



## University of Newcastle School of Education Submission Teacher Education Expert Panel Discussion Paper

April 2023

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The University of Newcastle School of Education is pleased to provide this submission to the Teacher Education Expert Panel in response to the discussion paper. The Paper and policy process are timely and significant, and we would be pleased to contribute further to considerations.

### About the University of Newcastle School of Education

The University of Newcastle is in the top 10 of Australian schools of education and top 101-50 schools of education in the world. We are among the largest providers of initial teacher education in Australia and graduate the largest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in the nation, many of whom have become leaders in the field. We are committed to providing quality education in and for the regions and addressing Sustainable Development Goals # 4 *Quality Education*; 3 *Good Health & Well Being*; 10 *Reduced Inequalities*; 16 *Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions*; 17 *Partnerships for the Goals*.

The University's approach has been to constantly innovate in teaching. We were the first to:

- were the first to introduce term-long professional experience internships,
- adopt multiple educational technologies to support the development of our future teachers including a simulation suite – SimSchool, SimTeach (Mursion) and SimCave,
- export Special and Inclusive Education programs to Singapore and Asia Pacific,
- promote innovative health programs on a national and global scale – Dads and Daughters – that target children's health and physical education and
- have all students learn a second language in their first year of study
- graduate highest percentage of indigenous teachers into the workforce and embed indigenous knowledges across our program

We are committed to ensuring we address all the domains of our future teachers (cognitive, affective and psychomotor), so they exit confident, capable and classroom-ready graduates.

We continue to be at the cutting edge of our field in teaching performance/strategies and research outputs. Our professors lead pillars of research that address areas of significance for the profession and academy: *Teachers and Teaching Research Centre (TTRC)*; *Centre for Active Living and Learning (CALL)*; *Learning Sciences & Learner Diversity (LSLD)*; and *Education Technologies (EdTech)*.

Our graduates are highly sought after and well regarded for their understanding of *Quality Teaching*, an evidence-based pedagogical model developed and implemented within the School of Education.

Our researchers are the recipients of the largest philanthropic grant awarded in Australia, and our research impacts policy and practices at a local, regional and global scale.

### University Submission – Principles and Structure

We position our response within the framework of AITSL *Accreditation of ITE programs: Standards and Procedures* and their principles of: Impact, evidence-based; rigour; continuous improvement; flexibility diversity and innovation; partnerships, transparency and research driven. This, coupled with our five school of education guiding principles should help reimagine teacher education and attract and retain more people into the profession.

#### 1. Policy design that supports whole of profession/sector approach to Education (professionalism)

*Clear path in through and out of IT; paraprofessional-preservice-induction-inservice-ongoing professional learning ; professional and ethical approaches within the profession; highly effectual and creative schools and graduates.*

**2. Policy commitment to Equity, Excellence and Technologies in Education**

*Embed Indigenous knowledges, EALD, Special Ed & Simulation in ITE core; QT Centre of Excellence; Incentivise Study;*

**3. Policy support for Place-based success and Differentiated Practices**

*Differentiation for smaller/regional schools; PBE approaches; community led and owned sustainability solutions; Supernumerary staff for RRR and hard to staff schools; placements in and beyond region.*

**4. Policy and practices that reward and encourage collaboration rather than competition**

*Dynamic Funding strategies that target research of national significance and need; encourage effectual and creative approaches to teaching in schools and by graduates*

**5. Education Policy driven by Educators**

*Teacher educators should lead strategic reform about the teaching profession.*

The aim of this submission is to provide solutions that promote the profession by being forward thinking and success driven.







The submission is presented in two parts: the first provides a summary of the recommendations for each reform area, the second offers elaborations of the recommendations with evidence for each reform area and the links to current accreditation.



We call for systems level agreements and legislation to strengthen workforce planning so the 'integrated delivery' aspired by TEMAG can be achieved. Genuine change requires system-level approaches to funding models, mentoring models, and the role and recognition of supervisors. Policy, funding and legislative changes will remove the overreliance on the goodwill and moral obligations of both academic and teaching staff and the ambiguity around roles and responsibilities.






## Summary of Recommendations

The Panel’s Paper is timely: Australia is experiencing its greatest teacher shortage, while the teaching profession endures scrutiny and criticism by media and, at times, by government through negative rhetoric (Mockler, 2018). The ongoing, persistent disrespect for the teaching profession at multiple levels demands a strong, bold and evidence-driven response.



The summary of recommendations outlined below also flag the impact of the recommendations: the *Education Sector, Schools, Universities, School Students, Graduating Teachers, Funding and Teaching profession* (see icons below).

					
<b>EdSector</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Student Teacher</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Teachers</b>

