



5 July, 2017

Submission on Consultation over the Education Council NZ 'Proposals for future focused ITE'.

The University of Otago College of Education (UOCE) was established in 2007 through the merger between the University of Otago and Dunedin College of Education. The UOCE has the longest history of teacher education in New Zealand with the former College of Education having been established in 1876. As an institution the UOCE has a long established reputation for excellence in education and the professional education of teachers. We offer initial teacher education (ITE) programmes in early childhood, primary, primary bi-cultural and secondary education. Postgraduate study options for ongoing professional learning and development of teachers and education professionals are rich; we offer a suite of programmes from degrees through to doctorates.

Please accept this submission on the Education Council of New Zealand's (ECNZ) 'Proposals for future focused ITE'. In preparing this submission, comments from Drs. Chris Linsell and Sandra Williamson-Leadley have been incorporated.

Proposal One: Raising entry requirements – Including higher literacy and numeracy.

We hold varying perspectives on the proposal to introduce higher literacy and numeracy requirements for entry to ITE from 2020. We do not want ECNZ to impose entry standards that impinge on a provider's right to set their own programme regulations that may meet or exceed the ECNZ standard. Furthermore we note no mention is made in this proposal of potential changes to entry standards for English as-a-second-language learners.

It is true that we consider the present situation of allowing students who come straight into programmes from secondary education with literacy standards that are gained in subjects other than English troubling – we do not think it sets students up well for teaching English at the Primary level. However, our protest is not about the level of requirement in this case, it is about the scope of evidence a prospective ITE candidate may draw from to show proficiency at entry. A higher benchmark at exit point may be a way to effect positive change.

We do think that current university entrance numeracy requirements are insufficient for demonstrating the numeracy required for teaching. Our experience is that very few students who enter into ITE below Step 5 of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy scale are able to improve their skills and knowledge sufficiently to achieve success in teacher education.

It may be possible to set different benchmarks for different ITE programme types. For example, having a higher entry level for 1-year ITE programmes thereby recognising that in a full year-long programme, opportunities to remediate literacy or numeracy proficiency are limited. For programmes of a longer duration, it may be possible to use an entry standard benchmark for formative purposes, allowing teacher education candidates times during their study to achieve the standard (say before the end of their first year, for instance).

The proposal to set benchmarks for literacy and numeracy during 2019 is encouraging but specific detail about how ECNZ is proposing to coordinate the testing, including collation of results, in a manner that fits with ITE providers varied selection processes and timelines is necessary if we are to wholly support this idea.

Requiring teacher education candidates to demonstrate understanding of mathematics and statistical methods appropriate to their teaching role is a sound proposal. This can be achieved through the setting of differentiated standards of performance for student groups. We support the use of the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool for assessing prospective teachers literacy and numeracy proficiency.

Proposal Two: Strengthening the quality of practica arrangements.

Quality factors in practica have been identified and most already embedded in ITE programmes around the country, although not without some difficulty in the initial stages - so we agree with the proposal of having providers demonstrate how such factors are addressed in programmes. The difficulties pertain to changed expectations on the professional setting side of the partnership equation – it's not possible for ITE providers to make 'whole school' responsibility occur, for instance; this comes down to how professional settings work. Providers can ask and design the approach with partner institutions but they cannot force schools and early childhood settings to comply. The other area of contention in this proposal for us is the notion that programmes should have fewer and longer periods for practicum. We see merit in having student teachers experience teaching in as wide a range of professional settings as possible so the 'fewer' aspect of this idea is challenging for us.

If the term 'practica' were to be replaced, we would encourage the use of 'professional experience' instead. This would be consistent with how our ITE programmes are currently moving.

Proposal Three: Programmes that prepare teachers to teach across different ranges of year levels.

In principle we are supportive of this idea. Historically the UOCE has offered integrated ITE across early childhood and primary education. The idea of strengthening professional practice at key transition periods for children (entry to school; primary/intermediate/secondary education) is encouraging because teachers who understand where a learner is coming from and moving to can plan curriculum to accommodate those changed circumstances for teaching and learning. However, to adequately address the full scope of curriculum that would support a teacher to cross-sectors (e.g., Te Whāriki and NZC years 1-8 or NZC years 1-8 and 9-13) the duration of an ITE programme would likely need to be increased. This may not be an attractive proposition for prospective student teachers, who in the longer term may be required to complete ITE in the postgraduate context. The acceptability of such graduates to the profession and initially employers would need to be fully explored also.

Proposal Four: Every ITE student must meet the Standards for the Teaching Profession (with support) prior to graduation.

We agree with this proposal, especially now that the new standards have been promulgated and present a more consistent, concise and comprehensive set of professional expectations of teachers. Furthermore the continuum approach to the standards reflects clearly the continued expectation for professional learning and development of expertise necessary for teachers to remain active and learning professionals.

Proposal Five: Strengthened approval requirements for all programmes from 2020.

As mentioned earlier, we do support the use of the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool for assessing prospective teachers literacy and numeracy proficiency. If it is to be used for benchmarking standards in 2018 by ECNZ, we would welcome clarity around how this will occur in ways consistent with providers already established selection procedures.

We consider that meeting the new approval expectations should occur on a case-by-case basis for providers as they 'review' existing or seek 'approval' for new ITE programmes rather than making all

providers on a fixed date, inundate ECNZ with documentation. It would seem reasonable to introduce the new requirements from 2020 and to use 2018 and 2019 to clarify criteria and work with providers on expectations for documentation.

Proposal Six: Expanding the availability of postgraduate ITE qualifications, with the long-term aim of all teachers entering the profession with a postgraduate qualification.

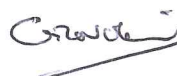
Interim findings from the evaluation of the postgraduate exemplary ITE programmes trial indicate that employers perceive graduates from the programmes to be as competent as (approx. 50%) or more/much more competent (approx. 50%) as graduates from other ITE programme types across domains of *inquiry teaching*, *researching new ideas about teaching and learning*, *using data to support learning*, and *being culturally responsive and able to engage with diverse learners*. We think therefore, between this NZ evidence and our own experience in the field, that postgraduate ITE is an option worth supporting in the longer-term. However, there are many challenges to postgraduate ITE that need addressing and some sectors may have more hurdles to be overcome – notably early childhood education and Māori Medium.

Problems with perceptions of accessibility to PGITE would need to be addressed. Furthermore, raised qualification levels are typically accompanied by expectations around better remuneration and working conditions – how will these be addressed? The availability of student loans and allowances that support prospective ITE students to continue study in the postgraduate context would need improving, as would the availability of continuing funding for postgraduate ITE. Providers who can offer strong pathway degree programmes to teaching would be able to address issues of depth of curriculum expertise within primary, early childhood and Māori Medium sectors. We expect that any shift to postgraduate programmes would encompass early childhood education and schools sector programmes.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on these proposals. Should you require any further information or clarification on this submission, please contact the named submitters below.



Dr. Alexandra C. Gunn
Associate Dean Teacher Education
University of Otago College of Education
145 Union St East,
PO Box 56,
Dunedin, NZ
03 4794261 / +64 21 279 3795



Professor Ross Notman
Dean of Education
University of Otago College of Education
145 Union St East,
PO Box 56,
Dunedin, NZ
03 4795461 / +64 21 279 3795