching Fellow, located in nominated base schools and centres, who coordinate and support teacher candidates throughout their practicum days, in collaboration

with school/centre-based Mentor Teachers, and University-based Clinical Specialists.

- Teaching Fellows: expert teachers from the base school (the central school in a partnership school group) spend two and a half days per week mentoring candidates and supporting mentor / supervising teachers.
- Clinical Specialists: university experts work closely with a Teaching Fellow and are on-site in schools one day per week to help link university theory and classroom practice.

The capstone assessment of pre-service teachers is through a 'clinical praxis exam', which focuses on the presentation of the 'cases' of individual students and a discussion and evaluation of the interventions made by pre-service teachers to improve their learning. This assessment reaches across subjects within the program, and has required individual academics to integrate their assessment practice on the basis of a shared vision of clinical teaching. Over time, it has influenced the ways in which these individual subjects are structured and taught.

Dinham, S. (2012). "Walking the walk: The need for school leaders to embrace teaching as a clinical profession." Australian Council for Educational Research. Accessed 15 July 2013 from [http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1137&context=research\\_conference](http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1137&context=research_conference)

Master of Teaching: Clinical Praxis Exam video

[http://education.unimelb.edu.au/about\\_us/clinical\\_teaching](http://education.unimelb.edu.au/about_us/clinical_teaching) accessed 29 August 2013

At a larger scale, teacher standards provide a vision of the graduate teacher that can be used to inform the design of initial teacher education, and create a shared language for discussing pre-service teachers' progress towards becoming competent graduates. In Australia, all new initial teacher education programs are now accredited on the basis that they will produce graduates who meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2011). NCATE (2010) advocates a similar, standards-based approach.

**Case Study: *The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as the Basis for National Support Materials***

As all initial teacher education programs across Australia are redesigned to demonstrate that their graduates will meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, organisations involved in initial teacher education are producing practical support materials that are able to be used across the country. This creates economies of scale, and assists these materials to be of high quality.

Project Evidence and Project Assessment are collaborations involving six universities in total, based in four Australian States. These projects have produced websites that present a set of practical strategies and support materials for supervising teachers, pre-service teachers and teacher educators to assist them in supporting learning, evidencing of achievement and assessment in professional experience placements.

The Supervising Preservice Teacher program is an interactive and self-directed online professional learning program that supports teachers who are either supervising a preservice teacher, or thinking about a supervising role. The program was developed by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) in partnership with the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) and the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) and launched in April 2013.

The program consists of four online, flexible learning modules which will give teachers the knowledge, skills and confidence to effectively supervise preservice teachers. The learning focuses on skills in:

- effective partnerships
- practice analysis
- making judgements
- unpacking the Graduate Standards.

Participants can study any or all of the modules according to their interest and will be certified according to the modules they complete. Key features of the program include:

- access high-quality, interactive, evidence-based content developed by experts
- study online, at your own pace
- learn through a 'just in time' enquiry model, accessing content through the use of questions and multimedia resources
- learn alongside colleagues from across Australia.

The comprehensive online professional learning program is open to all Australian school education professionals at no cost and forms part of AITSL's Learning Centre:

[www.learn.aitsl.edu.au/professional-learning-programs/supervising-preservice-teachers](http://www.learn.aitsl.edu.au/professional-learning-programs/supervising-preservice-teachers)

Sim, C., Freiberg, J., White, S., Allard, A., Le Cornu, R. & Carter, B. (2012). Using Professional Standards: Assessing work integrated learning in initial teacher education [online resource]. Melbourne, Australian Teaching and Learning Council. Available from: <http://www.teacherevidence.net>

Bloomfield, D., White, S & Goulding, J. (2013) Authentic Assessment in Practice Settings: A Participatory Design Approach (online resource) Melbourne, Australian Teaching and Learning Council. Available from: <http://www.teacherassessment.net>

## **2. *Integrating Theory and Practice***

The approach to teacher preparation that evolved through the latter part of the twentieth century has been described as a two-step process in which pre-service teachers commence

their program with studies in education to gain essential knowledge about schools and teaching, and then apply this knowledge to teaching during school placement experiences (Ure, 2009).

Teacher preparation constructed around clinical experience provides for this site-based experience not only to be integrated into all aspects of the program but for it to be *the integrating feature* of the program. Much professional preparation, including for teaching, now includes both frequent and regular immersion in clinical experiences as well as extended blocks of professional practice. It is suggested that pre-service teachers see and make sense of both theory and practice differently if they are taking coursework concurrently with fieldwork (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

In exploring the various kinds of boundary crossing that have emerged in attempts to provide alternatives to the traditional two step approach, Ken Zeichner (2010) has proposed the concept of “third space”. Third space is a conceptualisation of the bringing together of school and university based educators, and of practitioner and academic knowledge, creating new learning opportunities for prospective teachers. Zeichner provides a number of examples of ways in which programs have addressed the development of these third spaces.