Summary of Recommendations	Impact
<p><b>Reform Area 1 Strengthen ITE programs to deliver effective, classroom ready graduates</b></p> <p><b>A. Recommend evidence-based teaching strategies by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Combining expertise - AERO and Evidence4Learning should combine as both do similar work and their combined strengths would be beneficial</i></li> <li>• <i>Appointing ACDE and associated steering committees/networks (Professional Experience, ECE, VET, Research, AILTEA, Learning &amp; Teaching, Technology) to lead and inform policy and practice with regard ITE.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>B. Recommend amending Accreditation Standards &amp; Procedures by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Conducting a full program evaluation of the Accreditation Standards and Procedures implementation process.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reviewing TPAs. As a consequence of supporting 2 TPA tenders rather than one, it may be time to develop an Australian TPA which combines the best of what is currently on offer across the field.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>C. Recommend adopting Curriculum Specific Core Content and missing elements by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cross referencing current practice to see what Core content is not covered.</i></li> <li>• <i>Positioning the affective domain within the core</i></li> <li>• <i>Including Socratic questioning as core content</i></li> <li>• <i>Including keyboarding as part of writing transcription skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Practicing responses to authentic and intense classroom behaviours using safe simulated learning environments</i></li> <li>• <i>Employing neuromyth methodologies for current notions of ‘best practice’ and ‘instructional choices’</i></li> <li>• <i>Focussing on the General Capabilities (3D Curriculum) to cover many of the missing elements of the Core for students and PSTs – ethical, intercultural, personal, social, critical and creative, literacy, numeracy, ICT. This will give agency to students and address enabling factors.</i></li> <li>• <i>Changing language from Diverse learner needs not diverse learning needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Raising importance of place-based education.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>C. Recommend ensuring consistent, robust delivery of evidence based teaching strategies by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Legislative Change for a National Accreditation Body or Authorising environment for national consistency, mutual recognition and state representation.</i></li> <li>• <i>Culturally responsive Pedagogies and Practices</i></li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 20px;">   <b>EdSector</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">   <b>University</b> </div>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilising University of Newcastle’s Teachers and Teacher Research Centre Quality Teaching Model and Rounds to improve practice systemically</li> <li>Using evidence-based teaching strategies to refocus on psychomotor and affective domains to counter the cognitive only foci of current approach.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Reform Area 2 Strengthen the link between performance and funding of ITE</b></p> <p><b>A. Recommend continuing and modifying current performance measures for ITE with regards Selection, Retention, Classroom readiness and Transition by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilising and strengthening the AITSL Australian Teacher Workforce Data survey (ATWD) to include selection, retention, classroom readiness and transition data as measures</li> <li>Adopting and scaling up WA Principals perception of graduate teachers’ annual survey into the ATWD.</li> <li>Adoption of Option C – Excellence pool for higher quality ITE programs</li> </ul> <p><b>B. Recommend Public Reporting by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curating current data sets for more robust whole of ITE profile</li> <li>Not adopting TEF in Australia - the hierarchical class system ranking is detrimental to Australian ITE.</li> </ul> <p><b>C. Recommend performance measures and funding for all components of ITE are transparent and appropriate by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise the funding for ITE programs to ensure access to new technologies</li> <li>Ensuring university funds are channelled into ITE programs</li> <li>Remove costs of professional experience to the sectors so that mentors are paid and recognised within the system not ad hoc.</li> </ul> <p><b>D. Recommend transition funding to support performance improvement by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocating funding specifically targeting ITE courses,</li> <li>Remove Job Ready Graduate model as it has been detrimental to the delivery of ITE programs.</li> <li>Funding for mentors to be a sector level cost not university cost to raise the profile of mentors within the profession.</li> </ul> <p><b>E. Recommend reducing number of Schools of Education nationally and target expertise, cohorts and placements by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging specialisations and collaborations between universities</li> <li>Supporting Regional focussed universities</li> <li>Identifying Areas of Excellence and Uniqueness for SoE and advertise accordingly to reduce repetition and develop Centres of Teaching Excellence.</li> <li>Offering only Post Graduate programs at some institutions</li> <li>Developing a consortium of Unis that offer a national online ITE program</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommend that classroom ready graduates are supported by schools that are graduate ready by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing how each state addresses transition or induction process and scale up good practices (WA -less load, mentor for 2 years, graduate conference)</li> <li>Implementing or considering interrelated elements of the Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher Resilience (Johnson et al., 2014).</li> </ul>	      
<p><b>Reform Area 3 Improving the quality of practical experience in teaching</b></p> <p><b>A. Recommend Quality Practicums by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing sector driven policies and strategies that attract and retain teachers into the workforce by offering good experiences on placements and:</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Maintaining and strengthening national Accreditation Standards and Procedures for ITE, national curriculum, Teacher Professional Standards and TPAs and national mutual recognition.</i></li> <li>• <i>Providing clear sector pathways that place PSTs in high performing schools for placement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Supporting and identifying high performing schools in diverse contexts for quality placements – Rural and remote, large regional, multicultural urban schools, hard to staff etc.</i></li> <li>• <i>Scaling up successful Australian professional experience and internship models eg Final year internships</i></li> <li>• <i>Actioning whole of profession A Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher Resilience (Johnson et al., 2014).</i></li> </ul> <p><b>B. Recommend National Centre for ITE Professional Experience by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Engaging ACDE Professional Experience Steering Committee as national leaders in this area and coordinate large scale multiple site research related to professional experience models.</i></li> <li>• <i>Showcasing national exemplary practicum and internship practices</i></li> <li>• <i>Researching ‘the most optimal time and models for placements’</i></li> </ul> <p><b>C. Recommend scaling up current Innovative Practices by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring use of simulation and technologies to prepare for successful practicums</i></li> <li>• <i>Simulating scenario-based approaches that cater for current hot topics – violence against teachers, well-being and resilience, online learning</i></li> <li>• <i>Employing First year students as paid paraprofessionals [1-2 days per week]</i></li> <li>• <i>Employing Final year internship as paid conditional registered teachers – or induction year.</i></li> <li>• <i>Employing transition and induction staff as supernumerary to school staffing profiles in RRR and hard to staff schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Utilise state-based principals and teachers of the year to support PST and non schools of excellence – annual conference and annual refresh.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>D. Recommend Funding changes by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Continuing Australian Government funding of placements and reinstate CGS funding agreements to counter impact of JRG.</i></li> <li>• <i>Funding of students undertaking a paraprofessional role for first year students in schools (1 -3 days a week) and paid conditional employment in final year (1-3days)</i></li> <li>• <i>Identifying High Performing Schools in diverse contexts to be funded to support preservice teachers’ exposure to good practice including a supernumerary for the region.</i></li> <li>• <i>Utilising HALT teachers to support development and transition into schools for PSTs and new graduates</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase wage for those staff who take on further studies and mentoring thus removing costs required for placement.</i></li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: center;">   <b>EdSector</b> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">   <b>University</b> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">   <b>Student Teacher</b> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">   <b>Funding</b> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">   <b>EdSector</b> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">   <b>Funding</b> </div>
<p><b>Reform Area 4 Improve postgraduate ITE for mid-career entrants</b></p> <p><b>A. Recommend scaling up current MTeach condensed programs such as Newcastle 18month course with no regulatory arrangements needed and reintroducing a GradDip for single subject areas of need.</b></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support 12 month GradDip (single subject areas of need) stackable within M.Teach</li> </ul> <p><b>B. Recommend research into mid-career (MCT) entrants to determine what actually is needed, what numbers are represented and retention history of these groups by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilising ACDE Research Steering Committee to lead MCT review</li> <li>Building on the work and findings presented by the NSW MidCareer Transition to Teaching program (Sydney, Newcastle and Charles Sturt University)</li> </ul> <p><b>C. Recommend flexibility in terms of delivery – intensive, compressed, staggered, blended sessions by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying current successful flexible options for delivery and replicate.</li> <li>Ensure standards are maintained for all ITE programs – reintroduce GradDip (AQF8) as a single subject specialist degree that leads into a M.Teach. (AQF9)</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="1134 197 1281 315" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">  </div> <div data-bbox="1134 322 1281 376" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>Student Teacher</b> </div> <div data-bbox="1134 421 1281 539" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">  </div> <div data-bbox="1134 546 1281 607" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>EdSector</b> </div>
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## Elaboration of Recommendations

