

Response to Quality ITE Review, Discussion Paper

Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Australian Government

Submission type: As an individual

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Focus of Response:

Improving teaching and learning quality through a highly expert workforce: Ongoing quality Continuing Professional Education

QITE Review Questions for discussion (p.24)

- ***How can ITE providers best support teachers in their ongoing professional learning?***

There is an increasing body of work acknowledging the future of work in the fourth and fifth industrial revolutions, i.e. 4IR and 5IR respectively (Gauri & Van Eerden, 2019; Madsbjerg, 2017; Sarfraz, Sarfraz, Iftikar, & Akhund, 2021), needs to address the complexity of the upskilling and reskilling of the workforce, including the education sector. What work is not complex will be automated, a legacy of the 4IR – but the 5IR is emerging to highlight the critical nature and role of the human in the digital economy; where technology will focus on personalisation and connect digitalisation toward the service of humanity or ‘profit with purpose’. No longer can government and businesses rely on ‘frontloading education’ at the beginning of the career (including teaching) and think this will suffice to address the ongoing workplace complexity. People are living and staying in the workplace for longer and need to adapt to change, innovation and complexity on multiple fronts (Dede & Richards, 2020; Gratton & Scott, 2016).

Teachers, and the education sector, is part of this complexity in the workplace. Therefore, teachers need access to quality professional learning and development across their career lifespan and deeply engage with lifelong learning as ‘working learners’ (Weise, 2021), adapting to the complexity of their classroom, school and community to contribute to ongoing quality improvement in learning and teaching. In the 21st Century, thinking that quality initial teacher education will be the only source of deep professional learning in a teacher’s or principal’s career – is no longer an option.

This means the education system needs to support teachers and school leaders (HALT and principal class) to actively engage with their professional learning and development and provide opportunities to align with their interests, the learning needs of their students, and school goals. We have a strong framework for continuing professional learning and development through the AISTL’s teaching standards and principal standards as well as the professional learning standards (Darling-Hammond, 2021) – however, it’s time for policy to focus beyond the initial preparation of teachers and into continuing professional education to achieve greater improvement in learning and teaching through supporting teachers and school leaders to deepen their professional knowledge and practice for quality teaching through reflective praxis and inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) that redresses

complexity in the classroom and acknowledge how teaching expertise is developed over time in one's career (Loughran, 2010).

Teacher education providers need to be enabled to evolve their professional offerings beyond ITE and be supported by government to excel. The QITE Review discussion paper has already identified some examples of teacher education providers moving to provide quality models for continuing and professional education (CPE) e.g., Monash and LaTrobe (pp. 23 & 24). Literature and market insights are gathering pace on what quality of CPE looks like in the 21st Century (e.g., Fanfarelli & McDaniel, 2019; Gallagher, 2016; Ifenthaler, Beilin-Mularski, & Mah, 2016; Modern Campus, 2021; Oliver, 2019; Perea, 2021) – and these qualities can be extended to support CPE for teachers and school leaders. Often entry into CPE is characterised by short courses that are competency-driven such as afforded through digital micro-credentials. Then, by careful curriculum and assessment design, and as needs for further deepening of professional knowledge and practice, teachers may engage with longer, more conventional upskilling such as Graduate Certificates and Masters level study. Digital micro-credentials, with its mechanisms of stacking (i.e. advanced standing/credit) can allow teacher education providers opportunities to work with schools, employers, and education systems to develop quality CPE that is flexible and contextualised through quality online offerings. Drawing on quality, interactive online CPE programs would allow teachers and school leaders to engage with expertise of different teacher education providers across the nation for programs that support their professional learning and development needs. This would mean teacher education providers could specialise in their areas of strength to design and deliver high quality programs to school communities. For examples of well-designed, digital micro-credentials that are research and evidence informed and offered by teacher education providers is illustrated by University of Melbourne's recently released [Melbourne MicroCerts](#) that operate for the CPE market. Early offerings in [teacher education Melbourne MicroCerts](#) relate to early childhood leaders, learning environments and digital learning. Digital micro-credentials offer multiple opportunities to engage in delivering quality, co-designed professional learning and worthy of further exploration and research to support CPE for teachers and school leaders.

- *How could teacher and school leader workloads be made more manageable to allow them to provide more support to pre-service and newly graduated teachers?*

We need to recognise that teaching is complex work that requires lifelong learning commitment to address change, complexity and innovation in schools and their communities. This requires education systems to support teachers and school leaders to engage deeply with continuing their professional knowledge and practice of teaching as critical part of their work – that research and inquiry underpins their work as teachers, rather than an add-on activity for some within the teaching workforce. The education systems will need to recognise professional learning, inquiry and research are activities that are given time allocation to teachers and school leaders as part of their workload and carried out as part of their teaching responsibilities across each term.

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