Clinical models of initial teacher education focus heavily on the school as a site for this learning, and in many cases have significantly increased the duration of school placements, and the continuity of placements in a single school. Teach for America, and the related models that exist in many other countries, takes this to an extreme, with the associate employed as a teacher in a single school throughout the two-year program.

#### **Case study: Boston Teacher Residency**

The Boston Teacher Residency program is a joint initiative of Boston Public Schools and the Boston Plan for Excellence, with partners including the University of Massachusetts Boston. Residents teach with a more experienced teacher four days a week, and undertake academic study in a summer residency and one day and one evening a week during the school year. Additional in-school support is provided by Clinical Teacher Educators. At the end of the program, residents qualify for a Masters degree and a teaching licence.

This close partnership produces graduates who are well suited to teaching in Boston Public Schools. Of those graduates employed in Boston Public Schools, 80% remain employed there after three years, compared to a national average of 50% for urban schools. 97% of principals would recommend hiring a BTR graduate.

The program has also paid attention to scaling up its approach. It was a co-founder of Urban Teacher Residency United, which now has 18 programs across the United States that have met its strict standards to become a partner in that program.

<http://www.bostonteacherresidency.org/>

### **3. *Highly skilled and well supported supervising teachers***

A clinical model requires school-based personnel to take a lead role in mentoring and assessing pre-service teachers. These supervising teachers must not only be highly skilled teachers who can model effective practice, but also skilled adult educators who can support the development of the pre-service teacher.

The critical nature of the quality of support and supervision of pre-service teachers is a constant theme in the literature. In practice, teacher educators report that the pressure to secure sufficient placements for their students means that they do not have the luxury of selecting quality mentors and coaches but must accept any placements that are offered. Grossman (2010) suggests that the selection and professional preparation of supervising teachers is too often cursory and a weak link in the design of clinical preparation.

It is widely recognised that mentor teachers should be competent teachers, selected on the basis of “their knowledge and ability to teach and interact with adults rather than just years of teaching experience and qualifications” (Hudson & Hudson, 2010). This study by teacher education researchers at Queensland University of Technology provides an insight into the outcome of well-supported mentor development programs, particularly their formation of Zeichner’s “third space” referred to earlier. In particular, the teachers report their sense of responsibility for the quality of the profession as well as their own learning and insights into their own practice.

The relationship between pre-service teachers and professionals in the schools where they undertake their practical experience is reported to be critical to the effectiveness of the experience. Ure (2009) reports both supervising and pre-service teachers’ accounts of their experience of this professional interaction. It appears from this account that at least in the schools in her study this interaction was limited to the provision of feedback about individual lessons taught by pre-service teachers.

Stronger partnerships between schools and universities create the possibility of new staffing models. In Singapore, 15% of academic staff at the National Institute of Education are seconded from the Ministry of Education, and both organisations regularly second classroom teachers. Other models already discussed have created roles such as the Clinical Teacher Educator in the Boston Teacher Residency, and the Clinical Specialists at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, who are university staff, but spend large amounts of time in schools working with teachers.

#### **Case study – Charles Darwin University**

A collaboration between the Northern Territory Department of Education, Charles Darwin University and the Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board has seen the establishment and support of a number of “teaching schools”, based on the model of clinical medical education and committing all partners to “graduating work ready teachers of a high standard” (Charles Darwin University, *undated*). In these carefully selected schools, there is an emphasis on developing the responsibility of both school and university educators for the development of high quality teaching graduates.

In this partnership, the focus on the pre-service teacher as a member of an interactive professional community is evident. The guidelines explicitly refer to the school as a community of practice where pre-service teachers and teachers alike focus on developing the learning program.

Charles Darwin University. (*Undated*). *What is a Teaching School?* Darwin, Charles Darwin University.

<https://online.cdu.edu.au/bbcswebdav/institution/Education/Inschool%20documents/STUDENT%20RESOURCES/What%20is%20a%20Teaching%20School.pdf>

#### **4. Sustainable, scalable partnerships**

Equally important as the selection of and support for supervising teachers – some would say more important – is the selection of, and provision of support and development for, school sites for clinical experience. The notion of Professional Development Schools, which developed in the United States largely as an outcome of the work of John Goodlad and the Holmes Group (see for example Goodlad, 1985) provides an early and enduring example. These strong, embedded partnership arrangements are heavily supported by commentators and researchers such as Darling-Hammond (2006) and Grossman (2010). The concept has been adopted in many guises internationally at both system and local levels (Hall, 2005).

Professional Development Schools focus on the learning of all parties. This has the benefit of placing pre-service teachers in a strong, supportive professional community, and also means teachers in the school gain a benefit from participating. Necessary elements of the model include clear documentation of roles and responsibilities, shared governance, shared resourcing, opportunities for staff to work across settings, and formal rewards and recognition for those involved in the partnership. (National Association for Professional Development Schools 2008). Shussler (2006) examines the role of supervising teachers in these schools and identifies a strong commitment to a shared goal as a means of overcoming communication difficulties between school and university based staff, with strong governance structures and time allocated to building the partnership. In addition, incentives such as the removal of other responsibilities that take up time are critical to teachers' engagement in these partnerships.