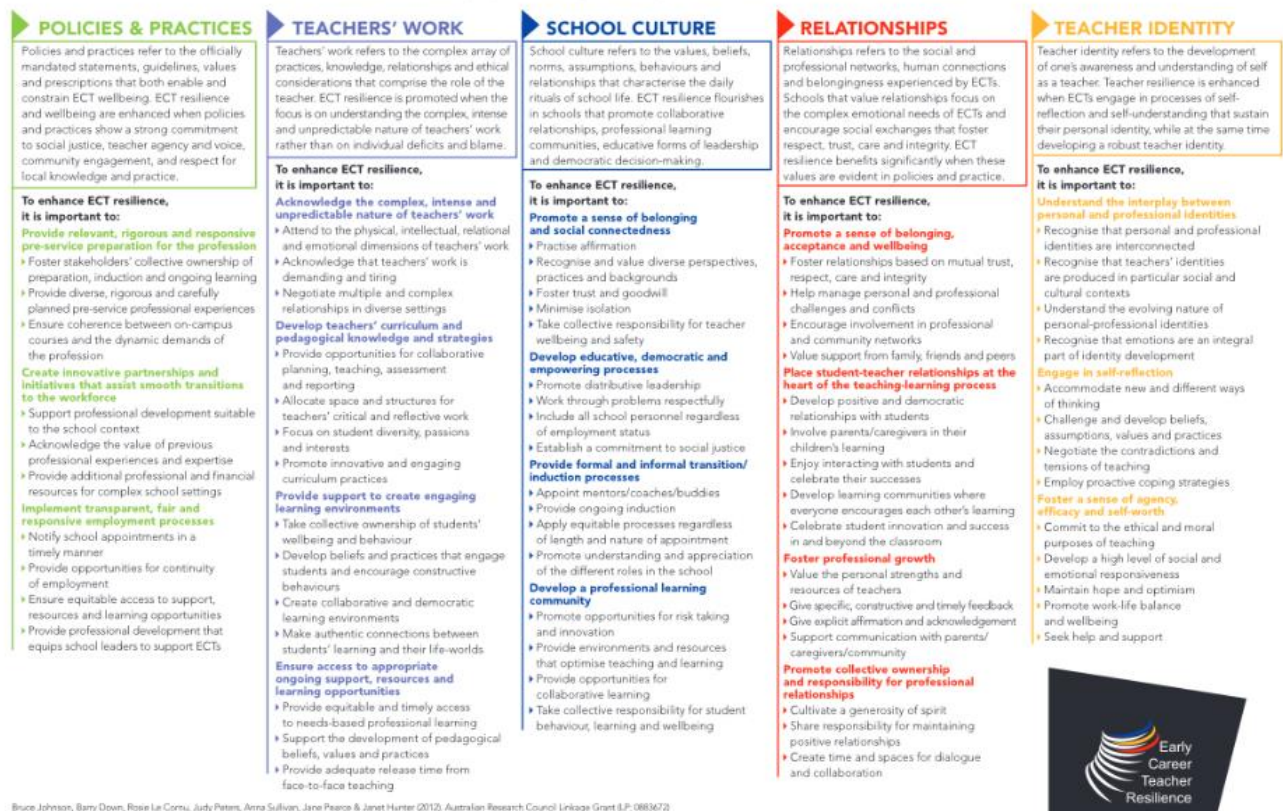
### Reform Area 1: Strengthen ITE programs to deliver effective, classroom ready graduates.

Reform Area 1 addresses the *Accreditation of ITE programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures (AITSL)*

- *Standard 1: Program Outcomes*
- *Standard 2: Program development, design and delivery.*
- *Standard 3: Program structure and content*

To deliver effective, **classroom ready graduates** we need to have corresponding **graduate ready schools** and sectors (Ledger, 2019). A whole of profession approach to support ITE and early career teachers is outlined in the following Framework resulting from an ARC LP Grant (Johnson et al., 2014). Attention to each of these conditions within our ITE programs and our School inductions should strengthen the profession.

### A Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher (ECT) Resilience



Of concern in Reform Area 1 is the lack of focus on affective or psychomotor domains and differentiation within policy, practice and core content. Teachers' work is currently being prescribed and to a large extent controlled through external accountability processes, such as centralised curriculum and high-stakes testing. It is important the sector returns to the aims of the Australian Curriculum and balance standardisation with a three-dimensional approach to learning that captures discipline knowledge, general capabilities and cross curricular priorities.

*The Australian Curriculum is designed to help all young Australians to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.*

The three dimensions of the school curriculum could be well positioned within ITE programs to develop the 'whole' teacher so that they can support the 'whole' student – cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The current balance is skewed and students, particularly marginalised students, are simply not engaged.

To deliver effective but appropriate practices in schools we need to marry evidence-based practices with local context. One way is to employ place-based education (PBE). A growing interest in place-based education (PBE) represents a refreshing turnabout in educational practice at the school and district level (McInerney et al., 2011). Gruenewald (2003) suggests a critical perspective in PBE encourages students to connect local issues to global which is leading to an ecopedagogy movement and awareness of UNSDG or as Reid (2007) suggests a 'pedagogy of responsibility'. We recommend a focus on critical pedagogy of responsibility transcends cultural, geographic, economic and cognitive foci and gives agency to students which in turn attends to ACARA aims '*to produce successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens*'.

### **1. Evidence-based teaching practices**

- Are there other evidence-based practices which should be prioritised in ITE programs?

There remains ambiguity in the term 'evidence based' and 'evidence informed practice' within policy reform of ITE and Education in Australia. The nature of evidence and its use, implies that many different levels and types of evidence...are needed and used to support decisions in clinical practice (Woodbury & Khunke, 2014). It is important that collective groups are involved and work together to determine what good evidence is and to continue to critique the evidence for improved practice. Evidence 4 Learning and AERO along with other state based and university based Centres for Evidence or equivalent should work together collaboratively for the national interest to deter narrow echo chambers or lobbyists emerging.

The University of Newcastle recommends Quality Teaching Model and Rounds (Gore et al., 2023) to be adopted as an Australian based 'quality teaching program' that will help raise the standard of current practice.

University course accreditation with TEQSA follows the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) and, following Threshold Standard 3.1.2, requires "The content and learning activities of each course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry consistent with the level of study and the expected learning outcomes, including:

- Current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciplines.
- Study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the academic disciplines or fields of education or research represented in the course, and
- Emerging concepts that are informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and, where applicable, advances in practice."

These TEQSA requirements are well aligned with evidence-based practices in education. Emerging research findings shape and support understandings of learners and their contexts and offer directions for practice. For this reason, foundation or core content is unlikely to look the same in 20 years' time as it does today. Accreditation processes can include updates in evidence-based practices and accreditation panels can convene sub-groups of experts in these fields.

### **2. Amending Accreditation Standards and Procedures**

- How should the Accreditation Standards and Procedures best be amended to ensure all ITE students learn and can confidently use these practices?
- Should the Accreditation Standards and Procedures be amended to require TPAs to assess these practices?



Current ITE programs have been designed to meet the national Accreditation Standards and Procedures (AITSL). This comprehensive process offers great data and information about each ITE provider and is evidence driven. We recommend continuing this process.

Since the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group’s 2016 recommendations, ITE providers have worked with AITSL and Teacher Regulation Authorities to design, implement and evaluate Teaching Performance Assessments as a valid and reliable measure of classroom readiness. While we welcome ongoing opportunities to refine the accreditation framework for TPAs, we do not recommend that the Accreditation Standards and Procedures be amended to require TPAs to also assess foundation content. The University joins the NSW Council of Deans concerns as follows:

- TPAs assess classroom readiness, which needs to be understood within the context of the school and the focus Key Learning Area.
- TPAs need to retain sufficient flexibility to allow for their implementation across a widerange settings. Aspects of the proposed foundation studies, as currently outlined, are too specific to be assessed across all TPA settings.
- TPA trend data cannot be compromised.
- ITE providers do not have jurisdictional authority to prescribe a particular set of pedagogies to schools. This means that ITE students would not have equal opportunity to demonstrate understanding or application of the specific teaching practices recommended.

### 3. Curriculum specific content

- What steps should be taken to ensure curriculum- specific ITE content embeds the evidence-based practices?

We recommend that we realign our focus from purely content to all elements of the 3D Australian Curriculum with a focus on the general capabilities to counter the ongoing privileging of cognition and content over other domains.

Figure *The three Dimensions of the Australian Curriculum*



In addition to including the general capabilities as the core other missing elements are also:

- *Socratic questioning*
- *Keyboarding as part of writing transcription skills*

- *Practicing responses to authentic and intense classroom behaviours using safe simulated learning environments*
- *Employing neuromyth methodologies for current notions of ‘best practice’ and ‘instructional choices’*

#### 4. Ensuring consistent, robust delivery of evidence-based teaching practices

In NSW, the Teacher Regulation Authority NESA enjoys a strong working relationship with the NSW Council of Deans of Education and with individual providers. Any changes to the authorising environment should work to reinforce NESA’s successful work. Above, for example, we recommend an ini.a.ve to nationalise NESA’s Priority Elaboration Areas. We welcome ongoing innovations and refinements that would pare some accreditation requirements back, while emphasising others that have emerged as more central to quality assurance processes. In the NSW Council of Deans of Education’s opinion, such refinement is both possible and desirable.

#### Recommendations

##### **Reform Area 1 Strengthen ITE programs to deliver effective, classroom ready graduates:**

##### **A. Recommend evidence based teaching strategies by**

- *Combining expertise - AERO and Evidence4Learning should combine as both do similar work and their combined strengths would be beneficial for the profession.*
- *Appointing ACDE and associated steering committees/networks (Professional Experience, ECE, VET, Research, AILTEA, Learning & Teaching, Technology) to lead and inform policy and practice with regard ITE.*

##### **B. Recommend amending Accreditation Standards & Procedures by**

- *Conducting a full program evaluation of the Accreditation Standards and Procedures implementation process.*
- *Reviewing TPAs as a consequence of supporting 2 TPA tenders rather than one, it may be time to develop an Australian TPA which combines the best of what is currently on offer across the field.*

##### **C. Recommend adopting Curriculum Specific Core Content and missing elements by:**

- *Cross reference current practice to see what Core content is not covered.*
- *Position the affective and psychomotor domains within the core*
- *Employ neuromyth methodologies for current notions of ‘best practice’ and ‘instructional choices’*
- *More focus on the General Capabilities (3D Curriculum) to cover many of the missing elements of the Core for students and PSTs – ethical, intercultural, personal, social, critical and creative ,literacy, numeracy, ICT. This will give agency to students and address enabling factors.*
- *Raise importance of place based education.*