As the research and practice reported here has indicated, clinical approaches to professional preparation require collaboration among a range of stakeholders. This holds as true in preparation for teaching as it does across the range of client-focussed professions. There need to be “enduring partnerships” in delivering all initial teacher preparation programs (AITSL, 2011). However for clinical approaches to be successfully implemented these partnerships must be wider than simply between providers and schools.

NCATE (2010) proposes that school systems/districts, university-based programs, policy makers and teacher unions should all be party to these partnerships. In a number of examples referenced earlier, such as the Northern Territory teaching schools and Urban Teacher Residency programs in the United States, the partnerships are demonstrably strategic and explicit, and include a range of stakeholders. Partnerships with systems and districts, as well as individual schools, are emerging as a means to provide high quality placements at scale.

#### **Case study – School Centres for Teacher Education Excellence**

An Australian Government initiative developed as part of the National Partnership on Improving Quality Teaching included the establishment in schools or clusters of schools School Centres for Teacher Education Excellence (Australian Government, 2008). These Centres were enacted in slightly different ways in different states and territories. However each of them provided opportunities for the development of whole-school approaches to the provision of quality clinical experiences for pre-service teachers, with a focus on collaboration and partnership with individual universities and on building the capacity of schools to support the professional learning of prospective as well as of existing teachers. The Centres exemplify the application of resources, intention and effort to the development of collaborative sites (see for example Queensland DETE, 2013; Victoria DEECD, 2013).

### **Edith Cowan University, Western Australia**

An example of an approach funded through this initiative is the Teacher Residency Model at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia. The initiative is a partnership involving the university, the Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office. Pre-service teacher “residents” undertake intensive periods on campus as well as in schools, including two days each week participating fully in school life. Initial evaluation of this program indicate high levels of teaching performance (78% of pre-service teachers achieving a grade of at least distinction in their teaching practice), greater enthusiasm to teach, and a stronger sense of what teaching is about (Lock, 2012).

Early results of this program indicate the significance of partnerships that have high-level support of their school systems and are funded to achieve their objectives.

Features of this model, which is offered to participants in the one-year Graduate Diploma of Education, include requirements that participants:

- commence early January with two weeks of intensive teaching on-campus
- attend schools for pre-term professional activities
- attend schools for two days per week as well as block placements (minimum 60 days per year)
- attend on-campus on Fridays throughout each semester
- attend for one week intensive on-campus at the commencement of semester two prior to school term three
- take part in a one day review at conclusion of final placement (Lock, 2012).

Major success factors have included careful selection of supervising teachers and residents, and early involvement of the Department of Education and Catholic Education Office in development of the model.

As the principal systemic partner in this project the Western Australian Department of Education has now extended its involvement to include three additional universities and some twenty further school sites, including eight rural schools (Western Australian Department of Education, 2012).

### **Case Study – Partnerships in Singaporean initial teacher education**

Initial teacher education in Singapore is very much a partnership between the Ministry of Education, individual schools and the National Institute of Education, which is the sole provider of initial teacher education. Pre-service teachers are paid employees of the Ministry, and numbers are set to match demand for teachers. Pre-service teachers are offered professional experience placements in schools suited to their own skills, and where vacancies are becoming available. The transition into a teaching career is therefore eased.

Senior representatives from the Ministry and the NIE attend weekly strategy meetings of the other institution, and feedback loops are built into the development, evaluation and refinement of the initial teacher education program. The partnership is held together by a strong shared commitment to improving the quality of education and ensuring all teachers in Singapore are of high quality.

Jensen, B 2012, *Catching up: learning from the best school systems in East Asia*, Grattan Institute, Melbourne.

### **Realising the benefits of a clinical approach – implementation**

The literature and case studies examined above suggest that there are some practical steps that organisations seeking to develop effective new models of initial teacher education can follow. These include:

- Engaging early with a broad range of partners, including universities, individual schools, school systems, teacher unions and professional associations.
- Developing shared governance and resourcing arrangements that sustain and embed partnerships.
- Developing, disseminating and reinforcing a shared view of effective teaching, and using this to inform all aspects of a program, including resource allocation.
- Designing the program so that there are high levels of coherence between theoretical and practical components, and the links between them are made explicit.
- Carefully selecting, training and supporting supervising teachers, who play a central role in any such program, and providing incentives for them to participate.
- Aligning assessment with the program's vision of effective teaching, and making assessment as authentic as possible.
- Paying early attention to scale, including through partnerships with systems and districts as well as individual schools, and communicating successes and challenges.
- Evaluating programs and researching elements of them, with a strong focus on the outcomes achieved for graduates and their students.

**Suggested further reading:**

Dinham, S. (2012). "Walking the walk: The need for school leaders to embrace teaching as a clinical profession." Australian Council for Educational Research. Accessed 15 July 2013 from

[http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1137&context=research\\_conference](http://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1137&context=research_conference)

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