##### **D. Recommend ensuring consistent, robust delivery of evidence based teaching strategies by:**

- *Legislative Change for a National Accreditation Body or Authorising environment for national consistency, mutual recognition and state representation.*
- *Culturally responsive Pedagogies and Practices*
- *Utilising University of Newcastle’s Teachers and Teacher Research Centre Quality Teaching Model and Rounds to improve practice systemically*
- *Use evidence-based teaching strategies to refocus on psychomotor and affective domains to counter the cognitive only foci of current approach.*

## Reform Area 2: Strengthen the link between performance and funding of initial teacher education

Reform Area 2 address the *Accreditation of ITE programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (AITSL)

- Standard 3: Program entry
- Standard 6: Program evaluation, reporting and improvement

### 1. ITE performance measures:

- Are there additional indicators that should be considered?
- To what extent should the performance measures form the core part of the evidence requirements in provider's Plans For Demonstrating Impact required in the Accreditation Standards and Procedures?

The University of Newcastle support the NSWCE suggestion that:

*No funding model could adequately capture the complexity and quality of an ITE program. Any metrics used in such a system could only be based on the improvements in candidates rather than the quality of the candidates emerging. As we have learnt from the government's My School platform, it is erroneous to judge the merit of an educational institution based on outcomes – a school that takes students who have suffered great adversities and enables them to contribute positively to society has achieved far more than a school that takes exceptional students and only enables them to achieve good results. Any measure of a ITE program quality would need to be based on the improvement that the program engendered in students. However, unlike NAPLAN results that can be objectively measured using multiple choice questions and the like, measuring improvement in teaching quality is far more subjective. It would require ITE students to complete an initial assessment of their teaching quality, based on a nationally deployed instrument, which is unrealistic, not least because of the impact any such evaluation activity on school children. In summary, there are too many subjectives to effectively measure improvement in teaching quality, and allocating funding based on anything other than improvement would be unfair.*

Questions that need to be raised include: What other industries have this measure? Why is this needed? What is the issue behind this? Can we deal with that issue rather than impose imperative measures? How do you measure success?

There remain concerns about the accuracy of data collected nationally around attrition. The indicator used is course completion at six years, meaning anyone has not completed after six years is counted in attrition numbers. This is often inaccurate as more students are completing their course part time, which can take 8 years. It is stated in the document that 'First-year attrition is a reflection of the selection of suitable ITE students, and the support provided in their first year'. The formula for the calculation is based on (p 32), 'the proportion of students who commenced an ITE program in 2019 who neither complete an ITE program in 2019 and 2020 nor return to an ITE program 2020'. This definition potentially excludes students who take leave, which biases against students who have experienced disadvantage. More research needs to be done in this area, including understanding how attrition rates compare with overseas ITE program and other professional degrees.

### 2. Public reporting:

- Should the Australian Teacher Workforce Data collection be the basis for reporting and publicising the performance measures?
- Are there other approaches for reporting the performance measures?

The ATWD is a great measure for reporting and transparency and could include models such as the WA Principals feedback on graduates within its structure.

The following three proposed indicators are not all fit for purpose, given the variables influencing them:

- a. Graduate employment outcomes: The proportion of teaching graduates employed upon graduation.
- b. Sustainability of employment: The proportion of graduates registered and employed at the end of the second-year post-graduation.
- c. Employment in areas of highest workforce need: The proportion of graduates employed in regional and remote, low SES locations, and in STEM subjects.

The University agrees with the NSW CDE submission that:

*A more fundamental problem is that ITE is not funded to support students' transition to employment. Universities are resourced to support students until graduation, but postemployment support should be provided by employers and accreditation agencies.*

*For example, from 2020-22, the proportion of early career teachers who underwent a formal induction process decreased from 65% to 59%. Employers should be providing induction to 100% of new employees, rather than having it decrease from already inadequate levels. ITE providers are not responsible for this situation.*

### **3. Public transparency:**

- If made publicly available, are these performance measures sufficient to drive quality improvement in ITE?

It is reasonable to publish data as it is public information, however, data must measure intended outcomes. The danger comes from using ill-informed data that compares unmeasurable or moderated data. A range of factors influence the measures being reported including factors beyond the control of ITE providers.

Strategies to develop a more reliable and valid measure is recommended and the ACDE would be a good starting point for this.

### **4. Transition funding to support performance improvement:**

- How could transition funding be used to set higher education providers on a path to improving the quality of their programs?

The NSW Council of Deans of Education has successfully completed research projects related to professional experience for the NSW Department of Education (Ure et al., 2020). These projects have involved university and school personnel implementing and evaluating strategies to improve collaborations between universities and schools that improve teacher education students' experiences transitioning into the profession.

### **5. Excellence pool for higher quality programs:**

- How could a system of reward funding be best designed to support high performing ITE programs and encourage them to increase their enrolments?
- Are there any risks to such an approach and if so, how should they be addressed?

To improve ITE, funding should be allocated on a need basis – for instance where resources and expertise are most required.

## Recommendations

### Reform Area 2 Strengthen the link between performance and funding of ITE

#### A. Recommend continuing and modifying current performance measures for ITE with regards Selection, Retention, Classroom readiness and Transition by:

- *Utilising and strengthening the AITSL Australian Teacher Workforce Data survey (ATWD) to include selection, retention, classroom readiness and transition data.*
- *Adopting and scaling up WA Principals perception of graduate teachers' annual survey into the ATWD.*
- *Adoption of Option C – Excellence pool for higher quality ITE programs*

#### B. Recommend Public Reporting by

- *Utilising and strengthening the AITSL Australian Teacher Workforce Data survey (ATWD) to include selection, retention, classroom readiness and transition data.*
- *Adopting and scaling up WA Principals perception of graduate teachers' annual survey into the ATWD.*
- *Not adopting TEF in Australia - the hierarchical class system ranking is detrimental to ITE.*

#### C. Recommend performance measures and funding for all components of ITE are transparent and appropriate by

- *Raise the funding for ITE programs to ensure access to new technologies*
- *Ensuring university funds are channelled into ITE programs*
- *Remove costs of professional experience to the sectors so that mentors are paid and recognised within the system not ad hoc.*

#### D. Recommend transition funding to support performance improvement by

- *Allocating funding specifically targeting ITE courses,*
- *Remove Job Ready Graduate model as it has been detrimental to the delivery of ITE programs.*
- *Funding for mentors to be a sector level cost not university cost to raise the profile of mentors within the profession.*

#### E. Recommend reducing number of Schools of Education nationally and target expertise, cohorts and placements by:

- Encouraging specialisations and collaborations between universities
- Supporting Regional focussed universities
- Identifying Areas of Excellence and Uniqueness for SoE and advertise accordingly to reduce repetition and develop Centres of Teaching Excellence.
- Offering only Post Graduate programs at some institutions
- Developing a consortia of Unis that offer a national online ITE program

#### F: Recommend that classroom ready graduates are supported by schools that are graduate ready by:

- *Reviewing how each state addresses transition or induction process and scale up good practices (WA -less load, mentor for 2 years, graduate conference)*
- *Implementing or considering interrelated elements of the Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher Resilience (Johnson et al., 2014).*



### Reform Area 3: Improving the quality of practical experience in teaching

Reform Area 3 address the *Accreditation of ITE programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (AITSL)

- Standard 5: Professional Experience

Professional experience continues to be an enduring or wicked problem for ITE programs; it has been discussed, scrutinised and debated for well over a century (Vick, 2007). Dating back to the early 1900s, ITE reform continues to question the structure of ITE programs balancing general principles of education, child development and their theoretical foundations, teaching methods, subject knowledge and school-based practice. Within this theory and practice debate (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Korthagen, 2010), placements have continued to be integral to complex, multi-faceted and carefully articulated ITE programs.

All major reports on ITE over the past five decades have identified practical experience as an area of attention. A decade ago, the *National Partnerships Agreement on Improving Quality Teaching* policy reform (2009-2012) called for innovative professional experience models and resulted in great examples of good practice around Australia, particularly innovative partnership and placement programs (Ledger & Vidovich, 2018). Within this NPTQ policy context, new forms of teaching internships, extended placements and immersion programs emerged to provide a high-quality teaching workforce for the nation (Tindall-Ford, Ledger, Williams, Ambrosetti, 2017). The Panel should draw from these successful models and scale them up accordingly across the nation (Bahr & Mellor, 2016; Conroy et al., 2013; Foxall, 2014; Ledger & Vidovich, 2018; Tindall-Ford et al., 2017; White et al. 2017).

Professional practicums take the form of either continuous time in schools (from 1-10 weeks) or regular time in schools over an extended period (1 day or morning a week). What happens and how these school times are structured determine the placement outcome. Whether universities use the gradual release of responsibility model (Frey & Fischer, 2008), the cognitive apprentice model (Bandura, 1997) or an institutional model that reflects the underlying philosophy or pedagogy which informs the developmental structure of the placement (e.g., Quality Teacher Method/Rounds, Gore, 2022) – time in schools enables our student teachers to apply their knowledge into practice. Traditionally, if students pass their final placement, they are deemed able to graduate. As a result of TEMAG, the Teacher Performance Assessment was added to the exit demands of graduates. Aimed to capture the students' ability to meet the demands of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers in a reflective and systematic manner. It has been proven beneficial as a threshold task but has fragilities (Buchanan et al., 2020).

In preparation for successful placements, ITE programs implement a range of strategies, including scenario-based responses, microteaching approaches (Allen & Eve, 1968), virtual worlds and video recordings for reflective practice (Gregory et al., 2013), lesson study/analysis (Baumfield et al., 2022) and more recently simulated classrooms (Fischetti et al., 2022). The benefit of simulation to better prepare students for successful placements has been well recorded (Ade-Ojo et al., 2021; Christensen et al., 2011; Dieker et al., 2014;) yet few universities in Australia have embraced the emerging technologies. The simulated platform offers a safe and supportive environment to practice before practicum and target scenarios that are increasing in our schools, such as irate parents, violence against teachers etc. We recommend simulation and emerging technologies to better prepare our students for successful placements as they address APTs and increase self-efficacy (Ledger et al., 2019).

The issues surrounding practicums are well documented; however, the complexity, practicality and costs are not well researched. The most recent was outlined by the Australian Council of Deans of Education steering committee document (Ure et al., 2017). The findings were highlighted in a paper by (Ledger et al., 2020), who discussed the ambiguity and greyness around the 'actual', 'hidden' and 'real' costs of delivering placements. The financial burden was further compounded with the introduction of Job Ready Graduates (JRG). JRG was significant in terms of placement costs as the monies lost from funding (roughly \$1K per

student) equates to the amount spent on placements each year per student. The recent addition of on-entry screening, LANTITE, TPAs and now JRG have all impacted the operational costs of placements in ITE programs. ITE programs should be celebrated for responding so admirably to these requests.

### **Points of Discussion**

The anomalies between how, when and where practicums take place and what form they take by universities, schools, students, and contexts resonate with Ball's (2015) concern that 'policies are contested, mediated and differentially represented by different actors in different contexts' (p311). To help mitigate these anomalies and develop a national educational identity, TEMAG recommendations saw the development of national standards, national accreditation of ITE and a national curriculum. Unfortunately, the option to adopt or adapt curriculum has meant unnecessary energy being put into rewriting curriculum and removed any semblance of national or mutual recognition (Haines, 2021). This has impacted ITE nationally and the ability of Australian teachers to move between states with ease.

The full adoption of the Australian professional standards for teachers and accreditation standards and procedures of ITE are testimony to successful implementation of policy and are playing a significant role in addressing the professionalism of the profession (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Unfortunately, policy-makers have tried to conflate student results with a national curriculum that was adapted to the professional standards and ITE accreditation that were fully adopted. There are inherent problems with this conflation and correlation.

### **3.1 System level agreements**

- The whole of profession approach to policy and legislative processes to ensure consistency and understanding of the lifelong process e.g., Education Act, Teachers Act, AITSL, only have one mention of schools assuming any responsibility to support preservice teachers. If staff move from schools to Education Department they are under different work conditions. The system allows for non-educators to lead Education.
- Whole of profession arrangements for placements as per Scotland – workforce planning is led by Dept and placements organised accordingly.
- Mutual recognition is important within the profession. The example of interstate teachers moving into NSW and incurring difficulty to work in a period of teacher shortages is one such anomaly.

### **3.2. Centres of excellence:**

- Centres of Excellence, Demonstration Schools, Hub Schools all offer great opportunity to expose our students to high quality placements in a diverse range of settings.
- Excellent mentors should be factored into our placement processes. Utilise current principals and teachers of the year winners in each state to have a year from their school commitments to support PSTs and schools. An annual conference for PSTs in addition to time spent supporting schools that were not Centres of excellence would be beneficial to the profession.

### **3.3 National frameworks:**

- We could utilise the ACDE Steering Committee for Professional Experience which includes all university professional experience leaders to lead and support a national agenda in this space.
- We already have a framework for professional practice embedded in our professional teaching standards and ITE accreditation and procedures.
- We also have extremely successful professional practice and internship models around the nation that could be used as national models and supported accordingly.

### **3.4 Student support during placements:**

- Job embedded learning initiatives in first year.
- More students in less schools and professional learning sessions completed in schools (NEXUS model from Victoria).
- Continue successful models from each state that emerged from National Partnership Reform a decade ago (Hub model in NSW; WACUTS & MIMS in WA; NEXUS & Deakin model Victoria; Training Schools program NT;;
- A high quality supernumerary teacher in each region to be paid to support PST and new teachers in RRR areas.

### **3.5 Integrating theory and practice:**

- Recommend Internship Model (WACUTS and MIMS from WA) for final year in school induction.
- How can practical experience be better integrated with the academic component of ITE programs to support ITE student learning and preparedness to teach?
- Summer orientation for new hires each year – for updated mandates and curriculum PL

### **3.7 Role of schools in supporting practical experience:**

- Flexible requirements from all parties.
- Recognition of mentor teachers and school placement coordinators in job description and pay like a HALT rather than small payments per placements from university.
- Recognition of higher education studies in job descriptions and rise in pay accordingly.
- Build it into workforce planning strategy, particularly for those hard-to-staff schools.
- First year paraprofessionals transitioning into the profession and final-year induction in schools.

We promote a whole of profession approach to the collective improvement of practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Promising strategies include:

- recruitment of highly able candidates into competitive salaries
- financial subsidies
- commonality in the design and quality of preparation
- connecting theory and practice through thoughtful coursework and integration of high-quality clinical work in settings where good practice is supported;
- focus on professional teaching standards on the learning and evaluation of critical knowledge, skills and dispositions;
- teacher performance assessments that develop candidate competence and program improvement; induction models that support beginning teachers;
- thoughtful professional development where teachers learn from each other;
- profession-wide capacity building for sharing of research, good practice and good leadership in schools and systems.

## Recommendations

### Current Arrangements for delivering practical experience:

*Systems level agreements and legislation need to strengthen in terms of work force planning so that an 'integrated delivery' aspired by TEMAG (2014, p.v) can be achieved. System level focus on the assumed responsibility that underpins the statement and the necessary legislative cohesion relating to funding models, mentoring models, and the role and recognition of supervisors. Policy, funding and legislative changes will remove the overreliance on the goodwill and moral obligations of both academic and teaching staff.*

### A. Quality Practicums

*Sector driven policies and strategies that attract and retain teachers into the workforce begin with good experiences on placements.*

- *Maintain and strengthen national Accreditation Standards and Procedures for ITE, national curriculum, Teacher Professional Standards and TPAs and mutual recognition.*
- *Clear sector pathways that place PSTs in high performing schools for placement.*
- *Support and identify high performing schools in diverse contexts for quality placements – Rural and remote, large regional, multicultural urban schools, hard to staff etc.*
- *Scale up successful professional experience and internship models in Australia*
- *Action whole of profession A Framework of Conditions Supporting Early Career Teacher Resilience (Johnson et al., 2014).*

### B. National Centre for ITE Professional Experience

- *ACDE Professional Experience Steering Committee to take a national lead in this area and coordinate large scale multiple site research related to professional experience models.*
- *Showcase national exemplary practicum and internship practices*
- *Research on 'what the most optimal time and models for placements'*

### C. Innovative Practices

- *Explore use of simulation and technologies to prepare for successful practicums*
- *Scenario based approaches that cater for current hot topics – violence, resilience*
- *First year students as paid paraprofessionals [1-2 days per week]*
- *Final year internship as paid conditional registered teachers – an induction year.*
- *Transition and induction staff who are supernumerary to school staffing profiles in RRR and hard to staff schools.*
- *Utilise state based principals and teachers of the year to support PST and non schools of excellence – annual conference and annual refresh.*

### D. Funding

- *Australian Government to continue funding placements and reinstate CGS funding agreements to counter impact of JRG.*
- *High Performing Schools in diverse contexts to be funded to support preservice teachers exposure to good practice including a supernumerary for the region.*
- *HALT teachers to support development and transition into schools for PSTs and new graduates*
- *Increase in wage for those staff who take on further studies and mentoring thus removing costs required for placement.*

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

Reform Area 4 addresses the *Accreditation of ITE programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (AITSL)

- Standard 4: Program structure and content

### 1. Better pathways for mid-career entrants:

- How can Masters degrees be structured so that mid-career entrants can assume roles in the classroom within 12-18 months instead of two years?
- What changes to regulatory arrangements are needed to enable this?

As highlighted in the TEEP Discussion Paper, the University of Newcastle Master of Teaching (Secondary) Fast Track program offers the M.Teach in 18 months in a compressed, Trimester mode with simulated learning environments designed to prepare students for successful placements. Other shorter programs exist, but to reduce them to 12 months would be compromising on quality or content.

One solution is to offer a GradDip (120pts) 1 year AQF8 qualification that allows graduates to teach in one specific subject area after 12 months. This could be stacked into a M.Teach (AQF9). The university is concerned that a watered down M.Teach is not of benefit to the profession and does not align with the acquired AQF standards.

We support the article by Dadvand et al. (2023) that the focus on rethinking policy solutions to teacher shortage problems that prioritize teacher 'recruitment' over 'retention'. Reactive policy responses often do not address the underlying causes of teacher attrition, therefore the focus should be on retention focussed workforce planning (Dadvand et al., 2023). Moreover, a whole of profession approach to policy and planning which includes selection into ITE, supporting ITE through quality placements, transitioning into the workforce through quality induction and ongoing PL for inservice teachers.

The push for reduced M.Teach is arguably reducing quality of the AQF 9. Regulation should allow for an AQF 8 GradDip to cover a single subject area for teaching. Currently a few universities including the University of Newcastle offer reduced M.Teach programs (4 trimester programs, 18 month). Further reduction would question the volume of learning that is required for an AQF 9 outcome. Therefore we recommend a 120pt, 12 month GradDip (AQF8) for single subject hard to staff areas – Math, Science, TAS.

This degree would be stackable within a M.Teach (AQF9).

### 2. Building the evidence base:

- Would a framework for assessing the success of mid-career programs assist in sharing lessons learned in designing mid-career programs?

Due to increasing and recurring teacher shortages, mid-career teachers (MCT) or SecondCareer Teachers (SCT) MCT/SCTs are a growing teacher group in many countries (Marinell & Johnson, 2014). Considerable resources are being invested in the recruitment and training of SCT yet little research is available concerning their ability to cope with the demands of their new profession and long-term engagement in teaching. Success of mid-career programs relates to the retention within the profession (Zuzovsky et al., 2014). Existing literature suggests second career teachers (SCT) have additional resources compared to first career teachers (FCT) however empirical data is scarce about whether SCT are capable of transferring prior skills and knowledge to teaching (Troesch & Bauer, 2020). Findings show that SCTs feel nearly as challenged when starting to teach as traditional teachers and as such need good teacher induction and support to retain them in the profession, is also suggests that SCTs are more intent to stay in the teaching profession than FCT (Troesch & Baurer, 2020).

*The accumulation of work and life experiences does not automatically lead to better teaching skills, but can only translate into a professional repertoire if reflected upon and purposefully implemented in the classroom (Freidus and Krasnow, 1991; Mayotte, 2003).*



Early feedback on the *NSW MidCareer transition to teaching program* has demonstrated that mid-career teachers prefer enrolling online on a part-time basis to allow them to maintain their employment (UniSyd, Newcastle, CSU and Macquarie). This program was charged with implementing, reviewing and proposal a new structure for mid-career transition to teaching. The report will be out by end of 2023.

In addition to this program we suggest utilising the ACDE steering committee for research (CaDRE) to undertake research in this area.

Preliminary findings from MidCareer program and Australian Internships (Ledger & Vidovich, 2018) would recommend:

- ITE MidCareer teachers need to be paid as paraprofessionals in schools 2-3 days a week and attend university 1-2 days a week. This integrated approach transitions MidCareer teachers into schools under supervision of mentors.
- National approach to operations so that midcareer teachers have mutual recognition and can easily cross borders
- Mentors to be acknowledged, recognised and paid accordingly by the sector not universities. This would lift the status of professional experience and the role of mentors within the system.

### **3. Increasing flexibility:**

- Is their sufficient flexibility in providers delivery of ITE to cater to the circumstances of mid-career entrants?

Much flexibility already exists in MTeach programs around the nation. The NSW MidCareer Transition to Teaching project (MCTTT) have found that current midcareer teachers (MCT) expect to continue to work in their field whilst attending to university demands. A large percentage of MCT switch from full time to parttime in the current 2 year programs and are moving to more online delivery (MidCareer Transition to Teaching findings – Dept). It also shows that intensive and accelerated programs do not suit all entrants.

#### **Reform Area 4 Improve postgraduate ITE for mid-career entrants**

##### **A. Recommend scaling up current MTeach condensed programs such as Newcastle 18month course with no regulatory arrangements needed and reintroducing a GradDip for single subject areas of need.**

- Support 12 month GradDip (single subject areas of need) stackable within M.Teach

##### **B. Recommend research into mid-career entrants to determine what actually is needed, what numbers are represented and retention history of these groups by:**

- Utilising ACDE Research Steering Committee to lead this review
- Building on the work and findings presented by the NSW MidCareer Transition to Teaching program (Sydney, Newcastle and Charles Sturt University)

##### **C. Recommend flexibility in terms of delivery – intensive, compressed, staggered, blended sessions by**

- Identifying current successful flexible options for delivery and replicate.
- Ensure standards are maintained for all ITE programs – reintroduce GradDip (AQF8) as a single subject specialist degree that leads into a M.Teach. (AQF9)

#### **Conclusion and Contact**

We support a whole of profession approach to all actions within this submission. Our recommendations have been drawn from feedback to the range of Education reviews over the last decade AITSL Spotlight reports, and many research articles that explore flexible approaches to program delivery (Dadvade et al., 2023; Fox, 2014; Ledger & Vidovich 2018; Tindall-ford et al., 2018; White et al., 2018). A focus on being proactive and future focussed is necessary to raise the profile of the teaching profession.

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The University of Newcastle School of Education is committed to providing quality education in and for the regions and addressing Sustainable Development Goals # 4 *Quality Education*; 3 *Good Health & Well Being*; 10 *Reduced Inequalities*; 16 *Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions*; 17 *Partnerships for the Goals*

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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